Six Archetypes of Spiritual Guidance

By Lisa A. Fullam and John R. Mabry

The title character of the television series "House" is a difficult person. Cranky, curmudgeonly, and often cruel, he doesn't hesitate to humiliate his supervisors, his residents, and frequently his patients. He's often impaired due to an addiction to Vicodin acquired when a surgery that went awry left him lame. He is a brilliant diagnostician, capable of driving himself (and those around him) to ask the next question: "but what if it's *this*...?" His relentless pursuit of the answer to the puzzles his patients provide is life-saving. Should his residents regard him as a role model? In what way(s)?

Instead of searching for virtues like justice or fidelity in theoretical formulations,[1] it is more important that we see virtues as they are lived out in people around us. Dr. House is remarkably devoted to solving the puzzles of his patients—he seems to care little for them as human beings, but to be driven by the intellectual challenge they represent. In the language of virtue, he is a curious man; this virtue of driving curiosity is a fundamental virtue for physicians[2]. And while it is certainly desirable to have a physician who wants to heal you because he or she cares about you, it is far better to have a cold but effective physician than one who holds your hand and watches you die without particularly wondering why you're slipping away, or whether anything can be done about it. We learn what curiosity looks like in Dr. House. We also see the lack of other virtues that might make him an even better physician and, arguably, a better human being.

Of course, House isn't real—he's a character in a television series that, among other things, teaches us something about the practice of medicine. He's a depiction of one way of being a physician, and doctors-to-be (and those who train doctors) might ponder his mode of doctoring, and what he means for them.

Likewise, there are many ways of offering spiritual guidance, some of them with significant differences. In this paper, we will explore this diversity by offering six archetypes of spiritual guides.[3]

Archetypes in Spiritual Guidance

Archetypes represent model or ideal behaviors, personalities, or ways of being. According to Carl Jung, they are not just products of culture, but have an independent reality from the individual psyche, existing in what he termed the "collective unconscious," a pool of images or ideas that reside on a transpersonal plane, that are accessible by all people everywhere.[4]

Transpersonal Psychology, as defined by Jung and others, is one of the few psychological schools that take spiritual experience seriously. As such, Transpersonal Psychologists offer spiritual guidance in the course of their practice, and the field has bequeathed much wisdom to traditional spiritual direction practice as well. Most talk of archetypes in spiritual guidance focuses on the experience of the client, such as in Bruce Talman's *Archetypes for Spiritual Directors,* where he discusses such client archetypes as the Heroic Sovereign, the Seer, and the Lover. In this paper, however, we propose an original model featuring six distinct archetypes that inhabit the spiritual guides themselves.

We say "inhabit" because, according to Jung, archetypes are not simply ideas that we project and emulate, but as already stated, are independent "entities," complexes, or energies that can possess, or inhabit human beings, directing their behavior, often unconsciously. This is a positive phenomenon in some circumstances—when, for instance, you are facing down a hostile boardroom with a moral admonition, being inhabited by the archetype of the Prophet can only help. However, as is usually the case, we are often unconsciously "possessed" by a succession of archetypes. Since they direct us, rather than being directed *by* us, this is often to our detriment, and we, like St. Paul, end up saying, "I do the things I hate."

One of the goals of Transpersonal Psychology, therefore, is to identify the archetypes active in one's life, to make unconscious "possessions" conscious, so that a person can even call upon a certain archetype when needed and dismiss them when they are not.[5] For instance, when in danger, the warrior archetype can be called upon to inhabit and direct one's actions, while the lover archetype can be called upon to express itself in romantic situations.

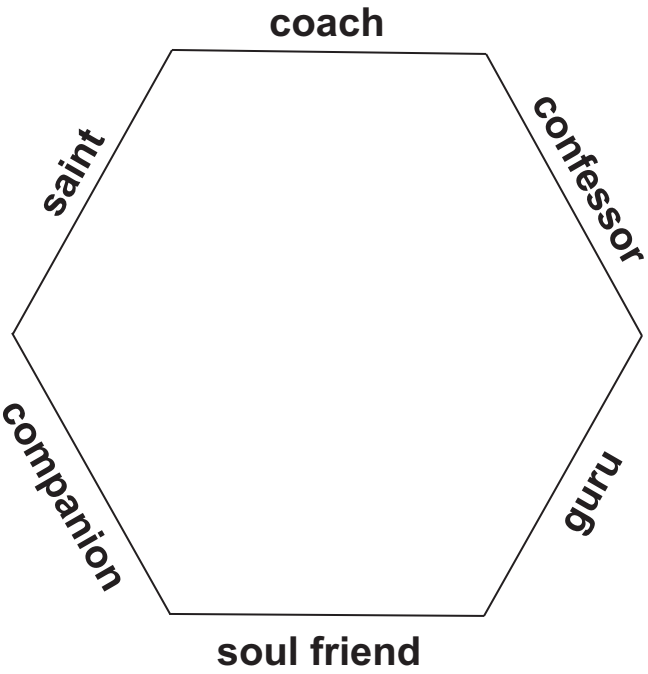
Likewise, the archetypes discussed in the following pages are independent "entities" or energies that each exhibit a distinct style of guiding the human soul. By making their operations conscious, by understanding the motivations and methods of each "type," they become more available to us—we can call upon them when needed. More than that, we can get "out of the way," and allow them to work through us unhindered.

