

Unconscious Drives Reimagined

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Abstract

Freud's early concepts about the unconscious are presented along with his later definition of the id as a portion of the larger unconscious. He described this id as holding genetically determined drives that comprise the fusion of two primal forces, Eros and destructiveness. Influenced by Freud and Jung's mythological analogies, the author identifies three unconscious drives (rather than two), which she refers to as "motivators" to distinguish them from Freud's drives. In the spirit of Jung, these unconscious motivators are imagined as Olympian goddesses named Survia, Passia, and Transcia. Each may affect a person independently or in combinations by stimulating particular feelings and thoughts that may surface in any ego state. Since motivators have divergent aims and functions, inner conflicts can occur if they do not take turns influencing a person. For better or worse, the conscious Parent or Adult ego states can sometimes control or steer behaviors stimulated by one or more of the motivators.

When we first meet Lady Macbeth in Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*, she is fully self-possessed and coherent. She continues to be so even when she encourages her husband to kill King Duncan and then she herself covers up the murder. However, by Act V she is shown as sleepwalking, disturbed, and incoherent. She rubs her hands and cries out irrationally, to the bafflement of her gentlewoman and doctor, the latter of whom has presumably been called in to treat her distraught condition: "Out, damned spot! out, I say! . . . What, will these hands ne'er come clean?" she wails. Eventually, the doctor says, "This disease is beyond my practice. . . . More needs she the divine than the physician" (Shakespeare, 1623/2008, Act V, Scene 1).

Long before Freud, and certainly in Shakespeare's time, audiences knew about hallucina-

tions and that strange influences from a mysterious source could affect even a rational person. In antiquity these were believed due to the influence of various Olympic gods and goddesses. In Europe, until the eighteenth century, such manifestations were considered to be beyond medical practice, as reflected in the aforementioned quote from Shakespeare. They might be inspired by God, as was the case for Joan of Arc, or by the devil, and they might require exorcism. By the nineteenth century, they were recognized as symptoms of psychosomatic diseases for which neurologists like Dr. Sigmund Freud used various panaceas, including hypnosis, which he learned from Dr. Jean-Martin Charcot in France. However, the general study of mental phenomena was left to philosophers.

Freud Marches In

A new era in psychology dawned in the twentieth century with the publication, in German, of Freud's (1900/1925) book *Die Traumdeutung* [The Interpretation of Dreams]. It was the first in his large output of writings over the next 39 years. With it Freud threw his medical and scientific hat into a ring previously reserved for philosophers or those religious teachers who studied ethics, reason, and the human "psyche" or soul. However, initially the book was dismissed or reviewed critically in scientific publications. It took 8 years to sell the 600 copies printed and 10 years for a second edition to come out (Jones, 1953/1961, p. 229).

The main thesis of Freud's book, which eventually became a bible for psychoanalysts, is that we all function with a hitherto unacknowledged mental system. Freud called this system "the Unconscious" and described how it only manifests its processes indirectly through dreams. He wrote, "The physician and the philosopher can only come together if they both recognize that the term 'unconscious psychological processes' is [an] appropriate and justified expression" (Freud, 1900/1961b, p. 611). This challenged the prevailing Cartesian belief of scientists (in

accordance with Descartes' dictum "Je pense donc je suis" [I think therefore I am]) that thoughts and the recognition of feelings can only exist consciously.

Much of *Die Traumdeutung* is devoted to Freud's claim that wishes that are unacceptable to the person's conscious self are censored and prevented from manifesting themselves consciously because they are of a sexual or destructive nature. As a result, they are "repressed." As he put it, "The Unconscious purpose requires the exhibiting [of the wishes] to proceed; the censorship demands that it shall be stopped" (Freud, 1900/1961b, p. 246). As a result, the person may develop harmful neurotic symptoms from which he or she needs relief. Such relief may be obtained by identifying and bringing to consciousness the person's secret wishes and her or his inner conflict about revealing them.

