

SOLID MAN

strong · present · confident

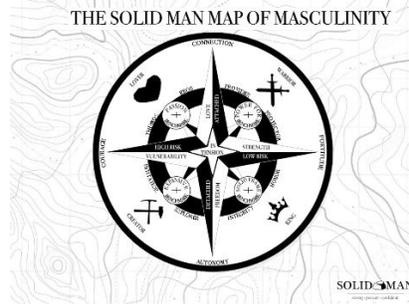
Solid Man Integrity Group Lesson 23

Pillar Four

Mastering Your Masculinity - Part Seven

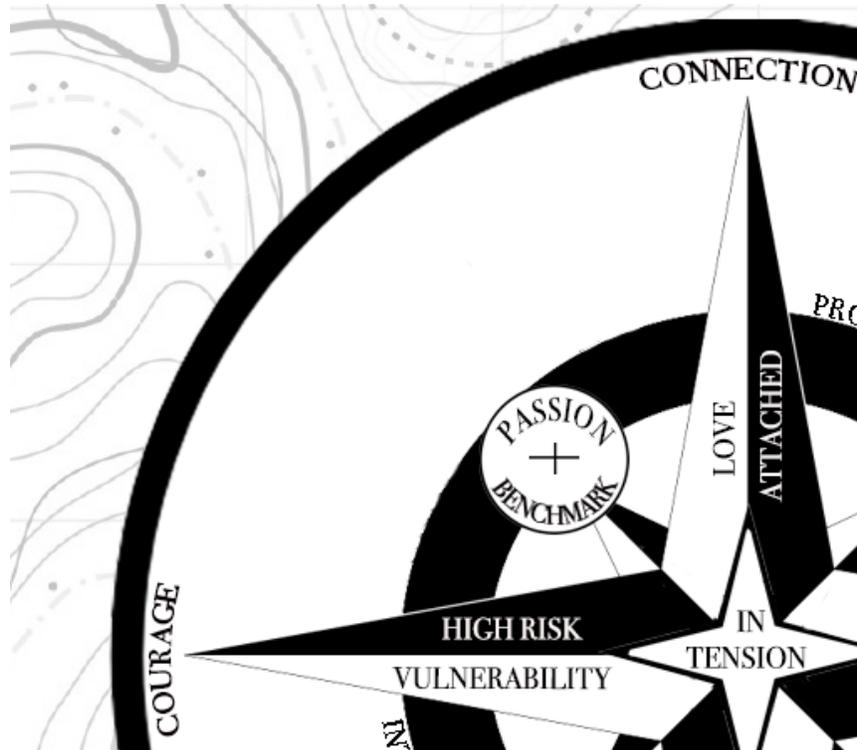
Benchmark Three; Passion

23



Quadrant Four - Passion

We are now on our last quadrant. From the individual or autonomy hemisphere, we are moving up into the relational hemisphere, so this quadrant brings us back into our interactions with others. We remain is the High-Risk side of life where Vulnerability, danger and discomfort exist. This is the corner where Courage meets Connection.



The Passion Benchmark

The word that represents this quadrant is Passion.

The concept of Passion is deeper than what it seems, so it takes some explanation. When you hear the word Passion, you probably think of love, desire, romance, lust or sexuality. These are absolutely concepts of Passion, however there is so much more.

Like so many concepts, think of Passion as a coin with two sides. The first side is desire and the second side is emptiness or suffering.

The desire side of Passion is ruled by the instinctive parts of our system; heart, intuitive, emotional, gut. As we move through life, we accumulate things we desire that are not from choice or necessarily from our conscious awareness. For instance, we may be attracted to blondes or brunettes, not out of choice, but just because. This is true of all the millions of other things we may desire; breasts v. butts, Ford v. Chevy, peace v. adrenaline, etc. At times desire comes from unexplainable places.

Passion is desire, and desire at its core is wanting. Desire as a concept requires not having something. If you had that thing you would no longer desire or long for it because it is now in your possession. So, Passion as desire is wanting or longing for some thing.

Since I want something, I don't have that thing and so as my want and desire increase, it becomes Passion; where my energy, focus and intent are increasing toward that which I don't have (desire). The big question here is "What do you want?" So many people go through life more concerned with what everybody else wants, or what will make them happy – with me. To ask, "What do I want?" is selfish, therefore it is not ok to desire. This is wrong.

The masculine man knows what he wants and pursues that. You may not achieve what you desire, that's not the point. The point is allowing yourself to live with desire, with the wanting. Remember just because you desire something does not mean it needs to be or will be fulfilled. Living with desire is where Passion comes alive. Passion is defined by desire, not necessarily the fulfillment of the desire.

Which brings us to the other side of the coin, Passion is emptiness or embracing sacrifice or embracing not having something. We usually do everything we can to fill or fulfill all of our desires without even thinking about it. The emptiness aspects of Passion require that we are attentive to our desire and aware of our experience of wanting. We are required to allow our conscious to enter the game and become attentive and aware of what we actually desire. Our maturity and self-discipline in the realm of Passion is borne from emptiness.

Emptiness is having serenity and peace in a state of not having something, yet not having to fill any emptiness or void. Embracing emptiness is intentional self-sacrifice from a place of strength for the good of others [love]. Passion requires that you embrace the fears and anxieties of life, not escape from them or numb them out. So often when men experience emptiness or tension, they will turn to their drug of choice to feel better. This is an escape from feeling empty and not experiencing the fullness of Passion, you'll never feel much Passion about life at all.

