



The Art of Being a Woman

Discover Your Feminine Power through the Magic of Archetypes

Katrin Saali Saul



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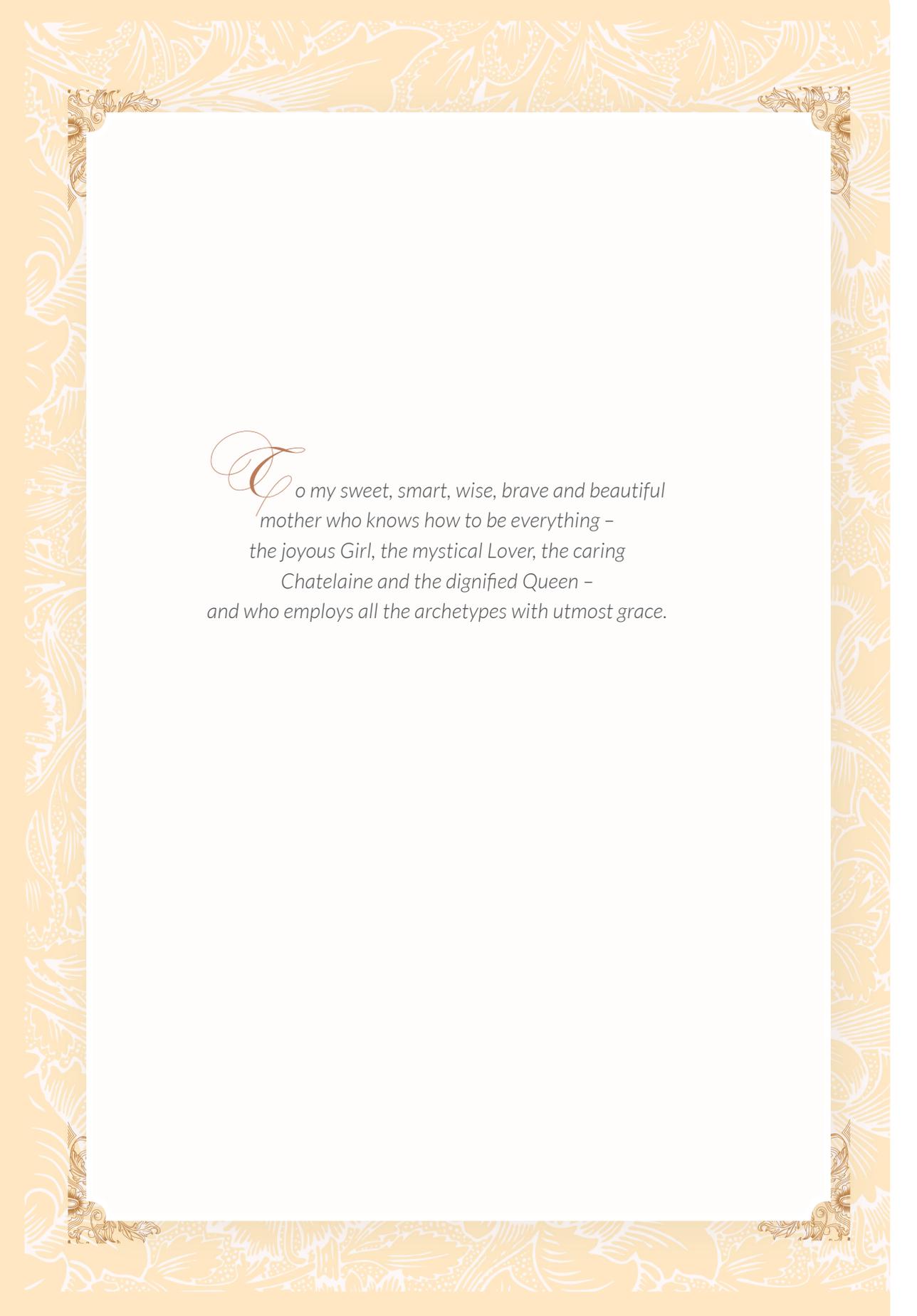
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Discover Your Feminine Power through the Magic of Archetypes

Katrin Saali Saul



*To my sweet, smart, wise, brave and beautiful
mother who knows how to be everything –
the joyous Girl, the mystical Lover, the caring
Chatelaine and the dignified Queen –
and who employs all the archetypes with utmost grace.*



Content

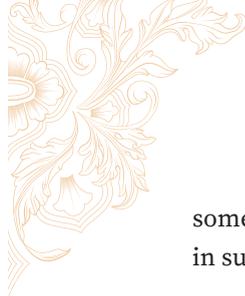
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Foreword

I am grateful to all of the people who have, directly or indirectly, inspired me to write this book.

