

# Stress Bytes Newsletter

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**"WHEN STRESS BITES, BITE BACK!"**

THE NEWSLETTER OF ANNETTE VAILLANCOURT, PH.D.  
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## What's in Your Shadow?

Ever wonder why people have a personality change at midlife, sometimes called a midlife crisis? Why does the mild mannered gentleman in your office suddenly quit his job and go off sailing around the world? Why does a formerly passive woman start speaking more assertively or even start expressing a n g e r ?

Carl Jung, a famous Swiss psychiatrist, said that we all have parts of ourselves that we disown, parts of our personalities that are hidden to us. This he called the Shadow. Most often aspects of our personality that are contained in the Shadow are ones we judge personally or as a society to be negative or undesirable. Often it is the opposite of how we see ourselves or how we'd like others to see us.

For example, if you are known as a patient person, almost saintly, impatience may be lurking in your Shadow. When that behavior appears in an abrupt and disruptive way, you might think, "I'm not myself today" and feel confused as to

why you were acting that way. You might feel contrite and vow never to act this way again, but unless you accept and acknowledge that this too is a part of your personality and learn to work with it, it might pop up again in unexpected w a y s .

Why? Shadow aspects insist on coming into consciousness, NOT to disrupt one's life, but to BALANCE it. It's almost as if the harder you try to deny these parts of yourself, the more they fight for inclusion in your life. The fear is that if we accept and acknowledge negative aspects of ourselves that our lives will become chaotic, our families and friendships ruined, and our self-esteem left in tatters.

The opposite is true. If we don't accept and acknowledge Shadow aspects, they will either run or ruin your life. There's a lot of power in these disowned aspect simply because they are repressed or outside our awareness, thus not under conscious control. Their power and energy can be harnessed for good when

we accept those parts of ourselves, bring them into consciousness, and use them judiciously. It's like adding more tools to our toolbox of life.

For example, if your Shadow contains anger aspects, those may come in handy when you feel an injustice had occurred and you need energy to fight for a resolution. The power to take action to right a wrong can be drawn from that angry aspect. If an injustice has

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**"Cinderella lived happily ever after until she had kids. After that she was too tired to know if she was happy or not."**

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## Shadow.... Cont'd from page 1

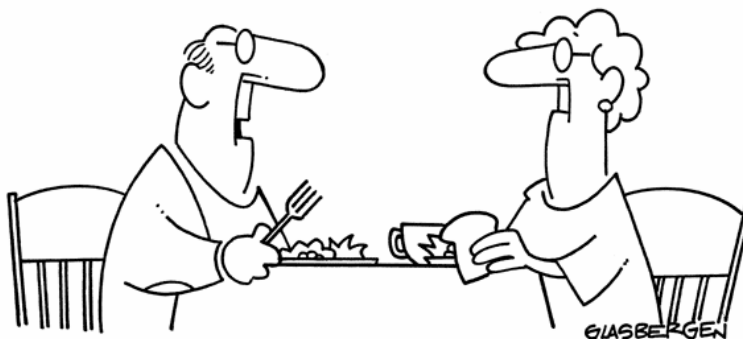
occurred and you cannot tap into that energy to use directly and positively, the consequences may be that you feel victimized and helpless to do anything about it, thus leading to depression or low self-esteem.

Also, Shadow aspects are what we tend to project onto other people. To get an idea of what might be in your Shadow, think about the behaviors or attitudes about "other people" that most annoys you or about which you are most judgmental. Do you "hate" passivity, dependence, self-righteousness, or opinionated people? What we can't stand in other people might be just the thing we're unaware of or are denying in ourselves. If we did acknowledge and accept that we too sometimes thought, felt, or acted these ways, we might not be so quick to judge and condemn those traits in others. Just as individual people do, entire nations can have their Shadow aspects too.

So, the "bad news" is we all contain the opposite aspects of our conscious personality in some form. The good news is as we mature and accept and acknowledge those parts of ourselves, we can integrate them into a more balanced personality and choose when and how to express them. It's a humbling experience to face and learn about your Shadow aspects, but ultimately empowering to integrate them into your life toolbox.

