

Archetypal Coaching

Creating Synergies Through Astrology
and Dream Work

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Chapter 2

Archetypal Dynamics in Coaching Practice

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Archetypal Dynamics in Coaching Practice

The Archetypes

The archetype—let us never forget this—is *a psychic organ present in all of us*. (Jung, CW 9i, para. 271)

The term “archetype” traces back to the Greek “arche” (primal) and “typos” (trace, seal, model), initially explored by Plato (428 BC). Freud viewed them as primal instincts and Jung (1960) viewed them as innate, cross-cultural patterns shaping the psyche. Hillman (1975) expanded on Jung’s perspective, seeing archetypes as gods symbolizing occult aspects of the psyche.

In ancient myths, archetypes were personified as immortal gods and goddesses. Plato used the stories of Eros and Aphrodite to represent Love and Beauty, as well as the legend of Zeus to describe Power. These archetypes were also called Ideas, Forms, and Absolute Principles by the philosophers.

In his book *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, Jung (1994, p. 39) states:

There is not a single essential idea or conception that does not possess historical antecedents. They are all ultimately based on primitive archetypal forms, which became apparent at a time when consciousness did not yet think but perceived and thought was essentially revelation.

Jung calls the image “primordial” when it has an archaic character, i.e. when the image presents a striking concordance with mythological themes. “The primordial image or archetype is always collective, that is, common to entire peoples or epochs” (1994, p. 524). Archetypes, according to Jung (1968, para. 329), are universal expressions shaping human behaviors, rooted in ancient myths and philosophical concepts. Archetypal images are limited and reflect fundamental and typical human experiences. All these archetypes borrow from the individual culture’s coloration and costumes, but they are basically the same universal archetypes, typical human ways of perceiving and reacting to life situations since primordial times.

These universal patterns, in the form of knowledge and images, accompany each individual from birth, providing a shared foundation rooted in ancestral experience of primordial images replicated in the myths of all cultures. My research participant Spring described the unified field of archetypes in the unconscious as a collective place to which she had access. Her elaboration of her experience concurs with Jung's archetypal theory of a collective universal unconscious that is present in all of us:

... so perhaps I'm just feeling into this archetype of freedom (Uranus); rather than just freedom belonging to me, it's more of a freedom that's available to us all. (pp. 96–98 in Carod, 2021)

Modern psychology, particularly Jung's theory of archetypes, is a contemporary expression of the same archetypal forces that have historically manifested in myths and collective symbols. It suggests that, despite its scientific framework, psychology functions as a modern myth that continues to shape our understanding of the human experience, linking the past and present through archetypal dynamics.

In his book *Jung to Live By*, Jungian psychoanalyst Eugene Pascal (1992) states that our ancestors genetically endure in us through local mythology, reflecting typical experiences of humans since primordial times.

Jung's approach to archetypal symbols emphasizes that the planetary "gods" are within the individual and can only be addressed on a psychological level through recognizing the psyche's mechanism of projection:

In themselves, archetypal images are among the highest values of the human psyche; they have peopled the heavens of all races from time immemorial. To discard them as valueless would be a distinct loss. Our task is not, therefore, to deny the archetype, but to dissolve the projections, in order to restore their contents to the individual who has involuntarily lost them by projecting them outside himself. (Jung, CW 9i, para. 160)

In his work *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*, Carl Jung (1951, pp. 3–23) identifies four main components: the persona, the anima/animus, the shadow, and the Self. The persona reflects how we adapt and present ourselves in the world, using different social masks to protect the ego and repress unaccepted impulses and emotions. The anima represents the feminine image in the male mind, while the animus is the masculine image in the female mind. The shadow encompasses the repressed and dark aspects of the personality, such as instincts and desires unacceptable to society. Some of these (animus and anima) connect the ego to the unconscious, whereas others (persona) connect the ego to the outside world. They originate from the realm of shadow, which is beyond consciousness.

In Greek mythology, the anima is represented by nymphs, amazons, nereids, and other creatures, as well as by Persephone, Aphrodite, Artemis, and Athena in their

more divine forms. However, as Hillman puts it (1972, p. 50), “the representations of the anima refer to a structure of consciousness relevant to the lives of both men and women.”

The archetypes transcend both men and women and their biological differences and social roles. Anima will always evoke its Greek influences, which blend it with psyche and the experiences of it as an emotional, amorphous living presence of great value to the individual human.

Jung often spoke of the dynamic interplay of archetypes, suggesting that they work together like “the psychic organs of the pre-rational psyche” (CW 9i, para. 222), shaping our perceptions and behaviors in interconnected ways.

It is possible that Jung’s clustering of astrological archetypes into Jungian archetypes was due to a lack of recognition for astrology at the time. It is shown in more detail in Chapter 5 that Jung’s work with astrology was well known in the field of analysis but that some Jungian training groups and analysts found it unsettling because they considered astrology of a dubious nature.

Recognizing these archetypes is crucial, not only for understanding our psyche but also for integrating the unconscious – those concealed aspects that, when overlooked, can lead to challenges in personal development. By consciously engaging with these symbols, we can explore transformative pathways and cultivate greater wholeness.

For example, the myth of Persephone in Greek mythology, who is abducted to the underworld but eventually returns to the surface, symbolizes personal transformation and rebirth. By understanding this myth, individuals grappling with periods of depression or significant life changes can find solace and meaning, recognizing their struggles as part of a larger, transformative process. Similarly, the story of Hercules and his 12 labors can be seen as an archetypal journey of overcoming immense obstacles, inspiring individuals facing their own daunting challenges to persevere and grow stronger through their trials. Carl Jung’s archetype of the Hero, prevalent in many cultures and mythologies, represents the journey of overcoming adversity and achieving greatness. By identifying with the Hero archetype, individuals can frame their own life challenges as part of a heroic quest, empowering them to tackle obstacles with courage and determination.

The study of the mythology and symbolism associated with the archetype facilitates both the acceptance of what is actually happening and the generation of creative responses. For instance, the archetype of the Wise Old Man or Woman embodies wisdom, guidance, and insight. Individuals seeking direction in their lives can look to this archetype to find inspiration and trust in the process of gaining knowledge through experience.

Engaging with questions such as “What is trying to emerge through this challenge?” or “What archetypal qualities might the client be seeking to bring to light?” fosters a deeper connection to the archetypes. For example, the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, which explores the theme of love and loss, highlights the deep

emotional struggles associated with losing a loved one and the lengths one might go to reclaim what has been lost. By relating to this myth, individuals can gain a deeper understanding of their own feelings of grief and the universal longing for reunion and closure.

Astrological archetypes offer a powerful framework for understanding the psychic dynamics that shape our lives. The planets Venus and the Moon, for example, are vehicles for the expression of the *anima*, representing the emotional and relational aspects of our psyche. These planets reflect the importance of recognizing and integrating feminine qualities to cultivate a sense of emotional balance.

The *animus* might be symbolized by the Sun and Mars, which embody assertiveness, strength, and purpose. Integrating these traits through a guided archetypal exploration can help individuals develop a stronger sense of confidence and direction.