Paradoxically, my intense and continuing interest in female archetypes was fuelled by men. In 2004 I stumbled across ***King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine*** (Harper One, 1990), a book by Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette, which made me look at men in a different light. I realised that every woman would like her man to be a **KING** – powerful, dignified, responsible for his kingdom, whether it be his family or company; a **MAGICIAN** – creative and wise, able to find solutions to all problems and challenges; a **WARRIOR** – a brave, strong, resilient man fighting for his goals and ideals, the one who would slay a dragon for his love; and a **LOVER**, a loyal and devoted partner, a master of both the physical and the spiritual aspects of love.

These are the four archetypes of mature masculinity. The balanced and devoted King builds his kingdom on the knowledge of the Magician, which is then expanded and defended by the Warrior. And at the centre of all pragmatic endeavours we find the creativity of the Lover. And yes, the Lover's impulses



sometimes make even the wisest of men do the craziest of things; history is rich in such stories.

Many well-loved big screen heroes are the embodiments of these archetypes. Sometimes all of them can be found in one person: James Bond, for example. He is a dignified King serving mankind and his country, a clever and cunning Magician fulfilling impossible missions, and a brave Warrior with a licence to kill when facing his enemies. And, of course, he is a passionate Lover, however fleeting his devotions may be.

Unfortunately, every archetype has its shadow sides. The just King can become the Tyrant. He may become a cruel despot, hungry for power, solely interested in satisfying his own needs. Another shadow of the King is the passive Weakling, who has lost touch with his power and has no interest in ruling his kingdom: he has neither the knowledge nor the skills.

The healthy Warrior may be overpowered by the shadow archetype of the vindictive and brutal Sadist, looting, burning and raping. At the other end of the spectrum is the emasculated Masochist, unable to harm a fly.

The Lover's energy is lively and passionate. The shadow-Lover, however, suffers from a Don Juan syndrome; he searches for the ultimate and perpetual orgasmic state and becomes a sex addict. Alternatively, he may feel no passion or *joy de vivre* and become the Impotent Lover.

The shadow of the clever and skilful Magician is the Manipulator, a hypocrite abusing his skills and knowledge, cheating everyone in his professional and private life. On the opposite, passive side of the spectrum is the Innocent, who is unable to do anything, having neither *élan* nor wisdom. He is a loser with no good plan, who cannot fix a leak, and who lacks the creativity to earn any money.

The question is not whether a man is influenced by shadow archetypes but when and how they manifest themselves. They exist in everybody. They are either dominant and affect the man's every move or they just pop up every once in a while.

This book by Moore and Gillette inspired me to think about women's archetypes and embark upon a journey to the sources of healthy womanhood. When I read ***Women Who Run With The Wolves*** by Clarissa Pinkola Estés, who dedicated her wonderful book to the wild woman of myths and fairy tales, it was like



seeds falling on fertile earth. Estés says: *“Traditional psychology is often spare or entirely silent about deeper issues important to women: the archetypal, the intuitive, the sexual and cyclical, the ages of women, a woman’s way, a woman’s knowing, her creative fire. This is what has driven my work on the Wild Woman archetype.” “Healthy wolves and healthy women share certain psychic characteristics: keen sensing, playful spirit, and heightened capacity for devotion. Wolves and women are relational by nature, inquiring, possessed of great endurance and strength. They are deeply intuitive.”*

Reading this book only increased my desire to understand the woman’s soul and its landscapes. I was like a female wolf intrigued by something she sees on the horizon, eagerly wagging my mythical tail.

