

SOLID MAN

strong · present · confident

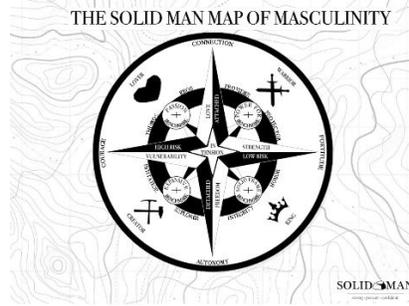
Solid Man Integrity Group Lesson 20

Pillar Four

Mastering Your Masculinity - Part Four

Benchmark One; Power For

20



Quadrant One – Power For

From here I will be outlining the “Quadrants”. Between each set of Paradoxes and Cornerstones is a quadrant. This is where we will further develop our understanding of the masculine heart. This is where you will discover some very concrete descriptions of the masculine soul. The full expression of Masculinity will be outlined as we unpack all four quadrants.

In each quadrant is a Benchmark of Masculinity. I learned about Benchmarks from my Dad as he taught me about the outdoors. Occasionally as we wandered through the woods, we would find a round metal marker about 4-5 inches across set in a rock or a concrete post. The marker had valuable information indicating elevation, latitude and longitude. It was often placed at the corner of a section and you could find your bearings on a topographical map. They were there mostly for surveyors but were important for anyone finding their way.

A benchmark looks something like this with numbers stamped into it.



A Typical Benchmark

This was how you could know where you were in the backcountry before everyone had GPS. Presently, the term “benchmark” is used often by businesses and entrepreneurs to measure if they are up to standards or achieving what they have set up as their expectations.

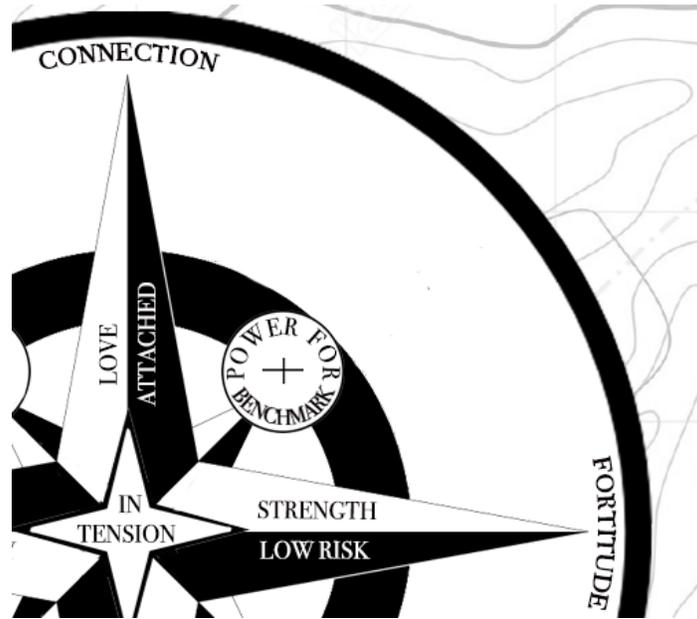
It’s the same concept; a benchmark is a standard or point of reference by which things are measured or judged, it is a guiding principle which helps evaluate your position, your condition or accomplishment.

“Benchmark” is a marker which shows you where you are. That may be in the backcountry or doing business on Wall Street. Here I am using this concept to give you a strong reference point for establishing and assessing where you are as you develop your strong and confident masculine self.

There are four Benchmarks, each developed and born from the two of the four Cornerstones. Within each Benchmark are what I call the “Muscles” of Masculinity. The Muscles are about action and more specific doing behaviors, how your Masculinity moves and is experienced.

There are two Muscles associated with each Benchmark and they are like our real muscles as you will be exercising and developing them to grow them bigger, stronger and more powerful. We will have a total of eight Muscles to build as we map out becoming a strong man.

Benchmark #1 - Power-For



The Power-For Benchmark

At the corner between Connection and Fortitude is the Benchmark called “Power-For”. Power-For is found where the Commodities of Love and Strength meet. Connection and Love on one side and Fortitude and Strength on the other. They seem like oil and water, but they come together in a very significant way.

The Fortitude/Strength side of the equation is where the concept of Power comes from. A man has been designed to be powerful and strong. He has been made to be influential, to initiate, to get things done, to work, to protect, to make positive changes in the world.

Power is the ability to be free to do something. It is the capability to do things, whether that is by influencing like a coach or a boss, or by having the personal skills to get whatever it is, done.

To most the idea of Power is an obvious characteristic of Masculinity. Increasing Strength has been a significant part of the lives of most men, whether physical, intellectual or in capability. Our increasing Strength in turn increases our Freedom, which increases our options, which gives us a good life. This is good.

Where Power goes awry is when we need to have “Power-Over” others. Tyrannical power is Power-Over. One person or system controls another person, reducing the other persons personal power and freedom. That person then has less power and must comply with the one who has Power-Over.

This type of Power is often equated to the concept of Zero-Sum. Zero-Sum is usually used with competition. There is a winner (+1) and a loser (-1), $-1 + 1 = 0$. The sum is zero. Many in today's culture have an understanding of Power only as a Zero-Sum category. (If the husband has Power, the wife has no Power.). It is the world of the victim and the oppressor. The victim has no Power, the oppressor has all the Power.

When the Power of one person (or system) is a controlling dictatorship, it is the Power-Over and Zero-Sum type of relationship. In history we have seen this with people like Hitler, Communist Dictators, various warlords, business monopolies and in authoritarian households (it could be either Fathers or Mothers).

The idea that masculine Power is only Power-Over has been a narrative derived from a Zero-Sum perspective to advance "equality" for women. While it is absolutely true that there have been many contexts in history where men have exerted Power-Over, both men and women can use power like this. We are all capable of using Power in unhealthy ways.

The false narrative that men are oppressors at their core, therefore Masculinity must be restrained or eliminated is wrong. While there are oppressors of any gender, most people just want themselves and their loved ones to do well. This is very true of men.

Even though men are quite capable of Power-Over, it is not the way Masculinity has been designed. Our hearts reveal something much deeper. The deeper and much stronger way of expressing our Power is a concept called Power-For. The power of the masculine has been designed to be FOR the wellbeing and love of self and others.

While Power-Over is for the benefit of only the one carrying the Power, Power-For is using strength and influence "FOR" the benefit of others. My Power is "for" those who may not have much Power.

