

# THE WISDOM OF THE ENNEAGRAM



THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO  
PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SPIRITUAL  
GROWTH FOR THE  
NINE PERSONALITY TYPES



DON RICHARD RISO AND RUSS HUDSON

BESTSELLING CO-AUTHORS OF *Personality Types*



Nine distinct personality types...  
Nine different perspectives on life...  
Nine ways of being in the world...

EACH TYPE HAS EXTRAORDINARY GIFTS—  
AND PREDICTABLE PITFALLS

1. THE REFORMER

Can lead through integrity and reason  
OR be hindered by perfectionism and resentment

2. THE HELPER

Can shine with generosity and healing power  
OR struggle with people-pleasing and possessiveness

3. THE ACHIEVER

Can become an inspiring example of excellence and authenticity  
OR blindly pursue success and status

4. THE INDIVIDUALIST

Can model creativity and intuitive power  
OR be held back by moodiness and self-consciousness

5. THE INVESTIGATOR

Can demonstrate visionary intellect and inventiveness  
OR become increasingly eccentric and isolated

6. THE LOYALIST

Can exemplify courage and commitment  
OR struggle with anxiety and rebelliousness

7. THE ENTHUSIAST

Can become highly accomplished and spirited  
OR be waylaid by impulsiveness and impatience

8. THE CHALLENGER

Can be a powerful, magnanimous leader  
OR control and intimidate others

9. THE PEACEMAKER

Can bring people together and heal conflicts  
OR be held back by passivity and stubbornness

BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY INTO SELF-KNOWLEDGE  
BY TAKING THE TEST ON PAGE 14.



Praise for

## THE WISDOM OF THE ENNEAGRAM

"*The Wisdom of the Enneagram* is a very important book. By combining the horizontal types of the Enneagram with a system of vertical levels of awareness, Riso and Hudson have produced one of the first truly integrated models of the human psyche. In addition to the importance of this pioneering work itself, it goes to point up the utter inadequacy of anything less than a full-spectrum model of human growth and development. Highly recommended."

—Ken Wilber, author of *The Marriage of Sense and Soul*

"I highly recommend this book, not only to anyone on the path of personal transformation, but to anyone who wants to understand the complex inner world of others, whether a spouse, family member, co-worker, or friend. The questionnaires were fun and illuminating. I received some very helpful information about myself, felt challenged to grow, and experienced a deepening of compassion. Perhaps the most profound contribution of *The Wisdom of the Enneagram* is reflected in the word 'wisdom.' The authors clearly communicate the complexity of human nature, the spiritual yearning resonant in all of us, and the ascending levels of our possibility. But they do not leave us there. They offer a clear path for personal and spiritual evolution."

—Harville Hendrix, Ph.D., author of *Getting the Love You Want*

"Don Riso and Russ Hudson thoughtfully engage the richness and depth of the Enneagram, and conjure with its power as a tool of transformation. *The Wisdom of the Enneagram* is filled with its own wisdom and depth. You'll find yourself returning to it over and over again and discovering new treasures."

—Tony Schwartz, author of *What Really Matters*

"*The Wisdom of the Enneagram* is not only a clear and comprehensive description and discussion of this ancient personality typology, but also a major and original contribution to its use and further development. Don Riso and Russ Hudson have designed simple, practical guidelines and tests that make it possible to determine one's own personality type and use this knowledge for healing and psychospiritual transformation."

—Stanislav Grof, M.D., author of *The Adventure of Self-Discovery*



ENNEAGRAM RESOURCES BY

DON RICHARD RISO

*The essential guide to the psychology and spirituality of the system*  
THE WISDOM OF THE ENNEAGRAM (1999)  
And Russ Hudson

*The most complete source of Enneagram descriptions and theory*  
PERSONALITY TYPES  
Using the Enneagram for Self-Discovery (1987, 1996)  
Revised with Russ Hudson

*Practical applications of the Enneagram in your daily life*  
UNDERSTANDING THE ENNEAGRAM  
The Practical Guide to Personality Types (1990)

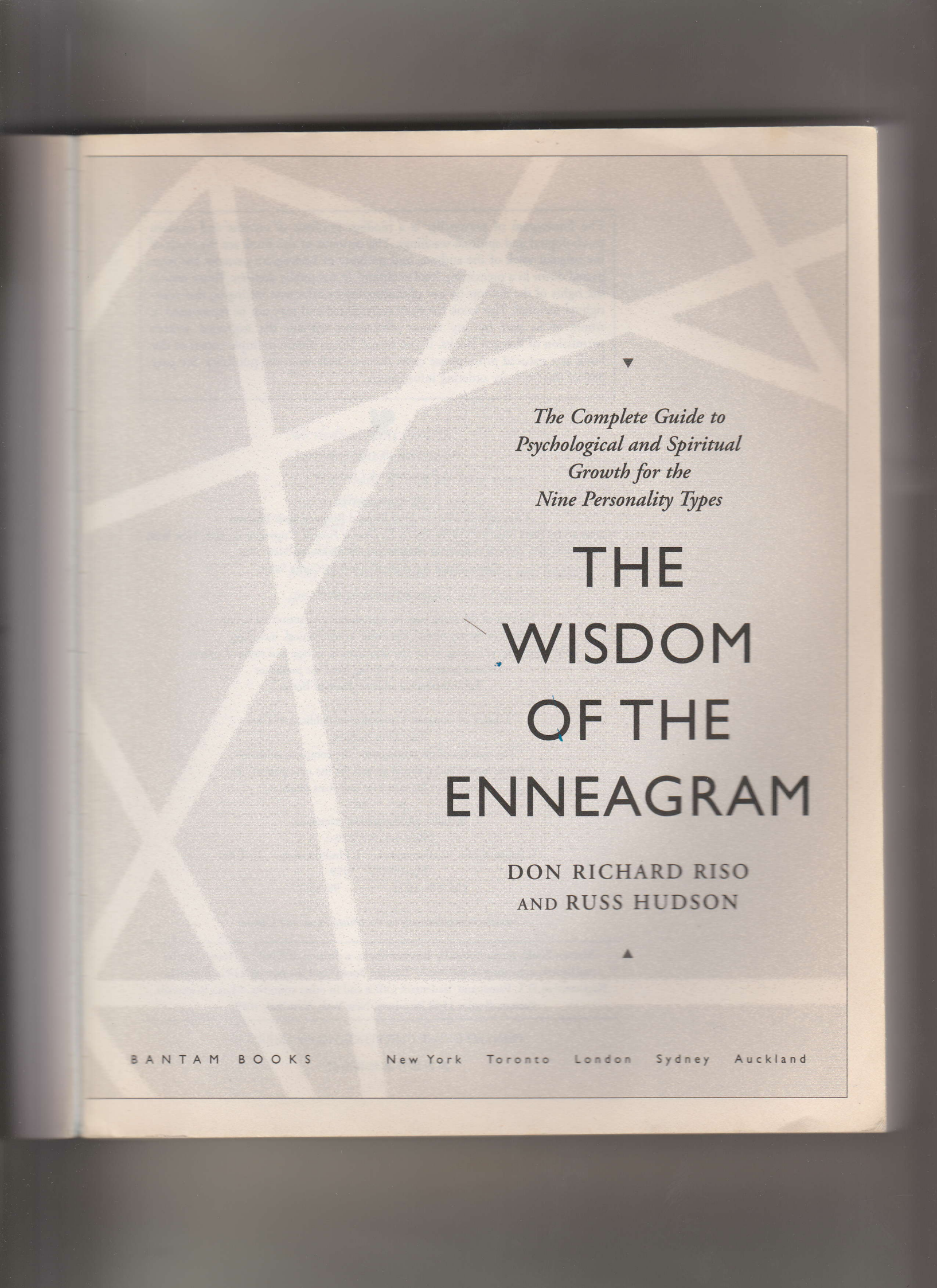
*An introduction to the Enneagram with a highly accurate personality test*  
DISCOVERING YOUR PERSONALITY TYPE  
The New Enneagram Questionnaire (1992, 1995)

*Spiritual and psychological inspiration for each type*  
ENNEAGRAM TRANSFORMATIONS  
Releases and Affirmations for Healing Your Personality Type (1995)

*A seven-hour audiotape introduction from Nightingale-Conant*  
THE POWER OF THE ENNEAGRAM  
A New Technology of Self-Discovery  
With Russ Hudson

*A two-hour abridgement from Simon and Schuster*  
THE POWER OF THE ENNEAGRAM  
A New Technology of Self-Discovery  
With Russ Hudson





▼

*The Complete Guide to  
Psychological and Spiritual  
Growth for the  
Nine Personality Types*

# THE WISDOM OF THE ENNEAGRAM

DON RICHARD RISO  
AND RUSS HUDSON

▲

BANTAM BOOKS

New York Toronto London Sydney Auckland



*We dedicate this book to  
the Ground of all Being,  
the One from Whom we have come,  
and to Whom we shall return,  
the Font of wisdom and Light of lights,  
the Maker, Renewer, and Keeper of all things.  
May this book which comes from our hearts,  
speak to the hearts of all who read it.*



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*Beings of Light*

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**WE ARE ALL DRIVEN** by a deep inner restlessness. We may feel this restlessness as a sense that something is missing in us, although it is usually difficult to define exactly what it is. We have all sorts of notions about what we think we need or want—a better relationship, a better job, a better physique, a better car, and on and on. We believe that if we acquire that perfect relationship or job or new “toy,” the restlessness will go away, and we will feel satisfied and complete. But experience teaches us that the new car makes us feel better for only a short time. The new relationship may be wonderful, but it never quite fulfills us in the way we thought it would. So what are we really looking for?

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If we reflect for a moment, we may realize that what our hearts yearn for is to know who we are and why we are here. But little in our culture encourages us to look for answers to these important questions. We have been taught that the quality of our life will improve primarily if our external fortunes improve. Sooner or later, however, we realize that external things, while valuable in themselves, cannot address the deep restlessness of our soul.

So where can we look for answers?

Many of the currently available books on personal transformation speak movingly about the kind of person that we would all like to be. They recognize the vital importance of compassion, community, communication, and creativity. But as beautiful and attractive as these (and other) qualities are, we find it extremely difficult to maintain them or to put them into practice in our daily lives. Our hearts yearn to soar, yet we almost always come crashing down painfully on the rocks of fear, self-defeating habits, and ignorance. All too often our good intentions and noble hopes simply become new sources of disappointment. We give up on ourselves, return to familiar distractions, and try to forget about the whole matter.

“There’s a part of every living thing that wants to become itself, the tadpole into the frog, the chrysalis into the butterfly, a damaged human being into a whole one. That is spirituality.”

ELLEN BASS



"It seems to me that before we set out on a journey to find reality, to find God, before we can act, before we can have any relationship with another . . . it is essential that we begin to understand ourselves first."

KRISHNAMURTI

"Whatever your age, your upbringing, or your education, what you are made of is mostly unused potential."

GEORGE LEONARD

Are the vast majority of popular psychology books misguided or wrong? Are human beings really incapable of living more complete and fulfilling lives? The great spiritual and moral teachers throughout history have always insisted that we have the potential to achieve greatness—that we are, in fact, divine creatures in some real sense. So why do we find this state so hard to recognize and live up to?

We believe that most self-help books are not necessarily wrong, *but merely incomplete*. For example, even with a basic topic like weight loss, there are many possible reasons why a person might have a weight problem or issues with food—a sugar sensitivity, or excessive fat in the diet, or nervous eating to repress anxiety, or any number of other emotional issues. Without identifying the specific core issues that are causing the problem, no solution is likely, no matter how great the effort.

The self-help author's prescriptions are usually based on methods that have worked for him or her personally and reflect his or her own psychological makeup and personal process. If a reader happens to have a similar psychological makeup, the author's method may be effective. But if there is little "match," the reader may be misled rather than helped.

Any effective approach to growth must therefore take into account the fact that there are different kinds of people—*different personality types*. Historically many psychological and spiritual systems have attempted to address this key insight: astrology, numerology, the four classic temperaments (phlegmatic, choleric, melancholic, and sanguine), Jung's system of psychological types (extrovert and introvert orientations times sensation, intuition, feeling, and thinking functions), and many others. Furthermore, recent studies in infant development and in brain science have indicated that fundamental differences in temperament between different types of people have a biological basis.

This diversity explains why what is good advice for one person can be disastrous for another. Telling some types that they need to focus more on their feelings is like throwing water on a drowning man. Telling other types that they need to assert themselves more is as foolish as putting an anorexic person on a diet. In understanding ourselves, our relationships, our spiritual growth, and many other important issues, we will see that type—not gender, not culture, and not generational differences—is the crucial factor.

We believe that awareness of personality types is needed in many areas—in education, the sciences, business, the humanities, and therapy—and, above all, in spirituality and transformational work. While our restless yearnings may be universal, how they are expressed is much more particular and is, in fact, a function of the "filter" with which we approach all of life. The main filter that we use to understand ourselves and the world around us, to express ourselves, to defend ourselves, to



deal with our past and anticipate our future, to learn with, to rejoice with, and to fall in love with, is our personality type.

What if there were a system that could enable us to have more insight into ourselves and others? What if it could help us discern our filters more clearly and take them into proper account? What if this system could show us our core psychological issues as well as our interpersonal strengths and weaknesses? What if this system did not depend on the pronouncements of experts or gurus, or on our birth date, or our birth order, but on our personality patterns and our willingness to honestly explore ourselves? What if this system showed us not only our core issues, but also pointed out effective ways of dealing with them? What if this system also directed us toward the depths of our soul? Such a system exists, and it is called the Enneagram.

"Spiritually speaking, everything that one wants, aspires to, and needs is ever-present, accessible here and now—for those with eyes to see."

SURYA DAS

## BEINGS OF LIGHT

One of the most important incidents of my life happened to me, Don, several years ago when I was involved in a week-long spiritual retreat in upstate New York. About fifty of us were staying in a turn-of-the-century hotel that our teacher owned. Since the grounds and interior of the old house perpetually needed upkeep, it was a perfect place for us to do some grueling manual labor—and an occasion to observe our resistances and reactions while we worked. The summer heat was intense, the showers few, the lines to the common bathrooms long, and there were almost no rest periods. As we were aware, all of these physical and communal conditions were engineered by our teacher to bring out our personality "features" so that we could observe ourselves more clearly in the intensity of this living laboratory.

One afternoon we were given a rare opportunity to have a forty-five-minute nap between chores. I had been assigned to scrape paint off the outside of the old hotel, and was soon covered from head to toe with tiny weathered chips. By the end of our work session, I was so tired and sweaty that I did not care how grubby I felt—I needed a nap, and as soon as we were dismissed from our chores, I was the first one upstairs and into bed. Most of the other guys who shared the dorm room with me dragged themselves in shortly after, and within five minutes we were all settling down to sleep.

Just then, our one remaining roommate, Alan, banged his way into the room. He had been assigned to look after the children of group members, and it was clear from the way he was flinging things around that he was mad that he could not get off duty earlier for a nap himself. He did, however, have time to make enough noise so that no one else could rest, either.



"Spirit is an invisible force  
made visible in all life."

MAYA ANGELOU

But shortly after Alan came crashing through the door, something amazing happened to me: I saw my negative reactions to him rising in my body like a train pulling into a station, and *I did not get on the train*. In a moment of simple clarity, I saw Alan with his anger and frustration—I saw his behavior for what it was without further elaboration—and I saw my anger "loading up" to let him have it—and I did not react to any of it.

When I simply observed my reactions of anger and self-justification rather than acting on them, it was as if a veil were suddenly pulled from my eyes, and *I opened up*. Something that normally blocked my perception dissolved in an instant, and the world became completely alive. Alan was suddenly lovable, and the other guys were perfect in their reactions, whatever they were. Just as astonishingly, as I turned my head and looked out the window, I saw that everything around me was glowing from within. The sunlight on the trees, the swaying of the leaves in the wind, the slight rattle of the panes of glass in the old window frame, were too beautiful for words. I was enthralled at how miraculous everything was. Absolutely everything was beautiful.

I was still in this state of amazed ecstasy when I joined the rest of the group for a late-afternoon meditation. As the meditation deepened, I opened my eyes and looked around the room—and fell into what I can only describe as an inner vision, the impression of which has stayed with me for years.

What I saw was that everyone there was a "being of light." I saw clearly that everyone is made of light—that we are like forms of light—but that a crust has formed over it. The crust is black and rubbery like tar and has obscured the inner light that is everyone's real, inner self. Some blotches of tar are very thick; other areas are thinner and more transparent. Those who have worked on themselves for longer have less tar and they radiate more of their inner light. Because of their personal history, others are covered with more tar and need a great deal of work to get free of it.

After about an hour the vision grew dim and eventually shut down. When the meditation was over, we had more work to do, and I rushed to take one of the most frequently avoided tasks, washing dishes in the steamy kitchen. But because the residue of ecstasy was still palpable, that chore, too, was a moment of bliss.

I share this story not only because of its significance for me personally but because it graphically showed me that the things we are talking about in this book are real. If we observe ourselves truthfully and non-judgmentally, seeing the mechanisms of our personality in action, *we can wake up, and our lives can be a miraculous unfolding of beauty and joy.*



## USING THIS BOOK

The Enneagram can help us only if we are honest with ourselves. Thus, the elements of the system—and this book—are best used as a guide to self-observation and self-inquiry. We have designed this book with many practical features to help you use it this way, including:

- ▶ Each type's healing attitudes, gifts, and specific transformational process
- ▶ How to "observe and let go" of troublesome habits and reactions
- ▶ How to work with the motivations of each type
- ▶ Unconscious childhood messages
- ▶ Therapeutic strategies for each type
- ▶ "Spiritual jump starts," Wake-up Calls, and Red Flags for each type
- ▶ How to cultivate awareness in your daily life
- ▶ Inner Work sessions and practices for each type
- ▶ How to use the system for continuing spiritual growth

Since it is helpful to do the exercises in this book in a journal of some kind, you might want to dedicate a notebook or loose-leaf binder for this purpose. We suggest that you use your Inner Work Journal to record the insights that will come to you as you read about your personality type as well as the other eight types. Most people find that this information also brings up all kinds of related issues, memories, and creative inspirations.

As a first exercise in your Inner Work Journal, we suggest you write a biography of yourself—not an autobiography. Write about yourself in the third person—that is, as "he" or "she" rather than "I." Tell your life story, beginning from your earliest years (or earlier, from what you know of your family history) up to the present time as if you were describing someone else. You may also wish to dedicate a page in your Inner Work Journal to each decade, leaving room to add relevant thoughts and observations as you recall more. Do not worry about being literary or "correct." The important thing is to see your life as a whole, as if told by someone else.



What have been the defining moments of your life—your traumas and triumphs—those times when you knew that, for better or worse, your life would never be the same? Who have been the most significant people in your life—those who have acted as “witnesses” to your struggles and growth, those who have hurt you, and those who have been your understanding mentors and friends? Be as detailed as possible.

Come back to your biography whenever you wish to add something and as you move through this book and gain more insight into yourself. Your story will become richer and more meaningful as you understand yourself more deeply.



E F A C E

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# PART I



## *The Inward Journey*





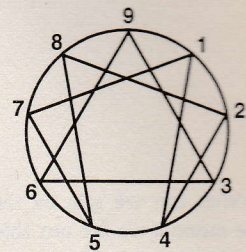
## CHAPTER I

# IDENTIFYING YOUR PERSONALITY TYPE

**THE ENNEAGRAM** (pronounced "ANY-a-gram") is a geometric figure that maps out the nine fundamental personality types of human nature and their complex interrelationships. It is a development of modern psychology that has roots in spiritual wisdom from many different ancient traditions. The word *Enneagram* comes from the Greek for "nine"—*ennea*—and "figure"—*grammos*; thus, it is a "nine-pointed figure."

The modern Enneagram of personality type has been synthesized from many different spiritual and religious traditions. Much of it is a condensation of universal wisdom, the perennial philosophy accumulated by Christians, Buddhists, Muslims (especially the Sufis), and Jews (in the Kabbalah) for thousands of years. The heart of the Enneagram is the universal insight that human beings are spiritual presences incarnated in the material world and yet mysteriously embodying the same life and Spirit as the Creator. Beneath surface differences and appearances, behind the veils of illusion, the light of Divinity shines in every individual. Various forces obscure that light, however, and each spiritual tradition has myths and doctrines to explain how mankind has lost its connection with the Divine.

One of the great strengths of the Enneagram is that it steps aside from all doctrinal differences. It has helped individuals from virtually every major religious faith to rediscover their fundamental unity as spiritual beings. The Enneagram can therefore be enormously valuable in today's world to show white and black, male and female, Catholic and Protestant, Arab and Jew, straight and gay, rich and poor that if they search beneath the surface differences that separate them, they will find an entirely new level of common humanity. With the help of the Enneagram, we will discover that Sixes are like all other Sixes—and



THE ENNEAGRAM

"The great metaphors from all spiritual traditions—grace, liberation, being born again, awakening from illusion—testify that it is possible to transcend the conditioning of my past and do a new thing."

SAM KEEN



"Do not weep; do not wax indignant. Understand."

SPINOZA

that they share the same values as others of their type. Ones who are black are much more like Ones who are white than they could have imagined, and so forth. A new level of community and compassion emerges that obliterates old ignorance and fear.

The Enneagram is not a religion, however; nor does it interfere with a person's religious orientation. It does not pretend to be a complete spiritual path. Nevertheless, it concerns itself with one element that is fundamental to all spiritual paths: *self-knowledge*.

Without self-knowledge, we will not get very far on our spiritual journey, nor will we be able to sustain whatever progress we have made. One of the great dangers of transformational work is that the ego attempts to sidestep deep psychological work by leaping into the transcendent too soon. This is because the ego always fancies itself much more "advanced" than it actually is. How many first-year novices have persuaded themselves that they are just about ready for sainthood? How many meditation students have been certain that they attained enlightenment in record-breaking time?

Real self-knowledge is an invaluable guardian against such self-deception. The Enneagram takes us places (and makes real progress possible) because it starts working from where we actually are. As much as it reveals the spiritual heights that we are capable of attaining, it also sheds light clearly and nonjudgmentally on the aspects of our lives that are dark and unfree. If we are going to live as spiritual beings in the material world, then these are the areas we most need to explore.

*Presence* (awareness, mindfulness), *the practice of self-observation* (gained from self-knowledge), and *understanding what one's experience means* (an accurate interpretation provided by a larger context such as a community or spiritual system) are the three basic elements needed for transformational work. *Being* supplies the first, *you* supply the second, and *the Enneagram* supplies the third. When these three come together, things can happen quickly.

"What can we gain by sailing to the moon if we are not able to cross the abyss that separates us from ourselves?"

THOMAS MERTON

## INTRODUCING THE NINE TYPES

Work with the Enneagram starts when you identify your type and begin to understand its dominant issues.

While we will recognize in ourselves behaviors of all nine types, our most defining characteristics are rooted in one of these types. On page 13 you will find a questionnaire, the Riso-Hudson QUEST, that can help you narrow down your basic type, and at the beginning of each type chapter there is a second independent test, the Riso-Hudson TAS or Type Attitude Sorter, to help you check your findings. Between these two tests and the descriptions and exercises in the type



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chapters, you should be able to discover your type with a high degree of certainty.

For now, read the following type names and brief descriptions to see which two or three strike you as being most typical of yourself. Keep in mind that the characteristics listed here are merely a few highlights and do not represent the full spectrum of each personality type.

