

Three Ways of Why

I no longer seek the cause of a neurosis in the past, but in the present. I ask, what is the necessary task which the patient will not accomplish? (Jung, CW 4, par. 570)

Precise questioning is *conditio sine qua non* of successful analysis. When asking questions, the analyst not only asks the client, but also poses questions to his or her own self. While communicating with the client, the analyst "looks" inside, and there asks questions and "listens" for answers. The analyst not only actively searches in his memory, where he/she seeks understanding, but also observes feelings, images and ideas that passively arise from unconsciousness. The analyst's psyche mirrors and at the same time complements missing links of the complex life situation of analysand and also his/hers own. The analyst not only helps the patient to find a new, "broader" meaning of his problem, but also enters the field in which both could undertake transformation.¹

The analysis is a creative team-work. In a way it is a maieutic, Socratic method of dialogue with the difference that the objective of analysis is to ask questions in such a way so they contribute to the revelation of a fuller life story, i.e. self-knowledge. The aim is not to achieve some kind of logical truth, but rather a new attitude; the greater degree of freedom that includes the acceptance of painful also-truths. The so-called behavioral therapies basically focus on the patient's conscious intentions and analyze whether these intentions are in conflict with the demands of the given reality. In Jungian analysis there is a third variable that enters the healing process, and that is unconscious. The unconscious has its own intelligence: it can have its

¹ "The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances: if there is any reaction, both are transformed. We should expect the doctor to have an influence on the patient in every effective psychic treatment. But this influence can only take place when he too is affected by the patient." Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, p. 49, 1933.

own will, its own intentions and secrets, or even an "opinions," which could often be at odds with the opinions of the ego. It is the "Other" that we also dialogue with during the process of analysis.

Conscious and unconscious

Let's ponder for a moment on the paradoxical relationship between conscious and unconscious. Conscious, just like the unconscious, has no "substance" that we can quantify, measure or localize *per se*. We can only know about it via our own conscious medium and thus through its own subject. The very fact that the psyche can never be objectified - even though it can be perceived that way during the states of extended consciousness - by definition makes it an unconquerable mystery.

We are left to reach for a definition derived from the relationship (reference) to what we perceive as "objective" or "material."² From the nature of the observer it is only expedient to perceive the world dually, i.e. divided into object and subject. Dark and light, evil and good, happiness and suffering, illness and health...those are all categories that come from the duality.

But if we come to grasp the world as a unity in which the opposites are only relative aspects of the whole, the unconscious becomes not a "third" variable, but rather a common denominator. From the point of view of the observer, that is, the ego, the unconscious differs from the conscious only in that it is unconscious. Unconscious is not something "different" in this way, it is, in effect an unconscious that is not conscious. Conversely, conscious is essentially an unconscious that became consciously apprehended.

² From Latin *objectivus*, from *objectum* "object, impersonal, unbiased." *Obiectum* "thing put before."

For example, darkness is a lack of light. Darkness does not change into light, but “gives way” to light. Realization could be understood as an elucidation of (already) existing fact (awakening). The duality of conscious and unconscious is thus a transient, from the point of view of the ego, justified relationship of two “quantities,” where one is known and the other is unknown. Non-duality way of thinking can be found in Sufism, Taoism, Hinduism (advaita), Buddhism (mādhyamaka), Kabbalah, Vedic teaching, for example, or in the philosophy of the mystics Jakob Böhme, Meister Eckhart and others.

Consciousness is, from the non-dual point of view, at the same time an object. Consciousness is the means by which the unconscious “sees” itself. Non-duality presupposes consciousness in the unconscious, and thus is the representation of the unity of conscious and unconscious. Although this sounds paradoxical, the non-dual approach claims the unconscious to be consciousness that is exerting self-awareness through the ego; respectively, according to the theory of non-dualism, there is interconnectedness of all things, and only one absolute subject and that is the Consciousness. Carl Jung emphasized that concepts are essential for having an experience and that the experience of any phenomena is only possible when the opposites are differentiated in the human mind, however his theory of synchronicity opens the door for exploring ideas of non-duality via experience of meaning.

