

The Four Archetypes of the Mature Masculine

Introduction

Of the many resources and readings available (see Healthy Masculine [Resource Page](#)), one way of approaching the Healthy Masculine is the classic book *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine*, by Jungian psychologist Robert Moore and mythologist Douglas Gillette. Originally published in 1990, it has had a big influence, suggesting that masculinity is made up of 4 archetypal energies which serve different purposes.

Over the Healthy Masculine series, we are going to be delving into the 4 masculine archetypes in *KWML*. We'll explore what they are and how you can access them on your journey to find, practice and co-mentor a Healthy masculine presence in our society, communities and families.

A Short Primer on Jungian Psychology

KWML is grounded in the psychology of Carl Jung, particularly in his idea of psychological archetypes. To understand the 4 archetypes of masculinity, it's helpful to understand a bit about Jungian psychology. Carl Jung was one of the early and most influential modern psychologists. Ever take one of those Myers-Briggs type indicator tests? Those were inspired by Jung's idea of extroverted and introverted personalities. Have you ever heard somebody talk about the "collective unconscious?" That's Jung, too. But, **Archetypes are not personality types**. Jung didn't think you could classify a person as a specific archetype. A person can't take a test to tell them that they are a "Shadow." Rather, the archetypes are simply patterns of behavior and thought, or "energies" that can be found in all people in varying degrees.

The Four Archetypes of the Mature Masculine: King, Warrior, Magician, Lover

Psychologist Robert Moore took the concept of Jung's archetypes and used it to create a framework that explained the development of mature and integral masculinity. Moore argued that the problems we see with masculinity today—violence, shiftlessness, aloofness—are a result of the modern masculine not adequately exploring or being in touch with the primal, masculine archetypes that reside within each of us. Like Jung, Moore believed that men and women possess both feminine and masculine archetypal patterns—this is the anima (feminine) and animus (masculine).

The problem with modern masculine is that Western society suppresses the animus or masculine archetype within them and instead encourages the masculine to get in touch with their "softer side" or their anima. Moore would argue that there's nothing wrong with masculine developing those softer, more nurturing and feminine behaviours. In fact, he would encourage it. *A problem only arises when the development of the internal feminine comes at the expense of developing the internal masculine.*

According to Moore, masculine psychology is made up of four major archetypes: King (Sovereign), Warrior, Magician, and Lover. In order to achieve mature masculine strength and energy, a person must be in touch with all four:

The Lover

The Lover is the archetype of youthful idealism and excitement and is usually the first of the archetypes to develop. Look at most youngsters and you see that they're often ruled by the passionate Lover archetype. They're looking for new and exciting endeavours, they develop intense romantic and sexual relationships, and they're filled with youthful idealism. Their experiences are marked by an acute *intensity*.

The Magician

Many go through a magic phase growing up, learning a few card tricks, or intrigued by the 'unknown' realms, Simply going down to the local magic store or apothecary to browse, and maybe even showing off newly learned tricks to one's family and friends. Most outgrow their magic hobby, although not necessarily their fascination with the art. The masculine attraction to magic can be traced to something much deeper than the ability to pull a rabbit out of a hat. Rather, it is rooted in

what the magician's abilities represent—the power that comes from the mastery of a secret knowledge and the ability to use that knowledge to manipulate tools in order to control certain elements and produce desired outcomes. The yearning to harness and possess that power is what fuels the Magician archetype, an energy that everyone should seek.

The Warrior

Most “great” civilizations have a great warrior tradition and accompanying warrior myths. The Old Testament recounts the stories of a warrior people and a warrior God. In the ancient Mediterranean, the Spartans had perhaps the most legendary warrior tradition. From birth, Spartan society nurtured and trained their boys to become warriors, and that rigorous training created men like Leonidas and his 300 men of unconquerable spirit. Japan had their fearless samurai warriors whose undaunted courage came from living life as if they were already dead.

Being a warrior is traditionally a man's role, the protector and the fighter, but legends of female warriors stretch back in time to include the Amazons of Greek mythology, the Valkyries of Norse mythology, and Joan of Arc in 1400s France. The Amazons are some of the most well-known female warriors. The term Amazon is now nearly synonymous with female warrior. While men did traditionally hold sway in the fighting realm, women still had to defend their towns and homes, especially if the men were fighting somewhere else ([source](#)).

Today the Warrior archetype lives on in our reverence for those who serve in armed forces and in modern books and movies. William Wallace from *Braveheart* and General Maximus from *Gladiator*, Xena, the warrior princess, Buffy, the vampire slayer, Mulan, and Trinity are all modern examples of this powerful archetype. But in general, modern culture is not comfortable with Warrior energy. The advent of mechanized warfare during the first half of the 20th century dampened the romantic ideal of martial courage. Since the social and cultural revolutions of the 60s and 70s, we're generally taught to avoid confrontation and conflict and to instead nurture their “feminine side.” The result is the Nice Guy; the man who will avoid confrontation and aggression even when confrontation and aggression are justified. Society pushes the masculine to be sweet and sensitive, because they fear them becoming coldly stoic, abusive, and destructively angry. But society's perception of the Warrior archetype is not based on the Warrior energy in its full, healthy manifestation, but on the archetype's *shadows*. The problem is not Warrior energy itself, but Warrior energy that is not used in harmony with the other masculine archetypes and directed by empathy, contemplation, and order. Fighting itself is not bad, the question is simply: What is someone fighting *for*? The Warrior's energy is needed not only in times of war, but on all the battlefields of life. Properly tapping into the Warrior's energy provides an unsurpassable power source which fuels us to reach our goals, fight for worthy causes, achieve greatness, and leave a lasting legacy.