**Type One: The Reformer.** The principled, idealistic type. Ones are ethical and conscientious, with a strong sense of right and wrong. They are teachers and crusaders, always striving to improve things but afraid of making a mistake. Well-organized, orderly, and fastidious, they try to maintain high standards but can slip into being critical and perfectionistic. They typically have problems with repressed anger and impatience. *At their best*, healthy Ones are wise, discerning, realistic, and noble, as well as morally heroic.

**Type Two: The Helper.** The caring, interpersonal type. Twos are empathetic, sincere, and warm-hearted. They are friendly, generous, and self-sacrificing, but they can also be sentimental, flattering, and people-pleasing. They are driven to be close to others, and they often do things for others in order to be needed. They typically have problems taking care of themselves and acknowledging their own needs. *At their best*, healthy Twos are unselfish and altruistic and have unconditional love for themselves and others.

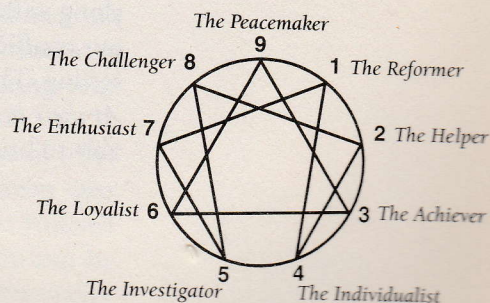
**Type Three: The Achiever.** The adaptable, success-oriented type. Threes are self-assured, attractive, and charming. Ambitious, competent, and energetic, they can also be status-conscious and highly driven for personal advancement. Threes are often concerned about their image and what others think of them. They typically have problems with workaholicism and competitiveness. *At their best*, healthy Threes are self-accepting, authentic, and everything they seem to be—role models who inspire others.

**Type Four: The Individualist.** The romantic, introspective type. Fours are self-aware, sensitive, reserved, and quiet. They are self-revealing, emotionally honest, and personal, but they can also be moody and self-conscious. Withholding themselves from others due to feeling vulnerable and defective, they can also feel disdainful and exempt from ordinary ways of living. They typically have problems with self-indulgence and self-pity. *At their best*, healthy Fours are inspired and highly creative, able to renew themselves and transform their experiences.

**Type Five: The Investigator.** The intense, cerebral type. Fives are alert, insightful, and curious. They are able to concentrate and focus on developing complex ideas and skills. Independent and innovative, they can become

"If men knew themselves, God would heal and pardon them."

PASCAL



THE ENNEAGRAM WITH RISO-HUDSON TYPE NAMES



preoccupied with their thoughts and imaginary constructs. They become detached, yet high-strung and intense. They typically have problems with isolation, eccentricity, and nihilism. *At their best*, healthy Fives are visionary pioneers, often ahead of their time and able to see the world in an entirely new way.

**Type Six: The Loyalist.** The committed, security-oriented type. Sixes are reliable, hardworking, and responsible, but they can also be defensive, evasive, and highly anxious—running on stress while complaining about it. They are often cautious and indecisive but can also be reactive, defiant, and rebellious. They typically have problems with self-doubt and suspicion. *At their best*, healthy Sixes are internally stable, self-confident, and self-reliant, courageously supporting the weak and powerless.

**Type Seven: The Enthusiast.** The busy, productive type. Sevens are versatile, optimistic, and spontaneous. Playful, high-spirited, and practical, they can also be overextended, scattered, and undisciplined. They constantly seek new and exciting experiences, but they can become distracted and exhausted by staying on the go. They typically have problems with superficiality and impulsiveness. *At their best*, healthy Sevens focus their talents on worthwhile goals, becoming joyous, highly accomplished, and full of gratitude.

**Type Eight: The Challenger.** The powerful, dominating type. Eights are self-confident, strong, and assertive. Protective, resourceful, and decisive, they can also be proud and domineering. Eights feel that they must control their environment, often becoming confrontational and intimidating. They typically have problems with allowing themselves to be close to others. *At their best*, healthy Eights are self-mastering—they use their strength to improve others' lives, becoming heroic, magnanimous, and sometimes historically great.

**Type Nine: The Peacemaker.** The easygoing, self-effacing type. Nines are accepting, trusting, and stable. They are good-natured, kind-hearted, easygoing, and supportive but can also be too willing to go along with others to keep the peace. They want everything to be without conflict but can tend to be complacent and minimize anything upsetting. They typically have problems with passivity and stubbornness. *At their best*, healthy Nines are indomitable and all-embracing; they are able to bring people together and heal conflicts.



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**Type Six: The Loyalist.** The committed, security-oriented type. Sixes are reliable, hardworking, and responsible, but they can also be defensive, evasive, and highly anxious—running on stress while complaining about it. They are often cautious and indecisive but can also be reactive, defiant, and rebellious. They typically have problems with self-doubt and suspicion. *At their best*, healthy Sixes are internally stable, self-confident, and self-reliant, courageously supporting the weak and powerless.

**Type Seven: The Enthusiast.** The busy, productive type. Sevens are versatile, optimistic, and spontaneous. Playful, high-spirited, and practical, they can also be overextended, scattered, and undisciplined. They constantly seek new and exciting experiences, but they can become distracted and exhausted by staying on the go. They typically have problems with superficiality and impulsiveness. *At their best*, healthy Sevens focus their talents on worthwhile goals, becoming joyous, highly accomplished, and full of gratitude.

**Type Eight: The Challenger.** The powerful, dominating type. Eights are self-confident, strong, and assertive. Protective, resourceful, and decisive, they can also be proud and domineering. Eights feel that they must control their environment, often becoming confrontational and intimidating. They typically have problems with allowing themselves to be close to others. *At their best*, healthy Eights are self-mastering—they use their strength to improve others' lives, becoming heroic, magnanimous, and sometimes historically great.

**Type Nine: The Peacemaker.** The easygoing, self-effacing type. Nines are accepting, trusting, and stable. They are good-natured, kind-hearted, easygoing, and supportive but can also be too willing to go along with others to keep the peace. They want everything to be without conflict but can tend to be complacent and minimize anything upsetting. They typically have problems with passivity and stubbornness. *At their best*, healthy Nines are indomitable and all-embracing; they are able to bring people together and heal conflicts.



## THE QUESTIONNAIRES

The first questionnaire, which follows on pages 14-15, is the Riso-Hudson QUEST, the *QUick Enneagram Sorting Test*. This test will help you narrow down the possibilities for your type in less than five minutes with about 70 percent accuracy. At the least you will be able to identify the top two or three possibilities for your type.

The second set of questionnaires is the Riso-Hudson TAS, or Type Attitude Sorter. At the beginning of each of the nine type chapters is a set of fifteen statements that are highly characteristic of the type under consideration. If you are interested in taking a self-scoring, computerized Enneagram Test, you can do so at our website, [www.EnneagramInstitute.com](http://www.EnneagramInstitute.com). This test, the RHETI (Riso-Hudson Enneagram Type Indicator, Version 2.5), involves choosing between 144 paired statements and is about 80 percent accurate. Beyond indicating the main type, it also produces a profile showing the relative strengths of each of the nine types in your personality. The RHETI usually takes about forty-five minutes to complete.

If you are new to the Enneagram, take the QUEST and then the TAS to see if there is a match. For instance, the QUEST might indicate that you are a Type Six. You could then go immediately to the fifteen statements of the TAS for Type Six (in Chapter 12) to see if you score high on those statements as well. If so, you are probably on the right track.

We urge you, however, to continue to keep an open mind and to read the full chapter of Type Six (to continue the example) until more pieces fall into place. If the description and exercises have a strong impact on you, then you are almost certainly a Six.

We are qualifying these statements slightly because it is always possible to be wrong in one's self-diagnosis—just as, unfortunately, it is easy to be wrongly diagnosed by an "Enneagram expert" of some sort. Therefore, take your time identifying your type. Read this book carefully, and more important, *live with the information for a while* and talk about it with those who know you well. Remember that self-discovery is a process, and that the process does not end with discovering your type—in fact, that is only the beginning.

When you do discover your type, you will know it. Waves of relief and embarrassment, of elation and chagrin, are likely to sweep over you. Things that you have always known unconsciously about yourself will suddenly become clear, and life patterns will emerge. You can be certain that when this happens, you have identified your personality type correctly.



THE  
RISO-HUDSON  
QUEST<sup>SM</sup>

*The  
Quick  
Enneagram  
Sorting  
Test*

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

For the QUEST to yield a correct result, it is important that you read and follow these few simple instructions.

► Select *one* paragraph in each of the following two groups of statements that best reflects your general attitudes and behaviors, as you have been most of your life.

► You do not have to agree completely with every word or statement in the paragraph you select! You may agree with only 80 to 90 percent of a particular paragraph and still select that paragraph over the other two in the group. However, you should agree with the general tone and overall "philosophy" of the paragraph you select. You will probably disagree with some part of each of the paragraphs. Do not reject a paragraph because of a single word or phrase! Again, look at the overall picture.

► Do not *overanalyze* your choices. Select the paragraph that your "gut feeling" says is the right one for you, even though you may not agree with 100 percent of it. The general thrust and feeling of the paragraph as a whole is more important than individual elements of it. Go with your intuition.

► If you cannot decide which paragraph best fits you in one of the groups, *you may make two choices*, but *only in one group*; for example, C in group I, and X and Y in group II.

► Enter the letter you have selected for that group in the appropriate box.

**GROUP I**

A. I have tended to be fairly independent and assertive: I've felt that life works best when you meet it head-on. I set my own goals, get involved, and want to make things happen. I don't like sitting around—I want to achieve something big and have an impact. I don't necessarily seek confrontations, but I don't let people push me around, either. Most of the time I know what I want, and I go for it. I tend to work hard and to play hard.

B. I have tended to be quiet and am used to being on my own. I usually don't draw much attention to myself socially, and it's generally unusual for me to assert myself all that forcefully. I

C  
B

GROUP I CHOICE



don't feel comfortable taking the lead or being as competitive as others. Many would probably say that I'm something of a dreamer—a lot of my excitement goes on in my imagination. I can be quite content without feeling I have to be active all the time.

C. I have tended to be extremely responsible and dedicated. I feel terrible if I don't keep my commitments and do what's expected of me. I want people to know that I'm there for them and that I'll do what I believe is best for them. I've often made great personal sacrifices for the sake of others, whether they know it or not. I often don't take adequate care of myself—I do the work that needs to be done and relax (and do what I really want) if there's time left.

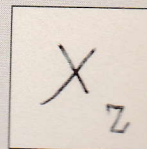
## GROUP II

X. I am a person who usually maintains a positive outlook and feels that things will work out for the best. I can usually find something to be enthusiastic about and different ways to occupy myself. I like being around people and helping others to be happy—I enjoy sharing my own well-being with them. (I don't always feel great, but I try not to show it to anyone!) However, staying positive has sometimes meant that I've put off dealing with my own problems for too long.

Y. I am a person who has strong feelings about things—most people can tell when I'm unhappy about something. I can be guarded with people, but I'm more sensitive than I let on. I want to know where I stand with others and who and what I can count on—it's pretty clear to most people where they stand with me. When I'm upset about something, I want others to respond and to get as worked up as I am. I know the rules, but I don't want people telling me what to do. I want to decide for myself.

Z. I tend to be self-controlled and logical—I am uncomfortable dealing with feelings. I am efficient—even perfectionistic—and prefer working on my own. When there are problems or personal conflicts, I try not to bring my feelings into the situation. Some say I'm too cool and detached, but I don't want my emotional reactions to distract me from what's really important to me. I usually don't show my reactions when others "get to me."

*To interpret your answer, see p. 18.*



GROUP II CHOICE



"If you hate a person, you hate something in him that is part of yourself. What isn't part of ourselves doesn't disturb us."

HERMAN HESSE

## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND ABOUT TYPE

- ▶ While everyone has a certain mix of types in their overall personality, one particular pattern or style is our "home base," and we return to it over and over. Our basic type stays the same throughout life. While people change and develop in numerous ways, they do not change from one basic personality type to another.
- ▶ The descriptions of the personality types are universal and apply equally to males and females. Of course, males and females will express the same attitudes, traits, and tendencies somewhat differently, but the basic issues of the type remain the same.
- ▶ Not everything in the description of your basic type will apply to you *all the time*. This is because we fluctuate constantly among the healthy, average, and unhealthy traits that make up our personality type, as we will see in our discussion of the Levels of Development (Chapter 6). We will also see that increasing maturation or increasing stress have a significant influence on how we are expressing our type.
- ▶ Although we have given each type a descriptive title (such as the Reformer, the Helper, and so forth), in practice we prefer to use its Enneagram number. Numbers are value neutral—they provide an unbiased, shorthand way of referring to the type. Furthermore, the numerical ranking of the types is not significant: being a type with a higher number is not better than being a type with a lower number. (For example, it is not better to be a Nine than a One.)
- ▶ None of the personality types is better or worse than any other—all types have unique assets and liabilities, strengths and weaknesses. Some types can be more valued than others in a given culture or group, however. As you learn more about all of the types, you will see that just as each has unique capacities, each has different limitations.
- ▶ No matter what type you are, *you have all nine types in you, to some degree*. To explore them all and see them all operating in you is to see the full spectrum of human nature. This awareness will give you far more understanding of and compassion for others, because you will recognize many aspects of their particular habits and reactions in yourself. It is much more difficult to condemn the aggressiveness of Eights or the disguised neediness of Twos, for instance, if we are aware of aggressiveness and neediness in ourselves. If you investigate all nine types in yourself, you will see how interdependent they are—just as the Enneagram symbol represents them.



## TYPING OTHERS

We feel strongly that it is always more problematic to use the Enneagram to type others than it is to use it on ourselves. Everyone has blind spots, and there are so many possible variations among the types that it is inevitable that we simply will not be familiar with all of them. Because of our own personal prejudices, it is also very likely that we have an outright aversion to some types. Remember the Enneagram is to be used primarily for self-discovery and self-understanding.

Furthermore, knowing our type or that of someone else can provide us with many valuable insights, but it cannot begin to tell us everything about the person, any more than knowing a person's race or nationality does. In itself, type tells us nothing about the person's particular history, intelligence, talent, honesty, integrity, character, or many other factors. On the other hand, type does tell us a great deal about how we view the world, the kinds of choices we are likely to make, the values we hold, what motivates us, how we react to people, how we respond to stress, and many other important things. As we become familiar with the personality patterns revealed by this system, we more easily appreciate perspectives that are different from our own.

"He who knows others is learned. He who knows himself is wise."

LAO TZU

## THE DEEPER PURPOSE OF THE ENNEAGRAM

Identifying oneself as one of nine personality types can be revolutionary. For the first time in our lives, we may see the pattern and overall rationale for the way we have lived and behaved. At a certain point, however, "knowing our type" becomes incorporated into our self-image and may actually begin to get in the way of our continued growth.

Indeed, some students of the Enneagram have become attached to their personality type—"Of course I get paranoid! After all, I'm a Six," or "You know how we Sevens are! We just have to stay on the go!" Justifying questionable behavior or adopting a more rigid identity are misuses of the Enneagram.

But by helping us see how trapped we are in our trances and how estranged we are from our Essential nature, *the Enneagram invites us to look deeply into the mystery of our true identity*. It is meant to initiate a process of inquiry that can lead us to a more profound truth about ourselves and our place in the world. If, however, we use the Enneagram simply to arrive at a better self-image, we will stop the process of uncovering (or, actually, recovering) our true nature. While knowing our type gives us important information, that information is merely an embarkation point for a much greater journey. In short, *knowing our type is not the final destination*.



The aim of this Work is to stop the automatic reactions of the personality by bringing awareness to it. Only by bringing insight and clarity to the mechanisms of personality can we awaken—which is why we have written this book. The more we see the mechanical reactions of our personality, the less identified with them we become and the more freedom we have. That is what the Enneagram is all about.

### *INTERPRETING THE QUEST (from page 14-15)*

Together the two letters you have selected form a two-letter code. For example, choosing paragraph C in group I, and paragraph Y in group II, produces the two-letter code CY.

To find out which basic personality type the QUEST indicates you are, see the QUEST codes to the right:

<i>2-Digit Code</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Type Name and Key Characteristics</i>
AX	7	The Enthusiast: Upbeat, accomplished, impulsive
AY	8	The Challenger: Self-confident, decisive, domineering
AZ	3	The Achiever: Adaptable, ambitious, image-conscious
BX	9	The Peacemaker: Receptive, reassuring, complacent
BY	4	The Individualist: Intuitive, aesthetic, self-absorbed
BZ	5	The Investigator: Perceptive, innovative, detached
CX	2	The Helper: Caring, generous, possessive
CY	6	The Loyalist: Engaging, responsible, defensive
CZ	1	The Reformer: Rational, principled, self-controlled



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## CHAPTER 2



# ANCIENT ROOTS, MODERN INSIGHTS



**THE MODERN ENNEAGRAM** of personality types does not come from any single source. It is a hybrid, a modern amalgam, from a number of ancient wisdom traditions combined with modern psychology. Various authors have speculated about its origins, and Enneagram enthusiasts have created a good deal of folklore about its history and development, but much of the information being passed around is unfortunately misleading. Many early authors, for example, attributed the entire system to Sufi masters, which we now know is not the case.

To understand the Enneagram's history, it is necessary to distinguish between the Enneagram *symbol* and *the nine personality types*. It is true that the Enneagram symbol is ancient, dating back some 2,500 years or more. Likewise, the roots of the ideas that eventually led to the development of the psychology of the nine types go back at least as far as the fourth century A.D. and perhaps further. It was not until the last few decades, however, that these two sources of insight came together.

The exact origins of the Enneagram *symbol* have been lost to history; we do not know where it came from, any more than we know who discovered the wheel or how to write. It is said to have originated in Babylon around 2500 B.C., but there is little direct evidence that this is so. Many of the abstract ideas connected with the Enneagram, not to mention its geometry and mathematical derivation, suggest that it may well have roots in classical Greek thought. The theories underlying the diagram can be found in the ideas of Pythagoras, Plato, and some of the Neoplatonic philosophers. In any case, it is clearly a part of the Western tradition that gave rise to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, as well as Hermetic and Gnostic philosophy, aspects of which can be found in all three of these great prophetic religions.

"Learn what you are and be such."

PINDAR



"Take the understanding of the East and the knowledge of the West—and then seek."

GURDJIEFF

"Remember yourself always and everywhere."

GURDJIEFF

There is no question, however, that the person responsible for bringing the Enneagram *symbol* to the modern world was George Ivanovich Gurdjieff. Gurdjieff was a Greek-Armenian born around 1875; as a young man, he became interested in esoteric knowledge and was convinced that a complete science for transforming the human psyche had been developed by the ancients but that this knowledge had subsequently been lost. Along with a handful of friends who shared his passion for recovering this lost science of human transformation, Gurdjieff spent the early part of his life attempting to piece together whatever ancient wisdom he could find. Together these friends formed a group called the Seekers After Truth (SAT) and decided that they would each explore different teachings and systems of thought independently and then regroup periodically to share what they had learned. They traveled widely, visiting Egypt, Afghanistan, Greece, Persia, India, and Tibet, spending time in monasteries and remote sanctuaries, learning everything they could about ancient wisdom traditions.

Somewhere in his travels, possibly in Afghanistan or Turkey, Gurdjieff encountered the symbol of the Enneagram. Thereafter he developed his own synthesis of what he and other SAT members had discovered. He ended his many years of searching just before World War I and began teaching in St. Petersburg and Moscow, immediately attracting an enthusiastic audience.

The system that Gurdjieff taught was a vast and complex study of psychology, spirituality, and cosmology that aimed at helping students understand their place in the universe and their objective purpose in life. Gurdjieff also taught that the Enneagram was the central and most important symbol in his philosophy. He stated that a person did not understand anything completely until he or she understood it in terms of the Enneagram, that is, until he or she could correctly place the elements of a process at the correct points on the Enneagram, thereby seeing the interdependent and mutually sustaining parts of the whole. The Enneagram taught by Gurdjieff was therefore primarily a *model of natural processes*, not a psychological typology.

Gurdjieff explained that the Enneagram symbol has three parts that represent three Divine laws, which govern all of existence. The first of these is the *circle*, a universal mandala, used in almost every culture. The circle refers to unity, wholeness, and oneness and symbolizes the idea that *God Is One*, the distinguishing feature of the major Western religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Within the *circle* we find the next symbol, the *triangle*. Traditionally, in Christianity, this refers to the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Similarly, the Kabbalah, an esoteric teaching of Judaism, teaches that God initially manifests Himself in the universe as



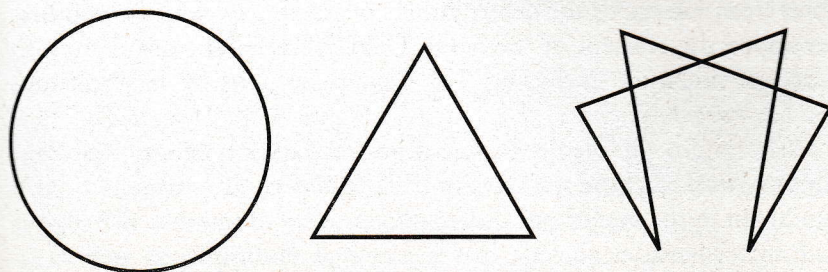
three emanations or "spheres," the *Sefirot* (Kether, Binah, and Hokmah) named in the Kabbalah's principal symbol, the Tree of Life. We can also see reflections of the trinitarian idea in other religions: the Buddhists talk about Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, the Hindus talk about Vishnu, Brahma, and Shiva, and the Taoists talk about Heaven, Earth, and Man.

Quite strikingly almost all of the major world religions teach that the universe is a manifestation not of duality, as much of Western logic teaches, but of trinity. Our usual way of looking at reality is based on pairs of opposites such as good and bad, black and white, male and female, introvert and extrovert, and so forth. The ancient traditions, however, do not see man and woman, but man, woman, and child. Things are not black or white, but black, white, and gray.

Gurdjieff called this phenomenon "the Law of Three" and said that everything that exists is the result of the interaction of three forces (whatever they may be in a given situation or dimension). Even the discoveries of modern physics seem to support the idea of the Law of Three. On the subatomic scale, atoms are made of protons, electrons, and neutrons, and rather than there being four fundamental forces of nature as was once thought, physics has now discovered that there are really only three—the strong force, the weak force, and electromagnetism.

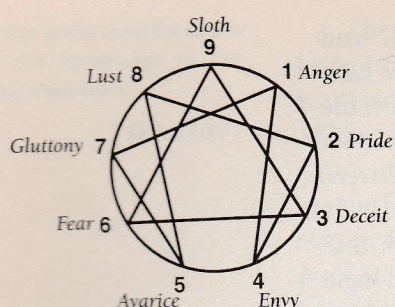
The third part of this triple symbol is the *hexad* (the figure tracing the numbers 1-4-2-8-5-7). This figure symbolizes what Gurdjieff called "the Law of Seven," which has to do with process and development over time. It states that nothing is static; everything is moving and becoming something else. Even rocks and stars eventually become transformed. Everything is changing, recycling and evolving or devolving—although in lawful and predictable ways according to their own nature and the forces that are acting on them. The days of the week, the Periodic Table, and the Western musical octave are all based on the Law of Seven.

When we put these three elements together (the circle, the triangle, and the hexad), we get the Enneagram. It is a symbol that shows the



THE THREE PARTS OF THE ENNEAGRAM SYMBOL





OSCAR ICHAZO'S ENNEAGRAM  
OF THE PASSIONS (DEADLY SINS)

wholeness of a thing (the circle), how its identity is the result of the interaction of three forces (the triangle), and how it evolves or changes over time (the hexad).

