

*“I must say, the Five Archetypes experience and the outcomes far exceeded my expectations in every way imaginable.”*

- Kristin Kenyon, Social Service Supervisor, ECEAP Center Director, Pierce County, Washington Department of Human Services

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**A case study for The Five Archetypes, building trust and communication within teams.**



Pierce County  
Human Services



# Who is Pierce County Human Services?



Pierce County Department of Human Services is a government entity dedicated to empowering individuals and families and building inclusive communities.

Their mission is to ensure all of Pierce County has equitable access to and a voice in community-based services that value each person's diverse experience.

Vehicles for support include  
→ → →



Community Action Programs



Early Childhood



Energy Assistance



Home Weatherization



Homeless Programs



Veterans Assistance



## Overview

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Kristin, the Social Service Supervisor and ECEAP Center Director had a vision for how she wanted her teachers and administrators to deal with difficulty, empower one another, and provide a compassionate environment for kids and their families. She led her team to be solution-oriented and outcome-focused.

Some of the people on her team had decades of experience in education and human services, which was attractive to Kristin as a leader. She felt their extensive experience would translate into an ability to remain resilient in the face of daily challenges.

And then COVID hit.



## Challenge

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During the COVID pandemic, Kristin and her team, as an essential government entity, were required to report to work in person, unlike much of the rest of the country who transitioned to remote work. The stress of daily in-person work, coupled with the looming threat of illness took a toll on her team, affecting their resilience. Consequently, individuals found it challenging to manage their stress effectively and navigate uncomfortable interpersonal situations.

Recognizing the need for support, Kristin realized the necessity to help her team cultivate resilience and foster mutual empowerment amidst chaos. She aimed to shift their focus towards embracing challenges as opportunities and maintaining a solution-oriented approach in the face of stress.



## Attempted Solutions

Like many leaders, Kristin attempted to support her staff in managing stress and interpersonal challenges through leading by example and demonstrating daily resilience under stress, in brief 1:1 conversations, and through annual performance feedback.

However, these efforts fell short of resolving the underlying issues. Despite Kristin's interventions, uncomfortable interactions persisted, and job stress increased among the team. Instead of confronting challenges directly, individuals avoided difficult conversations and internalized their struggles, leaving Kristin feeling frustrated and at a loss.




# The Five Archetypes Approach

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# Kristin, how did you discover the Five Archetypes?

“I attended a seminar where Carey spoke about "Manager as Coach." She helped the participants understand how to see and honor the differences among us and how to bridge the gaps in how we work so that we were constantly inspiring each other rather than breaking each other down.



A lightbulb went off and I was like, ‘This is what we need at my office!’ So, Carey and I got on the phone. She asked me a lot of questions and helped me see what I wanted to achieve with the Five Archetypes. Her questions got me to think more critically about the real issues in our organization.”



# And then?

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Carey did an in-depth diagnostic to understand our pain points and the context in which they occurred. We determined that the top three goals of our engagement would be:

1. To understand how our actions impact others.
2. To be able to communicate effectively with one another.
3. To develop respectful relationships and interactions with one another.

# What was next in the process?

Carey introduced the Five Archetypes assessment to me and our entire organization. This assessment unveiled the interplay of five distinct interactive styles within each team member, shedding light on both an individual and organizational view of how stress manifests, how we challenge one another, and then offering tailored solutions to solve and prevent further interpersonal issues.

Upon review with Carey, we discovered that our team predominantly exhibited Earth and Metal energy, with limited Wood energy. This unique composition influenced our approach to managing interpersonal discomfort, prolonging the time we would take to move past challenges, ultimately impacting our service delivery and collaborative problem-solving processes.

Recognizing the collective deficiency in Wood energy, we focused our workshop, coaching, and reinforcement activities on empowering team members to effectively engage their Wood energy to solve issues more quickly and completely.



## What changes did you want as a result of the Five Archetypes?

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How do you want attendees to think differently?

- Consider the perspectives of others in addition to your own.
- Does what I am about to say or do add or take away from a healthy work environment for me or my coworkers?

What do you want attendees to feel differently?

- Acceptance, part of the larger group.
- Belonging.

What do you want attendees to do differently?

- Give grace and empathy.
- Be aware of what you are bringing into a situation.
- Be aware of the impact your actions and words have on others.



# How did the engagement unfold?

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Carey customized a half-day workshop to kick off our year-long engagement with the Five Archetypes. The initial live event for our Pierce County Community Action Programs was phenomenal. I must say, the experience and the outcomes far exceeded my expectations in every way imaginable.

We were fortunate to have Carey deliver the Five Archetypes message in person in August 2022 to our staff, and afterward, the Leadership Team met with Carey to discuss the direction we wanted to go to continue this work with our teams. Carey was flexible in scheduling and very communicative and responsive! Knowing and understanding our archetypes as leadership was enlightening and strengthened our team, just as knowing the archetypes of the staff we supervise to support each person and each team in the work they are doing with children and families.

Carey also met with staff six times throughout the year to dive deeper into the work incorporating real-life experiences and how to be more successful during these challenging situations. We reinforced learnings by integrating the archetypes as a common language among our teams and through daily text messages that helped us avoid limited thinking under stress.

# What was the feedback from your team?

The staff have been very grateful for the information and the feedback has been phenomenal regarding the effectiveness of knowing and understanding the Five Archetypes in themselves and the people they work closely with.

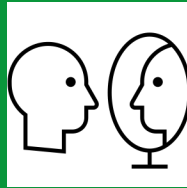
Working toward building self-awareness and accessing the tools and ability to cope in discomfort with empathy for each other and the clients they serve has been invaluable. We have seen from staff, the improved ability to solve problems and communicate effectively, especially in the face of challenge and stress. The staff was able to build a tool kit of self-awareness, self-regulation, and reflection with empathy to expand individual, team, and organization-wide transformation.

We have embedded the Five Archetypes work in performance evaluations and continue to talk and grow! We are continuing to learn how we can show up as our best selves, for ourselves, our coworkers, and our clients!

# Results



Staff has grown an improved ability to solve problems and communicate effectively, especially in the face of challenge and stress.



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