☞ **We will often turn to any “Drug of Choice” to escape emptiness.**

Purposefully pursuing the emptiness of Passion is a brilliant movement which truly clarifies the desires of a man. You may have been pursuing what you want, which is good. Now as emptiness is experienced a man is able to consciously decide “Is this what I **really** want?” This is about clarity. Embracing the tension that emptiness brings helps you to determine what is of true value to you in your life, what you spend your limited energy and Passion on attaining what has real meaning to you.

The challenge to embrace emptiness and desire at the same time, will allow you to experience the fulness of deep living. Your life will become more alive, purposeful and full. The emotions you stuffed, the empathy you set aside and the love you want will come back deeply. To some this is a daunting excursion and takes Courage, that’s Passion.

So, on one hand Passion creates a posture of excitement and drive where a man energetically pursues that which he desires. And on the other hand, he is able to rest in the tension of not having that which he desires (emptiness). He does not have to possess or own anything to experience wholeness and contentment in life.

Healthy Passion is experienced in a beautiful balance between drive and desire with suffering and emptiness. Unhealthy Passion is a compulsive drive to possess, which is addiction. Unhealthy Passion will have nothing to do with emptiness, it must have what ever it is that it desires. Healthy Passion can rest in the desire of not having.

☞ **Passion = the balance of desire and emptiness.**

This is difficult for men who have turned away from desire. It may be that you have been taught that desire is sinful, or at least some of the things you desire are sinful, like the shape of a woman’s body or the sexual energy that is described as feeling horny. So, you have spent much of your life pushing desires down and seeing yourself as defective. So many men question their God-given sex drive.

You may have been rejected or abandoned, so desiring to be in a close relationship puts you in a position that feels very dangerous, as if life really is at stake. Your desire for intimacy forces you to move into the emptiest place of your life. Because it feels dangerous you will then just hold back.

Living with Passion is no small endeavor. Consider one of the most significant stories which uses the word Passion; The Passion of the Christ. Most people are puzzled by the fact that the term “Passion” is used for this story. For us, men who are wanting to live to the fulness of Masculinity, it makes sense. It is the perfect example of what it would mean to experience Passion in every sense of the word.

Christ is a once moving with the deep desire and love for humanity while experiencing one of the most grueling deaths mankind has devised. The desire for the well-being and relationship for people is driving his willingness to allow himself to be crucified. It is Passion as both desire and emptiness are at play simultaneously.

This sacrifice as Passion is a willingness to place yourself in suffering or harm's way for others. This is not a self-harm or suicidal mentality, but an attitude of fearless courage for the well-being of those you love. A man could only do this if he has somewhat settled the specter of death that floats around our lives. This man can choose to give his life as sacrifice, whether that is losing his life in full by taking a bullet or choosing to use his time to help his kid with homework rather than watching the ball game.

This is where the two Cornerstones are interacting as well. The desire for Connection is the driver and the movement is one of Courage and Vulnerability. Christ spends his greatest Commodity for the souls of all humans. In this extremely vulnerable action he commits one of the most powerful acts in human history. This is Passion.

Whereas the story of Jesus is powerful and even extreme, how would any regular man live a life of Passion? What would this look like? Using the language of the Map of Masculinity, a man of Passion would live with Courage as he seeks Connection.

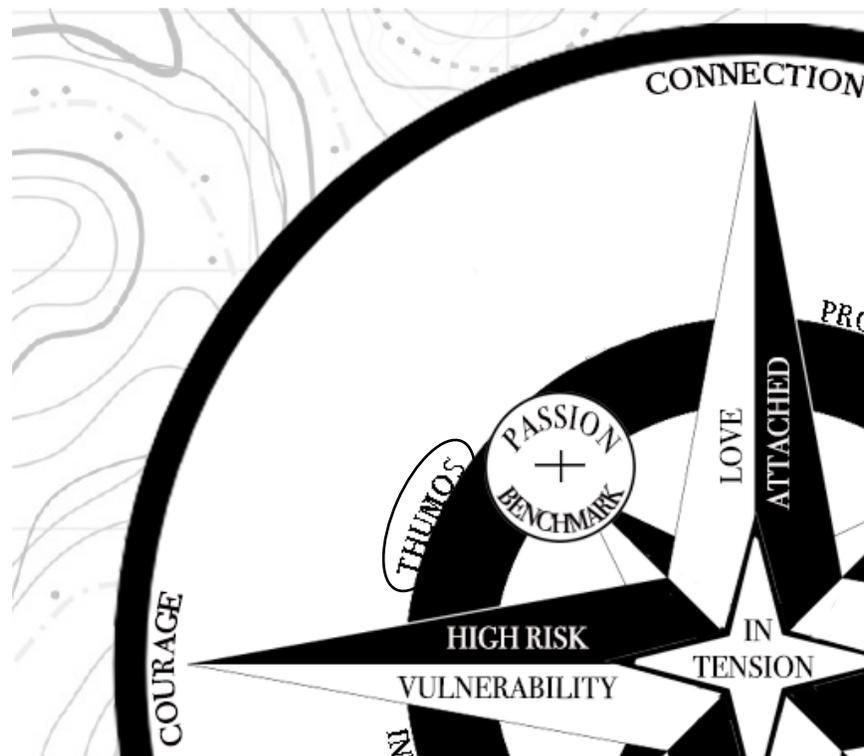
The man of Passion would fearlessly be whole-hearted, open and engaged in all he does; relationships, adventure, play, work, and calling. He pursues what he desires, but is ok if he does not obtain it.