This idea requires a completely different way to see Power. Rather than seeing Power as limited and win-lose (which it is in sports and tyranny), know that Power can be experienced and lived out with abundance as win-win for everybody.

The Abundance View of Power believes that there is plenty of Power to go around. If the husband has Power, the wife will share that Power and become more powerful. As she becomes more powerful, he becomes more powerful, they become a Power-Couple. Abundance Power begets more Abundance Power, everyone thrives.

 **Unlike Zero-Sum Power, Abundance Power is win-win.**

Mature masculine Power is Abundance Power. We have been designed to become the most powerful beings we can possibly become, so that those around us can thrive as well. We are made for Power-For. Our Power is "For" others not "Over" others.

Dominance and Submission

The idea of dominance has been a part of most conversations about Masculinity. Many writers call this idea “hegemonic” Masculinity, which means it is authoritarian. The assumption is that this is the essence of Masculinity, that it is about dominance.

This is a faulty viewpoint. As I said before this is immature or the “Power-Over” and Zero-Sum categories of power, whether from a man or woman. Presently, in our zero-sum world, hegemonic Femininity is as common as hegemonic Masculinity.

Recently the concept of Alpha and Beta is tossed around as normal aspects of manhood; a dominant man is Alpha, and a submissive man is Beta. Or it is assumed that if one is submissive and therefore Beta, he is not really a man.

This must be part of our conversation around Power. Those who talk about Alpha and Beta as such usually think in Zero-Sum power structures. However, the idea of Alpha-Beta is a natural thing in the world of many animals and there it is not used as Power-Over.

While the alpha wolf will be dominant while the lesser beta wolf submits and shows its throat to the alpha, it is played out quite differently than how humans would do Power. The beta wolf is now in a great position to be a huge part of a great team. He may not be the top dog, but he is a huge part of the pack’s success. Seems rather like an abundance view of Power.

If the alpha killed or injured the lesser wolves, there would be no pack and no survival. It is enough to know the dominance hierarchy and then move successfully in it, where everyone thrives. Sure, the alpha gets the best cut of meat and first choice in mating, but the beta does just fine. With a little patience, his time will come.

☞ **Not everyone has been designed to be the alpha.**

If alpha means Power-Over, then the idea that all men need to be alpha is quite foolish. But if Power-For is the norm, it works quite well. Here, alpha does not have to have Power-Over (dominating) but is good with Power-For (dominion). There is no need for chest pounding or driving a lifted pick-up truck with loud pipes. True Power and even dominance actually come from not needing to be dominant.

☞ **Most alpha-ness you see is just posturing to look strong and in control.**

Rather than the word “dominate”, defining Masculinity, the more accurate word is “dominion”. Dominion is having Power, no doubt, but it is Power to have control over your own life and Power For the betterment of those who are under your care or those you have chosen to use your commodities on.

Dominion is a place of leadership and ownership of the well-being of people within the sphere of influence of that person. It is very similar to control or dominance (that is Power-Over), but Dominion is Power -For. This man will say, “I have great power, even Dominion and this power is for the betterment of myself, my family and my world.”

☞ **A man with a confident core will probably will be an alpha, but the point is that he doesn't need to be.**

It is the difference between control and influence. Control says, “meet my demands!”, while Influence nudges those around him toward good, calling forth health, life and beauty. Dominating is control, Dominion is influence.

A man who has a solid internal core and has built a strong self, physically, mentally and spiritually, will have an internal strength that has no need to gain status or puffed up alpha-ness. He can be OK with submitting to a coach, a boss, or God because he has an internal confidence that his manhood is not dependent on whether or not he is alpha.

☞ **The world would be a different place if Power-For was the norm.**

The humility that comes from inner strength is real masculine Power. This is another aspect where Vulnerability comes from inner Power where there is no need to be inflated by external validators. The truly masculine man is internally strong, and he respects other men who have strength. He builds up and empowers a man with limited strength to become a man he wants on his team. This is Abundance Power, this is Power-For.

Benchmark #1 Motto:

“I will become the strongest, most powerful man I can be, so I can love others well.”

Increasing Your Power

There are a number of sources of Power within each person. What we usually think of first is our Physical Power, but then there is Cognitive Power, Presence and Influence which comes out of Confidence, Competence with our Skills and Abilities leading to Mastery, and the last one, but potentially the most powerful is our Voice.

Physical Power is found in our muscles and what our muscles can do. This is a basic sense of being able to get stuff done, to achieve athletic endeavors and to possibly dominate over others. This is the Power that young men get caught up in. They think this is the source of true Power. It is Power, but a very limited source, our muscles can only do so much.

Increasing physical Power is developed in good and healthy things like exercise, nutrition, sleep, self-care and medical care. So, go to the gym, eat well, go to your Doc, take care of your body, build this great resource of Power.

Your Cognitive Power is also limited. Each of us have a certain IQ or ability to learn. But we can do all we can to make sure we get the most out of the good mind we have. Even if your IQ is not Mensa level, you can still gain as much knowledge as you can. Even if you can't read at a 10th grade level, you can listen to podcasts or audible books. Even if your fifth-grade teacher said, "you'll never amount to anything!" you can prove her wrong by believing in yourself by building your smarts.

The Power structures of Presence and Influence come from a man's Confidence. Confidence simply is knowing you're ok and that you can handle just about any situation that comes up. Having a Confident posture then gives you Presence, or that sense of gravitas, when you are in the room people sense substance. YOU are here, now. When you have Presence, you will then build Influence, which is just the ability to nudge those around you toward greater good and empowerment.

Competence means that you are good at something. You have skill and ability to accomplish what you want. Competence creates great Power. Increasing your competence toward mastery places you in a position of even greater Power potential.

Competence = Mastery = Increased Influence

Voice is probably one of the most powerful aspects of being a man. If you are able to find your Voice, master your Voice and use your Voice well, you will experience more positive power and influence than ever realized you could. Simply speaking who you truly are, what you want or need and speaking clearly from your passion and purpose will change your world.

It may possibly change the world itself. Consider how the Voice has been used throughout history to influence, to inspire, to hold to account, to call out wrongs and injustice. Consider the voices of Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., Ghandi or Jesus, how they have changed the course of history. Think about how the simple statement from Rosa Parks, "'I don't think I should have to stand up.", changed the course of the Civil Rights Movement. Her Voice was powerful and so is yours.