Gurdjieff taught the Enneagram through a series of sacred dances, explaining that it should be thought of as a *living symbol* that was moving and dynamic, not as static. However, nowhere in the published writings of Gurdjieff and his students did he teach the Enneagram of personality types. The origins of that Enneagram are more recent and are based on two principal modern sources.

The first is Oscar Ichazo. Like Gurdjieff, as a young man, Ichazo was fascinated with uncovering lost knowledge. In his childhood he used his remarkable intelligence to absorb information from his uncle's vast library of philosophical and metaphysical texts. When Ichazo was still fairly young, he traveled from his home in Bolivia to Buenos Aires, Argentina, and later to other parts of the world in search of ancient wisdom. After traveling in the Middle East and elsewhere, he returned to South America and began to distill what he had learned.

Ichazo researched and synthesized the many elements of the Enneagram until, beginning in the 1950s, he discovered the connection between the symbol and the personality types. The nine types that he linked with the Enneagram symbol come from an ancient tradition of *remembering nine Divine attributes as they are reflected in human nature*. These ideas began with the Neoplatonists, if not earlier, and appeared in Plotinus' *The Enneads* in the third century A.D. They found their way into the Christian tradition as their opposites: the distortion of the Divine attributes became the Seven Deadly Sins (or "Capital Sins" or "Passions") plus two others (fear and deceit).

Common to both the Enneagram and the Seven Deadly Sins is the idea that while we have all of them in us, *one* in particular crops up over and over again. It is the root of our imbalance and the way we become trapped in ego. Ichazo traced early ideas about the nine Divine attributes from Greece to the desert fathers of the fourth century who first developed the concept of the Seven Deadly Sins, and from there into medieval literature, including *The Canterbury Tales* by Chaucer and Dante's *Purgatorio*.

Ichazo also explored the ancient Jewish tradition of the Kabbalah. This mystical teaching was developed in Jewish communities in France and Spain in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries of our era, although it had antecedents in ancient Jewish mystical traditions, as well as in Gnosticism and Neoplatonic philosophy. Central to Kabbalistic philosophy is a symbol called the Tree of Life (*Etz Hayim*) which, like the



## THE NINE PASSIONS

The idea of the Deadly Sins (also called the "Passions") is best understood if we think of the word *sin* not as something bad or evil, but as the tendency to "miss the mark" in some way. The Passions represent the nine main ways that we lose our center and become distorted in our thinking, feeling, and doing.

1	ANGER	This Passion might be more accurately described as <i>Resentment</i> . Anger in itself is not the problem, but in Ones the anger is repressed, leading to continual frustration and dissatisfaction with themselves and with the world.
2	PRIDE	Pride refers to an inability or unwillingness to acknowledge one's own suffering. Twos deny many of their own needs while attempting to "help" others. This Passion could also be described as <i>Vainglory</i> —pride in one's own virtue.
3	DECEIT	Deceit means deceiving ourselves into believing that we are only the ego self. When we believe this, we put our efforts into developing our egos instead of our true nature. We could also call this passion <i>Vanity</i> , our attempt to make the ego feel valuable without turning to our spiritual source.
4	ENVY	Envy is based on the feeling that something fundamental is missing. Envy leads Fours to feel that others possess qualities that they lack. Fours long for what is absent but often fail to notice the many blessings in their lives.
5	AVARICE	Fives feel that they lack inner resources and that too much interaction with others will lead to catastrophic depletion. This Passion leads Fives to withhold themselves from contact with the world. Thus they hold on to their resources and minimize their needs.
6	FEAR	This Passion might be more accurately described as <i>Anxiety</i> because anxiety leads us to be afraid of things that are not actually happening now. Sixes walk around in a constant state of apprehension and worry about possible future events.
7	GLUTTONY	Gluttony refers to the insatiable desire to "fill oneself up" with experiences. Sevens attempt to overcome feelings of inner emptiness by pursuing a variety of positive, stimulating ideas and activities, but they never feel that they have enough.
8	LUST	Lust does not only refer to sexual lust; Eights are "lusty" in that they are driven by a constant need for intensity, control, and self-extension. Lust causes Eights to try to push everything in their lives—to assert themselves willfully.
9	SLOTH	Sloth does not simply mean laziness, since Nines can be quite active and accomplished. Rather, it refers to a desire to be unaffected by life. It is an unwillingness to arise with the fullness of one's vitality to fully engage with life.



Enneagram, contains the ideas of unity, trinity, and a process of development involving seven parts.

In a flash of genius, Ichazo was able to place all of this material properly, in the right sequence, on the Enneagram symbol for the first time in the mid-1950s. It was only then that the different streams of transmission came together to form the basic template of the Enneagram as we know it today.

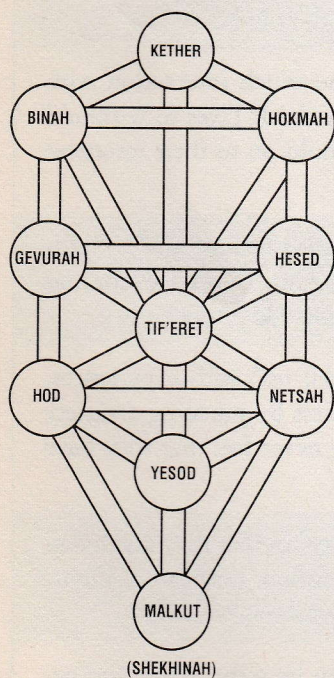
In 1970 noted psychiatrist Claudio Naranjo, who was developing a program of gestalt therapy at the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California, and a number of other thinkers in the human potential movement traveled to Arica, Chile, to study with Ichazo. Ichazo was directing an intensive forty-day program that he had designed to lead students to self-realization. One of the first things he taught was the Enneagram, together with the nine types or, as he called them, "ego fixations."

The Enneagram immediately captivated a number of people in the group, particularly Naranjo, who returned to California and began to teach it in conjunction with other psychological systems that he had studied. Naranjo became interested in correlating the Enneagram types with the psychiatric categories he was familiar with, and he began to expand Ichazo's brief sketches of the types. One way he demonstrated the validity of the system was by gathering together panels of people who identified with a particular type, or whose psychiatric categories were known, interviewing them to highlight their similarities and to elicit further information. For instance, he would gather together all the people in his group who had obsessive-compulsive personalities and observe how their responses fit with the descriptions of personality type One, and so forth.

Naranjo's method of using panels to understand types is not an ancient oral tradition as is sometimes claimed; nor does the Enneagram of personality come from a body of knowledge that has been passed down to us from an oral source. The use of panels began with Naranjo in the early 1970s, and is but one way of teaching and illuminating the Enneagram.

Naranjo began teaching an early version of the system to private groups in Berkeley, California, and it spread rapidly from there. The Enneagram was taught by enthusiasts in the San Francisco Bay Area as well as in Jesuit retreat houses across North America, where one of us, Don, then a Jesuit seminarian, learned the early material. Since the fundamental work of Ichazo and Naranjo, a number of others, including the authors, have been developing the Enneagram and discovering many new facets of it.

Our work has primarily involved developing the psychological basis of the types by filling out the original very brief descriptions and by showing how the Enneagram relates to other psychological and



THE TREE OF LIFE  
(ETZ HAYIM)



spiritual systems. Don's conviction has always been that until the descriptions of the types were fully and accurately worked out, the Enneagram would be of little real use to anyone—and would, in fact, become a source of misinformation and misguided attempts at growth.

A major breakthrough came in 1977 when he discovered the Levels of Development. The Levels revealed the gradations of growth and deterioration that people actually move through in their lives. They showed which traits and motivations went with which types, and why. Most profoundly, they indicated the degrees of our identification with our personality and our consequent lack of freedom. He also emphasized the psychological motivations of the types, as distinct from the impressionistic descriptions which were prevalent when he began working. He developed these and other ideas, such as the correlations with other psychological typologies, and presented his findings in *Personality Types* (1987) and in *Understanding the Enneagram* (1990).

Russ joined Don in 1991, initially to assist in developing an Enneagram type questionnaire, which ultimately became the Riso-Hudson Enneagram Type Indicator (RHETI), and later worked on the revisions to *Personality Types* (1996). Russ has brought his understanding and experience of the traditions and practices underlying Enneagram theory to this work. Subsequently, he further developed the ideas Don had pioneered, uncovering many of the deeper structures of the types as well as many of the system's implications for personal growth. Since 1991, both of us have been teaching workshops and seminars around the world, and many of the insights in this book have come from our experience of working with our students. We have had the privilege of working with people from every inhabited continent and from every major religious background. We continue to be amazed and impressed by the universality and practicality of the Enneagram.





### *THE STORY OF THE LOCKSMITH: A SUFI TALE*

Once there lived a metalworker, a locksmith, who was unjustly accused of crimes and was sentenced to a deep, dark prison. After he had been there awhile, his wife who loved him very much went to the King and beseeched him that she might at least give him a prayer rug so he could observe his five prostrations every day. The King considered that a lawful request, so he let the woman bring her husband a prayer rug. The prisoner was thankful to get the rug from his wife, and every day he faithfully did his prostrations on the rug.

Much later, the man escaped from prison, and when people asked him how he got out, he explained that after years of doing his prostrations and praying for deliverance from the prison, he began to see what was right in front of his nose. One day he suddenly saw that his wife had woven into the prayer rug the pattern of the lock that imprisoned him. Once he realized this and understood that all the information he needed to escape was already in his possession, he began to make friends with his guards. He also persuaded the guards that they all would have a better life if they cooperated and escaped the prison together. They agreed since, although they were guards, they realized that they were in prison, too. They also wished to escape, but they had no means to do so.

So the locksmith and his guards decided on the following plan: they would bring him pieces of metal, and he would fashion useful items from them to sell in the marketplace. Together they would amass resources for their escape, and from the strongest piece of metal they could acquire, the locksmith would fashion a key.

One night, when everything had been prepared, the locksmith and his guards unlocked the prison and walked out into the cool night where his beloved wife was waiting for him. He left the prayer rug behind so that any other prisoner who was clever enough to read the pattern of the rug could also make his escape. Thus, the locksmith was reunited with his loving wife, his former guards became his friends, and everyone lived in harmony. Love and skillfulness prevailed.

This traditional Sufi teaching story, from Idries Shah, can symbolize our study of the Enneagram: The lock is our personality, the prayer rug is the Enneagram, and the key is the Work. Note that although the wife brings the rug, in order to get the tools, the locksmith has to create something useful for his guards. He cannot get out alone, or for nothing. Furthermore, during the whole time he was praying for deliverance, the means of his liberation was literally "right under his nose," although he never saw the pattern or understood its meaning. One day, however, he woke up, saw the pattern, and then had the means to escape.

The heart of the story is clear: *each of us is in prison*. We have only to awaken to "read" the pattern of the lock that will allow us to escape.





## CHAPTER 3

ESSENCE AND  
PERSONALITY

**THE CORE TRUTH** that the Enneagram conveys to us is that *we are much more than our personality*. Our personalities are no more than the familiar, conditioned parts of a much wider range of potentials that we all possess. Beyond the limitations of our personalities, each of us exists as a vast, largely unrecognized quality of Being or Presence—what is called our *Essence*. In spiritual language we could say that within each person is an individual spark of the Divine, although we have forgotten this fundamental truth because *we have fallen asleep to our true nature*. We do not experience our own Divine nature; nor do we experience others as manifestations of the Divine. Instead, we often become hard, even cynical, treating others as objects to be defended against or used for our own gratification.

Most of us have some notion about what personality is, but the idea of Essence is probably foreign to us. When we talk about Essence, we mean it in the literal sense of the word—what we fundamentally are, our *Essential self*, the ground of Being in us. (*Spirit* is another appropriate word.)

It is also important to distinguish Essence, or spirit, from “soul.” The fundamental ground of our Being is Essence or Spirit, but it takes a dynamic form we call “the soul.” Our personality is a particular aspect of our soul. Our soul is “made of” Essence or Spirit. If Spirit were water, soul would be a particular lake or river, and personality would be waves on its surface—or frozen chunks of ice in the river.

Generally, we do not experience our Essence and its many aspects because our awareness is so dominated by our personality. But as we learn to bring awareness to our personality, it becomes more transparent, and we are able to experience our Essence more directly. We still function in the world but with a growing realization of our connection with Divinity. We become aware that we are part of a Divine Presence all around us and in us that is constantly and miraculously unfolding.

“The spirit is the true self, not that physical figure which can be pointed out by your finger.”

CICERO

“Spiritual development is a long and arduous journey, an adventure through strange lands full of surprises, joy, beauty, difficulties, and even dangers.”

ROBERTO ASSAGIOLI



The Enneagram can help us see what prevents us from remembering this deep truth about who we really are, the truth of our spiritual nature. It does this by providing highly specific insights into our psychological and spiritual makeup. The Enneagram also helps us by giving us a direction in which to work, but only as long as we remember that it is not telling us who we are, but how we have limited who we are. *Remember, the Enneagram does not put us in a box, it shows us the box we are already in—and the way out.*

### SACRED PSYCHOLOGY

One of the profound lessons of the Enneagram is that psychological integration and spiritual realization are not separate processes. Without spirituality, psychology cannot really free us or lead us to the deepest truths about ourselves, and without psychology, spirituality can lead to grandiosity, delusion, and an attempt to escape from reality. The Enneagram is neither dry psychology nor fuzzy mysticism but a tool for transformation that uses the clarity and insight of psychology as a point of entry into a profound and universal spirituality. Thus, in a literal sense, the Enneagram is “the bridge between psychology and spirituality.”

The core of this sacred psychology is that *our basic type reveals the psychological mechanisms by which we forget our true nature—our Divine Essence—the way in which we abandon ourselves*. Our personalities draw upon the capacities of our inborn temperament to develop defenses and compensations for where we have been hurt in childhood. In order to survive whatever difficulties we encountered at that time, we unwittingly mastered a limited repertoire of strategies, self-images, and behaviors that allowed us to cope with and survive in our early environment. Each of us therefore has become an “expert” at a particular form of coping which, if used excessively, also becomes the core of the dysfunctional area of our personality.

“Man wishes to be happy even when he so lives as to make happiness impossible.”

ST. AUGUSTINE

As the defenses and strategies of our personality become more structured, they cause us to lose contact with our direct experience of ourselves, our Essence. The personality becomes the source of our identity rather than contact with our Being. Our sense of ourselves is based increasingly on internal images, memories, and learned behaviors rather than on the spontaneous expression of our true nature. *This loss of contact with our Essence causes deep anxiety, taking the form of one of the nine Passions*. Once in place, these Passions, which are usually unconscious and invisible to us, begin to drive the personality.

Understanding our personality type and its dynamics, therefore, offers an especially potent approach to the unconscious, to our wounds and compensations, and ultimately, to our healing and transformation.



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The Enneagram shows us where our personality most "trips us up." It highlights both what is possible for us, as well as how self-defeating and unnecessary many of our old reactions and behaviors are. This is why, when we identify with the personality, we are settling on being much less than who we really are. It is as though we were given a mansion to live in, with rich furnishings and beautifully kept grounds, but have confined ourselves to a small dark closet in the basement. Most of us have even forgotten that the rest of the mansion exists, or that we are really its owner.

As spiritual teachers through the ages have pointed out, *we have fallen asleep to ourselves and to our own lives*. Most of the day we walk around preoccupied by ideas, anxieties, worries, and mental pictures. Seldom are we present to ourselves and to our immediate experience. As we begin to work on ourselves, however, we begin to see that our attention has been taken or "magnetized" by the preoccupations and features of our personality, and that we are actually sleepwalking through much of life. This view of things is contrary to common sense and often feels insulting to the way we see ourselves—as self-determining, conscious, and in control.

At the same time, our personality is not "bad." Our personality is an important part of our development and is necessary for the refinement of our Essential nature. The problem is that we become stuck in personality and do not know how to move on to the next phase. This is not the result of any inherent flaw in ourselves, rather it is an arrested development that occurs because almost no one in our formative years was aware that any more was possible. Our parents and teachers may have had some glimmers of their true nature, but like us, they generally did not recognize them, much less live as expressions of them.

Thus one of the most transformational insights that the Enneagram can provide is the realization that *we are not our personality*. To begin to grasp this is to undergo a transformation of our sense of self. When we begin to understand that we are not our personality, we also begin to realize that we are spiritual beings who *have* a personality and who are manifesting themselves through that personality. When we stop identifying with our personality and stop defending it, a miracle happens: our Essential nature spontaneously arises and transforms us.

## PERSONALITY DOES NOT GO AWAY

The purpose of the Enneagram is not to help us get rid of our personality. Even if we could, it would not be very helpful. This is reassuring to those of us who fear that if we let go of our personality, we will lose our identity or become less capable or effective.

In fact, exactly the opposite is true. When we get in touch with our Essence, we do not lose our personality. It becomes more transparent

"... the neurotic process ... is a problem of the self. It is a process of abandoning the real self for an idealized one; of trying to actualize this pseudoself instead of our given human potentials."

KAREN HORNEY

"The greatest happiness is to know the source of unhappiness."

DOSTOYEVSKY



and flexible, something that helps us live rather than something that takes over our lives. Moments of "flow" and "peak performance" arise when we are most present and aware—qualities of Essence—whereas the manifestations of our personality often cause us to overlook things, make mistakes, and create problems of all kinds. For example, if we are particularly anxious about a trip, we will likely pack the wrong clothes or forget important articles. Learning how to stay relaxed and present under everyday pressures can make our lives easier.

As we become less identified with our personality, it becomes a smaller part of the totality of who we are. The personality still exists, but there is a more active intelligence, a sensitivity, and a Presence underlying it that uses the personality as a vehicle rather than being driven by it. As we identify more with our Essence, we see that we do not lose our identity—we actually find it.

It would be misleading, however, to suggest that one experience of awakening, or even a few of them, will free us from identification with our personality. While each moment of self-realization transforms us to some degree, it usually takes many such experiences before we can live and function with an expanded awareness. But as these experiences accumulate, our identity gradually opens up to include more and more of our Essential nature. A capacity for deeper experiences is created and the vessel expands to become a more constant carrier of the Divine. Our inner light becomes brighter and shines more warmly into the world.

"Whenever a man awakes, he awakes from the false assumption that he has always been awake, and therefore the master of his thoughts, feelings, and actions."

HENRI TRACOL

## THE BASIC FEAR AND BASIC DESIRE

"The very things we wish to avoid, neglect, and flee from turn out to be the 'prima materia' from which all real growth comes."

ANDREW HARVEY

The mechanism of the personality is set in motion by what we call the *Basic Fear* of each type. The Basic Fear arises because of the inevitable loss of contact with our Essential nature in early childhood. This loss occurs for a number of reasons.

As newborn babies, we arrived in the world with natural, innate needs that had to be met for us to develop into mature human beings. However, even in the best circumstances, our parents inevitably could not meet all of our developmental needs perfectly. No matter how well intentioned they were, at certain times they had difficulty coping with our needs, especially those that had not been adequately met in themselves. As babies, it is our nature to express a wide range of emotions and states of being. If these qualities are blocked in our parents, they will feel anxious and uncomfortable whenever those qualities arise in us. This made our infant selves anxious and unhappy.

If, for example, a baby is expressing her joyfulness and delight in being alive, but her mother is depressed, it is unlikely that the mother will feel comfortable with the baby's joy. As a result, the baby learns to



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suppress her joy to keep the mother from getting more upset. Another baby with a different temperament might cry or make stronger attempts to get a reaction from the mother, but no matter what response the baby uses, her own joy is not mirrored. It is important to realize that these reactions did not occur because our parents were "bad" but because they could only mirror the qualities that were not blocked in themselves. This limited—and often dysfunctional—range of behaviors and attitudes become imprinted on the child's receptive soul as the psychic backdrop that the child brings into life and all future relationships.

As a result of unmet infant needs and subsequent blockages, we begin to feel very early in life that certain key elements in us are missing. Naturally, this feeling creates deep anxiety. It is likely that our innate temperament determines how we may respond to that anxiety, but no matter what our later personality type, we eventually come to the conclusion that there is something fundamentally wrong with us. Even if we cannot express it in words, we feel the tug of a powerful, unconscious anxiety—our Basic Fear.

Each type has its own characteristic Basic Fear, although the Basic Fears are also universal. (From a more subtle perspective, each Basic Fear is a reaction to the universal fear of death and annihilation—our personality's fear of nothingness.) We will recognize the Basic Fears of all nine types in ourselves, although our own type's Basic Fear motivates our behavior much more than the others.

"All men should strive to learn  
before they die what they are run-  
ning from, and to, and why."

JAMES THURBER

## UNCONSCIOUS CHILDHOOD MESSAGES

We all received many different unconscious messages from our mother and father (as well as from other significant figures) during childhood. Those messages had a profound effect on our growing identity and on how much we were allowed to fully be ourselves. Unless our parents were highly developed, conscious human beings themselves, the expansive brilliance of our soul was forced to shut down to varying degrees.

Although some of us received many of the following messages, one message tends to be central to each type. Which messages particularly affect you?

- Type One: "It's not okay to make mistakes."
- Type Two: "It's not okay to have your own needs."
- Type Three: "It's not okay to have your own feelings and identity."
- Type Four: "It's not okay to be too functional or too happy."
- Type Five: "It's not okay to be comfortable in the world."
- Type Six: "It's not okay to trust yourself."
- Type Seven: "It's not okay to depend on anyone for anything."
- Type Eight: "It's not okay to be vulnerable or to trust anyone."
- Type Nine: "It's not okay to assert yourself."



## THE BASIC FEARS OF THE TYPES

1	Fear of being bad, corrupt, evil, or defective
2	Fear of being unworthy of being loved
3	Fear of being worthless or without inherent value
4	Fear of being without identity or personal significance
5	Fear of being useless, incapable, or incompetent
6	Fear of being without support or guidance
7	Fear of being deprived or trapped in pain
8	Fear of being harmed or controlled by others
9	Fear of loss of connection, of fragmentation

"We do not succeed in changing things according to our desire, but gradually our desire changes."

PROUST

To compensate for the Basic Fear, a Basic Desire arises. The Basic Desire is the way that we defend against our Basic Fear in order to continue to function. The Basic Desire is what we believe will make us okay; it is as if we said to ourselves, "If I had X (love, security, peace, and so forth), everything would be great." We might also call the Basic Desire the *ego agenda*, because it tells us what the ego self is always striving after.

The Basic Desires represent legitimate universal human needs, although each type idealizes and grasps after its Basic Desire so much that other legitimate human needs begin to suffer. It is important to understand, however, that there is nothing wrong with our Basic Desire. The problem is that we try to fulfill it in misguided ways that lead us down paths that are ultimately self-defeating.

For example, the Basic Desire of the Six is to find security. As we will see, Sixes can seek security until they ultimately ruin everything in their lives, including, ironically, their security. In a similar way, every type is capable of becoming self-destructive by misguidedly and excessively pursuing its Basic Desire. We keep chasing after the same thing, using the same strategies, even though they are not giving us the results that we want.

Our Basic Desire also unwittingly blocks our Essential nature because the personality will not relinquish its control until it believes that the Basic



Desire has been obtained. For instance, a Six will not allow himself to relax and be present until he feels that his world is completely secure. Similarly, a One will not want to relax and become more present until everything in her world is perfect. Of course, these things will never happen.

Understanding the **Basic Fear and Basic Desire** gives particular insight into the ancient and universal teaching that **human nature is driven by fear and desire**. Thus, we might say that the whole of our personality structure is composed of our flight from our Basic Fear and our single-minded pursuit of our Basic Desire. The entire feeling-tone of our personality emerges out of this dynamic, and it becomes the foundation for our sense of self.

