



SACRED CONTRACTS

CAROLINE MYSS

TRANSWORLD
BOOKS

About the Book

The author of the international bestsellers ANATOMY OF THE SPIRIT and WHY PEOPLE DON'T HEAL AND HOW THEY CAN presents an exciting, highly original programme in this long-awaited book. As a medical intuitive, Myss has found that people generally don't understand their purpose in life, which has precipitated into a spiritual malaise of epidemic proportions. This metaphysical disease in turn leads to depression, anxiety, fatigue and eventually, physical illness.

But our purpose - our individual Sacred Contract - is often difficult to comprehend. Caroline Myss has developed an enjoyable and ingenious process for deciphering your own Contract that builds on the works of Jung, Plato and contemporary thinkers. With her signature motivational style, Myss explains how you can identify your own spiritual energies, or archetypes, and use them to help you find out what you are here on earth to learn and whom you are meant to meet. In coming to know your archetypal companions, you will also begin to see how to live your life in ways that make the best use of your personal power and lead you to fulfil your greatest - in fact, your divine - potential.

Both visionary and practical, SACRED CONTRACTS is a brilliant synthesis of psychology, healing guidance and spiritual insight from the internationally renowned pioneer of energy medicine.

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Awakening your divine potential

Caroline Myss

*For my father and my brother Joseph -
my family in Heaven*

Acknowledgments

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C. Norman Shealy, M.D., Ph.D., has been my professional colleague and loving friend for seventeen years. Through him I refined my skill as a medical intuitive, and for the past nine years he has worked with me in the classroom, teaching this material to students. I can never describe how much Norm has helped me in my work. His commitment to bringing the vision of Sacred Contracts to fruition was, for me, like having a backup spinal cord. He provided to this book his natural genius for generating original ideas and insights. His energy for long hours in the classroom and his dedication as a brilliant teacher have inspired thousands of students to pursue the depth of their Sacred Contracts. I will never have another creative companion in my life like Norm. My Contract with him is truly larger than this life.

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An Appreciation

I first met Caroline almost two decades ago, and we have been working together ever since. I was particularly impressed then with her belief that we each have a Sacred Contract to learn to use power wisely, responsibly, and lovingly. When Caroline began elaborating this concept of a Sacred Contract in our own workshops and for this book, she began to see energy in the form of archetypes. Gradually, it became clear to her that archetypes are the forces responsible for our learning the use of power.

Carl Jung is generally credited in the modern world as having introduced archetypes, although the idea had been espoused originally by Plato. Jung did first develop the concept of the collective unconscious, the ever-present sum of all experiences that the human race has acquired throughout history. These experiences appear in all ages and all latitudes, but also appear in individual dreams, fantasies, visions, and ideas.¹ Beyond these seminal ideas, Jung actually described a rather limited number of archetypes. He elaborated in detail only: Shadow; Wise Old Man; Child and Child Hero; Mother (Primordial and Earth); Maiden Anima (Female Pattern); Animus (Male Pattern). Each of these, he says, has a multitude of variations, and they change and evolve constantly. They are fluid and cannot be rigidly classified. According to Jung, archetypes provide the foundation for our personality, our drives, feelings, beliefs, motivation, and actions.

Jung emphasized that his was only an 'introduction' to an understanding of archetypes and that others would take this work forward. Indeed, many authors, psychologists, and

philosophers have written insightful, valuable, in-depth descriptions of various archetypes. Until now, however, there has not been a cohesive overview and in-depth use of archetypal psychology. The work of Caroline Myss in *Sacred Contracts* brings our understanding and use of archetypes to a remarkable new level. She truly moves the entire field of psychology and archetypes into the twenty-first century.

Some eight years ago, I had the unique privilege of working with Caroline for three days in developing my own archetypal charts, a process that you will learn in this book. We spent three full days analyzing not only my basic twelve archetypes but also their movement and interaction in three different phases of my life. Those three days were totally transformational. At the end of them, I felt as if I had been taken apart, gently and lovingly, cell by cell, and put back together. My psychological and physiological state has never been the same. For over six months after that three-day experience, I went through what is often called a Kundalini experience, with the most vivid and powerful archetypal dreams I have ever had. Periodically, further integration continues to take place.