Imperfection, a human burden

In many Eastern religions we find numerous references to the unity of God and humans. We also find them in Christianity (e.g. Acts 17:28, John 14: 9, Paul Co, 12:27,), but the teaching that has become mainstream is dual in essence, separating human being from God: the sinner is banished from the paradise of original unity

[of *participation mystique*]. The evil has split off from the good and became human business: *Omne bonum a Deo, omne malum ab homine*. Many religions leave to gods all the attributes of perfection, while placing imperfection on human shoulders.

In his *Answer to Job* (1952), Jung has found a relative compromise between dualism and non-dualism. In short, his thesis was that God needs human for its own self-awareness. Jung's book caused a lot of outrage, mainly because he portrayed God as unconscious, that is, imperfect. Perhaps the misunderstanding arose because Jung (maybe intentionally) was not clear whether he meant the God that is not present in consciousness or the God as an objective metaphysical entity. Whether the Unconscious is conscious in itself and at the same time self-conscious cannot be confirmed or refuted in any rational way.³ Only the bearer of consciousness can confirm it with absolute certainty, but then it is still only a subjective experience!⁴

Consciousness and intelligence

Given the fact of our restraints stemming from our subjectivity we are left with postulating a difference between consciousness and intelligence. When interacting with other humans we implicitly rely on the Theory of Mind and extrapolate our experience to other *Homo Sapiens*. When interacting with animals (aliens, or intelligent robots) we have to rely only on intelligence as an “output,” the presence of consciousness will have to remain an unanswered question until we manage to insight their consciousness “objectively.” However, the proof of intelligence is all

³ See - problem of solipsism.

⁴ In the (near) future, we will face a real problem of deciphering whether artificial intelligence has become consciousness or not.

around. Just look at bees, termites or ants colonies, organized complex forest systems and so on. There we can observe processes in which information is exchanged, feedback and self-correction, self-organization enacted. This could apply to the activity of nervous systems including the human brain. It is not news to Jungians that the unconscious is intelligent. It can process information, analyze, solve problems, create images and respond to communication, but the question “who” is really a mediator of the conscious insight remains unanswered. Jung’s theory of synchronicity ponders this mystery of non-cerebral intelligence:

“I am only too conscious that synchronicity is a highly abstract and ‘irrepresentable’ quantity. It ascribes to the moving body a certain psychoid property which, like space, time, and causality, forms a criterion of its behaviour. We must completely give up the idea of the psyche’s being somehow connected with the brain, and remember instead the ‘meaningful’ or ‘intelligent’ behaviour of the lower organisms, which are without a brain. Here we find ourselves much closer to the formal factor which, as I have said, has nothing to do with brain activity.” (Jung, *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*; from CW 8, p 103)



Suffice to say, consciousness is a helpful catalyst of the processes of change. It allowed humans to climb up on the top of the food chain in a relatively short time, but at the same time it has gradually alienated them from the intelligence of the instinct, so it actually arose as an experiment with an uncertain outcome. To conquer our own ignorance and our own unconsciousness is a great challenge of humanity. Transformation emerges when consciousness integrates instinct, not when it splits it off. The task of analysis is to bring them together.

