

The *Healthy Masculine 4 Part Series* takes a look at each of the 4 Masculine Archetypes outlined by the author Moore, and explores how to develop them more fully – by way of council, NVC, and group agreements creating safety, connection, and heart centred vulnerability. These 4 masculine archetypes—although not the only way—help to ground our Healthy Masculine Circle exploration as a starting point to share, connect and integrate.

The Warrior Archetype

Adapted from the artofmanliness.com series

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 person 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 Warrior in Its Fullness

Moore says that “The characteristics of the Warrior in its fullness amount to a total way of life, what the samurai called a *do* (pronounced ‘do’). These characteristics constitute the Warrior Dharma, Ma’at, or Tao, a spiritual or psychological path through life.” What are these characteristics?

Note: While here we use the language of the martial warrior, the characteristics can be applied to anyone’s life mission, whether civilian or soldier.

Aggressive: If you look up the word “aggressive” in the dictionary, these are the definitions you’ll find:

1. characterized by or tending toward unprovoked offensives, attacks, or invasions; militantly forward or menacing
2. making an all-out effort to win or succeed; competitive
3. vigorously energetic, especially in the use of initiative and forcefulness

Of the three definitions, the 1st is most popular in modern culture. Something unprovoked, out of line. Notice how often “overly” precedes “aggressive” in common parlance. Aggression may also bring to mind military policies a person does not agree with. In general, it has a negative connotation. But true aggression should be thought of in the context of the second 2 dictionary entries. Effort. Energy. Initiative. Force. Aggression is a neutral tool that can be harnessed for either ill or good. How it is channelled makes all the difference. A person who does not harness their aggression at all picks a fight with everyone and about everything; their relationships fail and they are stunted in their personal development. The person who reins in their aggression too much becomes the stereotypical “Nice Guy” – proper aggression turns into passive aggression. They are too “polite” to go after what they want, and they are seething inside because of it. Someone who has successfully integrated the Warrior archetype harnesses their aggression as the force that pushes them to compete to be the best and moves them ever forward towards their goals.

Purpose: Of course that proper use of aggression presupposes that a person has goals that they are striving towards in the first place. A person has to have a clear and definite purpose in life, or they will feel lost and restless, like drifting along instead of marching ahead.

Mindful: The mindfulness of the Warrior is two-fold. First, they are always alert and awake, ever vigilant, with keen situational awareness. Never lets complacency lull them to sleep; instead, they are always watching, observing, studying, and planning. Secondly, the Warrior is mindful of the finiteness of life and the inevitability of death, and purposefully contemplates death. Courage is rooted in the fact that they are not afraid to die. Life's shortness brings clarity to mind, knowing that any minute could be the last, thus makes every day / decision count. Carpe diem! becomes the battle cry.

Adaptable: During the Revolutionary War, the Continental Army knew that it could not match the man and fire power of the British. So instead of facing them down on a field for a traditional battle, the minutemen took to the woods and launched surprise hit and run attacks on the enemy. This is the way of the Warrior; a guerrilla fighter. When up against great odds, they buck convention and use cleverness and strategic intelligence to find creative ways to turn the tide in their favour. An efficient fighter – they study the weaknesses of their opponents and concentrates strikes there. Flexible and able to respond to change, they shift tactics on the fly.

Minimalist: The key to successful guerrilla warfare is the fighter's ability to travel light. While the traditional force has power in its superior resources – it also weighs and slows them down. The guerrilla fighter strips away all superfluties and excess baggage; carrying only what is needed and is thus quick and nimble, able to be two steps ahead of the enemy.

Decisive: In times of peace or crisis, whether for big things or small, the Warrior is able to boldly make decisions. They don't stand there shilly-shally, wondering what they should do, scared of choosing the wrong option: Calm and cool under pressure. Once a decision is made, they unhesitatingly move on it without regret. The Warrior is able to be so decisive because they train so thoroughly for these moments; they are prepared, thinking about all possible contingencies and what they would do in each situation before the crisis arrives. When the crisis does come, mind and body already instinctively know what to do.

Skillful: Part of the Warrior's confidence in their decisions is rooted in their supreme competence. Accordingly to Moore, "The Warrior's energy is concerned with skill, power, and accuracy." The Warrior "has absolute mastery of the technology of their trade...the technology that enables them to reach their goal. They have developed skill with the 'weapons' they use to implement their decisions."