Shortly thereafter, when we introduced this system to our first class, I stated that I believed that *Sacred Contracts* would become a powerful diagnostic and therapeutic tool. My faith and belief in this system has grown consistently as we have worked with hundreds of students. In *Sacred Contracts*, you will explore your archetypal relationships with your career; finances; use of power in general; human versus divine justice; abandonment; sickness; family; sexuality; creativity; relationships; death; and victimization; and you'll reflect upon the meaning of archetypal energies as they influence the twelve categories that contain every aspect of human life. Archetypal insights will also direct your spiritual development as you learn to fulfill your divine potential. Ultimately every archetype is merely an individual expression of one Universal energy pattern, which is our

connection to the Divine. The power of Caroline's Sacred Contracts system is now being made available to you. I trust that your exploration of your real Self with this unique spiritual tool will be as fun and enduring as mine. Thank you, Caroline!

- C. NORMAN SHEALY, M.D., Ph.D., *Professor of Energy Medicine, Holos University Graduate Seminary; Founding President, Americana Holistic Medical Association; President, Holod Institutes of Health, Inc.*

from 'The Trial by Existence' by Robert Frost

And from a cliff-top is proclaimed
The gathering of the souls for birth,
The trial by existence named,
The obscuration upon earth . . .

And the more loitering are turned
To view once more the sacrifice
Of those who for some good discerned
Will gladly give up paradise . . .

And none are taken but who will,
Having first heard the life read out
That opens earthward, good and ill,
Beyond the shadow of a doubt . . .
Nor is there wanting in the press
Some spirit to stand simply forth,
Heroic in its nakedness,
Against the uttermost of earth . . .

But always God speaks at the end:
'One thought in agony of strife
The bravest would have by for friend,
The memory that he chose the life;

But the pure fate to which you go
Admits no memory of choice,
Or the woe were not earthly woe
To which you gave the assenting voice.'

And so the choice must be again,
But the last choice is still the same;
And the awe passes wonder then,
And a hush falls for all acclaim.

And God has taken a flower of gold
And broken it, and used therefrom
The mystic link to find and hold
Spirit to matter till death come.

'Tis of the essence of life here,
Though we choose greatly, still to lack
The lasting memory at all clear,
That life has for us on the wrack
Nothing but what we somehow chose;
Thus are we wholly stripped of pride
In the pain that has but one close,
Bearing it crushed and mystified.

1. Carl Gustav Jung, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche (Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Volume 8)*, edited and translated by G. Adler and R. F. C. Hull, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970).

Introduction

The oldest wisdom in the world tells us we can consciously unite with the divine while in this body; for this man is really born. If he misses his destiny, Nature is not in a hurry; she will catch him up someday, and compel him to fulfill her secret purpose.

*SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN
(president of India, 1962-67)*

WE ALL WANT to know why we are here. What is our mission in life? Those people who know it are easy to spot: their lives shine with meaning. Their perception of their lives's purpose gives them the strength to live through the rough times as well as to enjoy the good. Many people, however, are confused - or completely in the dark - about their reason for living.

Through my years as a medical intuitive - someone who can 'read' a person's internal physiological condition intuitively, rather than by physical examination and diagnosis - I have frequently been asked, 'Why am I sick, and how can I heal?' Even more often and more insistently, I'm asked, 'Why am I here? What is my real purpose? What should I be doing with my life?' This lack of self-understanding and direction is a health problem itself, in a sense, for it can lead to all sorts of emotional stress, including depression, anxiety, and fatigue. And when these stresses or negative emotions become entrenched, they can contribute to the development of an illness. It's not only your mind that wants to know your mission - this knowledge is vitally important to your body and spirit as well.

A confused or directionless life has other consequences. Lack of knowledge of your mission can become a destructive force in your relationships. As the late

theologian, mystic, and Harvard professor Howard Thurman often said, there are two questions that we have to ask ourselves. 'The first is "Where am I going?" and the second is "Who will go with me?" If you ever get these questions in the wrong order, you are in trouble.'¹

Without self-understanding, without aim, we can hurt others around us as well as ourselves. If we don't have a clear sense of how to see the 'bigger picture' when things go wrong, we are not able to respond appropriately to events or people. A man named Philip once told me that he would probably still be happily married, if he had only had a better sense of what he should be doing and where he belonged. He had been frustrated for years and his chronic discontent took such a toll on his wife that she finally left him. Even after his divorce, however, Philip was unable to make the kinds of changes in his life and career that he needed to make. 'The problem with change,' Philip told me, 'is that one change is never enough. Once the process starts, you can't stop it.'