None of the archetypes alone is a complete account of what it means to be a spiritual guide—indeed, that's part of the point. To be a well-rounded spiritual

director means having a familiarity with all of them, and comfort working from the perspective of several. Dr. Kildare is a model general practitioner, but if we have some mysterious disease that's going to do us in twenty-four hours from now, we really don't want him for our diagnostician. Dr. House, on the other hand, is a terrible GP, and we probably wouldn't want to have anything to do with him socially. But faced with a mysterious illness, we really, really want him in our corner. House is uncomfortable, because he reveals a modality we don't usually associate with the practice of medicine. So House re-defines, or at least questions, our notions of the proper excellences of physicians.

Just as a physician would do well to see both the strengths and the shortcomings of House or Kildare and use them in their reflection on their own practice of medicine, the archetypes of spiritual guides we offer in the following pages are incomplete—a holistic approach to spiritual guidance involves not being inhabited exclusively by any one of the archetypes offered, but being able to draw upon the wisdom of all of them when needed and appropriate.

This list is incomplete in another way, as well. While we will articulate six archetypes for spiritual guides, there are, in fact, many more. This article is not meant to be an exhaustive exploration of spiritual guidance archetypes, but to merely highlight six that we consider to be the most prevalent and helpful in current practice.



I. Archetypes Standing Still: The Six Archetypes

The Coach. *Alan is 23, an undergraduate majoring in philosophy, and a leader in the campus Presbyterian ministry. Intelligent and inquisitive, he wants to stretch himself spiritually beyond where his past practice has taken him. He's done some reading: He's intrigued and a little scared by Teresa of Avila's* Interior Castle*, and wonders if he's got what it takes to be a mystic. He also feels himself strongly drawn to Buddhist practices of meditation, and has read Suzuki and other popular texts introducing Westerners to contemplation.*

Tom is the campus minister at Alan's school, and meets with him monthly. While not a formally defined relationship of spiritual direction, it is clear that Alan seeks from Tom guidance in his spiritual life within Tom's role as chaplain. Tom tells Alan that, while he has some experience in Christian contemplative practice, he is less knowledgeable about Buddhist meditation. If Alan wishes to continue his practice rooted in Christian tradition while incorporating Buddhist elements, Tom is happy to help. If Alan want to go in a more specifically Buddhist direction, he can recommend a local teacher with experience working with Christians. Tom advises Alan to discern where he wishes to be rooted, and to consider the other tradition as enriching and enlivening his pursuit of spiritual growth. Alan opts to be a "Buddhist-flavored Christian" rather than a "Christian-flavored Buddhist," at least for now, and Tom begins to instruct him in some practices of contemplative prayer, and to discuss with him his progress in meditation.

The Coach understands the role of the guide to be that of a knowledgeable and supportive resource for the client's growth. The coach emphasizes the development of the client from where he or she starts more than the need to make a fundamental break from the past in order to begin.

A coach begins with an honest assessment of a client's progress, and offers concrete steps, or "action items" to help the client achieve his or her goals. As such, the coach is very achievement-oriented, constantly assessing the clients' progress and success.

The coach's assurance that he or she understands the work of progress in the spiritual life can be especially helpful for clients who are unsure of their own

capacity for discerning what will help them, or who need substantial encouragement so that they can make progress.

While the coach seems like an archetype that has only recently emerged in the spiritual guidance community, in fact this style of direction has been around for a long time. St. Paul himself, in his epistles, exhibits a strong Coach approach to spiritual guidance, honestly assessing the spiritual state of the various communities he is writing to, and offering concrete behaviors and practices to help his readers succeed on the spiritual path.

Many spiritual guides are offering "spiritual coaching," utilizing many methods from formal coaching practice, but focused on spiritual formation. Such practitioners are consciously embodying the Coach archetype, and through their contributions to the theory and practice of the ministry, are shaping its future in a new and positively directive direction.

The Guru. *Betty took her religion more or less for granted until she discovered the writings of Thomas Merton. Then something "clicked" for her. She continued to read his books, listened to some audiotapes of his lectures, and sought a spiritual guide who shared her enthusiasm for his work. Plowing through the several volumes of his journals, she felt both privileged to feel she had a closer vision of his life and understanding of Christian living, and a bit disappointed at the ample evidence of his foibles that she found there. Still, it is Merton who has enlivened her faith, in the way a charismatic preacher might attract converts.*

Betty drives 75 miles to meet monthly with Fr. Antonio, a Trappist monk who has studied Merton intensively. Betty cherishes their sessions: Antonio represents for her an indirect connection to Merton. She finds their sessions to go beyond Merton's own teaching in helpful ways—basically finding in Antonio an updating of Merton that speaks to her own situation powerfully.

