

## Persona, Career and Mental Health

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### Abstract

The theoretical-reflective essay explores the dynamic between career and mental health from the Jungian concept of persona. Defined as the social mask an individual adopts to interact with the world, the persona relates to career development and can either contribute to or present an obstacle to career adaptability, with impacts on mental health. In relation to career, the persona can perform as both a protective factor and a risk to mental health. The essay emphasizes the need for a balance between external expectations and the authentic expressions of the ego and the Self in career processes. Thus, this study utilized a theoretical approach based on works by Jung and other authors. The objective was to offer, in an original way, an integrated view of the interaction of these three concepts: persona, career, and mental health, which are often presented independently in the literature.

### Conflicts of interest:

The authors state no professional or personal interest that may create a conflict of interests regarding this manuscript.

**Descriptors:** occupations; organizational psychology; mental health; Jungian psychology.



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## Persona, carreira e saúde mental

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### Resumo

O ensaio teórico-reflexivo explora a dinâmica entre carreira e saúde mental a partir do conceito junguiano de persona. Definida como a máscara social que o indivíduo adota para interagir com o mundo, a persona relaciona-se com o desenvolvimento da carreira profissional e pode contribuir ou se apresentar como um obstáculo para sua adaptabilidade, com impactos na saúde mental. Ao se relacionar com a carreira, a persona pode atuar como um fator protetivo e também como um risco para a saúde mental, o que acentua a necessidade de um equilíbrio entre as expectativas externas e as expressões autênticas do ego e do Self no desenvolvimento da carreira. Este estudo utilizou uma abordagem teórica, baseada em obras de Jung e outros autores, com o objetivo de apresentar, de forma original, uma visão integrada da interação desses três conceitos: persona, carreira e saúde mental, os quais, frequentemente, são abordados de modo independente pela literatura.

**Descritores:** profissões; psicologia organizacional; saúde mental; psicologia junguiana.

## Persona, carrera y salud mental

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### Resumen

El ensayo teórico-reflexivo explora la dinámica entre carrera y salud mental a partir del concepto junguiano de persona. Definida como la máscara social que el individuo adopta para interactuar con el mundo, la persona se relaciona con el desarrollo de carrera y puede contribuir o presentarse como un obstáculo para la adaptabilidad de carrera, con impactos en la salud mental. Al relacionarse con la carrera, la persona puede actuar tanto como un factor protector como un riesgo para la salud mental. Se acentúa la necesidad de un equilibrio entre las expectativas externas y las expresiones auténticas del ego y del Self en los procesos de carrera. Así, este estudio utilizó un enfoque teórico basado en obras de Jung y otros autores. El objetivo fue ofrecer, de forma original, una visión integrada de la interacción de estos tres conceptos: persona, carrera y salud mental, que frecuentemente se presentan en la literatura de modo independiente.

**Descriptor:** profesiones; psicología de las organizaciones; salud mental; psicología junguiana.

## Introduction

**In the contemporary world, the relationship between professional career and mental health has become an area of growing interest for psychological research and practice** (Mattos et al., 2020). This theoretical-reflective essay proposes to explore the dynamics between these constructs through the Jungian concept of persona, considering its importance in psychological development. In this conception, the association between persona and career may represent protective or risk factors in relation to mental health.

In this essay, career refers to the subjective, psychological dimension in which it takes shape as an individual's movement, adaptation, and maladaptation in relation to both the world of work and the self over time. From this perspective, career development is mediated by individuals' work relationships and the roles they perform, resulting in the construction of purposes, meanings, and narratives (McCash, 2018). Mental health, in turn, is conceived as a broad concept: the possibility of being and existing in the world through one's development, emancipation, and participation in the most diverse spheres of life, with a view to creating narratives (Schleder & Holanda, 2015).

Contemporary transformations of work and careers may generate challenges for mental health, such as stress, anxiety, depression, and burnout (Herr, 1989). Analytical psychology, particularly through the concept of persona, offers a perspective for understanding how individuals interact in their careers and how these transformations impact mental health (McCash, 2018; Romão, 2022). Thus, the interpretive hypothesis is that the relationship between career and persona impacts mental health, as represented in Figure 1, since the characteristics and quality of this relationship may favor or harm the mental health of a given professional.

