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Jung's Drive Theory: Making the Move from Ideas to Action

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TO: Jennifer Selig, PhD.
Chair of the Program Committee
Affect and Action: Psyche in a Time of Crisis
11th Annual Conference of Research in Jung and Analytical
Psychology
Jungian Society for Scholarly Studies
August 8-10, 2012
Bourbon Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA

JUNG'S DRIVE THEORY :
Making the Move from Ideas to Action

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Presentation Format:
Paper (20 minute presentation)

Technical Needs:
Overhead projector
(I will supply computer)

The construct of creativity continues to baffle scholars. And yet, in our current turbulent times, creativity becomes paramount as an economic driver.

Using a broad definition of creativity, to provide a corporate structure that is innovative and open to expansion is no less an artistic act than the creation of a symphony or a body of literature. Acts of creation have the power to touch people in ways that transcend verbal expression. In an organizational context, they have the potential to alter the environment whether locally, nationally, or even globally. As such, an act of creation has the potential to buffer change and, potentially, promote it. Creativity as an applied force has the potential to capture and utilize both affect and action.

A corporate mythology is a creative pattern of ideas that may be brought to consciousness in order to function as the driving force of an organization. It is the organization's continuing source of power and the engine that drives future sustainable growth.

In 1936, C. G. Jung presented an essay at Harvard University entitled "Psychological Factors Determining Human Behavior." In the lecture, he outlined the skeleton of a psychological drive theory that proposed five instinctual drives (hunger, sexuality, activity, reflection and creativity) as the foundation of a healthy psyche. Jung suggests that a psyche/body split is artificial, that "psyche is absolutely identical to the state of being alive." As such, psyche can be examined from both a personal and organizational perspective that addresses the growing problem of failing organizations and the consequent demoralization in the workforce. Jung's work is renowned for its complexity and inaccessibility so applying it to the corporate milieu of balance sheets and bottom lines is admittedly challenging but arguably urgently needed as a tool for transformation.

There is no better time for Jungian psychology to enter the world of business. Some business schools, such as Sheridan, are shifting to harness the power of creativity in support of design-driven innovation. A powerful force is needed to revision the way we work. Utilizing Jung's drive theory and its move towards the creative Psyche, this paper and presentation will outline how the psychological drives can assist our organizations to move ideas into action, and outline the current implementation into course development at the Faculty of Business at Sheridan.