

THE FATHER QUEST:

A Guide for Rediscovering and Renewing the Foundations of Fatherhood
Bud Harris, Ph.D.

Lecture Handout

“Dad! You better give me something. You better give me something fast... Dad, stand up for me.” ~James Dean, *Rebel Without a Cause*

“Every problem, therefore, brings the possibility of widening consciousness, but also the necessity of saying goodbye to childlike unconsciousness and trust in nature.”
~C. G. Jung

“Childhood is not only important because it is the starting point for possible crippling of instinct, but also because this is the time when, terrifying or encouraging, those far-seeing dreams and images come from the soul of the child, which prepare his whole destiny.” ~C. G. Jung

“...the present flows out of the past, and the future will flow out of it. So for the fullness of the present one must not forget the past and the future. One has no understanding of the present if one has no knowledge of the past and the future.”
~Marie Louise von Franz

“The hero-deed to be wrought is not today what it was in the century of Galileo. Where then there was darkness, now there is light; but also, where light was, there is now darkness. The modern hero-deed must be that of questing to bring light again to the lost Atlantis of the coordinated soul. ~Joseph Campbell

“The latest investigations show the predominating influence of the father’s character in a family, often lasting for centuries.” ~C. G. Jung

“The strongest and most fateful factor was the relationship to the father...”
~C. G. Jung

THE FATHER QUEST RESOURCES

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- _____ "The Structure and Dynamics of the Psychic." (Vol. 8)
- _____ "The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious." (Vol. 9i)
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OUTLINE – FATHER QUEST LECTURE

I. Introduction and Part 1

- A. Show and discuss photos of father & son
- B. Lecture handouts
- C. Read poem, For My Father on Father's Day

II. Experience of not having a strong father

- A. Year of staying drunk
- B. Results to father and son of overwhelming events in lives
- C. Realization of repeating father's abandonment

III. Decision to pursue Father Quest

- A. "Getting it Right" is not the point
- B. Love, humility, engagement and awareness
- C. Inner Father image for women
 - 1. Story of survey of women & fathers

IV. Problems & Wounds

- A. Place reserved for father image is vacant
 - 1. Leads to anxiety
 - 2. Lack of masculinity and attachment to "mother"
 - 3. Leads to anger in women and men
 - 4. End up identifying with parents' pathologies
- B. Whole society suffers from inability to commit or find meaning and purpose

V. Review

VI. Four essential aspects of Father Archetype

- A. Listed in handout
- B. Importance of imagination
 - 1. Gives us capacity to fully engage in life
 - 2. Able to see everyday life as metaphor
- C. Difference between personal and societal fatherhood
- D. Archetypal father as Great Life Giver

VII. Part 2: Key Aspects of Fatherhood

- A. Functions of fathers in primitive societies
 - 1. Training & initiation into adulthood
 - 2. Shepherding society and culture
- B. Story of Telemachus and Odysseus
- C. Since the Greeks process now inner psychological one

VIII. Importance of learning Courage

- A. Needs to be learned from fathers/grandfathers
 - 1. Women need it to support self-esteem
 - 2. Men need it to be self-responsible adults

IX. Emotional Safety learned from the father

- A. Leads to trust in life
- B. Basis for becoming self-actualized
- C. The “good enough” parent is sufficient

X. Presence as both giver and receiver

- A. First need to be engaged in life ourselves
- B. Mutuality leads to mutual respect & trust

XI. Tasks that Teach and Empower

- A. “good enough” father wants children to be independent and self-responsible
- B. Important that tasks set are reachable but challenging enough
- C. A too-indulgent or passive father shuts down child’s courage and ability to struggle

XII. Chapter “A Heart of Flame”

- A. Archetype of Great Father or Great Life Giver
 - 1. Helps us challenge conventional wisdom
 - 2. Enables us to take the hero’s journey
- B. Transcendence as a breaking in, not escaping
- C. Fading of father archetype leads to depersonalization of society

Four Essential Aspects of the Father Archetype

In myths and fairy tales the villain in the story is often in command of the situation because the king is too weak and the unconscious shadow controls one's fate because his ego is too ineffectual. The king represents the dominant ruling power in our personality whether personal or communal. In the Father Quest, the king represents a weakened father principle that has become ruled by the negative aspects of the patriarchy and the covert spiritual indoctrinations that has resulted from the institutionalization of our society.

The first step in healing this wound and preparing the foundation for growth is to return to the origin or source. In mythological terms this means return to the creation of the world. To return to the source is to return the understanding of the father archetype and to return to our personal experience of it with our fathers, our institutions and our religions. In mythological terms life cannot be repaired, it can only be re-created by a return to the sources. To help us in this quest I have defined four aspects of the father archetype.

1. In our personal experience of our fathers I will use lower case letters to spell the word, "father". While this image is a powerful one, positive, negative or some of both, it derives its power from the FATHER archetype that stands behind it.
2. Next, we experience the image of the Cultural Father. This is the archetype that brings organization to a society such as law, order, principles of character, safety, opportunity, prosperity and so-on. The personal father also has many of these responsibilities on a smaller level. When speaking of this aspect of the father archetype I capitalize the F in the word, Father.
3. Then we see that behind our experience of our personal fathers and the father principle in culture is the force of a first or primary force at work which governs the forces and patterns of this aspect of life. This is the dynamism which makes itself felt in the power of the FATHER archetypal images which I spell out in all capital letters.
4. Beyond the basic FATHER archetypal image lies an even greater one, unseen and calling us into the future, transformation and re-creating ourselves and the world. It calls us to grow beyond our hard-won self-image and our status and achievement in the world of normal and cultural reality. I refer to this dynamic image as the Transcendent FATHER, the GREAT FATHER or the GREAT LIFE GIVER—each spelled in all capital letters.

For My Father on Father's Day

By Bud Harris, Ph.D.

You were the man who wanted desperately
to be proud of me, who wanted me to fulfill
your dreams,
and thereby cleanse you of fear and
heal your ancient
hurts.

Your fear drove you through life,
aggressive, angry,
terrifying the small boy I was. Yet,
at the same time you were loyal
and deeply committed to loving your
family.

Your courage took you through
many desperate hours and out of the other side,
seeking new life
for yourself and all of us, a valiant quest
that in many ways
failed at the end, strangled by
propriety.

But, you taught me courage, the virtue
someone once said is the greatest gift in the world
to receive. And, you taught me something
about the meaning of
love.

I always felt your pain, long before I could begin
to understand it. I wish I could have found a way
to heal it, but the challenge
was far too great for me. Trying to heal it
would have destroyed me. Still, I often wish
I could have been the son you dreamed of, that would have
healed you.

I remember you with longing and I wish
we could have understood each other better. I weep
that you are no longer here
because I miss you terribly, as I
always have.

So, I write to thank you for the gift
of courage, for love, and
for the longings in my heart that have driven me
to quest as well, and for the living example
that warned me against the dangers of
propriety.

Dr. Bud Harris is a Zurich trained Jungian psychoanalyst who has been in Asheville, NC since 1989. He has lectured widely, and is the author of five books which include, *The Father Quest: Rediscovering an Elemental Force*. To contact Dr. Harris, find out more about him and his wife Dr. Massimilla Harris, also a Jungian psychoanalyst, and to sign up for Dr. Harris' newsletter, visit his website at: www.budharris.com