

ARCHETYPES

A JOURNAL OF RECOVERY, BROTHERHOOD & THE INNER LIFE



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FROM LONELINESS TO BROTHERHOOD

*Breaking Secrecy, Reclaiming Inner Authority,
and Growing in Better Soil*



SECRECY - INNER AUTHORITY - BROTHERHOOD

The strongest man knows his weaknesses - and does not carry them alone.

Written and curated by David "Indy" R.

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Vancouver, Canada



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CONNECTION IS THE OPPOSITE OF DYSFUNCTION

UNITY - SERVICE - GRATITUDE - POTENTIAL - RECOVERY

ACATRIBE.ORG



ARCHETYPES

A Quarterly Newsletter

ACA TRIBE
Men's Fellowship

MEN AND LONELINESS

"Loneliness is and always has been the central and inevitable experience of every man."

~Thomas Wolfe

We hear repeatedly in the media how there is an "epidemic of loneliness" among men. I think I'd rather call it a "pandemic" myself. I know that I struggle with this issue. And I have to very concertededly work at breaking out of isolation from others. Even when I was very active socially, I felt lonely. What are the factors involved in this problem? Is it a problem? Is it just true of all men everywhere for all time, as the quote above suggests? Or is it unique to "modern man" and his dilemmas?

There is, sort of, an evolutionary driver among males in many species towards a solitary life. Male bears, for instance, generally never "hang out" with their "bear buddies." And when they connect with females, it is solely to mate. Male elephants are much the same, although their female counterparts live in large groups. A wolf pack usually has only one male. Where do all the other "wolf bros" go? Even among domestic animals this is true... newborn male cattle become veal, newborn male sheep become "leg of lamb" more often than the females. This is because the males in these species tend to fight each other for access to the females and are less controllable once fully grown.

But among primates this does not appear to be true. Whether chimps, bonobos, baboons or monkeys, primate "societies" have both males and females, although they live by different rules? And it seems humans are much the same. Boys are socialized differently than girls. Society expects differences between them, and this programming is difficult to overcome. However, not all cultures have precisely the same expectations as every other. Yet the distinction remains.

Among mammals, human males are relatively unique... we form pair bonds which are long-lasting. This is understood to be about the long period of dependency of human young, needing support from both women and men to secure their survival. Whether or not males are more likely to "stray" than females is a question still being debated, although stereotypically males tend to admire the "lad" at least when young.

It is also interesting to note that males have shorter life-spans than females. This is attributed to many factors, some biological and some cultural. Males also tend to do

work that is less cooperative, although there are many exceptions to this. Males in all cultures take more risks, fight the wars, build shelters, go on long journeys, hunt, etc. These are not necessarily solitary activities, but they do expose men and boys to many dangers.

Is loneliness part of this pattern? Some would say so. For these trends tend to emphasize competition between men, and many of the traits needed to be successful in these endeavors are basically achieved as an individual. But does this mean we are doomed? Can we fight nature? And what about our modern societies, where everything is competitive, where cooperation is devalued in favor of "winning" and "beating the other guy"? This way of life is not universal in time and space.

Boys raised by dysfunctional or alcoholic parents are far more likely to turn to drugs, alcohol, sex, gambling and many other problematic behaviors. These "coping mechanisms" ruin our lives and the lives of those we love. AA, NA, GA and SAA are dominated by men trying to recover. ACA, however, has many more women than men. Why is this?

Women find it easier to share their vulnerability, as this trait does not conflict with our culture's expectations of them. For boys and men, this is much more difficult. Men are always supposed to be "in command" of themselves (and perhaps others). Being weak, needy, or even wrong makes us feel exposed, out on a limb, a sitting duck. We don't want to admit to frailty.

I think this is our "Achilles heel." Vulnerability is, in fact, normal. But not being able to acknowledge it means we are in even more danger. The imperatives imposed upon us prevent us from finding the true strength that is available to each of us. The strongest man knows his weaknesses, even respects them. But if you were abused as a boy, violated and bullied, what options are there? Honesty about such matters seems impossible.