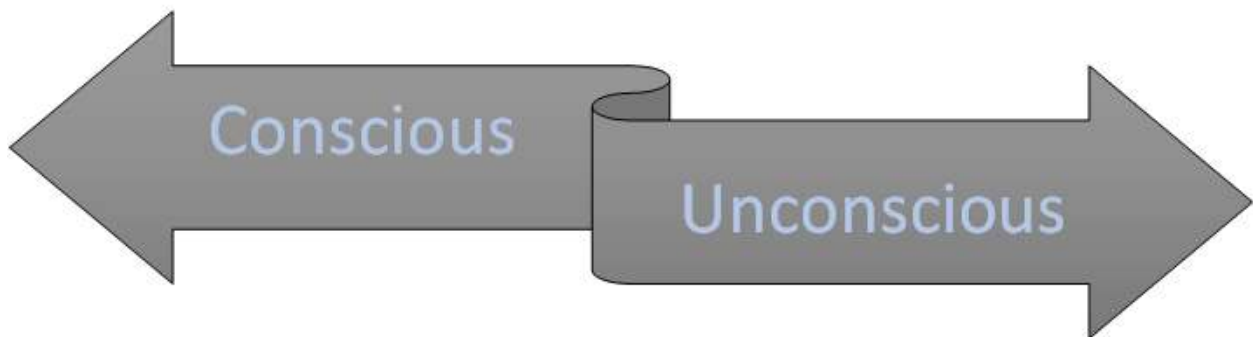
Unconscious as a partner

Carl Jung considered the unconscious to be a “partner” who is in us and whom we must dialogue with and take it seriously in order to achieve wholeness. He talks about the compensatory (balancing) relationship of conscious and unconscious attitudes. Our attitudes are expressions of the tension that exists between our ego and the unconscious “personality,” i.e. the Self. This tension is also a guiding spirit, a kind of magnetic field, without which the compass of a happy life could not work. However, the neurosis can spin the compass needle too fiercely and confuse our aims. The “voice” of the unconscious does not stop speaking. Sensations, reveries, fantasies, ideas, feelings, dreams or compulsions flow like blood in our veins. How do we learn to listen to the voice, and how do we know what to listen to?

An example comes to mind. The patient, who tries to control her feelings, but practically most of her life, has a dream where a charismatic female (the heroine of the movie *Wonder Woman*, 2017) urges her not to be afraid and “let go!” She stands on a high hill, then my patient lets go and begins to fall backwards into the darkness. As she rolls, she feels the soft green grass that caresses her naked body, waving her

arms like a bird with wings. She surrenders to the experience, rolls freely with joyful feelings and unexpected safety.

Who created this image? Has her unconscious come up with this image? She herself solves problems in her daily life by feeding her control. Organization, will and the idea of “letting go” terrifies her. When I ask her *why*, she comes up with many sophisticated reasons. Of course that’s her conscious attitude, and although it does not help her very much to overcome her anxiety, she rather holds on to it feverishly. So why does “her” unconscious offer an answer that is very different from what she consciously chooses? In analysis it is very important to keep in mind that when asking questions, we are asking the patient, but also the unconscious. Thus answers can differ indeed.



Pain and the past: the mover

Freud's psychoanalysis revealed the importance of looking for causal origins of neurosis in early psychological development. Freud's reductive method searches for the source of present pain in the past. We are dealing with the question of *causa efficiens*: By asking why something is happening, we are looking for the original

“mover,” (Greek: κινέω; the effect that brings about the finished result, linear, efficient) the source of the conflict, the origin of the symptom.⁵

For example: Why does my patient suffer from anxiety? Because her mother was a strict perfectionist. Why did the client succumb to alcohol dependence? Because his father was an alcoholic and during his childhood he developed a pattern of managing difficult emotional situations through escaping to drinking. Or maybe there are genetic predispositions that “cause” his alcoholism.

The search for original causes is perhaps an important part of analysis, but their rational recognition alone contributes little to healing. It belongs mainly to the initial phase, which has the task of *elucidating* historical relations and opening up space for self-understanding.⁶

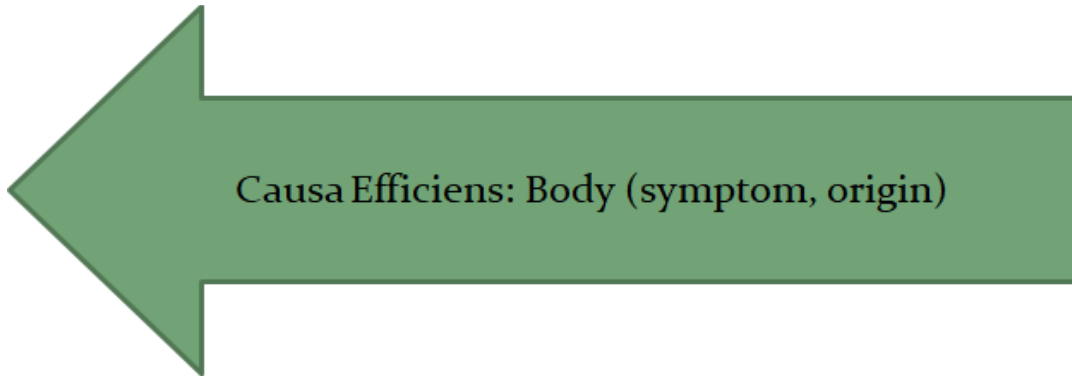
This aspect of therapy is related to the recognition of material reservoirs, memory. It has its roots planted in Western mode of historical thinking. It encompasses rather mechanistic world-understanding.

