



EXPLORING MATTHEW'S FEAR AS A MOVE TO INDIVIDUATION IN LISA THOMPSON'S "THE GOLDFISH BOY"

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Abstract

This research aims to analyse Matthew's fear as a move toward individuation in Lisa Thompson's novel The Goldfish Boy by examining how fear shapes his behavior and contributes to Matthew's journey toward individuation. His fear is related to his guilt over his baby brother's death, and an extreme fear of germs and social interaction forms the main psychological conflicts that curtail his everyday life. A psychological approach based on Carl Jung's theory of individuation is used in this study to investigate how Matthew's fears reveal deeper unconscious elements, including his persona, anima/animus, and the shadow that is a suppressed guilt and unresolved trauma, and how these elements relate to the individuation process, especially the stages that guide Matthew toward discovering his true self. This qualitative-descriptive research identifies dialogues, narrative descriptions, and events that reflect the psychological struggle of Matthew through close reading of the novel. The findings demonstrate that fear serves both as an obstacle and as a catalyst in Matthew's development. His guilt-driven fear leads him to isolation, compulsive cleaning, and avoidance of social interaction, showing how fear can consume an individual and result in emotional suffering. However, Teddy Dawson's disappearance becomes a turning point that forces Matthew to confront his fears, break his avoidance patterns, and gradually integrate the repressed parts of himself. When faced rather than avoided, Matthew's fears transform into a driving force that enables personal growth, deeper self-understanding, and the early stages of individuation, helping him move toward self-awareness, emotional balance, and a more integrated sense of identity.

Keywords: Fear, Individuation, Inner Healing, Jungian Psychology

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INTRODUCTION

Human life can be made up of past accumulated experiences that influence emotional and psychological development. According to Carl Gustav Jung (1968:284), human beings are born with an inner psychological structure made up of universal archetypes, such as the persona, shadow, anima, and animus. These archetypes already exist within the human psyche as natural potentials and are not created by experience. As individuals go through life, their experiences activate and shape these archetypal elements, which gradually form character and personality. Throughout life, people face various challenges that test their emotional, mental, and sometimes physical strength.

Among those emotions, fear is one of the strongest and most universal. Fear can protect a person from danger, but it can also limit their ability to live freely. When fear becomes too strong, it can cause isolation, hesitation, or even mental health problems. (Rachman, 2020:3) explains that fear is a natural self-defence mechanism that appears when someone feels threatened. The fear can come from outside, such as a frightening event, or from inside, such as painful memories, guilt, or trauma. If fear is not faced, it can grow stronger and take control of a person's life. This connection between fear and personal development can be better understood through Carl Gustav Jung's concept of individuation, which explains how individuals integrate their inner conflicts and fears to achieve psychological wholeness.

One of the fundamental psychological processes that can be investigated in literature is individuation, a concept introduced by Carl Gustav Jung. According to Jung, (1968:275) in his book *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* individuation is the psychological process in which a person integrates conscious and unconscious elements of the psyche into a whole person. Jung says that psychological development requires confronting one's inner fears, weaknesses, and "shadow" the hidden parts of the psyche that individuals avoid facing (Jung, 1968:8). Jung dictates that this is a process where people confront their inner insecurities, fears, and their "shadow," or repressed, generally darker parts of the psyche that people try to avoid.

In this context, fear contributes mostly to the process of individuation. Fear is an automatic sensation in response to threats. Human beings learn to be afraid sometimes because of horrible experiences or fear just by looking at other people (Rachman, 2020:78). When a person avoids fear, it becomes stronger and limits their growth; but when they face it, fear becomes the key to personal transformation.

In the example of Matthew, the main character of the story from Lisa Thompson's The Goldfish Boy (2017), his fear resulted both from his traumatic experience of having lost a baby brother and from his illness, that is, obsessive-compulsive disorder. His fear leads him to repeatedly clean things and avoid people. But in order to achieve personal development, this is not about running away from fear but confronting it. This is

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one step in his path to becoming a healthier and stronger individual. By confronting and overcoming our fear, we grow mature and fulfill our deepest human potential (Dozier, 1999:59). Because of that he becomes a very interesting character to study through psychological analysis, especially through Jung's concept of individuation.