The man of Passion would seek connection, intimacy and restoration of relationships. True, he is limited with only having so much bandwidth in relationships, but those he has committed to, he does in full.

Other Words that Describe Passionate: embraces emptiness, gives, loves, cares, makes personal sacrifices, listens, sees, cherishes, speaks, blesses, pays attention to self and others, vulnerable, open, empathetic, compassionate, attentive, knows his emotions and feelings, redemptive, patient, committed, faithful, supports, gracious, graceful, thankful, content, reliable, pursues and is settled.

The two Muscles of the passion Quadrant will give more meat to the idea of what it means to live with Passion, so let's take a look at those Muscles; Thumos and Eros.

The Thumos Muscle



The Thumos Muscle

In the Passion quadrant and leaning toward the cornerstone of Courage and Vulnerability is the Thumos Muscle. Thumos is in the top hemisphere that has to do with Relationship but leans toward the Courage Cornerstone. This means that while Thumos predominantly has to do with a man of Courage and Vulnerability, he does much of his work in the realm of connection and relationships.

The ancient Greek philosophers spoke of Thumos as a life-force found in certain things, like a spirited stallion or a spirited debate. Here, I am using the word Thumos to define that aspect of a man that is spirited, vigorous and full of vitality. It is a strong sense of enthusiasm about life.

Thumos describes a man who lives with a whole heart being present and aware and open with all he does. Since this part of the quadrant leans toward Courage, it is more to do with a man's posture in life, that he is open and courageous as he moves into life.

Philosopher Allan Bloom called Thumos "the central natural passion in men's souls." As a driving and energizing force, Thumos is a powerful aspect of a man's presence in his own life. Consider men from history or from your own life who have this strong presence. They seem to be a little bigger than life and you know they are in the room.

In his book *The Abolition of Man*, C.S. Lewis said, “In a sort of ghastly simplicity we remove the organ and demand the function. We make men without chests and expect of them virtue and enterprise. We laugh at honour and are shocked to find traitors in our midst. We castrate and bid the geldings be fruitful.”

Men with “chests” have Thumos. Men with virtue and enterprise have Thumos. Unfortunately, something that our culture has achieved, rather successfully, is to have created men who are void of Thumos. Removing Thumos is the equivalent of castration, yet the double standard exists that the culture still would say, “Man up!”

It is only through revitalizing the presence of Thumos will we ever be able to really live as men, as we have been designed. The “organ” that has been removed is our heart, our vitality, our Thumos. Even though we have been cut off from this important part of our Masculinity, it can be reclaimed. We must begin to exercise the Muscle of Thumos.

Brett McKay from *The Art of Manliness* says it this way, “Yet in our modern day, instead of helping men to harness their thumos for positive ends, society has decided it is better to neuter the force altogether. To protect some people from getting hurt, we’ve tried to breed it out of men, even if it means its positive effects will be sacrificed along with the negative. It is like getting rid of electricity, and all the benefits that have come with it, because some people get electrocuted.”

Thumos comes alive when you are aroused, moved, and emotional. Thumos is when you are responsive to beauty, truth, goodness and justice. It is righteous indignation and it is a sweet, gentle touch. It is excitement at the start of an adventure and it is eye contact during a job interview. It is being moved to tears at a good friend’s funeral and it is the awe you experience when you see a beautiful sunset or a beautiful ballet.

Thumos is the driver that makes us get up to do something and stand up for something. It is a motivator and an instigator. It is a deep internal aliveness that pushes us toward adventure, love and engagement. It is the drive into purpose and discovering why the hell you are on this planet. You will find your purpose if you live with Thumos. Thumos will come alive in your soul and your passion and purpose will become clear.

A man with Thumos will create an environment of safety but also tension. He will “hold space” with whatever energy is in the room. He is able to be present and remain present in whatever situation he is in. People know him as engaging since he will interact with intent with those around him. Sure, he may be an introvert, but he is engaged with life and people.

When it is called for, he will stand firm and rise up. He is ready and prepared because he is aware of what is going on. He holds fast to all he sees as dear to him and is willing to speak up when necessary.

The Muscle of Thumos is as necessary as the rest of the Muscles, but some men have a tough time exercising this one. Just like the Cornerstones of the quadrant suggest it requires Courage and Connection. Thumos is totally connected with life and it takes tons of Courage to live with that kind of Passion.

Words that describe Thumos are;

Vitality; Vitality is a word that says a man is full of life. He has liveliness and is highly spirited. He is described as energetic and alive. He is engaged and interactive with people and with experience. He just enjoys life and is very present.

A man with vitality is expressive with his words and actions, not being overly verbose or talkative, but also listening and being curious. He is not so concerned with his own business, but he is engaged with the world where he wants to experience it all. This is the classic “sucking the marrow” out of life motif. He is very alive.

Driven; A man with Thumos has an internal drive and motivation. He gets things done. His motivation comes from the depth of his purpose and desires. He knows what he wants, and he moves to make that happen. It could be work or it could be relationship, regardless of the context, he is active to make it so.

Temperance/Discipline; As Passion has two sides, so does Thumos. As much as a man is full of drive, he is also aware of not having or sacrifice. He is able to withhold, wait or go without. This is temperance, choosing to not have something, when you want it. At times a man of Thumos will live in simplicity or without many things. He will choose to be stoic in nature. He will seek the building of his endurance with discipline and work. He does this with choice and Passion.

Fearless/Settled; This seems very paradoxical, but he lives life in a “Today is a good day to die” way. The big questions of life are fairly settled. No man can know fully what will come when we die, but a man with Thumos embraces death with dignity. He has settled that he will die and made provisions for that as he has seen fit.