In terms of the *shadow*, it could be symbolized by Pluto, the planet of transformation and the unconscious, as well as Uranus and Neptune. Pluto invites us to explore the darker, hidden aspects of our psyche, Uranus to embrace change and disruption, and Neptune to transcend illusions and connect with the spiritual aspects of life. Together, these transpersonal planets point to profound personal growth and transformation through the integration of unconscious material. The recognition of a facet of the personality through the corresponding archetype and its analysis in the client's astral map relieves the pressure that is experienced when we take full responsibility for the problem or challenge. This understanding allows individuals to see their issues as influenced by a collective entity/archetype, rather than as solely personal issues.

By engaging with these questions and finding meaning in our hidden shadows through the archetypes, we can foster a sense of connection and shared humanity, providing comfort and guidance on personal journeys.

The Origins of Coaching: Socratic Questioning

Socrates, a philosopher from 469 to 399 BCE, significantly influenced the conception of philosophy and is the dominant figure in Plato's philosophical dialogues. He was not a teacher but a guide, helping others recognize their truths and goodness, who embraced poverty and refused to take money for his work. Socrates frequently conversed with diverse individuals in public spaces, focusing on serious matters like courage, love, reverence, moderation, and the state of their souls. He was known for his irony and diligent learning, demonstrating his ability to tailor his questions to his audience. Socrates believed that through questioning and engaging in meaningful dialogue, individuals could uncover their own wisdom and values (Nails & Monoson, 2022).

Similar to Socrates' method of *maieutics*, which guides interlocutors toward self-discovery through questioning, the coach facilitates a process of exploration and introspection for the client. This approach seeks to uncover the client's personal truths and inner wisdom. Socrates' dialogues, as depicted in Plato's works

like *Apology* and *Gorgias*, exemplify his emphasis on reflexivity, mutual respect, and human connection.

Socrates also introduced the concept of *boêtheia*,¹ meaning “protection and assistance,” to foster a collaborative relationship with his interlocutors. In a similar way, the coach offers support and guidance, creating a safe space that encourages the client to explore their thoughts and emotions openly.

Archetypal coaching extends this principle by integrating archetypal exploration into Socratic questioning, offering foundational insights about the relevant archetype before initiating the inquiry. This preparatory step helps orient the client, deepening their reflection and enhancing the transformative potential of the dialogue. An archetypal approach further fosters self-reflection, facilitates strategic action, and promotes deeper insight into the psychological dynamics that shape an individual’s perceptions, behaviors, and life patterns.

For instance, if a client is experiencing a Saturnian aspect characterized by restriction and limitation, the coach may ask targeted questions to help the client uncover where they feel restricted in their life and how they can overcome these limitations. Before questioning for self-reflection, the coach provides a thorough description of the myth related to the client’s issue, offering diverse options for honoring the myth. This may include exploring the symbolism of Saturn as the god of time, discipline, and responsibility, as well as discussing various cultural interpretations and historical contexts associated with Saturn.

A specific question that could be posed to the client in this situation would be: “In what areas of your life do you feel the presence of Saturn’s influence, and how do you perceive these limitations hindering your progress?” This question encourages the client to reflect on the specific challenges they are facing and to identify potential strategies for overcoming them.

Once the client has identified the areas of restriction, the coach can then guide them to explore the positive manifestations of Saturn’s energy. A question addressing this aspect could be: “Considering Saturn’s influence, where do you see opportunities for discipline, structure, and long-term planning in your life? How can you harness these qualities to achieve your goals effectively?” By addressing both the challenges and opportunities associated with Saturn’s influence, clients can develop a comprehensive understanding of how to navigate their current circumstances and work toward personal growth and overcoming obstacles.

The Foundations of Modern Coaching

Coaching is about exploring human potential and possibility; it understands the past as context but primarily deals with a person’s present, helping the client design and act toward a more desirable future. Clients must be in good health before consulting with a coach, as coaching focuses on mental development rather than mental health. Therapy focuses on both recovery and discovery, while coaching focuses solely on discovery.

While therapy often focuses on the past and presumes the client has a problem that needs solving, coaching looks to the future and assumes the client is whole,

possessing the innate wisdom and tools to live a satisfying life. In coaching, the client is guided toward their potential and assisted in creating fulfilling solutions rather than receiving external advice.

Coaching is grounded in psychology, particularly in the humanistic approaches of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, who emphasized the aspects of being human that promote health and happiness. The transpersonal psychology movement emerged in the late 1960s to include elements that empower humans to function at their best, focusing on mind, body, and spirit. It explored states of consciousness, transcendence, and what Eastern traditions and practices could teach Western theorists and practitioners.

Health-promoting practices prioritize identifying and leveraging an individual's strengths, resources, and potential. This approach, often termed "positive psychology" or "strengths-based coaching," encourages clients to build upon their inherent capabilities and virtues. By focusing on what is right and what can be improved, clients are empowered to see themselves as capable and resourceful, fostering a more positive self-image and greater self-efficacy.

Traditional coaching recognizes that a coach can help clients break free from unsatisfactory circumstances by helping them adopt new perceptions and beliefs, offering a framework for understanding their current path, and clarifying whether they wish to stay on it. This process illuminates options, enables clients to choose new directions, and supports them in persisting through change.

The popular GROW (Goal, Reality, Options, and Will) coaching model developed by Whitmore (2009) is a structured approach that moves the client through four stages of the coaching process:

Goal: What do you want?

Reality: Where are you now?

Options: What could you do? What are your skills?

Will: What will you do? Actions and behaviors that lead to the goals.

By focusing on specific goals, current realities, available options, and concrete actions, the GROW model aims to help individuals clarify their objectives and develop a clear path forward. However, the GROW coaching model may not be effective for individuals who thrive in more flexible and open-ended environments, as it may feel too rigid and constrictive for their preferred style of growth and development. Some individuals may find the emphasis on goal-setting to be limiting, as they may prefer to focus on exploration and self-discovery rather than specific outcomes.

People come to a coach because they want to change something in their lives. In most cases, the main obstacle to change is habit. However, when we dig deeper, we see that habits are not only behavioral patterns but also deeply tied to beliefs, thoughts, and emotions that have become ingrained over time, making them challenging to shift. An exploration of the archetypes associated with these thought and emotional patterns can complement traditional coaching practices by supporting emotional regulation (Lai & McDowall, 2014), enhancing self-awareness and

personal responsibility (O'Connor & Lages, 2009), and facilitating goal progression (Whitmore, 2009).

The Psychodynamic Approach to Coaching

The goal of the psychodynamic approach is essentially to expand the client's capacity for emotional regulation – that is, to enable the client to revisit difficult emotional territory in a way that is contained, so that the need for defensive strategies is reduced, and thinking rather than reacting can take place. The potential of psychodynamic coaching is that it can help clients understand how they limit themselves and how to approach conflicts with more awareness and freedom (Lee, in Cox et al., 2010).

A psychodynamic approach recognizes that different parts of the mind can be in conflict with each other and uses self-awareness of bodily sensations and emotions as indicators of unconscious communication.

Both psychodynamic and transpersonal approaches emphasize the significance of a client's unconscious agenda in facilitating change. These approaches describe how defense mechanisms – such as repression, denial, and projection – operate as unconscious patterns of emotional regulation to avoid or minimize emotions that feel intolerable. Jung explored these mechanisms primarily in relation to the psyche's tendency to avoid facing uncomfortable truths and to integrate repressed aspects of the self.