Freud considered neurosis to be an attempt for healing that failed. Regression, according to him, is a way of escaping conflict by returning to the previous level of development.⁷ Hence, psychoanalysis is also a “return” seeking causes for an unresolved conflict.

⁵ Material cause can be for this purpose and simplicity associated with causality and formal cause with finality.

⁶ “For all my respect for history, it seems to me that no insight into the past and no re-experiencing of pathogenic reminiscences – however powerful it may be – is as effective in freeing man from the grip of the past as the construction of something new...no matter what the original circumstances from which they arose, [the neurosis] is conditioned and maintained by a wrong attitude which is present all the time and which, once it is recognized, must be corrected now.” Jung, Freud and Psychoanalysis, par. 750. Also see CW 16, par. 153

⁷ Regarded causally, regression is determined, say, by a “mother fixation.” But from the final standpoint the libido regresses to the *imago* of the mother in order to find there the memory associations by means of which further development can take place, for instance from a sexual system into an intellectual or spiritual system. The first explanation exhausts itself in stressing the importance of the cause and completely overlooks the final significance of the regressive process. From this angle the whole edifice of civilization becomes a mere substitute for the impossibility of incest. But the second explanation allows us to foresee what will follow from the regression, and at the same time it helps us to understand the significance of the memory-images that have been reactivated.” (Jung, CW 8, par. 43)



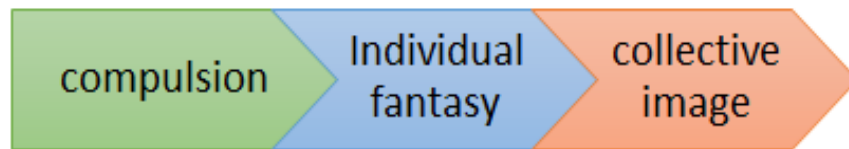
Causa Efficiens: Memory, symptom, mover, origin

For Jung though, regression is a “descent” into the depths of the psyche rather than a “return” to the past. It is a search for a key to open a new door, not the door of the past. It is a search for hidden potentials and images that can transcend the present conflict. Jung searches for the purpose rather than for a cause. He says: “In constructing a theory which derives the neurosis from causes in the distant past, we are first and foremost following the tendency of our patient to lure us as far away as possible from the critical present...” (Jung, C. G., CW 4, par. 373)



Why is something happening. Causa Finalis.

Another “why” used in analysis is in the service of the search for a purpose. For example, we can claim that the sexual instinct is rooted in the instinctive matrix, but it also operates in the service of a certain plan: it aims to procreate and consequently have family.⁸ Urge to pleasure can be represented on the conscious level as an “image” (idea) of the future development. This can be reflected in the concepts of teleology versus finality. The image can exist as a conscious fantasy or a more specific wish, but it can also have an unconscious, emotional aspect in the form of desire for belonging, happiness, meaning or salvation in the religious sense.⁹ A new meaning can emerge unexpectedly, without any discernible cause. It happens often after the culmination of a crisis or a futile conscious search.



As far as we know, Aristotle (384-322 BC) was amongst the first thinkers who popularized the idea of teleology (from Greek: τέλος, translit. télos, lit. ‘end,’ ‘purpose,’ or ‘goal,’ completion, but also death). Teleology became a main idea in the teaching of Alfred Adler (1870-1937). Adler believed that individuals are motivated by “final goals.” These final goals are innate, but ultimately based on what he called social interest (German: *Gemeinschaftsgefühl*).

It is a goal and at the same time a design that “pulls” our actions forward, and therefore not a cause that “pushes” us. The finality reflects the Eastern way of

⁸ Besides being just a pleasure-giver that satisfies the present!

