

Want to Know What Makes Gingrich Tick? Consult Carl Jung.

No one who has ever worked with Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-Ga) has a complete picture of him. In fact, the only man to portray him fully died over 30 years ago — and the two never met. This essay comes as close as anything will to bringing them together.

Back in April 1983, Newt told his DC staff: “There are consistencies of pattern but not consistencies of process. You can’t predict from day to day what I’ll do, but you can predict from day to day what, in a general way, I’ll be doing.”

In those days, he struggled to be heard and heeded. He assumed his staff could maximize his reach, if only they understood his method. He thought his GOP colleagues could seize the House, if only they would implement his latest 25 projects. So Newt explained himself blue, while they — most staff, many allies — ran themselves ragged. Eventually, many of us just ran. Even when we could finally “do what he wanted,” he suddenly no longer wanted it.

Becoming GOP Whip finally put some order into Newt’s daily operations, and the Speakership may complete the process. Yet my guess is that his hypercreative entrepreneurial nature will regularly override the new post’s structure and scheduling. If so, Newt’s

‘He is the natural champion of all minorities with a future,’ Jung wrote, more than 60 years ago.

associates still require a yardstick, a divining rod, to truly “understand” him. I have one, and I’ll tell you where to obtain it. But first, savor its best parts, in boldface, followed by a comment or two on each.

[His] morality is governed neither by thinking nor by feeling; he has his own characteristic morality, which consists in a loyalty to his vision and voluntary submission to its authority.

Much like Bill Gates creating Microsoft or Andy Grove guiding Intel, Newt Gingrich obeys his vision. Unlike them, he is used to flying solo. As he told a senior staff group in September 1982: “I only have coherently explainable positions when I’m forced to stop and develop them.” Otherwise he keeps piling intuition atop intuition.

The stronger his intuition, the more his ego becomes fused with all the possibilities he envisions. He brings his vision to life, he presents it convincingly and with dramatic fire — he embodies it, so to speak. But this is not play-acting, it is a kind of fate.

Yes, Newt has “known” since teendom how he was fated to shape and lead a transformed Republican party. Ego may help power such a person’s overarching goal, but it is never the determining motivation.

He seizes on new subjects with great intensity, sometimes with extraordinary enthusiasm, only to abandon them cold-bloodedly, without any compunction and apparently without remembering them, as soon as their range is known and no further developments can be divined.

Anyone in Washington ever put in charge of a “Newt project” will nod at this passage’s correctness. As Newt said in 1983: “I don’t do by planning, I plan by doing.” It’s a work-

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