The Guru is an embodiment of a wisdom that is revealed in the client's growth grasping the particular message the guru represents. The word "guru" comes from two Sanskrit words, "gu" (darkness) and "ru" (shatterer). A Guru, therefore is someone who shatters the darkness of the student, and leads him or her into light, wisdom, or spiritual clarity.

While there is a risk that the guru may come to see him- or herself as the core of the message, still there is a powerful transformation available in the kind of connection that can arise between the guru and his or her disciple. Charismatic and attractive, but still curiously aloof, the guru's approach is usually direct, but may also be indirect, as in this example.

While the Guru is well-founded in Hindu traditions, usually seen as an embodiment of God, the archetype is actually active around the globe. Zen Buddhist *roshis* partake of this archetype, as have famous rabbis, such as the Baal Shem Tov. Christian tradition, too, has had its share of gurus, going back to the Desert Fathers and Mothers, where an *abba* or *amma*'s skill in spiritual guidance would lend them sufficient fame to draw householders from hundreds of miles around to their cells.

A guru may be a valuable way for a client to re-vision his or her own tradition, or to gain entrance into a version of another, as the client may see in the

Guru a startling new way to embody the teachings of his or her tradition. Through the Guru's person, a client's darkness may be dispelled, ushering them into a new relationship with old teachings, and, of course, with the Divine.

The Confessor. *Ruth is a 35 year-old Reformed Jewish woman in spiritual direction for a few months for the first time. She's been active in her synagogue for a long time. Ruth is a divorced mother of two young children, who asked her alcoholic husband (a convert) to leave when the chaos of their home life became too great for her to bear. In direction, she seemed to have a kind of block to "letting go" in prayer, to "praying without a net," as it were. In time she admitted that she wondered if she could really be a person of deep prayer, since she had ended her marriage. She wondered if she could trust God not to let slip a person who had slipped so badly, she thought, in her own life.*

Catherine, her director, considered options for addressing what seemed to be a need for reconciliation. She suggests that Catherine take this issue to the upcoming Yom Kippur services, to offer it up and release it. She also offers a form of ritualized reconciliation within direction. She's not certain, however, how deep this sense of guilt and inadequacy goes for Ruth; she also offers that they begin their sessions with a short prayer of recollection of the unbounded mercy of God.

All spiritual directors are on the lookout for resistance to spiritual union, but the Confessor is primarily concerned with hindrances originating in guilt and shame. This archetype emphasizes the effects of sin on the client, while also carrying an assurance of the reality and availability of forgiveness. That forgiveness inheres

in part in the client's ability to recognize and express what is keeping him or her from realizing his or her spiritual potential. For clients carrying a substantial burden of a sense of brokenness or sin, the confessor can provide a concrete sense of liberation for the journey ahead. This vision of spiritual guidance can be extended over the entirety of a client's relationship with a director, based on a theological anthropology that emphasizes brokenness as a more-or-less chronic aspect of the human condition.

The Confessor has a long history in Catholic spiritual direction, and for many centuries the role of Spiritual Director was conflated with that of Confessor. Fortunately, this has been corrected, largely through the recent resurgence of non-ordained persons in the ministry of spiritual guidance. We say this is fortunate in that for too long—in the "conflated" period—the deep listening work of "spiritual guidance" was replaced by the doling out of perfunctory penances.

Ordained persons may still—and often do—still make formal confession an important part of their spiritual direction practice, and this is appropriate so long as the real work of listening to both the client and the Divine is done.

For many people, however, especially those who practice Protestant and Jewish traditions, there is no role for a formal Confessor. In such cases, directors who approach their work from a theological anthropology of fallenness or brokenness may still do effective work, reflecting on the corrosive effects of sin on the human soul and inviting clients to offer their confessions directly to God, or, in the case of Ruth above, liturgically, in the appropriate forum for *vidúi* and *teshuvá* (confession and forgiveness) to occur.

The Saint. *Brett is a forty year-old third order Franciscan, married with three children, the youngest seven years old. Since high school, he's been captivated by the person of Francis of Assisi. There are many "versions" of Francis available to the spiritual imagination: the nature-mystic, the anti-capitalist, the pacifist, and others. For Brett, the Francis that captured his imagination is the* poverello*, the man of utter simplicity of life, freedom from material attachments, and solidarity with the materially poor.*

He seeks direction from Eleanor, a local Franciscan who shares his appreciation for this Francis. She lives simply in a small community including vowed and lay Franciscans and offering temporary lodging for elderly homeless people. Their sessions include updating Brett on the work of the community, to which he is a generous donor. He has tremendous admiration for Eleanor, though he recognizes that, at least for now, his life is very different from hers. He appreciates, and seems to benefit from, the challenge that her community's witness presents to his own more traditionally middle-class life-style.