He is right, of course, and yet as the renowned Jungian psychologist James Hillman once said, 'You have to give up the life you have to get to the life that's waiting for you.' If Philip could have seen where he was going, he would have been able to act more appropriately. He would not have been so self-involved, and he and his wife would both have been better off. But he could not find a way to get himself on track.

After helping people find and use their inner compass for more than seventeen years, I have come to believe that this absence of spiritual and emotional orientation has become epidemic. Besides being a personal problem for many people, it is also a global concern: from a cosmically practical point of view, what good is it to the universe to have a planet filled with souls who have no idea whatsoever why they are here or what they are supposed to be doing?

When people asked me how they could 'fix' or heal their lives, how they could find the right direction in which to head, I often would direct them to pray for guidance. But as valuable as prayer is, I wondered if there was not some other definite way or process by which they could bring clarity to their lives and find their purpose. No one can see everything in advance, of course, but if we had a way of looking at the symbolic meaning of our experiences, we would be more prepared to face and accommodate the inevitable changes. Rather than fight change - and build up emotional scar tissue - we would be able to choose to see events in a different light, accept the changes, and get on with our lives.

Given the personal and global significance of knowing our mission, why has it been so difficult to find out what it is? How can we best search and inquire? Why do some people find their mission easily while others struggle for a clue? How can we get better at figuring it out?

For our own good, each of us needs to learn what our mission is, because the details of how we live our lives accumulate to create health or illness. As I discovered after conducting more than eight thousand medical intuitive readings in those seventeen years, 'our biography becomes our biology' - which I wrote about in *Anatomy of the Spirit*. In other words, the little troubles and major traumas that we go through take up residence and live in our bodies and affect or block our energy. So it stands to reason that the further we stray from our true mission in life, the more frustrated we will become, and the more out of sync our energy will be.

By coming to know your mission, you can live your life in a way that makes best use of your energy. When you are working well with your energy, you are also making the best expression of your personal power. I call this living in accord with your Sacred Contract.

In my intuitive readings I have been able to help people work more consciously with their energy by spotting the traumas or other life events that have lingered in their energy fields. When I bring these memories back up into their awareness, they can often see how they have lost their energy or power through their overidentification with these wounds or experiences. Once they see these 'energy leaks,' they can proceed to call back their spirit. While this remembering can be helpful, most people can already recall such major experiences without my help. But where I believe that I have genuinely assisted people is by helping them identify and interpret the underlying patterns of thoughts and beliefs that color their memories. In these sub-patterns lie the interpretations and meanings that you assign to your experiences. These interpretations become cellular memories and carry the emotional energy charge that affects your biography and consequently your biology.

When you remember, for example, that you excelled in math at school, that memory of success might have been a positive, inspiring effect on your body and mind. But if your success in math caused resentment or alienated you from jealous friends or siblings, it will also carry a negative emotional charge. Perhaps this negative charge attaches itself to every subsequent success, and you begin to associate guilt with achievement. Say, however, that your experience of these emotional complications actually prepared you to face later challenges. Rather than being angry at those jealous friends or siblings, you could become grateful for their contribution to your life training. By reading your own energy, by becoming aware of the lens through which you see your world, you can change your mind and change your life.

In detecting the emotional charge in your biography, you can begin to see how the fragments of your history have worked together in ways that have affected your past, your present, and the state of your health. This perspective is

what I call *symbolic sight*. Seeing your life in broad strokes and bright pieces allows you to redraw your conception of your future and fill in the fine, interpretive lines more consciously. Symbolic sight enables you to get back your energy or spirit and heal emotionally, spiritually, and sometimes even physically. Symbolic sight will be an important method of working with your energy to bring your Sacred Contract into focus.

When I read someone symbolically, I see his energy - in all his individual roles - streaming out and around him. Yet I simultaneously see him as a unified sum of all his parts. And I also see him as a single cell connected to a greater matrix of energy. In my readings my subjects become human holographs. Their overall energy pattern is reflected in their individual cells, just as our individual souls hum actively within a kind of global soul comprising all life on the planet. Our words, thoughts, deeds, and visions influence our individual health just as they affect the health of everyone around us. As vital parts of a larger, universal Spirit, we each have been put here on earth to fulfill a Sacred Contract that enhances our personal spiritual growth while contributing to the evolution of the entire global soul.