Some of Freud's early work with hypnosis had already seemed to indicate that what he later called "repressed" wishes had a sexual component. However, he was dissatisfied with the ultimate results of hypnosis. He saw "the Unconscious" as the "instigating agent of dreams no less than neurotic symptoms" (Freud, 1900/1961b, p. 592) and thus decided that the analysis of dreams was "*the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind*" (p. 608).

Essentially, in *Die Traumdeutung*, Freud defined the "Unconscious" as the all-encompassing mental system out of which emerges the conscious system and the preconscious system, the latter of which serves as a bridge to a small part of the unconscious. Thus, he actually described two unconscious systems or "spheres": a huge unconscious territory and a smaller unconscious system that connects to the preconscious, which, in turn, connects to the "Conscious." It is this smaller unconscious system that contains formulated and unformulated wishes, thoughts, and emotions that may have sought to emerge into consciousness during childhood (or later) but were censored for fear of retaliation or because of shame or guilt. Therefore, they were repressed or thrown back into the unconscious, where they continue to exist in particular unconscious memory systems (essentially, what we now call "implicit memory").

Yet they continue to press for expression by means of neurotic symptoms or in disguised form through dreams. Thus, the word "unconscious" is a noun that connotes one of two mental systems, but it can also be used as an adjective that applies to thoughts and feelings churning in either of the unconscious systems because they have not (or cannot be) moved to consciousness.

Freud gave credit to a Dr. Th. Lipps for the term "Unconscious" by referring to the latter's 1883 book *Grundtatsachen des Seelenlebens* [Basic Facts about the Life of the Soul] and to Lipps's 1897 presentation at the third psychology conference in Munich. Freud (1900/1961b) wrote:

The problem of the Unconscious in psychology is, in the forcible words of Lipps, "less a psychological problem than the problem of psychology." . . . It is essential to abandon the overvaluation of the property of being conscious before it becomes possible to form any correct view of the origin of what is mental. In Lipps's words, "the unconscious must be assumed to be the general basis of psychical life." The Unconscious is the larger sphere, which includes within it the smaller sphere of the conscious. The Unconscious is the true psychical reality; *in its innermost nature it is as much unknown to us as the reality of the external world and it is as incompletely presented by the data of consciousness as is the external world by the communications of our sense organs* (p. 611)

Freud (1900/1961b) also made sure to specify that

what I describe [as the Unconscious] is not the same as the Unconscious of the philosophers or even of Lipps. By them the term is used merely to indicate a contrast with the conscious. . . . [My] new discovery . . . lies in the fact that the Unconscious (that is, the psychical) is found as a function of two separate systems and that this is the case in normal as well as in pathological life. . . . In our sense: one of them, which we term the Ucs. (Unconscious), is inadmissible to consciousness, while we term the other Pcs. (preconscious)

because its excitations . . . are able to reach consciousness. The fact that excitations, in order to reach consciousness, must pass through a fixed series or hierarchy of agencies has enabled us to create a spatial analogy . . . [about] the relations of the two systems and to consciousness. . . . The Pcs. stands like a screen between the system Ucs. and consciousness. Pcs. also controls access to the power of voluntary movement and has a mobile cathectic energy. (p. 614)

About Dream Analysis

To illustrate his conviction that dream analysis could unlock the profound secrets of unconscious functions, and thus of human nature, Freud offered numerous analyses of dreams in *Die Traumdeutung*, frequently using descriptions of his own dreams.

Apparently, as a physician, Freud's original intention was to use his investigative curiosity to radically improve treatment outcomes. However, it seems to me that in the course of his work over many years, he became carried away by the excitement of his discoveries, so the researcher-about-human-nature in him became paramount. He used his genius to keep improving his theories, writing extensively. For this we owe him enormous gratitude and respect.

