

When your shadow comes out to play:

Shadow work is a concept rooted in psychology, particularly in the theories of Carl Jung. It involves exploring and integrating the unconscious parts of ourselves that we tend to repress or deny. These parts, often referred to as the "shadow," can include negative traits, emotions, desires, and impulses that we find unacceptable or uncomfortable. The goal of shadow work is to bring these hidden aspects into conscious awareness, which can lead to greater self-understanding, healing, and personal growth.

Getting Triggered by Traits in Others

When you get triggered by someone who exhibits traits you fear being seen as or don't like about yourself, it often highlights a part of your shadow. Here's what typically happens:

1. **Projection:** You might project your own unwanted traits onto others. This means attributing qualities you dislike about yourself to another person, often reacting strongly to these traits in them.
2. **Emotional Reaction:** Being triggered can lead to strong emotional reactions such as anger, irritation, or discomfort. These reactions are signals that there's something within you that needs attention.
3. **Mirror Effect:** The traits you notice in others act as a mirror, reflecting back the parts of yourself you struggle to accept. This can be an opportunity for self-awareness and growth.

SHADOW INTEGRATION PROCESS

When you find yourself getting triggered, you can use the TFIO to work through it.

1. Triigger - Who is the person or what is the event that is triggering you?
2. Feeling - What is the feeling of the trigger? What is it like and where in your body?
3. Ideal Outcome - If the outcome of the situation went the way you wanted it to, what would that be?

For an in depth analysis to start integrating these shadow sides of you, please follow the steps below.

Step One



- If it is a person you are triggered by, are you able to describe this person in 3-4 words or phrases?
- What is "wrong" with being like that?
- What would happen in their life, or in the relationship you have with them, if they do not stop being that way?
- What would be the ultimate tragedy? Really be intense here with the description.
- What do you think happens to a person long-term if they continued being the 3-4 traits listed above?

Step Two



- In what ways do you try to not be like the person above?
- How would you describe yourself? Use three traits that make you not like the person above.
- How would you describe the opposite of the 3 Qualities you listed about yourself?

Step Three



- Do you think you avoid being like the person who triggered you because you are really afraid of being seen as those traits?
- What would be possible for you (or open up for you) if you did not fear being perceived as (insert 3 traits from trigger step one)?

Homework:

Next time this comes up, sit with the feeling of what is triggering you, do not rush to fix it or believe it is ultimate truth. When you try to fight your feeling, it will become louder. When you accept it, it can move through and out of you. Learning to become less reactive is a gift.