

about to go wrong. From the moment that I wake up in the morning, I find myself scanning the environment—internally and externally—for trouble.... Life seems like an accident waiting to happen. Even in the best of moments, the only question is when the other shoe will drop.

"What are they up to?"

Average Sixes can also become very pessimistic and sour. They may have extremely low self-esteem and "amnesia" about their past successes and accomplishments. It is as if nothing in their past can convince them that they will be able to deal effectively with the problems at hand—and they see problems in every direction.

Annabelle vividly describes the tension that this creates.

When I'm a passenger in a car, I look ahead to see what the other cars ahead of us are doing. I see the possibility of something bad happening, and I imagine a scene of disaster. Heart pounds, pulse races, breath becomes shallow, imagination races out of control—no escape! Nothing happens. I move on to the next possibility. Creating a disaster in my mind is automatic. I can do this for hours, then I observe that I'm doing it and make myself stop, but pretty soon I'm lost in it again.

Sixes feel that any small mishap could be their undoing. They make mountains out of molehills and can be relied on to come up with all of the reasons why a project or endeavor will not work. Naturally, this can affect their attitudes at work, but it also affects their personal relationships. Slight misunderstandings or differences of opinion can indicate to the Six that she is facing imminent abandonment, or that her friends and supporters have turned against her. Left unchecked, this tendency can undermine significant relationships, or trigger paranoid responses to what they perceive as injustices directed at themselves.

OVERCOMING PESSIMISM

Learn to discern real dangers from potential ones. How often do you expect bad outcomes? Do you have trouble believing that things will work out? Do you choose to think about problems or is it a reflex? While anticipating future problems may have some usefulness, it more generally leads you away from dealing with the reality of here and now—the one place you can find the steadiness and guidance to move into the next moment.

Blaming and Victimization

To the degree that they feel powerless to do anything constructive themselves, Sixes may act out their anxieties by complaining and blaming others. This is all the more true if they fear that they will be

reprimanded or punished in some way by an authority figure for their failures.

Blaming may well begin with the common childhood scenario in which a parent comes home to find a broken knickknack and asks, "Who did this?" To which the guilty Six child responds, "Debbie did it! And you know what else? Debbie made a mess upstairs and said a bad word to me!"

In the adult world, Sixes more commonly discharge their anxieties by complaining to third parties about the people with whom they are frustrated. For many Sixes, the dinner table at home is the favorite place to vent about disappointments at work or to let off steam about someone's incompetence. Similar activities occur around coffee machines at the office or at bars after hours. Simply put, Sixes feel persecuted and victimized and frequently fall into the habit of *complaining without taking any definite action that would change the situation*. Over time, this begins to heighten their self-image of being victims, often leading to paranoia and the destructive modes of "problem-solving" we find in the unhealthy range.

*"I'm mad as hell and I'm
not going to take it
anymore!"*

WHY IS EVERYBODY MESSING UP MY LIFE?

How many of your conversations involve complaining? About your job, relationships, children, parents, sports team, politics, town, or even the weather? When you are complaining about a person, have you discussed this matter fully with that person? Who or what are you blaming for the problems in your life?

REACTING TO STRESS: SIX GOES TO THREE



As we have seen, Sixes tirelessly invest their time and energy in their "security systems." When stress increases beyond their normal ability to cope, Sixes may go to Three and become even more driven and potentially workaholic. They also make additional efforts to fit in, adapting themselves to their surroundings and striving to be exemplary enough to maintain their social and financial position. Thus, Sixes at Three become more image-conscious, developing the right look, gestures, jargon, and attitude to be acceptable to their peers. They hope in this way to win people over and avoid rejection. However, others often notice the forced quality of their friendliness or professionalism, leading them to wonder what Sixes are really up to.

Like Threes, Sixes can become competitive, although usually through identification with groups or beliefs (a favorite football team, their company, school, nationality, or religion). They may also become boastful and self-promoting, adopting condescending attitudes, dismissing others, and hyping their own superiority in a desperate attempt to defend against

their low self-esteem and feelings of inferiority. Dishonesty about their background or education, exploitation of self or others, and a relentless desire to triumph over rival groups or ideologies can enter the picture.

If Sixes are overstressed for an extended period of time, if they have suffered a serious crisis without adequate support or coping skills, or if they have suffered from chronic abuse in childhood, they may cross the shock point into the unhealthy range of their type. This may lead them to a fearful recognition that their own belligerent actions or defensive reactions are actually harming their security.

If Sixes can recognize the truth in these fears, they may begin to turn their life around and move toward health and liberation. On the other hand, they may become even more panicky and reactive: "I'll do anything for you! Don't leave me!" or, at the other extreme, "They'll be sorry they messed with me!" If Sixes persist in these attitudes, they may cross into the unhealthy range.

If you or someone you know is exhibiting the following warning signs for an extended period of time—more than two or three weeks—getting counseling, therapy, or other support is highly advisable.

WARNING SIGNS

POTENTIAL PATHOLOGY:
Paranoid, Dependent, and Borderline Personality Disorders, Dissociative Disorders, and passive-aggressive behaviors, intense anxiety attacks.