The Voice has been huge in history, and it is powerful in any relationship as well. Being overt about what you want and need, speaking a clear boundary for how you would like to be treated, expressing your love or pride in someone, or even the simplest sentence, “No.” are all ways of using your voice with Power. Finding your Voice and mastering it is primary with gaining masculine Power.

Limitations are at play here. We all have limitations in many areas. We have great strengths, but we have limits as well. Our work, as we build our Power, is to consider our limitations and press them to the limit, while building on our strengths. This endeavor creates full personal strength like nothing else.

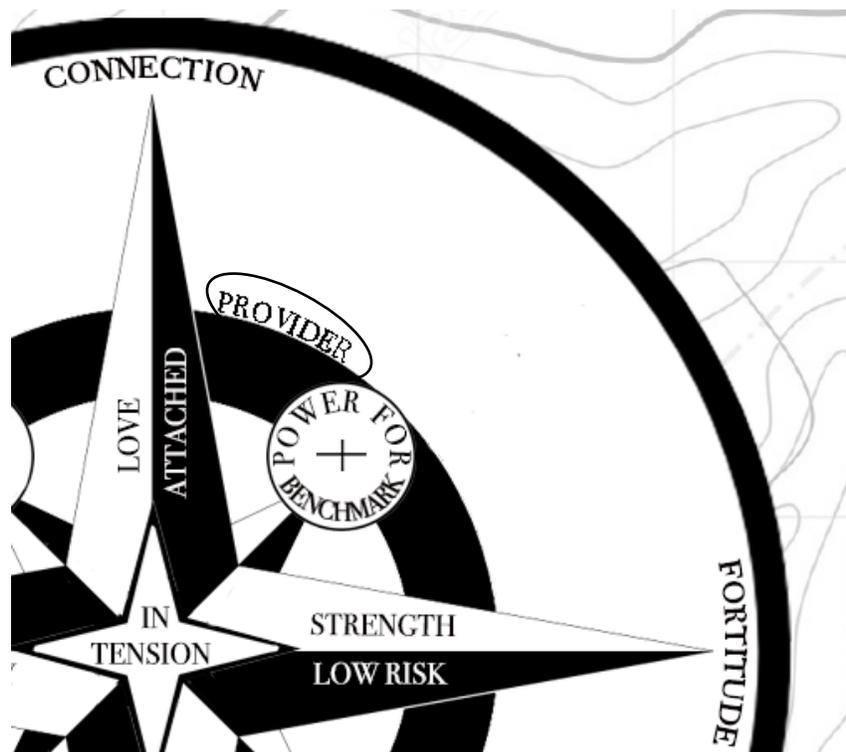
While much of your focus as a man will be toward self-care and increasing your capabilities and power, the outcome of building strength is not just for yourself. Every man has a deep internal desire to make sure everyone in his care is doing well. Which brings us to the two Power-For Muscles.

- ☛ **Power-For is significant because the Masculine has been designed to protect and provide.**

The Muscles of Benchmark #1 Power For: Provide and Protect

Reflecting the concept of Power-For, the two Power-for Muscles are Provide and Protect. These Muscles are found between Connection and Fortitude and are expressed through the Commodities of Love and Strength.

The Provider Muscle



The Provider Muscle

Leaning toward Connection and Love, but still fully connected to Fortitude is the Provider. The Provider does just that; he provides. Remember that the idea of Connection could be any entity of relationship; family, friends, community or even a gang. It doesn't matter what the entity is, providing is what the masculine is and does.

A provider produces, comes up with and distributes what is needed for any given need within the group that he has chosen to belong to. The first action of the provider is the choice with whom to spend his good, hard-earned commodities.

When we buy into culture's idea of what a man is, our perspective of work often becomes our identity, we are what we do. This externally referenced perspective is what most men see as their value in the world. A man is not a human being, who is, he is a "Human Doing" who does.

Roy Baumeister says it this way, "Across cultures and throughout time, people have one expectation of all men everywhere; that is that we produce more than we consume." The Prime Directive the world has for men is to be efficient and effective. A man has to get things done in the world to make sure everyone else is ok. Which is what I earlier called being the Utility, that is, keeping the machine going, usually in spite of his own well-being.

A wise man will take the time he needs to determine if any woman, mission or group is worth his hard work and self-sacrifice. If a woman is does not have good character, is unwilling to be held to account for her poor behavior or unwilling to respect a man for who he is, she would not be a wise choice to place your commitment to Provide.

Many externally referenced men have this unhealthy desire to rescue. They will unwittingly choose a single mother with a few kids to care for and provide since they have been abandoned. Some single moms are very good women, but the fact that they are in that situation is a huge red flag. Check your "need to rescue" quotient and consider at least three more times. Be wise with who you choose.

Your commodities are very valuable, don't spend them willy-nilly!

I have spoken at length in previous work how men lose themselves seeking external validation from an unhealthy woman only to experience a dead end of misery. Consider the ROI when choosing to place a lifetime commitment with any woman. Pay attention to red-flags, consider her character and choose according to what you really see not what you want.

The same would go for any place of business with shady dealings or any group that is not pursuing a path of strong ethic or purpose; that would not be a wise place to spend your valuable Commodity. Choose well.

While there are tons of words and concepts to describe what a Provider looks like, here are three of my most important aspects of a Provider.

Presence; Most men assume that the most valuable thing he can provide to his family is what comes from earning money; a certain standard of living, shelter, food, ballet lessons (etc.), opportunities, fun stuff, or just stuff in general. Most men just want their loved ones to experience a much better life than they had as a kid.

We will work hard and sacrifice personally to provide material goodness. We expect that is the expectation of us, to provide material stuff and good experience. While sometimes this is true if we have connected ourselves with a woman of low character, who thinks material things or a certain standard of living will bring her life, most family members long for a man to provide something else.

Presence is the most important thing to provide. You can ask anyone about their experience with their father, what was your greatest memory or what did you long for the most. It will never be the stuff he provided from working so hard. It will always be the time we went fishing, or when he read books to me, or I wished he would have spent more time with me.

Providing the essentials is essential for sure. But providing your being is most essential. YOU are the most important thing to provide to those you love. Your presence and just being there is prime and being there with intention is extraordinary. Knowing that you are absolutely important in the lives of those you love, helps you to create a great balance between your work and your presence.