Throughout the novel, Matthew's experience reflects the psychological process of individuation described by Jung (1959:490), where an individual faces their inner fears, shame, and unresolved issues to achieve self-awareness. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to analyse how Matthew Corbin's journey in *The Goldfish Boy* (2017) represents his psychological struggle and transformation through fear as a move toward individuation. The primary concern addressed in this research is how Matthew's fear influence his psychological growth and how his fear functions illustrate the process of individuation as proposed by Carl Gustav Jung. The study is guided by the following questions: first what is Matthew's fear portrayed in Lisa Thompson's *The Goldfish Boy*? and how does Matthew experience the process of individuation in Lisa Thompson's *The Goldfish Boy*?

This study focuses on analysing how fear that influence the psychological development of Matthew Corbin in Lisa Thompson's *The Goldfish Boy* (2017), and how his development aligns with Carl Jung's theory of individuation. The scope includes a detailed examination of Matthew's inner struggles that is fear

include his obsessive-compulsive disorder, guilt, and trauma furthermore, the ways in which these elements contribute to his acceptance of self and healing.

This study offers valuable insights into both literary analysis and psychological theory, focusing on how classical psychological frameworks are applied in modern young adult literature. Using Carl Gustav Jung's theory of individuation, it examines how Matthew Corbin's character development and the storytelling of Lisa Thompson's *The Goldfish Boy* (2017) are shaped by concepts of fear. Unlike classic heroes who fight external battles, Matthew is an inwardly tormented boy whose greatest conflict is against himself struggling with his fear.

The remainder of this article is structured as follows. Section 2 explains the methodology, including design, literary approach, data source, instruments, data collection procedure and analytical procedures. Section 3 presents the findings, highlighting what kind of fear that root in matthew using descriptive qualitative and how fear serve in individuation process especially on the stage of individuation. Section 4 discusses the findings in relation to existing Jungian literary studies and highlights the significance of fear as a catalyst for personal transformation in young adult literature and proposes directions for future research. Section 5 concludes the paper by summarizing the study's key contributions and practical recommendations.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

The Individuation Process is defined as a psychological process by which one integrates the conscious and unconscious parts of the psyche in an effort to achieve a more integrated and authentic sense of self. This concept is derived from Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology and is central to his conception of personal growth and self-realization. Individuation is the process of wholeness transformation from fragmented ego-consciousness into a fully individualized person expressing both the individual and universal properties of the psyche (Jung, 1968:275). Individuation means becoming an 'in-dividual', and, in so far as 'individuality' embraces our innermost, last, and incomparable uniqueness, it also implies becoming one's own self. We could therefore translate individuation as 'coming to selfhood' or 'selfrealization' (Jung, 1968:275). Based on the definition above, it can be understood that Jung believed everyone is unique that make them become who they really are as an individual.

Jung suggested this term to describe the process of psychological development, that he defined as becoming a unified and

also unique personality. At the heart of this process in his book Jung, C. G. (1968). The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. archetypes are key that shape in human experience: the persona (our outward identity), the shadow (the parts we hide or deny), the anima/animus (the inner feminine/masculine side), and the Self, which represents the unity and balance of the entire psyche. Individuation occurs when a person moves beyond the limited perspective of himself and begins to recognize and accept these deeper parts of the self.

There are some previous studies that discuss Jung's theory of individuation in literary works. Most of these studies focus on how characters reach self-growth by facing their unconscious mind, shadow, trauma, and identity conflict. However, there is still limited research that applies Jung's individuation theory to The Goldfish Boy (2017) by Lisa Thompson In Indonesia

The first related study is by Ningrum and Supsiadji (2024) from Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya, who conducted a study titled "Itsumi and Sayuri's Individuation Process in Akiyoshi Rikako's The Dark Maidens." This research uses Jung's theory to study the characters' ego, persona, shadow, and animus. The study finds that the two main characters pretend to be perfect in front of others, but their dark side (shadow) finally takes over. As a result, they make harmful and destructive decisions. The study shows that they go through a negative individuation, meaning they do not grow into better people but are controlled by their negative traits.