In *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* (1966, pp. 64–79), Jung discusses repression, suggesting that denial of darker or troubling aspects of the unconscious can lead to a split in the psyche, hindering growth. Jung explains that by denying parts of their inner experience, particularly “shadow” aspects, individuals limit their understanding of themselves, creating an incomplete self-perception. For Jung, psychic energies that struggle to find a path toward integration with consciousness and remain unacknowledged in our inner world manifest externally through projection.

In *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (1968, CW9, pp. 3–41), Jung examined how individuals project unconscious content onto archetypes, shaping their perceptions of others and themselves. In *Collected Works*, Volume 9, para. 80, Jung states that certain archetypes – such as the shadow, the anima, and the wise old man – can be directly experienced in a personified form. These archetypes often appear as active personalities in dreams and fantasies.

Projection occurs when we unconsciously attribute our own psychic content onto others or external situations. In projection, we live through these intense emotions in relationships to become conscious of them as vital facets of our psyche. Any person or object that reflects aspects of our unconscious energy, which needs integration for individuation, can serve as a “hook” for this projection.

The journey into the unconscious requires confronting the shadow, representing one's hidden nature; the anima or animus, the hidden opposite gender within each individual; and, beyond these, the archetypes. As archetypes enter consciousness, they shape the experiences of both typical and neurotic individuals; an excessively powerful archetype can overwhelm the psyche, potentially leading to psychosis. This dynamic is especially evident in relationships and can be illustrated through both dream symbols and astrological archetypes. Experiences such as fascination,

jealousy, and addictive “love” can be illustrated by the archetype of Venus, while frustration often reflects the energy of Saturn.

Unconscious archetypes are addressed in two stages: first, they are brought into full awareness, and then they are integrated with the conscious mind through recognition and acceptance. Dream work and astrology are especially powerful here. Dreams can reveal aspects of our psyche that the inner self wants to bring to conscious awareness, while astrological archetypes helps us understand why we express particular archetypes in certain ways, shedding light on the mythological and psychological roots of specific behaviors or beliefs.

An Archetype is an image charged with an emotion by the client; it contains psychic energy and dynamism. This special feeling tone of the archetype can enable for a transformative experience within therapy or coaching.

The interplay between dream symbols and astrological archetypes can be explored and processed through active imagination, as discussed in the following chapters. The approach is totally participative and creative, merging oniric images and dormant archetypal qualities into a new self, like a new birth.

In coaching, an essential first step is to help clients uncover the values that drive their habitual patterns without judgment. For clients with unresolved childhood rejection, this may manifest as difficulties in forming healthy adult relationships, often linked to the Moon and Saturn archetypes. Fear of rejection can make setting boundaries challenging, leading to conflict. Coaches can guide clients in addressing these patterns by examining Saturn’s position in the natal chart, which often reflects unmet emotional needs, fears, and a desire for security.

Exploring creative ways to meet the need for security and structure, we find that Saturn-Moon contacts encourage emotional self-sufficiency through inner exploration, recognition of repressed emotions, and healthy outlets for expressing them. By recognizing these patterns, coaches can help their clients work toward developing healthier coping mechanisms and communication skills.

However, people repress not only the unacceptable aspects of themselves but also their talents. For instance, someone with a strong Venus influence may suppress their artistic abilities out of fear of not being taken seriously. Another client with a prominent Mars influence may suppress their leadership skills due to societal expectations of aggression being negative. This perspective empowers the client, as it acknowledges their inherent potential and guides them toward finding solutions and achieving personal growth on their own terms.

Understanding the archetypal foundation allows us to be more flexible and take a non-judgmental view of our conflicts. By understanding these patterns, we can gain awareness of our emotional triggers and work toward finding constructive ways to express and transform them.

Transpersonal Work with Subpersonalities

In transpersonal work, the unconscious domain is differentiated into subpersonalities. We usually recognize the presence of a subpersonality when we find ourselves acting in ways we do not like or that go against our interests and are unable to

change this by a conscious decision. Whether as with Freud we talk about the ego, id, and superego, or as with Jung about the complexes and the archetypes, or as with Assagioli about subpersonalities, we are in each case talking about the same thing, semi-permanent and semi-autonomous patterns of feelings, thoughts, perceptions, and behaviors in response to recurrent situations in life (Rowan, 1990, p. 8).

Each subpersonality may have its own thoughts, feelings, and desires. These parts can range from protective and nurturing aspects to wounded or traumatized aspects of the Self. Working with subpersonalities involves identifying, understanding, and engaging with these different parts to bring about healing and integration. This process typically involves dialogue and questioning techniques to explore the nature and purpose of each subpersonality and to develop a better understanding of how they contribute to the individual's overall functioning.

Therapists employ diverse questioning techniques to facilitate this exploration, supporting clients in understanding their subpersonalities and fostering greater internal cohesion and well-being. Some common approaches include internal dialogue, open-ended questions, reflective questioning, integration, and negotiation.

All of them encourage individuals to engage in an internal dialogue with different subpersonalities, allowing them to express their concerns, beliefs, and desires. Giving each part a voice provides insights into their motivations and needs. To work with subpersonalities, therapists may suggest clients imagine placing one side of the split onto one chair and the other side onto another, assuming these are two distinct individuals who can communicate. This personification of the split has proved to be an active and effective method of psychotherapy or counseling.

Open-ended questions are used to prompt individuals to explore and articulate the experiences and perspectives of their subpersonalities. This fosters a deeper understanding of each part and its role in the person's life. For example, the coach engages the client in a dialogue, asking about the thoughts and emotions experienced during work challenges. The individual responds, "I often feel anxious and doubt my abilities." The coach then inquires, "Can you identify which part of you is feeling anxious and doubtful in those situations?" The individual reflects, "I think it's my inner critic. It always shows up when I feel pressured at work." Continuing, the coach asks, "What role do you believe your inner critic plays in your life, and how does it affect you?" The individual shares, "I believe it's trying to protect me from making mistakes, but it ends up making me doubt myself even more." These responses suggest a connection with the Saturn archetype. To delve deeper, the coach will explore Saturn's position in the client's natal chart, uncovering valuable lessons related to effort and will development.

Once subpersonalities are identified and understood, archetypal coaching may involve facilitating dialogue and negotiation among these parts. Clients can identify predetermined patterns, understand their potential manifestations, and make choices that benefit them. By recognizing distinct parts of the self and using planetary archetypes, clients gain greater insights into their habits, values, and potential for change. The goal is to establish a harmonious relationship and integration

among the various subpersonalities/archetypes, fostering greater internal cohesion and well-being (see Appendix I, Exercise “Integrating Archetypal Astrology into Subpersonality Work”).

When we observe recurring patterns in our relationships, be it at work, with family, or friends, it often indicates the presence of unconscious archetypes influencing our behaviors. When our egos are dominated by an archetype, our behaviors turn automatic, and thus we become slaves to the archetypal impulses. This unconscious state often creates problems for both ourselves and those around us. For example, under the automatic influence of the moon, we can fall into what is commonly referred to as a “lunatic” person, that is, someone whose mood fluctuates according to the lunar phases. Mars can lead us to behave aggressively and impulsively, while the influence of Venus can result in a constant search for gratification and pleasure.

