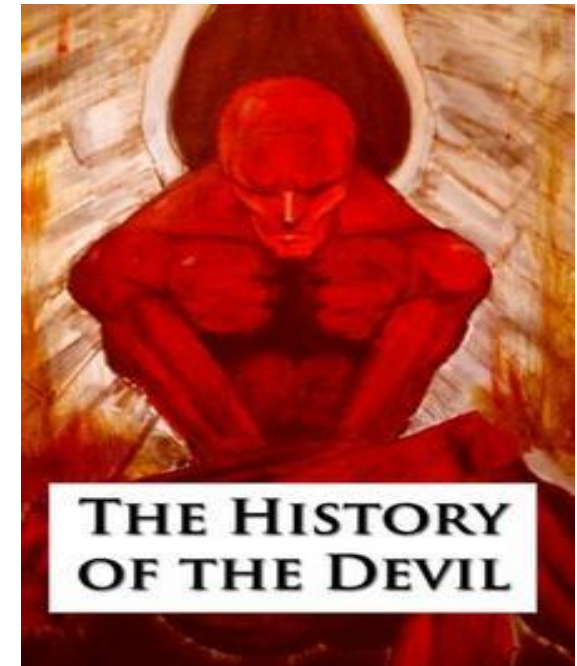


Persecutor is an Ancient Archetype

- Greek term for an “adversary” or “accuser,” is *diabolos*, the root term from which Satan’s other name, the Devil, is derived.
- One to blame for all that is wrong, or evil, is a core part of the human story and psyche.
- This plays an essential evoking function that requires us to look at behavior that may control us.



The Persecutor's Journey

Enter modern psychology when Carl Jung and James Hillman looked upon the Persecutor as the part of human psyche that must be observed and integrated in order to be fully human. In this vision, rather than a figure obsessed with the corruption of human beings, the Devil—or shadow side—becomes the harbinger of consciousness.

Hillman observes that the Persecutor, “[...]requires us to look at what we may not want to see or feel. Satan’s power is actually fed from our own exalted sense psychological and spiritual light. He gains when we lose touch with our own darkness, or when we lose sight of our own destructiveness and self-deceptions.”

The Persecutor's Yearning to:

- Feel safe and secure by being competitive and win, by any means;
- Feel powerful, accomplished and successful;
- For certainty, efficiency, and to control confusion;
- Exert control over others or the situation in order to reduce chaos and the unknown;
- Live based upon their belief system that is made up of winners and losers, right and wrong, black or white.

Bottom Line: When in the Persecutor role, our identity and sense of self is on the line and we are compelled to fight for it. Hence the Persecutor in us represents the “fighter” in the fight-or-flight mechanism.

The Shifting from Persecutor to Challenger

If we can look at the Persecutor—whether a person, condition, or circumstances—as something or someone that has come into our lives to challenge us to grow and develop, then the Persecutor is a catalyst for change and good.

Our Challenger essence acts as a personal “truth-teller” that helps us to face and integrate our “darker side” so our natural and true essence shows up as the courageous and authentic Creators we are.

Many Faces of Persecutors

The Critic—Negative, disapproving, and judgmental of others and their ideas. Has a high need to be right and tears down others in order to look good.

The Controller—Manages chaos and uncertainty with an “in your face” attitude of “my way or the highway.”

The Silencer—Uses silence, distance, and aloofness as control and punishment. While their silence might appear as disengagement, their strategy is to assert control over others and the situation.

The Manipulator—High need for power inside organizational politics to get what they want. Works hidden agendas.

The Wolf—May use charming personality to win influence, while their intention is to control the situation and have greater access to power.

Facilitating the Shift from Persecutor to Challenger

The core coaching question to support the shift from
Persecutor to Challenger is:

“What is your intention?”

What is Your Intention?

“Looking Good” Intent

How you want to LOOK to others

- Look good – even at other's expense
- Be right; be the hero
- Be smart; be the winner
- Based on judgment & control
- Use your energy to protect how you are seen
- Connect only if it is useful to your own agenda and/or “fake” connection
- Makes others wary, reluctant to engage or forgive error
- Puts self above (belittles)

“Learning” Intent

How you create LEARNING with others

- Focus on learning
- Enhance capacity and capability
- Maintains integrity – no hidden agenda
- Based on respect and care
- Use energy to create safe space
- Create & sustain connection even when there are differences/obstacles
- Helps others be willing to engage or forgive
- Builds up others

Derived from work of Diana Cawood
Used with Permission

Making the Shift from Persecutor to Challenger

- Self-acceptance and compassion by giving themselves a break and integrating their own inner-Persecuting tendencies.
- Understand the need to control as a primary strategy to manage their fear and anxiety. Support them to build trust and become more comfortable with “not knowing.”
- What is in it for them to step back so others can grow? How can they gain by adjusting their high need for control?
- Where do they exhibit gentle treatment with others? How can they transfer those qualities to other situations?
- Ask them to reflect on their behavior’s impact on others. What does it feel like when others control them?
- Share the DDT/TED* model with them—if they appear open.

The Shift from Persecutor to Challenger



The journey from Persecutor to Challenger is nurtured by compassion and love as we learn to integrate all aspects of who we are as human beings.

With this new humility for our human experience we become more open to “truth telling” and continuous learning in the face of not knowing.