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The second related study is by Hanabilah Fatchu Zuhro (2020) from UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, titled "Individuation Process of the Main Characters in Okky Madasari's Bound." This research reveals that the characters experience developments in persona, shadow, and anima, but they do not fully reach individuation because they fail to integrate all aspects of their unconscious self.

In addition, there is research by Danylova (2015), from the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine, named "The Way to the Self: The Novel Steppenwolf Through the Lens of Jungian Process of Individuation." This research explores the character of Harry Haller in Hesse's novel Steppenwolf through the theoretical framework of individuation by Carl Jung. This study went into depth about how the character was struggling with the dual identities of his persona and shadow sides. At the same time, it became clear that the character fails to achieve individuation.

Based on the three previous studies above, it can be seen that all of them use Carl Jung's individuation theory to examine the psychological journey of characters in literary works. Each researcher explores how characters confront their unconscious, shadow, and inner conflicts as part of their self-development.

However, the studies have difference in data sources and outcomes. Two studies focus on characters who fail to complete the individuation process, while

one examines characters who also experience negative psychological development. Although these studies share similarities in theoretical foundation, they do not analyse The Goldfish Boy (2017) by Lisa Thompson.

Therefore, this research aims to fill the gap by applying Jung's individuation theory to a contemporary young adult novel and exploring how inner fear functions as a driving force toward individuation. This study focuses on how fear and emotional struggle guide the protagonist toward self-awareness and personal growth, offering a new perspective in analysing individuation within young adult literature, especially in the context of English literature studies in Indonesia.

METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This research uses a descriptive qualitative design as its main research method. This method helps to explore and analyse the data more deeply based on the information gathered from the research object. Through this method, the study provides a clear and detailed description of the findings. It focuses on understanding the meaning and context of non-numerical data. The collected data are then explained in a simpler form so that the research results are easier to understand, even if the original data were complex. The purpose of qualitative research is to understand and

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interpret phenomena as they are experienced and constructed by people in their natural contexts. It involves detailed, in-depth data collection and analysis, allowing researchers to identify patterns, themes, and categories" (Bazen et al., 2021:241). Therefore, qualitative research methods are used in this study to examine and interpret current conditions. This explanation supports the use of textual analysis in examining The Goldfish Boy (2017) by Lisa Thompson.

2.2 Literary Approach

This research uses a psychological literary approach to analyse a literary work. Literature often reflects real human experiences, emotions, and behaviours, and therefore a character in a story can represent the psychological conditions of real individuals. Authors create characters who think, feel, and behave like human beings, and these actions reflect psychological processes. Since human personality is shaped by psychological elements, a psychological approach becomes relevant in studying a character's inner life and development.

A psychological approach focuses on understanding the psychological aspects of a character. In this research, the approach is used to examine the internal mental state of the main character in The Goldfish Boy (2017), especially in relation to Carl Gustav Jung's theory of individuation. According to Jung (1968:238), the psychological approach explores unconscious mental processes that influence human behaviours, including dreams, memories, fears, and suppressed emotions.

2.3 Data Source

The novel that will be used as the object of this research is the novel by Lisa Thompson, The Goldfish Boy. This novel was first published in the United Kingdom in 2017 by Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., New York. This novel has a total of 255 pages and contains 38 chapters beginning with Chapter One: The Arrival and ending with Chapter Thirty-Eight: Sue's Barbecue, followed by an "About the Author" section.

2.4 Instrument

The main instrument in this research is the researcher, who serves as the primary tool for analysing and interpreting the data. This study uses a literary psychological approach based on Carl Gustav Jung's theory of individuation to examine how fear operates as a key psychological force in the character's development. The researcher conducts careful reading and interpretation to identify psychological elements within the text, particularly those related to the unconscious, the shadow, and the movement toward the Self.