I am grateful to have found men who are able to talk about these things with frankness and compassion. Men can help each other through the tough times. In fact, we must learn to accept support and help from others. We must learn to be honest about virtually everything. Loneliness is not our inevitable fate. It is just one more factor we must deal with to become the men we were intended to be. -David R

MEETING HIGHLIGHT

MEN, MASCULINITIES AND RECOVERY

MONDAYS

In North America: 12:00 noon PT, 3:00 pm ET

In Europe: 2000 BT, 2100 CET

Meeting ID: 821 2056 1171

Passcode: 808678

A meeting such as Men, Masculinities and Recovery provides a structured environment where men can address the impact of being raised in dysfunctional homes. This group focuses on:

Emotional Safety: Establishing a "Vault of Confidentiality" where men can share their stories without fear of judgment or their information being shared outside the group.

Redefining Strength: Moving beyond traditional "macho" stereotypes—often called the "Man Box"—to embrace vulnerability, empathy, and emotional intelligence.

Authentic Connection: Building trust through "Empathic Listening," which encourages men to listen and witness each other's experiences without the impulse to immediately "fix" or advise.

Addressing Socialization: Exploring how early gender socialization has impacted their adult relationships, self-esteem, and substance use.

THE CONFLUENCE OF MANY RIVERS

How is it that I came to be a person I never thought possible? How is it that addiction and codependency took over my life such that I hurt myself and hurt so many others so much? Surely I did not deliberately choose this? Maybe I was born this way? Maybe it is in my genes? Maybe I'm just bad and God hates me?

If I answer "yes" to those questions, I tend to just give up and say "What's the point of even trying to change?" If I'm irredeemably bad, then my options are few.

In ACA I am learning that there are many factors underlying my dysfunction, codependence and addiction. I have come to ponder this in terms of standing at the confluence of many rivers. These rivers consist of my experiences and my reality.

One river was physical abuse. Another was sexual abuse. Still another involved bullying. And another consisted of a rather cruel and uncaring society.

Some are deeper than these. I was born gay (and hence faced homophobia). I was not a big guy, so I was vulnerable to the "alpha males" strutting their superiority. I probably also had some neurodiversity. All these are rivers too, which meet with the other rivers.

The overall point is that none of these were of my choosing. However, once I have discovered these facts I am confronted with a powerful choice: do I continue the same way, or do I seek to change? In some ways this has felt like the first time I ever had an actual meaningful choice in my life.

Recovery was not an easy thing to believe in. Plus I lived in a lot of denial. But when I realized that my addictions and compulsions were simply bad answers (made without support or sufficient knowledge) to my problems, I came to acceptance of myself. My struggles don't make me bad. They make me human.

Today I see there is at least one other stream in my life trajectory. This one is the friendship of others in recovery. There are others that I was not aware of... talents and proclivities that are good and worthwhile pursuits. ACA has helped me see so much about my existence.

I now swim in the streams of healthy clean waters. I soak in the honesty asked of me by the Twelve Steps. I drink and am refreshed by a new open mindedness. I delight in a baptism of forgiveness based in my original innocence. I begin to let go of the desperate fear of my True Self.

Return

"Be melting snow.
Wash yourself of yourself."
~Rumi

You are much more than you.
Indeed everything and nothing.
At the same time.

Ego is not satisfied.
It rushes and confines our movements.
It desires and demands.

There is necessity in our sadness.
Tears are our ocean.
They roll upon life's shores.

We return where we never left.
The home we never knew.
And its home the universe.

Thus we belong everywhere.
And nowhere.
Scattered fragments of wholeness.

YOU'RE ONLY AS SICK AS YOUR SECRETS

"We never spoke of family secrets. We thought we had forgotten the abuse, but the body and mind remembered." BRB pg. 106

Secrets! They are powerful things! Unless... we speak them. Then, somehow, they lose their power over us.

Growing up, there were many things I couldn't tell. Partly because I did not have the vocabulary necessary to speak about them. Partly because I was profoundly ashamed.