The King or Sovereign

The King / Sovereign archetype is the most important of the four mature masculine archetypes. Just as a good sovereign in mythological stories is often something of a “Renaissance man” – a good warrior, magician, and lover – the King archetype incorporates the other three mature masculine archetypes in perfect harmony. Someone who accesses the Sovereign archetype in its fullness will also have accessed the Warrior, Magician, and Lover archetypes. For this reason, the King archetype is typically the last of the mature masculine archetypes to power up in someone's life. In this way, it is truly the crown of the other archetypes, the energy that gives us a sense of our full, godlike potential.

The Structure of the Archetypes

Moore argues that each masculine archetype consists of 3 parts: the full/highest expression of the archetype and 2 bi-polar dysfunctional shadows. To better understand this, Moore portrays each archetype as a triangle. Here's a brief example of the King / Sovereign archetype where the bottom corners of the triangle represent the bi-polar shadow-split in the archetypal Self. The goal of each person, according to Moore, is to reconcile and integrate these 2 bi-polar shadows in order to attain the fullest expression of the archetype as represented at the top of the triangle.



The Immature Archetypes

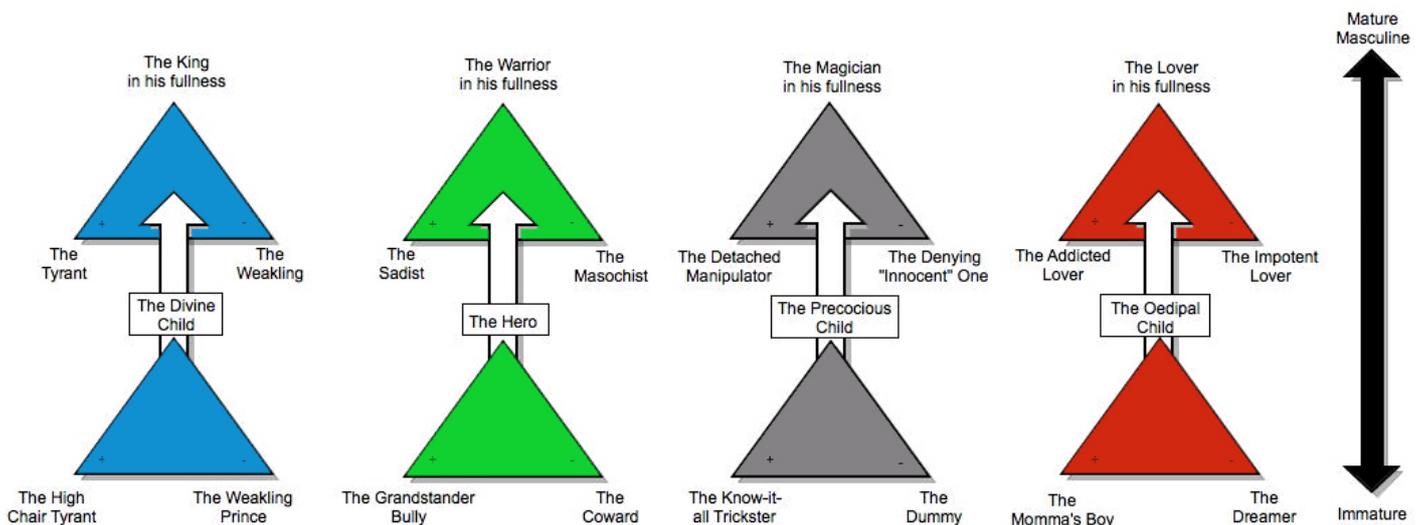
Moreover, each archetype has a mature and immature form. The mature masculine archetypes are the four we've already mentioned: King, Warrior, Magician, Lover. The immature archetypes are the Divine Child, the Hero, the Precocious Child, and the Oedipal Child. Each of these immature archetypes have the same tripartite configuration as the mature archetypes. They all have their highest and fullest expression along with their two bi-polar dysfunctional shadows.

To understand the four archetypes of mature masculinity, we need to explore their precursors. There are four immature archetypes which develop into the mature archetypes. Properly accessing and harnessing their energies is essential for a masculine's full development. These archetypes instill in the masculine a sense of wonder, play, and energy—traits that are essential for learning and development. And these immature archetypes don't leave us as we grow up, progress, and access the mature masculine archetypes. While each of the four immature archetypes gives rise to the four mature archetypes, they are not discarded once we reach them; the immature archetypes remain as building blocks in the structure of our Healthy Masculine.

While Moore and other Jungians would encourage people to stay in touch with their immature archetypes, they'd argue that we shouldn't do so at the expense of developing the mature masculine within us. According to Moore, one of the biggest problems facing the masculine in the West is that most of the masculine population are still ruled by immature archetypes and haven't moved on to harnessing the mature masculine. As a result, we have a society acting and thinking like teenagers.

Exploring the immature archetypes is useful for two reasons. First, it's a reminder that we should never lose touch with the energetic youthfulness that resides in each of us. Accessing that youthful enthusiasm makes life enjoyable and allows us to relate to our children or those we might be in charge of. Second, exploring the immature archetypes, particularly their bipolar shadows, will make us aware of any childish thought patterns we are still falling into, patterns which may be stunting our growth into mature masculine.

Before a person can access the King / Sovereign archetype they must develop the Divine Child; before they can access the Warrior archetype, they must develop the Hero archetype, etc. Once you see Moore's idea of the 4 masculine archetypes and the development from immature to mature masculinity in a diagram, it starts to be easy to understand:



The **Healthy Masculine 4 Part Series** will take a look at each of these 4 masculine archetypes outlined above by Moore, and explore – by way of council, NVC, and group agreements creating safely, connection, and heart centred vulnerability – how to develop them more fully. These 4 masculine archetypes – although not the only way – helps ground our Healthy Masculine Circle exploration as a starting point to share, connect and integrate.