Our life's mission, or Contract, cannot be defined or measured simply by our external life, however. Your purpose is not only your career or hobby or romantic relationship. A Contract is your overall relationship to your personal power and your spiritual power. It is how you work with your energy and whom you give it to. It is also how much you are willing to surrender to divine guidance. Although a Contract is not the physical details of your life, you can use those details to figure out what your Contract is. Your life is composed of many facets that shimmer and reflect both your physical and your internal energy. In attempting to grasp the whole of this reflection, you can discern and define your mission. Just as each fragment of a hologram contains the entire image, your mission is reflected,

although maybe from a slightly different angle, within each of these many individual energy rays.

Still, it takes practice to learn to see the larger picture in these fragments, to learn to add them together to get the sum of your mission. Discovering your Contract is bound to give you surprises. You're going to have rugs pulled out from under you and realizations that rock you. But in the process you will learn how to see symbolically, how to manage your personal power, and how to fulfill your Sacred Contract.

In my previous books *Anatomy of the Spirit* and *Why People Don't Heal and How They Can*, I explained some of the ways that energy works, how it organizes itself around our seven emotional centers, or chakras, and how you can learn to read your energy and hone your intuition to see where your spiritual and physical disruptions or diseases originate. I taught how and why energy could become blocked or distorted and how this blockage - which is often connected to unfinished business in the past - could be cleared so that you could heal. Usually the emotional or spiritual healing was tied into learning the lesson of the emotional center or centers involved in the illness. Sometimes the lesson was the illness itself, and learning to work with that form of energy brought insight into the mental and emotional changes that needed to be made.

After many thousands of readings, I came to the conclusion that an organizing principle even greater than the interplay of the chakras is shaping the energy within each of us - and shaping our lives as it does so. I began to identify universal forms of cosmic intelligence that are directly involved in the day-to-day organizing of our lives. In fact, with every reading that I did after 1989, what I could only call an archetypal pattern stepped forward out of the details and fragments of each life and assumed a definite shape, offering clear insight into that person's psyche and why her life was as it was. These patterns, often ancient in

origin, populate our minds and lives in ways that affect us deeply. Yet we are generally unaware of them. These patterns of intelligence are archetypes, dynamic living forms of energy that are shared in many people's thoughts and emotions, across cultures and countries.

During one reading about ten years ago, for instance, while I was looking for emotional data in a woman named Laura, I almost dismissed an energy 'hit.' While it didn't seem significant to me at the time, I saw a pair of eyes flashing an imperious, hypercritical 'look.' I mentioned this image to Laura, who said that her husband always looked at her that way - judgmentally, as if he were the Master and she the Servant. Indeed, Laura herself always had a 'look' too - one that silently begged for approval from her husband. Yet to Laura her husband's condescending glances were the energy symbol of their painful marriage.

After we spoke, Laura went to several women's support groups, and eventually she understood that she could not wait for her husband's permission to be who she was or who she wanted to become. She realized that she was allowing her husband to make her feel inadequate and powerless, and that his condescending glances symbolized his attitude that she was not his equal. She also sensed that he was so afraid she would leave him that he had to keep her disempowered - or metaphorically 'barefoot and pregnant.' In time they went into counseling together and were able to make changes that kept their marriage alive while allowing each of them to grow together.

Seeing herself enmeshed in the energy pattern of Servant and Master allowed Laura to break that pattern and become her own master. In working with this archetype, she was also able to perform a greater service. Laura came to embody what is positive in the Servant, by serving a greater good, helping her husband see beyond his fears, and changing her marriage for the better.

Learning to read the archetypal patterns that influence your energy is the natural complement to working with the energy of the chakras. Just as the energies of your chakras work together to provide a map of physical and energy information, the collective body of your archetypes produces a view of the governing forces of your psyche and soul. This interrelationship of forces explains why I was able to move so naturally from reading the energy of chakras to reading the energy of archetypes. The energy body that surrounds you, which is created by the chakras, contains all the data of your biology and your biography, so it makes sense that this energy would manifest in patterns of archetypes that affect your life.

