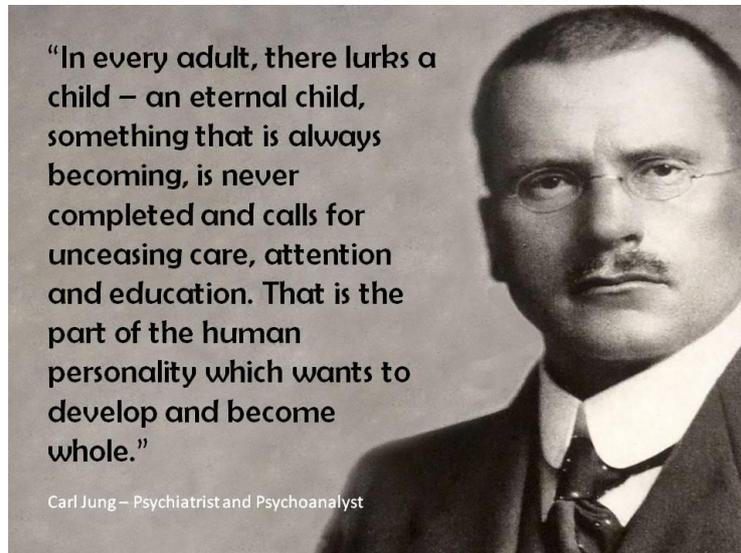


Exploring the Concept of the Inner Child



Psychologist Carl Jung (1875–1961) originated the concept of the Divine Child Archetype.

- Ⓢ The Divine Child is both helpless and all powerful at the same time.
- Ⓢ Stories of a divine child or golden child seen in many different cultures/literature throughout the world. E.g. Jesus, in literature Harry Potter/ Frodo Baggins.
- Ⓢ We all start out in life as vulnerable and dependent infants – it is a shared experience of all humans.
- Ⓢ The way we are nurtured will have an impact on our adult personalities and lives.
- Ⓢ The idea of the Inner child is still heavily used psychoanalysis and counselling.

What is the Inner Child?

- Ⓢ The Inner Child refers to the vulnerable and sensitive part in ourselves and remains at the core of our being.
- Ⓢ It refers the childlike aspects of our unconscious mind.
- Ⓢ Our Inner Child is our emotional self.
- Ⓢ Our true self, the part that feels our emotions (sadness, anger, fear, joy) and that is playful, curious, spontaneous, creative and intuitive.

- Ⓢ As children we were subject to many boundaries, restraints, conditions from all areas of life parents, school, wider society to feel accepted and loved.
- Ⓢ We tend to go along with these as we are still need of adults for the basics in life shelter, food, love etc.
- Ⓢ Not every child has been allowed to express themselves in the way they wished to. (e.g. stop crying or I will give you something to cry about - children have emotions too and adults do not like it when they express them)
- Ⓢ As a result of this can be that your adult self holds on to some behaviours that have been learned within early childhood to lesser or greater extent and some of these can be problematic (see list of damages below)

The Wounded Child



Exercise: Think about how you would react to the following scenario and why? Think in terms of your inner child!

You and your partner had a very special weekend planned for you anniversary, however, it turns out that you partner must work and it has to be cancelled. You have been planning

this for months and it has cost a lot of money which you won't be able to recoup. How do you react to the situation?

Childhood Trauma

If you experienced neglect, trauma, or other emotional pain, your **inner child** might seem small, vulnerable, and in need of protection.

You might notice:

- anger over unmet needs.
- abandonment or rejection.
- insecurity.
- vulnerability.
- guilt or shame.
- anxiety.

However, there is a flip side too:

Playfulness and Fun

- Ⓢ All children have some happy experiences during childhood that they recall fondly.
- Ⓢ The Inner Child can also be noted as a source of strength since your early experiences have helped shape your adult life through learning. E.g. Maybe more determined as a result of your poor childhood experiences
- Ⓢ Through making contact with our inner child and befriending it, we can begin to re-parent ourselves in a loving and nurturing way.
- Ⓢ Spiritual approaches say that in offering the inner child comfort we comfort ourselves as adults.

Getting in touch with your inner child can help to heal these wounds,

foster wellbeing and bring a lightness to life

Ways in which you can get in touch with your inner child

- ② Write a letter – Write a letter to your childhood self. Reassure them that all will be well in the future.
- ② Journal from the perspective of your inner child – this can help you to recognise unhelpful patterns in adult life and their origins. Then re-parent yourself. What did you need at the time do it – self love?
- ② Bring back the joys of childhood – get in touch with your playful side, make time for fun. Do something you always wanted to do as a child? Ride a rollercoaster, have a hamster? This will help to heal any childhood wounds.

Childhood activities are great too:

- Colouring/painting
- Family games – Monopoly
- Physical activities – Hula hooping, space hoppers etc.
- Eating sweets that you ate as a child
- Listening to a story

Don't forget to 'Leave the light' on for your inner child – help them to keep coming back