

## WORKING WITH YOUR SHADOW THROUGH JOURNALING

Please read my blog, "[Facing Your Shadow](#)," before starting this work.

In this journaling exercise, we're going to be using the ideas of "projection" and "reflection" to help identify aspects of your shadow and reclaim the energy trapped there.

1. **Create sacred space.** Begin by creating a sacred space (acknowledge your altar, light a candle, etc.). Set a positive intention for spiritual transformation. Call upon the highest spiritual power you feel a connection to – archangels, Christ, Buddha, St. Germaine, etc. and ask for their assistance in this sacred work.

2. **Find your Projection.** Choose someone you have a charged relationship with. This person may be someone you feel judgmental of, strangely attracted to, completely repulsed by, upset with or irritated by. Use the following questions to help you identify the traits that most disturb you about this person. Remember, no one will read this, so please be honest and don't hold back.

- Why do I feel so strongly about this person?
- What do I hate about this person?
- What does this person do or not do that most upsets or attracts me?
- What are the most negative qualities this person has?

Write down all your answers, such as "He is greedy and always lies to get attention. He's mean to me and refuses to listen to what I say."

3. **Find the negative intention/pleasure.** Imagine you're talking to this person. Try to understand what motivates him by asking the following questions and writing down what you think his answers would be:

- Why are you behaving this way? What do you want?
- What pleasure are you getting from treating me or others this way?

Write down your answers from their perspective, such as "I want you to pay attention to me," or "I like to have control over you." Remember, we're trying to get in touch with the darkest aspect of this person, so don't hold back. This is not an exercise in making excuses, but finding the negative pleasure this person might be taking in behaving badly.

4. **Acknowledge the reflection.** The things that bother you most in another are usually your own unacknowledged shadow traits. See how it feels to claim those exact traits. Rewrite your statements from your perspective and see how it feels to embody those negative traits. Using the above example, you might write "I'm greedy and mean, and I don't want to listen to what other people are saying. I like to have control over other people. It makes me feel powerful."

This part should feel uncomfortable to you. These are shadow aspects – they should feel completely

foreign. If it doesn't feel uncomfortable, go back and dig a little deeper. See if you can reach beneath the discomfort to the negative pleasure you get from acting or feeling this way. Negative pleasure feels addictive. Logically, you don't want to feel it, but you can't resist. It's seductive.

5. **Claim it.** See if you can identify areas in your own life where you've been acting from this shadow aspect. Using our example, consider where you've acted greedily. Where have you ignored what other people are saying? Where have you ignored what you're saying? Write down all the ways in which this shadow aspect has been controlling your behavior.

6. **Transmute your shadow with love.** Shadow is the part of you that lives in fear. Whatever dark or negative feelings you've uncovered in this exercise, having a shadow doesn't make you a bad person. We all have these dark places, and it takes great courage and great integrity to acknowledge your shadow. Shadow longs to be seen and loved. Allow yourself to feel love and compassion for this part of you that's been living in fear and darkness all these years. Let your heart fill with love and send that love to your shadow. Imagine your love is a light, bringing comfort and warmth to that frightened part of you.

7. **Set a positive intention.** Ask for spiritual help in integrating this energy into your life in a different way. Set an intention for shifting whatever you've uncovered by aligning with a high vibrational energy (such as surrender, acceptance, forgiveness, love, compassion, trust or gratitude). As an example, if you've uncovered a desire to control, set an intention to practice surrender. If you've uncovered a capacity to destroy, set an intention to practice acceptance of what is. Be specific. Write down your new intentions and place them somewhere you'll see them often. Commit to making at least one, small change in one of the areas of your life you've identified as being in shadow.