I still keep secrets. Often, I try to deny that they are even there, haunting me like some terrible phantom. But they find a way into my experiences.

My body knows the distress of them. My brain works hard to keep them concealed, overlaying them with mysterious behaviours I fail to comprehend.

Thankfully, I have found a brotherhood where it is safe to share them. Gradually the enigmatic nature of my life unfolds to reveal a simplicity I never knew was there.

Truth cannot be hidden. And it is the only path to life.

INVISIBLE ARMY

I'll never forget when I first heard someone say it: Not all wounds are visible.
It was about PTSD. Which I was diagnosed with when I first saw a psychiatrist about 20 years ago.
My "disability" is not obvious to others. It is contained within my brain.
It was born of psychic pain. It is borne on quiet dysfunction.
People don't see me as I am. I don't see me at all. I feel invisible.
Yet here I am, looking, absorbing, emitting, leaving pieces of myself behind.
I use to think of this as a curse. I've begun to see it as a gift.
I am part of an invisible army of brothers. We are warriors discovering our hidden greatness.
It doesn't matter that the world does not notice us. We are here anyway.
And we are making a difference in a silent way. Our stealth is effective, kind, and generous.
We are necessary.

King Archetype*

The King archetype represents the highest state of mature, centered consciousness, order, and self-mastery. Rather than just a literal monarch, it symbolizes your inner capacity to organize your life, lead yourself with integrity, and bring stability and purpose to your personal realm.

The Core Functions

The King has two primary duties:

Order and Harmony: The King is the great harmonizer. He establishes boundaries, brings calm clarity, and protects against the "chaos" of unregulated emotions or life stressors.

Bestowing Blessings: A healthy King doesn't rule for ego, but to nourish and empower the people and environment around him. He recognizes the worth of others, mentors them, and delegates fairly.

The Polarities (Shadow Aspects)

Every archetype exists on a spectrum. If you do not consciously connect with the King energy, the archetype will manifest negatively, resulting in two extremes:

The Tyrant (The Active Shadow): Driven by insecurity and the fear of losing control, the tyrant rules through fear, demands blind obedience, and crushes perceived threats.

The Weakling (The Passive Shadow): This manifests as a lack of inner authority. You might become passive, avoid taking responsibility, or allow others to dictate your life, while feeling inwardly inadequate and resentful.

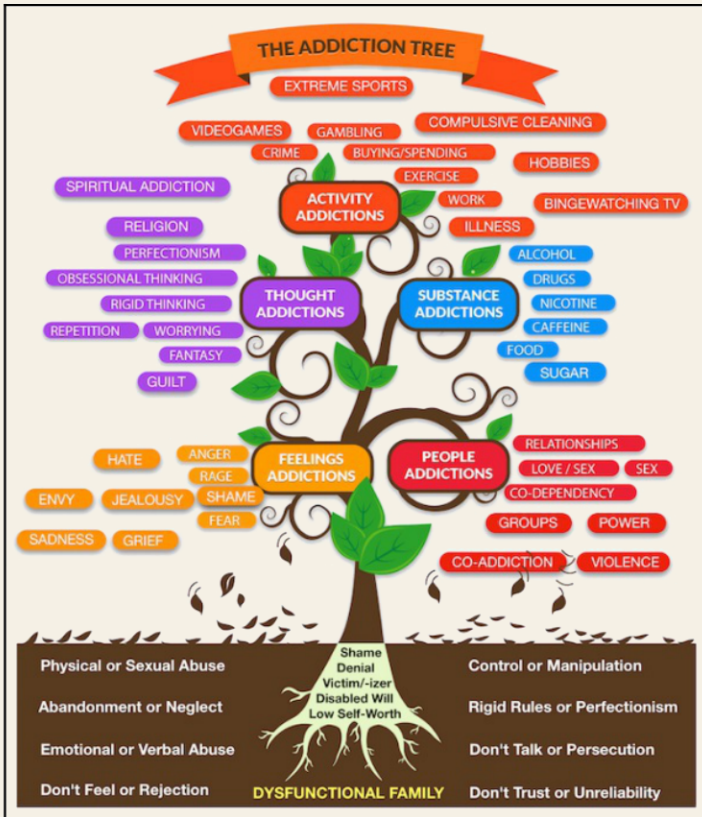
How to Cultivate It

To tap into the King archetype, Jungians recommend developing practices of inner authority. This involves identifying where external approval drives your self-worth, and instead making decisions based on your core, internal values. It's about moving from a reactive state into one where you take full responsibility for your actions and the order of your daily life.