To break free from this repetitive cycle, we could apply Assagioli’s technique of dis-identification (1974). This process can be deepened through the integration of astrological archetypes, which provide symbolic frameworks for understanding different psychological functions. In astrology, for instance, the Moon is associated with emotions and instinctive responses. Recognizing the Moon as an archetype and its dynamics within the natal chart can enhance one’s understanding of emotional dynamics while reinforcing that these feelings, although significant, do not define the self. This creates space for a more balanced and conscious interaction with one’s emotional life.

The exercise extends to desires as well, helping the individual reflect: “I have desires, but I am not my desires.” Desires, like emotions, fluctuate and are influenced by both internal drives and external forces. They may pull a person in conflicting directions, but the act of dis-identification allows one to step back, observe these urges, and choose how to respond to them. Introducing the archetype of Mars, which governs desires and assertiveness, can further illuminate these impulses. Mars, as a symbol of action and drive, can represent the energy behind desires, but by recognizing its role as an archetype, individuals are reminded that their true self transcends these primal impulses.

Finally, in relation to thoughts and intellect, the reflection continues: “I have an intellect, but I am not my intellect.” Thoughts, while vital for problem-solving and navigating the external world, are also subject to fluctuations and limitations. Dis-identification with the intellect encourages the recognition that the Self is not confined to rational processes. By associating the intellect with the astrological archetype of Mercury, which governs communication and cognition, one can become more aware of the mind’s patterns without being consumed by them.

The technique of substitution, as described by Assagioli in *The Act of Will* (1974, p. 66), is a practical application of the skillful will and can be also enriched by incorporating astrological archetypes. This method involves replacing a persistent negative thought or image with a more constructive one. In astrology, the planets symbolize different psychological functions and qualities. By associating negative thoughts with their planetary origins, clients can recognize their higher potential and substitute the limiting expression with a more elevated one.

Take, for instance, Suzanne (referenced in Chapter 6). Her self-critical and incessant thinking, linked to the astrological archetype of Mercury (which governs communication and the mind), was transformed using the technique of substitution. Instead of allowing Mercury's negative manifestations – overthinking and criticism – to dominate, Suzanne's mercurial energy was redirected toward a higher expression: the capacity for insightful questioning. This shift was inspired by a dream and further developed through active imagination, resulting in deeper self-awareness and meaningful breakthroughs (see chapter 6). Assagioli explains that when we focus our attention on an unwanted thought, it paradoxically becomes stronger. By trying to “not think” about it, we increase its presence in our mind (1974, p. 66). The technique of substitution suggests that rather than struggling against the thought directly, we should choose another image or idea to concentrate on, which gradually weakens the grip of the unwanted thought. In Suzanne's case, she substituted her self-critical Mercury energy with Mercury's positive qualities, transforming her critical inner dialogue into a tool for insight and clarity.

In this way, we can apply substitution by identifying the planetary archetypes involved in a client's recurring negative patterns. Whether it is the impulsive force of Mars manifesting in aggression or the emotional tides of the Moon creating anxiety, understanding the higher manifestation of these archetypes allows for constructive redirection. By choosing to focus on a more positive expression, the client can channel their will toward personal growth and transformation, as Assagioli emphasized, with the skillful and strategic use of energy rather than direct opposition to the problem.

Besides using substitution within a planet's manifestation possibilities, we can also induce substitution between different planets, as Marsilio Ficino recommended (discussed in Chapter 5). Ficino, a Renaissance Florentine philosopher who revived Platonic philosophy in the Christian West, proposed counterbalancing the negative influence of one planetary archetype with the positive influence of another, thus offering a wider range of possibilities for transformation.

When Suzanne felt overwhelmed by constant overthinking, heavily influenced by Mercury's analytical energy, she consciously shifted her focus to Jupiter's expansive qualities. By embracing Jupiter's symbolism of wisdom and broader perspective, she transitioned from self-criticism to finding purpose and meaning in her thoughts.

Additionally, Suzanne drew on Neptune's archetype of universal love and compassion to transcend Mercury's intellectual chatter and connect with her heart. In an active imagination exercise, she visualized a heart, symbolizing her desire for deep connection. By focusing on Neptune's energy, she shifted from an analytical mindset to one filled with compassion and boundless love for herself and others. As Assagioli's psychological laws emphasize, images and ideas have the power to awaken corresponding emotions and feelings (1974, p. 50), and in Suzanne's case, Neptune's universal love evoked a soothing and nurturing energy that counteracted the frenetic influence of Mercury.

Active Imagination with Archetypes

The idea of working with our imagination through the encounter with divine images is rooted in the Theurgical Neoplatonism of Iamblichus (c. 245–c.325). Theurgic astrology used images and symbols to connect with the astral powers and receive direct knowledge from them. Theurgy considers symbols as means to free the human soul from the limitations of material consciousness and to begin to see itself as an image of God (Voss, 2000, p. 29).

As preparation for this encounter with the gods, Iamblichus suggested specific prayers and rituals that would allow one to reach higher states of consciousness. Gods reveal themselves to the soul through various symbols and tokens, including animals, plants, stones, images, letters, sounds, music, names, and shapes, showcasing their divine nature. This contact with the divine occurs only with an ecstatic exchange that transforms our imagination into an organ of the god while the soul – with empty mind – follows the visions and witnesses the divine reunions (Shaw, 2003, p. 11).

For Iamblichus, the soul, being immortal, becomes mortal and alienated not only from the gods but also from its own divinity. Iamblichus argued that the soul can only reconnect with the divine by mediating opposites, recognizing the “nothingness” (*oudeneia*) of its mortal identity, and engaging in theurgy – cosmogonic rituals that allow the soul to discover its fragmented self in the material world. Through these acts of recollection, the soul gradually transforms the suffering of embodiment into a cosmos, reconfiguring its subtle body (*ochēma*) as it reconnects with the divine through nature and ritual (Shaw, 2016, p. 333).

This process of recollection aligns with Roshani’s account of her spiritual transformation after engaging with archetypes and dream symbols through active imagination. Roshani described her journey as one of reuniting her fragmented self, bringing together her scattered pieces:

Oh, I think it’s much bigger than understanding ... I would have had these scattered pieces of understanding. But I think that through our sessions we put them together ... like a Dali thing of me walking through the landscape with these scattered pieces ... picking them up. (pp. 168–171, in Carod, 2021)

Jung attributed divine qualities to the collective unconscious, where symbols transcend opposites uniting psychic material in images. In Jungian thought, archetypes manifest to consciousness as images and symbols. Jung, who placed great significance on astrology, explored it not only intellectually but also through active imagination (Greene, 2018, p. 76). Jung defined “active imagination” as a participatory method for integrating the essence of archetypes:

Since archetypes are, like all numinous contents, relatively autonomous, they cannot be integrated in a simply rational way, but require instead a dialectical method, i.e. a true discussion. (Jung, 1968, p. 47)

Jung describes these symbols as emerging from the interplay between the unconscious and the conscious mind, stating that “the interpretation of its meaning can start neither from the conscious alone nor from the unconscious alone, but only from their reciprocal relationship” (Jung, 1921, CW 6, para. 745).

