



Your Archetypes For Power and Success

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Abstract: *Four survival archetypes have a powerful influence on us. Each has its power and its shadow side. By developing awareness of these archetypes, how they affect us, and then making conscious choice about how we choose to work with or under them we can strengthen the personal power we can manifest.*

I have to warn you! I am about to be deliberately provocative. How much of a Prostitute are you? I hear the startled reaction: "Hang on! Surely that isn't fair! It was not questioning whether I am a Prostitute or not, which is strong and even offensive. This question implies 'I am a Prostitute'". Carl Jung, the noted psychologist, explored and wrote about archetypes that influence us from the *collective unconscious*. Joseph Campbell, his best-known student and disciple, wrote "...that since archetypes or norms of myth are common to the human species, they are inherently expressive...of common human needs, instincts, and potentials."

The words 'Prostitute', 'Child', 'Victim', and 'Saboteur' are labels for four primary survival archetypes that we all operate under, and each will be briefly explored in this article. Understanding how their influence works on us to shape our attitudes and behaviours provides valuable insight into why we act as we do. The understanding also enables us to tap in on our personal power and create positive outcomes in our relationships with others, both personal and business.

Four key ingredients to success in any relationship are integrity, trust, commitment and responsibility, and these are directly related to the four survival archetypes. Myths and legends are full of stories of heroes and villains, sorcerers and kings, damsels and knights, queens and jesters, and many other roles (the prostitute has long been recognised as the oldest profession). These stories grew from observation of human behaviour, with specifically noticeable actions being magnified as the stories developed. Each of us will read or heed a story and find it touches some part of us, stirs us up, and connects with us emotionally. Some archetypes (story characters, for want of another way of putting it) align with us more than others, and this connection enables us to understand some of our key drivers. Of course, that said, we all want to be the hero, the king, the valiant warrior princess, depending on our gender, but there is a flip side to all this.

Each archetype has two sides. The Star Wars trilogy is a wonderful example of archetypal expression, highlighting the light and the dark, the good and the bad, the two sides to 'the force'. Both are represented in

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each archetype and can be accessed by each of us. We choose which aspect we express at any given time. The 'dark side' is often referred to as the shadow of the archetype. The key driver for behaviour from the shadow side is fear. I refer to the 'light side' as the power or genuine side because it expresses our true selves unfettered by fear, and under it we work closest to our potential.

As we consider how the four survival archetypes can enable greater success and more effective relationships, it is important to consider the names simply as labels or placeholders for continuums of behaviour. Remove any negative or positive connotation that the names for the archetypes may suggest. The names are appropriate and serve as a clear reminder of key aspects of the behavioural continuum they represent.

So let me introduce the archetypes, what they are, and the benefits that understanding them can have for us.

The Prostitute archetype deals with our willingness to sell and negotiate away our spirit, virtue and integrity to satisfy survival needs, typically for financial or some other form of tangible or security gain. Any time we sell ourselves short or relinquish something important to us for a quick gain, or for increased security of some form, we are working from the shadow side. And it is not always 'bad' to be on the shadow side. For example, I have knowingly entered into deals to gain financial reward/security where I knew I could lose in other ways (no, nothing illegal, which would be a stronger example!), which is the Prostitute at work. At the same time I have also learned that I must work with people who do operate without integrity. If I am open to and aware of the role and motivation of the Prostitute, I am better able to respond to and protect myself from the shadow behaviours of other people's Prostitute. In the business environment I have seen people lie, deliberately establish false expectations, undermine the reputations of others and spread falsehoods, all to get ahead, gain some advantage or otherwise 'win' over others. The shadow Prostitute is playing here. I have also seen acts of courage where people have taken a stand against strong pressure from others to be unethical or undermine others, have refused to respond unprofessionally to scurrilous attacks by others, or have resigned to avoid breaching their own values. These are acts from the power side of the Prostitute, where personal integrity is more important than security and gain. ***The Prostitute governs integrity.***