The saint differs from the guru in that the saint is generally a more distant figure than the guru, and at the same time less mysterious. While the guru tends to incarnate a particular spiritual understanding, the saint tends to be a less complex exemplar of a small handful of difficult-to-emulate virtues usually clearly rooted in a traditional spiritual path. In other words, while gurus may, but do not always, represent a teaching that is unique and idiosyncratic, saints are "stars" of a well-known path, usually embodying their more difficult aspects. While Gurus put much

emphasis on their teaching, Saints edify by example, as Francis recommended to his followers: "Preach the gospel at all times. If necessary, use words."

There are nearly as many saints in Christian history as there are stars in the sky, and many of them have been luminaries for others in spiritual guidance. Some have been formally canonized, while most have labored quietly but effectively, living simple lives of faithfulness and devotion, inspiring others through their actions.

Dame Julian of Norwich is one example of a formal spiritual director who inspired others through her life of austere simplicity. The popularity of Mother Teresa's writings is another example of the "saint" archetype in action—Dorothy Day is another. Other faith traditions have their Saints as well, from Rumi to Bhodhidharma, from Rabbi Akiva to the nameless itinerant Hindu *sanyassi*, bowing in reverence to the Divine in everyone he meets.

The Companion. *James is a thirty year old Episcopal priest who is experienced in several kinds of spiritual practices, but feels himself most drawn to the Ignatian spiritual tradition, especially in its understanding of the spiraling synergy of contemplation and action. He no longer understands himself as a "beginner" in spiritual life, but more advanced in his practice of discipleship. One of the principal stresses he faces is how to balance the multifaceted and seemingly unending demands of his pastoral work with his spiritual life. He is also involved in a romantic relationship that is increasingly serious, and he feels pulled in three different directions.*

Hi spiritual director is Rebecca, an older lay associate minister at a nearby Roman Catholic parish. Rebecca is experienced in directing the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, and is experienced at navigating the difficult waters of balancing professional ministry with family life. In their sessions, James takes great comfort in being able to openly name and discuss the difficulty of balancing roles. Rebecca often finds herself acting as a sounding board more than a guide, she feels, but she recalls the 15th annotation of the Sp. Ex which reminds her that the director's task is to stand "in the middle like the balance of a scale, [and] allow the Creator to work directly with the creature, and the creature with its Creator and God."[6] She in no way sees herself as having "solved" the puzzle James is experiencing, but she has lived in its tensions with a measure of peace for some time now.

The companion is a fellow-traveler on the spiritual journey, who may or may not be on the same path as the client. The companion, as guide, is still an authority, but not in the same sense as the coach or guru—the companion is understood to be on the way also, and in part the usefulness of this archetype inheres in that shared *via*. In this way, the companion archetype strongly forefronts the process of spiritual development rather than the *telos* or endpoint it presents.

An excellent metaphor for the Companion is the pilgrim, since the pilgrim generally journeys with other pilgrims. The Companion and the client walk side-by-side, headed towards the same ultimate destination. The Companion is experienced in the path and its difficulties and rewards, but generally refrains from offering evaluative or interpretive information with his or her clients. Instead, he or she is

content to merely listen prayerfully, pointing out those things that he or she notices which the client may overlook.

The Companion differs from the soul-friend (see below) in that the companion's own experience (and the understanding of the process he or she has acquired in the role of guide,) is material drawn on in the direction relationship, but only insofar as it is useful for the directee's progress. It is not a relationship of mutuality, and the Companion will be highly circumspect in what personal information he or she offers to a client.

The Soul-Friend. *Laurie was on retreat at a Vipassana Buddhist Center when she ran into an old acquaintance she hadn't seen for some years. Anne was a classmate from college, and recalled many friendly conversations with Laurie, but never a close friendship, perhaps in part because Laurie was a year ahead and in a different program from Anne. At the retreat house, the norm was silence, and at first the two just grinned recognition. Two days later, Laurie gave Anne a note. "Would you like to talk? If so, how about tomorrow afternoon? I leave to go back to work on Friday." Perhaps in part fueled by the atmosphere of retreat, when speaking deeply is easier, their conversation was a powerful one. They discovered that their professional and spiritual lives were following similar patterns of growth and frustration. Both conversant in spiritual matters, they could talk easily of their spiritual seeking and practice. For years thereafter, though they lived on opposite coasts, they continued the conversation that began at the Center, able to chat conversationally, or go much deeper into their lives, needs and deepest desires.*

A soul-friend is a person with whom one shares intimately the details of spiritual life, and therefore life generally, in a more casual atmosphere than formal spiritual guidance. A Soul-friend relationship is one of mutuality—both parties share about their intimate spiritual longings and progress, and both listen and comment. This is never a professional relationship, but one grounded in friendship and shared experience.