2.5 Procedure

To collect valid data, the researcher focused on identifying scenes, dialogues, monologues and narrative descriptions that show Matthew's fear like anxiety, isolation, and gradual psychological growth. Fear is a central psychological aspect in this research, and therefore the researcher paid close attention to moments in the story where Matthew's internal struggle is revealed. Through careful reading, the researcher

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selected and noted important quotations that illustrate stages of Jung's individuation process, such as confronting the shadow, acknowledging emotional pain, and moving toward self-acceptance. According to Brevik (2019:2), proper reading requires both comprehension and interpretation. A reader must understand what they read, especially when the information is used to obtain meaning and support research finding. In this research, understanding the text means understanding the psychological meaning behind Matthew's behavior and emotional responses.

2.6 Data analysis

Data are collected from the novel in the form of quotations, dialogues, and narrative events that depict anxiety, trauma, internal conflict, and emotional development. The data are systematically analyzed by interpreting symbolic meanings and relating them to Jungian archetypes, such as the shadow, as well as stages of individuation. The findings demonstrate that fear functions not only as an obstacle but also as a catalyst for Matthew's psychological transformation. The study concludes by identifying the key psychological elements that influence Matthew's movement toward self-acceptance and individuation throughout the narrative.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was divided into two main sections: first, how Matthew's fear is portrayed in the novel, such as such as his fear of germs, physical contact, and

leaving the house; secondly, these fears are related to the early stages of the individuation process proposed by Jung, showing how Matthew starts to confront hidden parts of his personality. These together provide a clearer understanding of how fear shapes Matthew's behaviors and contributes to his psychological journey.

A. Matthew Fear Seen in Lisa Thompson's *The Goldfish Boy*

This section will present an analysis of how fear shapes Matthew Corbin's thoughts, actions, and personal growth in *The Goldfish Boy* (2017). It would appear that the novel shows how Matthew's life was greatly influenced by fear, most especially fears linked to trauma leads him into obsessive-compulsive disorder, and because of that he begins avoiding other people. These fears do not come from outside dangers, but from Matthew's own mind and memories. Because of this, fear becomes a major obstacle that affects his daily routines, his relationships, and the way he understands himself.

1. Fear of Germs and Physical Touch

Fear of germs and physical touch is the strongest and most defining fear portrayed in Matthew Corbin's character in *The Goldfish Boy* (2017). This fear shapes almost every aspect of his daily life, controlling his thoughts, routines, and even his social relationships.

The severity of Matthew's germ-related fear is shown early in the novel when he recalls one of his cleanings in his bathroom:

Now that I was at home I was much more in control and could clean pretty much whenever I liked. The bathroom caused me the most stress, because

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every time I went in there it felt infested with germs. (Thompson 2017:16)

This quotation reveals how he interprets ordinary places as dangerous. A bathroom, which is a normal and necessary part of a home, becomes for Matthew a space filled with invisible threats. The word "infested" is especially meaningful. It shows that Matthew does not see a few germs he imagines a full invasion, as if the germs are alive, spreading, and attacking him. His reaction is not based on reality, but on how his mind transforms fear into an overwhelming threat. The background Matthew's thinking about germs becomes even clearer when he explains the chain of fear that controls him:

My bedroom was the best part of the house. It was safe. It was free from germs. Out there, things were dangerous. What people didn't seem to understand was that dirt meant germs and germs meant illness and illness meant death. (Thompson 2017:15)

This quotation shows exactly how Matthew's fear works inside his mind. For him, dirt is not just dirt, it is the beginning of something deadly. He moves from dirt → germs → illness → death. This chain reaction explains why he panics over the smallest things. His mind turns simple experiences into life-threatening situations. This pattern also reflects cognitive distortion common in OCD, where simple thoughts quickly jump to extreme conclusions. Matthew's intense fear of germs does not only shape the way he thinks and interacts with others; it also influences where he feels safe. His belief that danger exists everywhere outside his controlled space leads to another important expression of his fear: his fear of leaving the house

2. Fear of Leaving the House

Matthew's fear of leaving the house is another major part of his psychological struggle in The Goldfish Boy (2017). This fear, often called agoraphobia, that is happens when

someone feels scared in places where they think it will be difficult to escape or get help (Balaram & Marwaha, 2025). People with this condition often worry that they might panic or experience something embarrassing outside.

