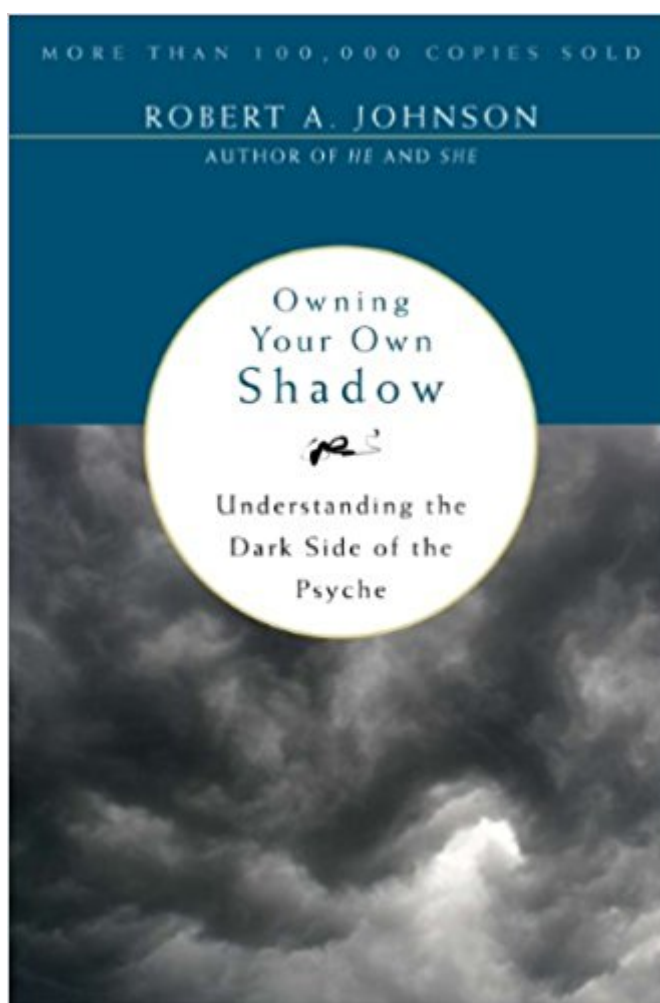


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# Owning Your Own Shadow: Understanding The Dark Side Of The Psyche



## Synopsis

A bestselling author shows how we can reclaim and make peace with the "shadow" side of our personality.

## Book Information

Paperback: 128 pages

Publisher: HarperSanFrancisco; Reprint edition (February 17, 1994)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 9780062507549

ISBN-13: 978-0062507549

ASIN: 0062507540

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.3 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 141 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #30,414 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #137 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Psychotherapy, TA & NLP #176 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Personality #352 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Mental Health > Happiness

## Customer Reviews

The shadow in Jungian psychology is the unconscious dumping ground for undesirable characteristics of personality. "Owning" the shadow--accepting it as part of one's self--is seen as the first step toward wholeness. Using examples from history, mythology, and religion, Johnson, author of *Inner Work* (LJ 7/86) and *Transformation* (LJ 8/91), offers a tour of the shadow, showing its origin and features, and demonstrating how and why it bursts into consciousness when least expected. Returning to the subject of his earlier work *We* (LJ 2/1/84), the author reveals how experience of romantic love may lead to awareness of both positive and negative aspects of the shadow, and how integrating the shadow into one's personality can be a challenging religious experience. This clearly written, thought-provoking work is recommended for academic and public libraries.- Lucille Boone, San Jose P.L., Cal. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Robert A. Johnson, a noted lecturer and Jungian analyst, is also the author of *He, She, We*, *Inner Work*, *Ecstasy*, *Transformation*, and *Owning Your Own Shadow*.

I like other readers was looking for practical advice on doing shadow work. I had to read this book more than once to discover that it's here, but it's subtle. Practical is not the same as personal, and the personal shadow is, well, personal!

I was reading this and kept waiting for the really interesting and incisive part. Unfortunately I reached the end of the book and was still waiting. Really just an opinion piece with little research. Quotes to support any ideas are chosen from a diverse range of historical sources but only show that other people have had similar ideas over human history. While there may be good arguments as to the benefits of owning your own shadow there is no discussion about how to do this. Similarly while there is discussion about the "dark" side of the psyche, there is nothing useful for the reader in gaining insights or further understanding of their own psyche. A very interesting topic and the concepts are potentially very powerful, but ultimately an unfulfilling hollow discussion, with an interestingly Catholic-centric focus.

Owning Your Own Shadow presents an important concept of Jungian psychology -- the shadow -- from a distinctly Christian point of view. That point of view is not in itself problematic -- authors like Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and CS Lewis have used their Christianity to excellent effect in their writing. Not so in this book! Johnson's emphasis on his own theology eclipses discussion of Jung's psychology. As other reviewers here note, you get a muddled sermon, not an understanding of Jung and his psychology. Most importantly, very little practical advice is to be found about how precisely to go about owning your own shadow. By practical, I mean exercises, checklists, and the other stuff found in the reputable self-help books. In addition, Johnson offers no bibliography or advice on further reading (other than occasionally plugging his other books). As a person new to Jung, I learned more about the shadow and the rest of Jung's psychology from Anthony Stevens' book, *Jung: A Very Short Introduction*, 1994. It's comprehensive, readable, short (not "very short" though), and costs less than 10 bucks. Plus Stevens appears to know Jung and Jungian analysis well. Many readers might benefit more from that book than from Johnson's lamentable book.

I have Johnson's "Inner Work" an excellent how-to for dream work and active imagination. I was hoping his shadow book would be something similar. It's a useful discussion about the shadow, but did not give me the more advanced information on working with the shadow that I was looking for.

I'm a fan of Johnson's books from He, Inner Work, We, She, and so forth. As a former student of Jung, Johnson has a very unique ability to write on complex topics, but by using myth as analogies I am able to understand and see it playing out in my own Self.

Initially, I was a little at odds with some of the cultural premises that Johnson was utilizing to explain a method of integrating the Shadow persona with the conscious SELF. Ultimately this work honed in on issues dealing with psychological projection that I have first hand experience with for healing my own psyche. The chapter explaining the idea of Romantic Love as a projection of the "God-Self" is priceless toward understanding the trails and tribulations most people in America are having with relationships. This frame adjustment has gone a long way toward healing my heart and approach toward loving myself first versus seeking relationship.

blew my mind and was an incredible read. I went into this after being recommended by a chiropractor it was a phenomenal read.. Extremely skeptical, I walked away with some open doors. I think enthusiast of lighter reads into psycho analysis will be into it. BUY ENJOY.

A personally very helpful book that helped me understand my own behavior and internal life. For those who are spiritual and not just religious, this book will help you develop by integrating the psyche into conversations about developing, something missing in our current churches, synagogues, and temples. I now feel that one cannot truly experience the spirit without owning their shadow.

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