### ESSENCE HAS BEEN CONSTRICTED BY PERSONALITY

Psychology suggests that much of our ability to function as well-integrated, mature adults is determined by how well our specific developmental needs were met in our early childhoods. Those needs that

#### BASIC DESIRES AND THEIR DISTORTIONS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | The desire to have integrity (deteriorates into critical perfectionism) |
| 2 | The desire to be loved (deteriorates into the need to be needed)        |
| 3 | The desire to be valuable (deteriorates into chasing after success)     |
| 4 | The desire to be oneself (deteriorates into self-indulgence)            |
| 5 | The desire to be competent (deteriorates into useless specialization)   |
| 6 | The desire to be secure (deteriorates into an attachment to beliefs)    |
| 7 | The desire to be happy (deteriorates into frenetic escapism)            |
| 8 | The desire to protect oneself (deteriorates into constant fighting)     |
| 9 | The desire to be at peace (deteriorates into stubborn neglectfulness)   |



were not adequately met can be thought of as “gaps” that interfere with our ability to experience our Essential wholeness. Spiritual tradition further suggests that our personality has been formed to compensate for these gaps in our development. Our personality is like a cast that protects a broken arm or leg. The more extreme the original injuries, the more extensive the cast has to be. Of course, the cast is necessary so that the limb can heal and regain its full functioning. But if we never take the cast off, it severely limits the use of the limb and makes further growth impossible. Some people have had to develop the personality equivalent of a full body cast. None of us has gotten out of childhood without some need to hide, or to shut down and protect ourselves from any further hurt.

Seen as a temporary cast, the personality is a highly useful, utterly necessary aid because it has developed most powerfully around the areas of our soul's greatest wounding. It has become strongest where we are weakest. Thus, not only has personality helped us to survive psychologically, it can also now direct us to where we most need to do our transformational work.

But because most of our personality is no more than a collection of

### LOST CHILDHOOD MESSAGES

While we receive many messages from childhood that limit us, there are also messages that every child needs to hear. We may have heard at least a few of them, but almost certainly not all. The Lost Message, the message that has not been heard (even if it has been sent), often becomes the central issue for the child and the core of his or her Basic Fear. Thus, for each type, the adult personality structure does whatever it can to have others give us the Lost Message we never adequately received.

Read the following Lost Messages and observe their impact on you. What message did you most need to hear? How does acknowledging that need affect you now?

- Type One: “You are good.”
- Type Two: “You are wanted.”
- Type Three: “You are loved for yourself.”
- Type Four: “You are seen for who you are.”
- Type Five: “Your needs are not a problem.”
- Type Six: “You are safe.”
- Type Seven: “You will be taken care of.”
- Type Eight: “You will not be betrayed.”
- Type Nine: “Your presence matters.”



conditioned reactions, fears, and beliefs and is not our true Self, our identification with it results in *a profound self-abandonment*. The experience of our identity has shifted from our true nature to the shell of defenses that we have had to develop. As long as we believe that "My personality is me," we will stay identified with our personality. One of the main reasons that we resist changing is that the movement back to our Essence always entails feeling the pain of our self-abandonment. When we are willing to say, "I want to be who I really am, and I want to live in the truth," the process of recovering ourselves has already begun.

For these reasons, in working with this material, we may be exposed to truths about ourselves that we have never known before, or we may reexperience old hurt, fear, or anger. That is why it is important to cultivate *compassion for ourselves*: we have to love ourselves enough to know that we are worth the effort to get to know ourselves as we really are. We have to love ourselves enough to know that even if we become anxious or depressed, we will not abandon ourselves again. When we are willing to experience the truth of how we have been and how we are now, and when we are willing to let ourselves be healed, our true nature emerges. The outcome is guaranteed: all we have to do is to show up.

### *Essence Cannot Be Lost or Harmed*

No matter what our past, we can take heart that *even the most traumatic childhood experiences cannot damage or destroy our Essence*. Our Essence is still pure and untarnished, although it is constricted and obscured by the structures of our personality. If we come from a highly dysfunctional family, this structure will be extremely rigid and restricting. If we come from a more functional family, the personality structure will be lighter and more flexible.

Those who have come from highly dysfunctional families can take heart in knowing that the Essential self within us is completely intact and always looking for ways to manifest itself. Initially, we may have to spend a great deal of time and effort working on the gaps in our development, but the core of our Being is always there to support us. *Again, no matter how painful our early experiences were, our Essence cannot be harmed.* Our Essence is waiting for the opportunity to reveal itself. In a very true sense, we are waiting for the opportunity to become ourselves. Our spirit is yearning to break free, to express itself, to come back to life, to be in the world in the way that it was meant to be.

And yet, ironically, we always fear and resist opening to that which is most real in us. When we trust in the process and give ourselves over to it, however, our true nature comes forth. The result is real integrity, love, authenticity, creativity, understanding, guidance, joy, power, and serenity—all of the qualities we are forever demanding that personality supply.

"We are all serving a life-sentence in the dungeon of self."

CYRIL CONNOLLY



## CHAPTER 4

# CULTIVATING AWARENESS

**HOW CAN WE** get in touch with our true nature—the spark of divinity that lives within each of us? How can we peel away the layers of defenses and identifications that we have taken to be ourselves and learn to trust our Essence to give us sustenance and guidance? How do we do so not just in a workshop or in a peaceful mountainside retreat but in our daily lives? How can we move from an intellectual recognition of what is true, to *living* our truth from moment to moment? How can we make life our practice?

The Enneagram helps us let go of the limiting mechanisms of our personality so that we can more deeply experience who and what we really are. But this does not happen automatically. Understanding the personality types clearly and deeply is the prerequisite, although information alone is not enough to free us. We cannot will, or think, or “technique” our way into transformation. Yet without our participation it cannot happen. So what part do we play in our own transformation?

### “CATCHING OURSELVES IN THE ACT”

Sacred traditions from around the world are united in stressing the importance of our being witnesses to our transformation. We are called on to be vigilant, to observe ourselves, and to bring mindfulness to ourselves and our activities. If we want to benefit from this map of the soul, we must cultivate the art of awareness, learning to be more awake to our lives in each moment without judgment and without excuse. We must learn to “catch ourselves in the act” of behaving according to the dictates of our personality, seeing how we are manifesting mechanically and unfreely from moment to moment. When we are able to notice



what we are doing now, to experience our current state completely and without judgment, the old patterns will begin to fall away.

Awareness is vitally important in the work of transformation because the habits of our personality let go most completely when we see them *as they are occurring*. Analyzing past behavior is helpful, but it is not as powerful as observing ourselves as we are in the present moment. For example, it is certainly worthwhile to understand why we had a terrible argument with our spouse, or were irritable with an associate or a child. But if, while we are having an argument or are being irritable, we suddenly "catch ourselves in the act," something extraordinary can occur. In that moment of awareness, we may realize that we do not really want to do the questionable behavior that only seconds before we were so invested in. We may also see a deeper truth about our situation—for instance, that the "important point" we were so eager to make was really only an attempt to justify ourselves, or worse, a covert attempt to get back at someone. Or that the "witty remarks" we were having such fun with were really an attempt to avoid feeling sad or lonely.

If we are able to stay with these impressions, our awareness will continue to expand. We may initially feel embarrassed or ashamed; we may feel the urge to shut down or to distract ourselves in various ways. But if we stay present to our discomfort, we will also feel something else arising, something more real, capable, sensitive, and exquisitely aware of ourselves and our surroundings. This "something" feels compassionate and strong, patient and wise, indomitable, and of great value. This something is who we actually are. It is the "I" beyond name, without personality—our true nature.

## WAKING UP

Awareness can not only change your life, it can save your life. Several years ago a major bridge on an interstate highway collapsed during the night of a heavy storm. Several sections in the middle of the bridge fell into the river, leaving unsuspecting motorists exposed to a life-threatening situation in the driving rain and confusion of the storm.

One alert driver saw what had happened and was able to bring his car to a stop only a few feet from the edge before he would have plunged to certain death in the river some forty feet below. He risked his life by running toward the oncoming traffic, frantically attempting to alert other drivers to the danger. Almost immediately a carload of five young men came along. They saw the man's frantic attempts to stop them but apparently thought that he was only trying to get help with his own stalled car. Laughing, they made a crude gesture at him and pushed the



accelerator to the floor. A few seconds later they plunged off the edge of the bridge into the river below and were all killed.

From our perspective, it could be said that their personality killed them. Contemptuousness, hostility, bravado, unwillingness to listen, a lack of compassion, or showing off—any one of a number of related impulses—could have been the cause of the driver's decision not to stop. Some habit, some feature of his personality, had the upper hand at a critical moment, with tragic results.

It is a major breakthrough when we fully appreciate the extent to which we entrust our lives to the mechanisms of our personalities and what peril we are in when we do so. Many times it is as if a three-year-old were making many crucial life decisions for us. Once we understand the nature of our personality's mechanisms, we begin to have a choice about identifying with them or not. If we are not aware of them, clearly no choice is possible. As we see our Fiveness, or our Twoness, or our Eightness, however, the opportunity to "not do" our type appears.

Gurdjieff and other spiritual teachers have often asserted that our normal state of consciousness is a kind of "sleep." This may sound strange, but relative to the level of awareness that is possible for us, our ordinary state of consciousness is as far from a direct experience of reality as sleep is from waking consciousness. Nevertheless, we know that when we are asleep, our dreams can seem very real at the time. When we awaken and realize that we have been dreaming, our connection with reality shifts. Our sense of who and what we are comes into another focus.

Waking up from the trance of personality occurs in much the same way. We do a kind of double take, asking ourselves, "What was that all about? Where was I a moment ago?" We can be surprised at how lost we were, although in those previous states we did not feel lost. If someone had asked us if we were fully present and awake, we would have said yes, but from this new perspective we can see that we were not. We may realize that entire sections of our lives have actually been spent in "sleep."

"The Bible says that a deep sleep fell upon Adam, and nowhere is there a reference to his waking up."

A COURSE IN MIRACLES

### CONSCIOUS LOOKING

Take a moment to look around the room that you are in right now. What have you not noticed about it before? Are there aspects of it that you have never seen? Really look. Don't take it for granted that you know everything in it. As you are looking, can you feel your body? Can you notice your posture while you are looking? As you attempt to do this, do you notice anything different between your current sense of yourself and the way you usually experience yourself?



### *What Is Awareness?*

We use the term *awareness* a great deal, and it is an important term in many different approaches to psychological and spiritual growth. Yet finding an adequate definition for this word is difficult. It may be easier to define awareness by what it *is not* than by what it *is*. For instance, we can say that awareness is not thinking, not feeling, not moving, not intuition, and not instinct—even though it can contain any one or all of these things.

Even the most active, focused thinking is not the same thing as awareness. For example, we might be thinking intensely about what to write in this chapter, and we can also simultaneously be aware of our thinking processes. At another time we might notice that we are thinking about an upcoming business meeting—or rehearsing a possible conversation with someone in our head—while we are taking a walk. Usually our awareness is so completely taken up with our inner talk that we do not experience ourselves as separate from it. With more awareness, however, we are able to step back from our imaginary conversation and observe it.

In the same way we can become more aware of our feelings. We may catch ourselves getting caught up in irritation, or boredom, or loneliness. When we are less aware, we are identified with a feeling—I am frustrated, I am depressed—and we do not see its temporary nature: *we believe it is how we are*. After the storm has passed, we realize that the feeling actually was temporary, even though when we were in the middle of it, it was our whole reality. By contrast, when we are aware of our feelings, we clearly observe their arising, their impact on us, and their passing away.

We can also become more aware of what we are doing—of the actual sensations of our body in action or at rest. For both better or worse, our bodies have learned to do many things on automatic pilot. For instance, we are capable of driving a car and of having a conversation at the same time. We might be thinking about what we are going to say next while also feeling worried about getting to our destination, while our body is doing all the complicated things it needs to do to drive the car. All of this can occur automatically and without much awareness, or with awareness of any part of it, or with awareness of all of it.

Each moment presents us with the possibility of expanding our awareness—with many benefits to ourselves:

► When we relax and allow awareness to expand, we become less caught up in whatever has magnetized our attention. If we have been fearful or anxious or lost in daydreams and fantasies, we will gain objectivity and perspective about what we are doing. As a result, we will suffer less.



"Each thought, each action in the sunlight of awareness, becomes sacred."

THICH NHAT HANH

observing  
"I"

► Our expanded awareness enables us to bring more of ourselves and thus more resources to bear on whatever problems or difficulties we may be facing. We will see fresh solutions instead of reacting habitually, according to the mechanisms of our personality.

► Expanded awareness opens us to a real relationship with others and with the world around us. We are nourished and enriched by the pleasure and wonder of each moment. Even what we would ordinarily regard as unpleasant experiences have a very different quality when we experience them with awareness.

We also often use the word *see*, as in the expression "it is important for us to *see* the mechanisms of our personality." However, as with awareness, we need to be clear about what we mean by this word. More specifically, *it is vital that we understand what in us is doing the "seeing."* We are all well practiced at commenting on ourselves, or evaluating our experiences. In such cases, one part of our personality is criticizing or commenting on another part, as if to say, "I don't like that part of me" or "That was a great comment I just made," and so forth. This inner commentary usually leads to nothing more than an increasingly inflated, empty, and impoverished ego structure—and eventual inner warfare. This is not the kind of "seeing" we wish to cultivate.

"Seeing" is not a purely intellectual understanding, either. Our intellect certainly has a part to play, and we do not want to suggest that we do not need our minds in the process of transformation. But the part of us that sees is something more omnipresent yet elusive. *It is sometimes called the inner observer or the witness.* It is our total awareness, alive, here and now, and able to take in experience at many different levels.

## LEARNING TO "OBSERVE AND LET GO"

One of the most important skills we must acquire as we embark on the inward journey is the ability to "observe and let go" of the habits and mechanisms of our personality that have trapped us.

Our maxim is deceptively simple. What it means is that we must learn to observe ourselves, seeing what arises in us from moment to moment, as well as seeing what calls us away from the here and now. Whatever we find, whether pleasant or unpleasant, we simply observe it. We do not try to change it, nor do we criticize ourselves for what we uncover. To the extent that we are fully present to whatever we find in ourselves, the constrictions of our personality begin to relax, and our Essence begins to manifest more fully.

Unlike what our ego may believe, it is not our role to repair or transform ourselves. Indeed, one of the major obstacles to transforma-



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tion is the idea that we can "fix" ourselves. This notion, of course, raises some interesting questions. What in us do we believe needs fixing, and what part of us is claiming the authority to be able to fix another part? What parts are the judge, the jury, and the defendant in the dock? What are the tools of punishment or rehabilitation, and what parts of us will wield them on what other parts?

We are programmed from early childhood to believe that we need to be better, to try harder, and to discount parts of ourselves that other parts do not approve of. The whole of our culture and education constantly reminds us of how we can be more successful, desirable, secure, or spiritual if we were only to change in some way or other. In short, we have learned that we need to be different from how we actually are according to some formula the mind has received. The idea that we simply need to discover and accept who we actually are is contrary to almost everything we have been taught.

Clearly, if we are doing things that harm ourselves—such as abusing drugs or alcohol, or engaging in destructive relationships or criminal activities—then stopping that behavior is necessary before we can do meaningful transformational work. But what usually enables us to change is neither haranguing nor punishing ourselves but cultivating a quiet, centered awareness so that we can see what is compelling us to harm ourselves. When we bring awareness both to our bad habits as well as to the parts of ourselves that would like to rid us of them, something entirely new enters the picture.

As we learn to be present to our lives and open to the moment, miracles begin to happen. One of the greatest miracles is that we can drop a habit that has plagued us for many years in a minute. When we are fully present, the old habit lets go, and we are no longer the same. To experience the healing of our oldest and deepest wounds through the action of awareness is the miracle we can all count on. If we follow this map of the soul into the depths of our hearts, hatred will turn into compassion, rejection into acceptance, and fear into wonder.

*Always remember that it is your birthright and natural state to be wise and noble, loving and generous, to esteem yourself and others, to be creative and constantly renewing yourself, to be engaged in the world in awe and in depth, to have courage and to rely on yourself, to be joyous and effortlessly accomplished, to be strong and effective, to enjoy peace of mind and to be present to the unfolding mystery of your life.*

"We do not have to improve ourselves; we just have to let go of what blocks our heart."

JACK KORNFIELD

"Through our senses the world appears. Through our reactions we create delusions. Without reactions the world becomes clear."

BUDDHA



### SPIRITUAL JUMP STARTS

No matter what type you are, there are specific things you can do to “jump start” your spiritual and personal growth. All of the following are type-specific problem areas, but everyone gets caught up in them from time to time. So, if you want to move forward in your inner work, bring your awareness, as fully as possible, to the following patterns:

- ▶ Value-judging, condemning yourself and others (One)
- ▶ Giving your value away to others (Two)
- ▶ Trying to be other than you authentically are (Three)
- ▶ Making negative comparisons (Four)
- ▶ Overinterpreting your experience (Five)
- ▶ Becoming dependent on something outside yourself for support (Six)
- ▶ Anticipating what you are going to do next (Seven)
- ▶ Trying to force or control your life (Eight)
- ▶ Resisting being affected by your experiences (Nine)

### IDENTIFICATION AND THE INNER OBSERVER

As we gain experience with being present and observing ourselves, we begin to notice the development of a seemingly new aspect of our awareness—a profound ability to “witness” our experience more objectively. As we have noted, this quality of awareness has been called the *inner observer*. The inner observer allows us to observe what is going on in and around us simultaneously, without commentary or judgment.

The inner observer is necessary for transformation because of a psychological mechanism Gurdjieff called “identification,” which is one of the primary ways our personalities create and sustain their reality.

The personality can identify with just about anything—an idea, our body, an itch, a sunset, a child, or a song. That is, at any moment in which we are not fully awake in the present moment, our sense of identity comes from whatever we are paying attention to. For instance, if we are fretting, focusing our attention on an upcoming meeting, it is as if we were experiencing the meeting (although an imaginary one) instead of what is actually happening right now. Or, if we are identified with an emotional reaction—for instance, an attraction to another person—it is as if we *become* that attraction. Or if we feel berated by a critical voice in our heads, we cannot separate ourselves from that voice.

If we quiet our minds even a little, we notice how our states fluctu-

“Identification . . . is a form of escape from the self.”

KRISHNAMURTI



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are from one moment to the next. One instant we are thinking about our job, in the next we notice someone crossing the street who reminds us of a date we had some years ago. An instant later we are recalling a song from our school days until we are splashed by a car driving through a puddle. Instantly we are filled with rage at the idiot driving the car and can think of nothing else until we realize that we want a candy bar to make ourselves feel better. And on it goes. The only thing that is consistent is our personality's tendency to identify with each successive state.

Awareness expands and contracts like a balloon, but identification always causes it to become smaller. We might notice that when we are identified with something, our awareness of our immediate surroundings is greatly diminished. We are less aware of other people, of our environment, and of our own inner state. Simply put, the more identified we are, the more contracted our awareness is—and the more out of touch with reality we are.

"Very few men, properly speaking, live at present, but are providing to live another time."

JONATHAN SWIFT

### CONTINUUM OF AWARENESS

For this exercise you will need a watch or a clock and, if possible, a tape recorder. Find a place where you can sit comfortably and observe the room or location you are in. For five minutes, follow your attention as best you can, naming whatever you are paying attention to. For example, you might say, "I am noticing the way the light hits that wall. I am noticing that I am wondering why I looked at the wall. I am noticing that I am tensing my right shoulder. I am noticing that I feel nervous," and so forth.

You may wish to record your observations, or you may wish to do this exercise with a partner. Even if you do the exercise without a recording or a partner, see if you can discern any patterns in the movement of your awareness. Do you focus more on your thoughts? On the environment? On your sensations? On your feelings and reactions? Do certain themes emerge?

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Over time our identification with a certain set of qualities (such as strength, empathy, peacefulness, or spontaneity, to name just a few) becomes fixed, and our type's characteristic sense of self is established. The feelings and states that comprise our sense of self are those we think are necessary for achieving our Basic Desire. The more we identify with our sense of self, the more we become locked into it, and the more we forget that other choices and other modes of being are available to us. We start to believe that we are this pattern. We focus on only certain qualities from the total range of our human potentials as if saying, "These qualities are me, but those are not. I am this way, but not that way." Thus we develop a self-image, a self-definition—a predictable personality type.

For example, the Basic Fear of Eights is of being harmed or controlled by other people or by life, and their Basic Desire is to protect and defend themselves. Self-protection and self-reliance are universal human



## CORE IDENTIFICATIONS OF THE TYPES

<i>Type</i>	<i>Identifies powerfully with:</i>	<i>To sustain the self-image of being:</i>		
1	The superego, with the capacity to evaluate, compare, measure, and discern experiences or things. Resists recognizing anger-based tension.	reasonable sensible objective	moderate prudent moral	"good" rational
2	Feelings for and about others and feelings about others' responses to them. Resists recognizing own feelings about self and needs.	loving caring selfless	thoughtful warm-hearted concerned	kind compassionate
3	A self-image developed in response to what they perceive as admiration by others. Resists recognizing feelings of emptiness, own self-rejection.	admirable desirable attractive	outstanding well-adjusted effective	having "unlimited potential"
4	Feelings of "otherness," of being flawed, and with emotional reactions. Resists recognizing authentic positive qualities in self and being like others.	sensitive different unique	self-aware gentle intuitive	quiet, deep honest with self
5	Sense of being a detached, outside observer of the world—not part of it. Resists recognizing physical presence and state, feelings and needs.	perceptive "smart" curious	self-contained insightful unusual	alert objective
6	The need to respond and react to inner anxiety about perceived lack of support. Resists recognizing support and own inner guidance.	reliable dependable trustworthy	likable "regular" careful	having foresight questioning
7	Sense of excitement coming from anticipating future positive experiences. Resists recognizing personal pain and anxiety.	enthusiastic free-spirited spontaneous	cheerful eager outgoing	energetic positive
8	Sense of intensity coming from resisting or challenging others and environment. Resists recognizing own vulnerability and need for nurturing.	strong assertive direct	resourceful action-oriented tenacious	robust independent
9	Sense of inner stability coming from disengagement from intense impulses and feelings. Resists recognizing own strength and capacity.	peaceful relaxed steady	stable gentle natural	easygoing friendly



needs, and even if we are not Eights, we need to protect ourselves physically and emotionally. Young Eights, however, begin to focus on the qualities they find in themselves that will help them protect themselves. They discover their strength, willpower, perseverance, and self-assertion and start using these capacities to develop and reinforce their ego identity.

## THE FEAR OF BEING PRESENT

Inevitably, when we stay open to ourselves for any period of time, we begin to feel anxious, intuiting that something uncomfortable may arise. This happens because we are "pushing the envelope" of our personality. We can take heart because experiencing some degree of anxiety during transformational work is a good sign. When we move beyond our old defenses, we also start to experience the very feelings that we have been defending ourselves from all of our lives.

This explains why we can have fulfilling spiritual experiences and then quickly find ourselves in a fearful, reactive, or negative state again. The process of growth entails an ongoing cycling among letting go of old blockages, opening up to new possibilities in ourselves, and then encountering deeper levels of blockage. Although we might wish that spiritual growth would be more linear and that it could be accomplished in one or two major breakthroughs, the reality is that it is a process that we must go through many times on many different fronts until our whole psyche is reorganized.