Matthew's fear of leaving the house we can see in this scene where his parents invite him to go to a family barbecue at Aunt Jean's house. In the past, Matthew used to join these family events, but now his fear has become so strong that he feels unable to step outside. His mother and father try to persuade him gently, but the invitation immediately triggers his anxiety.

"Come on, son, it's the Mighty Picnic! You can't miss it, you've got to try and break that baseball record, remember? How many runs did you get again?" I shrugged. "I don't know." (Thompson, 2017: 48)

In this conversation between Matthew and his father is a moment showing how Matthew's fear of leaving the house right away affects his response to his parents. Encouraging him to join the family barbecue, reminding him of the "Mighty Picnic" and his old baseball achievements, they tried to make him recall some good memories times when Matthew used to go outside, play sports, and socialize without any sort of fear. Instead of getting excited, Matthew gives an extremely brief and uncertain answer: "I don't know." A shrug makes it obvious that he is feeling uncomfortable and doesn't want to discuss this topic anymore.

The simplicity of his answer shows how much fear limits him. He cannot even talk about leaving the house without feeling stressed. The fact that he used to enjoy picnics and baseball also highlights how much his condition has changed his life. What once gave him joy now triggers anxiety.

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Matthew's fear of leaving the house does not only limit his physical movement but also deepens his emotional and social distance from the people around him. His repeated avoidance refusing to babysit, lying about schoolwork, and withdrawing from family activities shows that he is trapped in a pattern of fear that prevents him from engaging with the outside world.

These fears function as symbols of the unconscious, especially the guilt he carries about his brother Callum's death. This guilt forms part of what Jung calls the shadow, the part of the self that is painful, rejected, or pushed away. Matthew avoids the outside world not only because he fears contamination, but because leaving the house forces him closer to the memories and emotions, he has tried so hard to suppress. His isolation becomes both a shield and a trap, protecting him from emotional pain while also preventing him from healing.

B. The Individuation Process of Matthew Corbin in Lisa Thompson's *The Goldfish Boy*

Researchers have recognized and discovered that there is a clear process of individuation evident in the development of Matthew Corbin, the main character in *The Goldfish Boy* (2017). According to Jung (1968:275), individuation refers to a psychological journey in which a person becomes aware of hidden aspects of themselves and gradually integrates them into a better, more balanced self. In Matthew's case, this process begins when the world he perceives as safe and controlled is not his true reality, but rather hinders his development in discovering his true self.

1. Persona

In the stages of individuation, the persona is the "mask" a person wears in front of others. It helps someone fit into society by showing only the parts of themselves they want people to see. For Matthew Corbin, his persona is the image of a normal schoolboy someone who goes to class, talks with friends, and acts like everything is fine. He uses this mask to hide his real problems, especially his fear of germs and his obsessive cleaning habits.

However, when Teddy Dawson goes missing, Matthew's persona can no longer protect him. His fear of what people think becomes less important than helping Teddy. The situation forces Matthew to step out of his comfort zone and act according to his true self, not the mask he has been hiding behind. For the first time, he stops caring whether people judge him. His focus shifts from hiding his OCD to participating in the search for Teddy. This change becomes clear when he asks Melody to buy him latex gloves an object that clearly shows his fear of germs. In the scene below, Matthew no longer tries to hide this behaviour from Melody:

"Thanks for getting the gloves. "She nodded. The bag sat between us untouched, and I resisted the urge to grab it and put a pair on. "I really do appreciate it. I know it was an odd thing to ask." I laughed nervously and she raised her eyebrows. I was expecting her to start asking questions, but she didn't. (Thompson, 2017:129)

