

Owning Your Shadow

Handout created by Carol Roush
This exercise is a Medicine Horse Way concept.

EXERCISE: List the names of 3 people you admire and then list three of their characteristics that you like. These can be people in your life past or present, they can be television characters, politicians, actors, singers, or characters in books. Basically anyone you have a strong reaction to.

1.

a.

b.

c.

2.

a.

b.

c.

3.

a.

b.

c.

List the names of three people you dislike and three of their personality traits that you dislike. This may even be someone you like but a habit or behavior triggers a negative reaction.

4.

a.

b.

c.

5.

a.

b.

c.

6.

a.

b.

c.

To begin to own your shadow it is helpful to ask yourself the following questions as you claim this important aspect of yourself:

1. How has this served me in the past?
2. Is it helping me or hindering me now?
3. Might there be circumstances where it could serve me in the future?

EXERCISE: Go back to all the traits you named on the previous two pages and write "I am" in front of each trait.

Each of us has a shadow or blind side. The shadow part of the self is the part of us that we can't see and quite often don't want to see. The shadow can contain false self beliefs and behaviors that are unconscious, and it can contain talents and gifts that we haven't recognized the value of. Shadow material that remains unconscious is quite often revealed through our projections onto others. **We cannot perceive something in another that we do not, at some level, contain within ourselves.**