

The Acorn Questionnaire

This is a series of questions designed to help any individual to find his/her acorn, daimon, genius, guiding angel, or essence.

The theory of the Acorn is attributable to James Hillman, outlined in his book, *The Soul's Code*. For those attempting to answer the questions in this series please keep in mind that this questionnaire requires one to slow down the thinking process to reflect and search for clues in your dreams and personal history, clues about your unique individual voice.

Finding your 'acorn' is not a life-map to a career, vocation, or avocation. While thinking about the possible answers to each question, try brain-storming (jotting down several ideas that come to mind quickly). As you review the list, listen to your physical and emotional response to each idea or name you write. More energy will flow around a particular answer and bring back memories or ideas that you may have forgotten.

1. Have there been any moments, from your recollection, or from the recollections of others who know you, in which you were especially defiant, demanding that your uniqueness be expressed and heard? Describe those moments, as well as you can remember.

2. Have you ever noticed and pointed out to another person, what seems to be the special uniqueness of that person? Capture the image you conveyed in one or two words.

3. Has anyone ever noticed and pointed out to you, what seems to be the special uniqueness of your person? If so, what did they say?

4. If the acorn theory holds that each of us is born with a *defining image*, and that image could be captured in a picture of a particular person from history, literature, drama, movies, sports, or biographies...name the person/persons who best captures your uniqueness. (Ask someone who knows you well, if you feel you would like to!)

Names and Reason for Affinity:

5. Is there an individual(s) in your life you would ascribe as your mentor, someone who recognizes your "heart" and "soul" and encourages you and by whom you feel inspired? What is special about this person?

6. If this daimon/voice/uniqueness has your interest at heart, like a best friend, what kind of messages do you recognize, either 'sent' or 'received' by you:

Whispers:

Sudden urges:

Odd circumstances:

Eccentric people:

Dreams:

Sudden clarity:

Epiphanies:

An inner voice telling you to do something or that something is going to happen:

Is there any common theme, image, message in these experiences?

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7. In situations of distress, when you are being helped by something or someone "unidentified" who might have the instincts and the insights of your daimon, how did "it" help you through?

What were its messages that made it possible for you to get through the distress?

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8. If the call of the acorn shows in the tantrums and in the obstinacies, in the shyness and in the retreats that seem to set the child against our world, (but may be protections of the world it comes with and comes from) then, from your life experiences, explore what can you learn from your experiences of your own:

Tantrums:

Obstinacies:

Shyness (When you thought you were afraid of doing what you needed to do):

Retreats (When you felt that your own voice was "too much" for you to handle):

9. Suddenly, as a child, you knew what you had to do...although you did not know where the clarity was coming from, what was the nature of the clarity?

What did you know that you had to do, not necessarily in a crisis, but for your own person?

10. Since the daimon's demands are often more than the child can manage, one way is for the child to race ahead, like some of the famous "infant prodigies." Has anyone ever mentioned that this might be happening to you? For what actions, statements, or attitudes did they mention this?

11. Another way for the child to answer the daimon is to shrink back, to hold the daimon at bay, in order to manage the “power” of the daimon. In reflection, is there any evidence that you might have done this?

What was the daimon asking you to do, and how did you hold it back?

When?

What might the daimon have been saying?

12. Have you ever felt a wave of indignation, as a child, when you felt that you were not “up to the task” of your daimon?

When?

What did you feel you lacked?

13. When you, as a child, asked for something that you *really wanted*, a specific toy or musical instrument, specific tools, or a particular book or activity such as dance or hockey lesson, and you were not given what you wanted, what was your response? (For example: You received play things when you wanted the real, adult thing; or you were told that you must focus your energy on an activity that would not include your most desired activity)

Circle one: Apathy Sadness Anger Exasperation Defiance

What did you so deeply desire?

14. Do you recall ever being told that you had childish omnipotent fantasies?

What do you recall about the situation?

What was the fantasy?

Who told you it was childish and "out-of-this-world?"

15. When you are with friend, and someone casually, perhaps even teasingly, mentions your "gift" to the world, what words do they use?

16. If we can find clues about mystery of our acorn from mythic characters with whom we identify, with which characters from myths you know about do you identify? (For example: general mythic characters might be space explorers, healers, warriors, peacemakers, kings, queens, wizards.)

Name and reason for affinity:

17. Do you recall a moment(s) in your life when you felt most at "home" in what you were doing? (This includes dreams and daydreams, pictures that come to you and things you wish to be involved with or doing. This question is more than "If I had a million dollars, I would..." or "if I could wake up and the world would be just as I imagined, I would..." because it is asking you to remember something you have personally experienced in your dreaming or waking activities that you recognize as feeling unique and fulfilling.) List the activity, your age, and your emotions for each experience.

18. What might be some other messages, when you don't necessarily feel at 'home' unless you are daydreaming, that you haven't thought of before: messages that appear to be hidden and hard to remember—like the feeling when one leaves on a trip and knows something has been forgotten—what is nagging you that you are trying to drown out with "busy-ness?"

19. Do you recall receiving and reading a book, or seeing a film, or listening to a song, which moved you so greatly that you saw your life in its pages, frames, or melodies? List the title, your age, the theme, and your emotional response.

20. Did (do) you have any characters from the world of cartoons, children's literature, drama, history, science, sports, that you especially identified with? List the names and reason for your attraction.