Having settled the ultimate question, he can now live fully with fearlessness or Courage in all he does. This is a huge part of Thumos. He can pursue all he wants to with fullness and depth, with Vulnerability and openness, with all of his heart.

Other Words that Describe Thumos;

Thumos is also sturdiness, toughness, [hardiness](#), [strength](#), spiritedness, internal urge, conscious, aware, creates, builds, motivated, ownership, responsible, vision, reliable, count-on-able, , honor and purpose, self-discipline, endurance, intentional, purposeful, not filling the void, purposeful, aware of the sacred, unfinished, unknowing, embrace mystery, doesn't have to control, lives in tension, anchored, influential, fully alive.

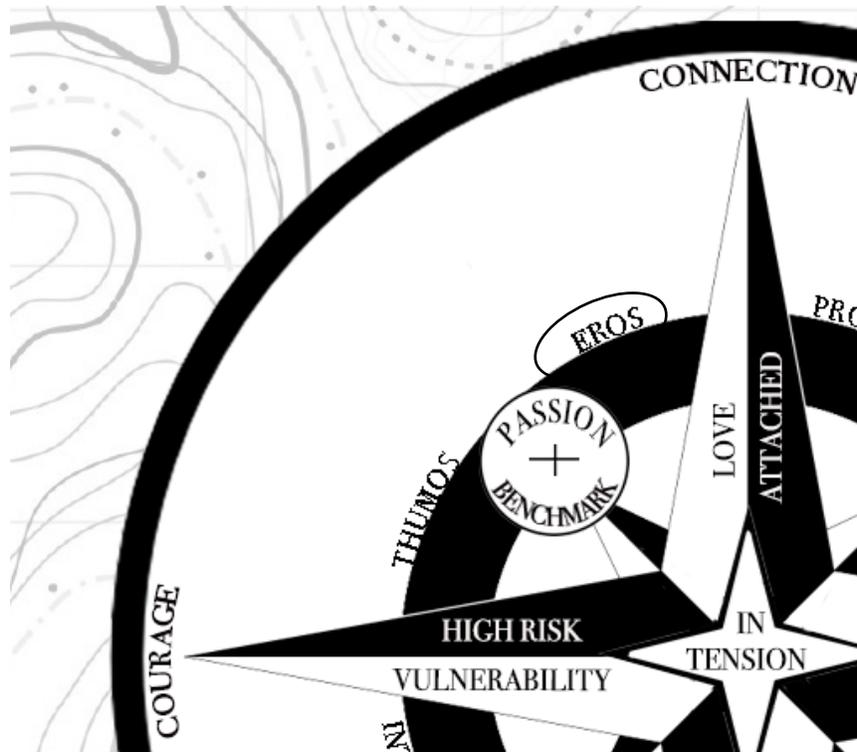
The Thumos TLA

LWH = Live Whole Hearted

The man with Thumos lives with a whole heart. This means his heart is open to all that life has, profound and difficult. He embraces life and love, as well as discipline and grief. He is as integrated with as much of his internal resources as possible, open and aware of his deep internal workings. He is as connected to experiences, community and family to the fullest degree he is capable.

Whole Hearted living is the mark of a man with Thumos. He is connected to life and lives life to the fullest by opening his heart to what life brings. He seeks thriving and abundance for himself and all who join with him.

The Eros Muscle



The Muscle of Eros

In the Passion quadrant and leaning toward the cornerstone of Connection and Love is the Eros Muscle. Eros is in the top hemisphere that has to do with Relationship and is involved with the aspects of life that are about Love, Connection and Attachment. This means that while Eros predominantly has to do with the realm of Connection and Relationships he still is involved with Courage and Vulnerability.

Eros is a Greek word that is one of the four Greek words found in the Bible that define Love. *Storge* is the family bond type of Love. *Phileo* is a friendship connection as in “*philadelphia*” or “brotherly love”, *phileo* is love and *delphos* is brother. *Agape* is the type of Love that is unconditional, sacrificial and pure.

Eros represents the sexual, sensual, romantic, passionate Love of desire and physical attraction. I am using it here in the Passion Quadrant as the word describing the masculine Muscle which is very connected in relationship and very open with Courage and Vulnerability. A man who lives strong with the Muscle of Eros is living a life that is Passionate (desire and sacrifice), open and connected. It is about sexual arousal and so much more.

☞ **Eros is life energy that comes out of us to create life.**

Whereas the Thumos muscle is in a man's passion for life and living full, Eros is a man's passion for connection, intimacy and relationship. A significant aspect of being human is the fact that life is the inescapable context of relationships. We cannot escape this. For a human, relationships are similar to the air we breathe in that it we are bathed in it every moment, we need it to keep living well and often we are oblivious to our interactions with it.

Since we are engaged in relationships on a daily, even hourly basis, if we are going to live well and with intention, we must become aware of our interactions, our own necessity for relationships and the ways in which we do relationships in healthy and unhealthy ways. Considering the Muscle of Eros will help to make things clear.

As the word Eros is usually used for our sexuality and romantic interactions, I am using about general relationships as well. It would be the drive for building a strong family, it is about building your Mt. Rushmore with the men you want to have in your life, it is building any relationship that has deeper and stronger bonds than the normal interactions you have on a daily basis.

Your relationships with your children and members of your family of origin are these close relationships that you will pursue and develop as you embrace the Muscle of Eros. The passion a man has for his children is a beautiful example of this muscle at play. Be passionate and engaged with your kids, it is one of the most beautiful expressions of our Masculinity.