The question is how can we today re-play this ancient neoplatonic tradition, respecting its historical context while adapting it to our modern understanding of spirituality and psychology? Reconciliation between conscious and unconscious forces does not occur spontaneously; we must actively seek it with intention, emotion, and alignment with unseen forces, a contemporary version of ancient Babylonian and Greek rituals. Archetypal coaching seeks to recover the original, sacred approach to working with imagination—receiving archetypal messages in an embodied way, much like the theurgists practiced—while adapting these principles to modern techniques such as active imagination and somatic meditation. By incorporating elements of Jungian psychology and contemporary techniques for accessing expanded states of consciousness, we can reimagine the ancient mysteries in a form that resonates with modern seekers of the divine—what Iamblichus referred to as “the gods” and Jung conceptualized as archetypes. In place of traditional prayers and rituals, practices such as active imagination, undertaken in a state of mindful awareness, offer a balanced interplay between conscious intention and receptive surrender to the mystery.

Both Jung and Iamblichus recognized the dangers of overthinking and abstract conceptualization, which can detach individuals from the natural flow of life. A third domain, the world of imagination, exists between the physical and spiritual realms, where dream pictures and archetypal symbols can function as an antenna to receive information.

If we wish to change our lives, it is essential to transform the unconscious images and the subpersonalities that shape them. By practicing active imagination, we are dialoguing with ourselves, consciously addressing the various subpersonalities, which we often do unconsciously. The mind participates in the events that take place on the imaginative level, which is neither conscious nor unconscious, and creates a life experience that combines the elements of both (Johnson, 2009).

In the practice of active imagination, clients are encouraged to acknowledge spontaneous images associated to archetypes and dream symbols and to give voice to what the image/archetype needs and what they appreciate about it. Active imagination enables individuals to reconnect with their chosen archetypes, activating inner symbols that guide them toward the divine. The symbolic act of addressing those dream symbols and archetypes that relate to the trigger provides the necessary space for the client to own their emotions without projecting or bypassing them.

Interacting with them in an expanded state of mind can allow significant insights to imprint on the client’s subconscious mind. We allow these archetypal subpersonalities to manifest and reveal to us what they need to express, without careful analysis of what is occurring, so that the alchemical exchange flows without interruption.

The emphasis is not only on the attainment of high states of consciousness but also on developing an authentic relationship with the different subpersonalities, embracing both light and shadow. Astrological archetypes can be a powerful tool for enhancing the process of active imagination when combined with dream symbols. They function as universal patterns that speak to deep, collective forces within the psyche. By using them in dialogue with dream imagery, synergies are created that can reveal the unconscious patterns and dynamics brought by the client.

Spring (see Chapter 6) offers an example of how to develop an alternative story that resonates more with the client's values and needs through a dialogue between the archetypes and dream symbols. In a dream, Spring described being in a large room with a wise old man, where balls of clay were popping around her, and she sensed the need to leave to avoid being struck by them. We linked these clay balls to her natal Mars-Saturn conjunction – Mars symbolizing aggression and movement and Saturn representing the heaviness and gravity of the stones. We reflected on how this dynamic reflected her need for persistent effort, determination, and focus (Mars influenced by Saturn) to overcome obstacles, alongside her desire to access intuitive knowledge (Neptune). I suggested her to engage in active imagination, honoring both needs without prioritizing one over the other.

In active imagination, we invited Saturn (Chronos), an archetype related to the ability to set boundaries. During our work, Spring embodied each archetypal pattern with specific physical postures and facial expressions. She named Saturn the “wise man,” and her insight was that he was taming her wilderness, protecting her from overexpressing. As she embodied Saturn, her hands faced upward, and she remarked that it felt like sensing energy before things happened, allowing her to protect herself. She described it as being “ever-present, detecting through my hands.”

As I stepped into this area in the dream, suddenly these balls of clay came and were like popping all over the place in all directions, so I had to move myself from this area... It seemed like it was restricted by this limiting force, which we connected with Saturn or this inner Saturn showing up... it seems like Saturn was there to kind of feel the environment, to feel what was happening. So, it wasn't necessarily a negative influence... in fact, it was maybe the inner protector. (Spring, pp. 35–81, in Carod, 2021)

The dialogue with Saturn (symbolizing how we can cope with difficulties and structure our work) in active imagination gave her tips about how to integrate her need for expressing with authenticity with her need for grounding and getting tasks done efficiently. She was inspired to listen to the advice of Saturn (representing order in the physical world) when her Mars energy (the need to act bluntly) is charging ahead at full speed. Spring gained embodied insights into Saturn's role as a protector and boundary-setter, helping her stay grounded and focus on her intellectual tasks. Rather than feeling overwhelmed, blocked, or frustrated, Saturn was guiding her toward sacred, mindful action, allowing her to balance Mars's impulsive energy with the discipline of Saturn.

Another illustration of the Jungian technique of active imagination, a dialogue between the archetypes of the Sun and the Moon, might explore the relationship between the client's conscious will and their unconscious reactions, linked to emotional needs. The Sun/Moon active imagination session that I guided for Roshani (see Chapter 6) brought up an internal struggle between her needs and wants, a pull in different directions – a highly logical mind and proactive personality versus an emotional side that had been blocked since childhood. During the active imagination exercise, Roshani identified and embraced her feelings of vulnerability.

Roshani's dreams highlighted the importance of acknowledging her feminine side, symbolized by her mother, daughter, and scenes where she felt powerless or had to wait. These images guided her toward greater self-compassion and inner balance. By embracing these symbols during active imagination, she began to nurture and accept this aspect of herself, leading to a calming effect on her childhood wound.

In active imagination with archetypes and dream symbols, the client has the possibility to create a symbol that unifies conflicting or dissociated aspects. Clients are encouraged to express these qualities creatively through mediums like mandalas, collages, vision boards, sculptures, drawings, stories, or poems that reflect their evolving selves (see Chapter 6).

As the client allows their dream symbols to interact with archetypal images, a form of inner alchemy can occur, and the client's psyche may naturally harmonize and integrate these archetypal energies, facilitating change at a foundational level.

Rewriting the Personal Myth

Self-knowledge through astrology fosters acceptance and fulfillment. Valuing our astrological archetypes and recognizing our potential help us feel more content with who we are and bring us closer to a greater sense of well-being. This self-acceptance deepens as we understand, through myth, why we sometimes act in certain ways and recognize the values that these behaviors aim to protect. It opens up more constructive ways to express these values. There's a heaviness that lifts when we mediate these archetypal energies, along with a relief that comes from knowing we can embody our archetypes in various ways that fulfill our values and support our goals.

What's particularly valuable about mythology is how stories featuring mythological gods illustrate the interplay and clashes among archetypal principles, guiding us toward resolving human conflicts. The client can look into the cosmic metaphoric mirror of myths for meaning and inspiration. In myths, we see different sides to things. For instance, Aphrodite stands for harmony, love, and pleasure and is linked to the planet Venus. However, in some stories where Aphrodite influences others – and in real life when women love abusive men – her impact can be harmful.

The study of the client's natal astrological map can reveal latent mythic forces. Each woman has different goddess traits inside her, reflecting various parts of her

character and mind. By recognizing and connecting with these traits, women can learn about their strengths, struggles, and potential. Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, not only embodies love but also represents creativity and finding beauty in passions. Additionally, Aphrodite's lessons involve forming deep connections beyond physical attraction and showing love's caring side. By reflecting on the traits of their Venus archetype, people can become more self-aware in how they handle relationships, which can be a significant step toward breaking free from impulsive behaviors.