However, while Freud's explorations about the unconscious of his patients (and his own) may have initially led him to focus primarily on dream analysis, it was not necessarily the best method for curing or treating individual patients because it meant that patients had to be seen "interminably" to unravel dreams. There are indications that he himself became disenchanted with the necessity of seeing patients extensively (Jones, 1953/1961). Toward the end of his life, he even titled one of his essays *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* (Freud, 1937/1964).

Nevertheless, it seems to me that too many subsequent psychoanalysts of lesser talent blindly fell into the trap of depending on excessive dream analysis, necessitating innumerable treatment sessions, exhaustingly following leads offered by associations to images and thoughts. This was often to the detriment of

actually helping their patients deal with their problems, until Berne and a few others sought and found other ways to treat patients without denying the value of Freud's discoveries.

Id, Ego, and Superego

In the course of numerous writings after his first book, Freud developed his concept of personality as consisting of three parts: id, ego, and superego. He indicated that both the id and the superego exist in the unconscious and, further, "in spite of their fundamental differences, the Id and the Super-ego . . . both represent the influences of the past—(the Id the influence of heredity, the Superego essentially the influence of what is taken over from other people)" (Freud, 1940/1949, p. 17). Here, the ego is described as developed "out of the cortical layer of the Id," but "adapted for the reception and exclusion of stimuli" and "in direct contact with the outside world. . . . Its psychological function consists in raising the processes in the Id to a higher dynamic level. . . . Its constructive function consists in interposing, between the demand made by an instinct and the action that satisfies it, an intellectual activity The reality principle. . . . The ego is governed by considerations of safety" (p. 110-111).

After having further defined the *Ego and the Id* in detail in a book of that name, Freud (1923/1961a) seemed to stop emphasizing distinctions between the larger and smaller unconscious spheres described in his first book. He continued to use the term "Unconscious" primarily for the vast unknown area originally described as the larger one. Thus, nowadays, many authors tend to refer to the unconscious as synonymous with the id or vice versa. Although the id is only a portion of the unconscious, in ordinary language, we are likely to use the word "unconscious" as an adjective in referring to "unconscious" feelings or urges, which may or may not have been repressed but are actually primarily related only to the id.

Definitions by Berne

In *A Layman's Guide to Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis*, Eric Berne (1947/1957) offered a graphic definition of Freud's concept of the unconscious that makes it easier to imagine it.

“First of all, the unconscious is an energy center, where the Id instincts begin to take form” (p. 103). “[Also,] the unconscious, then, is . . . a part of the mind where thoughts are ‘manufactured,’ but the way the unconscious works is different from the way the conscious mind works” (pp. 104-105). Berne illustrated these definitions by comparing the unconscious to an automobile factory “full of dynamos which supply energy to run the machines. . . . [But just as] one would never be able to guess what an automobile looked like by looking at a carburetor. . . . the individual cannot guess how his thoughts are made by watching them go through his mind” (p. 103). “Secondly, the unconscious is a region where feelings are stored. This is not ‘dead storage,’ but very much ‘live’ storage, more like a zoo than a warehouse, for all the feelings stored in the unconscious are forever trying to get out. Feelings are stored by being attached to images, just as electricity is stored by being condensed in something” (p. 105).

Not surprisingly, after Berne developed transactional analysis and focused exclusively on subsystems of the ego, he tended to avoid references to the unconscious and the id. Instead, he focused on preconscious thoughts and feelings that an individual does not acknowledge, as in game theory, with the implication that it is possible to become aware of and name them. However, Berne implicitly included the idea of a psychosomatic unconscious in transactional analysis by listing psychological hungers, and he obviously accepted Freud’s idea of an in-born instinct for self-preservation by emphasizing our need for strokes as messages of reassurance against death.

Drives

Freud’s (1940/1949) last book, *Abriss der Psychoanalyse* [An Outline of Psychoanalysis], was written in German in London in July 1938 and published posthumously in 1940. By the time he wrote it, psychoanalysis had gained enormous recognition in the United States, England, and France, but Freud himself was close to death from cancer and also a refugee from the Nazis (Jones, 1953/1961). In contrast to his first book, in which he almost apologetically

referred to his “crude hypothesis” of the “mental apparatus,” in 1938 he confidently referred to the “doctrines” of psychoanalysis. He no longer feared being tarred as a philosopher when he described mental life as “the function of an apparatus to which we ascribe the characteristics of being extended into space and of being made up of several portions” (p. 14).