Loyal: If you remember, the Hero is the adolescent archetype which matures into the Warrior archetype. Part of this maturation process centres on a shift in a person's loyalties. Moore argues that "The Hero's loyalty...is really to themself—to impressing themself with themself and to impressing others." The Warrior's loyalties, on the other hand, "are to something beyond and other than themself and their own concerns." The Warrior's loyalty centres on "a cause, a god, a people, a task, a nation—larger than individuals." The Warrior has a "central commitment" around which they organize their lives. Their life's purpose is rooted in ideals and principles, which naturally strips away superfluties and pettiness and brings their life great meaning.

Disciplined: The Warrior has mastered body and mind; power is rooted in self-control knowing when to be aggressive and how aggressive to be. A master of its energies, releasing them and pulling them back as they choose. They decide the attitude to take in a certain situation, instead of letting the situation dictate how they feel. Unlike the adolescent Hero archetype, the Warrior understands their limits – taking calculated, instead of unnecessary risks. Their discipline also frees them of a fear of pain. Feeble, mediocre people believe all pain is bad. The Warrior knows there is bad pain and good pain, and is willing, even eager to withstand psychological and physical pain on the path to their goals. Subscribing to "pain is just weakness leaving the body" philosophy, they relish difficulty because it makes them stronger.

Emotionally Detached: Not all the time, but when in Warrior mode. To complete the mission, the Warrior must be emotionally detached—from the fear and doubt generated by their own feelings, from the intimidation emanating from their enemy, and from the "shoulds" and demands put on them by friends and family. The Warrior needs the kind of mental clarity that only comes from single-minded purpose, or as Moore puts it, "The Warrior needs room to swing his sword." Switching off that emotional detachment when away from the mission represents the great challenge for the Warrior. The inability to do so can result in one of the Warrior's shadows.

Creative Destroyer: The Warrior is the archetype of destruction. However, the Warrior in its fullness only destroys in order to "make room for something new and fresh and more alive." An act of creative destruction – they don't tear things down simply for the pleasure of doing so. We call upon the Warrior archetype when we quit bad habits and replace them with better ones or when we get rid of people in our lives who bring us down and surround ourselves with people who edify.

The Shadows of the Warrior

Remember that each archetype has both a pinnacle, which represents the fullness of the archetype, and a bi-polar shadow split. These shadows are the result of the archetype not being integrated in a healthy and coherent way. The two shadows of the Warrior archetype are the *Sadist* and the *Masochist*.



The Sadist.

As just discussed, people in touch with the Warrior archetype have the ability to detach themselves from emotions and human relationships. While detachment provides a person with much needed focus on important tasks, when it becomes their permanent state, the Sadist shadow controls their psyche.

This is why soldiers, who have a mission-minded attitude while on deployment, can find it very difficult to adjust to life back home and find their place in their families, which are based on emotional needs and currents—the stuff the soldier has been used to setting aside. The mission-focused life freed them from human pettiness—and returning to it can be grating. This is also true of lawyers, ministers, doctors, politicians, and others who may be married to their job—shifting from mission-mode to domestic-mode can be difficult for them. As the name implies, the Sadist can be cruel, even to those most vulnerable. They disdain the weak. A commanding officer in the Army may try to rigidly run their family in the same way they lead their troops.

The Sadist creates unattainably high standards for themselves and those around. When a child comes home with a less than perfect grade, a parent influenced by the Sadist will put her down and berate her mercilessly. A parent with positive Warrior energy would have kindly shown disappointment, but then offered to help their daughter study for the next exam so she could ace it.

The Sadist's disgust at weakness is linked to the adolescent Hero archetype trying to break away from their mother and from feminine energy in general seeking to become their own self. But adults who are still insecure about being "masculine enough" project this insecurity onto others, hating what they fear is within themselves.

According to Moore, people possessed by the Sadist also tend to be workaholics, taking pride in working all night at the office and coming home at 7AM, only to leave for the office again an hour later. They'll choose work at the expense of health and even family. They take the Warrior's comfort with pain to an extreme and grind it out to get to the top. But they're doing it because they really don't know what they want out of life, and constantly working distracts them from this fact. Once they do reach the top, they often feel empty, lost, and bitter. But many Sadists simply burn out before they even get there.