So to work with these big energies, these archetypal patterns, you have to step away from your life, step up and back from the detailed brush-strokes that make up your energy self-portrait, to see the whole picture. Working with your archetypes involves seeing your life in symbols at the center of a panoramic vista. From this vantage point you are able to take into account all parts of your life. You don't just focus on the major events or significant wounds.

In the 1990s I began teaching seminars on these archetypal energies. As my students learned to identify their archetypal patterns, then link the characteristics of each archetype to crucial behaviors and relationships, they often got instant clues to their life's mission. The energy of the archetype and its manifestation in our psyches and lives is so pervasive and intimate that no part of our lives exists separately from at least one archetypal pattern. Usually no fewer than twelve are our constant companions. Each has a story to tell you; each brings with it the power of the world myths and legends in which it has figured over time, and the energy of the patterns of belief and behavior out of which it was created.

Archetypes are the architects of our lives. They are the energy companions through whom we can learn to

understand ourselves, as Laura did. These psychological, emotional patterns – how we live and whom we love – can lead us to a profound understanding of our purpose. Their energy can connect us to our higher Sacred Contract – to our greater mission on the planet. As I saw in my reading of Laura, there are no insignificant relationships. Every experience that we have contains purpose and meaning. Each event, each person in our lives embodies an energetic fragment of our own psyche and soul. Our individual spiritual task is to recognize and integrate all of them into our awareness so that the greater pattern of our mission can shine forth in its full dimensions.

This realization eventually became the genesis of this book. In *Sacred Contracts* lies a process that helps you to discover and integrate the fragments of your psyche. It is a guide to intense self-examination for the purpose of finding your individual archetypal companions, and working with them to realize your life's mission and Sacred Contract.

Moreover, this book is an introduction to a mystery school. It's the study of a different sense of time and space that we inhabit through our relationships, which are really our Contracts with other people. The language of this mystery school is one of spiritual alchemy. With it we'll learn to transform heavy physical relationships and emotions into spiritual gold. This process involves prayer and contemplation, and it also requires examining all the fragments of your life experiences and relationships. You'll be researching your archetypes' energy chemistry – how they express and assert themselves in and through your life. By discovering and working with your individual archetypal companions, your connections to the cosmic forces directing your life, you will consciously affect the course of your life.

You are about to embark on a journey into the archetypal dimension of life, a dimension of consciousness that contains all of us collectively and yet somehow also individually. For although the way you express your

archetypes is unique to you, these energies correspond to the archetypes of other people in your life. They interact. Everyone has a Child archetype, for example, and so the inner Child in you connects you to the inner Child within everyone else. Learning to read your own archetypes allows you to read other people's archetypes as well. And it provides you with a better capacity for understanding and connecting with your loved ones, family, friends, colleagues - even strangers.

Carl Jung believed that archetypes live in a collective unconscious through which all souls are connected. The collective unconscious holds the energy of all who have participated in an archetype through the ages - the stories, myths, legends, and prototypes. Their stories and histories, briefly offered in the [Appendix](#) at the end of this book, can help you identify which archetypal energies most influence you. Knowledge of archetypes in turn helps you to understand why certain relationships have been necessary in your life and why you have had to take on specific duties that either surprised and delighted you or seemed burdensome or destructive. You learn again and again in working with archetypes that everything has its role, regardless of how painful or joyful it may be.

After you have determined your archetypes and worked with them for a while, the accumulation of insights they give you will tip you into a greater revelation: your mission emerges in its purest form. 'I was born to serve God's poor,' declared Mother Teresa. Before she could state that, however, she faced enormous difficulties and endured harsh criticisms that were necessary so that she could intensify her resolve, her social skills and contacts, and her spiritual growth. Even though the antagonists in her youth tried her courage and seemed to impede her progress, in truth they served her most by refining her purpose. For instance, the first two religious orders that Mother Teresa entered made her discontented, because neither was founded to do the

charitable work she was being guided to do. She eventually founded a new community of her own to serve the needs of the poor – as well as her Sacred Contract.