As you grow in your capacities of presence; using your good voice, having positivity, engaging in play and adventure, attentiveness, setting boundaries and nurturing, you will begin to notice the how powerful your presence is in the lives of those around you.

Generous; A generous man is benevolent, a team player, brings essential needs, gives, advocates; is community oriented and makes a difference. He is kind-hearted, considerate and concerned for the well-being of others, especially those under his care. He takes care of needs and wants of those around him. He blesses others through his voice and thoughtful consideration.

This is where the choice of Commodities is lived out. For those I love and have chosen to commit to, I will generously give of all I have. I will be open and vulnerable with myself and my emotional heart. I will give of my time and freedom. I will engage in true and deep connection with good conversation and physical presence. I will be free with the goods I have earned and create good, fun, memorable experiences.

Most men are very generous, it is a deep part of our desire to provide. When there is a little appreciation, we will give of ourselves to the point of great personal sacrifice. All we need is consistent kindness, appreciation, enthusiastic sex and we are good to go. Throw in some consistent affection and most men are willing to give it all. Our hearts are not like Scrooge, we want everyone to thrive.

☞ **A man who provides is generous.**

Reliable; As a concept of providing, reliability is when the people I have chosen to commit my energy to, have someone who they can trust. They can trust you to be there, to give your best and to handle things when they need to be taken care of.

A reliable man makes sure he is physically healthy. His self-care is strong and intentional, so he is thriving himself. He does this, so he is able to increase the capacity of his strength to achieve his own goals and to be reliable for others.

He is a hard worker, resourceful, creates solutions, problem solves, fixes things and makes things work. He is competent and persistent. He leads, has vision, makes plans, and makes decisions. He has ownership of his life and family, he engages in partnership and makes you so glad he is on your team.

He creates environments of safety and security. He strategizes ways to make sure everyone in his sphere of influence is doing well. He observes and pays attention to his surroundings and the well-being of others. He has what it takes.

Your kid doesn't give a shit about how much money you make.

Like a muscle, providing is one of those things you can exercise so it grows big and strong. The more you build your career, the more capable you are of providing a better lifestyle. The more you build your ability to be present, the more your relationships will be healthy and strong. The more generous you are with yourself, the closer you will be to others.

Even if you are a single man, you will have the opportunity to give, provide and supply goodness to people around you. You have the opportunity to be on mission to change the world for good.

Other words to describe the Provider;

A Protector is also an advocate, skilled, capable, observant, loyal, committed, focus, self-care, on the move, influential, forward thinking, dependable, knows what needs to be done, count-on-able, makes you so glad he is on your team, physically healthy, hard worker, team player, resourceful, creates solutions, takes care of wants, leads, has vision, makes decisions, problem solves, fixes things, makes things work, competent, persistent, works hard, brings essential needs, nurtures, creates an environment of safety and security, ownership, partnership.

TLA

Each of the “Muscles” will have a TLA (**T**hree **L**etter **A**cronym) which gives an easy tool to remember the essence of what you will be developing with each particular Muscle. Hopefully this will help some of the content to be memorable.

The Provider TLA

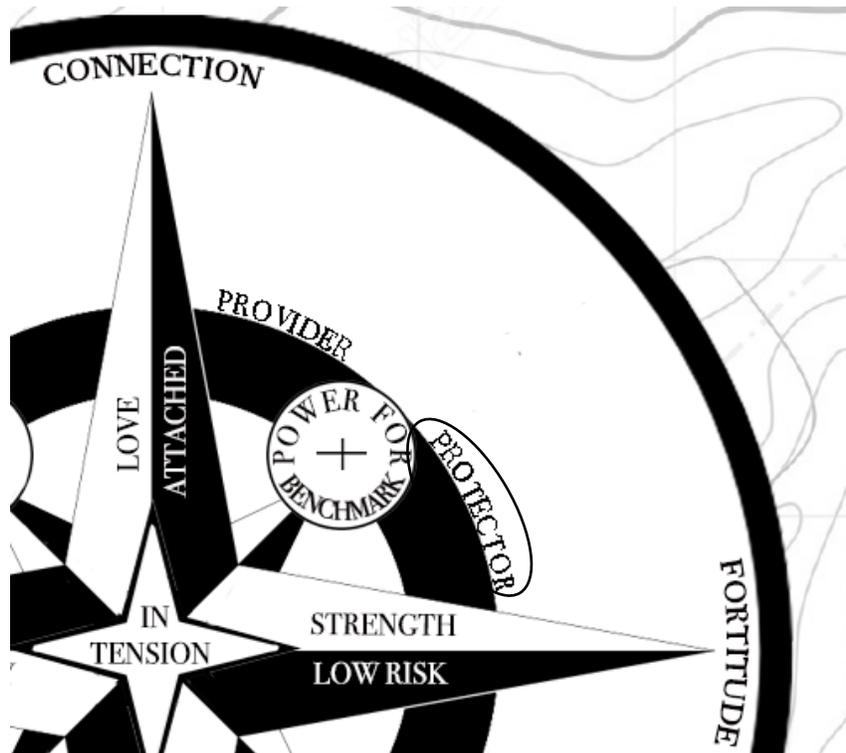
BYC = Build Your Capital

Building Your Capital is an ever-increasing ability to make money, increase influence, build relationships and to expand your “kingdom”. Do you remember how much you made per hour in your first job? I made 11 cents per tree yanking the new green growth (called suckers) from the inside of apple trees when I was 9 years old. Now I make a decent hourly wage as a therapist. My earning capacity has changed!

I have built my ability to make money over my life. I have earned two degrees, certifications and licenses to make that happen. I have gone through significant internships, supervision and training programs to build my skill. This provides us with the Power to make things happen in our own lives and in the lives of those we love. And with any person who would benefit from our generosity.

Our capital is also expressed in our influence and how we network or build the community around us. Having a strong network will provide some of the greatest help when you are in need or just a sense of connection and purpose. As a man of Power, Build Your Capital.

The Protector Muscle



The Protector Muscle

In the Power For quadrant and leaning toward the side of Fortitude and Strength, the Protector Muscle is what it says; it's there for Protection. Protection exists for the care, well-being, safety and security of all in the Protector's sphere of influence. This is where it is still infused with Connection. It is using Power For to protect those you love and have chosen to be under your care.