The persona is the mask individuals use to interact with the external world. It is a necessary construction for social adaptation, enabling people to perform socially accepted roles and integrate into different cultural and professional contexts (Jung, 1958/2014a). The persona, however, is only one of the many aspects of the psyche. Within this relationship, the ego is the center of consciousness and personal identity. The persona functions as an interface between the ego and the external world, facilitating adaptation but also potentially leading to ego alienation. This occurs when the ego identifies excessively with the persona (Jung, 1958/2014a).

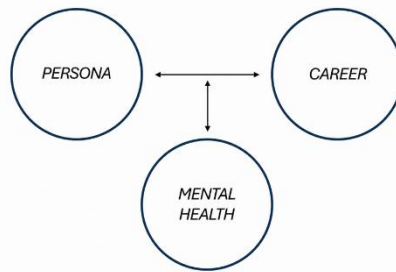


Figure 1. Relationship among persona, career, and mental health  
Source: Prepared by the authors (2025).

Although the presence of an adaptive persona is widely recognized as beneficial, the implications of its absence or fragility must also be considered. The lack of a well-structured persona may leave individuals vulnerable to environmental pressures and expectations, without the symbolic buffering provided by this psychic interface with the world. Such direct exposure may intensify feelings of overload, increasing susceptibility to emotional exhaustion and psychic defensiveness. In these contexts, flexibility of the persona becomes a fundamental competence, particularly in unstable and demanding settings (Hudson, 1978; Bisagni, 2018). The ability to adjust the persona to circumstances is essential to psychological resilience and to the construction of mental health in constantly changing environments (Salman, 2017).

Understanding the concept of persona is relevant in contexts in which individuals are led to assume specific public configurations in order to meet professional and institutional expectations. The persona is

(. . .) the system of adaptation or the manner we assume in dealing with the world. Every calling or profession, for example, has its own characteristic persona. (. . .) The world will force him to accept a mask, to build up a persona (. . .) (Jung, 1959/2012, p. 126, para. 221).

The persona may also be an idealized construction intended to secure recognition and belonging; when rigidly maintained, however, it compromises individual spontaneity and authenticity. This tension increases when the projected image is disconnected from internal experience, potentially generating feelings of imposture, falseness, anguish, discontinuity, and psychological suffering. In such cases, the persona ceases to function as a flexible mediation and begins to conceal, or even deny, relevant aspects of the Self, making meaningful engagement with one's own professional trajectory more difficult (Negley & Smith, 2019).

The continuous pressure to sustain a specific persona, shaped by social demands and/or demands for high performance at work, may lead to emotional exhaustion and ego alienation, compromising mental health. In contexts where an idealized image must be constantly reaffirmed, the persona tends to become rigid, functioning more like armor than skin. Social expectations play a decisive role in this process by imposing models of conduct and representation that do not always correspond to subjective experience. When such standards are internalized uncritically, they reinforce modes of action that deny the Self (Hopcke, 1995; Fawkes, 2015). The importance of examining the relationship between persona and career and its impact on mental health is underscored by the growing incidence of work-related mental disorders (Dejours, 2017; World Health Organization [WHO], 2000).

## The concept of persona

The term persona comes from Latin and denotes the mask worn by actors in the theater to portray fixed roles, allowing the projection of the voice and the character being performed (Jacobi, 1971/1976; Jung, 1928/2014a). The concept was later incorporated into analytical psychology to represent a facet of personality constituted through social relationships, functioning as a mediation between the ego and the external world. In this sense, the persona serves as a bridge between one's internal self-image and the way one wishes to be socially perceived, enabling the individual to relate to the collective in a functional manner consistent with cultural norms (Jung, 1928/2014a). Individuals thus enter social processes, including the workplace, through the tension between creating a relational style and striving to meet expectations (Jung, 1959/2012). When the creation of a style prevails, the persona contributes to personality development; when the need to meet expectations predominates, however, the individual succumbs to social demands. Across a career, these two attitudes may alternate, conflict, or converge.

Beyond social relationships, the persona is directly linked to collective structures, as it is understood to be a necessary archetypal function developed through socialization and education. Its primary purpose is to ensure the stability of relationships and social roles, thereby making contact among individuals possible. Its formation is inevitable and shaped by three principal factors: the individual's physical and psychic constitution, the ego ideal, and the prevailing collective ideals of the period. As long as it retains its flexibility and remains integrated into the totality of the personality, the persona contributes to psychic maturation and social adaptation (Jacobi, 1971/1976).

