

THE EGO - SELF AXIS IN PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA

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Understanding the meaning and dynamics of the phenomenological expression of schizophrenia enables the possibility of having a dialogue with schizophrenic individual. The theoretical framework of analytical psychology offers the possibility of understanding the schizophrenic world. The identity of a person consists of two centers of organization (Ego and Self) which are connected (Ego- Self axis). The nature of the Ego-Self relationship is determined by the developmental cycles, but also by everything that changes the relationship between the conscious and subconscious. In schizophrenia, the unconscious contents flood the Ego consciousness which loses the ability to distinguish between internal and external reality. The boundaries of the Ego are lost and it is assimilated in the Self. The Ego becomes uninterested with reality which appears to be insignificant in comparison to the unlimited possibilities of the unconscious. The assimilated Ego takes possession of the attributes of the Self, and thus the illusion of immortality, powerfulness, omniscience, as the content of consciousness and as personal attributes, most frequently in the form of delusional ideas and experiences of omnipotence. In schizophrenia, the assimilation and inflation of the Ego can be caused by the weakness of the Ego or the increase in the pressure from non-integrated complexes in the unconscious. The Ego-Self axis in schizophrenia is moved towards the Self, marking the retreat of the Ego which actively participates in the reality, in which Ego observes and passively bears witness to the content of the unconscious both at an individual and collective level.