Spiritual growth is also a process that requires us to be gentle and patient with ourselves. Frustration, specific expectations about our growth, timetables for spiritual progress, and disparaging ourselves when we fall short of our expectations are all common reactions, but they do not help. It took many years to build up our ego defenses, so we cannot expect to dismantle them overnight. Our soul has its own wisdom, and it will not allow us to see anything about ourselves (much less release it) until we are truly ready to do so.

When we begin to do this kind of work, there is also a common fear that being present means sitting around "contemplating our navel" or staring at a wall. We have the notion that if we become more present, we will not be able to deal with the important problems in our lives—we will be "spacey," impractical, and ineffective. In fact, just the reverse is true: we are more alert and our judgments and insights are more accurate.

Likewise, many of us believe that if we become more present, we will lose all of our hard-won maturity or professional skills. Again, this is the reverse of what actually happens. When we are present, we are able to do things better and more consistently than ever before; we also acquire new skills far more easily because our concentration improves. When we are mindful, our intelligence operates in ways that will

"And if not now, when?"

THE TALMUD

"If you are irritated by every rub, how will your mirror be polished?"

RUMI



"In the final analysis, we count for something only because of the essential we embody, and if we do not embody that, life is wasted."

JUNG

"If you would only switch on the light of awareness and observe yourself and everything around you throughout the day, if you would see yourself reflected in the mirror of awareness the way you see your face reflected in a looking glass, that is, accurately, clearly, exactly as it is without the slightest distortion or addition, and if you observed this reflection without any judgment or condemnation, you would experience all sorts of marvelous changes coming about in you. Only you will not be in control of those changes, or be able to plan them in advance, or decide how and when they are to take place. It is this nonjudgmental awareness alone that heals and changes and makes one grow. But in its own way and at its own time."

ANTHONY DEMELLO,  
THE WAY TO LOVE

surprise us, calling forth exactly the piece of information or skill required to solve the problem at hand.

On yet a deeper level, we are afraid to stay present and to really show up in our lives because we are terrified that we will relive all of our childhood wounds. If we dare to unveil our true nature, it might not be seen or loved. It might be rejected or humiliated; it might make us feel vulnerable or cause others to fear or betray us. We fear that others will abandon us. We fear that the preciousness of our souls will be disregarded or harmed again.

And yet when we actually show up more fully, we experience immense space, peace, and a quiet aliveness. We discover that we are solid, immensely alive, and connected with the world around us. There is no reason not to live this way, except for the reasons that our personality gives us—biased, self-interested reasons, to be sure.

## AWARENESS LEADS TO PRESENCE

If we stay with this process, paying attention to what is real—to what is happening right now—we begin to experience a subtle *Presence* pervading our inner space and our surroundings. It feels light, exquisite, and pleasurable and can manifest many different qualities. Thus, by bringing our awareness to the actual experience of the present moment, we begin to be filled with Presence. Indeed, we may recognize that *this Presence is what we fundamentally are*.

What is remarkable is that *Presence always reveals what in us is blocking us from becoming more present*. The more we become present, the more we become aware of the parts of our selves that are not relaxed, the parts that we have not fully occupied. The more we are able to relax, the more we become aware of the subtle movement of Presence filling us and surrounding us. It may be helpful just to stay with that impression without labeling it or thinking about it too much. In time, what was subtle and vague will become clearer and more distinct as new layers of Being reveal themselves to us.

Presence breaks in on our daydreams and identifications all the time, and yet because of the structures of our personality, we cannot hold our ground to remain present. The further into the trance of our ego we go, the more "charged" our personality mechanisms become, as if they were electromagnets exerting a fierce and desperate energy. However, becoming attuned to the vibrant nature of Presence, and seeing the enormous investment of our life energy in the "projects" of the personality, provides a way out. At the same time, we cannot simply decide to be present; yet without the intention to be present, Presence is impossible. So how can a person in a trance break out of his own trance?

Clearly, such a heroic undertaking is almost impossible without ad-



equate tools and support. In subsequent chapters we will look at how help in awakening can come from a profound system of understanding like the Enneagram and, most importantly, from a daily practice to cultivate awareness and Presence. In addition, we will suggest a number of tools and supports that can function as "alarm clocks" to awaken us from our trance. The more we heed these "wake-up calls," the more Presence we will have (and the more possible it will be *to wake ourselves up*). But this takes much practice.

Make no mistake—this is a lifelong work. The more moments of awakening we have, however, the more they collectively add momentum to the process of awakening: something is deposited in us—a kernel, the seed of a pearl—that does not go away when we return to our ordinary state. To help us know when we are awake, there are three characteristics we can look for:

1. *We fully experience our Presence as a living being, here and now.* We know that there is someone here; we feel our substantiality, our "is-ness," and, as a result, we are grounded in the moment. Moreover, this occurs not because we are picturing ourselves from some outside viewpoint, but because we are "inside" our experience, fully connected with the sensations of life in our bodies, from the top of our heads to the bottoms of our feet. There is no feeling of resistance to the reality of the moment.

2. *We take in the impressions of our internal and external environments completely and without judgment or emotional reaction.* We are able to observe the many thoughts and feelings that pass through our awareness without becoming attached to any of them. We interact with life from an inner quiet and stillness rather than from anxieties and inner franticness. Our attention is on what is occurring now, not dreaming of the past or anticipating the future or fantasizing about something else.

3. *We are fully participating in the moment,* allowing ourselves to be touched by the impressions around us and to fully taste and experience the richness and subtlety of our life. We are utterly sincere and without artifice or self-consciousness. In each moment, we experience our identity as something entirely new and fresh. We are always looking for a formula, a rule, or a prayer that will turn the trick for us. But *there is no substitute for Presence.* Without Presence, none of the prayers, meditations, teachers, and techniques in the world can transform us. This is why we can spend many years observing the practices of our religion and still not be able to consistently embody the beliefs that we hold. We can have extraordinary experiences and moments of being free from the shackles of our personality, but sooner or later—and usually much sooner than we would like—we return to our old ways. This is because we do not understand the vital importance of Presence: it is not, and cannot be, part of our personality or its agenda.



"Spirit is always present, just as the sun is always shining above the clouds."

DAN MILLMAN

The good news is that Presence is already here, even though our awareness of it has become limited by our preoccupation with the narrow concerns of personality. As we begin to value awareness and to cultivate it and engage in practices to strengthen it, the deeper qualities of our Essential nature manifest themselves more and more clearly.

### AN INVITATION TO ABUNDANCE

The Ennéagram reminds us of the different elements or qualities that constitute a complete human being. Each of the following invitations is based on the strengths symbolized by the nine types; no matter what type we are, we can respond to all of them.

Invitation 1	<i>To live for a Higher Purpose.</i> Remember that it is your true nature to be wise and discerning.
Invitation 2	<i>To nurture yourself and others.</i> Remember that it is your true nature to be good to yourself and to have goodwill and compassion for others.
Invitation 3	<i>To develop yourself and set an example for others.</i> Remember that it is your true nature to take pleasure in your existence and to esteem and value others.
Invitation 4	<i>To let go of the past and be renewed by your experiences.</i> Remember that it is your true nature to be forgiving and to use everything in life for your growth and renewal.
Invitation 5	<i>To observe yourself and others without judgment or expectations.</i> Remember that it is your true nature to be engaged with reality, contemplating the infinite riches of the world.
Invitation 6	<i>To have faith in yourself and trust in the goodness of life.</i> Remember that it is your true nature to be courageous and capable of dealing with life under all conditions.
Invitation 7	<i>To joyously celebrate existence and share your happiness.</i> Remember that it is your true nature to be happy and to add to the richness of experience for everyone.
Invitation 8	<i>To stand up for yourself and to speak out for what you believe.</i> Remember that it is your true nature to be strong and capable of affecting the world in many different positive ways.
Invitation 9	<i>To bring peace and healing into your world.</i> Remember that it is your true nature to be an inexhaustible font of serenity, acceptance, and kindness in the world.



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## CHAPTER 5

# THE TRIADIC SELF

**IF HUMAN BEINGS** were able to stay centered in their Essential unity, there would be no need for the Enneagram. But without working on ourselves, we cannot become centered. It is a universal perception of the great spiritual traditions that human nature is divided—against itself, and against the Divine. Our *lack* of unity is, in fact, more characteristic of our “normal” reality than our Essential unity.

Amazingly, the Enneagram symbol accounts for both aspects of human nature in its unity (the circle) and in the way it is divided (the triangle and the hexad). Every part of the Enneagram reveals psychological and spiritual truths about who we are, deepening our understanding of our predicament while simultaneously suggesting solutions to that predicament.

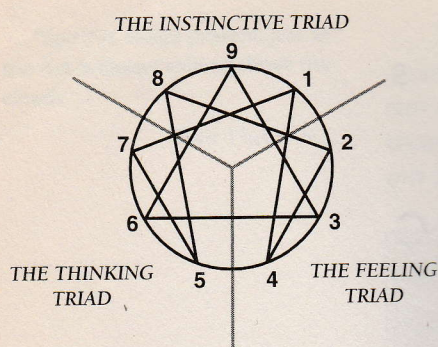
In this chapter, we will examine the major ways in which the original unity of the human psyche has been divided—into Triads, different groups of three. The nine types are not isolated categories but are interrelated in extremely rich and profound ways that have meanings beyond individual psychological types.

The Triads are important for transformational work because they specify where our chief imbalance lies. The Triads represent the three main clusters of issues and defenses of the ego self, and they reveal the principal ways in which we contract our awareness and limit ourselves.

This first grouping of the types refers to the three basic components of the human psyche: instinct, feeling, and thinking. According

## THE TRIADS





to Enneagram theory, these three functions are related to subtle "Centers" in the human body, and the personality fixation is associated primarily in one of these Centers. Types Eight, Nine, and One comprise the Instinctive Triad; types Two, Three, and Four make up the Feeling Triad; and types Five, Six, and Seven are the Thinking Triad.

It is worth noting that modern medicine also divides the human brain into three basic components: the root brain, or instinctual brain; the limbic system, or emotional brain; and the cerebral cortex, or the thinking part of the brain. Some teachers of the Enneagram also refer to the three Centers as the head, heart, and gut, or as the thinking, feeling, and doing Centers respectively.

No matter what type we are, our personality contains all three components—instinct, feeling, and thinking. All three interact with each other, and we cannot work on one without affecting the others. But for most of us, caught in the world of personality as we usually are, it is difficult to distinguish these components of ourselves. Nothing in our modern education has taught us how to do so.

Each of these Triads represents a range of Essential capacities or functions that have become blocked or distorted. The personality then tries to fill in the gaps where our Essence has been blocked, and the Triad that our type is in indicates where the constrictions to our Essence and the artificial filler of our personality are most strongly operative. For example, if we are an Eight, we have been blocked in the Essential quality of strength; thus, our personality has stepped in and has attempted to *imitate* real strength by causing us to act tough and sometimes to assert ourselves in inappropriate ways. The false strength of our personality has taken over and concealed the blockage of real strength even from us. Until we understand this, we cannot recognize or recover our authentic, Essential strength.

In a similar way, each personality type replaces other Essential qualities with imitations that we identify with and try to make the most of.

Paradoxically, if someone's type is in the Feeling Triad, this does not mean that they have more feelings than other people. Similarly, if someone is in the Thinking Triad, this does not mean that they are more intelligent than others are. In fact, in each Triad, the function in question (instinct, feeling, or thinking) is the function that the ego has most strongly formed around, and it is therefore *the component of the psyche that is least able to function freely*.



## THE MAJOR THEMES OF THE THREE TRIADS

### *The Instinctive Triad*

Types Eight, Nine, and One are concerned with maintaining resistance to reality (creating boundaries for the self that are based on physical tensions). These types tend to have problems with aggression and repression. Underneath their ego defenses they carry a great deal of *rage*.

### *The Feeling Triad*

Types Two, Three, and Four are concerned with self-image (attachment to the false or assumed self of personality). They believe that the stories about themselves and their assumed qualities are their actual identity. Underneath their ego defenses these types carry a great deal of *shame*.

### *The Thinking Triad*

Types Five, Six, and Seven are concerned with anxiety (they experience a lack of support and guidance). They engage in behaviors that they believe will enhance their safety and security. Underneath their ego defenses these types carry a great deal of *fear*.

## IN THE INSTINCTIVE TRIAD

Types Eight, Nine, and One have formed around distortions in their instincts, the root of our life-force and vitality. The Instinctive Triad is concerned with the intelligence of the body, with basic life functioning and survival.

The body plays a crucial role in all forms of genuine spiritual work, because bringing awareness back to the body anchors the quality of Presence. The reason is fairly obvious: while our minds and feelings can wander to the past or the future, *our body can only exist here and now, in the present moment*. This is one of the fundamental reasons why virtually all meaningful spiritual work begins with coming back to the body and becoming more grounded in it.

Moreover, the instincts of the body are the most powerful energies that we have to work with. Any real transformation must involve them, and any work that ignores them is almost certain to create problems.

- CONCERNED WITH: Resistance & Control of the Environment
- HAVE ISSUES WITH: Aggression & Repression
- SEEKS: Autonomy
- UNDERLYING FEELING: RAGE



"All spiritual interests are supported by animal life."

GEORGE SANTAYANA

The body has an amazing intelligence and sensitivity, and it also has its own language and its own way of knowing. In indigenous societies, such as the aboriginal tribes of Australia, people have maintained a more open relationship with the intelligence of the body. There have been documented cases in which aborigines knew in their bodies that one of their relatives had been injured many miles away. This body-knowledge enabled them to walk directly toward the injured person to help them.

Most of us in modern societies are almost entirely estranged from the wisdom of our bodies. The psychological term for this is *dissociation*, in everyday language we call this *checking out*. In a busy, stress-filled day, it is likely we sense our body only if it is in pain. For instance, we do not usually notice that we have feet unless our shoes are too tight. Even though our back is highly sensitive, we are usually unaware of it unless we are getting a massage, or have a sunburn or a back injury—and sometimes not even then.

### BEING PRESENT IN THE BODY

At this moment, as you are reading the words on this page, can you feel your body? How much of it? Where is your body positioned right now? How deeply are you experiencing it? What helps you experience it more deeply?

When we truly inhabit our Instinctive Center—fully occupying our body—it gives us a profound sense of fullness, stability, and autonomy or independence. When we lose contact with our Essence, the personality attempts to "fill in" by providing a false sense of autonomy.

To give us this false sense of autonomy, the personality creates what psychology calls *ego boundaries*. With ego boundaries, we are able to say, "This is me and that is not me. That out there is not me, but this sensation (or thought, or feeling) here is me." We usually believe that these boundaries correspond with our skin and therefore with the dimensions of our real bodies, but this is not always true.

This is because we are usually sensing habitual tensions, *not* necessarily the actual contours of our bodies. We may also notice that we have almost no sensation in some parts of our bodies: they feel blank or empty. The truth is that we are always carrying around a felt sense of self that has little to do with how our body actually is, where it is positioned, or what we are doing. The set of *internal tensions* that create our unconscious sense of self is the foundation of the personality, the first layer.



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While all of the types employ ego boundaries, the Eight, Nine, and One do so for a particular reason—they are attempting to use their will to affect the world without being affected by it. They try to influence their environment, to remake it, control it, hold it back, without having their sense of self influenced by it. To put this differently, all three of these types resist being influenced by reality in different ways. They try to create a sense of wholeness and autonomy by building a “wall” between what they consider self and not self, although where these walls are varies from type to type and from person to person.

Our ego boundaries fall into two categories. The first boundary is directed *outward*. It usually corresponds to our physical body, although not always. When we cut our fingernails or hair, or have a tooth extracted, we no longer regard them as part of ourselves. Conversely, we may subconsciously regard certain people or possessions as part of ourselves—our home, our spouse, or children—although, of course, they are not.

The second boundary is directed *inward*. For example, we say that we “had a dream,” but we do not think that we *are* the dream. Some of our thoughts or feelings will also be seen as separate from our identity, while we definitely identify with others. Of course, different people will identify with different feelings and thoughts. One person may experience anger as part of the self while another will view anger as something alien. In all cases, however, it is important to remember that these divisions are arbitrary and are the results of habits of the mind.

In Type Eight the ego boundary is primarily focused outward, against the environment. The focus of attention is also outward. The result is an expansiveness and an outpouring of the Eight’s vitality into the world. Eights are constantly putting out energy so that nothing can get too close and hurt them. Their whole approach to life is as if they were saying, “Nothing’s going to get the upper hand on me. No one is going to get through my defenses and hurt me. I’m going to keep my guard up.” The more wounded an Eight is from childhood, the thicker their ego boundary, and the tougher they are going to make it for others to get through to them.

Type One individuals also hold a boundary against the outside world, but they are far more invested in maintaining their internal boundary. All of us have aspects of ourselves that we do not trust or approve of that make us feel anxious and that we want to defend ourselves from. Ones expend enormous energy trying to hold back certain unconscious impulses, trying to keep them from getting into consciousness. It is as if Ones were saying to themselves, “I don’t want that feeling! I don’t want to have that reaction or that impulse!” They create a great deal of physical tension to maintain their inner boundaries and hold aspects of their own inner nature at bay.

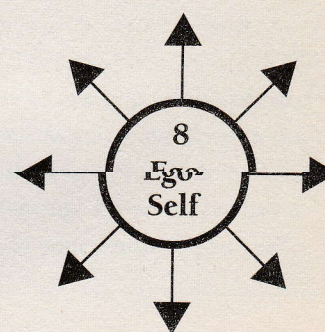
Type Nine, the central type in the Triad (the type positioned on the

“When you are describing or explaining or even just inwardly feeling your ‘self,’ what you are actually doing, whether you know it or not, is drawing a mental line or boundary across the whole field of your experience, and everything on the *inside* of that boundary you are feeling or calling your ‘self’ while everything *outside* that boundary you feel to be ‘not-self.’ Your self-identity, in other words, depends entirely upon where you draw that boundary line. . . .”

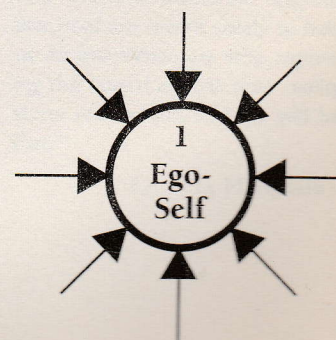
KEN WILBER

#### DIRECTIONS OF EGO BOUNDARIES IN THE INSTINCTIVE TRIAD

EIGHTS: ENERGY DIRECTED OUTWARD AGAINST THE ENVIRONMENT

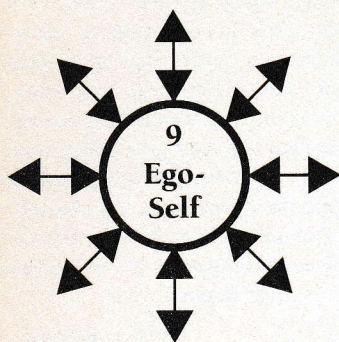


ONES: ENERGY DIRECTED INWARD AGAINST THEIR INTERNAL IMPULSES





NINES: ENERGY DIRECTED  
AGAINST BOTH INWARD AND  
OUTWARD "THREATS"



equilateral triangle), tries to hold their ego boundaries in both areas, internal and external. In the internal realm, Nines do not want certain feelings and states to disturb their equilibrium. They put up a wall against parts of themselves just as Ones do, suppressing powerful instinctive drives and emotions. At the same time, Nines maintain a strong ego boundary against the outside world so that they will not be hurt, like Eights. They often engage in passive-aggressive behaviors and turn a blind eye to whatever threatens their peace. It is no wonder that Nines report that they often feel fatigued, because it takes a tremendous amount of energy to resist reality on both "fronts." If Nines use most of their vitality to maintain these boundaries, it is not available for living and engaging more fully in the world.

Each of these three types has problems with aggression. (While all nine personality types are aggressive in different ways, the energy of aggression is a key component in the Instinctive types' ego structures.) Sometimes the aggression is directed toward the self, sometimes at others. In the course of psychological or spiritual work, this aggressive energy often emerges as a powerful sense of rage. Rage is the instinctive reaction to feeling the need to suppress ourselves—the need to close down and constrict our aliveness. *Eights tend to act out rage, Nines tend to deny it, and Ones tend to repress it.*

We can understand the function of rage more clearly in the experience of a child. All of us, either consciously or unconsciously, feel that as children we did not have the space that we needed to fully develop. When we start exploring this realm of experience, we will discover that beneath our grown-up veneer, we are suppressing (or even more so, repressing) an intense anger that has resulted from this insult to our Essential integrity. (On the positive side, anger is also a way of telling others "Stay away from me so that I can have my own space! I want and need to be whole and independent.") The problem is that if we carry these issues from our childhood, we will continue to feel as though we need to protect our "personal space" even when there is no actual threat to it. Once these issues have been worked through, the energy that drives our rage—as well as the energy that keeps it suppressed—can be released and redirected toward other, more fulfilling goals, including our transformation.

### IN THE FEELING TRIAD

In the Instinctive Triad, we saw how seldom we really occupy our bodies and are really present with our full vitality. In the same way, we seldom dare to be fully in our hearts. When we are, it is often overwhelming. We therefore substitute all kinds of reactions for the power



of real feelings. This is the core dilemma of the Feeling Triad: types Two, Three, and Four.

At the deepest level, *your heart qualities are the source of your identity*. When your heart opens, you know who you are, and that “who you are” has nothing to do with what people think of you and nothing to do with your past history. You have a particular quality, a flavor, something that is unique and intimately *you*. It is through the heart that we recognize and appreciate our true nature.

When we are in contact with the heart, we feel loved and valued. Moreover, as the great spiritual traditions teach, the heart reveals that *we are love and value*. Our share in the Divine nature means not only that we are loved by God, but that the presence of love resides in us—we are the conduit through which love comes into the world. When our hearts are closed off and blocked, however, not only do we lose contact with our true identity, but we do not feel valued or loved. This loss is intolerable, so the personality steps in to create a substitute identity and to find other things to give us a sense of value, usually by seeking attention and external affirmation from others.

- CONCERNED WITH: Love of False Self & Self-Image
- HAVE ISSUES WITH: Identity & Hostility
- SEEKS: Attention
- UNDERLYING FEELING: SHAME

### THE FEELING CENTER

Right now, as you are reading these words on this page, turn your attention to the area of your heart. Take some deep, easy breaths, and actually sense into your chest. What sensations do you experience in this area? Allow yourself to relax and breathe deeply and see what you are feeling in the area of your heart. Does it feel sharp? Tender? Numb? Aching? What is the exact feeling you are experiencing? If this feeling had a color or shape or taste, what would it be? What effect does this exercise have on your sense of yourself?

Thus, the three types of the Feeling Triad are primarily concerned with the development of a self-image. They compensate for a lack of deeper connection with the Essential qualities of the heart by erecting a false identity and becoming identified with it. They then present this image to others (as well as to themselves) in the hope that it will attract love, attention, approval, and a sense of value.

In psychological terms, Twos, Threes, and Fours are the types most concerned with their “narcissistic wounding,” that is, with not being valued for who they really were as children. Because no one graduates from childhood without some degree of narcissistic damage, as adults, we have a lot of difficulty being authentic with one another. There is always the fear that, when all is said and done, we are really empty and worthless. The tragic result is that we almost never actually see each other or allow ourselves to be seen, no matter what type we are. We

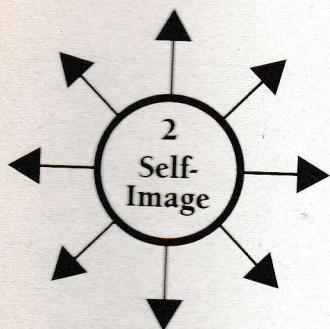
“All we need to do is to give up our habit of regarding as real that which is unreal. All religious practices are meant solely to help us do this. When we stop regarding the unreal as real, then reality alone will remain, and we will be that.”