Jack Donovan speaks of building your tribe or gang of men. Men who will be with you in thick and thin. Men that have proven themselves as those who will have your back when things get bad. This is your Band of Brothers, men who are with you in life. This has nothing to do with romance or sex, but it has everything to do with passion and brotherhood. It is a deep sense of love. It is the "*phileo*" love, but I am also speaking that there is a more passionate aspect to it as well. Every man must build his tribe.

This may seem odd, but this is where you would develop closeness in an intimate relationship with God, or your Source, however you see things. Many men desire to develop a deep relationship with their creator and this relationship intimacy is expressed in the realm of Eros. It is deeply intimate and passionate, not as lovers or in any form of sexuality, but it is close, intimate and anchored.

But mostly, the Muscle of Eros is reserved for your relationship with your woman. She is the one who will receive your focus, desire and commitment like no other. This is not putting her on a pedestal as a goddess but reserving your energy and passion for

her above other women. There is something deeply sacred within a marriage, so pursuing and penetrating your woman's heart, soul and body is divine.

Eros allows you to be known, to be seen for who you really are. You are able to know and to see the other as well. This deep soul-level intimacy is the essence of Eros.

☞ **Love is the PRIME virtue.**

Remember the main idea of the word Eros is about love. Love has always been the highest virtue in our world. Love is the Prime virtue. Of all the virtues I have been presenting, love, either Thumos and the zest for life or Eros and the passion for connection and relationship, brings depth and fulness into our lives like nothing else.

☞ **Love brings life like nothing else.**

What I am saying is that a strong, driven, passionate, and engaged Masculinity is what the Muscle of Eros is all about. Here are some words that describe Eros more fully.

Vigor: A man who expresses Eros is alive. His movements, intentions and behaviors are full of energy and vitality. There is a fervor in his steps and choices. This may sound like he moves impulsively, it is not, he moves with life and passion. Not sure how else to say it, his life is full of life. That's what vigor is.

Engaged: The man of Eros is engaged. He has entered into relationships with a connectedness and openness. He is aware of the deep value of connectedness and therefore moves into relationships with intent and clarity. Even though they are often a space of the sacred, relationships become a place of play as well. He is able to remain in rest in the deep moments of gravity and also teasing in lighter moments of laughter and ease. He is engaged.

Sexual: Eros is a very sexy aspect of living. Engaging in Eros fully means that a man has processed his shame around his sexuality. Many of us have a sense that sexuality is dirty or wrong, that our drive or desire for sex reveals something is deeply broken or wrong within me. To become a man who is free, you must overcome this bondage.

A man's sexuality is one of his most profound arenas of influence as well as his enjoyment of life. Sex covers the full display of human living from physical pleasure to emotional connection to transcendent worship. It is a beautiful thing that adds so much to the gift of life.

Desire: Having a strong feeling of wanting something or for something to happen is desire. Wanting is desire. Many men have either forgotten their desires, lost permission to want or have pushed aside their desires as if their desires are bad. Desire might be seen as selfish or sinful, therefore must be disregarded.

This is a huge pitfall, if you lose your desire you lose your ability to want. When you lose your wants, you lose the ability to choose or lead your own life in freedom.

Desire and Eros are so intertwined. Eros is wanting something, whether that is sex or connection or fulfilling purpose. The roots of desire are deep within one's heart and soul. It is true that sometimes we might want something in an impulsive or foolish way, but that says more about how we choose rather than what we desire or what we most desire. For instance, I may desire to have sex with random women, but my greater desire is to have a strong marriage, so I choose my path with one woman.

☞ **Desire is good, wanting is good.**

Pursuit: Going after the things we desire is significant as well. Sitting passively is not how Masculinity is lived out. Passivity and procrastination are the opposite of pursuit. Pursuing what you want and either making it happen or reaching out and getting it, is masculine.

Most women want to be pursued. It means that you care, that you think she is attractive, that you are aroused by her, that she is beautiful, that she impacts your life. She wants to know she rocks your world. She will test you and push back, that's part of the pursuit, she wants to know that you have resolve and will keep up the pursuit. It is play, it is flirting, it is tension. Pursuit is Eros in action.

Sacrifice: The other side of the coin of Passion was the pain that comes from loving and being connected. The more connection and love you feel, the more pain you may experience. Let's say you become very attached to your woman after years of open conversation, deep and meaningful love-making, building a family and pursuing dreams. You are attached. But as life has it, someone will die.

☞ **The more you open yourself up to love, the more pain you will feel.**

Since someone will die, either you or her, someone will feel the most intense loss imaginable. Not only will you make sacrifices to work hard or go without things periodically, you will experience grief. I think I am saying the same thing as Buddhism that attachment is suffering. However, with a different angle, I am saying living with Eros means that you will choose to attach deeply and therefore choose to suffer deeply. Eros, like Passion, is suffering as well, however it is suffering with deep meaning and intent.

Other words that Describe Eros;

Eros can also be seen as lover, aroused, desire, connecting, attentive, seductive, flirty, robustness, [health](#), horniness, intensity, focus, potent, gusto, hard-on, hardiness, stamina, play, fun, energizing, laughter, caring, heart, restlessness, alive, openness,

empathetic, passionate, compassionate, attentive, knows and values emotions and feelings, liveliness, energetic, survivor, aware of and healed from wounds, longing, pursuit, appetite, motivated, generous, wants, undone, serenity in want, surrender, suffering, vulnerability, cherishing, delighting, blessing, open, embracing not having and being ok with it because there is a true Source of life, embraces purposeful emptiness , committed, faithful.