Archetypes, i.e. principle patterns, can be seen as cornerstones of full-fledged womanhood. They lay the foundation for the deepest layers of the balanced woman’s psyche, affecting her feelings, thoughts and behaviours. They create the wise, playful, emotional, loving and creative Wild Woman who Estés has so elaborately described.

What are the feminine archetypes corresponding to the masculine ones, the archetypes facilitating viable and healthy mutual relationships? And, knowing there are shadow archetypes for men, what are the shadows pursuing women and weakening their contact with the Wild Woman?

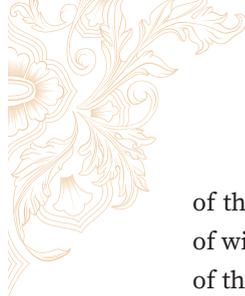
When I Googled for the answers I found several theories. There are many different sources dealing with women and archetypes. Every author has his/her own convictions and lingo, producing a multitude of descriptions that are charming in their way. I will elaborate on some of them.

In the last century, Toni Wolff¹, beloved colleague and muse of Carl Gustav Jung, wrote an essay on four archetypes manifesting in women. She describes the Amazon – an independent and self-contained woman; the Mother – the caregiver; the Hetaira – the mistress involved in fine arts; and Mediale – the wise woman.

Women have also been analysed through seven Ancient Greek goddesses – Hera, Hestia, Athena, Demeter, Aphrodite, Artemis and Persephone² – where every goddess represents some aspect of a woman, each manifesting herself in the field they control in Greek mythology. For example, Hestia, the Greek goddess

¹ Toni Wolff (1956). Structural Forms of the Feminine Psyche.

² Jean Shinoda Bolen (1984) Goddesses in Everywoman: A New Psychology of Women.



of the hearth, represents women involved in domesticity. Athena, the goddess of wisdom, represents the intellectual aspirations of women. Demeter, goddess of the harvest, is connected to motherhood. The goddess of love, Aphrodite, is, of course, identified with female sexuality.

Fallenangel³, having studied the masculine archetypes described by Moore and Gillette, has written an article on the archetypes of Queen, Mother, Wise Woman and Lover. He also briefly mentions shadow archetypes. Thus the Queen becomes either the Tyrant or the Weakling. The Mother's shadows are the devouring (Possessive) or the careless (Distant) mother. The Wise Woman can be either the Witch or the Fool. The unbalanced Lover can become either the Frigid or the Seducer.

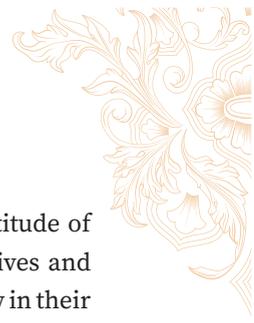
This representation of the woman's world as standing on four archetypal pillars and the shadows surrounding them seemed very clear and understandable to me until I happened to participate in **Larisa Renar's** Life Academy workshops, where **the Lover, the Lady of the House, the Girl** and **the Queen** were discussed.

Renar has combined the Wise Woman and the Mother into one archetype - Mistress of the House - and introduces one new element - the Girl. This concept seemed to make the most sense to me because **girlish happiness, purity, trust and the joy of living are of such importance in a woman's psyche that these traits deserve to be represented in one independent archetype**. So the Lover embraces the Lover, the Queen sides with the King, the Magician partners up with the Chatelaine (who is a sorceress of a kind) and the Warrior gets to protect the Girl.

These seminars and the addition of the Girl archetype changed my understanding of the holy quaternary of the female inner cosmos. The mission of Renar's Life Academy's workshops is to achieve the integrity of the four elements, to invoke the healthy versions of these energies, and to develop them. I have always been more interested in the shadow aspects **because the shadow archetypes counteract the effects of healthy expressions of mature archetypes**. Larisa Renar's theory⁴ laid the foundation for my own ever-evolving hypothesis. It grew and matured into the Estonian culture. Inspired by these workshops, I developed shadow archetypes, the majority of which we all know from childhood fairy tales.