### SHADOW CHARACTERS IN TV, FILM AND LITERATURE

- LORD OF THE RINGS—GOLLUM, SAURON
- THE HEART OF DARKNESS BY JOSEPH CONRAD
- DR. JEKYL AND MR. HYDE BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON
- GLENN CLOSE'S CHARACTER IN "FATAL ATTRACTION"
- MACBETH
- DON JUAN
- PAUL NEWMAN CHARACTER IN "THE VERDICT"
- ROBERT DUVAL IN "THE GODFATHER" TRILOGY
- PATRICK STEWART AND IAN MCCLELLAN CHARACTERS IN "X-MEN"
- IAGO IN "OTHELLO"
- NURSE RATCHET IN "ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST"
- TONY SOPRANO FROM HBO'S "THE SOPRANOS"
- FAYE DUNNWAY CHARACTER IN "MOMMIE DEAREST"
- PETER FINCH CHARACTER IN "NETWORK"



**"If I could live my life over, I wouldn't change a thing, especially diapers."**

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## THE WOLVES WITHIN

*Author Unknown*

An old Grandfather, whose grandson came to him with anger at a schoolmate who had done him an injustice, said, "Let me tell you a story. I too, at times, have felt a great hate for those that have taken so much, with no sorrow for what they do. But hate wears you down, and does not hurt your enemy. It is like taking poison and wishing your enemy would die. I have struggled with these feelings many times."

He continued, "It is as if there are two wolves inside me; one is good and does no harm. He lives in harmony with all around him and does not take offense when no offense was intended. He will only fight when it is right to do so, and in the right way."

"But the other wolf, ah! He is full of anger. The littlest thing will set him into a fit of temper. He fights everyone, all the time, for no reason. He cannot think because his anger and hate are so great. It is hard to live with these two wolves inside me, for both of them try to dominate my spirit."

The boy looked intently into his Grandfather's eyes and asked, "Which one wins, Grandfather?"  
The Grandfather solemnly said, "The one I feed."

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### ***The Stress Doctor is IN!!!***

IF NATIONS COULD  
OVERCOME THE MUTUAL  
FEAR AND DISTRUST WHOSE  
SOMBER SHADOW IS NOW  
THROWN OVER THE WORLD,  
AND COULD MEET WITH  
CONFIDENCE AND GOOD  
WILL TO SETTLE THEIR  
POSSIBLE DIFFERENCES,  
THEY WOULD EASILY BE  
ABLE TO ESTABLISH A  
LASTING PEACE.

—FRIDJOF NANSEN

THE ROAD TO TRUTH IS  
LONG, AND LINED THE  
ENTIRE WAY WITH  
ANNOYING BASTARDS. —  
ALEXANDER JABLOKOV

IF ONE SPEAKS OR ACTS  
WITH A CRUEL MIND,  
MISERY FOLLOWS, AS THE  
CART FOLLOWS THE  
HORSE... IF ONE SPEAKS OR  
ACTS WITH A PURE MIND,  
HAPPINESS FOLLOWS, AS A  
SHADOW FOLLOWS ITS  
SOURCE. —THE DHAMMAPADA



**“I’ll be home late. I’ve joined a support group for women who need a reason to stay at work until the house is picked up and dinner is on the table.”**

**ANNETTE VAILLANCOURT, PH.D.**

LICENSED CLINICAL PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR

- 15 years experience gently helping individuals, couples and groups resolve personal problems, manage stress, and reach their full potential.
- Specializing in Women’s Issues and Stress Management

Call **(618) 549-5935** to set up an appointment

Visit our website at [www.GotStressGetHelp.com](http://www.GotStressGetHelp.com)

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### **CARL JUNG QUOTATIONS**

“Where love rules, there is no will to power, and where power predominates, love is lacking. The one is the shadow of the other.”

“Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves.”

“The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances: if there is any reaction, both are transformed.”

“We cannot change anything unless we accept it. Condemnation does not liberate, it oppresses.”