⁹ Teleology implies the anticipation of a particular end or goal; finality assumes purpose but an essentially unknown goal. Jung, CW 8, par. 456.

thinking: it seeks harmony, greater societal good. Confucianism, for example strives to achieve moral perfection while drawing from the ideals of the past.

The concept of finality has become an important part of Jungian theory. Jung says:

“The palpable fact of differentiation and development can never be explained exhaustively by causality; it requires also the final point of view, which humans produced in the course of their psychic evolution, as their also produced the causal. (Jung, CW 8, par. 42, author changed men to humans)

Symbol

The analysis is a work with symbols that have the ability to expand consciousness, so to speak, to “widths,” but also to its “depths.” While the causal perspective searches for a symptomatic cause of a given condition, the symbolic perspective seeks potentials of growth. Patient is not only searching for what caused a certain injury, but he/she may also be looking for unconscious resources that have been forgotten and that could have prevented the injury in the first place. In other words, the suffering is not caused by the past wound, but by the patient's [temporary] inability to access archetypal sources of healing.¹⁰

Jung says: “Those who have suffered ever since childhood from a chronic neurosis do not suffer now from the same conflict they suffered from then.” (The Aetiology of Neurosis, par. 354)

The client, who finds herself again and again as a victim in an abusive relationship, may act, on the one hand, due to an activation of a childhood complex, but on the

¹⁰ A fantasy needs to be understood both causally and purposively. Causally interpreted, it seems like a *symptom* of a physiological state, the outcome of antecedent events. Purposively interpreted, it seems like a symbol, seeking to characterize a definite goal with the help of the material at hand, or trace out a line of future psychological development. (Jung, "Definitions," CW 6, par. 720)

other hand she may also be seeking liberation from this complex, which can take place by an unwitting re-establishment of abusive situation; but a new conscious solution is needed to achieve freedom. Thus we can say that the unconscious intention is not just to throw her back to an impossible situation, but to expand on the perspective from which she can view the nature of her pattern. We Jungians do not pathologize human suffering because we know that just as seemingly good things can bring suffering, so painful things can bring new freedom. Joseph Cambell said that the cave we fear is hiding the treasure that we are looking for. Archetypes are, from the perspective of finality, ideals, stars that we fly towards; we are born with an unconscious plan that can be fulfilled through individuation.



Take, for example, a tangerine seed. We plant it and the tree begins to grow. The information that is contained in DNA determines how the processes of growth will follow is based on *causa efficiens*. The final form of the tree, or if you will, the intent of nature, environmental effects which results in the shape of the tree is the work of *causa finalis*. Perhaps it will be tilted right due to the north winds and its fruits would be big and juicy due to the rainy climate. We can ask, why is tangerine sweet? Well, it's the sugar says causal explanation, but it is also "intending" to be eaten and its seeds pooped out in order to spread life. Sugar is the energy, but so is life.

For a tree does not have a conscious “intention” as far as we can discern, similarly the archetype has no plan per se, but the conscious reflection and relation creates it. We might not be able to see a plan; we attend to a set of processes. What emerges speaks for itself.

During the growth of the tangerine tree, there are processes that are taking place that are visible “right now.” There are chemical processes (and states) that we can observe and affect *hic et nunc* (here and now). This cause lies in the present moment and according to Jung it is the only cause that can affect the change (transformation). “...It is mainly in the present that the affective causes lie, and here alone are the possibilities of removing them” puts it Jung bluntly. (Jung, C. G., CW 4, par. 373)

Causa Praesenti

The third “why” that we use in the analysis is aimed at the critical present that is inevitably linked with the affect; emotions, that could become feelings via the process of analysis. From a perspective of change, this is the most important aspect of analysis.

Past is a category of time for our minds but our psyche does not dwell in time; there is no time for her. The trauma that took place in the past is present in our current reactions and emotions. We deal with trauma not through the memory but through the immediate affective connection. The patient who follows her imagination and practices “letting go of control” in order to overcome her anxiety has to make a conscious decision to do so. It requires conscious relating to her complex that may hold her back. That also requires an attitude of courage.