The Eros TLA

PIP= Pursue Intimacy Passionately

The man with Eros pursues intimacy with Passion. He goes after (pursue) closeness and connection (intimacy) with intention and courage (passionately). Eros is a driver of deep meaningful connection.

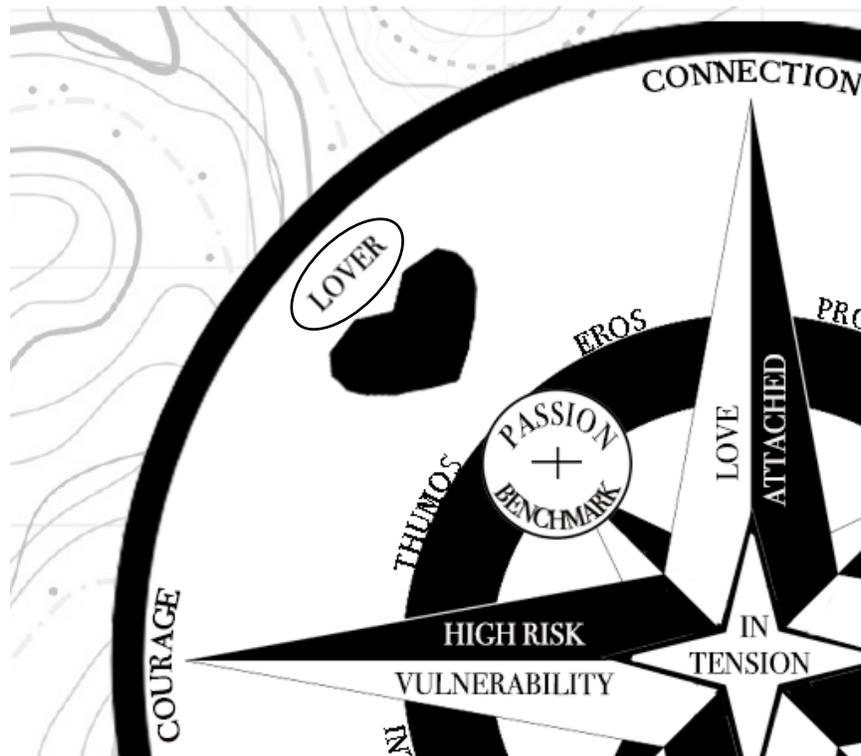
Intimacy is a state of openness to allow someone to see you. I've heard this way of describing intimacy; In-To-Me-See. I know it is cheesy, but it describes letting someone in to your inner world, they now have seen and have your heart. You have chosen to spend your Vulnerability currency in this way with this person.

 **Love is the Prime Virtue and Intimacy is the doorway.**

The man of Eros recognizes the deep life meaning of intimacy and then goes after it with vigor and vulnerability which takes a strong measure of courage. You trust the ones you choose to be open with and give them permission to know the true you.

Pursue Intimacy Passionately is a call to live life with deep Eros Love. It is open and vulnerable. It is alive and free. It is connected and togetherness. It is one of the most terrifying and yet one of the most beautiful experiences of life.

The Archetype of Quadrant Four; Lover



Passion Quadrant Archetype; The Lover

The Lover Archetype

There are many people in literature and history that hold the Lover archetype. People like Romeo and Juliet, Sir Lancelot and Guinevere, Romeo and Juliet, Rhett Butler and Scarlett O'Hara, Elizabeth Bennett and Mr. Darcy and Rose and Jack from Titanic. There are the classic lovers Valentino, Don Juan, the Phantom of the Opera or Casanova. Or one's you don't often consider as the Lover archetype like Dracula or Pepe le Pew.

The Lover is a very common and important aspect of most literature. There usually is some sort of love going on. If not, it's kind of boring. The funky pseudo incest between Luke and Leia Skywalker made things interesting until Han Solo stole Leia's heart. Even The Lord of the Rings had Samwise Gamgee and Rosie Cotton and Aragorn and Arwen as side stories to keep it interesting. The Lover is everywhere, especially thriving in bad literature.

The Lover seeks connection and intimacy. Building relationships is a significant pastime. These relationships could be romantic, but they are also platonic or networking types of relationships with no intent to be sexual.

It is about being with others. It could be in the context of sexual and romantic, it could be business and entrepreneurial, it could be sports and competition or it could be in a gang or a tribe.

☞ **The Lover seeks and thrives in being with others.**

The Lover is sensuous, in that he is awake to all his physical, emotional, spiritual and relational processes. He notices what is happening and holds space in as many experiences as possible. The Lover has an enthusiastic appetite for living, for passion and experiences of all types. This is the Thumos side of the Lover, moving into life with excitement and intention.

☞ **The Lover loves living and all that life provides.**

The Lover lives with an open heart because he knows that this is how he will experience life in the fullest. He wants that whole-hearted gusto that exists with openness to all experiences, whether they are fulfilling, joyful or even in grief.

Because of this, the Lover can fall into what looks and feels like depression, they are feeling the rough parts of life fully. Things will potentially become a crisis and as he feels deeply, he will process the experience deeply. This is necessary so that the realities of life will be seen, known and implanted in his soul.

But he also has the capability of feeling the most beautiful and profoundly uplifting parts as well. This will feel like a roller-coaster at times because this is the way life is and the Lover lives life openly.

