

"The terms 'telic' and 'paratelic' have been chosen because the relations between them is not unlike that between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems." Smith and Apter, p.3.

Synergy.

For many (but not all) opposition pairs, the organism may need both at different times (e.g. novelty and security) but because they are mutually opposed it would appear that this would be impossible at the same time. It is, however, often possible to combine opposites. This is achieved by treating different aspects of the situation in opposing ways simultaneously (e.g. the context of some situation may elicit feelings of security, the content feelings of novelty).

We describe such situations as synergistic in that the oppositions work together by enhancing each other's properties, in the same kind of way in which complementary colours placed next to each other enhance each other's vividness...." p.3

Another kind of paratelic idea is paradox, which escapes from any kind of truth or falsity (e.g. 'this statement is false' where it refers to itself). The paradox is sometimes deliberately used, as in Zen Buddhism, to escape the tyranny of telic thinking. Mystical insight also appears to involve the paradoxical joining of opposites (e.g. the feeling of eternity in a single moment.) In this case however we do not have synergy since, if such states exist at all, they involve conceiving the same situation simultaneously in opposite ways, not different aspects of the same situation. p.8.

"But the transcendent function and the unifying symbol can appear only where there is a tension between a stable consciousness and a "charged" unconscious.... Only if this tension is endured - and this always calls forth a state of suffering - can a third term be born, which "transcends", or surpasses, the opposites and so combines parts of both positions into an unknown, new creation.

"The living symbol cannot come to birth in an inert or poorly developed mind, for such a man will rest content with the already existing symbols offered by established tradition. Only the passionate yearning of a highly developed mind, for whom the dictated symbol no longer contains the highest reconciliation in one expression, can create a new symbol. But, inasmuch as the symbol proceeds from his highest and latest mental achievement and must also include the deepest roots of his being, it cannot be a one-sided product of the most highly differentiated mental functions, but must at least have an equal source in the lowest and most primitive motions of his psyche. For this co-operation of antithetical states to be at all possible, they must both stand side by side in fullest conscious opposition. Such a condition necessarily entails a violent disunion with oneself, even to a point where thesis and antithesis mutually deny each other, while the ego is still forced to recognize its absolute participation in both." 193