*Written with help from AI.

OSMOSIS

Recovery is not an intellectual process. While learning about the impacts of child abuse is useful knowledge, it does not eliminate the consequences we experience as a result. Many of us are addicted in some way... perhaps to substances, perhaps to what the BRB calls the "inner drug store." One of the Laundry List traits reminds us that we become "addicted to excitement." It's a bit like this addiction tree.



It is as if we have been a tree absorbing poor nutrients, even poisonous ones. Osmosis is the way a plant absorbs water and nutrients from the ground in which it is planted. If that is not good, the tree is not healthy.

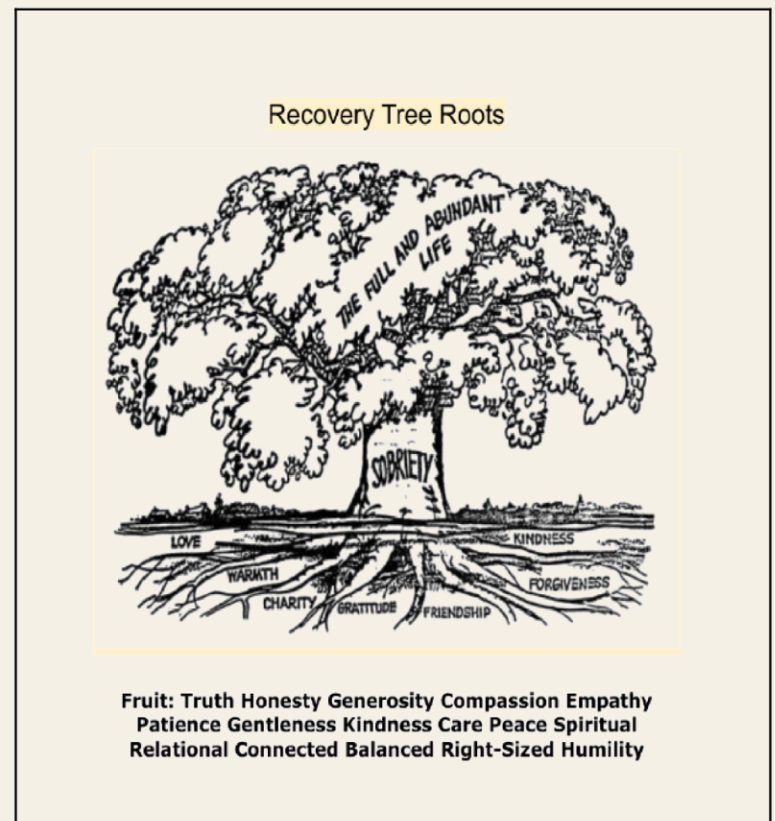
Recovery is about replacing that ground with healthy nutrients and healthy water. It is like the recovery tree below.

It takes time, of course, for the tree to become healthy. And there will probably still be parts of the tree that are affected by the years of poor

health. But the good news is that our program is a powerful way to alter the ground upon which we live.

The recovery tree is a good illustration of this. Let us resolve to consistently feed ourselves with trust, honesty, compassion, kindness and listening. Gradually we will find our lives reshaped by simply being present in such good soil.

For more information see The ACAD Tribe Loving Leader Welcome Guide.



OUR THREE-FOLD PURPOSE*

The purpose of the ACA Tribe is three-fold:

- 1) to shelter and support “newcoming brothers” in confronting “denial” of childhood family dysfunction;
- 2) to comfort those brothers mourning their early loss of security, trust and love; and
- 3) to teach our brothers the skills for reparenting with gentleness, humor, love and respect.