The Child archetype deals with our ability to connect with and exhibit childlike qualities such as innocence, optimism, and trust. Consider how you were as a child. We were each born innocent, vulnerable and dependant on others. Trust was, out of necessity, our key trait. It was only as our needs were not met, pain was experienced and other things occurred that were not to our liking, that trust was eroded. Children in their natural state let the world know their needs, albeit with some communication difficulties, and have easy access to joy. The shadow Child loses all those natural aspects, is pessimistic, lacks trust, and finds life difficult and burdensome. I have found that when my trust is low, (and is no genuine reason for a lack of trust); it is because I have disconnected from my archetypal child. At such times dealing with other people always becomes more difficult. ***The Child governs trust.***

The Saboteur archetype is concerned with tendencies to diminish, derail or destroy our efforts. It may also extend to doing the same to others. Generally it is related to self-worth issues. People tend to be naturally familiar with the shadow aspect of this archetype. It is apparent when we use procrastination to avoid taking important action, or when we use behaviours such as aloofness to push others away. Effectively we are running away from the potential success that staying engaged with the relationship or performing the action may create. Examples of sabotage in business can be seen in disruptive attitudes in teams, arrogance and demeaning behaviours toward and deliberately undermining others, overloading the schedule so time is not available for performing the task, and countless other approaches. The power side of the Saboteur (remember it is a label for a continuum of behaviour) is total commitment to the relationship or to achieving the task. On the power side we operate with clarity and focus. We are not distracted by external events and issues, nor by our own fears and insecurities. ***The Saboteur governs commitment.***

The Victim archetype focuses on the level of empowerment we assume for the results of our actions and behaviours. The shadow of the archetype is well recognised, with the person acting in a disempowered and pitiful state. The use of 'poor me' dramas to elicit sympathy is common. Shadow Victims allow others to take advantage of them, considering themselves weak or insignificant. They often place themselves at the mercy of others. They are well practiced at blame and have a reduced ability to manage their own environment to create success. Victims come out of the woodwork when a project has failed, financial returns are poor, or a business decision has turned bad. Finger pointing and criticism run rampant in organisations, and I refer to this as "Pits of Blame", which is so common in organisations in crisis. These Victims are individuals with a highly external *locus of control*. The power side of the Victim is the individual working from a sense of personal responsibility, knowing they are capable of creating their own results. This is a person with a highly internal *locus of control* who believes they manage their own destiny. ***The Victim governs responsibility.***

None of us work solely from the power side or the shadow side of these archetypes. However, I have found that understanding these archetypes provides a wonderful tool for increasing my self-awareness and enabling me to consciously choose better behaviours and approaches, or to diagnose what has gone wrong when a situation turns 'weird' on me. As we function in business relationships, within teams, with partners, customers and suppliers, or as we work on ourselves, we must develop self-awareness and emotional intelligence. Our ability to work with others is fundamental to success in this highly interactive world and the archetypes provide us with a means of improving our ability to work with others effectively. Any tool or idea that enables us to develop ourselves and improve on our capabilities is to be valued.

There are many other archetypes, all of which we can draw on as and when we need. Some will be more intuitively useful for us than others. Examples of other archetypes include the Warrior that manages boundaries, the Monarch or Ruler that deals with governance of self and others, the Lover focused on intimacy, and the Wizard who applies intellect and special skills to transformation. While understanding

individual archetypal characteristics is a benefit, it is important to understand that they operate on us as together with the other archetypes. They affect our ability to pursue success and function in relationships.

Personal power is essential to success. Whether we create tangible results or positive relationships with others, personal power is derived from applying the principles of integrity, trust, commitment, and responsibility to all that we do, in a consistent manner. So, in closing, I wish you every success in living your power through your Prostitute, Child, Saboteur and Victim. The more you understand how these operate in your life, the easier it is to manage and create the results you want. It is also interesting to observe and recognise how they manifest in others. The shadow is a reflection of fear. Power comes from our authenticity.