- ▶ Intense anxiety and panic attacks
- ▶ Acute inferiority feelings and chronic depression
- ▶ Constant fear of losing support from others
- ▶ Alternating dependency and impulsive displays of defiance
- ▶ Keeping "bad company" and attachments to abusive relationships
- ▶ Extreme suspiciousness and paranoia
- ▶ Hysterical lashing-out at perceived enemies

▶ Notice how much time you spend trying to figure out how to handle possible future problems. In reality, how often do these imagined events come to pass? Also notice how this mental activity actually makes you *less* effective at dealing with the challenges at hand. If you are worrying and obsessing about a meeting you will have tomorrow or next week, you are far more likely to forget an important phone call—or even overlook a real danger signal. Quieting the mind through disciplined meditation practices, especially those that focus on the body,

THE RED FLAG: THE SIX IN TROUBLE



PRACTICES THAT HELP SIXES DEVELOP



can help Sixes clear out the chorus of voices in their heads. Remember, inner knowing usually does not speak using words.

- ▶ You tend to have difficulty enjoying those moments when you achieve your objectives without immediately launching into your next round of anxieties—even worrying about how others might resent your accomplishment! When you achieve a goal, large or small, stop long enough to relax, breathe, and savor the moment. Take in the impression of your competence. Remember this impression. This feeling will help you see the ways in which you consistently support yourself and others. This memory will come to your aid when you doubt your ability to cope at other times.
- ▶ Get in the practice of noticing what you trust and how you come to decisions. Notice especially the procedures or allies you automatically turn to when you are unsure of yourself. Why do you feel that others will know better what to do than you do? Also notice your anger and rejection of them when it is clear that they do not have the answers you seek. You can avoid these situations by turning more to what your heart and instincts are telling you in the moment. Many internal voices may clamor, but understand what they are—fearful aspects of your imagination and your superego, and no more. The more you are able to see the truth of this, the more you will find your quiet mind and come to the right path for yourself.
- ▶ While you want to be there in a responsible way for everyone else in your life, you tend to shortchange yourself by not believing that your own self-development is worth the trouble. This can be exacerbated by fears of change—of moving into the unknown. Take risks, especially when it comes to moving out of familiar, safe patterns. Having a therapist that you trust or a spiritual group that you work with can be invaluable for creating the kind of support you need to explore difficult issues. But remember, it is your own courage and strength that ultimately are required (and available) for such explorations.
- ▶ Seek out diversity and variety. Sure, you like cheeseburgers, but maybe you could try the chicken sandwich. You love basketball, but perhaps you could also find another sport or activity interesting. The same is true with your choice of acquaintances. By sometimes interacting with people from very different backgrounds and perspectives, you will learn more about yourself and the world. All of this, far from being threatening or dangerous, will greatly expand your base of support and increase your comfort in the world.
- ▶ Learn to cultivate quiet time for yourself. By this, we do not mean sitting around in front of a TV for hours, but time in which you

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get to be with yourself in a simple way. You benefit greatly from contact with nature. Take walks, garden, swim, meditate—and above all, do not use these times to worry, fret, and strategize about your work and relationships. They are times for you to become more comfortable with Being. Getting in greater contact with your surroundings and with the sensations in your body will do much to soothe and quiet that busy mind of yours.

Healthy Sixes are endowed with tremendous endurance and achieve their objectives through steady and persistent efforts. Less flashy than some of the other types, they believe in the adage “Success is 10 percent inspiration and 90 percent perspiration.” They give careful attention to details and tend to approach problems carefully and methodically. They organize resources, prioritize tasks, and see projects through, feeling that their personal value rests on their reliability and on the quality of the work they produce. High-functioning Sixes respect dependability and good craftsmanship and, to the best of their ability, provide them.

Because of their underlying vigilance and sensitivity to danger signals, Sixes also foresee problems and can “head them off at the pass.” They are natural troubleshooters and often save themselves, their families, or their companies many headaches by spotting irregularities or potential problems. They like to stay on top of things so that their world runs as trouble-free as possible. Keeping insurance and paying bills early are typical Six behaviors.

Sixes like to learn and to think about things, but within known and knowable categories. They are attracted to self-contained systems, such as law, accounting, engineering, languages, and the sciences, where one can arrive at a definite answer. Thus, they tend to be excellent in work that involves careful analysis and an ability to keep track of variables. Their diligence can alert them to discrepancies in systems, to potential problems, or to inaccuracies or contradictions in the statements of others. The world of academia, for example, supports many Six values: observing good structure and form, referring back to authorities through citations and footnotes, careful analysis and systematic thinking.

Sixes are outstanding in their ability to work for a common good without needing to be stars. Sixes ask what needs to be done and then do it, with a sense of being part of something that transcends their personal interests. They teach us all about the benefits and joys of commitment, cooperation, and service. Healthy Sixes are great believers in the age-old observation that people acting with a common purpose can accomplish more than anyone acting alone, particularly in situations where people need to band together to survive—to produce food or

BUILDING ON THE SIX'S STRENGTHS



clothing, to build a house, to improve communities or working conditions, or to defend a city or a country.

