An Introduction To Archetypes: The Patterns That Shape Our Reality
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Archetypes are “original patterns” in the human psyche. Carl Gustav Jung, believed that universal, mythical characters reside within the collective (or shared) unconscious of people the world over. Joseph Campbell took this concept even further and, in comparing the mythologies of the world, revealed just how common, similar and universal they are. Archetypes represent fundamental human motifs of our experience as we evolved as a species; and they often evoke deeply rooted emotional compulsions.

So you might be wondering by now, OK, what does that have to do with me? and, how do they shape our reality?

Imagine for a moment, that you’re driving a 6 speed high performance sports car. You rev the engine, and take the on ramp to the Interstate. But as you get on the highway...you find you can’t get out of 1st gear. The speed limit is 70 mph, but you can’t get out of 1st...what to do right? You’d be in a fine mess wouldn’t you? But, hey, there’s 5 more gears on that shifter...what if you put it into 2nd, 3rd, 4th...and so on. No more problems. But just like you don’t want to do 70 mph in 1st gear, you wouldn’t want to do 10 mph in 6th right? So, there are appropriate gears for appropriate situations. This is where the power of archetypes becomes more clearly understandable.

Although there are many different archetypes, there are twelve primary patterns that symbolize basic human motivations. Each type has its own set of values, meanings and personality traits. These twelve types can be divided into three sets of four, namely Ego, Soul and Self. The types in each set share a common driving source, for example types within the Ego set are driven to fulfill ego-defined agendas.
Most, if not all, people have several archetypes at play in their personality construct; however, one archetype tends to dominate the personality in general. And, there are generally some archetypes that will be completely or relatively undeveloped and untapped.

What this means for you, is, knowing which archetypes are most predominant in your mind, and which are non-existent or under-active, can allow you to focus on strengthening the weaker archetypes and rely less on the primary archetypes you commonly use. Think of this as adding more gears to your vehicle.

“The inherent problem is that if all we have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail.”

Another way to understand just how important archetypes can be, is to imagine a few of your favorite movies. Let’s say the first movie is an adventure, the kind where you have a hero of some kind, and he or she is faced with an immediate threatening situation. Now, as the “hero or heroine” they come out, guns blazing, and save the day. But imagine for a moment if that “hero” archetype was instead a jester. And no, we’re not talking Joker and his exploding chattering teeth.

Or, perhaps it’s a love story, but instead of a “lover” you have a sage, intent on studying endlessly...not very romantic right?

In other words, what works best in life, is when we can adopt the proper pattern for the situation. And these are primal patterns that have existed since the dawn of man. We find stories of each of them in every tradition in the world, every culture... clearly, it’s true that “there is nothing new under the sun!”
The Ego Archetypes

The Innocent
Motto: Free to be you and me
Core desire: to get to paradise
Goal: to be happy
Greatest fear: to be punished for doing something bad or wrong
Strategy: to do things right
Weakness: boring for all their naive innocence
Talent: faith and optimism
The Innocent is also known as: Utopian, traditionalist, naive, mystic, saint, romantic, dreamer.

The Orphan/Regular Guy or Gal
Motto: All men and women are created equal
Core Desire: connecting with others
Goal: to belong
Greatest fear: to be left out or to stand out from the crowd
Strategy: develop ordinary solid virtues, be down to earth, the common touch
Weakness: losing one’s own self in an effort to blend in or for the sake of superficial relationships
Talent: realism, empathy, lack of pretense
The Regular Person is also known as: The good old boy, everyman, the person next door, the realist, the working stiff, the solid citizen, the good neighbor, the silent majority.

The Hero
Motto: Where there’s a will, there’s a way
Core desire: to prove one’s worth through courageous acts
Goal: expert mastery in a way that improves the world
Greatest fear: weakness, vulnerability, being a “chicken”
Strategy: to be as strong and competent as possible  
Weakness: arrogance, always needing another battle to fight  
Talent: competence and courage  
The Hero is also known as: The warrior, crusader, rescuer, superhero, 
the soldier, dragon slayer, the winner and the team player.  

The Caregiver  
Motto: Love your neighbor as yourself  
Core desire: to protect and care for others  
Goal: to help others  
Greatest fear: selfishness and ingratitude  
Strategy: doing things for others  
Weakness: martyrdom and being exploited  
Talent: compassion, generosity  
The Caregiver is also known as: The saint, altruist, parent, helper, 
supporter.  