The Lover often is a seducer and a flirt, being very playful and fun in the arena of relational interaction and comfortable with sexual tension. This is not necessarily to experience sex, but often is, but also just because he enjoys the banter and tension of relational energy.

As a seducer, the Lover seeks and appreciates beauty. The intimacy of a connection with another is profoundly beautiful. He allows himself to rest in awe of anything beautiful; the feminine form, a well-timed joke, a nice move in sports, art that moves him, a sunset, or his child giggling uncontrollably. His attachment to beauty and connection, to intimacy and experience are what defines how he lives life. He is highly attached to all these experiences. They bring depth and fullness to life.

The seducer aspect often is met with disdain because of how many men have used it just to get laid or to take advantage of people. This is true, many have abused this aspect of the Lover. However, when it is engaged with the “Solid Frame” quadrant the seducer is a very healthy aspect of the Masculine. The seducer is one who invites another into the life of thriving, intimacy and enjoying experience. He invites into life.

☞ **The Lover seduces, and seducing or inviting others into life at its fullest!**

The Lover is not just super out-going as an extrovert but can also be found in the introverted side of personality. As an introvert, the Lover's sense of connection seems to flow much deeper and pursuing a more profound sense of intimacy. He may pour much of his energy into building one deeper relationship than into many relationships.

God is often seen as the Lover as he pursues mankind into relationship. Many aspects of Christianity speak to God's passion for paving a way for intimate relationship with the people he has created. Again this is where the Passion of the Christ is an expression of the love God has for us.

The Lover is the most fragile archetype in Masculinity. As he feels deeply and experiences life openly, he is vulnerable to pain and loss. That's what Vulnerability is. He is putting himself "out there" in life so he has a high potential for negative experience. This is where seeking the wisdom of spending currencies of Love and Vulnerability are essential.

The Lover must also be connected deeply to his Solid Frame (King) archetype to maintain groundedness. The balance of all the masculine quadrants is necessary to master Masculinity, this creates an "anti-fragile" life.

Passion Quadrant Motto:

"I will live with an Open Heart, pursuing life and love with energy, intent, purpose and fearless passion and at times sacrifice, when I don't receive what I desire, I will embrace the emptiness of "not having" with grace and maturity."

Distortions of Quadrant #4 Passion –

The dark side of Quadrant #4 has three main pitfalls; **Closed Heart**, **Impulsivity/Compulsivity** and **Abuse**. These shadows of Passion, Thumos, Eros and the Lover are not that obvious as distortions because they are more normal or expected of men than not. Most men dramatically fall into these distortions without even thinking about what they are doing. Let's look at these three distortions of Passionate manhood.

A Closed Heart is the opposite of having an open heart. An open heart is open to experience and love, but also potential pain and suffering. A closed heart is led by fearfulness and self-protection. It is generally seen in a defensive or victim posture. The closed heart therefore disengages and withdraws from life, from relationship and from any experience that may be difficult or uncomfortable. This results in a life that is unconscious, blank, powerless and generally dead to abundance.

The closed heart also has alexithymia. Alexithymia is a fancy word for not being in touch with your emotions. When you close off to any outside pain, you also close off to any of your vital internal resources as well. These men are closed off to themselves as well as others. Whatever you've been taught about emotions, it is very, very unwise to close them off. You must engage with your internal resources, your emotional process being one of the most important.

Rather than being ok with alexithymia, become more emotionally engaged. Men who are emotionally engaged may look stoic, but they are quite aware of their own emotional processes and vulnerably open with their own emotions with people who are close to them and emotionally safe. They learn that anger is not the thing that controls their lives but is only indicating their well-being; an indicator guiding them to what they need. They have Passion, living with vigor and vitality proceeding from freedom. Passion requires that you embrace the fears and anxieties of life, not escaping from them or numbing them out. It is living a whole-hearted life.

Impulsivity/Compulsivity; This is where a man has limited self-discipline with what he thinks and unconsciously, ritualistically acts to get what he thinks he desires. He will move with impulsivity, acting without thought or intention. He will do things foolishly. Impulsivity is Passion with no internal restraint. It is moving without healthy boundaries, integrity or honor.

Compulsivity is moving and acting according to whatever urges one may have at any given moment. Similar to impulsivity, compulsivity is more about urges that exist from addictions or counterfeits, things that we pursue because we think they will give us life or fill a void within. The man of Passion understands these urges, where they come from and is able to choose emptiness or not having something, with wisdom and self-discipline.

Passion can easily become addiction.

Impulsive and compulsive behavior is addiction and addiction is desire gone awry. It is our deep desires being played out without wisdom, integrity or the ability to be empty or going without something. Addiction wants to fill the Void with consumerism, possessing something, controlling, using others or substances in addictive absorption to relieve pain or emptiness, with fearful and anxious self-

protection. The man of Passion is able to choose to live on the sacrifice and empty side of the Passion coin.

Abuse; Abuse is controlling others and your surroundings in order to achieve a sensation of power. This is played out as “power-over”. It is a drive to absorb and to possess things in order to fulfill personal deficit or to compensate for inadequacies.

Although the majority of men reduce their positive influence on the world by refraining from entering into life (passivity), some men will engage in behaviors which abuses those around him. Abuse is improper and unhealthy treatment of a person, where the other person is a tool to for the abuser to achieve a sense of strength that is missing from his internal self. This distortion exists in this quadrant because this is how men without integrity or internal fortitude often relate.