The main task of the archetypal coach is to assist clients in identifying and challenging their negative self-stories and guide them to reshape their own narratives. According to Jungian psychology, understanding myths can help us dealing with complex emotions like anger, anxiety, and depression. Therapists and coaches can further support this process by helping clients weave elements from significant myths into their self-concept, creating empowering and transformative personal mythologies.

For instance, a client facing a career setback could be encouraged to see themselves as a modern-day Prometheus, bringing innovation to their field despite challenges. In coaching, this journey aligns with the "hero's journey" framework, empowering clients to apply mythic principles to their current struggles. Like Prometheus, who brought fire and enlightenment to humanity despite adversity, clients can view themselves as agents of positive change in their own lives.

By exploring clients' personal myths and understanding how these stories shape their perceptions, coaches can foster deeper self-awareness. We may look into our client's personal myths and how they influence their perceptions of themselves and the world around them.

For example, when helping someone through a period of depression and withdrawal caused by divorce, job loss, or trauma, we can address the Sumerian myth of Inanna² and the Greco-Roman story of Persephone and Pluto.³ Both stories involve going to the underworld, symbolizing letting go of the past and personal growth through transformation. Exploring the myth of Persephone can help clients understand that temporary depression is a natural response to loss, serving as a helpful companion during difficult times. When Persephone emerges from the underworld, she does so renewed, carrying spiritual treasures and a newfound confidence. Reflecting on this myth allows clients to find meaning in persistent painful emotions and to envision personal transformation.

In *The Goddess Within*, Jennifer and Roger Woolger (1989, p. 230) delve into Persephone's unique connection to the spirit world and her understanding of life and death mysteries. Unlike the Amazonian archetypes of Athena, Artemis, and Hera, the "Persephone woman" values privacy and inner projects. Though seemingly fragile, she has a profound ability to bring unconscious content into conscious awareness. By reflecting on Persephone's journey, clients can see their struggles as pathways to wisdom and strength, with the potential for personal renewal.

When a woman is overidentified with Persephone she will be very attracted to situations where she or others get hurt because of her powerless and passive

attitude. It is crucial that she can rely on the support of the other goddesses to maintain balance and provide nourishment. It might help her to find Demeter's sense of connection to the earth and to the ground and to get good advice from Athena's calmness and determination. These qualities can offer her stability and guidance during times of emotional turmoil. Hera's nurturing presence can foster a sense of belonging and community, helping Persephone women navigate challenges with grace and resilience. Recognizing and embracing the wisdom and strength of these goddesses can help them discover their inner strength and purpose.

Exploring the relationship between quantum physics, perception, and narrative reveals how profoundly our beliefs shape reality. Quantum physics shows that human perception influences what we observe, suggesting that the stories we believe and tell can impact our reality more than we may realize.

In coaching, a client's natal chart and dream symbols provide a basis for exploring the archetypes that shape their behaviors and beliefs. For instance, a client with feelings of inadequacy might explore the myth of Saturn, their inner critic archetype, to cultivate self-compassion and acceptance (see Marguerite and Mary's example in Chapter 6). An archetypal coach can use the client's chart to help them reframe personal myths in alignment with their true values and desires. By examining Jupiter, the coach can identify areas of growth; through the Sun, avenues for self-expression; and through Venus, an understanding of what the client truly values. Jupiter's themes of adventure and growth align with heroic journeys, while Saturn represents discipline and responsibility, like wise mentors in myths.

Working with a myth allows clients to direct emotional energy toward it, providing a sense of release. Since myths are deeply woven into our patterns of thought and behavior, they are often resistant to change. However, by recognizing the diverse potentials of these myths, clients can craft new narratives that support their growth and well-being.

Rediscovering our archetypes requires little effort; these myths already reside in our subconscious, waiting to emerge. By delving into them, clients can find clues on how to adopt new ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. Negative emotions such as anxiety, depression, and fear, often linked to personality patterns, can also be traced to mythic figures. For instance, Aphrodite-Venus, the goddess of love, may manifest in women drawn to unhealthy relationships, turning her influence from a blessing to a curse. The challenge, then, is to redirect Aphrodite's energy toward building meaningful, nourishing connections that resonate with their values, identities, and aspirations.

Rose provides an example of how archetypal awareness can shape choices, leading to more fulfilling outcomes (see Chapter 6). Having endured an abusive relationship, Rose was committed to breaking free from this cycle. Together, we explored her Venusian archetype to find meanings and healthy ways to honor it, thereby strengthening her self-esteem.

Rose also benefited from exploring archetypes like Athena – the goddess of wisdom and strategy – who embodies self-assuredness and clarity. This connection was reflected in her Venus, positioned in the mental and communicative sign of

Gemini, within the air element. By integrating the constructive qualities of both Aphrodite and Athena, Rose was able to channel her creative energy into self-affirming pursuits.

Through her work with the Venus archetype, Rose uncovered a renewed ability to express creativity and joy, ultimately enrolling in a writing course that allowed her to engage deeply with activities she genuinely loves.

Expanding Reality Maps

Neurolinguistic programming (NLP) is a model of human behavior that focuses on identifying patterns that drive high performance. NLP stands for our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors within the nervous system (neuro), how language shapes our internal and external experiences (linguistic), and the capacity to change behavioral and emotional patterns to foster growth (programming).

In NLP, interpretations or “maps” of reality are shaped by unique filters – memories, values, beliefs, decision-making patterns, and sensory perceptions. These filters affect how we process experiences, distorting or generalizing information according to our personal perceptions (Dängeli, 2022). An extension of NLP, humanistic neurolinguistic programming (HNLP), focuses on “coaching the unconscious mind,” deepening NLP principles to transform subconscious patterns that influence well-being and personal development.

Combining NLP or HNLP with archetypes allows clients to broaden their “map of reality,” creating new opportunities for personal empowerment. The natal chart, with its archetypal symbols and configurations, can significantly enhance the NLP concept of “territory” by offering a unique map of psychological patterns and preferences. Archetypes present a rich spectrum of options for understanding and responding to life’s challenges. They help increase clients’ choices by offering a multidimensional “map” filled with various archetypal paths, which clients can use to reframe difficult situations.

For example, imagine a client whose natal chart highlights the Saturnian fear of failure. This fear may show up in dreams of obstacles when climbing a mountain or driving. When looking carefully at the client configuration of Saturn, we can help them uncover the highest positive intention behind this fear: the intention to protect, providing a foundation for thoughtful planning, steady effort, and discipline. By honoring Saturn’s intent, the client could adopt strategies like breaking down goals into manageable steps, creating a plan for progress, or setting realistic milestones, which helps them advance with less resistance.

In HNLP, the feeling associated with successfully reaching an external goal is termed the “End State Energy” (ESE) (Dängeli, 2022, p. 185). The ESE aligns with a person’s core values, beliefs, and identities.

For instance, if the client mentioned above has a goal of developing assertiveness, their ESE may be tied to a sense of steady progress and control. By examining how Saturn is configured in their natal chart, we can foster reflection on how to channel this energy effectively. For example, if their Saturn is positioned in the

practical earth sign of Capricorn, we might ask questions that encourage them to consider realistic, incremental achievements, which would enable them to build assertiveness in a structured and confident manner. One question could be “Can you describe some small, realistic steps that would help you move closer to your goals?” Additionally, we might ask, “What structures or routines could you put in place to support steady growth toward your assertiveness goals?” These questions are designed to guide the client in aligning their goals with Saturn’s grounded energy and Capricorn’s practical approach.