While high-functioning Sixes are deeply loyal and committed to others, they are also committed to learning more about themselves. In the process, they often find rich and unsuspected talent for creativity and self-expression. Committing to their own development helps Sixes build strong self-esteem and see themselves as the equal of others—equally competent, equally worthy of respect and rewards, equally able to take responsibility and to hold their own in all areas of life.

Connie's path of growth has involved finding her own center within herself.

"Can we be friends?"

Probably the aspect about my personality that has changed the most is my ability to stand on my own. I now know within myself that I am okay, that things will be all right. At my best, I am strong and can care not only for myself but for those around me. Instead of having fifteen authority figures, I have one or two trusted friends—and I listen to my own counsel. There are actually things that I don't share with anyone. Previously my life was an open book. Now I give myself and others needed respect.

High-functioning Sixes are self-confident and self-affirming because they have learned to recognize and trust their own inner guidance. Their faith in themselves often manifests as outstanding courage and leadership. They lead from a deep understanding of people's insecurities and frailties, and others respond to them, seeing their sincerity and willingness to be honest about their own weaknesses. They nurture an egalitarian spirit, a sense that there really are no leaders and followers, just different people with different talents finding ways to combine them for a common good. This desire to engage, to find common ground, and to work for everyone's mutual safety and benefit is a gift that our species needs for survival.

THE PATH OF INTEGRATION: SIX GOES TO NINE



Sixes become actualized and remain healthy by becoming balanced in their instincts and grounded in their bodies like healthy Nines. For Sixes to find the stability they seek, they need to turn to the steady support of their physical presence: to get grounded in the here-and-now. Many Sixes are active, even athletic, but this is not the same thing as being in contact with the moment-to-moment sensations of the body. Attending to the immediacy of their sensory impressions acts as a counterbalance to the Six's nonstop thinking and gives them something else to identify with.

At first, centering themselves in their physical sensations may produce feelings of panic or dread, particularly if Sixes have suffered trauma in their past. It is not uncommon for Sixes from abusive backgrounds to begin to tremble as they occupy their bodies more completely. At such times, it is important for Sixes to realize that such physical reactions are the body's way of processing old fears and hurts and *are not necessarily indications of present danger*. If Sixes are able to sense themselves and their anxious feelings without reacting to them, they begin to come into a more open and trusting experience of life.

Sixes cannot find this steadiness by imitating the traits of average Nines, however. Becoming complacent, attempting to efface themselves, or getting involved in comforting ruts merely reinforces the Six's fearful clinging to people and activities for security. Trying to be easygoing or passive will not negate a Six's anxieties and may even increase the churning of her mind. But as Sixes become more practiced at staying with themselves without reacting to their anxieties, they begin to feel supported, not just by their significant others or by their work but by Being itself. They sense life's benevolence and know that the ground will hold. This is not based on belief or on any trick of the mind but on a quiet and steady inner knowing that requires no explanation or external backup.

From this position of grounded openness, Sixes are able to recognize the common bonds they share with all of humanity. They feel inclusive and accepting of others, regardless of whether their views or lifestyles are familiar to them. They are filled with courage that is not a counterphobic reaction to fear but is an actual force in and of itself. Their courage arises from a feeling of real inner solidity and of profound connection with themselves and with all living things. Thus, integrating Sixes, like healthy Nines, can approach tremendous challenges and even tragedies or threats with inner balance and equanimity.

TRANSFORMING PERSONALITY INTO ESSENCE



"When eating a fruit, think of
the person who planted the tree."

VIETNAMESE SAYING

"You cannot depend on anybody. There is no guide, teacher, no authority. There is only you—your relationship with others and with the world—there is nothing else."

KRISHNAMURTI

All human beings need support and security in order to survive, let alone thrive, *but seldom do we realize how extensively we are supported*. Besides the support of our friends and loved ones, we have been supported by the people who grew the food that we will eat for dinner tonight, by the unknown factory workers who manufactured our clothes, by the people working in the utility company who provide us with heat and electricity, and on and on. No one who reads this book has ever truly been without support, but our personality, based as it is on defenses against fears and feelings of deficiency, cannot recognize this. The ability to recognize and respond intelligently to the support of the world, as well as the inner support and guidance of Being, can be achieved only through Presence—through abiding in our true nature.

The "wrong turn" that Sixes take is to use their fearful and doubting ego minds to figure out where reliable guidance and support can be found. Ironically, the more they question and strategize, the less secure they feel. Rather than give them the security they seek, being identified with their anxious thoughts makes Sixes feel small, helpless, and without direction. Only by seeing through their fearful thinking patterns can Sixes begin to reconnect with their Essential nature. When they do so, they rediscover their own inner authority, and they begin to recognize that the support they have been seeking is everywhere and always available.

Jenny, a therapist in her fifties who had recently undergone a mastectomy, beautifully expresses this transformation.