Now he focused on one of these “portions,” namely “the obscure Id, . . . the core of our being, . . . the oldest of mental provinces or agencies.” Here he also indicated that drives are within the “obscure Id” by stating that the id “contains everything that is inherited, that is present at birth . . . above all, therefore, the Drives, which originate in the somatic organization, and which find their first mental expression in the Id in forms unknown to us” (Freud, 1940/1949, p. 14).

Unfortunately, in English translations of Freud’s works, the German word “Trieb” [“drive”] is translated as “instinct,” whereas Freud (1915/1957) himself wrote a whole article differentiating instincts from drives. Therefore, I use the word “instinct” wherever Freud wrote “instinct” and “drive” wherever Freud wrote “Trieb,” regardless of the published translations.

In this, his last book, Freud (1940/1949) also summarized his latest definitions and his names for “primal forces” in drives by stating, “Drives are themselves composed of fusions of two primal forces, Eros and Destructiveness” (p. 108).

This definition of drives corresponds to the revision of his earlier definitions of drives due to his reactions to the brutality of World War I and the conviction he arrived at that there is a death urge in humans that is transformed into destructiveness. He had first announced his revised view in a short essay entitled *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (Freud, 1920/1955). Freud’s emphasis on death (transformed into destructiveness) caused much controversy in the psychoanalytic movement. Regardless of whether we refer to an earlier definition of drives or a later one, let us note that Freud consistently saw them as dangerous and potentially destabilizing. He wrote,

The one and only endeavor of these drives is toward satisfaction . . . but an immediate

satisfaction would often enough lead to perilous conflicts with the outside world and to extinction. The Id knows no precautions to ensure survival and no anxiety. . . . The processes which are possible in and between the assumed mental elements in the Id (the primary process) differ largely from those which are familiar to us by conscious perception in our intellectual and emotional life. . . . The Id has its own world of perception. . . . Coenesthetic feelings and feelings of pleasure-unpleasure govern events in the Id with despotic force. (Freud, 1940/1949, pp. 108-109)

Jung and the Collective Unconscious

With Freud's reference to the "primeval phylogenetic past" in the id, itself embedded in the larger unconscious, we can make a transition to Jung's concept of the "collective unconscious." Both Freud and Jung clearly anticipated modern neurobiology, which emphasizes the role of transmitted and transformed genes. However, Jung also relied more than Freud on ancient mythology, in which unconscious processes and conflicts are personified and dramatized in elaborate stories.

Jung distinguished between two aspects of the unconscious:

1. The personal unconscious (which resembles Freud's early description of the small sphere within the large sphere), to which Jung added the concept of complexes for webs of ideas and emotions that are repressed from consciousness
2. The collective unconscious, an additional deeper layer of personality that contains what Jung (1922/1966) called "archetypes" (pp. 80-82). These are inherited tendencies of psychic functioning, some of which may predate the development of language and can thus at best only be apprehended through symbols

Jung wrote:

In contrast to the personal unconscious . . . the collective unconscious shows no tendency to become conscious under normal conditions. . . . It is no more than a potentiality handed down to us from primordial times in the specific form of mnemonic

images (archetypes) or inherited in the anatomical structure of the brain. There are no inborn ideas, but there are inborn possibilities. . . . It is like a deeply graven river-bed in the psyche. . . . When an archetypal situation occurs we suddenly feel . . . as though transported, or caught up by an overwhelming power. . . . The impact of an archetype, whether it takes the form of immediate experience or is expressed through the spoken word . . . summons up a voice that is stronger than our own. (pp. 80-82)