Soul-friends are rare, and generally a person has only a few, if any, in a life-time. While the Soul-friend is not generally regarded as an appropriate archetype for professional spiritual guides, but represents a powerful dynamic that can underlie or mark the beginning or end of a professional relationship with a client. This archetype may also represent a need that a client or guide brings to a professional relationship. The power in such relationships includes the ability to see and share in the on-going work of God in the friend's life, and therefore become more attuned to discerning it in one's own life—sometimes at the friend's prompting.[7]

There is a rich history of soul-friendship in many spiritual traditions, and although usually one member is clearly seen as senior on the journey, the mutuality of the relationship is also often clear. In the Christian tradition, the relationship between Sts. Francis and Clare represent such a relationship, as do the letters of Abelard and Heloise. In Judaism, the relationship between David and Jonathan in the Hebrew scriptures exemplifies this archetype, while in Sufism the deep Soul-friendship between Rumi and Shams continues to inspire and enliven seekers' imaginations.

Summary. A few points can be made about these six archetypes:

1. They're styles, not models. These six archetypes are not models for spiritual guides, most obviously in that they are not complete depictions of how to be a spiritual guide. Nor is any of them sufficient alone to describe how one or another person might chose to offer spiritual guidance; they are not exclusive ways one fulfills the role of guide, nor what one seeks when looking for a spiritual guide. Just as our earlier example of Dr. House reveals one way of being a physician, his is not, fortunately, the only way of filling that important role. There are many ways to heal, and this is as true of the soul as of the body. The archetypes we present are better thought of as *character styles*: they represent different ways of entering into a guide/client interaction. They reflect emphases that a guide will tend to reflect. Each archetype has strengths and limitations (more of which will be discussed below), drawn from the nature of the archetype.

In a way, archetypes may be understood as styles for guides in the way that singers employ different musical styles. The opera singer makes music within a stylistic range that emphasizes purity of tone and pitch along with tremendous power. A jazz singer displays a facility with improvisation and a wide range of vocal tones from pure harmonies to low growls, and vocal power is less emphasized. The aim for a singer is to make music, building on the capacities of his or her own voice, employing different musical styles as they enhance or fail to enhance the final product.

2. Some styles work better than others for each guide. Like singers and styles of music, spiritual guides will inhabit some archetypes more gracefully than others. For example, for some people, the role of companion is the most comfortable mode of offering spiritual guidance, and will be the "baseline" for his or her practice. This is a reflection of factors that include the guide's basic personality type (character,) training, and of course the guide's own experience in their own ongoing formation.

Also like musical styles, some archetypes really won't suit a particular guide well. The same factors shaping an archetype's "fit" likewise condition the "un-fit" of other archetypes. A sense of "un-fit" can represent many different things, ranging from a basic unfamiliarity with a guidance archetype to a real danger for the guide (or client) inherent in the model if he or she pursues it. For example, for some the archetype of guru is extremely discomfiting, either because they simply don't feel comfortable exercising that degree of directiveness, or because they see in it a risk that the guide's own priorities and even doctrine can easily be imposed on the client. The source of the discomfiture is matter for the guide's own discussion in supervision or in his or her own spiritual direction.

3. A good guide knows what works and what doesn't. Unlike musical styles, a spiritual guidance archetype is not something that's simply acquired or imitated. Since the archetypes reflect a deeper dynamism of character, training and experience, a guide should be aware of the archetypes he or she is most given to embody, along with its strengths and weaknesses. This form of self-awareness is a fundamental professional skill as much as other particular tools like active listening or knowledge of spiritualities.