I believe I became my own authority with my mastectomy experience. I was able to take in love from my family and friends. It never felt safe before. What a beautiful gift! I had to be my own authority because my survival was at stake and no one really knows what is best for me except me! I feel wonderful when I allow myself to feel healthy! Recently I have been focusing my attention on growing flowers as opposed to pulling weeds all the time. My "inner voices"—my old superego stuff—just keep me in the weeds.

Sixes achieve transformation by confronting their Basic Fear of being without support and guidance. As they do so, they begin to experience a vast, empty inner space, and they may sometimes feel as though they are falling into it. If they can tolerate this sensation, this space may change and feel solid or become intensely shiny and luminous—or it could transform itself in numerous ways. Sixes then come to recognize that the inner space they experience is actually the very support they have been looking for. It is free, open, and infinitely wise and patient. When this spaciousness is present, Sixes feel self-reliant, courageous, and brilliantly intelligent—in short, all of the qualities they have been looking for.

THE EMERGENCE OF ESSENCE

Deep down, Sixes remember that the universe is benevolent and supports them completely. They know that they are grounded in Being, are part of the Divine Nature, and that grace is always available to them.

When their minds become quiet, Sixes experience an inner spaciousness that is the Ground of Being. They realize that Essence is real and is not simply an idea; in fact, it is the thing that is most real in existence, the very foundation of existence itself. People have associated this inner peace with the presence of God, which is manifesting itself at every moment, and which is available at every moment. When Sixes experience this truth, they feel solid, steady, and supported, as if they were standing on a massive bed of granite. They realize that this ground is the only real security in life, and it is what gives Sixes immense courage.

This is the real meaning of *faith*, their particular Essential quality. Faith is not belief, but a real, immediate knowing that comes from experience. Faith without experience is belief. Faith with experience brings reliable guidance. Much of the personality of Sixes can be seen as an effort to imitate or recreate faith in terms of beliefs, and to find a substitute for the certainty that they are already secure as an expression of the Divine. When Essence emerges, however, Sixes have a certainty that they are grounded in Being in a way that is immutable and absolute. Being supports them because they are part of it: their own existence has Being because it cannot *not* have Being.

Add your scores for the fifteen statements for Type Six. Your result will be between 15 and 75. The following guidelines may help you discover or confirm your personality type.

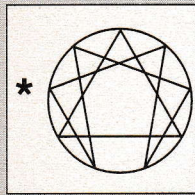
- ▶ 15 You are probably not a compliant type (not a One, Two, or Six).
- ▶ 15–30 You are probably not a Type Six.
- ▶ 30–45 You most probably have Six-issues or a Six parent.
- ▶ 45–60 You most likely have a Six-component.
- ▶ 60–75 You are most likely a Six (but could still be another type if you are thinking too narrowly about Type Six).

Sixes are most likely to misidentify themselves as Fours, Eights, or Ones. Twos, Fives, and Ones are most likely to misidentify themselves as Sixes.

CHAPTER 13



TYPE SEVEN: THE ENTHUSIAST



THE GENERALIST

THE MULTI-TASKER

THE WUNDERKIND

THE DILETTANTE

THE CONNOISSEUR

THE ENERGIZER

"Pleasure is the object, the duty, and the goal of all rational creatures."

—VOLTAIRE

"No pleasure is evil in itself; but the means by which certain pleasures are gained bring pains many times greater than the pleasures."

—EPICURUS

"With the catching ends the pleasure of the chase."

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN

"How could there be any question of acquiring or possessing, when the one thing needful for a man is to become—to be at last, and to die in the fullness of his being."

—SAINT-EXUPÉRY

THE RISO-HUDSON T A S

Type Attitude Sorter

Score each of the following statements according to how true or applicable to you it is on the following scale:

1.....*Not at All True*

2.....*Seldom True*

3.....*Somewhat True*

4.....*Generally True*

5.....*Very True*

See page 286 for
scoring key.

- _____ 1. I love traveling and discovering different kinds of foods, people, and experiences—the whole fabulous whirlwind of life!
- _____ 2. My calendar is usually full, and I like to keep it that way: no grass is going to grow under my feet!
- _____ 3. What's important to me is excitement and variety rather than comfort and playing it safe—although I'll take my comforts wherever I can find them.
- _____ 4. My mind is always chattering—sometimes it seems like I'm thinking about ten things at once!
- _____ 5. One thing I absolutely cannot stand is being bored—and I make sure that I am never boring myself.
- _____ 6. I'm pretty committed when I'm in a relationship, but when it's over, I move on.
- _____ 7. I am curious and adventurous and am usually the first one of my friends to try whatever is new and interesting.
- _____ 8. When I no longer enjoy doing something, I stop doing it.
- _____ 9. I'm not just a "fun person"—there is a serious, even dark side to me, although I do not like to go there very much.
- _____ 10. I'm good at the big picture, not so much the little details: it's more enjoyable for me to brainstorm a lot of new ideas than to get involved with implementing them.
- _____ 11. When I really want something, I usually find a way to get it.
- _____ 12. Things get me down once in a while, but I quickly pop back up again.
- _____ 13. One of my main problems is that I am easily distracted and can get too scattered.
- _____ 14. I tend to spend more money than I probably should.
- _____ 15. Other people are great to have along—as long as they want to go where I'm going.