This is the ACA Tribe Mission Statement, To Save Our Brothers Still Suffering

*Adapted from BRB pg. 82.

If you would like to contribute to future editions of this newsletter, please contact David R (Indy) at devedr@yahoo.ca or through WhatsApp.

Tribe Resources:

WhatsApp: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/GSMfqniDjBLD1WaWKlq8Wk>

Seventh Tradition: <https://paypal.me/12Steps347>

Meetings:

THE TRIBE: ACA MEN'S GRATITUDE MEETING / DAILY

North America Times: 2:30 pm PT, 5:30 pm ET / Europe Times: 2230 BT, 2330 CET / Sydney (Aus) Time: 0930

Meeting ID: 890 3200 3902 / Passcode: 837692

MEN, MASCULINITIES AND RECOVERY / MONDAYS

North America Times: 12:00 noon PT, 3:00 pm ET / Europe Times 2000 BT, 2100 CET

Meeting ID: 821 2056 1171 / Passcode: 808678

A NEW HOPE FOR MEN ACA / TUESDAYS

North America Times: 11:00 am PT, 2:00 pm ET / Europe Times: 1900 BT, 2000 CET

Meeting ID: 811 7457 5758 / Passcode: 007783

SYDNEY WEDNESDAY MEN'S MEETING / WEDNESDAYS

Australia Times: 7:00 pm Sydney Time / North America Times: 2:00 am PT, 5:00 am ET / Europe Times: 1000 BT, 1100 CET

Meeting ID: 999 3559 8599 / Passcode: ACASydney

HEALING IN BROTHERHOOD ACA / WEDNESDAYS

Europe Times: 1930 BT, 2030 CET / North America Times: 11:30 am PT, 2:30 pm ET

Meeting ID: 859 2343 0060 / Passcode: 499821

MEN'S STEP STUDY - TONY A / THURSDAYS

North America Times: 11:30 am PT, 2:30 pm ET / Europe Times: 1930 BT, 2030 CET

Meeting ID: 858 1124 3854 / Passcode: 523106

NO MORE SECRETS ACA / FRIDAYS

North America Times: 12:00 noon PT, 3:00 pm ET / Europe Times: 2000 BT, 2100 CET

Meeting ID: 856 5383 4416 / Passcode: 265140

BROTHER TO BROTHER SIA/ACA / SATURDAYS

North America Times: 1:00 pm PT, 4:00 pm ET / Europe Times: 2100 BT, 2200 CET

Meeting ID: 858 1799 7467 / Passcode: 663957



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TRIBE RESOURCES

Public resources, meetings and support



VISIT THE TRIBE

Welcome, unity, recovery and the public home of the brotherhood.

SCAN OR CLICK



PUBLIC RESOURCE LIBRARY

Newsletters, guides, workbooks and recovery resources.

SCAN OR CLICK



UPCOMING MEETINGS

Find the current men's meetings and choose one simple next step.

SCAN OR CLICK



NEWCOMER GUIDE

A gentle starting place for a brother who has just arrived.

SCAN OR CLICK



JOIN THE WHATSAPP TRIBE

Stay connected with the brotherhood between meetings.

SCAN OR CLICK



SEVENTH TRADITION

Help keep the meetings available and self-supporting.

SCAN OR CLICK

Links designed to stay simple for the reader

The website address remains stable even when the file behind it is updated.

Need help? Begin at ACATribe.org and choose Meetings or Resources.



SEVENTH TRADITION

The Seventh Tradition states that each group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

We have no dues or fees, but we do have some monthly expenses, such as a Zoom account, an AI account, and other incidentals that help bring this education to you daily, and support 13 meetings per week.

Anything you can donate,
goes a really long way to
HABO - Helping A Brother Out.

Your donations are a blessing,
but your **Presence is a GIFT.**

We couldn't do Recovery without you, Brothers.

Thank you. **Keep Coming Back.**



THE ACAD TRIBE OF BROTHERS