

## BOOK REVIEW CRITIQUE

With regard to the review of my book, *Gaining Archetypal Vision: A Guidebook for Using Archetypes in Personal Growth and Healing*, in the December 2011/January 2012 *AHP Perspective* issue, I am concerned with the underdeveloped and inaccurate nature of the review by John Rowan. The book is a professional memoir and an example of legacy writing. Among the many interesting things that the reviewer failed to site was how a counselor works with the archetypes and especially with the positive and negative aspects of the archetypes. Additionally, tools of the intuitive arts (that make use of the archetypes) used in my alternative nursing practice were not mentioned.

The title of the book *Gaining Archetypal Vision* describes a “process” to gain the talent for seeing symbols and patterns combined with the ability to make associations. This book is Archetypes 101 and is not intended to turn out masters. As noted in the Epilogue, the readers have been introduced to basic intellectual concepts to “begin” their exploration of the archetypes. It is difficult to fully understand the concepts presented until you work with them. For only when a person learns to see the archetypes in everyday experience, will they be able to recognize them in ourselves and the world.

Two “small criticisms” are incomplete: The reviewer references his own work but does not explain why he is objecting to a generally accepted symbol of the pyramid for the hierarchy of needs model. He gives no explanation of why he thinks my version of the chakra system is eccentric.

The reviewer’s “big criticism” was that the author didn’t say enough about the archetypes until Chapter 6, and that the positive and negative aspects weren’t discussed. This criticism is inaccurate as evidenced by the Excerpt of the book’s Chapter 3 that appears on the same page after the book review. The Excerpt clearly discusses several of the larger archetypes and tells a story about a friend who is operating in the *lower* and more primitive levels of her archetypes (negative). It also described the higher more refined levels of the archetypes (positive). Every chapter discusses the archetypes; the word archetype appears more than 200 times in the manuscript; not only that but the positive and negative aspects of the archetypes are demonstrated by discussion and story throughout this book.

The *Perspective* magazine is an important arena for professional dialogue. This book review is so inaccurate that one must wonder if the reviewer read it. Not only that, but it appears to have been hastily put together without a lot of thought; not a good model for this magazine. To keep your standards high and, at the same time, not do professional damage to author’s reputations, there needs to be reliable protocol for reviewing scholarly work. In this instance, a reviewer well versed in the intuitive arts



would have been the more appropriate choice. To qualify, this person would need to be open to the perspective that we are divine expressions of something we cannot know and that the living archetypes move through our lives in an all-inclusive fashion and are “not” just a few “closely packed lists” of words.

Because I don’t like to criticize without giving suggestions to remedy the issue, I would suggest that the AHP Board set up a book review committee assigned to come up with: a) guidelines for reviewing books; b) categories of subjects to be reviewed; c) and qualifications for the reviewers of each of the categories.

—WARM REGARDS, TONI GILBERT  
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WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GET THE JOB DONE  
FAMILY THERAPY

I have a picture of Geronimo holding his rifle near the entrance to my home. A psychiatrist who had experience working with Apache Indians asked me what kind of therapy I did. I said “I like to throw people off three-story balconies, but it’s never been a problem because I always get ‘informed consent’.” I mean that family therapists have to be willing to work on the cutting edge and get families to open up to unknown possibilities.

There are two morals to the story here. Families are so messed up that it is unlikely that most kinds of [individual] therapy will be able to help them turn the tragic corner in the primitive areas where they continue to destroy their own lives and those of their beloved family members. The second moral of the story is that if a family therapist has any ability to work at the required level to get the job done, he or she most probably will at times work so far outside of “community standards of practice” of the professional psychiatry and psychology communities, that they will be thought to be outlaws. They would be foolish to accept the job if they had any sense that they would be punished by their professional community for a “good faith attempt to do the impossible” in the service of the promotion of individual and family health and their increased ability to function in ways that are meaningful to family members, however strange that may turn out to look.

When people ask me who the picture is hanging on the wall (not knowing Geronimo), I tell them it is my mother!

The professionals protecting themselves and the medical boards and Board of Psychology have made themselves to a large degree impotent to effect and affect change.

For a change to occur at meaningful levels in therapy, both family therapist and family members have to be willing to take risks not knowing what the outcome will be, only that they are taking their best shot at life. There is no such thing as normal life—there is only life!

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