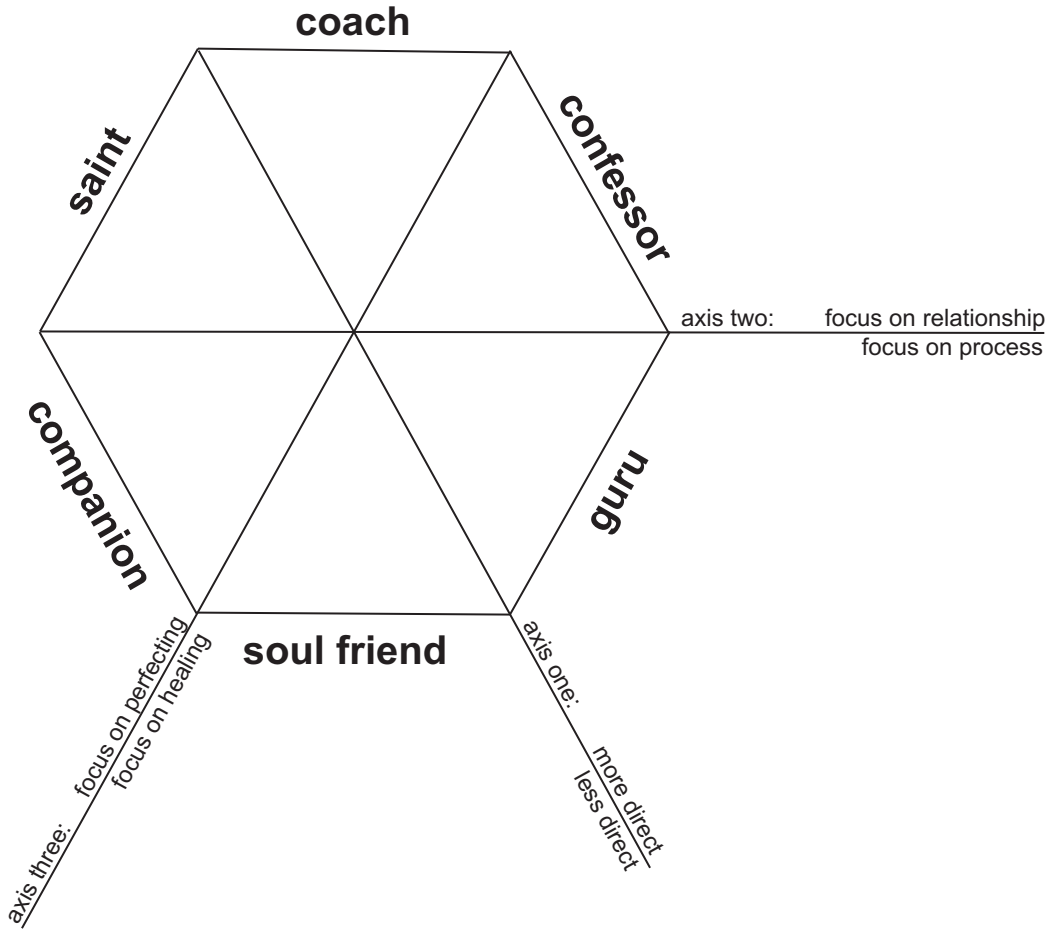
Likewise, an experienced guide will be able to develop a sense of the kind of guide from which a client will most benefit. If the guide is able to work from another archetypal position, he or she is able to be of service to a wider range of clients. For example, a client with a strong need for affinity with the guide may seek a guide who works easily from the companion archetype. A guide who cannot work except from a high boundary style like that of the Saint archetype will not be able to be as helpful.

4. Character, training and experience are all dynamic. A competent guide recognizes his or her own more natural archetypal styles. As guides become more mature, and as their training and experience advance, they should also advance in their ability to draw on the strong points of other archetypes—to open themselves to the influence of such archetypes. Even the aspects of archetypes they find uncomfortable at first may become easier to recognize and enter into with practice, perhaps employing a succession of archetypal influences within a single session. The goal is not to become a styleless abstraction, like a coat-hanger on which one can hang any style of clothing with equal and impersonal effect, but rather to begin to consciously explore and engage the richness of the whole array of archetypes, while maintaining and developing a personal style. Again, think of musical styles—while a singer may consider himself or herself principally a rock singer, in time he or she may experiment or even gravitate toward other styles that enrich their own. Paul Simon is one example of this process in popular music, when later in his career he engaged Afro-Caribbean music and re-enlivened his music.

5. Supervision is essential to maintain a balanced practice. Two heads are always better than one, and just as supervision is always necessary for maintaining an effective and ethical practice, supervision is essential for making sure one's archetypal approach is appropriate. Since one's supervisor will have familiarity with a different constellation of archetypes, bringing his or her approaches to bear upon issues in one's practice is a reliable way to make sure that one's approach is well-rounded, as well as revealing one's own possible blind spots. A supervisor can help discern and point out when directive archetypes are becoming overbearing or self-important, as well as helping monitor proper boundaries those archetypes in which the distinction between professional and social can become blurry.

II. Archetypes Dancing:

Points of Similarity and Dissimilarity across the Archetypes.



In the above figure, the six archetypes are arranged in a hexagon with three axes bisecting it. Each of the axes represents a tension or spectrum of emphasis about the understanding of the nature of the interaction between guide and client.

Axis 1: Directiveness. One axis bisecting the hexagon is that of authority, or, more precisely, the degree to which the guide sees himself or herself as directing the process that the client is undergoing. The Coach, the Confessor and the Guru all possess an authority over the process and the goal that exceeds that of the other three archetypes.

More directive modalities are generally both useful and even necessary for beginners. A client in counseling for the first time, e.g., is unlikely to know even what to expect in terms of the structure of the session. More authoritative archetypes are also helpful in times of particular stress or uncertainty on the part of the client—they give the client an arm to lean on, a shoulder to cry on, a sense that there is a transcendent universe even if things look pretty bleak, ordinary, or pointless.

