

Studying Jung's *Red Book* helps us all focus on the tremendously important issues of meaning and meaninglessness, the Spirit of the Times, and the Spirit of the Depths, and where we are in our lives today and tomorrow.

Jung's *Red Book* is the powerful document of one man's midlife crisis and his struggle to understand what he had excluded from his consciousness for most of his professional life. What Jung encountered in his exploration of “the unconscious” and recorded in word and image in the *Red Book* provided the experiential material for much of his scholarly study and publication from about 1930 until the end of his life.



But what does that have to do with an individual today? Why should anyone care?

We live in a culture that is terribly unbalanced. In many ways, the cultural ideal is the highly efficient machine. Efficiency and utility are undoubtedly important. But when efficiency and utility occupy almost all of our waking attention we are essentially cut off from conscious connection with all that acts within us outside of our habitual consciousness. This was Jung's situation in 1912. His midlife crisis consisted, in part, of the loss of his professional colleagues. The other part of his midlife crisis was his realization that, to paraphrase the Bible, he had gained the entire (professional) world, but indeed lost his soul --

“At that time, in the fortieth year of my life, I had achieved everything that I had wished for myself. I had achieved honor, power, wealth, knowledge, and every human happiness. Then my desire for the increase of these trappings ceased, the desire ebbed from me and horror overcame me. . . . [U]nbearable inner longing [drove me on] and I said “My soul, where are you? Do you hear me? Speak, I call you. Are you there? After long years of wandering I have come to you again.”
(Red Book Readers Edition, p. 127)

“Soul” is a frustrating word. It can mean different things to different people. In Jung's context, I think it means something like “living only in one's head, in one's rationality, in one's intellect.”

Jung writes: “He whose desire turns away from the outer things, reaches the place of the soul. If he does not find the soul, the horror of emptiness will overcome him, and fear will drive him with a whip lashing time and again in a desperate endeavor and a blind desire for the hollow things of the world.”
Red Book Readers Edition, p. 129) Now, a century later, Jung's words hold true for many who experience that horror.

If exploring these issues of “Soul” interests you, I invite you to join me for this 6-session journey through Dr. Jung’s work. This man spent nearly 16 years of his life in this amazing self-exploration. Don’t miss out on the immense benefit you can gain by studying this work.