³ *Fallenangel* (2013) Queen, Mother, Wise Woman and Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Feminine

⁴ *If you are interested in Larisa Renar's theory, please read her book "Четыре грани совершенства. Годовая программа возвращения женственности" (Бектор 2010), or visit her homepage <http://www.lifeacademy.ru/en/>*

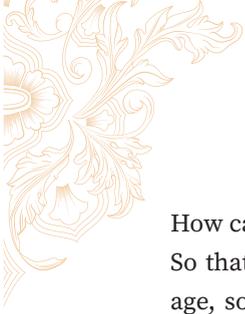


My work as a psychotherapist has brought me into contact with a multitude of sad, angry, scared, jealous and bored women who feel stuck in their lives and relationships. Some are haunted by childhood ordeals, some are unhappy in their current relationships, and many cannot read the intricate language of their souls or make friends with themselves, let alone with their partners or kids. Many have endured breakups and cannot comprehend their role in what happened. Many don't see womanhood as joy but as a burden, pain and suffering.

I altered my work strategy and started telling women about archetypes and their shadows, how they evolve and how they are manifested, why it is good to recognise them and how to deal with them. I have seen many people identifying with what I have told them, but of course not all discoveries were happy ones. Unhappy discoveries have included finding the silent freezing shadow of the Ice Queen, the Greedy Woman's dissatisfaction and domineering, the Mother Hen's hovering around children and the Ugly Duckling's victim mentality. However, these discoveries have marked the beginning of the journey towards healthier relationships, both with one's self and others.

As there was nothing available in the Estonian language on feminine archetypes, it made sense to write down in one book everything that had enriched my understanding of how to live life as a wholesome woman: my thoughts as a therapist, observations from workshops, and my life experience. Larisa Renar has given me her blessing, allowing me to refer to her as my source of inspiration and to use her system of feminine energies. My contribution here is the fairy-tale – whether painful or trivial – side of the shadow archetypes. Most of this book is about stories of women, of life itself. I have tried to understand women, to understand what contributes to a satisfactory life and what is symptomatic of chaos, anxiety and disruption. All of these qualities are divided between the categories of mature archetypes and their shadows.

This book is not a clinical study or a scientific analysis. My aim was to write a book that would be easy to comprehend without any academic knowledge, a book that would enable readers to appreciate the **art of being a woman** through the world of archetypes. Yes, I mean “art”. They say on the sixth day God made Man, then looked at him and said, “I think I can do better than that”. And he made Woman. I sincerely believe Woman is the finest of all God's creations. Every woman is destined to be divine, beautiful, tender and powerful at the same time. Every woman is a creator and nurturer of all creation. This is the divine mission of women: enabling life to flourish on Earth.



How can you live your life in a way that the divine source in you doesn't dry up? So that the spark doesn't dim and you become more and more powerful with age, so much so that this power feeds your self-esteem, the foundation of all relationships? This is the art of life. **I feel that being aware of the archetypes and the shadows helps to create a masterpiece out of your own life.** There are only two options: either you dominate the archetypes or they dominate you.

One adjective that you will not find under any archetype is "beautiful". To me femininity and beauty are synonyms. Femininity does not depend on body shape or fitness. There is a saying that in youth a woman is beautiful because this is what God intended, but when she reaches maturity beauty is in the hands of the woman. Beauty is an inner quality glowing from the inside out. **A woman loses her beauty only when she loses contact with her femininity.** This means that hard times or age are not the enemies of beauty but sadness, anger, envy, guilt and shame are; these negative qualities are represented by shadow archetypes. Every woman wants to feel beautiful and to be considered beautiful. Of course, looking after oneself helps, but beauty is more than skin deep. **Happiness, peace of mind, love and wisdom glowing from healthy archetypes are the most important building blocks of femininity and beauty.**

Through the ages, women have been portrayed in all forms of artistic creation – music, film, dance, architecture, decorative art and literature – yet each representation is unique. I will try to do justice to this divine creation: Woman.





*I*ntroduction

What is an archetype?

The simplest way to explain it is to say that an archetype is an idea that is identically interpreted by all people, and this idea arises from our deeper nature.

A “nice day“ can be comprehended and interpreted in various ways: for some it means sun and warmth, others envision snowy mountains and skiing, or think of playtime with kids, fun with friends, long walks on a windy beach and so on. A nice day is not an archetype.

