Rumpelstiltskin:
An Exploration of the Psychological and Symbolic Meaning of Folk Tales

Lecture & Discussion
9/15/12 | 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. | 3.0 CEUs Available

Folktales have been told over the millennia and across the globe, capturing the hearts and imaginations of every generation and affecting listeners everywhere. They are symbolic stories that reveal archetypal aspects of human existence. Rumpelstiltskin tells the story of a young girl's desperate situation: to save her life, she promises her child to a gnome who rescues her. We will explore how the girl becomes trapped, how she is rescued, and how she regains her child and her life. We will seek to understand where we encounter similar dilemmas in our lives and how we can grow to regain autonomy. Rumpelstiltskin is the gnome who helps and hinders, whose power we have to appreciate and overcome and who will ensnare us unless we passionately seek to know him and thereby reclaim our vitality.

Outline of Topics:
- Dimensions of folklore
- Rumpelstiltskin: The Brothers Grimm fairytale of the poor Miller's daughter
- Interpretation of the following:
  - Explore the figures in the story to see what psychological traits we find in them and where those traits reside in us
  - Look at the actions in the story and explore where they occur in our lives
  - Reflect on the protagonist's dilemma and the means with which she finds a way out of her desperate situation
- What does the story reveal? What are the psychological processes about which give the tale information out of the storehouse of humanity's way of living life? The story tells of a young feminine ego who lives in the father's world and whose creative energies are aroused by father and king to further their needs and at a moment of total helplessness and near despair, the affective realization of her dilemma calls forth a mannequin whose services on the one hand, rescue her, and on the other hand, deprive her. After having been saved by the mannequin, she has a period of growth in her pregnancy, and she becomes able to claim for herself her feminine creativity. She can then deal directly with that complex of living for others and she can own her life more fully.

About the Presenter:
Jody Wainer is a Jungian analyst and a Licensed Independent Social Worker. She has been in private practice since 1996. In April of 2003, she was awarded a diploma in Analytical Psychology by the Inter-Regional Society of Jungian analysts. She is a graduate of the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland's four-year post-graduate training program as well as the Intimate Systems training program. She has over 20 years of experience as a therapist. Jody is currently active in IRSJA, serving on admissions and review committees. Her thesis was The Braided Candle: The Ten Sefirot of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life As Understood Through a Jungian Psychological Lens and Their Implications for Practice. She is interested in increasing the visibility and understanding of Jungian thought, and the support it can offer our everyday lives.

Payment Form: Rumpelstiltskin Lecture & Discussion, Jody Wainer, Jungian Analyst

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