

DEVELOPING A PERSONA FOR THE PRIVATE READER

by Richard Webster

Recently, someone asked me for advice on what sort of persona he should develop and utilize when giving readings. Like me, he does short, fun readings for entertainment purposes, as well as full-length readings.

When I started out, I initially tried to be someone who “sees all, and knows all.” I quickly learned how impractical this was, at least for me. If you adopt this type of persona, you need to be “on” twenty-four hours a day. This is highly stressful, and works only if you’re willing to be a psychic all the time. A friend of mine also tried this approach and developed bulimia as a result.

I used to read palms at several shopping malls. On one occasion, the manager of one of these malls insisted I put on a costume and work as a gypsy fortuneteller. This lasted all of five minutes, as everyone who came for a reading could tell at a glance that I wasn’t a gypsy. In this case, the whole idea was counterproductive. Of course, if I’d put time and effort into it, I could have created a gypsy character and done my readings in that guise. However, that would ultimately have been too limiting. I can’t imagine a gypsy fortuneteller being booked to read palms at a corporate event, for instance, even if he claimed to be the seventh son of a seventh son. The same problem applies with other characters I could have developed.

In the end, I decided to be a slightly amplified version of myself. I sell myself as a regular person who has studied the mystical arts for many years, and learned how to do the various things I do. This happens to be the truth, anyway. I used to do my full-length private readings in a book-lined room. This subtly demonstrated that I knew what I was talking about. The client and I both sat down on the same side of an antique desk. I felt that this was friendlier than sitting behind the desk. I wore good quality, casual clothes. I displayed no occult paraphernalia, except for a crystal ball and a deck of Tarot cards. All of this told my clients that I was a normal person, who happened to be interested in the occult arts, and was obviously making a success at my chosen career.

If I’m seeking advice on anything, I try to ask someone who appears to be successful, as he or she will probably give me better advice than someone who looks slovenly and is obviously unsuccessful. I wouldn’t ask a homeless person for investment advice, for instance. Many people who offer private readings look unsuccessful, and this doesn’t convey a good impression. I want to present an image of success, as it makes me feel good, and also reassures the client that he or she has come to see someone who knows what he is doing, and is successful at it.

I have the same persona when working for corporations, though I’m more outgoing in this type of situation than I normally am. If I’m 105% of myself in a private reading, I’m 115% at a corporate function. This is because I’m being employed as an entertainer, and I need to charm, captivate, and entertain my audience. I tell (clean) jokes. I laugh a lot. I wear good quality

clothes. Corporate buyers can tell the difference between a cheap and an expensive suit. Initially, I wore a tie, but stopped wearing one about twenty years ago, as I wanted to look slightly different to all the other men at the function. If I'm using Tarot cards, I replace them regularly. Everything I use has to be of good quality. This is seldom commented on, but people notice. Not long ago, I watched a card magic DVD. I can't tell you what effects the magician did, as I was so fascinated with his old, dirty deck of cards.

The advantage of being a slightly amplified version of myself is that after the show or reading, I can immediately become my normal everyday self again. If I happen to meet a client when I'm out and about, I can instantly "expand" my aura and become a psychic again. Funnily enough, I enjoy expanding and contracting myself in this way. It enables me to be outgoing and gregarious when I want to be, but also enables me to be just as happy when away from the limelight.

This is one of a series of occasional essays produced by Richard Webster, 8 Napa Court, Shamrock Park, Manukau 2016, New Zealand (esp@psychic.co.nz).

This reprint of Richard Webster's essay courtesy of

Doug Dymont

www.deceptionary.com

