



Ecstasy: Understanding the Psychology of Joy

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THE RENOWNED JUNGIAN PSYCHOLOGIST AND AUTHOR OF 'TRANSFORMATION' AND 'OWNING YOUR OWN SHADOW' BRINGS THE HIDDEN GIFT OF ECSTASY BACK INTO OUR LIVES.

Robert A. Johnson has taken tens of thousands of readers on spiritual and psychological journeys towards inner transformation. In 'Ecstasy', he reconnects with the powerful and life-changing ecstatic element that lies dormant – but long-repressed – within us.

Ecstasy was once considered a divine gift, Johnson tells us, one that could lift mortals out of ordinary reality and into higher world. But because Western culture has systematically repressed this ecstatic human impulse, we are unable to truly experience its transformative power.

Johnson penetrates the surface of modern life to reveal the ancient dynamics of our humanity, pointing out practical means for achieving a healthy expression of our true inner selves. Through dreams, rituals, and celebrations, he shows us how to return to these original life-giving principles and restore inner harmony.

Robert A. Johnson is the best-selling author of 'He, She, We, Inner Work, ' and 'Femininity Lost and Regained. '

Ecstasy: Understanding the Psychology of Joy Details

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From Reader Review Ecstasy: Understanding the Psychology of Joy for online ebook

Geri Degrugy says

Excellent book. Jungian psychologist Robert Johnson discusses ways our corporate culture, religion and reason have essentially put down the value of ecstasy in our lives. Using the myth of Dionysus, he takes us on a journey, accessing the unconscious through dreams, active imagination techniques and ritual, leading to deeper self awareness and joy.

Serena.. Sery-ously? says

3.5* (in realtà 4.5* alla prima parte e un tristissimo **MEH** alla seconda che mi ha fatto pensare di essere su una candid camera.. Tutta fuffa!)

La prima parte del libro è davvero interessante: l'autore parte dal mito di Dioniso per spiegare l'estasi - un dono divino che trasporta i mortali fuori dalla realtà ordinaria-, quanto essa sia importante nell'esistenza delle persone e quanto però essa sia stata perduta con il sopravvento della ragione e della scienza che hanno, in un certo senso, mortificato l'io interiore.

Johnson ci presenta un Dioniso dalle mille sfaccettature che certo non si riduce al "dio del vino" né tanto meno al "dio dell'ebbrezza" in cui è stato trasfigurato Dioniso dai romani nella figura di Bacco; il libro è un buon punto di partenza per comprendere le Dionisie e per liberare il culto dai pregiudizi che certo lo circondano, mi ha messo tanta curiosità di appronfondire il tema (e per un attimo, mi è pure venuta voglia di partecipare ad un rito in onore di Dioniso.. Vabbé, poi mi sono ripresa :D)!

L'idea dell'estasi repressa e del modo in cui - volenti o nolenti - oggi riesce a fuoriuscire è davvero accattivante e convincente.. Per questo credo l'autore abbia voluto inserire la II parte, che altrimenti non mi spiego: in questa sezione infatti l'autore ci spiega come provare l'ebbrezza dell'estasi senza fare del male a noi stessi e agli altri in modo 'naturale' e 'costruttivo'.

Secondo me è una presa in giro bella e buona, ma forse è anche probabile che io non possegga l'adeguata predisposizione mentale, chi lo sa!

Le strade infatti che l'autore suggerisce sono due: l'interpretazione dei sogni (e ci potrei anche stare) e l'*immaginazione attiva*.

Ecco.

Per la prima.. lui riporta come esempio per l'interpretazione un suo sogno, giusto per metterci sulla strada corretta.. Ebbene, l'autore sogna la reincarnazione di quattro Buddha differenti, con i quali tra l'altro ha un rapporto di intimità e amicizia.

?? Ma puoi!! Come si ricollega alla mia triste esistenza? :/

L'immaginazione attiva è una cosa ancora più rocambolesca: bisogna *immaginare* di parlare con Dioniso. (...)

Forse non sono ancora pronta per abbracciare gli insegnamenti di Dioniso :D

Liam See says

More insights in this slim tome than Encyclopedia Britannica's numerous editions of the previous two centuries. Deeply potent perspectives.

Helen Luo says

Honestly - I didn't understand it, or at the very least, I suspect that I may have grossly misinterpreted its purpose.