RAMANA MAHARSHI

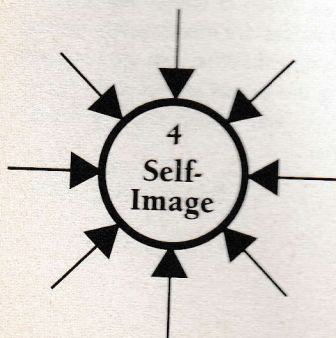


# FOCUS OF SELF-IMAGE IN THE FEELING TRIAD

TWOS: SELF-IMAGE PRESENTED OUTWARDLY TO OTHERS



FOURS: SELF-IMAGE PRESENTED INWARDLY TO THEMSELVES



substitute an image instead, as if we were saying to the world, "This is who I am—isn't it? You like it—don't you?" People may affirm us (that is, our image), but as long as we identify with our personality, something deeper always goes unaffirmed.

The types of the Feeling Triad present us with three different solutions to this dilemma: going out to please others so that they will like you (Type Two); achieving things and becoming outstanding in some way so that people will admire and affirm you (Type Three); or having an elaborate story about yourself and attaching tremendous significance to all of your personal characteristics (Type Four).

Two major themes in this Triad involve *identity issues* ("Who am I?") and *problems with hostility* ("I hate you for not loving me in the way I want!"). Because Twos, Threes, and Fours unconsciously know that their identity is not an expression of who they really are, they respond with hostility whenever their personality-identity is not validated. Hostility serves both to deflect people who might question or devalue this identity, and to defend these types against deeper feelings of shame and humiliation.

Type Two is looking for value in the good regard of others. Twos want to be wanted; they try to obtain favorable reactions by giving people their energy and attention. Twos look for positive responses to their overtures of friendliness, help, and goodness in order to build up their own self-esteem. The focus of their feelings is outward, on others, but as a result, they often have difficulty knowing what their own feelings are telling them. They also frequently feel unappreciated, although, as much as possible, they must conceal the hostile feelings that this generates.

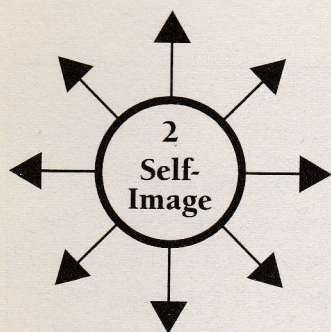
Type Four is the opposite: their energy and attention go inward to maintain a self-image based on feelings, fantasies, and stories from the past. Their personality-identity centers on being "different," being unlike anyone else, and as a result, they often feel estranged from people. Fours tend to create and sustain moods rather than allow whatever feelings are actually present to arise. Less healthy Fours often see themselves as victims and prisoners of their pasts. They believe that there is no hope of being another way because of all the tragedies and abuses that have befallen them. This is also their way of eliciting attention and pity from others and, hence, some degree of validation.

Type Three, the central type of this Triad (the type positioned on the equilateral triangle), directs attention and energy both inward and outward. Like Twos, Threes need the positive feedback and affirmation of others. Threes primarily seek value through accomplishment; they develop notions about what a valuable person would be like, then try to become that person. But Threes also engage in a great deal of internal "self-talk," attempting to create and sustain a consistent internal picture of themselves, like Fours. They are always in danger of "believing their own press releases" more than the truth.

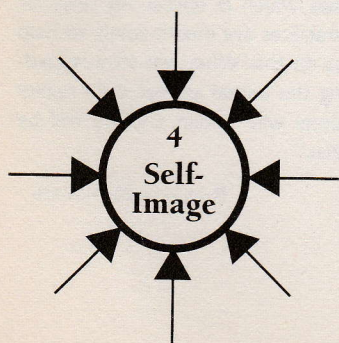


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Despite the various images presented by these types, at root they feel valueless, and many of their personality's agendas are attempts to disguise this from themselves and others. Twos attempt to get a sense of value by saying, "I know I am valuable because others love and value me. I do good things for people, and they appreciate me." Twos are *rescuers*. On the opposite side of the spectrum, Fours are *rescues*. Fours tell themselves, "I know I am valuable because I am unique and unlike anyone else. I am special because someone took the trouble to rescue me. Someone is taking the trouble to attend to my distress, so I must be worthwhile." Threes are paragons who *do not need rescuing*, as if to say, "I know I am valuable because I've got my act together—there's nothing wrong with me. I am valuable because of my accomplishments." Despite their individual methods for "building self-esteem," all three of these types lack a proper love of self.

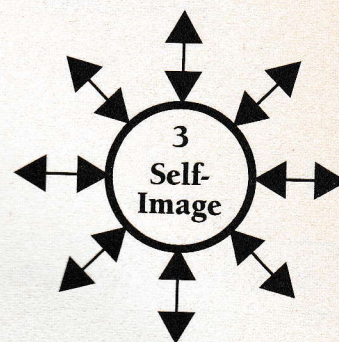
If the types of the Instinctive Triad are trying to manage feelings of rage, in the Feeling Triad Twos, Threes, and Fours are trying to deal with feelings of *shame*. When our authentic, Essential qualities are not mirrored in early childhood, we come to the conclusion that something is wrong with us. The resulting feeling is shame. By attempting to feel valuable by means of their self-image, these types hope to escape feelings of shame. Twos become ultragood, trying to be caring and of service to others so that they will not feel shame. Threes become perfect in their performance and outstanding in their achievements so they will be able to resist feeling shame. Fours avoid deeper feelings of shame by dramatizing their losses and hurts and by seeing themselves as victims.

### IN THE THINKING TRIAD

If the Instinctive Triad is about *maintaining a felt sense of self* and the Feeling Triad is about *maintaining a personal identity*, the Thinking Triad is about *finding a sense of inner guidance and support*. The dominant feelings in types Five, Six, and Seven are *anxiety* and *insecurity*. To put it another way, the Instinctive Triad types are concerned with resisting aspects of the present. The Feeling Triad types are all past-oriented because our self-image is built up out of memories and interpretations of the past. The Thinking Triad types are more concerned about the future, as if to ask, "What's going to happen to me? How am I going to survive? How can I prepare myself to keep bad things from happening? How do I move forward in life? How do I cope?"

The Thinking Triad has lost touch with the aspect of our true nature that in some spiritual traditions is called the *quiet mind*. The quiet mind is the source of inner guidance that gives us the ability to perceive

THREES: SELF-IMAGE  
PRESENTED BOTH TO SELF  
AND TO OTHERS



- ▶ CONCERNED WITH:  
Strategies & Beliefs
- ▶ HAVE ISSUES WITH:  
Insecurity & Anxiety
- ▶ SEEKS: Security
- ▶ UNDERLYING FEELING:  
FEAR



"We must be willing to get rid of the life we've planned, so as to have the life that's waiting for us."

JOSEPH CAMPBELL

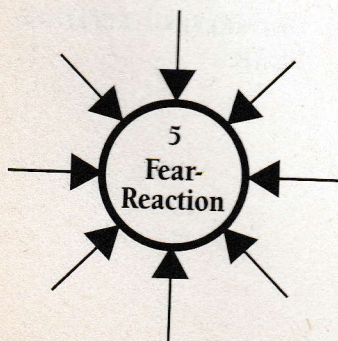
reality exactly as it is. It allows us to be receptive to an inner knowing that can guide our actions. But just as we are seldom fully in our bodies or in our hearts, we seldom have access to the quiet, spacious quality of the mind. Quite the contrary, for most of us, the mind is an inner chatterbox, which is why people spend years in monasteries or in retreats trying to quiet their restless minds. In personality, the mind is not quiet and not naturally "knowing"—it is forever trying to come up with a strategy or a formula so that it can do whatever it thinks will allow us to function in the world.

### THE THINKING CENTER

Right now, allow yourself to relax and get in greater contact with the sensations and impressions you are having. Actually sense what it feels like to be alive in your body at this time. Don't visualize—let yourself experience whatever is here. As you become more grounded and calm, you may begin to notice your mind becoming less "noisy." Continue this process for a few minutes. Stay in contact with your immediate sensations and impressions, and see what effect this has on your thinking. As your mind becomes quieter, are your perceptions clearer or fuzzier? Does your mind seem sharper or duller?

#### DIRECTIONS OF "FLIGHT" FOR THE THINKING TRIAD

FIVES: FLEE INWARD DUE TO  
FEAR OF ASPECTS OF THE  
OUTSIDE WORLD



Fives, Sixes, and Sevens cannot get their minds to simmer down. This is a problem because the quiet mind allows us to feel profoundly supported; inner knowing and guidance arise in the quiet mind and give us confidence to act in the world. When these qualities are blocked, we feel fear. Their reactions to fear distinguish the three types of the Thinking Triad.

Type Five responds by retreating from life and reducing their personal needs. Fives believe that they are too frail and insubstantial to safely survive in the world. The only safe place is in their minds, so they stockpile whatever they believe will help them survive until they are ready to rejoin the world. Fives also feel that they do not have enough to "bring to the table" to meet the demands of practical life. They retreat until they can learn something or master some skill that would allow them to feel safe enough to come out of hiding.

Type Seven, by contrast, charges into life and appears to be afraid of nothing. It at first seems strange that Sevens are in a Triad whose types are afflicted by fear since they are so outwardly adventurous. Despite appearances, however, Sevens are full of fear, but not of the outside world: they are afraid of their inner world—of being trapped in emotional pain, grief, and especially feelings of anxiety. So they escape into activity and anticipation of activity. Sevens unconsciously attempt to keep their minds occupied so that their underlying anxieties and hurts will not surface.



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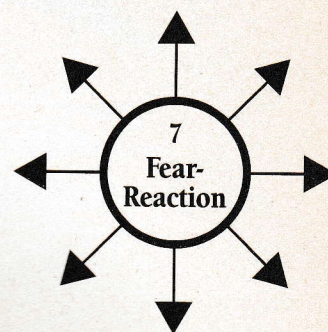
In Type Six, the central type of this Triad (the type positioned on the equilateral triangle), attention and energy are directed both inward and outward. Sixes feel anxious inside, and so launch into external action and anticipation of the future like Sevens. But having done so, they eventually become afraid that they will make mistakes and be punished or overwhelmed by demands on them, so like Fives, they "jump back inside." They get scared by their feelings again, and the reactive cycle continues, with anxiety causing their attention to bounce around like a Ping-Pong ball.

The types of the Thinking Triad tend to have issues related to what psychologists call the "separation phase" of ego development. This is the stage, around two to four years old, when toddlers begin to wonder, "How do I move away from the safety and nurturance of Mommy? What is safe and what is dangerous?" Under ideal circumstances, the father-figure becomes the support and the guide, the person who helps the child develop skills and independence.

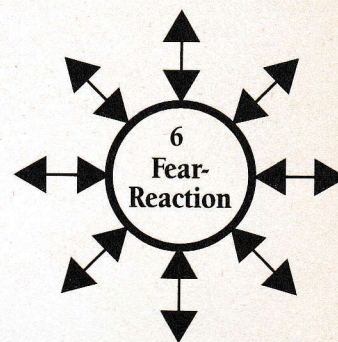
The types of this Triad represent the three ways children might attempt to negotiate the separation phase and overcome dependency. *Sixes* look for somebody like a father-figure, someone who is strong, trustworthy, and authoritative. Thus, Sixes deal with the loss of inner guidance by seeking guidance from others. They are looking for support to become independent, although ironically they tend to become dependent on the very person or system they use to find independence. *Fives* are convinced that support is unavailable or not reliable, so they attempt to compensate for the loss of inner guidance by mentally figuring everything out on their own. But because they are "going it alone," they believe they must reduce their need for and attachment to anyone if they are going to break away and be independent. *Sevens* try to break away by pursuing substitutes for their mother's nurturing. They go after whatever they believe will make them feel more satisfied and secure. At the same time, they respond to the lack of guidance by trying everything—as if by the process of elimination, they could discover the source of nurturance they are secretly looking for.

The Hornebian Groups indicate the social style of each type and also how each type tries to get its primary needs met (as indicated by its Triadic Center). Bringing awareness to the ways in which we unconsciously pursue our desires can help us disengage from powerful identifications and wake up.

SEVENS: FLEE OUTWARD DUE  
TO FEAR OF ASPECTS OF  
THEIR INNER WORLD



SIXES: FLEE INWARD TO  
AVOID EXTERNAL THREATS  
AND OUTWARD TO AVOID  
INTERNAL FEARS



SOCIAL STYLE—  
THE HORNEBIAN  
GROUPS



### PERSONALITY AND ESSENCE: CONTRASTING QUALITIES

*Personality*  
(Asleep)

*Essence*  
(Awake)

#### T H I N K I N G   C E N T E R

Mental chatter  
Figuring it out  
Strategies, doubt  
Anxiety and fear  
Anticipation  
(*Future orientation*)

Quiet mind  
Inner guidance  
Knowing, clarity  
Support and steadiness  
Open to present moment  
(*Here and now*)

#### F E E L I N G   C E N T E R

Self-image  
Stories  
Emotionality  
Holding on to moods  
Adapting to affect others  
(*Past orientation*)

Authenticity  
Truthfulness  
Compassion  
Forgiveness and flow  
Inner-directed  
(*Here and now*)

#### I N S T I N C T I V E   C E N T E R

Boundaries  
Tension, numbness  
Defending  
Dissociating  
Irritation  
(*Resistant to present*)

Connected with life  
Relaxed, open, sensing  
Inner strength  
Grounded  
Acceptance  
(*Here and now*)

Besides the three Triads, there is another important three-times-three grouping of the types, the Hornebian Groups, which we named in honor of Karen Horney, a psychiatrist who developed Freud's work by identifying three fundamental ways in which people attempt to solve inner conflicts. We could also say that the Hornebian Groups indicate the "social style" of each type: there is an assertive style, a withdrawn style, and a compliant (to the superego, that is, "dutiful") style. All nine types fall into these three major styles.



The *assertives* (Horney's "moving against people") include the Threes, Sevens, and Eights. The assertive types are ego-oriented and ego-expansive. They respond to stress or difficulty by building up, reinforcing, or inflating their ego. They expand their ego in the face of difficulty rather than back down, withdraw, or seek protection from others. All three of these types have issues with processing their feelings.

Each of the Hornebian Groups has an intrinsic sense of self in relation to other people. Recognizing and understanding the untruth of this "sense of self" can be extremely valuable for seeing through some of the major features of our ego.

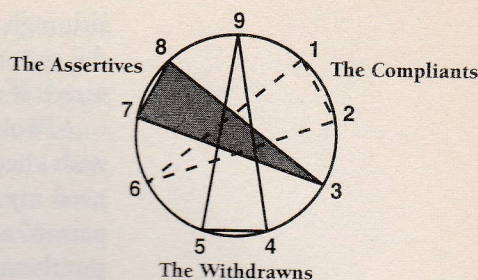
A simple example will make this clear: if you were to walk into a room full of people, you would automatically experience yourself in a certain way. If you are in the assertive group, your first automatic response would be, "I am the center. I am what is important here. Now that I am here, something is going to happen." Assertives automatically feel that everything meaningful happening is in relation to them.

Sevens and Eights naturally feel this way. Sevens come into a room and subconsciously think, "Here I am, everybody! Things are going to be more lively now!" Eights subconsciously think, "Okay, I'm here. Deal with me." These types "take over" the space and expect others to react to them. Threes, however, do not easily or naturally feel like the center because, as we have seen, they are covertly dependent on the attention of others to feel valuable. As much as possible, Threes will find subtle ways to get positive regard from others so they will feel like the center, as if to say, "Look at what I have achieved. Look at me and affirm my value."

The *compliance* (Horney's "moving toward people") include types One, Two, and Six. These three types share a need to be of service to other people. They are the advocates, crusaders, public servants, and committed workers. All three respond to difficulty and stress by consulting with their superego to find out what is the right thing to do, asking themselves, "How can I meet the demands of what others expect of me? How can I be a responsible person?"

It is important to understand that the compliant types are not necessarily compliant to other people; they are, however, highly compliant to the demands of their superegos. These three types try to obey the internalized rules, principles, and dictates that they have learned from childhood. As a result, they often become authority figures themselves—especially Sixes and Ones. (Twos can sometimes also be authority figures, although more often by trying to be the "good parent" or a trusted adviser to others.)

When a person whose type is in the compliant group enters a room, their automatic sense of self is that of being "better than" others,



THE HORNEBIAN GROUPS



although how this is expressed is usually subtle. Ones may come into the room and subconsciously think, "This is so sloppy and disorganized. If I were in charge, things would not be such a mess."

Twos enter a room and subconsciously think, "These poor people! I wish I had time to give everyone my attention. They look troubled—they need my help!" By approaching others from the position of the "loving person" who gives their concern and service to others, Twos automatically put themselves in the superior role of being "better than" others.

Sixes are more troubled by inferiority feelings than Ones or Twos, but they get a sense of "better than" through their affiliations and social identifications. ("I'm a Democrat, and we are better than Republicans!" "I live in New York, which is a better city than Los Angeles." "Nobody's better than my team, the 49ers!")

The *withdrawals* (Horney's "moving away from people") include types Four, Five, and Nine. These types do not have much differentiation between their conscious self and their unconscious, unprocessed feelings, thoughts, and impulses. Their unconscious is always welling up into consciousness through daydreams and fantasies.

All three types respond to stress by moving away from engagement with the world and into an "inner space" in their imagination. Nines withdraw into a safe and carefree Inner Sanctum, Fours withdraw into a romantic and idealized Fantasy Self, and Fives withdraw into a complex and cerebral Inner Tinker Toy. In common language, they all can "zone out" and go into their imaginations very easily. These types have problems with staying in their physicality and with getting out of their imaginations and into action.

The automatic sense of self that arises when they come into a room is, "I am not part of what is going on. I am not like these other people. I don't fit in." The Four and the Five most clearly feel separate from others. They reinforce their sense of self by staying apart and being different. In a room full of people, Fours would typically be standoffish and aloof and would act in some kind of "mysterious" fashion. On the other hand, if they were not in the proper mood, they might simply leave, especially since their sense of social obligation is tenuous ("It is too much for me. I'm just not up to it right now. . .").

Fives might not mind being there, but they would be just as happy at home reading a book or pursuing their own interests. If they stayed, Fives would probably sit on the sidelines and watch everybody else. They would be more likely to socialize if they could have a context, like photographing the proceedings with a camcorder.

Nines might well enjoy the gathering and even participate, but they would remain disengaged. They might nod and smile while thinking about a fishing trip, or they might "tune out" almost entirely and simply "tag along" with someone, allowing the other person to do most



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Earlier in this chapter, we saw that the Triads tell us what each type most wanted in childhood. The types in the Instinctive Triad most wanted *autonomy*: they sought independence, the ability to assert their own will and direct their own life. The types in the Feeling Triad most wanted *attention*: to be seen and validated by their parents. Lastly, the types in the Thinking Triad most wanted *security*: to know that their environment was safe and stable.

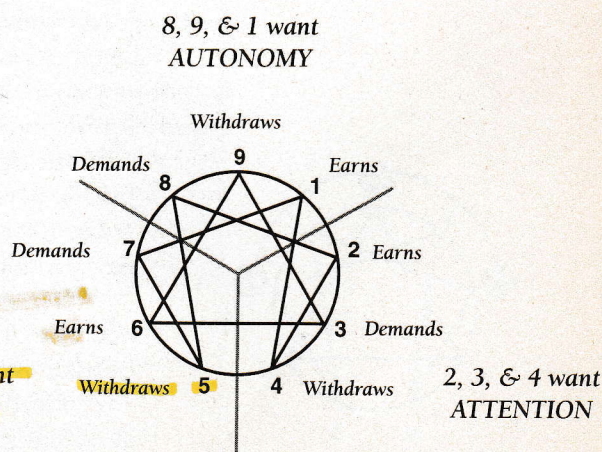
*The Hornebian Groups tell us the strategy each type employs to get its needs met.* The assertive types (Three, Seven, and Eight) insist or demand that they get what they want. Their approach is active and direct as they go after what they believe they need. The compliant types (One, Two, and Six) all attempt to *earn* something by placating their superego to get what they want. They do their best to be "good boys and girls" to get their needs met. The withdrawn types (Four, Five, and Nine) all *withdraw* to get what they want. They disengage from others to deal with their needs.

If we go around the Enneagram, we can put these three groups together in a way that succinctly characterizes each type's core motivation and style. Beginning with the types in the Instinctive Triad we can see that the Eight demands autonomy, the Nine withdraws to gain autonomy (to have their own space), and the One attempts to earn autonomy (feeling that if they are perfect, others will not interfere with them).

Moving into the Feeling Triad, we see that the Two, a compliant type, tries to earn attention (serving and doing thoughtful things for others). The Three, being an assertive type, demands attention (doing whatever wins recognition and attention), and the Four, a withdrawn type, withdraws for attention (in the hope that someone will come and discover them).

In the Thinking Triad, the Five withdraws for security ("I will be safe if I stay away from others"), the Six tries to earn security ("I will be safe if I do what is expected of me"), and the Seven demands security ("I am going after whatever I need to feel secure").

5, 6, & 7 want  
SECURITY



THE HORNEBIAN GROUPS WITH THE MOTIVATIONAL  
AIMS OF THE TRIADS



### COPING STYLE— THE HARMONIC GROUPS

The Harmonic Groups are useful for transformational work because they indicate how each person copes when they do not get what they want (as indicated by the Triad they are in). Thus they reveal the fundamental way that our personality defends against loss and disappointment.

We have also discovered a third significant way to group the nine types that we have named *the Harmonic Groups*. For each primary type (those located on the equilateral triangle, the Three, Six, and Nine), there are two secondary types that seem very much like it in numerous ways—and people repeatedly misidentify themselves as a result of the similarities between these types. For example, Nines often misidentify themselves as Twos or Sevens; Threes misidentify themselves as Ones or Fives, and Sixes are almost notorious in misidentifying themselves as either Fours or Eights.

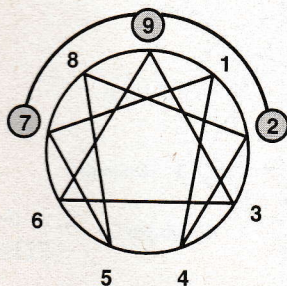
Even though there are no lines that connect them in the Enneagram symbol, common themes and issues unite these types. The Harmonic Groups tell us what attitude the type adopts if it fails to meet its dominant need. In other words, *the Harmonic Groups tell us how we cope with conflict and difficulty: how we respond when we do not get what we want.*

*The Positive Outlook Group* is composed of types Nine, Two, and Seven. All three respond to conflict and difficulty by adopting, as much as possible, a "positive attitude," reframing disappointment in some positive way. They want to emphasize the uplifting aspects of life and to look at the bright side of things. These types are morale-builders who enjoy helping other people feel good because they want to stay feeling good themselves ("I don't have a problem").

These types have difficulty facing the dark side of themselves; they do not want to look at anything painful or negative in themselves. Also, depending on the type, each has trouble balancing their own needs with the needs of others. Twos focus primarily on the needs of others, Sevens focus primarily on their own needs, and Nines try to focus on both, although often with the result that they have trouble adequately fulfilling either.

*The Competency Group* is composed of types Three, One, and Five. These people have learned to deal with difficulty by putting aside their personal feelings and striving to be objective, effective, and competent. They put their subjective needs and feelings on the back burner; they try to solve problems *logically* and expect others to do the same.