This book, then, is a product of my wanting to share with people my insights about our individual and collective life purpose over nearly two decades of working with the energies of the human spirit. It presents a new language of spiritual interpretation to help you become fluent in understanding yourself and your life's mission. You'll first learn about the 'nouns' of your psyche – your archetypal spiritual companions. You'll also see how their energy works in your life – the 'verbs' of archetypal energy and manifestation – and how their actions express your mission in small and big phrases. You'll eventually learn to build bigger and bigger verbal pictures of your own life until out of it all emerges a whole, profound new view of your full potential, your purpose in life, and your higher Sacred Contract.

Sacred Contracts is an interactive book. You are meant to respond to the stories and teachings in a way that will help you understand the nature and purpose of your Contracts and the role played by your personal archetypes. So please get yourself a journal or notebook in which to write your observations and associations that come to you as you read these chapters. I'll be asking you to remember intuitions and other glimmerings you've had of people you were meant to meet and things you were meant to do. And beginning with [Chapter 5](#), you will need to keep a record of your answers to a series of questions, as well as insights and impressions that will arise when you begin exploring your archetypal patterns. If possible, dedicate one notebook just to the information and insights you develop in working with this book, and use it as you continue to work with your archetypes and Sacred Contract.

By developing symbolic sight and archetypal language, you will grasp the whole of your life with a level of spiritual

clarity that can heal the emotional and spiritual wounds you have accumulated and fill you with awe that your life is also of great importance to everyone you encounter. It becomes possible for you to trust that everything that is meant to come your way will arrive in due time, that you will be with the right people at the right moment, and that divine guidance endlessly flows into your soul. It can't be otherwise: we manage our Contracts, but the Divine takes care of the Sacred.

CHAPTER 1

What Is a Sacred Contract?

A contract isn't about saying what you meant. It is about meaning what you say.

*OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809-94,
physician, poet, and humorist)*

WHEN I WAS a young girl, my father always told me, 'I don't care what you do when you grow up, so long as you're a nurse or a teacher.' I can still remember my fury when he would say that, because I was interested only in writing. The very idea of teaching school was out of the question. Yet today, in spite of all my efforts to avoid life in the classroom, I am a teacher - of workshops, of theology, of motivation - and what's more, I love it. I feel distantly connected to the nursing part of my dad's directive too, through the healing effects my work has had on many people.

My father passed away in 1989, and in the early 1990s, as my mom and I were discussing my work, I said to her, 'Well, he won after all.' Then I realized that Dad hadn't 'won' some sort of game or struggle to control what I did with my life. My Contract had won. My father had been able to glimpse aspects of it, as many parents can, although their vision is often clouded by their own expectations and wishes for their children. Even without knowing about archetypes, Dad had seen something in me that evoked his understanding of the greater function and meaning of a nurse and teacher, and he related it to the career choices that were common for young women at the time.

Still, my Contract does contain the archetypes of the Teacher and Healer, which have manifested through the events of my life, even though I have never formally studied healing or teaching. My higher education has been in journalism and theology, but my work in medical intuition simply 'happened.' I did my first intuitive reading almost by accident, and then another, and another. Word spread through the neighborhood, and soon I was doing ten to fifteen a week. My growing reputation led to invitations to lecture on my work, which in turn led to invitations to teach workshops.

The most extraordinary feature about how I learned energy anatomy was the precision with which my education was organized. Again, it simply 'happened.' Within a period of seven to ten days, three people with the same illness would approach me for help. Each one would prove to be coping with similar but slightly different life problems that had contributed to the development of their illness. By the time I read all three individuals, I felt I had grasped the major energy stress factors behind their conditions. Shortly after I completed one trio, another three people in quick succession would contact me for help. Again, each would prove to have the same illness. Gradually my understanding of energy anatomy led me to realize that our biography becomes our biology.

Once I understood that principle, my education seemed to move in another direction. Whereas my previous readings had focused on assessing an individual's physical and emotional chronology, I suddenly began to perceive images that had no apparent connection to the person. In reading a woman who wanted to understand her neck pain, for instance, I got the image of a pirate in her energy field. She was a housewife from the Midwest, so this information meant absolutely nothing to her. Yet while subsequently undergoing relaxation and visualization exercises with a hypnotherapist, she also sensed the pirate energy in her

field. She 'saw' him slashing her throat with his sword. Curiously, she also felt more positive associations, including wild lawlessness and liberated sexuality. These conflicting impressions of the pirate energy indicated to her that she was being choked or controlled by her life circumstances while yearning for a freedom that she could not consciously voice.