PERSONALITY TYPE SEVEN: THE ENTHUSIAST

- ▶ **BASIC FEAR:** Of being deprived and trapped in pain
- ▶ **BASIC DESIRE:** To be happy, satisfied, to find fulfillment
- ▶ **SUPEREGO MESSAGE:** "You are good or okay if you get what you need."

The Busy, Fun-Loving Type: Spontaneous, Versatile, Acquisitive, and Scattered

We have named this personality type *the Enthusiast* because Sevens are enthusiastic about almost everything that catches their attention. They approach life with curiosity, optimism, and a sense of adventure, like kids in a candy store who look at the world in wide-eyed, rapt anticipation of all the good things they are about to experience. They are bold and vivacious, pursuing what they want in life with a cheerful determination. They have a quality best described by the Yiddish word *chutzpah*—a kind of brash nerviness.

Although Sevens are in the Thinking Triad, this is not immediately apparent because they tend to be extremely practical and engaged in a multitude of projects at any given time. Their thinking is *anticipatory*; they foresee events and generate ideas on the fly, favoring activities that stimulate their minds—which in turn generate more things to do and think about. Sevens are not necessarily intellectual or studious by any standard definition, although they are often intelligent and can be widely read and highly verbal. Their minds move rapidly from one idea to the next, making them gifted at brainstorming and synthesizing information. Sevens are exhilarated by the rush of ideas and by the pleasure of being spontaneous, preferring broad overviews and the excitement of the initial stages of the creative process to probing a single topic in depth.

Devon, a successful businesswoman, shares with us some of the inner workings of her Seven mindset.

I am definitely a list person. It's not really for memory, since I have a great memory. It's more for downloading information so that my mind won't spin on it. For example, I was at a concert where the tickets were hard to get and very expensive. I couldn't sit through it. My mind was torturing me with the things I needed to do. Finally, I had to get up and leave. This was very upsetting to the person I went with, and I missed a good show.

Sevens are frequently endowed with quick, agile minds and can be exceptionally fast learners. This is true both of their ability to absorb information (language, facts, and procedures) and their ability to learn new manual skills—they tend to have excellent mind-body coordination and manual dexterity (typewriting, piano playing, tennis). All of this can combine to make a Seven into the quintessential Renaissance person.

U S I A S T

Ironically, Sevens' wide-ranging curiosity and ability to learn quickly can also create problems for them. Because they are able to pick up many different skills with relative ease, it becomes more difficult for them to decide what to do with themselves. As a result, they also do not always value their abilities as they would if they had to struggle to gain them. When Sevens are more balanced, however, their versatility, curiosity, and ability to learn can lead them to extraordinary achievement.

The root of their problem is common to all of the types of the Thinking Triad: they are out of touch with the inner guidance and support of their Essential nature, and this creates a deep anxiety in Sevens. They do not feel that they know how to make choices that will be beneficial to themselves and others. Sevens cope with this anxiety in two ways. First, they try to keep their minds busy all of the time. As long as they can keep their minds occupied, especially with projects and positive ideas for the future, they can, to some extent, keep anxiety and negative feelings out of their conscious awareness. Likewise, since their thinking is stimulated by activity, Sevens are compelled to stay on the go, moving from one experience to the next, searching for more stimulation. This is not to say that Sevens are spinning their wheels. They generally enjoy being practical and getting things done.

Frances, a successful business consultant, sounds more energetic than is humanly possible—and yet she is a typical Seven.

I am highly, highly productive. At the office, I am joyful and my mind is running at its best. I might create several marketing campaigns for a client, work on the outline for an upcoming seminar, talk out a difficult problem with a client on the telephone, close two deals, make a project list, dictate a few letters, and look up to see that it's 9:30 A.M. and my assistant is coming in to start our work for the day.

Second, Sevens cope with the loss of Essential guidance by using the trial-and-error method: they try everything to make sure they know what is best. On a very deep level, *Sevens do not feel that they can find what they really want in life*. They therefore tend to try everything—and ultimately may even resort to *anything* as a substitute for what they are really looking for. ("If I can't have what will really satisfy me, I'll enjoy myself anyway. I'll have all kinds of experiences—that way I will not feel bad about not getting what I really want.")

We can see this in action even in the most trivial areas of their daily lives. Unable to decide whether he wants vanilla, chocolate, or strawberry ice cream, a Seven will want all three flavors—just to be sure that he does not miss out on the "right" choice. Having two weeks for a vacation and a desire to visit Europe brings a similar quandary. Which countries and cities to visit? Which sights to see? The Seven's way of

"I still haven't figured out what I want to be when I grow up."

dealing with this will be to cram as many different countries, cities, and attractions into his vacation as possible. While they are scrambling after exciting experiences, the real object of their heart's desire (their personal Rosebud, as it were) may be so deeply buried in their unconscious that they are never really aware of precisely what it is.