The first confusion is that for me, there was an apparent shortage in metaphysical grounds that persisted throughout the text, primarily concerning the question - of what substance am I to consider Dionysus, or his energy? Surely Johnson was not positing that I interpret him as a literal god, but if so, then what specifically does he intend? If he is a mere 'force of nature' or 'condition of the psyche,' then why choose to deliberately incorporate seemingly haphazard elements of Greek mythology, Jewish tradition, Christian theology, modern consumerism, Jungian psychology, until the resultant creation is nothing more than an ambiguous tapestry of no credible telos? And furthermore, if Dionysus is an energy or a persistent element of the cosmos, then why name him Dionysus, invoking an arbitrarily archaic creation of the Greeks?

The book is riddled with other ambiguities - Johnson frequently invokes pithy aphorisms in the vein of "do not deny yourself the Dionysian experience!" but without fully providing the definitional groundwork of what constitutes such an experience. If I am to assume that I have in fact, completely understood the book's contents, then I am saddened to say that all of its arguments and constructive material can be refuted without great effort.

The book concludes with hurried and insufficient recommendations on the conducting of rituals in the spirit of Dionysus, but as far as texts on rituals go, this one seems to be lacking in an expansive quantity of elaboration before an effective one may be carried out. I admit to being at most, rudimentary in my studies on ritualistic practices, but even from my limited vantage point I can note that there are very key elements absent - symbolic objects, incantations, or any material objects that are necessary in for a novice to fruitfully connect the spiritual with the physical. In short, I believe that the summary on ritual from this book can be fairly understood as "anything is ritual" - which is an observation that is impossible to fully deny, but is also fairly generic and unambitious.

As a footnote, I will confess that I had interpreted the word "psychology" in the title in a vein that is more modern and quite removed from its Freudian, psychoanalytic sense. Perhaps I should have adjusted my expectations when the inner cover specified that the work was composed by a Jungian scholar, but with that being said, I still did anticipate the book to be far more focused on the degree to which euphoria influences our lives, its recommended dosage, its comparative to the eudaimonic experience, historical figures who have emulated the ecstatic lifestyle, etc. What I got instead seemed to be the abstract musings of a slightly tipsy preacher who is more intent on creating grandiose depictions of his own delights than anything that would truly intellectually stimulate a reader.

That being said - this book confused far more than disappointed. I have written this review under the assumption that I have not misinterpreted any of its pages, including its overarching end goal.

Notwithstanding, it is entirely possible that my judgements be uncharitable and that the true reason for which this piece was not enjoyable was due to my own deficiencies as a reader.

Elizabeth Merchant says

Here again, Robert Johnson employs a myth as allegory for a facet of Jungian psychology, in this case the lost Dionysian element of ecstasy, irrationality, joy. Full of insights, plainly stated, as is his style. Minus one star for not explaining exactly how to remain totally blissful for the remainder of my life ;-)

Kirtida Gautam says

In Robert A Johnson, I have found a writer my soul was seeking in the year 2016. He is helping me with the Inner Work. It's like going to a spa and coming out feeling fresh and full of ecstasy. Oh so cheesy! But I don't care. I am happy.

Donna says

A tiny little book about the psychology of joy.

Robert Windsor says

This was an enlightening read. The value of understanding joy and as examples, looking at the Dionysus myth, brings so much clarity to the hideous uprising of Trump's destructive hate campaign, Brexit's negative migrant hate, the savage attack on the sacred grounds of Standing Rock and the failure to recognise the true value of the lands, Mother Earth, and every war and dictatorship.

Robert A J states '...we don't have a modern myth..' but I guess there are moments in history which play out as already told stories.

It's not all doom and gloom, but hey? There's plenty of shadow play, but that's another book!

John-Talmage says

I had hoped to like the book, but I walked away with few nuggets. The good thing, though, is that the book is short and I completed it in a days' time.

Izabela says

Beautiful reminder of the power of the archetype when it lies dormant and how to go about using it for everyday ecstasy - the term so rarely understood. Loved it!

Richard says

Very accessible Jungian imaginings.

80 pages and the only interesting idea was that the Divine comes to you through your weakest faculties. which is something to ponder.

Julian Gilder says

A great and well researched book written for the Jungian perspective. I found it extremely enlightening and interesting. I really enjoyed reading it.