Reading another woman a short time later, who complained of severe arthritis in her hands, I kept seeing the image of an artist. When I mentioned this, however, she was baffled, insisting that she had no artistic talent whatever. Nonetheless I suggested that she take up pottery as therapy for her arthritis. She began by making simple clay vases and in time flowered into a gifted potter who now produces artistically sophisticated pieces.

Finally, while reading an Australian salesman named Jimmy who had been seriously depressed for several years, I saw a strong actor in his energy field. But Jimmy had never done any acting even though he did want to, because, he said, he was still 'in the closet' and was afraid that if he acted, it would 'come out' that he was gay. He was, in fact, already acting - as if he were straight - but the blocking of his talent and identity had made him implode emotionally. A few years later I was thankful to hear from Jimmy that he had pulled out of his depression and now acts in summer stock. He takes his stage work seriously, and he is no longer hiding his sexuality.

When these odd images first began to emerge, they seemed so disassociated from the people I was reading, so off, that I felt that I had somehow lost my intuitive accuracy. Yet these readings ultimately proved helpful for every person. Then one day in 1991 everything fell into place for me. I was listening to a conversation between two women in one of my workshops. Within five minutes of meeting, they had exchanged the ordinary details of their lives, such as where they lived and what kind of work they did. After the

basic physical details, they then spoke about what life experiences had brought them to a spiritual workshop. Suddenly they found a life pattern they shared, an energy link that was immediately noticeable in their heightened response to each other. Their children were grown, their marriages were happily established, and they had arrived at a natural transition point in their lives - they were tired of being everyone else's 'servant.' Now they wanted to serve themselves. Retired and liberated, they wanted to pursue their own interests and to develop their own spirits.

As I listened to these kind souls describe the pattern of their lives, I was seeing through their conversation to its symbolic level. As good mothers and marriage partners, they had acted in behalf of others for most of their lives, but having accomplished this early mission, they were now striking out on their own, as the Servant of myth and legend must. When the biblical Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers, for instance, he bided his time and did the work requested of him through many years of service. But then he used his singular gifts as a dream interpreter to earn his freedom and become a great leader in the land - going from Servant to Master.

All of a sudden the vivid but mystifying images that I had been getting in my recent readings made sense. The Pirate, the Artist, the Actor, and the Servant were not part of the individual, physical chronology that I had been used to reading. Rather, these images were a part of each person's spiritual chronology, a personal mythology that had begun even before they entered their physical lives. These images were archetypes, energy guides that could direct people toward their spiritual purpose, their Contracts.

The mythic lightbulb that got turned on that afternoon has stayed on ever since. From that point on, every reading I did opened with an evaluation of a person's spiritual chronology, the archetypal patterns that express themselves through his personality and life experiences.

And just as trios of people with the same physical illnesses had contacted me for intuitive readings, people with the same archetypal patterns began contacting me in a relatively short period of time, though spread over months rather than days. Some of my first readings, for example, were for several people who had the Wounded Child archetype, a pattern of emotional scars from childhood. Then I met a few who had in common a dominant Victim archetype. Just as before, each of these people reflected slightly different aspects of these archetypes as a result of their individual personalities and life experiences.

As I began to work purposefully with the archetypes in my readings and to teach them in my workshops, I gained further insights about how they function within our psyche. When Jung proposed his theory of the collective unconscious, he defined it as mainly populated with countless psychological patterns derived from historical roles in life, such as the Mother, the Trickster, the King, and the Servant. Along with our individual personal unconscious, which is unique to each of us, he said, 'there exists a second psychic system of a collective, universal, and impersonal nature that is identical in all individuals.' This collective unconscious, he believed, was inherited rather than developed. I have observed that some archetypes step out from the backdrop of this great collective to play a much more prominent role in people's lives, and that each of us has our own personal alignment of key archetypes.

Through a process of research, reflection, trial, and error, I ultimately concluded that a unique combination of twelve archetypal patterns, corresponding to the twelve houses of the zodiac, works within each of us to support our personal development. These twelve patterns work together in all aspects of your life. They can be particularly vivid and perceptible in your problems or challenges, or in the places where you feel incomplete. And they can be particularly useful in healing painful memories, or redirecting your life,