Neither is “means of transport“: it can be a car, camel or bike, depending on the person.

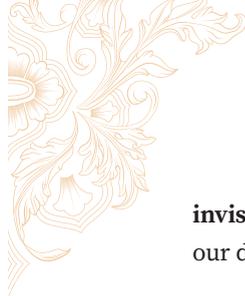
But there are a multitude of ideas that are interpreted the same wherever you go. If we asked people to describe a king, mother, orphan, warrior, witch or trickster, we would get basically the same answers.

The psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung’s⁵ description of archetypes, i.e. organising principles, is a part of the repository of psychology. **He explains this synchronicity of understanding through the collective unconscious. He argues that a certain number of images are universal and belong to the inherited structure of the human psyche. These dominant factors of the collective unconscious instinctively shape and influence human perceptions, thought processes, feelings and behaviour, regardless of whether they are conscious or unconscious.** These are potentials that are handed down from generation to generation.

For Jung the archetypes “are ‘primordial images’ in so far as they are peculiar to whole species, and if they ever ‘originated’ their origin must have coincided at least with the beginning of the species. They are ‘the human quality’ of the human being. This specific form is hereditary /.../ The idea that it is not inherited but comes into being in every child anew would be just as preposterous as the primitive belief that the sun which rises in the morning is a different sun from that which set the evening before”.

Well-known expressions of archetypes include fairy tales, myths and folk tales, and through them we all are very well acquainted with archetypes from early childhood. **Regardless of whether the term itself is known to us or not, these**

⁵ *The following quotes are from Four Archetypes, C. G. Jung (Routledge 2003)*



invisible forces affect our behaviour daily. If such larger-than-life forces affecting our daily life exist, isn't it sensible to be better informed about them?

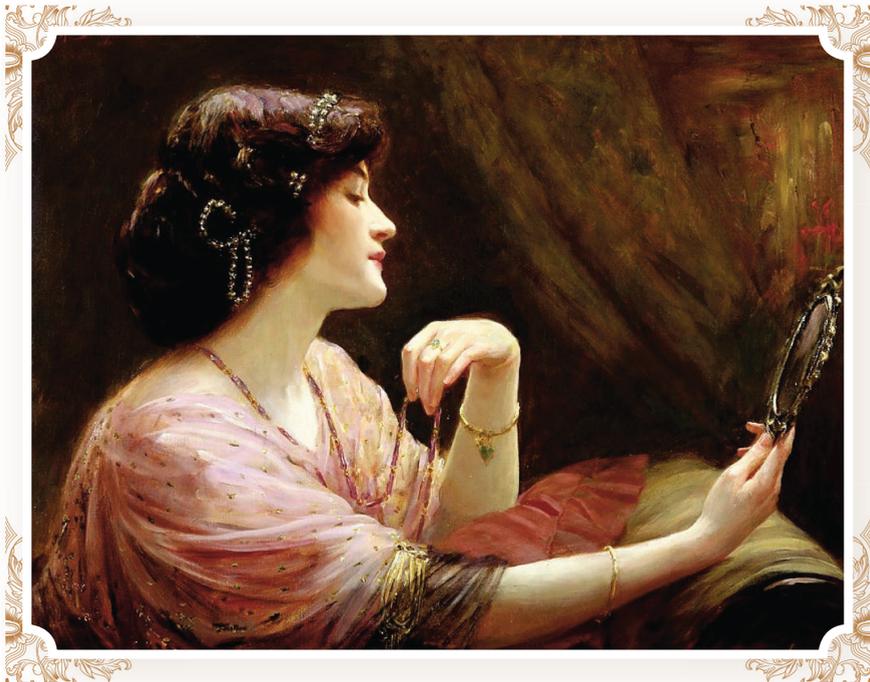
*F*eminine archetypes

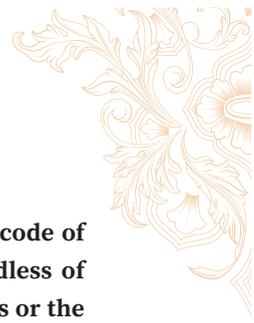
Woman is also an archetypal concept, the primary associations being softness, tenderness, warmth, fertility, emotionality and beauty. There are many more associations, depending on your individual experience with women or as a woman.