Furthermore, as Sevens speed up their pursuit of whatever seems to offer freedom and satisfaction, they tend to make worse choices, and they are less able to be satisfied because everything is experienced indirectly, through the dense filter of their fast-paced mental activity. The result is that Sevens end up anxious, frustrated, and enraged, with fewer resources available to them physically, emotionally, or financially. They may end up ruining their health, their relationships, and their finances in their search for happiness.

Gertrude is busy establishing her career and family now, but she looks back at how this tendency contributed to her getting a rough start in life.

There wasn't anything to do at home or in the tiny Southern town I grew up in. I was dying to get out of it and go someplace more exciting. When I was sixteen, I started dating, and before long I got pregnant, but the father didn't want to marry me—which was okay since I didn't want to marry him, either. It wasn't too long before I found somebody else, and we got married, and I got to move to a larger city. But it didn't really work out the way I wanted because after I had the baby, we broke up and I had to move back home. I stayed there for a year or two to get my feet on the ground. When things were looking bleak, I married someone else. I'm nineteen now and I guess I've done a lot already.

*"If life gives you lemons,
make lemonade."*

On the positive side, however, Sevens are extremely optimistic people—exuberant and upbeat. They are endowed with abundant vitality and a desire to fully participate in their lives each day. They are naturally cheerful and good-humored, not taking themselves too seriously, or anything else for that matter. When they are balanced within themselves, their joy and enthusiasm for life naturally affect everyone around them. They remind us of the pure pleasure of existence—the greatest gift of all.

THE CHILDHOOD PATTERN

The Seven's childhood is flavored by a largely unconscious feeling of disconnection from the nurturing figure (often, but not always, the biological mother). Generally speaking, Sevens are sensitive to a very deep frustration resulting from feelings of being cut off from maternal nurturance at an early age, as if they had been taken away from the

breast too soon (which may have literally been true in some cases). In response, young Sevens unconsciously "decided" to nurture themselves. ("I am not going to sit around feeling sorry for myself, waiting for somebody to take care of me. I'll take care of myself.") This pattern does not mean that Sevens were not close to their mothers in childhood. But on an emotional level, they unconsciously decided that they would have to take care of their own needs.

The reasons for this perception can vary widely. Perhaps another sibling came along, and the young Seven suddenly found he was displaced from his mother's attention. Perhaps an early illness curtailed the Seven's nurturing: either she was ill and needed to be hospitalized or the mother became ill.

Devon, the businesswoman we met earlier, recalls:

One incident that happened when I was three years old made such an impression on me that I remember it like it was yesterday. My infant brother was having a convulsion. My mother stood screaming and literally pulling handfuls of her long, beautiful black hair out. I remember the hair landing on the rose and cream carpet. It was late at night, and the ambulance took my mother and my brother away, and my father went with them, too. I know that until I was one and a half, I was well nurtured by my mother. Then she became pregnant and was very sick until my brother was born. My brother was sick early, and so I kind of lost my mother along the way.

Sevens are also heavily influenced by the "separation phase" of ego development when they are learning to be more independent of their mothers. One way that children manage the difficult process of separation is by focusing on what psychologists call *transitional objects*. Having toys, games, playmates, and other distractions helps toddlers tolerate their anxiety.

Sevens seem to be still in search of transitional objects. As long as Sevens can find and move toward interesting ideas, experiences, people, and "toys," they are able to repress their underlying feelings of frustration, fear, and hurt. But if, for whatever reasons, Sevens are unable to find any adequate transitional objects, their anxiety and emotional conflicts crowd into conscious awareness. As quickly as possible, they attempt to manage their panicky feelings by finding another distraction. Of course, the more actual deprivation and frustration the Seven child suffered, the more intensely the adult Seven will need to "occupy their mind" with a variety of distractions.

Please note that the childhood pattern we are describing here does not cause the personality type. Rather, it describes tendencies that we observe in early childhood that have a major impact on the type's adult relationships.

THE WING SUBTYPES



Examples

Robin Williams
Steven Spielberg
W.A. Mozart
Jim Carrey
Goldie Hawn
Carol Burnett
Sarah Ferguson
Benjamin Franklin
Timothy Leary
Tom Wolfe

Examples

Jack Nicholson
Lucille Ball
Joan Rivers
Howard Stern
Leonard Bernstein
Lauren Bacall
Bette Midler
Malcolm Forbes
John F. Kennedy
"Scarlett O'Hara"

THE SEVEN WITH A SIX-WING: THE ENTERTAINER

Healthy People of this subtype are productive and playful, retaining a belief in life's goodness and the joy of existence. They are often curious and creative, with an excellent sense of humor and a more positive outlook than the other subtype. They have quick minds, a cooperative spirit, and organizational abilities—enabling them to accomplish a great deal, seemingly with little effort. They seek variety and have the ability to interact easily with people—show business, public relations, advertising, media, and the world of entertainment are natural for them.