My Theoretical Views

Having briefly presented some of Freud's and Jung's concepts about unconscious forces, quite immodestly, I now want to add some of mine, which, of course, were influenced by the writings of these mental giants and others as well as my experience as a therapist and workshop presenter. Essentially, I proceed from Freud's and Jung's statements that we operate with mysterious unconscious processes that are still difficult, if not impossible, to describe precisely. Until such time as much more is learned by means of neurobiology and brain imaging, we must continue to resort to hypotheses and metaphors about how our "psychic energy" operates. Sometimes, we can also be inspired by ancient Greek drama, as was Freud, or by the mythology of numerous ancient cultures, as frequently illustrated by Jung. After all, they carry some of the wisdom of the ages!

From my observations of clients and of myself, I have found that three distinct unconscious drives—rather than only two—seem to pull us in different directions. Just because we occasionally experience alternations of feelings or functions, we do not necessarily need to posit a dualistic unconscious system, as Freud seemed to believe. Rather, by positing three drives of comparable power that take turns influencing us, but where two might clash or ally against a third, we can see how each of us can experience a multiplicity of conflictual feelings at times or, then again, sometimes a sense of resolution and power. Inner comfort may be maintained for a while, and then it may be followed by mental discomfort, and so on. All of

this occurs in a constant flow, although perhaps interrupted by feeling blocked and wanting help to get out of conflict or confusion (English, 1998). My descriptions and definitions of the functions of these three drives differ significantly from Freud's, particularly since I do not see their operation as eminently dangerous as he did. Rather, there are many positive aspects, although they can also cause harm and conflicts, as I will describe later. To avoid confusing my descriptions of psychosomatic drives with Freud's definitions, I refer to them as "motivators," following a suggestion from James Allen.

To picture them and their operation, I am influenced by Jung, and thus I personify them the way the ancient Greeks did. They believed that certain gods and goddesses on Olympus affected them whenever they were baffled by the impact of their unconscious processes on their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Accordingly, I imagine our unconscious drives (or motivators) as three goddesses, dancing high above us. Each has a wand with which she can surreptitiously affect the unconscious impulses, feelings, and thoughts as well as behaviors of mortals like us. However, we each have our own bodies with physical, emotional, and mental aptitudes, including language and a functional ego with preconscious ego states and conscious functions (English, 1998).

Each goddess has her own particular interests and goals, determined by Zeus, or, if you will, by the mysterious processes of spotty evolution. Also, each goddess can influence mortals in accordance with her interests, although each may differ or be in opposition to those of one or both of the other goddesses. Therefore, conflicts and perpetual changes of alliances can occur among the goddesses, with one opposing another and with the third one siding one way or another. As a result, seemingly unexplainable changes of mood and function can occur in a person being touched by one wand and then another one pointing in a different direction. However, usually the goddesses take turns influencing us, so most of the time mortals manage to maintain emotional balance and run their lives in accordance with their conscious and preconscious purposes, just the way most

of the time we vary our food intelligently and do not have to concern ourselves too much with the details of our digestive processes unless we feel particular discomfort.

I use the word "attributes" for the particular kinds of feelings, thoughts, or behaviors that are provoked or encouraged by a particular goddess, with corresponding somatic or behavioral manifestations, as I will be illustrating. These manifestations can be helpful or harmful according to circumstances, for Olympian goddesses are indifferent to social or conventional values. These are in the province of an individual's conscious ego. Here, then, are the drives, or motivators, now personified as influential goddesses, along with some of their attributes and manifestations.

1. *For individual survival: "Survia."* This motivator is concerned with the survival of the individual, at whatever cost. She is quite similar to the drive for self-preservation described by Freud in his early writings. For instance, hunger is one of her attributes, generating the pressure to seek food or earn the means to obtain food. Eating would be the corresponding manifestation. Pain is also one of her attributes; it motivates attention to the body, when needed (as does fear), as a way to seek protection. In short, *Survia* supports whatever may promote the survival of the individual, whether pleasant or unpleasant. This may include attending to health or transacting for strokes, including behaviors or attitudes that may be exaggerations or distortions of basic attributes (e.g., greed or competitiveness).