In this quotation show that Matthew allows Melody to see this vulnerable part of him. He does not hide or lie. He even laughs nervously, signalling that he is anxious but still willing to show his true self. Then Matthew finally said his biggest fear directly to melody that show in the quotation below:

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"I've—I've got this problem. A fear of germs. That's why I needed the gloves. I'm sorry. It's not you ... There you go, you know my little secret now." (Thompson, 2017:129)

This moment is important because it represents the beginning of change within Matthew. His persona designed to make him look normal and hide his fears is no longer helping him. The pressure of the mystery and his growing desire to be involved in the real world push him to break his mask. He stops worrying about how others view him and begins acting based on what he truly feels and needs. By showing Melody the gloves and tell the truth about his biggest fear and not hiding his OCD anymore, Matthew takes his first step toward his true self.

As Matthew's persona weakens, deeper levels of his psychological struggle begin to surface. When he no longer uses the social mask to conceal his fears, he has to confront emotions and memories he has avoided for a very long time. When the persona can no longer protect the individual, the next step in individuation involves meeting one's shadow: the painful, hurtful, and often negative features of the self that an individual usually tries to keep hidden.

2. The Shadow

In Jung's (1968:223) theory *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, the shadow refers to the parts of a person that are painful, hidden, or rejected feelings that people do not want others to see or even admit to themselves. In Matthew's case, the shadow contains his deepest fears, guilt, and painful memories that he keeps completely hidden. While a secret can be good or bad, the shadow specifically holds the emotions

and beliefs a person feels ashamed of or cannot accept.

After a tiring journey to uncover the mystery of who kidnapped Teddy and most importantly, Matthew faces the shadow, namely his fear of germs. Matthew finally has the courage to reveal the reason why he always cleans and why he is afraid of germs to his parents.

"Sorry, but I need to talk to you," I said. "There's something I have to tell you." Dad quickly switched the TV off and they both sat there, waiting. I wrung my hands together, digging my thumb into my palm. "I clean because ... I clean because I worry if I don't, someone will die." Mum gasped and gripped Dad's arm. "What do you mean?" said Dad. I couldn't look at him. I knew that if I caught his eye I'd just stop and run away. I carried on. "In my head, I believe that if I don't keep clean, if I don't get rid of all of the germs, then I could get ill ..." I cleared my throat. "... and if I get ill then I could make you ill and then you might die. Like Callum did." (Thompson, 2017:244)

In this quotation, Matthew finally tells his parents the real reason behind his compulsive cleaning. This is the point where he ceases to run from his shadow and decides to confront it with honesty. The fear he discloses is not merely of germs; it has stemmed from a very strong feeling of guilt since childhood that he was responsible for Callum's death. This guilt has resided in his unconsciousness for all these years and grew into obsessive behavior. Based on Jungian theory, such repressed fear and guilt constitute the core of the shadow. By speaking these words, Matthew brings what was hidden in his unconscious into the enlightenment. His inability to look at his father shows how deeply rooted his shame is,

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but saying it aloud means he is no longer controlled by the fear. This confession connects directly to his earlier growth: just as he faced his fear of the outside world to save Teddy, he now faces the internal fear that has shaped his entire identity.

This scene marks the completion of the final stage of confronting the shadow. Earlier in the story, Matthew's fear of germs kept him trapped and isolated, unable to live freely. But by confessing the truth, accepting help, and allowing himself to be supported, Matthew becomes a stronger and more authentic version of himself. He is no longer driven by shame or guilt; instead, he begins to move toward healing and self-acceptance. Through this, Matthew fully overcomes the shadow that once dominated his life.

3. The Anima/ Animus

In Jungian psychology, the anima is the feminine side of a man's personality, and the animus is the masculine side of a female's personality. According to Jung (1968:117), the anima symbolically indicates traits such as emotional consciousness, sensitivity, empathy, and the capability to express emotions. However, the feminine side of a male's personality is commonly repressed, as it symbolically indicates weakness. When the anima is too dominant, an individual experiences fear, imbalance of emotions, or a lack of courage. Individuation occurs when the anima is recognized and integrated into consciousness, allowing emotional maturity and inner balance.