Just as with your Provider Muscle, choosing the people you will protect in your life is very important. You need to use your best wisdom since protecting may very well cost you your life. Your protection is no small thing. Since it may include placing not just your well-being, but your life on the line potentially, regard it with those deep implications.

☞ **The desire to be a Provider and a Protector is deep within a man.**

All these decisions must be made with extreme sobriety. Do not choose a woman who lacks character. Do not go out and just rescue anyone who will not regard your well-being and care for your heart. This a place of great foolishness for many men; choosing a woman who does not respect one of your greatest gifts; Protection.

Many men will choose a woman because she chooses you, because she likes you or because she is willing to have sex with you. This is just external validation for a man without a strong core, it feels good, but it is no reason to choose a woman.

Do not choose a woman who is unwilling to place herself under your care. This is part of the “submission” question in Christian circles. When it comes down to it, is your woman willing to submit to you? I am not talking about submitting to you as an authority who will tell her what to do. I am talking about she respects you and how she is also making an “all in” investment in your life together.

If a woman understands what being a Protector means, that you are willing to spend your Commodity with the ultimate price, then she will respect that in a way that shows she is willing to give fully in return as well. If a woman knows and respects this very significant gift, her posture will show it. If she doesn't respect this potential gift, don't give this type of woman the time of day. Find a woman who respects the fact that you are a Protector.

Comedian Bill Burr jokes that the idea that women make less than men is the way it should be. That there is a \$1 hourly surcharge paid to men since in any emergency situation men will be required to protect, give up their seat in the lifeboat or make sure women and children are first. He thinks because of this, it is only right men make more per hour than women!

In reality, men have no problem being the protectors. We see it in every emergency, every shooting, every flood, men give it up. Men cover others and take bullets. Men gather their fishing boats and come to the rescue. It is what men do, without even thinking about it. Protecting is in our being.

One of the clearest ideas about men protecting is from the story from *American Sniper* that describes three types of people: wolves, sheep, and sheepdogs. Wolves are strong predators, they prey on sheep and anything that is weak or helpless. Sheep are oblivious, naïve and weak; they can get eaten by the wolves. Sheepdogs are strong and reliable, and they protect the sheep against the wolves. The challenge of the story is, “What kind of man will you be, son?”

While there are tons of words and concepts to describe what a Protector looks like, here are three of my most important aspects of a Protector.

Vigilant; The Protector has his eyes open. He watches and is aware of surroundings. His vigilance is played out as there is just always something in the background of his mind, the commitment to make sure people are going to be safe under his watch.

Even though sometimes it is at the forefront of the mind, usually it is just under the surface, a passing thought about the nearest exit or a peculiar sound.

Being vigilant is a way of being; observing self, others and surroundings. His intuitive is his best indicator. The “spidey sense” will give him the most valuable and timely information.

Vigilance is securing the perimeter. It is making sure everything is ok in our home. Remember the idea of Fortitude being a ‘fort’? Securing the perimeter is having the fort secure. It is making sure everything is locked for the night. It is making sure the family is doing well.

While vigilance is surveillance and making sure of safety, it does not mean that there is no adventure. But while you are on an adventure with your kids camping or serving a meal downtown, you are on watch.

👉 **Vigilance is usually just staying out of a mess.**

One of the most difficult experiences for any man to process is when something happens under his watch. If a relative took advantage of one of his kids abusively or an accident happened during a fun event. These things happen, but when you didn’t see it coming, it crushes something deep. The call is just to do your best.

It is deep within us to protect the innocence of children. We are heart-broken about stories of people who suffer abuse. Allow these stories to create motivation to be vigilant in your world, but not to keep you from play and adventure.

Prepared; A protector is ready, and he has taken precautions to have a strong perimeter. Depending on your neighborhood, you’ll need to attend to your locks, windows and security. Is it wise to have firearms? What kind of protocol do we have with our police and fire house?

Am I ready physically? Am I out of shape? Many men prepare themselves by attending any type of martial arts class. Just about every strip mall has a hole-in-the-wall business with a class with Jiu Jitsu, Krav Maga, MMA, Karate, Boxing, Aikido, or other form of self-defense. Learning to handle yourself physically is a huge way to be prepared.

No one has any idea what may happen next in life. Being in good shape, knowing how to handle your body in a tussle, knowing how to navigate a conflict, just having a more confident posture is essential in being a Protector.

You may want to go through a concealed carry class, so you can legally carry a firearm with you wherever you go. Depending on your local laws and your own personal perspective, you can choose to do this or not. Regardless if you will carry or not, the class will provide some very valuable information to you.

There are classes on active shooter situations, how to handle conflict or how to keep your home safer. One of my favorite Bible ideas is the word “meek” from the phrase, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” This is the Greek work “praus”. It does mean gentle and humble, but also having great strength while being under control.

It is like a wild animal who is tame, but still holds its wild nature and ability to kill. It is being wild and fierce, but under control. I have heard it said that meek is one who has all the weapons but keeps them sheathed. It is keeping calm, even in the face of insults. Meek is not weak, but it is having great strength, and using that ferocity rarely, only when necessary, only when violence is the answer.

Consider how prepared you are, because a Protector is prepared.

Sacrifice; Sacrifice is the willingness to give something up for something else, usually with a loss. Ultimately, it is about value. It may be my time. I value what I gain by giving my time to my work, so I can get something I value; a standard of living or some freedom. Every sacrifice is an exchange of one value for another.

I will sacrifice my life to save someone I love. I have said it before that most men would take a bullet without thinking to protect their family. There are things that are priceless, and my life is a fair trade. Whether it is time, freedom or your life, a Protector is willing to make sacrifices necessary to keep people they love from harm.

Choice again is a primary category here. Have I placed myself around people of such quality and love that I would not even question making ongoing and one-time sacrifices? Have I been wise with deciding who I would spend my Commodities with? How could I build a very healthy group or family of people around me that I would give so much of my life for? Having deep connections creates some very deep meaning for men and that motivates the Protector.

Other words for Protector are;

A Protector is also described as intensity, aggressive, adversarial, defender, pathfinder, clears the way, a force to be reckoned with, trained well, willing to fight and wise not to, powerful, rescuer, deliverer, has your back, appropriately bad-ass, protects and begets innocence, force for good, fierce, spine, prepared to be violent, dangerous, risk-taking, bold, challenges, pursues, firm, defends the weak, seeks justice, fights for those who can't defend themselves, speaks against wrongs, ethic of justice, stands up, physical, mastery of physical being, intimidating, impenetrable, resilient, backbone, “not under my watch”.