2. *For survival of the species: "Passia."* This motivator is dedicated to creativity, including discoveries, exploration, inventions, and, yes, pro-creation, all of which are important to the survival of our species. According to Freud, she would represent sexuality. This might be true for all other animals, since the survival of their species can be maintained only by pro-creation. However, in the course of human evolution, other attributes became equally, if not more important for the survival of our species. For instance, the attributes of curiosity, playfulness, creativity, enthusiasm, and risk taking have helped our species explore, discover, and create, thanks to which we have survived

instead of becoming extinct, devoured by more powerful animals. These attributes cannot simply be dismissed as sublimations of sexual urges, although sexuality in all its forms and manifestations, including concern for future generations, remains an important attribute for Passia. Without all the contributions from individuals and groups, some of whom gave their entire lives to projects that helped other humans to prosper, our species would not have survived. In addition, at those times when someone is “carried away” to creative or risk-taking activity by Passia, he or she is impervious to strokes, disdains social conventions, and may seem quite ruthless and insensitive to others. As a result, this motivator often enters into conflict with Survia, who becomes alarmed at her rashness.

3. *For transcendence beyond daily reality: “Transcia.”* This motivator is concerned with detaching us from worldly cares, helping us to let go, relax, and sleep instead of constantly being caught up in action. Originally, I named this goddess “Quiessa,” for quietude, peacefulness, relaxation, even passivity, all of which are attributes of this drive, as is the ability to sleep. However, unquestionably, oceanic, out of body, or spiritual experiences must be included as attributes of this motivator, hence the new name. She, also, may enter into conflict with either one of the two other goddesses or an alliance with one against another. However, sometimes when Survia and Passia fight, Transcia may intervene and bring on peacefulness, for instance, when a person turns to meditation or prayer on experiencing inner conflict. It is not accurate to equate Transcia with Freud’s death drive and his views about reactive destructiveness, although her attributes can be essential for sick or aged persons when they need to reach a peaceful death.

Two Exceptional Attributes

Love and aggressiveness are two categories of feelings or behaviors that were of particular concern to Freud. Indeed, they are worthy of special attention, for they can pertain to all three drives, although they manifest differently for each. Specifically, under Survia, love is dependent or controlling and aggression is either to obtain the means of survival, or territorial, or

defensive. Under Passia, love is passionate, sometimes obsessive, sometimes altruistic, protective, and generous; aggression may occur for the sake of freedom and/or to pursue goals such as discoveries. Aggression can also be spontaneous, as when a child runs or plays. Under Transcia, love can be ecstatic or broadly encompassing; aggression would be passive-aggressive or incidental, as in the process of motion.

Inner Conflicts and Repression

As you can imagine from my descriptions of the different unconscious goals, attributes, and manifestations of our three motivators or goddesses, it is obvious that their differences can cause us inner conflict and indecision. So, at times, we may experience an inner tug-of-war, mysterious emotional discomfort or erratic function, or feelings of frustration and hopelessness. Then, eventually, we may feel a sense of relief or, at other times, be surprised by sudden feelings of elation, joy, power, even invincibility, or, afterward, peacefulness.

Although nowadays indications of sexuality are not necessarily feared by parents as they were in the past, some such manifestations—or of other “Passia” attributes such as exuberance, playfulness, jealousy, or curiosity—may have been repressed during childhood. Also, nowadays, many lively children are unnecessarily medicated if they seem too unruly, and appropriate outlets for Passia may be blocked in ways similar to the sexual repression of Freud’s time, causing strange inner discomfort or various manifestations of symptoms calling for therapy.