The same traits make the more directive archetypes inappropriate in other circumstances. A client who needs to develop self-confidence in his or her own spiritual life needs to be let free to see how they do, not heavy-handedly pushed to this or that practice, pursuit, or goal.

Guides should be aware that being too directive is a risk for the client, and should monitor their degree of directiveness in supervision. Inexperienced guides may tend to push clients to follow a particular path, whether or not that path is the client's own. A Roman Catholic diocesan seminarian was teaching an RCIA class, in which, in every session, he extolled the virtues of a particular mystic he found especially entrancing. When the catechumens chose confirmation names, every one of them chose the name of the mystic. He'd adopted the guru archetype, here representing the teaching of a particular mystic as the entirety of Christian tradition.

Experienced guides, too, may find themselves drawn inappropriately to the more directive archetypes. It can make the client's spiritual progress seem faster and smoother, both of which are temptations in spiritual life. It can reassure the guide of his or her wisdom or efficacy, and so becomes one form of counter-transference.[8]

Also, be aware that a guide who is too directive with a client in whom communication with God is going quite nicely would do well to make sure he or she gets out of the way. After all, as St. Teresa warned of a director who took too much pride in his knowledge, "He must strive to strengthen his faith and humble himself, because the Lord is perhaps making some old woman better versed in this science than himself, even though he be a very learned man."[9]

Axis 2: Focus: Process/relationship vs. goal. The second bisection indicates a difference in understanding the object or focus of the work. The Guru, the Companion, and the Soul-friend represent a strongly relational or process-oriented vision of what is sought in spiritual guidance. The goal is the path, not the achievement of some defined success. These archetypes may represent a pilgrim-model of spiritual life (especially the companion archetype,) or a more luminous or mystical notion that it is in coming close to and conforming oneself to the teaching of the guru, or in the deepening of the bond to the soul-friend that the richness of spiritual life is realized. The saint, the coach and the confessor represent a more goal-oriented or universal, transcendent, or objective (rather than uniquely inter-subjective) concept of the spiritual path: the confessor, for example, carries a concept of sin that is independent of the individual client, in terms of which the client's own brokenness may be named.

As with the dynamisms of the first axis, there's good news and bad news here. Beginners in spiritual direction tend to focus excessively on an end-point for spiritual growth as they understand it. Whether that end-point is Ignatian availability, mystical union, or a more inchoate wisdom, they may fail to see how the end-point is discovered only in and through the process of growth. Pilgrims are made by the walking, not by the arriving. On the other side, an excessive focus on process can cause the client to lose the "edge" that comes with the knowledge that they still have a goal that is far off. Soul-friends can sink into little mutual-admiration societies rather than a mutual commitment to striving. Pilgrims who lose sight of the goal are just wandering.

The benefits and risks for the guide are similar to those for the client. A more process-oriented guide may risk becoming the focus of the relationship, rather than the client's development. Those working out of the guru archetype, because of the combination of high-directiveness and focus on relationship may tend to subsume their disciples unless they are careful to attend to the client's growth and unique end. The less relationally-centered archetypes may forget that the end of direction is not the production of an objectively-definable type but of new incarnations of such—the aim of Benedictine religious formation, e.g., is to make more Benedictines, not more Benedicts.

Supervisors working with directors who function out of these archetypes would do well to invite them to discern the propriety of their approaches and boundaries.

Axis 3: Mode: Healing vs. Perfecting. The third axis reflects a different understanding of the nature of spiritual development, roughly described as a difference between healing what is broken and perfecting what is healthy.

Among the healing archetypes, the Confessor's task is to help the sinner recognize and name the brokenness of their lives, and then to heal it. A Guru provides a wisdom that the client is missing, and is discontent from the lack. Even finding a Soul-friend can be seen as finding a missing piece, the kind of deep companion that reassures that God is in all the mess, after all.

Among the perfecting archetypes, the Coach exhorts the client to the excellence of which they are capable. Saints call us to be "outstanding in virtue," and Companions are like fellow-journeyers working out the same path. The paths of perfection are generally forward-looking, while the archetypes that emphasize healing tend to start with a recognition of a past alienation or rupture (perhaps in the individual, or perhaps universally past, if humanity generally is seen as broken by sin), then moving forward first by repair, or, if the problem lies in human nature itself, in a form of damage control. For example, ascetical practices of various types can be framed in both modalities. If a person fasts to control the unruly base appetite of fleshly desire for food, then the presumption is that the body must be tamed in order for the soul to be free. If a person fasts in order to enjoy the possible consequent alertness in prayer, awareness of the interconnection of all life and gratitude for the sustenance of the body, then a more perfecting frame is at work. The first faster is looking to correct or corral the body, while the second looks forward to the benefits attainable through this exercise.