These three types also have issues related to working within the confines of a structure or a system. ("How do I



THE 9-2-7 HARMONIC PATTERN:  
THE POSITIVE OUTLOOK GROUP



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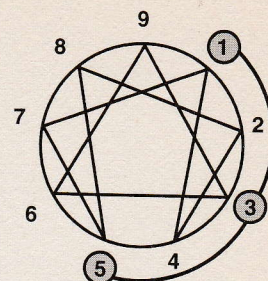
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function within a system? Can I use it to my advantage? Will it hamper me from doing what I want to do?") The types' attitude toward systems evolved from their relationship with their families. These types are not sure how much they want to give themselves over to the values of the system, and how much they want to withhold themselves from it. Ones operate inside the rules, following them so well that no one would dare question their integrity. By contrast, Fives tend to operate outside of the rules. Threes want to play it both ways, having the benefit of the rules and structures while not having the restrictions.

*The Reactive Group* is composed of types Six, Four, and Eight. These types react emotionally to conflicts and problems and have difficulties knowing how much to trust other people: "I need you to know how I feel about this." When problems arise, these types look for an emotional response from others that mirrors their concern. In conflicts, the reactive types want the other person to match their emotional state. "This is really bothering me! It should bother you, too!" The types



THE 1-3-5 HARMONIC PATTERN:  
THE COMPETENCY GROUP

### MAIN THEMES OF THE POSITIVE OUTLOOK GROUP

	Emphasizes:	Avoids seeing:	Problems with needs:
2	Positive self-image: "I am a caring, loving person." They focus on their good intentions.	Their own neediness, disappointment, and anger.	Overemphasis on the needs of others; neglect of their own needs.
7	Positive experiences, enjoyment, activity, excitement, and fun.	Their pain and emptiness; their role in creating suffering for self and others.	Overemphasis on their own needs. They easily feel burdened by the needs of others.
9	The positive qualities of others and of their environment. They idealize their world.	Problems with their loved ones or their environment as well as their own lack of development.	Feeling overwhelmed by their own needs and needs of others. They do not want to deal with either.



in this group have strong likes and dislikes. If there is a problem, others are going to hear about it. In conflicts, they need to deal with their feelings first, and usually once they are able to do so, things can blow over fairly quickly and permanently. If they are not able to vent their feelings, however, these types can become increasingly resentful and vindictive.

The Reactive Group types also have difficulty balancing their need for independence and self-determination with their need to be nurtured and supported by others. They simultaneously trust and distrust others: to accept the support and affection of others is a deep desire for

### MAIN THEMES OF THE COMPETENCY GROUP

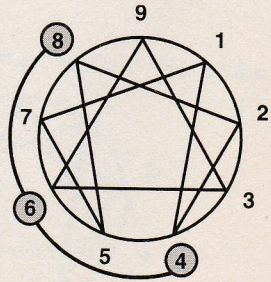
	<i>Emphasizes:</i>	<i>Manages feelings:</i>	<i>Relation to systems:</i>
1	Being correct, organized, and sensible. They focus on standards, improving themselves, and knowing the rules.	By repression and denial. Feelings are channeled into activity, getting things done perfectly. Feelings are also held as physical rigidity in the body.	Ones want to work with the system. They try to be a "good boy or girl" and are irritated with people who disregard the rules.
3	Being efficient, capable, and outstanding. They focus on goals, being pragmatic, and knowing how to present self.	By repression and keeping attention on tasks, staying active. Achievement offsets painful feelings. They look to others for feeling cues.	Threes want to work with the system. But they also like being outside of it—bending rules and finding shortcuts.
5	Being the expert and having deep information. They focus on the process, objective facts, and maintaining clarity and detachment.	By splitting off and abstracting feelings, they stay preoccupied and cerebral, as if their feelings were happening to someone else.	Fives reject the system and want to work on their own, outside of it. They have little patience with rules or procedures.



MAIN THEMES OF THE REACTIVE GROUP

	<i>Seeks:</i>	<i>Fears:</i>	<i>Deals with others by:</i>
4	A rescuer, someone to understand them and support their life and dreams. They want to be seen.	Abandonment—that no one will care for them; that they will not have enough support to find and become themselves.	Keeping others interested by limiting access, playing “hard to get,” and holding on to supporters.
6	Both independence and support. They want someone to rely on, but they also need to be “the strong one.”	Being abandoned and without support, but also becoming too dependent on others.	Being committed and reliable while trying to maintain their independence; they are engaging but also defensive.
8	Independence and self-reliance. They want to need others as little as possible, to be their own person.	Being controlled or dominated by others. Thus, they fear intimacy and becoming vulnerable by trusting or caring too much.	Keeping their guard up, not letting others get too close, and toughening themselves against hurt and their need for others.

these types, but to do so feels like losing control of themselves and of their circumstances. They fear being betrayed and need feedback from people in order to know where others stand toward them. They are either looking for advice and direction (“parenting”) or defying it (rebellious). Subconsciously, Fours want to be parented, whereas Eights want to play the role of parent and provider. Sixes want it both ways, sometimes being the parent, sometimes being parented by someone else.



THE 4-6-8 HARMONIC PATTERN:  
THE REACTIVE GROUP



**HARMONIC GROUPS AT A GLANCE**

*The Positive Outlook Group: Deny that they have any problems*

Nine: "What problem? I don't think there is a problem."

Two: "You have a problem. I am here to help *you*."

Seven: "There may be a problem, but *I'm* fine."

*The Competency Group: Cut off feelings and solve problems logically*

Three: "There's an efficient solution to this—we just need to get to work."

One: "I'm sure we can solve this like sensible, mature adults."

Five: "There are a number of hidden issues here: let me think about this."

*The Reactive Group: React strongly and need response from others*

Six: "I feel really pressured, and I've got to let off some steam!"

Four: "I feel really hurt, and I need to express myself."

Eight: "I'm angry about this and you're going to hear about it!"



## CHAPTER 6

# DYNAMICS AND VARIATIONS

**THE ENNEAGRAM IS** not vague. It can help us pinpoint and personalize our understanding through a finer set of distinctions than the nine basic types. Each type has two *Wings* and three *Instinctual Variants*. These two "lenses" help us zero in on our personality traits with greater accuracy and specificity. But the Enneagram is also unique among personality typologies in that it shows us ways to develop. It precisely maps out the patterns of our growth as well as those which get us into trouble. Through the *Levels of Development* and the *Directions of Integration and Disintegration*, we can understand the dynamics of our personality—the ways in which we change over time.

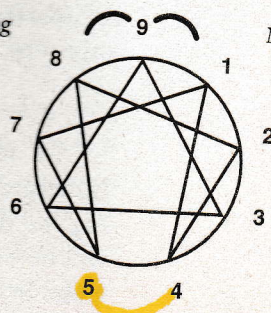
The wings help us to individualize the nine (more general) types of the Enneagram. Each wing is a subtype of the general type. Knowing the wing enables us to narrow down the issues that we must face on the spiritual path.

## THE WINGS

Because the nine types are arranged around a circle, no matter what your basic type, you will have a type on each side of it. One of these two types will be your *wing*. The wing modifies and blends with the basic type and highlights certain tendencies in it. For example, if your basic type is Nine, you will have either an Eight-wing or a One-wing.

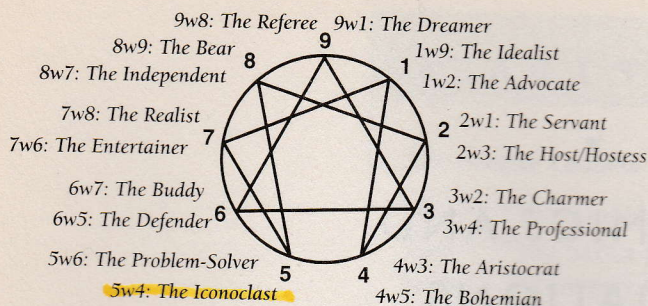
Nine with an Eight-wing

Nine with a One-wing

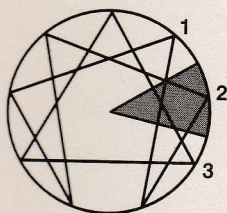


THE WINGS OF TYPE NINE





THE 18 RISO-HUDSON WING SUBTYPE NAMES

THE RANGE OF  
"TWONESS"

## THE INSTINCTUAL VARIANTS

The Instinctual Variants indicate which of our three basic instincts have been most distorted in childhood, resulting in characteristic pre-occupations and behaviors throughout the entire range of the personality type.

In addition to the two wing subtypes for each point of the Enneagram, there are three *Instinctual Variants* for each type, indicating the different areas of life in which each type's particular concerns will be focused. A person's dominant Instinctual Variant represents the arena in which the issues of their type will be most often played out.

Just as all nine Enneagram types operate in us, so do all three

No one is a pure type, and in some cases, we also find Nines with both wings. Most people, however, have one dominant wing.

Taking the dominant wing into consideration produces a unique subtype that is recognizable in daily life. For instance, when we look at Sevens in the real world, we see that there are Sevens with an Eight-wing and Sevens with a Six-wing. Each of these two different wing subtypes has a very different flavor. All of the type and wing combinations yield eighteen wing subtypes, with two for

each type. They are each described in their respective type chapters.

It may help you to think of individual differences by picturing the circumference of the Enneagram as a color wheel that gives the full range of available colors.

The types can therefore be thought of as a family of related shades. Indicating that someone is a Six, for example, would be the equivalent of saying that they are in the "blue family." While we might not have a precise notion about what exact shade of blue is being referred to (teal, navy blue, sky blue, indigo, powder blue, and so forth), we certainly know the difference between blue and red, or between blue and orange, for instance.

This way of looking at the types shows us that there is a continuum of human expression, just as there is a continuum on the color spectrum. There are no real divisions between the varieties of personality types, just as there are none between the colors of the rainbow. Individual differences are as unique as different shades, hues, and intensities of color. The nine points on the Enneagram are simply "family names" that we use to speak meaningfully about differences in personality, ways of speaking about main features without getting lost in details.

## THE SELF-P

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Variants, although as with type, one of these Variants will predominate. The three instincts can be ranked like the layers of a cake with the most dominant instinct on the top layer, another in the middle, and the least powerful instinct on the bottom. Further, this can be done without knowing the person's Enneagram type; the instincts are clearly defined and observable in their own right and are a variable that functions independently of type and are not therefore a true "subtype."

The Instinctual Variants are based on three primary instincts that motivate human behavior: *the Self-Preservation Instinct, the Social Instinct, and the Sexual Instinct*. Thus, each Enneagram type has three variations based on the three possible dominant instincts. For example, a Six could be a Self-Preservation Six, a Social Six, or a Sexual Six, and each of these Sixes would have a noticeably different set of concerns.

A person can therefore be described as a combination of a basic type, a wing, and a dominant Instinctual Variant—for example, a Self-Preservation One with a Two-wing, or a Sexual Eight with a Nine-wing. Since Instinctual Variants and wings are not directly related, it is usually easier to look at a type either through the "lens" of the wing or through the "lens" of the dominant Instinctual Variant. However, combining these two separate frames of reference produces *six variations for each type*, with a total of fifty-four major variations in the entire Enneagram.

Taking this dimension of personality into account may be a finer degree of detail than most people require, but for transformational work the Instinctual Variants are important. *The Instinctual Variants are also noteworthy because they play a pivotal role in relationships. People of the same Variant tend to share values and to understand each other, whereas couples of different Variants (for example, Self-Preservation and Sexual types) will tend to have more conflicts because their fundamental values are so different.*

## THE SELF-PRESERVATION VARIANT

Most people can easily identify this Instinctual Variant. Self-Preservation types are *preoccupied with getting and maintaining physical safety and comfort*, which often translates into concerns about food, clothing, money, housing, and physical health. These issues are their main priority, and in pursuing them, other areas of their lives may suffer.

For example, we might identify this Instinctual Variant in ourselves or others by observing what a person would first notice on entering a room. Self-Preservation types tend to focus on the comfort of the environment. Does the environment support their sense of well-being? They are quick to notice and respond to poor lighting, or uncomfortable chairs, or to be dissatisfied with the room temperature, and they are



constantly adjusting these things. They may wonder when their next meal or coffee break will come, worry if there will be enough food, or if it will be the kind they like, or if it will meet their dietary requirements.

When this instinct is functioning harmoniously with the personality type, these people can be earthy and practical. They apply their energies to taking care of basic life necessities—creating a secure environment, shopping, maintaining the home and workplace, paying bills, and acquiring useful skills so that the orderly flow of life will not be interrupted. When the personality becomes unhealthy, however, it distorts the instinct, causing these people to take poor care of themselves, possibly developing eating and sleeping disorders. They may stock up on too many things, overbuy, overeat, and overpurge themselves of unnecessary “baggage” of all sorts.

Less healthy Self-Preservation types let themselves go physically, or they become obsessive about health and food matters, or both. Further, their normal practicality and financial sense may become distorted, resulting in problems with money and organizing their affairs. If the Self-Preservation instinct becomes completely overwhelmed by personality issues, individuals may engage in deliberately self-destructive behavior, in which the instinct has the effect of turning against itself.

When the other two instincts dominate in an individual and the Self-Preservation instinct is the *least developed*, attending to the basics of life does not come naturally. It will not always occur to such individuals that they need to eat or sleep properly. Environmental factors will be relatively insignificant, and they will tend to lack the drive to accumulate wealth or property—or even to care about such matters. Time and resource management will typically be neglected, often with seriously detrimental effects to their own careers, social life, and material well-being.

### THE SOCIAL VARIANT

Most of us are aware that we have a social component, but we tend to see it as our desire to socialize, to attend parties, meetings, belong to groups, and so forth. The Social instinct, however, is actually something much more fundamental. It is a powerful desire, found in all human beings, to be liked, approved of, and to feel safe with others. On our own, we are rather weak and vulnerable and can easily fall prey to a hostile environment. We lack the claws, fangs, and fur of other animals, and if we did not band together and cooperate with each other, it is unlikely that our species—or we as individuals—would be able to survive. Being able to adjust ourselves to others and be acceptable is a fundamental, survival-based human instinct.

People who have a dominant Social instinct are preoccupied with being accepted and necessary in their world. They are concerned with

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maintaining the sense of value they get from participating in activities with others, be they family, group, community, national, or global activities. Social types like to feel involved, and they enjoy interacting with others for common purposes.

On entering a room, Social types would be immediately aware of the power structures and subtle "politics" between the different people and groups. They are subconsciously focused on others' reactions to them—particularly on whether they are being accepted or not. They are attuned to the notion of "place" within a hierarchical social structure, in regard both to themselves and to others. This can manifest in many ways, such as the pursuit of attention, success, fame, recognition, honor, leadership, and appreciation, as well as the security of being part of something larger than themselves. Of all the Instinctual Variants, Social types like to know what is going on in their world; they need to "touch base" with others to feel safe, alive, and energized. This can range from an interest in office politics or neighborhood gossip to world news and international diplomacy. We could say that the Social instinct is a kind of contextual intelligence: it gives us the ability to see our efforts and their effects in a broader context.

In general, Social types enjoy interacting with people, although ironically, they tend to avoid intimacy. As with all of the instincts, if the person becomes unhealthy, the instinct manifests as its opposite. Unhealthy Social types can become extremely *antisocial*, detesting people and resenting society, and as a result, they may have poorly developed social skills. They fear and distrust others and cannot get along with people, while at the same time they are unable to disengage from their social connections. In brief, Social types focus on interacting with people in ways that will build their personal value, their sense of accomplishment, and their security of place with others.

When the other two instincts dominate in an individual and the Social instinct is *least developed*, attending to social endeavors and commitments does not come naturally. Such individuals have difficulty seeing the point of creating and sustaining social connections, often disregarding the impact of the opinions of others. Their sense of involvement with their community, at any scale, may be minimal. They often have little connection with people, feeling that they do not need others and that others do not need them. Thus, there may be frequent misunderstandings with allies and supporters as well as friends and family members.

## THE SEXUAL VARIANT

Many people initially want to identify themselves as this Variant, perhaps because they believe that this would mean that they are sexy or



because they enjoy sex. Of course, sexiness is highly subjective, and there are "sexy" people in all three of the Instinctual Variants. If we wish to be one Variant rather than another, it is good to remember that *the personality tends to interfere with and distort the dominant instinct*. Thus, people of the Sexual Variant tend to have recurrent problems in the areas of intimate relationships. As with the other Variants, we need to see the way that the instinct plays out more broadly.

In the Sexual types, there is a constant search for connection and an attraction to intense experiences—not only sexual experiences but any situation that promises a similar charge. In all things, Sexual types seek intense contact. They may find intensity in a ski jump, a deep conversation, or an exciting movie. They are the "intimacy junkies" of the Instinctual Variants. On the positive side, Sexual types possess a wide-ranging, exploratory approach to life; on the negative side, they have difficulty focusing on their own real needs and priorities.

On entering a room, Sexual types quickly focus on finding where the most interesting people are. They tend to follow their attractions. (By contrast, Social types notice who is talking with the host, who has power, prestige, or who might be able to help them. Self-Preservation types will note the temperature of the room, where the refreshments are, and what might be a comfortable place to sit.) Sexual types gravitate toward people they feel magnetized by, regardless of the person's potential for helping them or their social standing. It is as if they were asking, "Where is the juice in this room? Whose energy is most intense?"

Sexual types tend to have difficulty pursuing their own projects or taking adequate care of themselves, because on a subconscious level, they are always looking outside themselves for the person or situation that will complete them. They are like a plug looking for a socket and can become obsessed with another if they feel they have found the right person for them. They may neglect important obligations, or even their own basic necessities, if they are swept up in someone or something that has captivated them.

When they are unhealthy, Sexual types can experience a scattering of their attention and a profound lack of focus. They may act out in sexual promiscuity or become trapped in a fearful, dysfunctional attitude toward sex and intimacy. When the latter becomes their orientation, they will be equally intense about their avoidances.

When the other two instincts dominate in an individual and the Sexual instinct is *least developed*, attending to matters of intimacy and stimulation—mental or emotional—does not come naturally. They know what they like, but often find it difficult to get deeply excited or enthusiastic about anything. Such individuals also tend to have difficulty being intimate with others and may even avoid it altogether. They also tend to fall into routines, feeling uncomfortable if there is too



much that is unfamiliar in their lives. They may feel socially involved with people but strangely disconnected even from spouses, friends, and family members.

The Levels of Development offer a way of observing and measuring our degree of identification with our personality structures. Further, they make crucial distinctions between the types possible, and within each type, they add the "vertical" dimension to an otherwise "horizontal" categorical system.

## THE LEVELS OF DEVELOPMENT

Clearly, some people are high-functioning, open, balanced, stable, and able to handle stress well, while others are more troubled, reactive, emotionally stuck, and cannot handle stress effectively. Further, most of us have experienced a wide range of states over the course of our lives, from free, life-affirming ones, to painful, dark, neurotic ones.

The nine personality types alone are merely a set of "horizontal" categories, however subtle they may be. But if the system is to mirror human nature accurately and reflect the ever-changing states within our type, there also needs to be a way to account for "vertical" movement and development within each type. The Levels of Development and the Directions of Integration and Disintegration answer this need.

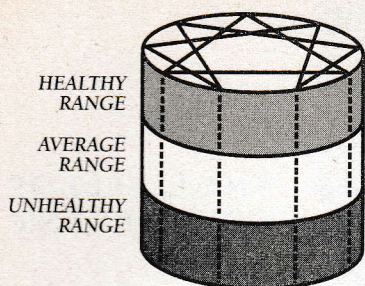
Ken Wilber, a pioneer in developing models of human consciousness, has pointed out that any complete psychological system needs to account for both horizontal and vertical dimensions. The horizontal dimension alone describes only the characteristics of the types; for a system to be complete, however, the vertical element must be taken into account, which is what the Levels of Development do.

As obvious as it now seems, and as widely used as the distinction now has become, it had not been done until Don began to develop the vertical dimension of the Enneagram types (by distinguishing the healthy, average, and unhealthy ranges). When he accounted for the even finer nine Levels of Development, the Enneagram became a fully developed, two-dimensional model, vastly more capable of representing the complexity of human nature. These two dimensions can be represented somewhat like a cake with nine layers.

The Levels of Development have many profound practical and therapeutic implications, as we will see throughout this book. They are a framework that makes movement, growth, and deterioration within each type clear; they help predict behavior, and at their simplest, they are a yardstick of a person's mental and emotional health.

The Levels within each type are distinct and yet interrelated; they give us a way of thinking about "where" in the range of healthy, average,





THE HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL DIMENSIONS  
OF THE ENNEAGRAM

and unhealthy traits a person is within each type and the "direction" in which they are moving. They are important for therapy and self-help as a way of specifying which issues are uppermost in a person's transformational work at any given time. They are also helpful for understanding which traits and motivations properly go with each type and, as a result, for understanding the causes of mistyping and other confusions. For example, Eights are often characterized as "aggressive" and Twos as "seductive," although all types can be aggressive and seductive in their own ways. The

Levels help us see how and when an Eight might be aggressive, for instance, and more importantly, *why*. Perhaps most profoundly, the Levels give us a measure of a person's degree of identification with his or her personality—that is, how defended and shut down or how liberated and open the person is.

It is almost impossible to make generalizations about the types without taking the Levels into consideration, because as each type deteriorates down the Levels, many of its characteristics become their opposite. For instance, healthy Eights are the most big-hearted and constructive of the types. They provide the circumstances in which others can flourish and be strong. But the opposite is true of unhealthy Eights: full of rage and feeling that the world is against them, they are extremely destructive and hard-hearted. Healthy and unhealthy Eights will seem so different from each other that they may seem to be two different types. Furthermore, because people range within the Levels of their type, *no single trait will always be true of a type*. It is therefore unwise to type anyone on the basis of a handful of traits, since all of the behaviors associated with each type change at different Levels of Development.

While our type seems to be mainly inborn, the result of hereditary and prenatal factors including genetic patterning, our early childhood environment is the major factor in determining at which Level of Development we function. Interviewing people on panels in our workshops and professional trainings has confirmed the commonsense observation that the quality of parenting and other related environmental factors (such as health, education, nutrition, and the availability of other resources) all have a tremendous impact on a child's subsequent level of functioning.

This is because each Level represents an increasing layer of fear and defense. It is important to remember, however, that all of these fears and defenses arose in childhood and are carried into our adult life by automatic habits and unexamined belief systems. We can also see how the degree of dysfunction that we had to cope with in our early life determined how many layers of these defenses we had to adopt. The more toxic our child-



hood environment, the greater the fear that has been instilled in us, and the more limited and rigid are the ways we employ to deal with our situation.

The Levels encourage us to think of the development of the types not as a simple on/off switch, but as a continuum of growth. They provide us with early warnings of when we are becoming enmeshed in dysfunctional behaviors before it is too late and bad habits have become entrenched. In the type chapters, we will indicate specific "Wake-up Calls," "Social Roles," "Red Flags," and other features that will help you become more aware of your progress or deterioration along the Levels of your type. As you get to know them and see them functioning in yourself and others, they will become a tool for awareness second in importance only to the Enneagram itself.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE LEVELS

Each type has three main ranges: *healthy*, *average*, and *unhealthy*, with three Levels within each of those ranges. The healthy range (Levels 1-3) represents the high-functioning aspects of the type. The average range (Levels 4-6) represents the "normal" behaviors of the type. This is where we most often find ourselves and where most people operate. The unhealthy range (Levels 7-9) represents the deeply dysfunctional manifestations of the type.

