

# Review of: "Jung on the Meaning of Life"

Gianni Zappalà<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Technology Sydney

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

I enjoyed reading this informative, well-written and useful paper by Dr Drob on Jung's ideas and writings on the meaning of life. The paper stands in its own right and does what it set out to do - focus solely on Jung's perspectives on the meaning of life, I wonder whether it may also be based on a chapter from a larger book that Dr Drob is writing which explores other perspectives on the meaning of life. If so, I look forward to reading it in due course. The aspects of the paper that are particularly strong and warrant mention include:

- Drob's fourfold categorisation of Jung's thought on life's meaning, which was central to his work. As the author notes, Jung's views were at times contradictory, and as with many of the other areas that Jung focused on (e.g. his understanding of archetypes, the workings of astrology etc.), evolved and changed over time. For a categorisation of Jung's thoughts on Astrology, for example, see the recently edited volume by Safron Rossi and Keiron Le Grice. <sup>[1]</sup> Drob's categorisation allows the reader to see and understand the key inflection points and how they interrelate with each other.
- The conclusion provides a concise and thought-provoking synthesis of Jung's views on life's meaning, bringing insight to what may have initially seemed paradoxical and contradictory.

What could be improved?

- I would have liked to see Jung's concept of synchronicity given some space in the paper. This now popular idea of a 'meaningful coincidence' - the meeting of an inner subjective state with an external 'objective' event, I believe is also important to understanding Jung's thoughts on life's meaning. <sup>[2]</sup> Indeed, for many, synchronicity can be seen as a portal where our individual life intersects with a universal order or purpose, providing a sense of personal meaning and a re-enchantment of our world. The existence and 'effects' of synchronicity could be discussed either within the existing fourfold categorisation, or be added as a separate category, without too much additional length.
- While the focus and purpose of the paper is to focus on Jung's thought, the addition of other perspectives on the meaning of life, even in a brief paragraph or two, could provide a bridge for, and enrich their understanding, for those who are less familiar or interested in Jung, yet focus on questions of meaning in their work and practice.

Overall, this is a valuable contribution to Jung scholarship as well as our understanding of the great mystery of life's meaning.

## References

1. <sup>^</sup> Keiron Le Grice. (2017/2021). 'Explanations of Astrology, Introduction to Part IV of Jung on Astrology' in Le Grice, K (2021) *Archetypal Cosmology and Depth Psychology – Selected Essays*, ITAS Publications, Ojai, California.. ITAS publications.
2. <sup>^</sup> Bernard Beitman. (2022). *Meaningful Coincidences: How and Why Synchronicity and Serendipity Happen*.