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## Twins: a unique relationship and its implications for parents and psychotherapy

### Abstract

If we look carefully at our fascination with twins and the origins of this excitement, we find this reveals how our perceptions of twins reflect our own longing for a perfect soul-mate and the effect this personal projection has on the development in twins.

Twins share a deep psychic bond that forms the core of their twinship but they are NEVER identical. Many factors will affect their development, including the early mutual resonances and sensate experiences between them and parental and societal attitudes in raising them. The internal dynamics of the twin relationship and the factors that crucially affect and shape it are complex. They will include the nature of the internal twin bond; the twins' relationships with the parents and siblings, including their perceptions about the twin relationship; the twins' perceptions of each other within the intricately bound twin relationship; each twin's perception of the other twin's relationship with the parents; and the outside world with its expectations and strictures on twins. It is important that we enable twins to develop individually within the twin relationship rather than remain as a bound pair and pay attention to the factors that influence this development.

Both our unconscious perceptions about twins and the way these perceptions affect our behaviour and attitudes towards the twins will influence the individual development in twins and our treatment of twins in society. This is reflected in literature and in cultural practices throughout the world, and in the local myths, religious practices and unconscious beliefs upon which they are based.