



THE FOUR- FOLD WAY

Walking the Paths
of the Warrior, Teacher,
Healer and Visionary

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HOW THE UNCLAIMED HEALER REVEALS ITSELF: THE SHADOW ASPECTS OF THE HEALER ARCHETYPE, THE WOUNDED CHILD OF THE SOUTH

We experience the shadow side of the Healer when we do not attend to our own health and well-being. To attend to our own health care requires a commitment to life-affirming patterns. When life-affirming patterns are not consistently present, the shadow side of this archetype is revealed by the wounded child of the South, who exhibits patterns of neediness and withdrawal and grows up to be the *martyr*. The Healer archetype may carry the shadow aspect, which reveals our own addictive nature and life-negating patterns. We often refer to these life-negating patterns as *addictions*. Underneath every addiction may well be an individual who is an indulgent martyr, unwilling to claim his or her health and well-being. Reinforcing life-negating patterns opens the doors to disease and discomfort.

Four Universal Addictions

Perhaps what we call individual addictions, such as to drugs, alcohol, and sex, are actually symptoms of deeper patterns of addiction that we share as a species. In looking at addictions from a cross-cultural perspective, I discovered

that this is true and that there are four basic addictive patterns that human beings share:

1. The addiction to intensity. The unclaimed human resource is the expression of love.
2. The addiction to perfection. The unclaimed human resource is the expression of excellence and right use of power.
3. The addiction to the need to know. The unclaimed human resource is the expression of wisdom.
4. The addiction to being fixated on what's not working rather than what is working. The unclaimed human resource is the expression of vision and ways of looking at the whole.

The *addiction to intensity* is often demonstrated by individuals who have a low tolerance for boredom. If things become too dull or too routine, people who are addicted to intensity will dramatize, sensationalize, and exaggerate their life experience in order to feel alive. Many of these people will move to drugs, alcohol, and sex to intensify their experience and create the illusion of more vitality and aliveness. Intensity is the shadow side of love. If the addiction to intensity is well developed, waiting to be claimed is the human resource of love and the passionate four-chambered heart.

The *addiction to perfection* is the second addiction. Some indigenous societies clearly see the difference between per-

*Tell me whom you love, and
I'll tell you who you are.*

—African-American proverb
(Feldman, *A World Treasury*)

fection and excellence. Perfection does not tolerate mistakes, whereas excellence incorporates and learns from mistakes. People who have an addiction to perfection have little tolerance for mistakes or exposure of vulnerability of any kind. They equate vulnerability with weakness rather than strength. Contrary to this view, indigenous societies see the expression of vulnerability as an expression of strength. They inherently understand that vulnerability springs from the authentic self. Wherever we are addicted to perfection, we begin to walk the procession of the living dead or become like a walking mannequin. We deny our humanness and invest all our energy in maintaining a cultivated image or facade of how we want to be seen rather than exposing who we are. Perfection is the shadow side of excellence and the right use of power. If this addiction is well developed, waiting on the other side to be claimed is the human resource of power and excellent leadership skills.

The *addiction to the need to know* is the third addiction shared by humankind. It is important to inform oneself and to know things; yet in this addiction one is driven and compulsive about the need to know or the need to understand. These individuals do not like surprises or unexpected events. Where we are addicted to the need to know, we become masters of control and have strong trust issues. Everything needs to be compartmentalized, information needs to be controlled, and relationships need to be strategized. We become dogmatic, righteous, critical, and arrogant. These characteristics are the shadow side of wisdom.

If this addiction is well developed, the human resource of wisdom is waiting to be claimed. Wisdom includes the characteristics of objectivity, clarity, and discernment.

The *addiction of being fixated on what is not working* instead of what is working is the fourth addiction. The truth is that the majority of our life, when we look at it as a whole, is working. It is only a portion or a big slice of life that isn't working, but not the whole. If this addiction is well developed, there is a tendency to magnify negative experiences and blow them out of proportion. We tend to look at life from a fixed perspective, we don't recognize our blind spots, and we are unable to trust intuitive information. This addiction is the shadow side of the four ways of seeing: intuition, insight, perception, and vision. The four ways of seeing allow us to fully claim the gift of vision and release the addiction to being fixated on what is not working. When this addiction is fully disengaged, we begin to look at the blessings, gifts, talents, and resources that are available to us in our lives.

It is better to prevent than to cure.

—Peruvian proverb
(Feldman, *A World Treasury*)

The Eight Universal Healing Principles

Eight healing principles, used in the majority of cultures, sustain health and well-being. When we do not fully attend to these principles we find ourselves on the shadow side of the Healer archetype. Study the chart below, and assess for yourself where you are supporting your health and well-being and where you are not attending to health-care issues.