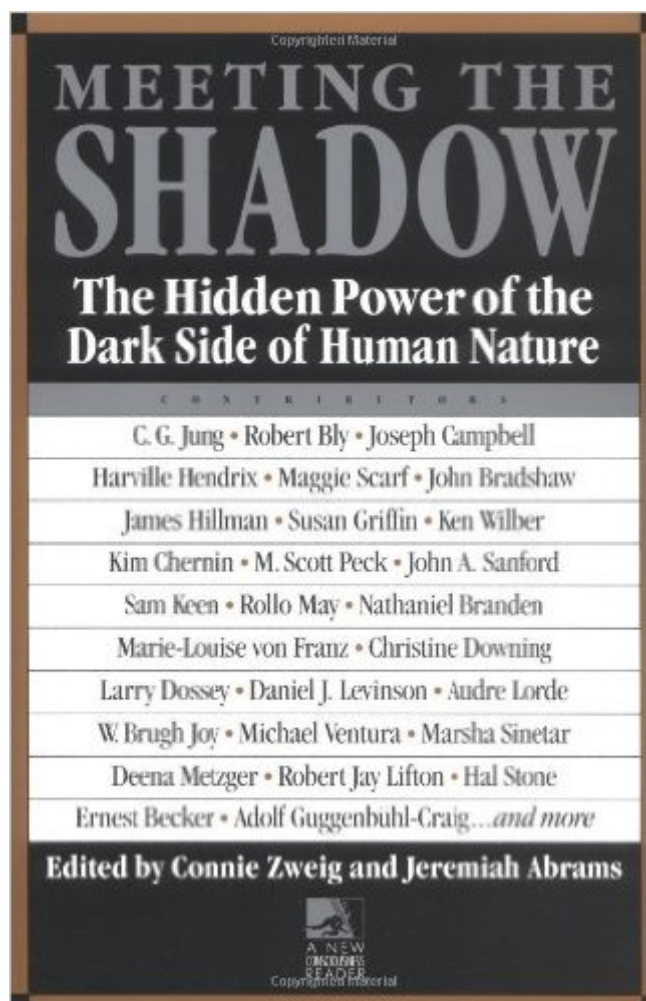


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# Meeting The Shadow: The Hidden Power Of The Dark Side Of Human Nature



## Synopsis

The author offers exploration of self and practical guidance dealing with the dark side of personality based on Jung's concept of "shadow," or the forbidden and unacceptable feelings and behaviors each of us experience.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This collection of 65 essays from a wide array of Jungian practitioners is designed to give us a window into the mysterious world that lives within each of us; the shadow. Each of these essays, in their own unique ways, throws the lid off of our own personal "Pandora's box" and brings us face to face with the disowned and despised parts of who we are: sexual urges, rage, resentment, arrogance, greed, envy; the list is endless. Jung was once quoted as saying "I would rather be whole than to be good." I did not understand this statement until I read this book. Now that I have begun my own "shadow work," the picture is becoming clearer, and clearer.

Editors Connie Zweig and Jeremiah Abrams deserve congratulations for constructing this remarkable collection of illuminating looks at the hitherto inscrutable human "shadow." This substantial volume brings together extremely diverse perspectives on this eternally timely topic, citing brief but pithy passages from luminaries like Carl Jung, James Hillman, M.L. von Franz, John Sanford; Harville Hendrix, Marsha Sinetar, Larry Dossey, W.Brugh Joy; M.Scott Peck, Rollo May, Ernest Becker, Sam Keen, Robert Jay Lifton; Ken Wilber, Robert Bly, Joseph Campbell and John

Bradshaw. There is much distilled wisdom in these pages, organized in a meaningful, coherent, even entertaining fashion--with intelligent commentary by the editors, who scatter lovely little nuggets from Rilke, Nietzsche, Rumi, Shakespeare, Lao-Tzu, Blake, Dante and others throughout. Some reviewers have called this highly readable book the "I Ching" of the shadow, and for good reason: readers, even those new to the notion of the "shadow," can pick it up, open to practically any page, and discover something valuable and essential to understanding themselves and others more deeply and more compassionately. In short, this compendium is a terrific introduction to Jung's archetypal concept of the Shadow, and I, for one, was honored to contribute to it.

The editors have collected diverse opinions that point to the power, value and wisdom alive within the parts of ourselves that we most often deny, detest and fear. Readers just entering into awareness of the shadow side of personality and the worth of honoring rather than repressing it will find many valuable ideas that challenge traditional notions of 'good' and 'evil'. More experienced seekers on the paths of Shadow wisdom may find thoughts that confirm or deepen insights to unlock even greater personal power and creativity. The book is arranged into short essays, some of which come from various journals or other books. This approach allows the reader to gain little tastes of various authors, which can lead to further exploration. I found this overview to be quite helpful. Sections introduce the concept of the Shadow; its developmental origins; somatic and sexual expressions; Shadow manifestations in relationships, work and society; deeply engrossing sections about Shadow energy in religion and psychology; techniques for coming to recognize and learn from the Shadow, etc. There is much wisdom in these pages, a wisdom which does not flinch from what betrays us, does not condemn what holds our secrets and shames, does not hold false promises or quick fixes for a topic that is central to personal and societal evolution. While most people will not show an interest or ability to recognize the Work that this topic points toward, those with the eyes, stomach and heart to accept a truly polished mirror will learn much about themselves.

This is a reader; brief articles taken from other sources, on the subject of the shadow. It is a good place to start if you are new to this subject, but it is by no means comprehensive. It is quite repetitive; almost every article/essay begins with the definition of the shadow, and several themes are continually restated throughout. As another reviewer said, the book is dated, what with mentions of US-Russian relations, but don't let that stop you; you need not read every article in order to benefit from the messages within. Instead, read articles selectively, according to your own personal needs.

This is a fairly thorough book explaining the shadow for people with some understanding of Western thinking. (Your Shadow is the bits of you that are fairly close to the surface but which you are not aware of, so they tend to ambush you 'from behind'). It's a bit thin on non western views, but approaches the matter of the shadow from enough angles to be easily translatable into other cultures, and to enable one to translate things from other cultures to be understandable from a western point of view. I found it very useful in a multitude of ways. Reading about my shadow helped me to see it and myself much more clearly and also to understand things about other people's behaviour that had been troubling me. The articles range from almost chewing gum to extremely profound, and all of them are useful or interesting.

For many years, I have been teaching and presenting workshops on the "Shadow", and then along came this magnificent book, and I was able to revise and make more meaningful my presentations. It's the most thorough work on the subject I have ever come across.

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