How Our Goddesses Can Affect Us

Although always there, just like their counterparts on Olympus, our goddesses do not necessarily affect us all of the time. Often they may stay in the background, in the vast realm of Elysian fields that correspond to the unconscious, or one or another may come forward and wave her wand at a mortal and then retreat. To give you a sense of how they may relay each other, but then perhaps enter in conflict before moving away again, let us pretend they are taking an interest in Ivan, a pretty normal working man, on a particular day.

The alarm clock awakens Ivan in the morning. Survia pulls him out of deep sleep (supervised by Transcia) and a fanciful dream (from Passia). Reluctantly, Transcia retreats to the background. Passia still lingers as Ivan continues thinking about his dream while he gets dressed. Survia pushes Passia away as Ivan discovers he is hungry and now fears he will be late. He wolfs down breakfast and rushes to take the suburban train; he cannot afford to miss it! Relief! Transcia comes on as he flops into a seat on the train. Mercifully, he looks forward to 45 minutes of peace on the train. He is a talented musician, but that does not put bread on the table. He is heading for his job on an assembly line, quite routine. At least on the train Passia may return, briefly, as he softly hums a tune in rhythm with the train. Survia retreats as Ivan imagines playing the tune on his guitar, but all too soon he arrives at his destination. Both Passia and Transcia are chased away by Survia as Ivan concentrates on checking in at the factory and settling into work. Passia attempts to return but leaves soon as Survia reminds Ivan that he must pay attention or his hand will get mangled in the machine on which he is working. He calls on Transcia, briefly, breathing deeply, to chase away angry feelings about his situation, now stimulated by Passia. Why is he doing this instead of playing the tune that is trying to take shape in his mind? How he would love to punch that supervisor in the nose! No, says Survia, calling on his conscious ego. Ivan uses all the strength of his Adult ego to banish Passia and Transcia back to the unconscious, reminding himself that he needs this job in these difficult times. He briefly allows himself an inner Child/Parent dialogue; his Parent gives his Child some strokes for behaving himself, promising that he can get back to his guitar this evening . . . the weekend is coming soon . . . maybe, maybe . . . oops! Survia is vigilant, pushing Passia and Transcia away. Pay attention! Well, maybe, maybe later. Hope and fantasy spring eternal, helpfully for some, harmfully for others.

On a Long-term Basis

Each of us tends to have one favorite goddess who comes on most often or that we call

forth at times of crisis. Therefore, she determines important aspects of our character. Her attributes have priority over those of other goddesses, so she is likely to guide our major decisions, our goals, and the enactment of our positive life script.

The brief example just described does not tell us enough about Ivan to evaluate whether, for instance, Passia is a favorite. If that were the case, then freedom to create artistically may gain priority and Ivan may sacrifice material comfort, perhaps even a close relationship and the strokes it brings, to pursue his dream of being a full-time musician. Or perhaps Survia is his favorite, so that keeping a job, perhaps just focusing on improving his job prospects and settling down, may take precedence over artistic freedom. Or Transcia may be the favorite; Ivan may quit working for a loose lifestyle that may allow freedom for transforming spiritual experiences.

Uses of the Theory

Having taught this material for years (English, 1998, 2001, 2003, 2005; English & Pitschetsrieder, 1996), I have found that familiarity with the operation of unconscious motivators and the ability to distinguish among them through their attributes has proven to be helpful to therapists and counselors working with individuals and couples as well as in career counseling (English, 2001) and education (Pierre, 2007).

Knowledge of the theory combines well with the practice of cognitive transactional analysis in every field because all manifestations of unconscious attributes are channeled through our functional ego states. Thus, just as it is helpful to recognize ego states, it can be helpful in dealing with conflict or needed changes and decisions to use clues gained from manifestations of particular attributes to figure out which unconscious motivators may be operating or sabotaging needed change at a given time in order to support a client's Adult ego state in effecting change.

In Closing

According to whichever goddess happens to inspire me, I may say:

From Survia: Take care! Here's to good health!

From Passia: Have fun! Enjoy! Here's to happiness!

From Transcia: Take it easy! Peace!

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