The Masochist.

The Masochist is the passive shadow in the tripartite Warrior archetype, and its attributes closely parallel those of the adolescent Hero archetype's cowardly shadow. A person possessed by the Masochist feels powerless; a push-over who has no personal boundaries and will let others walk all over them. They may hate their job or their relationships and complain about it, but instead of quitting, cutting their losses and moving on, they dig in and try harder to be who their boss or partner want them to be, and takes even more abuse. Because while they might complain about the pain, they really like it. This is the person who enjoys being the martyr.

An archetype's bi-polar shadows often work together against them. Those under the Masochist's influence will take the disrespect others dish out without fighting back or asserting themselves. Then one day something, maybe a criticism, pushes them over the edge and they "explode with sadistic verbal [and sometimes even] physical abuse."

The Adolescent Archetypes

To understand each of the four archetypes of mature masculine, we need to explore their precursors. There are four adolescent archetypes which develop into the mature archetypes. Properly accessing and harnessing their energies is essential for full development. These archetypes instill a sense of wonder, play, and energy—traits that are essential for learning and development. The adolescent archetypes are positive but immature energies that, with proper masculine guidance, develop into the archetypes of mature masculine.

The Hero

Think back to when you were a teenager. Remember that feeling of expanding independence? Little by little you started to rely less and less on your parents for your basic needs. You clamoured for more freedoms and for your parents to get off your back.

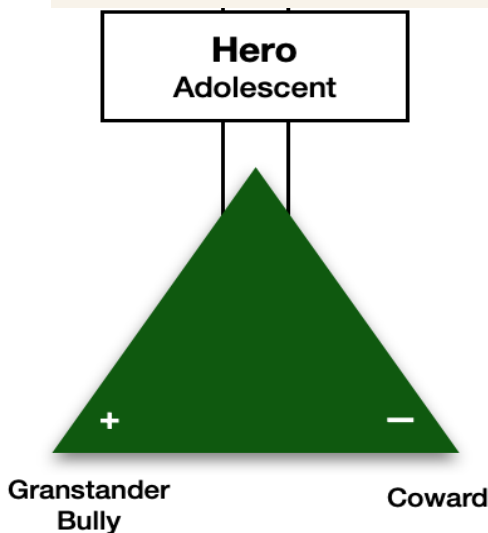
Also, if you were like most teenagers, you probably took part in activities (sometimes very risky activities) to test your mettle and your ability to overcome fear. You wanted to prove to your friends, and more importantly to yourself, that you were “masculine enough” to take on any challenge that came your way.

The Hero archetype is unarguably the most common figure found in myths. Joseph Campbell detailed the use of the Hero archetype in his seminal work, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*. In that book, Campbell describes an archetypal journey that all mythological heroes must take. *Star Wars* is a perfect example of the Hero’s Journey. Luke Skywalker begins the story as a mere “farm boy” on the planet Tatooine. By the end of the first trilogy he has morphed into a Hero who saves the galaxy from evil.

While we’re accustomed to thinking of becoming a hero as the end-all of existence, Moore argues that the hero archetype is still an immature energy that must be further developed into the mature Warrior archetype. Unlike the mature Warrior who fights and battles for a cause bigger than themselves, the immature Hero fights and battles mainly for themselves. The Hero definitely has ideals—but these ideals are used for a self-serving purpose—to create an identity that facilitates the process of becoming his own adult. When you were a teenager, you probably latched onto an identity like this—you were the super-liberal, or the super-Christian, or the non-conformist Goth, and so on. The Hero’s only goal is to win their personal independence, break free from the feminine influence of their mother, and enter fully into adulthood. Moreover, while the mature Warrior knows their limitations, the Hero doesn’t have that sort of self-awareness which often results in physical or emotional ruin.

The Hero is usually the last of the adolescent archetypes to develop and is the peak of psychological development in youngsters. It is the last developmental stage before transitioning into adulthood. According to Moore, this transformation from youngster to an adult can only occur through the “death” of the Hero. Through initiation and rites of passage, the youngster is symbolically killed only to be reborn as an adult. Unfortunately, because many adults in the modern West lack a rite of passage into adulthood, they remain psychologically stuck in adolescence.

