

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

Module I: Individuation and Vocation—Closing the Gaps



The First and Second Halves of Life

- Does this theory of the two halves of life resonate with you?
- In what ways has your second half of life (if you are in it) been different from the first half of life?
- Do you consider your vocation to be your individuation, to be your movement toward a less divided life, toward wholeness?
- In what ways does your work in the world support your individuation? In what ways does it impede your individuation?
- Was there a time in your life when you realized your vocational ladder was up the wrong wall? What did you do about this realization, if anything?
- How do you define “growing up”? How grown up do you think you are? In what areas or in which ways would you like to “finally, really” grow up? What would that look like to you?

Real Versus Ideal Self

- Where do you see the gaps between your real self and your ideal self?
- Which aspects of your ideal self cause you the most difficulty, the most anxiety, when you are not living in accordance with them?
- Have you or do you have work in the world that allows you to express your real self? If not, what aspects of your real self have you had to leave behind or hide? What might work look like that keeps it/you real?
- Growing up, what did your father’s ideal child look like? In what ways did you become that child? In what ways did you fall short? And how are you carrying that ideal self forward in your work in the world now?
- Growing up, what did your mother’s ideal child look like? In what ways did you become that child? In what ways did you fall short? And how are you carrying that ideal self forward in your work in the world now?

Becoming Yourself

- May Sarton has such a wonderful poem title—“Now I Become Myself.” When in your life have you felt most like yourself? What were you doing then? What archetypes were you living or expressing?

Learning From Our Parents

- What did your mother teach you—explicitly (she directly told you) or implicitly (you learned by her example)—about work/vocation?
- What did your father teach you—explicitly or implicitly— about work/vocation?
- What messages did your parents give you, consciously or unconsciously, about who you were and what you could do?
- What messages did your parents give you, consciously or unconsciously, about who you **weren't** and what you **couldn't** do?

Fulfilling Our Parents' Needs

- What did your father need you to be or become?
- What did your mother need you to be or become?
- What did your father need you **not** to be or become?
- What did your mother need you **not** to be or become?

Our Parents' Unlived Lives

- What is/was your mother's unlived life? How might you have been affected by this? Are you living parts of her unlived life, or are you doing the opposite?
- What is/was your father's unlived life? How might you have been affected by this? Are you living parts of his unlived life, or are you doing the opposite?

The Tyranny of the Shoulds

- What did you learn from your mother about what you should and should not do vocationally? Which of these have you adopted for yourself? Which have you reacted against?
- What did you learn from your father about what you should or should not do vocationally? Which of these have you adopted for yourself? Which have you reacted against?
- What have you told yourself about what you should and should not do vocationally?
- What shoulds and should nots would you like to let go?
- What shoulds and should nots would you like to keep or create for yourself in this next part of your life?

Vocational Messages From Beyond

- We receive messages about vocation from many locations besides our parents. What messages and expectations and shoulds did you receive from your...
 - Grandparents
 - Caregivers
 - Extended family
 - Siblings
 - Peers
 - School/Teachers
 - Church
 - Town/City
 - Race
 - Gender
 - Dis/Ability
 - Physical Appearance
 - Economic class
 - State
 - Country
 - Era you grew up in