If we ask a client who is being mentally abused by her partner why she is not doing anything about it, she can answer that her father has abused her or that she does not want to inconvenience her children, it may also be because it has something to do

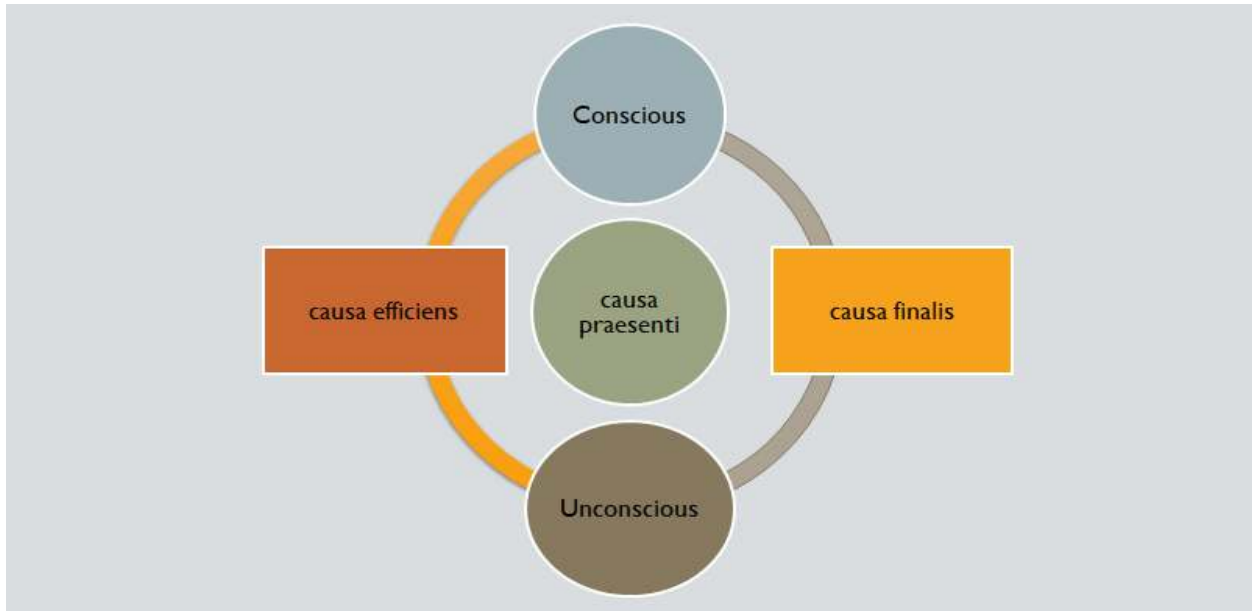
with certain affective energy that is influencing her decision to act or not act at every present moment. “Why? Because I feel I cannot do it now; I’m scared! We make important decisions in life based on what is currently talking to us, not because we have planned and designed it that way, but because something living has moved us here, and now.

Fear, anger, sadness, shame, hopelessness, or excitement. These are all emotions that somehow attach us to the current situation and decide how we will behave at a given moment. We can call this “immediacy” *causa praesenti*.

While the first “why” focuses on the original cause (memory), the second on the ideal (image), *causa praesenti* is a synthesis of both and focuses on the “subjective” (meaning).