Average Excited by new ideas, fast-talking, witty, and engaging, people of this subtype have high energy and provide moments of high spirits for others. They are generally productive but can lose focus, become scattered, with less follow-through than the other subtype. To the extent that they are insecure, there can be a revved-up, manic, nervous quality to them. Looking for strong experiences, they are often either in a relationship or looking for one. They do not like to be alone but have high requirements of intimates. They often have conflicts between a desire to move on to greener pastures and a fear of losing connection. There is the possibility of substance abuse in this subtype due to anxiety and hidden feelings of inferiority.

THE SEVEN WITH AN EIGHT-WING: THE REALIST

Healthy People of this subtype truly enjoy the world and are "materialistic" in the broadest sense of the word. They combine quickness with drive, often leading to material success and positions of power and prominence. They are determined to get what they want from life; they think strategically and can rapidly organize their internal and external resources in pursuit of their desires. They are earthy, practical, and tough-minded. Their sense of humor expresses itself in a biting wit and a taste for the outrageous.

Average People of this subtype apply their energies in many directions, multitasking or even "multicareering." They can be aggressive and have the willpower and drive to take care of their own needs. They tend to be more workaholic than the other subtype, coming from the strong desire to accumulate possessions and experiences. ("I'm worth it!") Their focus is more on generating activities than on connecting with people. Hence they tend to be pragmatic about relationships—looking for a partner, not a romantic fantasy figure. They are not afraid to be alone and are clear about their own expectations and how much they will tolerate. Directness can verge on bluntness and on pushing

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people out of the way to get what they want. They can be jaded and callous, in contrast to the childish hyperenthusiasm of the Six-wing.

THE SELF-PRESERVATION INSTINCT IN THE SEVEN

Getting Mine. In the average range, Self-Preservation Sevens are determined, energetic people, driven to make sure that their basic needs and comforts will always be met. Their attitudes and concerns tend to emphasize the practical and the material. (In the immortal words of Scarlett O'Hara, "As God is my witness, I will never go hungry again!") They tend to be ambitious and work hard to insure that options will remain open to them.

Self-Preservation Sevens are also classic consumers. They enjoy shopping, traveling, and pampering themselves, making it their business to gather information about potential sources of enjoyment (catalogues, movie listings, travel and restaurant guides). These Sevens are especially on the lookout for sales and bargains, and like discussing these matters with friends. ("I just found the most darling mugs at the Pottery Barn." "That's a great computer monitor. How much did you pay for it?") While they enjoy socializing, Self-Preservation Sevens fear developing dependencies on others and avoid having others depend on them.

Less healthy Self-Preservation Sevens can feel impatient and panicky when their needs are not quickly met. They often experience anxieties about the loss of comforts or of material support and easily feel deprived. (Fears about going hungry are not uncommon.) They can be extremely demanding and cranky when frustrated, expecting others to meet their needs as soon as they are expressed—or even sooner.

In the unhealthy range, Self-Preservation Sevens can be extremely thoughtless and relentless in pursuit of security needs. They aggressively go after whatever they believe will make them feel more secure or stave off their anxiety, and brook no interference. Reckless with their finances and resources, spending out of control or gambling, they can be even more profligate with their own health and inner resources. They push themselves beyond reasonable limits, eating, drinking, and indulging themselves to excess.

THE SOCIAL INSTINCT IN THE SEVEN

Missing Out. In the average range, Social Sevens often cultivate a group of friends and "advisors" who share enthusiasms and interests with them. These people keep the Seven informed of new possibilities and

THE
INSTINCTUAL
VARIANTS

provide the stimulation and variety that Sevens enjoy. Idealistic people, they like getting involved with social interactions and causes, finding these activities exciting. However, once involved in projects with other people, Social Sevens can become frustrated and feel bogged down by others' slower pace. At such times, social responsibility begins to feel burdensome—they are caught in a conflict between the desire to fulfill their commitments and the desire to go off and do their own thing. Moreover, Social Sevens are always on the lookout for a more stimulating setting ("This New Year's gathering is pretty nice, but I bet Ted's party will really be jumping after midnight!"). Social Sevens also resent authority, seeing it as arbitrary and unnecessary—yet another source of social restriction.

Less healthy Social Sevens tend to scatter their energy and resources, to half commit. They make sure to fill their calendars and date books, but also "pencil in" back-up plans, so that they are not trapped in any particular course of action. They tend to have many pokers in the fire, but are too distracted to get white-hot about any of them. They are friendly and engaging, even charming, but easily feel trapped, and may cancel appointments or dates with little or no notice if anxiety or a more promising social engagement presents itself.

In the unhealthy range, Social Sevens tend to dissipate their force and talent in endless successions of meetings, social gatherings, and "planning sessions" that are never brought to a conclusion. They leave a trail of loose ends and broken hearts, never alighting anywhere for long. They are unsettled and unsettling since flight from anxiety renders them irresponsible and leads them into potentially dangerous and destructive "social scenes."