One way to describe the rich essence of the woman is to look at the archetypal elements:

In every woman there is a:

- ~..~.. Cheerful, emotional, playful, carefree and smiling Girl
- ~..~.. Sensual, sexual and elusively mystical Lover
- ~..~.. Caring, motherly, calm and organising Chatelaine (Lady of the House)
- ~..~.. Dignified, wise and fair Queen.





Every woman is born with this rich palette of archetypes. This is the code of the primal woman, which is activated at the moment of birth regardless of the place of birth or race, mother's age or mental state, physical fitness or the nature of the birth process.

The standard package of archetypes is meant to guarantee a complete woman's life. Nature (or God, if you please) has done its job at the moment of birth; the rest lies in the hands of the mother and the environment.

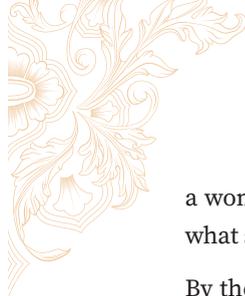
It is very difficult to determine when exactly a child will come into contact with the archetypes; different archetypes are activated full-on at different stages of a person's development. But if we take, for example, a year-old girl, we can very clearly see the first inklings of the Lover behind the innocent and playful Girl: how easy it is for her to coo at her daddy and wrap him around her tiny finger! Young girls are little Chatelaines, ladies of the house, playing with dolls, learning to be domesticate by making sand cakes. And they are perfect Princesses, declaring their wishes or declaring their final "No!" should the food or dress picked out by their mum not be to their liking.

A small child is like a sponge during the first years, taking in everything going on around her at the time. **She saves in her unconscious not just the way her parents treat her and speak to her but also how they interact with each other.** Everything is saved and stored – warm and loving family relationships, how all members of the family are treasured and valued, how everyone's opinion counts, if parents laugh together and show their mutual love with kisses and cuddles or if there is a cold, pragmatic and distant atmosphere where all communication is limited to logistics (who needs to go where, what to pick up at the shop, what has to be done etc.) – absolutely everything, both good and bad, and this is what the child will base her own identity on.

*M*other's influence

Feminine archetypes – encompassing warmth and wholesome detachment, wisdom and childish ease, sensuality, passionate sexuality and sensible calm, dignity and naughty shrewdness – are all learned from mothers and other significant women in the family.

There is a saying that a girl's formation begins at the moment of her mother's conception. Ancestral heritage is the cornerstone of femininity. By this I mean that



a woman's childhood and upbringing determine what kind of mother she will be, what she can offer to her own child.

By the time a woman is born, she has been affected by the state of her pregnant mother's mind for nine months. After the birth, the mother creates her child's reality, and the mother's disposition affects a child hundreds of times more than the physical environment. The mother's state of mind depends on this same physical environment.

Lucky are those whose mothers and grandmothers have been connected to the primal feminine energy, despite the perils of life and the troubles of womanhood, and who have been able to hold onto the wisdom, joy and beauty of being a woman. The primal feminine power taps into the woman's self-awareness and her self-worth. It is fed by self-respect, self-love, love of life, the inner voice and peace of mind. It depends on being happy with one's body, soul and mind, on feeling beautiful regardless of age, weight or fitness.

Every life has challenges; the world around us produces a lot of duress. It's hard to be perky around the clock and life is hardly a bed of roses. Everyone suffers failures; nothing and no one is perfect. Still, some women manage to live their lives without losing contact with the four archetypes. Daughters have seen their mothers be playful, chase butterflies, make snow angels, be fascinated and be overcome with awe. These daughters have seen their mother's Lover archetype's warm, tactile and loving relationship with her husband. They have witnessed their Queenly mother being respected by her husband, friends and colleagues for her knowledge, skills and dignity. And, of course, these daughters have felt their mother's love and enjoyed the comforts of their cosy home. They have learnt family recipes, good mood tricks, fever remedies and home-making secrets.