We can also understand the Levels as a measure of our degree of freedom and awareness. In the healthy range, we are increasingly free from the constraints of our personality structures, as well as the habits and mechanisms of our ego. We are free to be in the moment, to choose, and to act with spontaneous wisdom, strength, and compassion, among other positive qualities.

As we spiral down the Levels, however, our freedom is increasingly constricted. We become so identified with our personality mechanisms that we are entirely driven by them, resulting in more suffering for ourselves and others. We become more and more out of touch with reality, with our capacity to make balanced assessments of our situation, and with our ability to stop the avalanche of our ego compulsions. And if we should deteriorate into the unhealthy range, we have almost no freedom of choice whatsoever. Perhaps the only freedom we have in the lower Levels is the ability to choose to go on in the same destructive patterns or to reach out for help—to say either no or yes to life.

### *The Bandwidth*

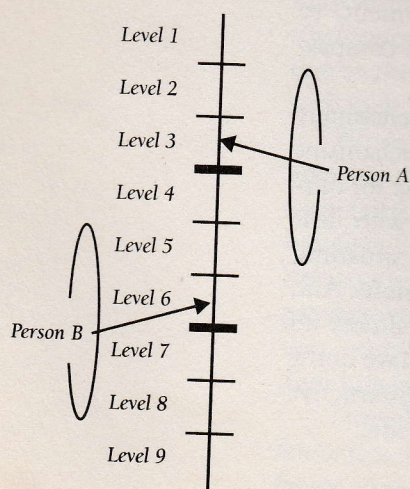
While our basic type does not change, the Level at which we are operating changes all the time. We may move up and down several



Levels of our type in a single day within a certain "bandwidth" or range of habitual behaviors. We may wake up in a balanced, healthy state, but have a bad argument with a colleague and fall two or three Levels. Even though our state can radically change in a short time, we are not a different personality type—we are simply manifesting different behaviors at different Levels of our type.

It may be helpful to visualize the nine Levels of our type as a wooden pegboard with nine holes drilled in it, with one hole for each Level. We have a wooden peg sitting in one of the nine holes. The placement of our peg represents the "center of gravity" of our personality. At the same time, we also have a rubber band attached to the wooden peg, and it stretches up when we are more relaxed and centered, or it stretches down in times of stress. All things being equal, we will tend to return to the Level of our peg, wherever our center of gravity is. The important thing to understand is that real transformation is denoted not by the movement of the rubber band but *by the movement of the peg*. When our center of gravity shifts, it marks a profound change in our entire state of being.

Our mood or state changes all the time, whereas our center of gravity changes much more slowly—usually only as the result of major life crises, or of doing long-term transformational work. When our center of gravity shifts upward even a single Level, we often look back at our former states and wonder how we could have lived that way. We can see our former lower-Level behaviors and attitudes for the constrictions and compensations that they actually were, but which we could not see when we were identified with them.



THE BANDWIDTH AND  
THE CENTER OF GRAVITY

The illustration may make these ideas more clear. Person A has a bandwidth from Levels 2 to 5, whereas Person B has one from Levels 5 to 8. Even though they are the same type, these two individuals would still be noticeably different in their motivations, attitudes, and behaviors, as well as their emotional stability and the quality of their relationships. The arrows indicate at which Level each person has his or her "peg" or center of gravity. As we can see, Person A's center of gravity is at Level 3, whereas Person B's is at Level 6, again accounting for vast differences in the expression of their personality structure.

If our inner work is to be effective, it is important to recognize an unsettling truth: no matter what Level we are actually functioning at (that is, no matter where our center of gravity is), we tend to see our motivations as coming from the healthy



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range. The defenses of our ego are such that we always see ourselves as our idealized self-image, even when we are only average or even pathological. For example, our actual behavior might be at Level 6 or 7, but we will tend to see ourselves at a much healthier Level (generally, Level 2). Therefore, perhaps the first real step we can take on our inner journey is to accurately identify not only our type, but the range of Levels we normally traverse and, importantly, where our center of gravity currently is. The Enneagram will do us no good if we delude ourselves into thinking we are healthier than we actually are.

### *Mood Versus Level*

It is also worth noting that a shift up the Levels is not the same as a shift in our mood. Being in a better mood is not necessarily a marker of being at a higher Level of Development. Our Level is really a function of freedom and awareness, not of mood. Thus, being at a higher Level does not mean that we will always be in a good mood, just as being at a lower Level does not mean that we always will be in a bad mood. An individual could be solidly entrenched at Level 6, completely identified with his personality and highly reactive. He may have just smashed someone in a business deal and be feeling great about it. This kind of gleeful reaction is not the same thing as having internal freedom or real joy. When something goes wrong, the person becomes reactive and negative again—and is once again at the mercy of externals.

On the other hand, having serenity and vitality and engagement with the real world—as opposed to our illusions and delusions—in the midst of difficulties are signs of spiritual growth. When we are centered and grounded, connected with ourselves and our Essential Being, we experience a quiet joy that is palpably different from being in a good mood. Thus, at their most profound, the Levels are really a measure of how connected or disconnected we are with our true nature.

We will now examine some of the major features of the average, unhealthy, and healthy ranges of the Levels of Development—and their relevance for inner work. We follow this sequence because the type chapters are structured this way, and because most people will find themselves in the average range as they begin their inner work.

### THE AVERAGE RANGE

In this range, people are functional and act in ways that others would consider normal, but they are increasingly identified with their ego identity. As a result, they are aware of and able to actualize only a relatively narrow range of their full human potential. Indeed, as indi-



viduals spiral down the Levels within the average range, each type manifests increasing degrees of ego-centricity since the maintenance of the ego becomes the personality's main agenda. Moreover, life and relationships present many situations that do not support their self-image, so manipulation of self and others is always involved and interpersonal conflicts inevitably occur.

### *The Wake-up Call*

The *Wake-up Call* serves as an indicator that we are moving from the healthy range of our type to the more fixated average range. This is a clue that we are becoming more identified with our ego and that conflicts and other problems are sure to arise. For example, the Wake-up Call for Nines is the tendency to avoid conflicts by going along with people. As Nines become more identified with their particular ego structure, they say yes to things that they do not want to do, repressing themselves and their legitimate needs and desires until conflicts inevitably occur.

THE WAKE-UP CALLS	
1	Feeling a sense of personal obligation to fix everything themselves
2	Believing that they must go out to others to win them over
3	Beginning to drive themselves for status and attention
4	Holding on to and intensifying feelings through the imagination
5	Withdrawing from reality into concepts and mental worlds
6	Becoming dependent on something outside the self for guidance
7	Feeling that something better is available somewhere else
8	Feeling that they must push and struggle to make things happen
9	Outwardly accommodating themselves to others



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We will discuss the Wake-up Calls for the nine types at more length in each of the type chapters. Observing yourself doing these is one of the most powerful ways to use the Enneagram in your daily life.

### *The Social Role*

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Once we enter the average range, we increasingly feel that we need to be a certain way and we need other people to respond to us as being that way. We are much more dependent on the particular coping mechanisms of our type, and we are much more fixated on achieving our Basic Desire through those mechanisms. Although we are still functional and pleasant enough, a certain sameness or repetitiveness enters the picture. In family systems theory, this is where the child starts playing a particular role, such as the Family Hero, the Lost Child, or the Scapegoat. We will discuss the Social Role of each type in the individual type chapters. Observing yourself as you slip in and out of your own Social Role is an extremely practical and powerful way to make life your arena for transformational practice.

### HOW EACH TYPE MANIPULATES OTHERS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | By correcting others—by insisting that others share their standards   |
| 2 | By finding out others' needs and desires—thus creating dependencies   |
| 3 | By charming others—and by adopting whatever image will “work”         |
| 4 | By being temperamental—and making others “walk on eggshells”          |
| 5 | By staying preoccupied—and by detaching emotionally from others       |
| 6 | By complaining—and by testing others' commitment to them              |
| 7 | By distracting others—and by insisting that others meet their demands |
| 8 | By dominating others—and by demanding that others do as they say      |
| 9 | By “checking out”—and by passive-aggressively resisting others        |



"He who cannot change the very fabric of his thought will never be able to change reality."

ANWAR SADAT

### *The Social Role and Relationships*

When we become locked into our Social Roles, we try to get the environment—mainly other people—to support our ego and its agendas, usually resulting in conflicts. When this occurs, we know that we are becoming more identified with our personality's agenda. We require others to interact with us only in ways that support our self-image. Conflicts arise because each type uses other people to get what it needs for its ego payoffs. People identified with their Social Role can get locked into a frustrating dance with each other, rewarding and rejecting each other just enough to keep the other person in the dance. In relationships of this kind, one person's neurosis dovetails with the other person's neurosis, creating a static balance that can be difficult to break.

We may also attempt to manipulate others into meeting our Basic Desire in various ways through inappropriate strategies that backfire in the long run. Many of our failed or troubled relationships are a testa-

#### THE LEADEN RULE FOR THE TYPES

1	Fearing that they may be evil, corrupt, or defective in some way, Ones point out evil, corruption, and defectiveness in others.
2	Fearing that they are unwanted and unloved, Twos make others feel unworthy of their love, generosity, or attention.
3	Fearing that they are worthless and without value in themselves, Threes make others feel valueless by treating them arrogantly or with contempt.
4	Fearing that they do not have an identity or any personal significance of their own, Fours treat people disdainfully, as if others were "nobodies" and had no value or significance.
5	Fearing that they are helpless, incapable, and incompetent, Fives make others feel helpless, incompetent, stupid, and incapable.
6	Fearing that they are without support or guidance, Sixes undermine the support systems of others, trying to isolate them in some fashion.
7	Fearing that they are trapped in pain and deprivation of some sort, Sevens cause pain and make others feel deprived in various ways.
8	Fearing that they will be harmed or controlled by others, Eights make others fear that they will be harmed or controlled by their belligerent and intimidating threats.
9	Fearing that they will suffer loss of connection with others, Nines make others feel that they have lost connection with the Nine by "tuning out" people in various ways.



ment to how frustrating these strategies can be. Once we are locked into a pattern of defending our self-image and manipulating others into supporting it, real relating becomes difficult if not impossible.

*The Leaden Rule*

If such manipulations fail to get our needs met, we may intensify our campaign. Rather than stopping our self-defeating behaviors, without awareness, we tend to employ them more aggressively. At this stage, we are not merely trying to get other people to support our ego agendas, we are forcing them on others. Ego inflation is at its maximum, and we act out our anxieties and aggressively pursue our Basic Desire, either overtly or covertly.

We have discovered a feature of the types that occurs at the bottom of the average range. We call this feature the *Leaden Rule*, the opposite of the more famous Golden Rule. If the Golden Rule tells us, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," the *Leaden Rule* states, *"Do unto others what you most fear having done unto you."*

The *Leaden Rule* points out that each type has its own special way of aggressively undermining others to bolster its own ego. The false belief is that "If I put someone else down a notch, it will lift me up one." Thus, each type begins to inflict its own Basic Fear on others. For instance, if Eights fear being harmed or controlled by others, they start threatening people with harm and control. ("You better do it my way, or else I'm going to make you sorry. If I get angry, you know what's going to happen!") They become intimidating, belligerent, and extremely confrontational. If the Four's Basic Fear is of having no personal significance, they may aloofly dismiss others, treating them as if they had no personal significance. They may treat waiters or doormen rudely, or cut off friends from further contact as if they did not exist and had no feelings of their own.

*The Red Flag*

Before each type moves into the unhealthy range, each encounters what we call the *Red Flag fear*. If the Wake-up Call was an invitation to awaken before the person moved deeper into the average Levels and into fixation and increasing "sleep," the *Red Flag* is a far more serious alarm that signals an imminent crisis.

The *Red Flag* is a fear, although one that is realistic and needs to be heeded if the person is to resist the destructive forces that are threatening to sweep him or her down the Levels. If the person is shocked into awareness by his *Red Flag* fear, he may be able to stop acting out the behaviors and attitudes that have gotten him into his current perilous





## THE RED FLAG FEARS

1	That their ideals are actually wrong and counterproductive
2	That they are driving friends and loved ones away
3	That they are failing, that their claims are empty and fraudulent
4	That they are ruining their lives and wasting their opportunities
5	That they are never going to find a place in the world or with people
6	That their own actions have harmed their security
7	That their activities are bringing them pain and unhappiness
8	That others are turning against them and will retaliate
9	That they will be forced by reality to deal with their problems

position. If, however, he is unable or unwilling to heed his Red Flag, he may persist in his self-defeating attitudes and behaviors, with the almost certain result that he will fall into increasingly destructive states.

## THE UNHEALTHY RANGE

For any number of reasons, people can fall into the unhealthy range, but fortunately, it is not as easy to get really stuck there. We may temporarily resort to unhealthy behaviors, but it is rare for our center of gravity to move into the unhealthy range. This is because the demarcation or zone between the average and unhealthy ranges seems to act as a brake in the personality's deterioration. Thus, many people can function within the average range for years without becoming unhealthy. We call this demarcation in the Levels a *shock point*.

Because it takes an additional "shock" or input of energy to move into the unhealthy Levels, most people do not move there unless one of two things has occurred. The first is a major life crisis, such as the loss of

## THE HEAL

In this range, people are so lightly, so to speak, that they have a head-on collision with reality. They have most of the energy they would be seen to have, but it is unbalanced, mature



a job or of a spouse through divorce or death, or a major medical or financial catastrophe. If we do not have the psychological and spiritual tools to deal with such crises, we can suddenly fall into the unhealthy range and be unable to get out. Fortunately, under these circumstances, many people realize that they are "going under" and need to see a therapist or become involved in a recovery program of some kind.

The second reason people move into the unhealthy range is that unhealthy patterns were established in childhood. People regress to earlier, more primitive behavior when conditions become too challenging for them. People who have been extremely abused and hurt (emotionally, mentally, sexually, or physically) as children have had to build huge defenses to protect themselves. Under these conditions, they were never able to learn healthy coping skills and are highly vulnerable to slipping back into destructive patterns.

When we become unhealthy, we lose touch with our true nature; to an increasing degree, we lose touch with reality. We become caught in a maze of reactions and illusions, out of control, and we cannot see solutions to our intensifying fears and conflicts—nor to any practical problems we face. We can only react more intensely and put more pressure on the environment to solve our problems for us. We become so completely identified with the limited mechanisms of our personality that other solutions do not occur to us; or even if they do, we realize that we cannot act on them without extraordinary help. Of course, we do not will ourselves to be unhealthy, but we collapse into these states through ignorance and because the earlier circumstances of our lives did not show us healthier ways of coping with our problems.

In the end, the unhealthy range represents a profound self-abandonment—although a self-abandonment that was forced on us by circumstances. While we cannot undo the history of our childhood and we cannot prevent catastrophes from occurring, we *can* develop our internal resources so that problems do not destroy us. We can also shorten our recovery time when troubles occur. Our transformational work can eventually produce great serenity, acceptance, nonreactiveness, compassion, and an expanded perspective about our lives.

### THE HEALTHY RANGE

In this range, although the ego identity is in place, it is worn lightly, so to speak, and expresses itself beneficially in the world. Each type has a healthy way of embodying the personal qualities with which they have most identified. An individual operating in the healthy range would be seen by most people within their culture as extremely balanced, mature, and high-functioning; however, even at Levels 2 and 3,

"Look into the depths of your own soul and learn to know yourself, then you will understand why this illness was bound to come upon you and perhaps you will thenceforth avoid falling ill."

FREUD



the person is still operating from some degree of ego, compensating for his or her Basic Desire and Basic Fear.

For example, in response to their Basic Fear of being harmed or controlled by others, Eights define themselves as strong, capable, action-oriented, and assertive. They feel the need to prove these qualities to themselves and to others, so they take on challenges and engage in constructive activities that require strength and willpower. They become empowering, protective leaders, creating conditions in which others can flourish.

2 Twos define themselves as loving, caring, and selfless, but healthy Twos reinforce this self-image by actually going out in the world to perform loving, caring, generous acts. They become good friends and benefactors who share their gifts and resources with others because this behavior reinforces their self-definition.

If more people were operating in the healthy range, the world would be a much better place. Although most of us have experienced what it is like to function in this range at one time or another, our environment, culture, and perhaps our family generally do not support this kind of openness, so few of us are able to maintain this degree of freedom for long. All too often, fears arise, causing us to fall into the average range.

To stay healthy, however, requires the intention to be healthy—and this requires the intention to be present and awake. This means that we must use the tools and practices available to us to cultivate awareness. As our awareness strengthens, we can become conscious of another “shock point” between the healthy and average ranges (between Levels 3 and 4) that can be activated by the Wake-up Call that we have already seen. Just as there is a profound shift between the unhealthy and average ranges, there is another between the average and healthy ranges. We can pass through this “shock point” in either direction, falling into the average and unhealthy ranges through crises or life circumstances, or ascending the Levels by consciously working through the issues involved.

“We have to become somebody before we can become nobody.”

JACK ENGLER

## THE LEVEL OF LIBERATION

By the time we have worked through our issues (more or less Level by Level) and have arrived fully in the healthy range, our ego has achieved a noteworthy degree of balance and transparency, and we are poised to take the last step toward living out of our Essential nature. Simply stated, *liberation happens to the degree that we no longer identify with our ego*. Aspects of it may well still exist, but they are no longer the center of our identity. However, the ego must be restored to its natural balance and functioning before real and lasting liberation can be achieved. At this stage, the person has let go of a particular self-image and



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worked through his or her Basic Fear and has expanded his or her aware-  
ness to act rightly on the Basic Desire. All of these processes take balance,  
wisdom, courage, fortitude, and enough psychological integrity to with-  
stand the anxiety involved in the dissolution of the ego identity.

When we arrive at the Level of Liberation, it usually comes as a big  
surprise to find that we already have the very qualities that we have  
been looking for. We become aware that they were present all along,  
but that we were going about looking for them in the wrong way. Just  
like Dorothy at the end of *The Wizard of Oz*, we discover that we were  
closer to realizing our goal than we imagined. Everything we need for  
our transformation, everything we require to be complete human be-  
ings, is available to us in our Essential nature and always has been. In-  
fact, at Level 1, we actually achieve our Basic Desire. Once we under-  
stand this, our most burning question becomes how we can sustain this  
more open, vibrant state—or really, how we can allow it to be sustained  
in us. How can we continue to open ourselves to the action of grace?

The Directions of Integration and Disintegration help us recognize  
whether we are progressing or regressing in our development. Integration gives us objective markers of our growth. Disintegration  
shows us how we act out under stress, what our unconscious motiva-  
tions and behaviors are, and, paradoxically, what qualities we most  
need to integrate.

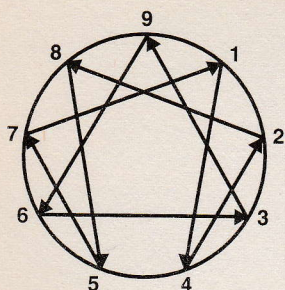
## THE DIRECTIONS OF INTEGRATION AND DISINTEGRATION

If you look at the Enneagram, you will notice that each number  
around the circle has two inner lines attached to it. For example, the  
Eight has one line to Two and another to Five. The Nine has one line  
to Three and another to Six, and so forth for all the types.

One line represents the *Direction of Integration*, or the line of nat-  
ural development toward wholeness for each type, while the other line  
represents the type's *Direction of Disintegration*, which shows what be-  
haviors we manifest when we have pushed the behaviors of our type to  
the limit. The movements in both directions are naturally occurring  
processes because the Enneagram predicts what each type will be like as  
it becomes healthier (less constricted and fixated) or, conversely, as it  
becomes more identified, tense, and ultimately dysfunctional. (The  
movements in the Directions of Integration and Disintegration are dis-  
tinct from, though related to, the movement up and down the Levels.  
We will have more to say on this later.)

Strictly speaking, we cannot say that one Direction is necessarily  
"all good" and the other is necessarily "all bad." Human nature has de-  
veloped coping mechanisms in both Directions, and the Enneagram is





THE DIRECTION OF  
DISINTEGRATION

able to track the shifts of these subtle mechanisms as no other system can. Understanding these movements and recognizing them in our daily lives can be extremely helpful in accelerating our development.

The arrows on the following Enneagram indicate the Directions of Disintegration for each type. For example, Type Eight represents the Two's Direction of Disintegration.

The arrows for the Direction of Integration move in the reverse order, so that the Direction of Integration for Type Eight is toward Two, and so forth, for all the types.

If the types are rightly defined, the Enneagram can predict future behavior. It tells us what each type is going to become like if it continues to deteriorate in its pattern of identifications, defenses, and self-defeating behaviors. It also predicts what healthy qualities will emerge as a person becomes less identified with the patterns, structures, and defenses of their type.

## THE DIRECTION OF DISINTEGRATION

The Direction of Disintegration usually manifests when we are in a period of increased stress or uncertainty. When we have pushed the strategy of our own type as far as it can go (without deteriorating to a lower Level entirely), and it is not improving our situation or getting us what we want, we will unconsciously start to behave like the type in our Direction of Disintegration. In psychological terms, this is called *acting out*, because these attitudes and behaviors tend to be unconscious and compulsive, although they are not necessarily immediately destructive.

We almost always will see ourselves (or someone else) act out *at more or less the same Level* that we are functioning at within our basic type. This helps to explain all sorts of puzzling "reversals" of behavior that we see in people. Furthermore, this also explains why we do not suddenly jump from the average behavior of our own type into pathological behavior in our Direction of Disintegration, and why we do not have to be in the unhealthy range of our type to go in the Direction of Disintegration.

Twos, for example, believe that they must always be kind and loving and that they need to take care of the needs of others rather than their own. But actually Twos also want *their needs* to be taken care of, and they hope that if they shower enough love on others, someone will reciprocate their generosity. If they keep giving endlessly, and no one seems to be responding to them—or not responding in ways that Twos recognize as loving—they will become more angry and more forceful about getting their own needs met. This is the meaning of the Twos' movement to Eight: they begin to act out their repressed anger aggres-

	The Basic Type	Direction of Disintegration
Healthy	Level 1 X → X	
	Level 2 X → X	Healthy
	Level 3 X → X	
Average	Level 4 X → X	
	Level 5 X → X	Average
	Level 6 X → X	
Unhealthy	Level 7 X → X	
	Level 8 X → X	Unhealthy
	Level 9 X → X	

THE DIRECTION OF  
DISINTEGRATION



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### THE DIRECTION OF DISINTEGRATION (WITH REVERSAL)

1	Methodical Ones suddenly become moody and irrational at Four.
2	Needy Twos suddenly become aggressive and dominating at Eight.
3	Driven Threes suddenly become disengaged and apathetic at Nine.
4	Aloof Fours suddenly become overinvolved and clinging at Two.
5	Detached Fives suddenly become hyperactive and scattered at Seven.
6	Dutiful Sixes suddenly become competitive and arrogant at Three.
7	Scattered Sevens suddenly become perfectionistic and critical at One.
8	Self-confident Eights suddenly become secretive and fearful at Five.
9	Complacent Nines suddenly become anxious and worried at Six.

sively and impulsively. Instead of continuing to suppress their needi-  
ness and flattering others, they become direct and assertive. The more  
Twos deny their anger and their needs, the more explosive and de-  
structive their acting out will be.

The following principle operates in all of the types: *whatever is re-  
pressed by a type is acted out under pressure in ways indicated by the type's  
Direction of Disintegration.* The following chart will hint at this process;  
the individual type chapters will describe it in more detail.

It is important to understand that, from a certain perspective, the  
movement in the Direction of Disintegration is just another survival  
mechanism. Nature has equipped us with a number of useful "escape