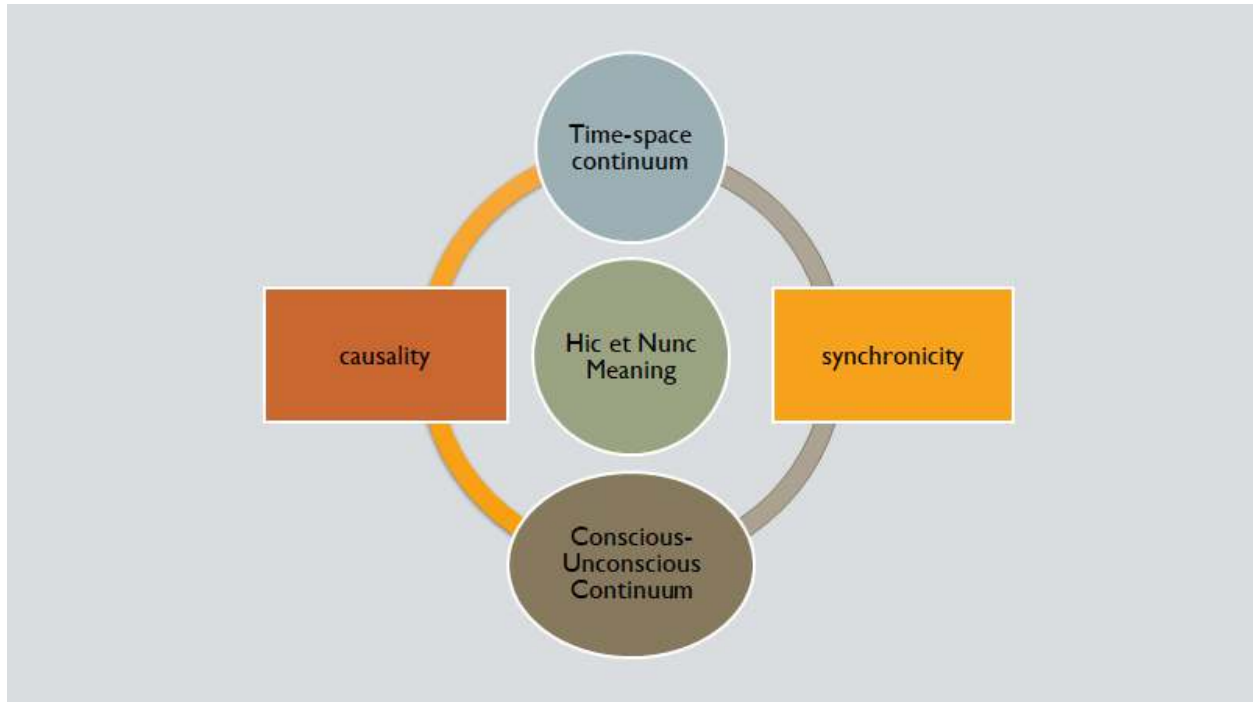
All that is happening in the session is ultimately a relationship that has synchronistic basis. Jung was talking about attending to the very present aspect of the transference and countertransference dynamics that determines how the future unfolds. The conscious attitude requires integration of affects that could not longer be theoretically examined, but must be fully experienced in order to elicit change. The subjective aspect of the present is crucial. The conscious choice that is different from the dictate of compulsion, and different from ideal expectation is exclusively individual. Jung says:

“(…) what happened to the patient must now happen to the doctor, so that his personality shall not react unfavourably on the patient. The doctor can no longer evade his own difficulty by treating the difficulties of others: the man who suffers from a running abscess is not fit to perform a surgical operation. (..) It is not only the sufferer but the doctor as well, not only the object but also the subject, not only a cerebral function but the *absolute condition of consciousness itself*.” (CW 16, pars. 172-73, author’s emphasis)



Tending to emotions and images that are bound to them is akin to mining an alchemical gold of analysis. The affect that is unattended lives its own life cut off from the image, so the image can find its meaning through the conscious present. *Causa praesenti* is an aspect of analysis where past and future gain meaning via conscious relationship between therapist and patient. It is no longer a mere return of memories, or following a fantasy-image, but it is an experience in “timelessness.” Any experience is actually a synchronistic phenomenon, where space and time are relativized. Affect that is momentarily experienced is a psychic state that may be both, related to some event in the past (trauma), but at the same time it is a very “present” affect that has a synchronistic and not causal affinity with the trauma. Jung talks about the mentally conditioned relativity of time and space. (CW 8, par. 840) “Only through affect can we free the soul from the bondage of trauma,” says Jung. (CW 13, par. 464) In his *Practice of Psychotherapy* he stresses the importance of therapeutic relationship and tending to numinosum as the basis for transformation. (CW 16, 174 and Letters, I p. 377) We can consider any analysis as fruitful that manages to bring about *causa praesenti*, where we can

experience the present meaning of experiences and actions, and thus then we really travel in time to change the future.



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