This condition is clearly shown when Melody is bullied by Jake and Matthew only watches from his window instead of helping her. The following quotation illustrates his hesitation:

Jake put a finger to his chin as if he was thinking about letting her pass but hadn't quite decided yet, and then he leaned toward her and grabbed her wrist. Twisting around, she looked straight up at me. She must have known I was there all along, watching her like an idiot. I held her gaze for a moment. (Thompson, 2017:59)

This scene shows that Matthew is emotionally stuck. Even though he feels worried about Melody, he cannot take action to help her. Because his anima is strong and limits his ability to express empathy through behavior. By watching silently from the window, Matthew shows his emotional separation from the real world and his difficulty in actively participating in it. Because Matthew can't stand seeing Melody bullied by Jake, Matthew finally suppressed his anima to help Melody as he finally fights his fear and chooses to act. This change is shown in the quotation below:

I couldn't bear it any longer. I raced downstairs and opened the front door using my shirt to cover the handle. "Hi! Melody! Sorry about that, I was in the back." Jake scoffed. "Oh I see, the weirdos like to stick together, do they? You know she's only got a thing for corpses, don't you?" (Thompson, 2017:59)

In this moment, Matthew breaks free from passivity. Although he is still afraid, he allows his emotions to guide his actions. This indicates that his anima is suppressed or balanced, helping him develop courage and emotional awareness. By stepping outside and helping Melody, Matthew reconnects with reality and begins to balance fear with empathy.

As the story progresses, Matthew continues to integrate his anima through emotional openness. His involvement in solving Teddy Dawson's disappearance and his decision to confess his deepest fears and guilt to

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his parents show that he no longer cannot control his emotions. By expressing vulnerability and accepting support, Matthew achieves emotional growth. At this stage, Matthew reaches a crucial point in the individuation process. By integrating his persona, anima, confronting his shadow, and accepting his true feelings, he moves toward psychological wholeness. This integration marks the completion of his individuation journey, as he becomes more courageous, emotionally balanced, and capable of living authentically

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that if fear is left untreated, it will eat away at a person's psyche, resulting in devastating emotional consequences and in some situation, fear manages to consume a person's mind, it can lead to feelings of anger towards oneself. This situation can even lead to self-hate and make those around him feel unsafe. This evidence show fear can keeps an individual trapped in a vicious circle of suffering, unable to live freely.

However, the analysis also shows that fear can become a catalyst for personal growth. While fear has the power to destroy, it also holds the potential to initiate healing. Matthew's transformation begins when Teddy Dawson goes missing, a moment that forces him to confront the fears he has long avoided. By confronting these inner struggles, he moves forward in the individuation process, taking early steps toward self-awareness, responsibility, and emotional strength. This demonstrates Jung's idea that facing fear is necessary for psychological integration. Rather than allowing fear to control him, Matthew gradually transforms it into a source of courage and personal development.

Furthermore, this study concludes that the individuation stage that most powerfully dominates Matthew's journey is the confrontation and integration of the shadow. Although Matthew first breaks through his persona, and later he can balance his anima, which can develop his courage to overcome his fear, the most powerful thing to overcome his fear is the shadow stage that defines his psychological development.

Overall, the researcher can conclude that Matthew's story demonstrates that fear can function not only as an obstacle but also as a catalyst for psychological growth. Through confronting his inner conflict, Matthew slowly reconnects with the world around him and begins the long process of healing. His journey illustrates the core of Jungian individuation: a movement from avoidance to acceptance, from fragmentation to wholeness, and from self-blame to self understanding. By revealing how fear shapes and transforms an individual, the novel and this study highlight the significance of psychological insight in young adult literature and show how inner struggles can guide a person toward a greater and more authentic sense of self.

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