Protector TLA

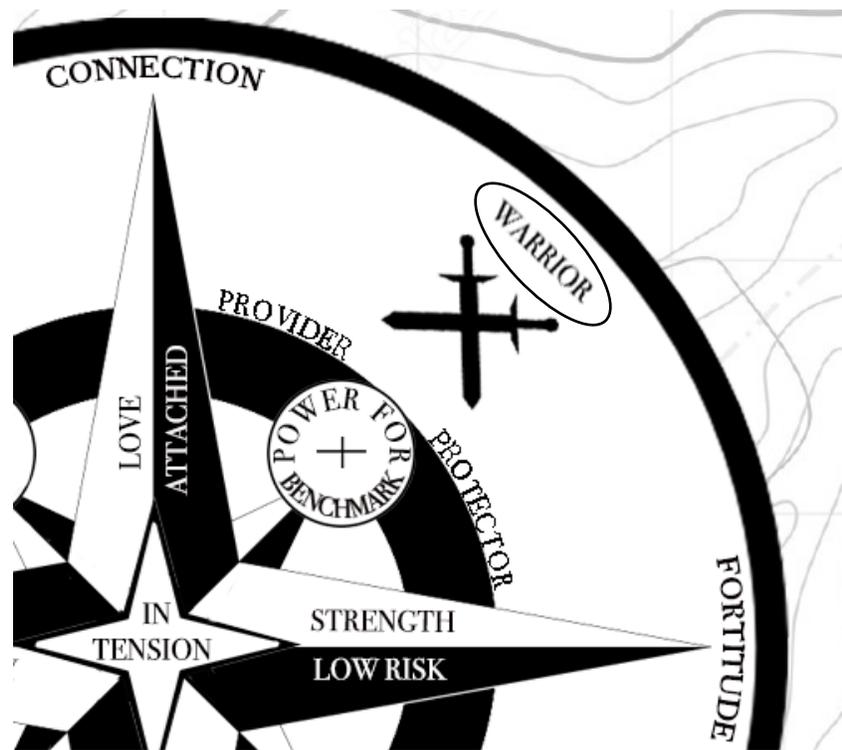
BYP = Build Your Power

As the Provider is on an ever-increasing quest to build his ability to build capital, the Protector desires to build his Power. This requires building a mind-set of vigilance, awareness, physicality, presence and even an understanding of violence. It is as though you will become your own Secret Service team for your family.

The Secret Service are the people called to protect important people like the president. They have training not just the ability to engage in physical altercation, but in the million ways to keep that from ever happening. They know how to see what is in the surroundings, what kind of postures people have, what seems suspicious, what looks normal. They intuitively know when to clear out before there is a need to engage.

How would you begin to build your ability to become your own Secret Service? What could you do to be confident if you had to engage, but more confident in knowing your surroundings and when to clear out to keep everyone you love safe? Intentionally make a plan to increase your abilities and awareness. There are books and classes made just for this. Remember this is about becoming the strongest, most powerful man you can be so that you can love others well. Empower yourself!

Archetype; The Warrior



The Warrior Archetype

I will be presenting a central archetype for each quadrant. An archetype is something that is seen as an original pattern or model from which other new patterns are made. It would be like a copy of an original. The original is the archetype.

An archetype is the thing that came first, whether it is an idea, a type of person or a prototype of a human characteristic upon which all other humans are based. Carl Jung considered archetypes as an unconscious idea or pattern of thought or behavior which are inherited, carried on through generations and universally present in individual psyches.

Jung called it the Collective Unconscious; the archetype is the part of the psyche that is common to every culture in every era of history and mankind. The archetype is a pattern of behavior that is grounded in biology as instinct and is manifested in our actions. An archetype has developed as certain representations of those patterns in our cultural and personal stories which bring to life ideas and categories of our humanness.

These archetypes become enlivened within people as they encounter various experiences. As when you watch or read any story which follows the “Hero’s Journey” categories. Books/movies like Star Wars, Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter or

Avatar all have elements which seem to awaken our hearts to something deeper and exciting. Our lives are just normal, but something is alive inside of us that is piqued when we hear a good story or engage in an adventure.

There are many archetypes that have been identified; The King, The Warrior, The Sage, The Magician, The Trickster, The Lover, The Cowboy, The Everyman, The Queen, The Great Mother, The Hero, The Beauty, The Innocent, The Explorer, The Martyr, The Outlaw, The Creator, The Jester and The Poet/Warrior are some of the most mentioned.

As there are many, for this exercise I will use four main archetypes which will fit nicely into our map of masculinity. For the Quadrant of Power For, the archetype is The Warrior.

The Warrior coincides with the idea of Power, Strength and Fortitude. It comes alive in the world as being a Provider and a Protector. As well, the Warrior is always connected to his people. He is just not fighting a battle because he is just conflictual or contrary, he is fighting for the well-being of his people.

The Warrior wages war against chaos and entropy. The battle is against what can be called the “Outer Dragon”. As things fall apart, he restores order, security and honor. This restoration requires a significant level of ferocity, aggression and intensity. In this category, his fight comes from without, not from within (that fight is in the next quadrant).

The Outer Dragon is a metaphor for all those things in life that bring harm, pain and chaos. We know we can never eliminate all threat, but the Warrior sets his heart to do the best he can for those he loves or for what he believes.

There are things in our world which destroy, steal and deceive. There are forces that thwart, there are those that are just malignant and there are those that are flat-out evil. The Warrior acknowledges that there is a battle to be fought in the physical realm, in the spiritual realm and in the realm of ideas. He engages to create safe and secure spaces for those he loves.

☞ Evil brings challenge, you are forced to bring forth what you couldn't bring forth if you didn't have an adversary. The greater the thing you are to bring forth, the greater the challenge. - Jordan B. Peterson

The Warrior follows the motto of Power For; “I will become the strongest, most powerful man that I can be, so that I can care for and love others well.” This idea that a sense of being a Warrior is deeply rooted within the soul of every man as an archetype is part of our challenge if we have never experienced opportunities to be a Warrior.

We know something resonates in us when we hear a good story of a Warrior, so we know something is in us. We are drawn to competitions that have aggression or intensity, like MMA, Football, Hockey or Boxing. Why else did Fight Club intrigue a generation of men? Something is in us, that thing is the archetype of the Warrior.