Abuse comes in many forms; physical, sexual, emotional, verbal etc. A man who abuses has chosen to fight against the very people he has been designed to protect. He is fighting a battle against his own Masculinity, hurting those around him rather than providing safety for them. The abuser moves out of self-protectiveness and fear. He uses the strength he has to put those around him into harm, to break them down, with accusation, and exposes them to potential harm. This is POWER OVER but is different in that it is purposefully controlling others, which is a perversion of all the quadrants; Power For, Solid Frame, Expansiveness and Passion.

Concrete Steps to Build Passion:

Responsibility

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

Responsibility is huge in the Passion quadrant. You must be diligent to keep your values and move from your solid core with your values and character leading how you move. Many men have been lost in a maelstrom of wretched relationships because they chose unwisely which women to interact with. Be the one who chooses and chooses well who you might engage with in Passion. Hold strong with your personal boundaries and don't spend your precious currencies on someone just because they are hot or into you.

Self-Care

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

Self-care always is important. In relationship and romance, many men give up themselves to keep her happy, or more precisely to keep her happy with them. You can't do this, you must keep your own self-care at the top of your priorities. If she doesn't allow this, then she cannot be the one for you. Passion is about love, romance and connection; you must not lose yourself in that. Keep your frame and your priorities.

Balance

👉 **Keeping a good balance in life will help me hold my center.**

Like responsibility and self-care, it seems redundant to talk about balance. But as you engage in Passion, if you do not hold fast to your Solid Frame you will lose both your Power and your ability to Expand. So many men lose their soul in this quadrant. There is much to be experienced with Passion, but it must be done while holding fast to your center, your Solid Frame.

Passionate Character Comparison

Jesus; Maybe it is the Father in the picture who is the Lover, as in, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only son...” But Jesus is definitely a Lover at heart. He is the quintessential man of Passion. That is why it is he who had the experience that is described as the “Passion of the Christ”. He loved and he suffered. He experienced Passion in fullness. I don't think you could score any higher, since he was the one who defines Passion and Love.

Maximus; A major theme in *Gladiator* is the love Maximus has for his wife and son. The pain that he feels with his loss, the evil of Commodus and the idea of “in this life or the next” all speak to the passion (desire and suffering) he has a lover of life, of his family and his men. He is a Lover.

William Wallace; Like *Gladiator* a major theme, and why Wallace even engages like he does in *Braveheart*, is because of love. The pain of the loss of his love and the evil of the Right of the First Night set things up that his loss and suffering thrust Wallace from Lover to Warrior. His passion for freedom for his men and his country become his driving purpose, because of the pain from his deep love.

Aragorn; The backstory of his love for Arwen throws the Lover archetype directly into the path of the story. Here he is being a warrior and in one swoop he is caught up into a spectacular scandal of loving an elven princess where she sacrifices her immortality to love a man. The end of the trilogy present Aragorn not as a ranger or a Warrior, but as the King and the Lover.

Others as the Lover; You have some very smooth operators in literature, movies and history. Usually they are not given as much respect as other archetypes in this day because they are often players, love 'em/leave 'em types or they seem to take advantage of the innocent woman. While this is often how the Lover is portrayed, the true Lover usually has a big heart and cares too much at times. Part of the fun of the story is how he gets embroiled into the chaos of relationship. Han Solo, Bill Clinton and Humphrey Bogart's characters are like this, caught up into something they did not anticipate or expect.

Group Reflection Questions; Quadrant Four – Passion

Remember that Quadrant Four is at the crossroads of Connection and Courage, where we develop our Vulnerability and Passion for our world and the people in it. The motto is; "I will live with an Open Heart, I will pursue the things I desire with energy, intent and purpose and when I don't receive what I want I will embrace the emptiness of "not having" with grace and maturity." This Quadrant has the Muscles of Thumos and Eros, the TLA's of Live Whole Hearted (LWH) and Pursue Intimacy Passionately (PIP) and is represented by the Archetype of the Lover.

Walking the balance between our Connection with the people around us and the Courage to engage with life to the fullest, both in adventure and relationship is a significant part of living out our Masculinity. In what ways has balancing this been difficult or something you're good at?

The motto in the Passion quadrant is "I will live with an Open Heart, I will pursue the things I desire with energy, intent and purpose and when I don't receive what I want I will embrace the emptiness of "not having" with grace and maturity." To what degree have you lived like this, and what could you do to have more of an open heart, pursuing and being ok when you don't get what you want?

Passion is at the center of this quadrant of Masculinity. Passion has the two sides of suffering or sacrifice and the side of desire and wanting. How have you been able to live with this kind of Passion in your life? In what ways have you had a balance between these two ideas of Passion?

Thumos is the muscle that is living with a zest, zeal and vitality in your life. It is the vigor of the wild stallion. It is a powerful life-force inside a man, moving him to profoundly engage with life. How has this described you, or not? Who is in your life that is like this? What would it take to build this into your soul?

Live Whole Hearted (LWH) is the acronym for the Thumos muscle. This means that your heart is open, engaged and interactive with life, relationships and the world with openness and integration of all your self. What are ways you could grow in this, and gain more proficiency?

The Eros muscle is one many men consider to be a great goal. But it is often just orgasm-centric, that is, when the orgasm is over the experience is over. Eros has much to do with an intimacy centered experience, where closeness and being known is primary. In what ways have you engaged in this more mature form of connectedness?

The acronym for the Eros muscle is Pursue Intimacy Passionately (PIP). To what degree do you think you intentionally move into intimacy or closeness in your primary relationships?

The Lover archetype has many classic characters in literature. What are some of your favorites and in what ways do you emulate them?

What other insights or thoughts do you have about this lesson?