

Sibling Position and Family Projection Process

Adult Formation: In Relationship
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Journaling and Self Reflection: Sibling Position

1. Looking at the list provided, find where you actually fit (according to your Family of Origin). Do you agree with those characteristics?

2. If not, look at all the different characteristics—does a different sibling position match to you more? What might be the reason or this?

Journaling and Self Reflection: Family Projection Process

1. Growing up, did one or both of your parents have a heightened focus on you or one of your siblings? How did the other siblings handle that?

2. In your current family (or as your current family was younger), did you or your spouse have a heightened focus on any one of your children? How did the other children handle that?

Projection does not just happen between parents and children. It can also happen at any point, when you are faced with someone who reminds you of yourself, your child, or someone else with whom you are very close. Think of the people you spend time with, especially in highly emotional situations. How do you project your own fears, anxieties, expectations, hopes, dreams, etc., on them? How do you feel when that person does not act in the way you “want” them to or “expect” them to?

There are several typical roles in a dysfunctional family: Hero, Scapegoat, Mascot, Lost Child, Caretaker, and Mastermind. Being honest with yourself, which one most aligns with your role in your Family of Origin? And your Current Family? How do you think this affects your role in other social systems (such as your work or classroom setting or even your role in ministry in the church)?

- Hero: typically seen as over-responsible and self-sufficient; attempts to restore the dysfunctional home life behind closed doors
- Scapegoat: the problem child (perceived or real); through acts of defiance or hostility, diverts attention from main issue
- Mascot: the comedian; uses humor and silliness to lessen the stress caused by main issue
- Lost Child: the quiet one; flies under the radar while other family members play their parts
- Caretaker: the enabler; often covers the problems and responsibilities to keep everyone happy
- Mastermind: the manipulator; uses the hostile environment to their advantage; may play family members against each other in order to get own way.