From a cultural perspective, the persona is understood as a social archetype that expresses shared symbolic patterns. It enables individuals to contend with social expectations and the demands of their time, functioning not only as a protective factor but also as a resource for communication and adaptive expression (Hopcke, 1995). This archetype may manifest through elements such as gender, profession, social status, or family role, reflecting internalized social conventions (Samuels et al., 1986). Different personas are mobilized throughout life according to context, and their articulation is essential to psychological development (Hopcke, 1995).

The persona is often understood as a superficial or inauthentic structure, but this simplified conception does not encompass its symbolic complexity. Although distinct from individuality, the persona is not essentially opposed to the ego or the Self; it is a construction necessary for adaptation to life in society (Jung, 1921/2012). Although its appearance may be socially coded, it is no less legitimate than other aspects of the personality, because it incorporates the collective conventions and values that organize psychic life (Hopcke, 1995). By enabling an individual's social participation, the persona influences interpersonal relationships and the ways of thinking and feeling that are possible within a given cultural context (Dawson, 2008). Thus, although it represents a layer of the psyche oriented toward the external world, the persona should not be mistaken for a mere device of concealment or manipulation; it is an agency of mediation and protection for the ego in the face of external demands (Jung, 1928/2014a).

When we analyse the persona, we strip off the mask and discover that what seemed to be individual is at bottom collective; in other words, that the persona was only a mask of the collective psyche. Fundamentally the persona is nothing real: it is a compromise between individual and society as to what a man should appear to be: name, title, occupation, this or that. In a certain sense all this is real, yet in relation to the essential individuality of the person concerned it is only a secondary reality, a compromise formation, in making which others often have a greater share than he. The persona is a semblance, a two-dimensional reality, to give it a nickname (Jung, 1928/2014a, p. 46, para. 246, emphasis in original).

As a collective aspect of personality, the persona is shaped by culture and changes over time. It expresses behavioral and emotional patterns associated with the conventions of a given era, social groups, professional functions, or historical forms of work organization (Pieri, 2022). In human development, the persona is

introjected from childhood and transmitted through language, social norms, and values internalized through education. This early internalization limits subjective freedom because it imposes specific conditions of belonging before the exercise of will or conscious reflection (Pieri, 2022). It is therefore essential that the persona be integrated into the ego consciously and dynamically, preserving its plasticity and preventing adaptive rigidity (Hopcke, 1995). In this regard, Jung (1928/2014b) states: "If people identify with the crust, they cannot do anything but live out their biography" (p. 90).

The capacity to adjust the persona to different life contexts is essential to balancing external demands and internal needs. This attitude of integrating personality with adaptation to the social field allows ongoing adjustments through which the persona contributes to important dimensions of life, notably matters related to work. It is nevertheless important to avoid turning people into two-dimensional realities in which commitment to social demands deprives life of its potency. In this sense, psychological resilience depends in part on flexibility in constructing social roles (Salman, 2017). A persona that protects without suffocating and expresses without concealing contributes to psychic health and the continuity of the individuation process. Like a "two-faced mask," it simultaneously conceals and reveals aspects of the individual, enabling the ego to relate to the collective without severing its connection to the Self (Pieri, 2022). At the same time as it delineates the individual's social contours, the persona reveals symbolic forms of psychic expression and may emerge in dreams, images, gestures, clothing, and everyday choices (Hopcke, 1995).

The persona relates to other agencies of the psyche, such as the ego and the shadow, composing a dynamic network of mediations. It functions as the outermost layer of personality, a kind of psychic skin facing the world, whereas the shadow comprises repressed or as-yet undeveloped contents of personality, including socially unacceptable fears, desires, and impulses. The ego, in turn, represents the center of consciousness and mediates between the persona and the Self. Developing a flexible and conscious persona is therefore an essential stage of individuation, characterized by movement toward integrating the various aspects of the psyche and realizing the Self as a unifying center (Jung, 1928/2014a).

The adaptive function of the persona may, however, become dysfunctional when it crystallizes into a fixed, automatic role disconnected from psychic totality. In such cases, individuals cease to recognize the persona as a temporary resource for mediation and begin to identify it as their complete identity, reducing themselves to a rigidly performed social role. The rigidity of the persona compromises the dynamism of the psyche, alienating the ego from its internal sources of spontaneity and authenticity. The

individual then becomes a caricature of the self, a “walking cliché,” often functional and socially valued yet internally dissociated and impoverished. From this perspective, the aim of psychological development is not to eliminate the persona but to integrate it consciously into the personality as a whole, enabling it to act as a bridge between the internal and external worlds, protecting without concealing, mediating without dominating (Jacobi, 1971/1976).

