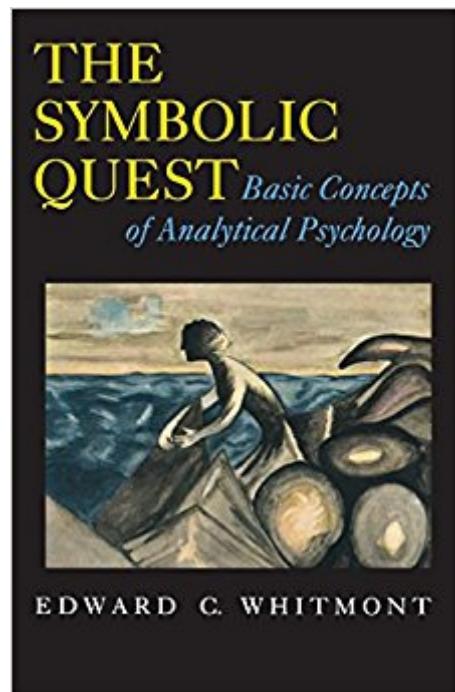


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# The Symbolic Quest



## Synopsis

This book explores the use and development of man's symbolizing capacities-those qualities that make him distinctly human. Dr. Whitmont describes the symbolic approach to a dream, which takes into account a symptom's meaning in reference to an unfolding wholeness of personality. He then presents the view that the instinctual urge for meaning is served by the symbolizing capacities, and that this urge has been repressed in our time. In the field of psychology, this symbolic approach is most fully exemplified by the theories of C. G. Jung. The author's contribution includes many differentiations and speculations, especially concerning the problems of relatedness.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"[Whitmont] has succeeded in what can only be called an act of creative translation. . . . The general reader will get what has not been available before, a clear and lucid statement of the Jungian position, that life has a pattern of wholeness which can only be comprehended symbolically at this moment in time."--Los Angeles Times "Whitmont...enriches the meaning of the myth of the self by taking us beyond the language of 'disease' and 'symptom' into another language world, the world of 'dis-ease' and 'symbol' and 'therapeia'."--Inward Light

In this highly acclaimed work Edward C. Whitmont explores C.G. Jung's revolutionary discoveries about the archetypal world and the self, offering practical insights into the process of healing and

transformation.

Wonderful book. Amazingly written!! A real jewel. I am a retired doctor and decided to undertake Jungian analysis and study synchronicity and the I ching. This book has provided me with a wealth of information. The writing style is crystal clear and spot on. He surpasses Jung in his ability to explain concepts. My analyst says I am in the small percentage of people who have a porous psyche and can tap into the collective consciousness very readily and I believe Dr Whitmont was too!! Take the journey.

This is an outstandingly good book. It provides a comprehensive overview of Jungian thought and theory without skimming the surface but at the same time being very readable. I've done a good deal of reading in Jung, enough to develop a list of favorite Jungian authors (Ann Belford Ulanov, John A. Sanford), so I am not sure how I would feel if I were just starting out. For where I am now, this book seems an exceptionally fine combination of thoroughness, clarity and good, fluid writing, with observations rooted in clinical practice and examples derived from that practice. Years ago I read Raymond E. Fancher's Psychoanalytic Psychology: The Development of Freud's Thought. It was beautifully written, clear and articulate, careful in its discussion, with no sense of skimming. I feel as if I've come across the best of that book for Jungian thought. This is good stuff.

Much more than a primer or a simple introduction to Jung, this carefully written book expresses itself succinctly in capturing key Jungian concepts within its proper framework and the crucial formulation of its historical underpinnings (showcasing where appropriate the differences with Freud and at times with Adler, analyzing in detail the immense philosophic background and depth of Kant, idealism, phenomenology) as a vehicle in which Jung crafted his philosophy turning him into one of the major pillars not only of psychology but of thought in general whose ideas and insights reverberate throughout today's climate despite the obvious shift away from traditional psychoanalysis into medicinal therapy. You will walk away understanding Jung after reading this book but it is no simple read. Its text is eloquent and is not a simple beach book. Its pages are woven carefully by a Jungian scholar and rather than diminish the ideas of Freud and others, the author, a top ranking Jungian, explains Freud and others to the reading public within a framework of understanding not only about Jung but after reading the book the major concepts and ideas of the psychoanalytical movement in general and specifics. Another wonderful read on Jung but more suited for actual case studies and in a more relaxed style is June Singer's Boundaries Of The Soul,

but for the seriousness that Jung deserves Whitmont's book can't be beat.

Having just finished Whitmont's Symbolic Quest, I have to admit it is not easy (which is why I had to give it four stars instead of five). Yes, sections need to be read and re-read to understand his "explanations" of Jungian analytical psychology. Often this is to explain why Jung used the terminology he did (often invented). Nonetheless, if one is careful and 'conscious' while reading it (to describe how the book should be read, as opposed to carelessly or even quickly for that matter), then one will find within a beautiful and concise description of the basic tenets of Jungian psychology: the objective psyche, the anima and animus (and the difference, as well as the newest interpretations), the ego, and the Self. The definition (and exposition) of Archetypes finally became totally understandable, especially from Jung's point of view, and therapy no longer becomes simply a method of 'repair', but becomes more of a scientific endeavor of discovery. As an anthropologist who has read a good portion of Jung, I found the book, yes, intricate, but well worth the effort. As I told a friend, I will keep this in my ever-wandering and disparate traveling library, to either reference or read again someday. Unlike other books that are just plain enjoyable, I will not be giving this one away.

Written when I was five years old, Edward Whitmont's "The Symbolic Quest" is as fresh and informative in 2012 as it ever has been. The text is perhaps not for those brand new to Analytical Psychology, however, if you've found this title in your searching, you likely have a curiosity to know more about the interior life. Whitmont's work is a seminal text which formalizes as well as humanizes the concepts of Jungian and early post-Jungian thought. Answering the call of individuation may become the most challenging and rewarding work of your future. This book will help you navigate the journey.

Probably the single best summary of Jung's theories that exists, updated to include further elaborations by other psychiatrist's work since Jung's death. Difficult reading at time, but nowhere near as difficult as Jung's own work. Recommended if it meets your need for a view into the unconscious world that is part of you and helps shape your life.

I have a read a few introductions to Jungian psychology and they have all suffered from one serious defect. Namely, in their attempt to be understood, they didn't provide a sense of the expanse of Jungian psychological thought. This book is the sole exception. It seems to be quite

thorough. Apparently, some readers have found this work difficult. I didn't and I am not a psychologist. In fact, I read this work as a beach book while on vacation. I found it to be a helpful explanation and introduction.

Read this book, and anything else of his. Look for audio of his lectures, more will be available soon. Edward Whitmont was a soul man.

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