For another client the goal is to feel safe and connected in an intimate relationship. This client presents tense aspects between the Moon and Uranus, as well as the Moon and Saturn. This configuration creates an inner conflict between two opposing forces: Uranus represents a strong desire for freedom and independence, often pressing the individual to break free from past conditioning, while Saturn embodies a need for structure, tradition, and responsibility, compelling the individual to conform to family and societal expectations. When this client considers change, they may experience intense anxiety because they’re torn between the excitement of liberation (Uranus) and the security of stability and approval (Saturn).

In coaching, investigating these opposing forces can help the client clarify the source of their anxiety around change. For example, they may feel that stepping into their individuality and pursuing freedom could betray their responsibilities or disappoint family members, creating inner tension. By working with these archetypes, the coach can guide the client to recognize how their current behavior might be an expression of Saturnian loyalty to tradition, while their urge to change stems from a deep Uranian impulse for self-liberation. Dreams may add further insights, perhaps presenting imagery like breaking out of an enclosure or escaping from constraints.

Exploring their Moon sign and its aspects within the natal chart can uncover conditions that support this sense of belonging. A client with the Moon in a fiery sign like Sagittarius or Aries might find emotional fulfillment through dynamic, adventurous connections. However, if Saturn (the archetype of stability and realism) also influences this Moon, the client may seek both excitement and security within these experiences.

To deepen this exploration, we can encourage the client to incubate a dream for added clarity. As part of this, we suggest starting a nightly ritual: each evening before bed, they write a brief “day residue” – a few thoughts on the day’s events – to help analyze how their dreams may be compensating for conscious concerns.

In one dream, the client found herself driving a sporty car in a remote area, feeling the sun and wind on her face. She associated this with her current need for freedom and expanded this image further by examining how the planet Uranus, symbolizing liberation and change, appears in her natal chart. We might then ask, “Does this dream remind you of any current situation of your life? Does it bring up any new ideas, sensations, emotions, or insights?” Next, we could practice active imagination, inviting the associated archetypes into a dialogue to gain deeper insights.

By exploring these symbols, the client can find new ways to satisfy the need for both freedom and responsibility, perhaps by pursuing incremental change that respects Saturn's values while allowing Uranus to bring fresh perspectives and new choices. This archetypal exploration not only enriches the visualization of the ESE but also aligns with the client's unique potential. In this way, it becomes easier for the client to embrace the desired state, as they are rediscovering qualities that already exist within them.

Enhancing Coaching Techniques with Archetypal Insights

In the world of coaching, foundational techniques such as the GROW Model, visualization, reframing, Socratic questioning, and values identification provide essential tools for guiding clients. When combined with an archetypal perspective rooted in planetary influences, these techniques gain depth and resonance, allowing clients to connect with universal patterns that speak directly to their inner experiences.

For example, the GROW Model – guiding clients to define their Goal, explore their Reality, identify Options, and find the Way forward – can be enhanced by drawing on planetary archetypes. If a client's goal revolves around achieving discipline or structure, invoking Saturn's archetype as the *Wise Old Man* provides a guiding image of wisdom and resilience, while Saturn's role as the *Inner Critic* can highlight any self-imposed limitations they need to acknowledge and transform. By understanding their inner Saturn, clients gain a framework for steady, disciplined progress.

In his influential work *Coaching for Performance*, Whitmore (2009) highlights the importance of self-confidence and responsibility, key components of effective coaching (p. 18). He explains that coaching is about helping clients realize their potential by fostering both clarity and action. For Whitmore, we strengthen our self-confidence when we make decisions, when our actions are successful, and when we take full responsibility for both successes and failures. It is essential that the coach ensures that he/she has helped the person to reach optimal clarity and to commit to action, which involves anticipating obstacles.

Identifying values and strengths is crucial for aligning a client's goals with their core self. When approached with an archetypal perspective, planetary influences reveal the personal values and strengths that resonate on a deep, often unconscious level. Mars, for example, as the *Warrior* brings forth values like courage, loyalty, and assertiveness. Saturn's *Wise Old Man* emphasizes patience and integrity, while Jupiter as the *Teacher* or *Philosopher* encourages growth, wisdom, and adventure.

Questions can evoke specific archetypes, such as asking, "What wisdom might the *Wise Old Man* (Saturn) offer in this situation?" or "What would the *Warrior* in you bring forth in this moment?"

Visualization and guided imagery are powerful techniques on their own, helping clients mentally project themselves into future successes. Yet this practice becomes even more meaningful when aligned with archetypal symbols. When a client

envisions embodying their inner Mars, they connect with the *Warrior* archetype, channeling courage, strength, and assertiveness. Alternatively, if the client's goal involves breaking old boundaries or fostering innovation, connecting with Uranus – the archetype of Prometheus or The Creator – can stimulate visionary thinking. For a client struggling at work who feels like an outsider, we might explore the myth of Prometheus alongside a study of Uranus in their natal chart, focusing on how it represents their unique approach and unconventional strengths.

This client recalled a dream where she found herself pushing aside a dusty, old wardrobe, discovering two powerful big tarot cards – the Sun and the Emperor. She sought help from teacher colleagues to clear the dust from these cards, but they refused, hiding them again behind the wardrobe. She wanted to voice her frustration to the school Director. The client associated these cards with her creativity and personal power, and we amplified the wardrobe image to reflect Saturn's frustrating influence, symbolizing how her creativity and potential might feel blocked by "heavy" external forces. Her impulse to complain to the Director reflects an inner desire to clear this blockage – perhaps a call from her higher self to reclaim her power.

If Uranus is prominently positioned, the client is likely to resonate deeply with Promethean themes, finding personal meaning and comfort in their distinct role. Examining Uranus's connections to other planets in the natal chart, especially strong aspects with the Moon or Sun, can reveal how these energies shape the client's self-perception and responses. By visualizing themselves as creators of new possibilities, they can draw on Uranian energy to transcend limitations and envision themselves beyond current circumstances.

Integrating archetypes into reframing and perspective shifts provides a powerful tool for turning challenges into growth opportunities. When a client feels confined by limitations, for example, accessing Jupiter's *Optimist* archetype invites a shift toward abundance and possibility, while calling on Mercury's *Messenger* archetype can help them see a situation from multiple perspectives, facilitating mental flexibility and adaptability.

Marguerite's story (see Chapter 6) illustrates how the challenging aspects of an archetype can be transformed to motivate a client toward their goal. Her natal chart features Mercury in a square aspect to Saturn—a traditionally difficult astrological configuration. Her fear of public speaking manifested vividly in her dreams, reflecting a classic Saturnian fear associated with Mercury – the planet symbolizing communication and learning. Saturn typically likes to build structure, be responsible, and organize, while Mercury rules communication, thinking processes, and learning. The trigger (fear of speaking in public) was then neutralized by the image offered by the Saturnian archetype, suggesting constant effort to become a professional coach and plant therapist.

Saturn asked me to put in effort, to materialize.... A bit challenging because I have this fear of showing my truth. And it made me uncomfortable, but actually that was the solution to overcome my resistance and fears. Instead of focusing on my fears, I put effort into expressing my truth. (Marguerite, pp. 69– 73, in Carod, 2021)

Reframing through archetypes and dream symbols enables clients to not only think differently but also feel aligned with forces greater than themselves. This awareness of personal archetypes empowers clients to harness their strengths consciously and transform limiting patterns.