The Shadows of the Hero Archetype



The Grandstander Bully.

The youngster under the influence of the Grandstander Bully demands respect from others and will unleash their wrath both physically and verbally if they don’t get it. They let the Hero’s sense of invulnerability mushroom into an arrogant and inflated sense of self. Thus the child under the Bully shadow takes unnecessary and foolish risks, and their hubris oftentimes leads to their own destruction.

This shadow very often follows a child into adulthood. Do you know a grown person who suffers from intense road rage or blows up at the server who gets their order wrong? That’s the child bully shadow at work. The person who is still haunted by this shadow believes they are superior to all others, and when their inflated sense of self is threatened—ie., when the world does not cater to their needs – they lose their temper and lash out.

But underneath the Grandstander Bully’s posturing and false bravado lies an insecure coward, and they must fight to keep this fact hidden from everyone else. This insecurity makes the Grandstander Bully sensitive to any insinuation that they aren’t masculine enough, and so they lack the confidence to incorporate any “feminine” energy into their life. This is someone who scoffs at meditation or introspection as “sissy” stuff.

The Coward.

The passive polar shadow of the Hero archetype is the Coward. Lacking the Hero’s courage, the child under this shadow avoids confrontation; whether the conflict is physical or mental or moral, the Coward cannot stand up for themselves. A conformist—a child who always goes along with the crowd and does what others tell them to do. Even when fighting back is the right decision, they will walk away and rationalize the choice as the “manlier” thing to do.

But the child possessed by the Coward cannot even convince themselves of their own excuses, and despises themselves for their cowardice. Knows they are a doormat, and as people continue to walk over them, they get angrier and angrier until they reach a breaking point and lash out in full Grandstander Bully fashion. It would have been far better for this child to handle conflict in a healthier way.

Accessing the Hero Archetype as an Adult

The hero archetype is difficult to successfully integrate. On the one hand, teenagers see things as black and white, and despise the wishy-washy convictions and play-it-safe attitude of adults. On the other hand, adults shake their heads at the foolish risks youngsters take and laugh at the unrealistic idealism of young people, telling them they'll change their mind once they see how the world "really is." The complete adult must walk the line between these two camps and must come to understand their own limitations and the true nature of the obstacles in their way; otherwise, they cannot be effective in bringing about real change. At the same time, they cannot lose heart while pushing up against those challenges, and stumble into the kind of cynical apathy that makes seeking greatness seem an impossible task and an entirely worthless endeavour. They need to be able to sometimes take youthful risks in order to achieve goals.

How to Access the Warrior Archetype

Many people today lack Warrior energy. They've been told all their lives that aggression is bad and they should just work on being "Nice guys." But if there's anything the world needs today, it's people in touch with the Warrior archetype in its fullness. It's the energy that propels people to dare greatly and to fight for a worthy cause.

So what can we do to access this positive Warrior energy?

- Watch movies about great warriors. Any film that showcases people with the warrior spirit
- Read biographies about great warriors - like those of Marcus Aurelius (the ultimate philosopher-warrior).
- Take up boxing or another martial art; Do something that scares you; Work on becoming more decisive.
- Meditate. Especially on death.
- Quit "shoulding" on yourself. The Warrior is able to detach from opinions of others and carry out its mission.
- Find your core values; Have a plan and purpose for your life.
- Boost your adaptability by strengthening your resilience.
- Study and practice the skills necessary for completing your goals. Whether that's marksmanship, computer programming, or being charismatic, become a master of your trade.
- Find the principles that you're loyal to; Establish some non-negotiable, unalterable terms, and live by them.
- Strengthen your discipline by establishing habits and daily routines.
- Adopt a minimalist philosophy. Declutter your life. Simplify your diet. Get out of debt.

Fullness or Shadow – how do I know?

- I know my **Warrior** is in its Fullness and is supporting me when:
 - *I'm feeling powerful, knowing the importance of time and timing;*
 - *Serving and protecting myself and my clan.*
- I know my Shadow **Warrior** is sabotaging me when
 - *I feel edgy, aggravated and controlling;*
 - *It looks like I need everything done immediately and my way.*

YOUR REFLECTIVE ANSWERS:

How does my **Warrior** in its Fullness support me?

- ...
- ...

How does my Shadow **Warrior** sabotage me?

- ...
- ...