## Persona and career

The biography of a public figure is generally, to a great extent, the story of that person's persona, illustrating the profound connection between persona and life narrative. This observation highlights the importance of the persona in constructing narrative identities, particularly in choosing professions and adapting to career expectations. Career identity, as an expression of the persona, reflects the need for social adaptation and is strongly influenced by culture and the collective (Jung, 1957/2011).

The pursuit of a career often entails creating a persona aligned with social and professional expectations, which in turn manifest what Ribeiro (2014) calls “career discourses” that become hegemonic in particular periods. The career persona may become a “protective wall” that conceals possible connections between the ego and the Self, leading to a life dominated by social roles and stereotyped biographies (Jung, 1928/2014a). Moreover, excessive identification with the career persona may result in dissociation from the Self and a life devoid of authenticity and depth (Jacobi, 1971/1976).

Social expectations regarding career place considerable pressure on individuals, often requiring them to construct a persona that does not reflect the development of the personality as a whole. Developing a career persona entails balancing adaptation to social demands with the preservation of personal authenticity and avoiding the construction of a life based on external expectations, which may result in a lack of meaning and personal fulfillment (Hudson, 1978; Hopcke, 1995). Flexibility and the ability to adapt the persona to changing circumstances are viewed as essential capacities for psychological resilience and mental health (Jacobi, 1971/1976; Hudson, 1978).

Flexibility of the persona constitutes a central skill in a constantly changing world of work, demanding adaptability resources such as curiosity, control, confidence, and future vision/planning, as proposed in career construction theory (Savickas, 2013). In a convergent direction, psychological resilience may be understood, in part, as a function of the persona's adjustment to circumstances,



expressed in the capacity to absorb and react to situations of change (Irigaray et al., 2017).

In this sense, the persona constitutes a means of adapting to new contextual demands, especially in dynamic work environments where responsibilities and expectations change rapidly (Salman, 2017). Through the persona, individuals explore social roles and balance external demands with the development and preservation of identity. It therefore functions as a resource for confronting career challenges across the lifespan, in keeping with Savickas's (2013) adaptability model and the understanding of the persona's role in mediating between adaptation and identity (McCash, 2018).

### **The persona as a protective factor in the dynamics between career and mental health**

In the context of career and mental health, the persona is a psychic construction that serves as a psychological defense mechanism. It acts as a protective layer that helps filter and manage external pressures, keeping the ego separate from and protected against the demands and criticism of the external world. This is particularly relevant in work relationships, where individuals may be subjected to constant evaluation and demands. The persona enables individuals to perform their career roles effectively without feeling excessively vulnerable (Hudson, 1978).

The protective function of the persona is evident in its capacity to provide a sense of stability and continuity, especially during crises or transitions. In high-pressure situations, such as important presentations or critical negotiations, a persona of confidence and competence may help preserve calm and clarity of thought. This capacity for emotional distance is crucial for professionals in emotionally demanding fields such as health care, education, and social work (MacGuire, 2017). Maintaining a professional persona is essential to preventing emotional exhaustion and preserving mental health (Salman, 2017).

Flexibility is critical to the persona's protective function. The capacity to adjust the persona according to contextual demands enables individuals to maintain a healthy balance between internal needs and external expectations. Such flexibility is a form of psychological resilience essential to navigating changes and challenges (Negley & Smith, 2019). A critical issue emerges here: certain organizations that adopt less centralized and hierarchical management arrangements often prescribe flexibility and authenticity as requirements for what they consider adequate performance. These demands, however, are frequently guided exclusively by market interests, which are not always—and in many

cases are rarely—consistent with authentic processes of personality development.

The protective persona can thus be understood as a psychic organization that enables individuals to remain cohesive in the face of the world's demands; that is, the persona is constructed through the dynamics between psychic integrity and the social field. In this regard, the persona helps establish boundaries between professional and personal life, protecting the ego from external demands. Such separation is essential to preventing burnout, especially in contexts marked by blurred boundaries among life spheres and by the constant pressure to remain visible and responsive, features of the accelerated contemporary world (Bisagni, 2018). When lived consciously and flexibly, the persona allows individuals to sustain social roles without confusing themselves with those roles, functioning as a “psychic skin” that preserves emotional integrity in adverse contexts (Schmidt, 2012). In this sense, a well-developed persona that remains permeable to the needs of the ego and the Self may be an important resource for psychic balance throughout a career, fostering not only social adaptation but also subjective continuity and care for mental health (Hudson, 1978; MacGuire, 2017).