Again, each has its place, each has its risks. Most people most of the time, carry both brokenness and the grounding for exhortation and perfecting. A given client may move from one mode to the other, and may reflect both simultaneously in different aspects of life. Alternatively, one mode or another may dominate for a time: deep trauma may require long work to address, while focusing on healing with a person who needs to focus on moving forward is like putting a brace on a healthy athlete. It won't help, and will only irritate and inhibit. A client may sometimes seek to deny or ignore aspects of their lives which need healing, and try to keep progressing despite them.

This axis can also be an important consideration in marking professional boundaries—a client who seems stuck or lost in brokenness may be in need of auxiliary therapy beyond the competence of the guide. Supervisors can help directors discern when this is the case.

The healing/perfecting axis also represents a spectrum of theological anthropologies from the more pessimistic visions of human prospects to more optimistic views. A classic Calvinist is much more likely to work from a healing than a perfecting mode, and to see the risk of hubris inherent in the drive to be perfected. Both can cohere with a strong doctrine of grace, but for the healing modality it is God's extrinsic grace overwhelming the broken soul that is emphasized, while the perfecting modality sees grace at work in the perfecting of a joyous spirit.

Summary. The three axes represent rough groupings of emphases of degree of authority, focus, and mode. They are ways of describing the archetypes as well—saint, for example, exercises less personal authority in a relationship that

emphasizes a defined goal over process, and aims to perfect rather than heal or restore. These are not the only possible ways to group archetypes, but tend to highlight, we believe, fundamental questions about the nature and practice of spiritual guidance that those in training, in practice, and training new guides might find helpful.

Conclusion

Two final points: first, again, the idea is that the archetypes live in directors, not that directors become archetypical. With attentive practice, guides become competent with the riches of the array, not limited to one expression or another. Even in a single session, an experienced guide may move from one to the other. The discernment of the appropriateness of a particular archetype for a session relies on a guide's self-awareness of his or her own ability with various archetypes, his or her skill at perceiving what would be helpful to a particular client at a particular point in the client's journey, an ability to get out of the way and allow God—through the archetypes—to do the work. (The adage "Don't speak unless spoken through" remains operative here, as in all good spiritual guidance.) All of these may be expected to improve with practice, just as with any professional skill, and competent supervision can promote this as well.

Training in spiritual guidance includes acquiring skills that help the guide to be present to and supportive of the client, while not imposing his or her own needs, ends, or agendas on the client. Acquiring ease with various archetypes is in the service of that process, where guide and client both walk on holy ground.

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NOTES

[1]For example, according to Thomas Aquinas, the virtue of justice is the "Perpetual and constant will to render to each one his right" (Summa Theologiae, II II q.58.1).

[2] And others: I have argued elsewhere for curiosity as an intellectual virtue. See "Virtues for Genomics: Curiosity and Skepticism in Genetic Research. *Irish Theological Quarterly* Winter, 2003

[3] By "spiritual guides," here I use the term broadly to include all who offer spiritual guidance. Pride of place goes to spiritual directors, but I also intend to include pastoral counselors, religious educators whose work includes a pastoral dimension, and lay and ordained pastoral ministers, in those aspects of their work where they engage in spiritual guidance, especially in an on-going relationship with a client. Similarly I will use the term "client" broadly to include all those on the other end of these various types of spiritual guidance.

[4] See Stein, *Jung's Map of the Soul*, p. 88.

[5] Transpersonal psychologist Roberto Assagioli's school, Psychosynthesis, features a theory of sub-personalities that operates in much the same way.

[6] St. Ignatius, *Spiritual Exercises*, 15

[7] Sometimes soul-friends never meet. Consider the Indigo Girls song "Virginia Woolf": "They published your diary, and that's how I got to know you. The key to the room of your own and a mind without end. And here's a young girl, on a kind of a telephone line through time. And the voice on the other end comes like a long lost friend. So I know I'm all right..."

[8] "Transference" is a term rooted in psychoanalytic psychology, and indicates the transposition of the client's emotions and/or desires from one relationship, particularly a relationship in the client's early life, to the relationship with the analyst, as, e.g., the client works out a difficult relationship with a parent by seeing the analyst somewhat in that role. In this context, transference includes the client idealizing the guide in some manner and to some extent. Religious professionals are seen also to represent the divine to parishioners/clients to some degree, and so may experience the client's feelings toward God, positive and negative, in the context of the relationship. "Counter-transference" is the same process moving from the

helping professional to the client. In the present context, counter-transference can take the form of a guide needing or at least seeking a certain form of affirmation from the client, whether to the guide's wisdom, authority, or in a more psychoanalytic sense in which a client reminds the guide of a parent or other figure, and bears the burdens of that other relationship. Both processes are, I think, unavoidable, but a common trope in spiritual misguidance is the failure of the guide to recognize and try to mitigate his or her counter-transference.

[9] *The Life of Teresa of Jesus*, p. 326

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