So, this question comes up, “Would you rather be safe or strong?” The Warrior in us wants to be strong, to create safe for others. The Warrior wants to “kill it” at work so he can provide greatly. The Warrior wants to live to a higher code of honor to protect his flock. He is prepared, vigilant and ready.

The Warrior is “Meek” -He has the sword, but he keeps it sheathed. He is not combative nor pugnacious, he will do all he can to keep from a fight, but the Warrior is willing and able to engage when and only if it is necessary.

He knows that once you do engage, safety goes out the window for everybody, someone is going to get hurt. He will do all he can to retreat or escape a potentially dangerous situation, with humility and grace. Being able to not get in the situation in the first place is the best move. In the immortal words of Lynyrd Skynyrd, “Gimme three steps.”, getting out of the situation is the next best move.

- ☞ **Best move = stay out of the situation.**
- ☞ **Next best move = get out of the situation.**

Getting down to business, is the worst and last move. When this happens, someone will get hurt and that is not a good option. Hopefully it will never get to that but be ready. Remember with your woman, safety is job one, so do your best to maintain safe environments.

Distortions of the Power For Quadrant

Every aspect of life seems to have a shadow or dark side. It is when any category of life lived out with immaturity or fear. We all have seen and experienced how power is abused. Here are three ways that this quadrant goes awry.

The first distortion is described as **“Power Over”** as a posture where strength is used to control, manipulate, intimidate and abuse. When the masculine is driven by fear or is attached to unhealthy outcomes, power is used in an abusive way “over” another person, which restricts their freedom, choice and personal power often resulting in violations and abuse.

Power Over is tyrannical; controlling and authoritarian. It is the corrupt politician, it is the playground bully, it is the controlling spouse and it is the manipulative boss. Each of these examples are based in fear and insecurity. People who take the Power Over posture are trying to control their environment to achieve something that will give them a sense of security or personal validation.

It is very difficult to navigate situations when people act this way. It feels as though all our power and freedom is gone. It is not, it just feels so. Our challenge is to commit that we will recognize it, stand up to it and never replicate it.

The second distortion is **“Powerlessness”** or a posture of chosen weakness or surrender. This posture occurs when masculine strength in essence is believed to be bad or even evil. Men will then choose to rebuke or repel any internal masculine strength that exists within in order to fit in, not cause harm or not be “that guy” who uses and abuses women.

The typical “Nice Guy” or SNAG (Sensitive New Age Guy) fits here. Many men are uncomfortable or even fearful of their own masculine strength. Even as you have read the previous pages you may have felt very uncomfortable as I outlined Fortitude and Power. Diminishing your strength is not healthy in any way. You’ve been designed to be a strong and powerful man, so take the challenge to grow in that even if it feels uncomfortable.

Often when men have a powerless posture, they move with passive aggressive or covert behavior. This is because they can’t be overtly strong or forceful since that would break some kind of unwritten code or rule. Any movement from a powerless position looks weak and unmanly. It is never attractive to anyone. It just doesn’t work well on any level.

Powerlessness is also seen as **“Unreliability”**. This is an aspect of the Provider Muscle. If a man lives in an “underfunctioning” way, that is he does not pull his own weight in any category, at home, work, on a team, or in a community. This often occurs when a man loses his heart or motivation because he has experienced some failure or received some input of unworthiness so he has chosen to give up.

A man who has chosen this path has lost hope that he will have any ability to exact change or to influence the world around him, he has taken on a “victim” posture. The loss of confidence will look like depression or sometimes abuse as he tries to make some kind of sense or reclaim some kind of power in a very unhealthy way.

These forms of the dark side of Power are deeply misinformed, quite immature and even repulsive to the true masculine soul. Take the time to begin to build Fortitude, Strength and Power For into your good heart.

Benchmark #1 Motto:

“I will become the strongest, most powerful man that I can be, so I can love others well.”

Concrete Steps to Gain Power For:

Responsibility

- ☞ **I am responsible for my life and I will engage in strong personal boundaries.**

Understanding your own power means that you understand that you have agency in your life. You have choice and you are not a victim to what life throws at you. You understand that life is a beautiful dance with difficulties and victories all wrapped up in a spectacular package of growth and passion. As you grow in power, agency and responsibility you will begin to join the movements of how your Masculinity has been designed to influence in ways you never imagined. It will become fun.

Boundaries are lines, one side is ok or preferred behavior and the other side is not ok. It is very important to have good boundaries in your life. Speak up when you need to say no. Hold people accountable to treat you well, especially your woman. Stand up when you see evil or when things are not right. Make your presence known.

Self-Care

- ☞ **To maintain personal strength, I must engage in intentional and consistent self-care.**

Taking care of yourself is one of the most important things you can do to keep your power growing. Get in shape, get the sleep you need, eat well. Get in to see your doc. Your check-ups with a doctor is a very vulnerable experience, you don't know what he is going to say. He may say you're good to go and keep up the good work, or he may have concerns about a possible cancerous lump. Get your butt in there.

Taking care of your body is huge, but care for everything else as well; your spiritual well-being and your relationships. Keep your spiritual heart alive and connected to your Source. Mend broken relationships and build your primary relationship. You'll be surprised how these parts of life help build your overall strength and influence.

Balance

- ☞ **Keeping a good balance in life will help me hold my power.**

Be diligent to have margin and a good pace. Keep a good balance between Heart and Spine, be open yet keep your strength. Being the strongest most powerful man, you can be is exhilarating, and the balance is to use that strength for good, for the benefit of yourself and others. The balance between all the Cornerstones requires that you live in that tension.

Character Comparison

I will compare a few characters that most of us know to see how each quadrant of masculinity is lived out. I am using two from history (Jesus and William Wallace, *Braveheart*) and two from stories that are valuable to most men (Maximus from *Gladiator* and Aragorn from *Lord of the Rings*). If you haven't seen these three movies, it may be a good idea. First here is a basic into.

Jesus

I have chosen to use Jesus in this comparison because he is the most influential person in history. Whether you follow him or not, he has much to add to our understanding of what a man is. He is often maligned for not being masculine enough, I disagree as you will see, so I have chosen him be one of our primary characters to compare since he is seen as the savior of the world by many.