Although the persona has a protective function in mediating between external demands and internal needs, its operation is not risk-free. The very structure that enables individuals to position themselves effectively in the face of demands may generate psychological vulnerability when it becomes rigid or excessively identified with external expectations, or when a well-defined persona is lacking. This duality underscores the need to explore the potentially negative aspects of the persona in its dynamics with career and the consequences for mental health.

### **The persona as a risk factor in the dynamics between career and mental health**

The persona may become a significant risk factor for mental health when there is excessive identification with social roles, particularly in professional contexts that demand a high degree of consistency in image and behavior. Such overidentification may distance individuals from the Self, resulting in existential crises marked by feelings of disconnection, emptiness, and inauthenticity (Hudson, 1978; Hopcke, 1995). When lived rigidly and unconsciously, the persona obscures the Self and prevents the soul from being expressed in the world. This disconnection tends to intensify in leadership positions or during career transitions, when the pressure

to sustain idealized images becomes even more pronounced (MacGuire, 2017).

Burnout is a risk that may be associated with maintaining an idealized persona, especially when individuals feel compelled to sustain a permanent image of high competence, energy, and control. This demand may lead to emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and a sense of inefficacy, which are central characteristics of burnout syndrome (Pêgo & Pêgo, 2016). Overly structured personas may function as defensive armor, masking feelings of inadequacy and repressing aspects of the Self. The subjective depletion characteristic of burnout may be understood as the effect of a persona that operates autonomously and rigidly, dissociated from the individual's affective experience, thereby compromising vitality and authenticity in professional practice (Hudson, 1978).

The absence of a well-defined persona also constitutes a risk factor. Without a mediating structure to filter and organize relationships with the environment, individuals are directly exposed to external demands and become more vulnerable to criticism, instability, and feelings of marginalization. Jung (1928/2014a) observes that the absence of a minimally functional persona compromises the ego's adaptation to the external world, exposing individuals to disorganized experiences and a cycle of psychic exhaustion. The risk therefore lies not only in the rigidity of the persona but also in the absence of adequate mediation between the ego and the collective.

The pressure to sustain a persona incompatible with one's internal state may also provoke psychosomatic manifestations, including sleep disturbances, physical illness, and symptoms related to chronic stress. In contexts where authenticity is inhibited, psychosomatic symptoms may emerge as expressions of a one-sided functioning of the psyche, in which the dissociation between social image and subjective experience prevents the symbolic elaboration of suffering (Okumura et al., 2020).

Maintaining a rigid and inauthentic persona shaped by external expectations may limit spontaneity and generate feelings of disconnection and exhaustion, particularly in highly demanding professional contexts (Negley & Smith, 2019). It may consequently damage work relationships by hindering the formation of genuine bonds and support networks. Overidentification with an idealized professional image compromises spontaneity and intensifies feelings of imposture (Fawkes, 2015). Recognizing the persona as a necessary construction that becomes potentially dangerous when lived unconsciously or in a dissociated manner broadens our understanding of possible paths for sustaining mental health

throughout a career. Cultivating a conscious relationship with one's persona does not mean denying it but integrating it.

### **Persona: constructing mental health and career**

Constructing a particular professional persona over the course of a career entails the capacity to inhabit social roles consciously while recognizing the boundaries between the persona and the Self. Clarity regarding the persona's function enables individuals to avoid making it absolute. A persona constructed in integration with the Self thus allows individuals to embody the soul in the world in ways that are ethical, aesthetic, and responsive to the demands of professional life (MacGuire, 2017), contributing to a more creative professional experience (Stebbins, 2017). Awareness of the persona in professional contexts helps individuals recognize the boundaries between their social role and their individuality, preventing rigid identifications that impoverish life. Such recognition contributes to alignment between role and authenticity in the construction of a more integrated professional identity (Stebbins, 2017).

Psychological freedom arises when individuals recognize that they are performing roles while retaining awareness of and choice regarding how to inhabit them (Hudson, 1978). This symbolic integration among different aspects of personality fosters subjective continuity, prevents psychic fragmentation, and contributes to constructing mental health throughout the career.