The Soul Archetypes  

The Explorer  
Motto: Don’t fence me in  
Core desire: the freedom to find out who you are through exploring the world  
Goal: to experience a better, more authentic, more fulfilling life  
Biggest fear: getting trapped, conformity, and inner emptiness  
Strategy: journey, seeking out and experiencing new things, escape from boredom  
Weakness: aimless wandering, becoming a misfit  
Talent: autonomy, ambition, being true to one’s soul  
The explorer is also known as: The seeker, iconoclast, wanderer, 
individualist, pilgrim.
The Rebel
Motto: Rules are made to be broken
Core desire: revenge or revolution
Goal: to overturn what isn’t working
Greatest fear: to be powerless or ineffectual
Strategy: disrupt, destroy, or shock
Weakness: crossing over to the dark side, crime
Talent: outrageousness, radical freedom
The Outlaw is also known as: The rebel, revolutionary, wild man, the misfit, or iconoclast.

The Lover
Motto: You’re the only one
Core desire: intimacy and experience
Goal: being in a relationship with the people, work and surroundings they love
Greatest fear: being alone, a wallflower, unwanted, unloved
Strategy: to become more and more physically and emotionally attractive
Weakness: outward-directed desire to please others at risk of losing own identity
Talent: passion, gratitude, appreciation, and commitment
The Lover is also known as: The partner, friend, intimate, enthusiast, sensualist, spouse, team-builder.

The Creator
Motto: If you can imagine it, it can be done
Core desire: to create things of enduring value
Goal: to realize a vision
Greatest fear: mediocre vision or execution
Strategy: develop artistic control and skill
Task: to create culture, express own vision
Weakness: perfectionism, bad solutions
Talent: creativity and imagination
The Creator is also known as: The artist, inventor, innovator, musician, writer or dreamer.

The Self Archetypes

The Jester
Motto: You only live once
Core desire: to live in the moment with full enjoyment
Goal: to have a great time and lighten up the world
Greatest fear: being bored or boring others
Strategy: play, make jokes, be funny
Weakness: frivolity, wasting time
Talent: joy
The Jester is also known as: The fool, trickster, joker, practical joker or comedian.

The Sage
Motto: The truth will set you free
Core desire: to find the truth.
Goal: to use intelligence and analysis to understand the world.
Biggest fear: being duped, misled—or ignorance.
Strategy: seeking out information and knowledge; self-reflection and understanding thought processes.
Weakness: can study details forever and never act.
Talent: wisdom, intelligence.
The Sage is also known as: The expert, scholar, detective, advisor, thinker, philosopher, academic, researcher, thinker, planner, professional, mentor, teacher, contemplative.
The Magician
Motto: I make things happen.
Core desire: understanding the fundamental laws of the universe
Goal: to make dreams come true
Greatest fear: unintended negative consequences
Strategy: develop a vision and live by it
Weakness: becoming manipulative
Talent: finding win-win solutions
The Magician is also known as: The visionary, catalyst, inventor, charismatic leader, shaman, healer, medicine man.

The Ruler
Motto: Power isn’t everything, it’s the only thing.
Core desire: control
Goal: create a prosperous, successful family or community
Strategy: exercise power
Greatest fear: chaos, being overthrown
Weakness: being authoritarian, unable to delegate
Talent: responsibility, leadership
The Ruler is also known as: The boss, leader, aristocrat, king, queen, politician, role model, manager or administrator.

So now that you know what each of the archetypes is, and what their motto, core desire, goal, strategy, etc...are, you can likely begin to intuit which of these archetypes are most familiar, and which are most foreign to you.

I encourage you to look at those most foreign to you, and as an exercise, imagine yourself taking on those “roles” in various situations in your life, and see what kind of different actions and reactions you might take as a result of being in that particular “role”. Next, seek
out movies or fictional books that depict characters that exhibit those archetypal qualities and watch or read them thoroughly. Get into those characters and really strive to understand why they have the motivations they do.
Afterward

I hope you enjoyed this introductory guide. This, and the other guides offered at TamingTheWorld.com™ are by no means exhaustive, but rather intended to get you on an active path of personal development.

The Taming The World™ series was designed from my decade of experience as both a life and business coach. What I found in my coaching practice, is that there are definitive skills or building blocks of the most successful people. The greatest clients I’ve had, those who went on to achieve the greatest accomplishments, and frequently too, had the most happiness and fulfillment in their lives, all had these core skills or developed them through their coaching experiences with me.

One word of caution: No matter how solid the truth, no matter how effective the methods, none of these skills will do anything toward bettering your life if you fail to take action on them. That part, your action, rests entirely upon your responsibility.

Whether you want a more fulfilling romantic life, a successful business, a greater level of fitness, or simply a greater degree of control over your life and self, Taming The World directly guides you towards building the solid foundation necessary to have both the quickest and the most profound results.

I invite and encourage you to visit me at TamingTheWorld.com™ to explore further. Today truly is the first day of the rest of your life. Life, even when lived to a ripe old age, is such a brief flash of time in the grand scheme of things, and we don’t get a dress rehearsal. It is my sincerest wish, that you will value yourself and the time you have as much as I do, and as a result, fully immerse and commit yourself to the life-long process of unfolding your greatness.

All the best!
Bill White