

# The Bulletin of Psychological Type

## Vol. 41 Issue 6 2017

### BOOK REVIEW

#### Editor's Note

Doing a book review is incredibly time consuming. We are very appreciative of both Nicole Gruel's expertise and time committed to review Dario Nardi's new book for us. I love Nicole's description of "Nardi's erudite yet whimsical style of presentation." This book is both expert and eclectic. Not just anyone could have reviewed this for us, so I'm especially grateful to this contribution from Nicole.

Happy Type Watching to you, and Happy Type Reading, too,

Carol Linden  
Editor  
carol@effectivewithpeople.com

#### Author



**Nicole Gruel, PhD**, is an author, ACISTE certified life coach, and holistic counselor specializing in the integration of non-ordinary transcendent experiences. She's passionate about transpersonal psychology, Jungian typology, sustainable co-creation, sacred activism, and helping people live from their deepest wisdom. She is author of the books *Dancing with Dragons: A Journey to Wholeness*, *Women of the Wise Earth: Celebrating the Rainbow Symphony*, and the upcoming title, *The Power of NOTES: Non-Ordinary Transcendent Experiences Transforming the Way We Live, Love, and Lead*. She has served as President for a chapter of the Australian Association for Psychological Type and was invited to write *Chakradance* for children. She lives by the beautiful beaches of Sydney, Australia. For more go to [www.nicolegruel.com](http://www.nicolegruel.com) or get in touch via [hello@nicolegruel.com](mailto:hello@nicolegruel.com).

## Book Review

***Jung on Yoga: Insights and Activities to Awaken with the Chakras.* Dario Nardi. 2017. Los Angeles, CA: Radiance House. 140 pages.**

When Jung unveiled *Psychological Types* in 1921, he went to great lengths to explain his theory of individuation. Namely, he believed the opposition of forces within the psyche creates important opportunities for a person to transcend the tension and continually grow to new ways of being and knowing in the world. With the posthumous release of what he considered his most important oeuvre, *The Red Book: Liber Novus* (2009), we further know that his theory of psychological type was intended to be a dynamic tool to venture into, through, and beyond the wilderness of psyche. Indeed, in the years he grappled with the unconscious he was also writing *Psychological Types*, attempting to encapsulate his psychology of consciousness. Jung, at his core, was intrigued by how we can actively experience the divine within whilst best making use of our natural typological tendencies. At the same time, he forewarned of his typology's potential to become a mere "childish parlour game" of labeling, a reality manifest today that would likely have him turning in his grave.

Dario Nardi's *Jung on Yoga* is an insightful breath of fresh air that returns typology to its intended roots of individuation and active awakening. Its hope is, as Nardi says, echoing Yogi Bhañan, to bring greater health, happiness, and holiness. The book uses Jung's 1932 lectures on kundalini yoga as a jumping off point for a broad and fascinating synthesis of typology, individuation, the yogic chakra system, neuroscience, and entheogens. It is where depth psychology meets transpersonal psychology and modern brain science. Through it, Nardi has attempted to reconcile Jung's interpretation of the chakras—a system of centers through the body that receive, assimilate, and express life-force energy—with the actual descriptions found in yoga. Nardi has further added his own creative twist with symbolic imagery and practical activities to help the reader grasp, engage, and integrate vast bodies of information.

Part One of the book provides a broad overview introducing kundalini yoga, the chakras as both biological centers and psycho-spiritual gateways, Jung's interest in the chakras, and how the journey of individuation relates to awakening levels of consciousness.

Part Two takes a deep dive into each chakra, presenting and elaborating upon Jung's descriptions. Each chakra is complemented by mindful activities and self-reflective prompts so the reader can actively engage personal growth and even self-score a chakra profile. Unlike the regular seven-fold model of the chakras, here we find an additional version of the third eye chakra with a quintessentially Jungian flavor, which Nardi names Jung's 6th chakra of psyche and imagination. It is in this center that we "tap strange imagery from the unconscious, get in touch with the many archetypes, and perform alchemy for spiritual growth" (p.57). Whether Jung confused the Sanskrit names of the higher chakras with their function, fundamentally misunderstood them, was misinformed, or simply took creative liberties, his somewhat unconventional western interpretations nonetheless add to a richer modern conception of the chakras.

In keeping with Jung's fondness of mandalas for exploration and resolution, Nardi has similarly provided summative tableaus filled with symbolic imagery for each chakra to help the reader get in touch with themselves. The tableaus are a combination of traditional yogic chakra symbolism, thematic aspects of Jung's descriptions, and Nardi's playful

imagination. The outer frames of each tableau represent the gradual dissolving of ego boundaries as one moves from the root to the crown chakra. Each is far more than an intriguing picture; the tableaus alone are transformative tools for the visually inclined.

Part Three offers ways to practically work with the chakras through basic kundalini yoga exercises. Much like attending a yoga class, Nardi guides the reader through several body, breath, and mindfulness practices that can easily be incorporated into one's practice. Such exercises were traditionally practiced with the guidance of a teacher and within the safety of a sacred space, such as an ashram, with full awareness of their potency and potential to awaken the practitioner as they were designed to do. Nardi appropriately recommends one finds a guide if venturing beyond the basics and discusses the signs, symptoms, and what to do in the case of a sudden release of life-force energy.

This section also touches on tantric yoga—the harmonizing and exchanging of male and female energies—which aligns well with Jung's concept of the anima/animus and what he believed to be their inevitable encounter in the journey of individuation. There is a complementary checklist of the chakras for couples to explore.

Also included in this part is an overview of the nervous system and what occurs neurologically during awakening and altered states of consciousness. In addition to yoga, Nardi discusses various other methods and traditions of psycho-spiritual transformation, including the ceremonial use of entheogens.

Part Four, aptly titled "More Jung", presents Jung's model of the psyche and suggestions for how the chakras relate to the types. Nardi postulates that the transcendent function acts as a "motor for growth" as one develops through the chakras over a lifetime. This is one of the book's most significant contributions as it links the chakra system to a key aspect of Jung's theory in a way that Jung himself did not. The table on chakras as developmental levels (p.115) neatly compresses this idea and the spiral chart (p.121) presents an alternate model of individuating and eventual awakening through the chakras.

Once again, practical activities are provided, this time for specifically developing Jung's 6th chakra and working with opposites in the chakras. Interestingly, a final note compares ego development in the east and west—an important distinction to keep in mind when navigating Jung's thoughts on any one of the many eastern philosophies and concepts he explored.

Part Five wraps up this grand tour with the Wheel of Conscious Experience, a tool to "stay awake" beyond transformative experiences. In it, Nardi has brought together stages of individuation with various states of consciousness and activities for psycho-spiritual growth. It allows the reader to locate where one is in life's great journey and to shift to the next natural phase when the time is appropriate. It is a means of keeping the alchemical process of transformation alive and well.

Overall, this book is an ambitious effort that brings together several dense subjects in a light and practical manner. True to Nardi's erudite yet whimsical style of presentation, this text is sure to become a favorite in any type lover's library as well as a frequent go-to reference. For those who dare to accept the challenge and embark on diligent self-exploration through this book, hold onto your chakras . . . you're in for a treat!