However, not all girls are that lucky and, therefore, there are a myriad of women who look mature but who have no idea of the power of the feminine. Their mothers have lost contact with some archetypes along the way. There may be many reasons for this, the biggest of which is their own mother's influence. That's why I said before that the fore-mothers are the carriers of healthy archetypes from generation to generation. **Little bundles of joy look at their mothers as paragons. Little girls accept what they see.** They have no idea that there are other ways of being a woman than their mother's way.

All of us have heard stories of how some puppies accept a cat (or some other animal for that matter) as their mother, adapting to its archetypal behaviour. The puppy does it because this is its only reality, its entire world. A girl forms her idea of womanhood based on the example of her mother and later this becomes her



subconscious role model, which envelops all archetypes. The unfortunate aspect here is that unhealthy relationship patterns and miserable dispositions are also passed on. This heritage is not malicious – no one wants to harm her children on purpose – but unconscious and due to ignorance.

For example, the healthy manifestation of the Girl archetype can be lost in childhood. If a mother is poorly connected to this archetype, she will also not tolerate her daughter's giggling. "Life is an onion that you peel crying", may be the motto of this family. Maybe the girl has had to grow up fast to help her mum take care of the other children. Maybe the mother is unhappy and helpless and the child has had to mother her mother, sacrificing her own childhood games. The reason, of course, may also be the tyrannical nature of the father. Or, maybe, in this family only boys are wanted and valued.

All girls are born with the healthy manifestations of the archetypes, but if a girl does not see them manifested in her mother, grandmothers or other significant women, she will find it hard to develop them in herself. Luckily, it's not entirely impossible. Many women have tried so hard not to be like their mothers that they have consciously started to develop traits that were missing or in overdrive in their mother. Awareness is the keyword.

The father's role is crucial in the birth of femininity. A girl forms her opinion of men in general based on her father's attitude towards her mother and other women. A girl needs to frolic and play with her father to feel his physical strength and to become familiar with the male body. If a girl sees that her mother admires her father and believes that he can cope with almost anything and knows almost everything, then this provides her with confidence in life and teaches her to avoid relationships that are not trustworthy or safe. The way a woman lets herself be treated by men later in life depends on her father – if a father has time to discuss life with his daughter and listen to her thoughts and feelings, then his way of handling her feelings teaches her borders and respect.

Seeing her parents share tender feelings, kissing and hugging, develops a girl's healthy sexuality. If her mother has a good relationship with her father, the girl wants to find a husband who will be like her father.

Our attitude towards our bodies also has roots in childhood. In an ideal world, parents would instil in their daughter the feeling that she is pretty. If a girl sees that her mother considers herself beautiful and her father confirms it with his words, the girl will grow up with a sense of harmony. If the mother is constantly dissatisfied with her physical appearance or, even worse, criticizes her daughter's looks, this criticism will affect the girl for the rest of her life.



Shadow archetypes

Healthy archetypes make a woman happy and everyone enjoys being around her. A healthy archetype is balanced and we will talk about this balance in the coming chapters.

Unfortunately, this balance is difficult to achieve and even harder to maintain. **It's easy to err on either side, to go into overdrive and have too much of the respective energy, or not have enough contact with some archetype because of fatigue or lack of courage or skills, resulting in the dominance of shadow archetypes in a woman's psyche.**

When life is good, it is easy to be balanced. The shadow sides gain dominance when something goes wrong or the woman thinks that something is awry or she is dissatisfied with her life. I have built my theory so that all archetypes have four shadows: two on either side.

In overdrive cases, a woman either has too much of the respective energy in her mental and/or physical self-expression, or she has entirely moved away from feminine energy, ending up in some aggressive, too active or one could even say even masculine form of energy. If the archetype is weak, the woman is either not using the energy enough or has lost all contact with it.



Healthy archetypes and their shadows are represented as follows:

- 0 **defective shadow archetype**; contact with the healthy archetype has been lost altogether
- **weak shadow archetype**; contact with the healthy archetype is too weak
- ♥ **healthy, balanced archetype**
- + **shadow archetype in overdrive**; too much expression
- ♂ **masculine shadow archetype**; very forceful, aggressive and active expression.