Archetypal Anchors

Besides reframing and perspective shifts, NLP also uses the concept of an “anchor.” An anchor is a sight, sound, or feeling that is associated with a particular response or emotion in the past and triggers the same feeling in the present (O’Connor & Lages, 2009).

Exploring the archetypes in the client’s natal chart unveils their inherent positive potential, enabling us to create meaningful and impactful anchors. These innate resources, present from birth, require a process of rediscovery, unveiling latent potential rather than imagining a disconnected reality. An essential role of the archetypal coach is to revive overlooked or concealed strengths embedded within the client’s narrative, viewed through the lens of their archetypal configurations. For instance, we can pinpoint positive potentials in the client’s birth chart directly related to their initial aspirations (how they wish to feel and be), establishing these potentials as guiding anchors.

In his book *Astrology’s Higher Octaves* (2020, p. 25), Professor Greg Bogart affirms that “first and foremost, transformative readings emerge from dialogue, from posing questions.” When coaches ask their clients open-ended questions, they can help them make connections between their answers and archetypal traits that will support their objectives and vision. After explaining the myth’s basic symbolism, the therapist will ask the client open-ended questions such as “how do you express your moon” to encourage additional reflection and comprehension of their emotional reactions. By incorporating insights from Mars and Jupiter, we would gain an understanding of what ignites their energy and hope, while Venus reveals sources of happiness and joy in their lives.

If we wish to inquire about their goals for the future in an archetypally informed framework, we might inquire about their vision of success and link their answer to the archetypal positions of Jupiter, the Sun, and Saturn, adding details to illustrate their aspirations further.

This would provide additional insights into how to become brilliant (the Sun), grow and expand (Jupiter), and achieve tangible success in their chosen path (Saturn). For example, if someone’s ambition is to become a successful entrepreneur, we may use Jupiter’s placement in their natal chart to explain his willingness to take chances and embrace possibilities for growth and expansion in their business ventures. In addition, we look to the Sun’s position to explain their leadership style, as well as Saturn’s disciplined work ethic and strategic planning abilities, which contribute to long-term success and stability in the entrepreneurial enterprise.

In contrast to most therapies and coaching strategies, anchoring through an archetypal trait that inherently belongs to the client has a significant and powerful effect.

In a session with my research participant Rose, she expressed drawing upon the potential of her archetypes to materialize work projects, stating:

I'm creative, I'm strong, I have a lot of wisdom... the main insight is that I have these abilities and I can do something with them. And I haven't been honoring them... so I haven't been expressing my true self, that's what I feel. (pp. 43–44)

My client Marguerite, whose Jupiter is prominently positioned in her natal chart, used Jupiter's energy as an anchor when dealing with communication insecurities. By focusing on Jupiter's symbolism of growth, expansion, and benevolence, Marguerite was able to build confidence in her communication skills which opened up career opportunities through groups of like-minded people. Anchoring in Jupiter's energy instilled in her a sense of optimism and a belief in her ability to express herself effectively.

Summer felt disconnected from her creative potential and expressed a desire to feel more fulfilled and expressive in her life. She shared a sense of frustration and unfulfillment, expressing a desire to reconnect with her creative side. Summer mentioned a passion for painting that she abandoned years ago due to career pressures and responsibilities. By analyzing her natal chart, I identified a strong placement of the Sun and Venus, two archetypes closely linked to creativity, self-expression, and beauty. While a well-placed Sun in the natal chart indicates strong potential for creativity and leadership, Venus symbolizes beauty, harmony, and artistic talents. A prominent Venus suggests a natural inclination toward the arts and aesthetics. The sign the Sun and Venus are placed and the contacts with other planets will inform us about the client's artistic inclinations.

In Summer's natal chart, Venus and the Sun in Cancer highlight her strong connection between creativity, emotions, and self-expression, emphasizing nurturing qualities. This alignment reveals her natural inclination toward emotionally resonant art, such as watercolor painting. Recognizing this, we set specific goals to reconnect her with her creative passions, like dedicating weekly time to dream-inspired artwork. By keeping a dream journal and translating these emotions into her art, she could harmonize her feelings and deepen her creative expression.

Let's take the example of a client who has a tense aspect between Mars (drive for action) and Saturn (representing fear and delays) and has faced persistent setbacks in achieving her goals. She experienced a business failure and struggled to complete her master's thesis. This aspect often represents a struggle between the drive for action (Mars) and internalized self-criticism or restriction (Saturn), which can lead to a sense of being "stuck" or blocked. Archetypally, this tension embodies the Warrior (Mars) and the Wise Elder or Taskmaster (Saturn). We first identify the client's negative state, linked to an archetype (e.g., Saturn as the *Inner Critic*), and then choose positive archetypal traits (e.g., Mars's courage, Saturn's discipline) to create a powerful resource anchor. We guide the client to mentally rehearse scenarios in which these new traits are applied, creating a strong link to future situations.



Figure 2.1 Astrological feng shui. Illustration by Joan Comella

Through guided visualization, the client aligns herself with the Warrior and Wise Elder archetypes, inspiring her to act with focused intention, release self-imposed limitations, and steadily pursue her goals.

(For a full breakdown of each stage in this method, please refer to Exercise D in Appendix I, which provides a detailed, step-by-step outline.) (Figure 2.1).

In this astrological chart, painter Joan Comella uses carefully chosen minerals to balance conflicting energies. These gems function as a form of astrological feng shui, bringing balance and harmony to the difficult aspects depicted in the astral chart. For example, Comella may place a piece of hematite to ground the fiery energy of Mars in Aries, while also incorporating a rose quartz to soften the intense passion of Venus in Scorpio.

The staircase, an element to access from one level to another, serves as a constant reminder that alchemy is attainable when we allow ourselves to be open to our higher consciousness.

Notes

- 1 By referring to his interlocutors as “friends,” Socrates underscores his emphasis on empathy and affect. The Socratic approach prioritizes the interlocutor’s character and the interpersonal dynamics of the dialogue (De Dominicis & Stelter, 2023, p. 27).

2 Inana, the Sumerian Queen of Heaven, descends to Earth under Ereshkigal's rule and undergoes seven gates in an initiation. At the final gate, she is stripped of her clothes, faces the sentence of seven judges, and is killed by Ereshkigal. Her lifeless body is displayed on a stake, resembling a crucifixion. Enki, the deity of waters and wisdom, rescues Inanna and restores her garments.

With Enki's help, Inana reclaims her physical form and undergoes a transformative journey of resurrection and restoration. This process helps Inanna integrate her physical and spiritual selves, bringing balance and wholeness to her being.

Barker Woolger, J. (1989). *The Goddess within: A guide to the eternal myths that shape women's lives*. Fawcett Columbine.

3 Persephone was known to the Greeks as the distant Queen of the Underworld, who kept an eye on the Souls of the Dead. She was also known as the maiden, or Kore, whom Hades kidnapped from her mother, Demeter, and transported to the underworld. Demeter's agonizing experience of losing her daughter gives birth to the seasons, as she mourns Kore's death during the winter. Persephone was eventually permitted to return to the world above for a portion of the year, bringing spring with her (Woolger, 1989, p. 257).

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