Maximus

Maximus Decimus Meridius is the main character in the movie *Gladiator*. He is a general in Marcus Aurelius' army and a very probable heir to become emperor since he has Marcus Aurelius' blessing. But through deceit and cunning, Commodus kills Marcus Aurelius, Maximus' wife and son, send Maximus into slavery and claims the throne for himself. Then the story gets good.

William Wallace

I'm going to use the movie *Braveheart* for my "historical" account since most of us know this particular story of William Wallace. Even though much liberty was taken for the movie, it will serve our purposes well. The real story of William Wallace was very different than the movie, but we will go ahead and use the movie character as a representative for this masculine character comparison.

Aragorn

Aragorn is first introduced in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy as Strider, a ranger of the north, a seemingly nobody. But as we find out as the story unfolds, he is not just a homeless wanderer, but the rightful heir to Gondor and Arnor.

He is a great example for us since what we know about him changes throughout the story, but he never really does.

Jesus; The kind of Power that Jesus wields seems to be entirely for others. How he lives and how he dies is expressed in a type of Power the world rarely sees. I think this is why he is such an intriguing person for so many. He is powerful as he had command of 12 legions of angels (Matthew 26:53). A legion is between five and seven thousand Roman soldiers. But he chose not to use his 84,000 angels to destroy and dominate because his purpose was to show a different way to use Power, it was Power For.

As far as the muscles, he is a Provider in that he has provided the most significant gift one could have, forgiveness and a relationship with God which is eternal life. Kind of a big deal. Even though it seems he allows rough things to happen to people, he is the Protector as one who ultimately guards your soul. Because his type of protection is different than outlined in the quadrant, he scores in the middle on this one.

Much about Jesus is different than the world expects, he came as a “lamb” this first time but will come as a “lion” his second time. So, living out the archetype of Warrior, is there. He was a Warrior for the soul initially and a Warrior for justice the next. That does sound badass enough for me. Highest marks for Jesus in the Power For quadrant.

Maximus; Everything about Maximus is Strong, he is literally a Warrior. He also is a general and commander of legions, not angels, but Roman soldiers. He knows power and uses it to dominate for Rome. To him Rome is the highest ideal and uses what is at his hand to advance Rome. Initially his Power is “over” but as the movie progresses you see this shift to equipping and leading the other gladiators into victory; Power For them, Power Over his opponents.

He has Provided well for his wife and son (until Commodus does his evil). The hand brushing wheat scene is evidence of how he has provided abundantly for them. The scene of him doing all he can to get to his villa shows his heart of Protector. In this heart rendering scene, he arrives just hours too late.

Maximus scores very high as a Warrior, as a Provider and as a Protector. He is a powerful man and I give him less credit since as a Roman he uses Power Over, I give him kudos since as a husband/father, leader of men and friend he is very much Power For.

William Wallace; It seems that William Wallace would have been quite satisfied living in peaceful times, as it was so while he was a child. But they had to go and kill his girl. True or not, it makes a good story as William then rises up to rally his

countrymen to stand. And then provokes a battle. So, he proves well his ability to fight. He is a Warrior and a leader. Not so much is in the story about being a Provider or even a Protector as he, like Maximus could not protect the ones he loved.

While his Power in battle is Over, his Power is For his homeland. This seems different from Maximus as a Roman as it is protecting his people from the aggressive, dominating Longshanks. Wallace scores high as a Warrior, not so much as Provider and Protector and his Power is more on the side of Power For, good job William!

Aragorn; Aragorn as Strider was entirely a Protector. It was his job to protect the Hobbits, not just on the quest, but the rangers protected the Shire where the Hobbits lived. He protects throughout the story. As a Provider, not so much is told, he seems to be very generous, which is good.

He proves to be a great Warrior as well. He fights for justice, what is right, against evil and never seems to give up. He is a great Power For example. His personal Power, the Power he builds with his teams of warriors and the Power he has in the end, is all Power For the goodness in the world. Aragorn gets high marks in this quadrant.

Others; There are tons of people who have wielded their Power Over; Hitler, Genghis Khan and innumerable warlords or bullies throughout history. There are men who don't have a strong presence or the ability to protect, men who you wouldn't want on your side like Ross from *Friends*, Al Bundy or pretty much any character played by Will Ferrell. These are not men who you would choose to stand alongside you when things get tough.

Group Reflection Questions; Quadrant One – Power For

The first quadrant was found between the low-risk side of Fortitude and the attached side of Connection. It is about how we are to become the most powerful man that we can be because our Power is designed to be lived out for ourselves and others. The Motto is “I will become the strongest, most powerful man that I can be, so I can love others well.” The Power For quadrant has the Muscles of Provider and Protector. It is built by developing the TLA's Build Your Capital (BYC) and Build Your Power (BYP). And it is lived out with the Archetype of the Warrior.

The Power For Motto is “I will become the strongest, most powerful man that I can be, so I can love others well.” This is about becoming a very empowered man. What comes to mind or how do you feel about using your energy and focus to become a very strong man?

The idea of using your Power For others rather than Over others is essential to living in mature Masculinity. In what ways have you experienced both of these forms of Power? What was it like and how did you respond?

What could you do to empower yourself?

The Provider is called to “Build Your Capital”, what have you done or what could you begin to do to gain more strength in your ability to earn or influence?

In what ways have you become more generous, or how is this a struggle for you?

The Protector is called to “Build Your Power”, to become one who can secure the perimeter, protect those he loves and develop a posture of vigilance while creating safe environments. How does this describe you? What things could you do to grow in this area?

Over the years how have you developed the ability and awareness to create and hold space for safety and security? How have you not done so well?

What do you think or feel when considering yourself as a Warrior? Are you ready? Are you aware of the evil and malignant aspects of our world? What has prepared you to be prepared for this battle?

Which of our comparison examples seem to resonate with you? Who have you looked up to in your life as one who has engaged well in the battle?

Take a look at your answers. What stands out to you?

Which of these concepts seem to be areas which need some work?

For each of those you listed, think of three things you could do to become more confident with that concept. *For instance, if you are not very good at Protecting, you could; hire a trainer to get in better physical shape, read the book by Tim Larkin, When Violence is the Answer, take a self-defense class, talk to your woman about the ways she needs with safety and security, take a concealed carry class, engage in some kind of forum about school safety in your community...*

1.

2.

3.

What other thoughts do you have about this lesson?