The persona may facilitate social adaptation, support personal and emotional development, and help integrate personal and professional aspects of life. Through the persona, individuals can build relationships grounded in shared interests and values, creating support networks that are fundamental to mental health. These relationships provide emotional support and create opportunities for career development and personal growth. By allowing the authentic and balanced expression of different aspects of personality, the persona facilitates career development and contributes to a more satisfying and integrated life.

In professional contexts, the persona mediates between the ego and social expectations, enabling adaptation to the environment without compromising subjective continuity throughout the career. Conversely, when an unconscious and defensive identification with socially valued idealized images occurs, the persona tends to crystallize into a rigid structure that operates automatically and in dissociation from the Self. This process compromises the persona's mediating function, impoverishes the expression of the soul, and restricts the individual's creative spontaneity, fostering alienated

and potentially pathogenic forms of adaptation (Jacobi, 1971/1976; Jung, 1921/2012; Fawkes, 2015).

It thus becomes evident that fostering a flexible persona, permeable to dialogue between social roles and the Self, is an important condition both for developing a meaningful career and for preserving mental health. Cultivating a conscious relationship with the persona does not entail rejecting social roles but inhabiting them symbolically, with inner freedom and subjective groundedness.

## Final considerations

This theoretical-reflective essay sought to explore the ways in which the persona may support or hinder mental health throughout a career, based on the interpretive hypothesis that the relationship between career and persona directly affects mental health. The analysis showed that, in the context of work, the persona is a necessary resource for adaptation and social interaction and may either foster protective processes or compromise mental health, depending on the quality of this relationship. In this sense, the capacity to adjust the persona over the course of career development emerges as an important condition for sustaining mental health amid change, transition, and adversity.

The persona was found to operate as a protective factor by providing a layer of defense against external pressures. However, excessive identification with the persona, its becoming rigid and dissociated from the ego–Self axis, or the absence of a well-established persona may give rise to feelings of alienation, imposture, and emotional exhaustion, with negative effects on mental health. These aspects underscore the importance of a persona that is clearly delineated yet flexible and permits the genuine expression of internal values, emotions, and positions.

The reflections presented here indicate that both the absence of and excessive identification with the persona entail risks, albeit distinct ones: direct and unmediated exposure to professional demands may intensify psychological suffering, whereas the rigidity of the persona may lead to a symbolic impoverishment of professional life. The quality of the relationship established with the persona throughout a career—especially in contexts marked by idealization and performance pressure—is therefore relevant to understanding both pathways to illness and possibilities for mental health care.

The implications of this analysis are significant for the field of work psychology and for professionals involved in personal and career development. Promoting awareness of how the persona is

constructed and lived may foster more consistent and sustainable professional paths. Clinical and institutional listening practices may benefit from attending to how the persona adjusts to lived situations, particularly when external demands and the Self are in tension.

Regarding research agendas, future studies may further investigate the relationship among persona, career, and mental health from different empirical and conceptual perspectives. Studies considering different professions and cultural contexts could examine how normative and institutional demands influence the formation, maintenance, and transformation of the persona over the course of a career, especially during transitions, professional redefinition, and prolonged exposure to performance pressures. Longitudinal investigations are particularly relevant for tracking adjustments in the persona over time and their effects on psychological suffering and subjective continuity.

On a complementary level, research may explore the symbolic aspects of the persona by investigating how individuals symbolically inhabit professional roles and how the persona operates as a symbol mediating individual and collective dimensions, articulating subjective meanings, cultural values, and archetypal images. As Hopcke (1995) proposes, the persona constitutes a liminal space in which everyday work experiences may acquire symbolic density, fostering integration between the profane and sacred dimensions of human experience. Articulating empirical and symbolic approaches may broaden understanding of the connections among career, meaning-making, psychological suffering, and mental health.

In dialogue with Savickas (2013), career may be understood as a narrative and social construction produced through the interrelationship between the individual and cultural and institutional contexts. This perspective expands the analysis beyond the intrapsychic by integrating collective and contemporary dimensions of the world of work. In this setting, the persona functions as an essential aspect mediating external expectations and the Self and may either support or compromise mental health according to its flexibility and degree of integration.

By addressing the persona as a mediator in the relationship between individual and career, this essay delineates a field of reflection that articulates the subjective and collective dimensions of career. The analysis contributes to understanding the ways in which socially sustained images permeate career construction, producing psychic effects that may either foster creative processes or intensify experiences of suffering. This approach may help refine mental health care practices by highlighting the centrality of the

relationship with the persona in mediating among social demands, identity, and subjective continuity in contemporary life.

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