THE SEXUAL INSTINCT IN THE SEVEN

The Neophile. In the average range, Sexual Sevens are constantly looking for something new and beyond the ordinary; like Fours, they tend to reject the mundane. In all of their activities and interactions, they want to experience the intense charge of being alive. They see life through heightened imagination, idealizing themselves, their relationships, and reality. They often have wide-ranging curiosity and interests and are fascinated by new ideas and topics they see as being on the cutting edge. Sexual Sevens are magnetized by people whom they find interesting or refreshing. When the radar of their sexual instinct locks on to such a person, they do not hesitate to approach the person with charm and genuine interest. They feel temporarily dazzled and hypnotized by the object of their curiosity and may induce similar feelings in others. Sexual Sevens enjoy the excitement of fantasizing about future adventures and shared interests with the new person. They love wild

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ideas, wit, and humor—their minds move very quickly, but this can also cause restlessness with themselves and their relationships.

Less healthy Sexual Sevens can become fickle—both with their interests and with their affections. They fear commitment, preferring the intense feelings of infatuation that occur in the earliest stages of a relationship. (They love falling in love.) They revel in romance and in the process of mutual discovery, but as soon as the feelings become familiar, they are ready to explore other possibilities. Similarly, restlessness causes them to lack discernment. They may get involved in faddish or sensational ideas in glitzy packaging that are little more than temporary distractions. Disappointment soon follows.

In the unhealthy range, Sexual Sevens become even more reckless in their pursuit of charged excitement. They may involve themselves in crazy schemes and unrealistic or dangerous love affairs. They become thrill-seekers, looking for more and more extraordinary sources of entertainment while being less and less affected by any of it. They become hardened and dissipated from living on the edge, often burning out or damaging themselves in some permanent way from their excesses.

Most Sevens will encounter the following issues at some point in their lives. Noticing these patterns, “catching ourselves in the act,” and simply seeing our underlying habitual responses to life will do much to release us from the negative aspects of our type.

THE SEVEN'S CHALLENGES TO GROWTH



THE WAKE-UP CALL FOR TYPE SEVEN: “THE GRASS IS ALWAYS GREENER”

Sevens’ characteristic temptation is the tendency to become dissatisfied with whatever they are doing or are currently experiencing. The grass is always greener somewhere else, and so they begin to look forward to the future, as if another event or activity will be the solution to their problems. (“I’m having dinner with friends now, but I wonder what’s going on at that gallery opening tonight? Maybe if I eat quickly, I’ll be able to go there, too!”) If Sevens ignore their Wake-up Call—getting distracted by the possibilities of the next moment rather than being fully in the present one—they will begin moving in a wrong direction.

Imagine that you are talking with someone in a crowded restaurant and begin to overhear another conversation nearby. Do you shift your attention to the other conversation and eavesdrop while pretending to still be engaged with the first conversation? If so, you have succumbed to the Seven’s Wake-up Call—with the result that you would enjoy neither conversation and would subtly insult your dinner partner who would likely sense your relocated attention.

H E A L T H Y	Level 1	Key Terms: <i>Joyful</i> <i>Satisfied</i>	Sevens let go of the belief that they require specific objects and experiences to feel fulfilled, so they are able to fully assimilate their experiences and be nourished by them. They also paradoxically achieve their Basic Desire—to be satisfied and content, to have their needs fulfilled—and they become appreciative, ecstatic, and deeply grateful.
	Level 2	<i>Anticipating</i> <i>Enthusiastic</i>	Sevens are focused on the world of possibilities and are excited by thinking about all the things they will do. Self-image: "I am happy, spontaneous, and outgoing."
	Level 3	<i>Realistic</i> <i>Productive</i>	Sevens reinforce their self-image by fully engaging with life and by doing things that will ensure that they will have what they need. Their passionate gusto for life is revealed in great versatility and a prolific output. They are optimistic and bold but also practical and accomplished.
A V E R A G E	Level 4	<i>Acquisitive</i> <i>Consuming</i>	Sevens begin to fear that they are missing out on other, more worthwhile experiences; thus they become restless and interested in having more and more options available to them. They stay busy, juggling many different tasks and plans and trying to keep up with the latest trends.
	Level 5	<i>Distracted</i> <i>Scattered</i>	Sevens worry that they will be bored or frustrated and that painful feelings will arise, so they try to keep themselves excited and occupied. They pump up the energy around them by talking, joking around, and pursuing new adventures, but they are often distracted and unfocused.
	Level 6	<i>Self-Centered</i> <i>Excessive</i>	Sevens are afraid that there will not be enough of whatever they believe they need, so they become impatient, seeking instant gratification. They can be very demanding but are seldom satisfied when their demands are met. Jaded and wasteful, they are cavalier about their habits, denying guilt.
U N H E A L T H Y	Level 7	<i>Insatiable</i> <i>Escaping</i>	Sevens fear that their actions are bringing them pain and unhappiness, and this may be true. They panic, trying to avoid their pain at any cost. They are highly impulsive and irresponsible and do whatever promises temporary relief from their anxiety, but they are joyless in their pursuits.
	Level 8	<i>Manic</i> <i>(Depressive)</i> <i>Reckless</i>	Sevens become so desperate to escape their anxiety that they fly out of control, recklessly acting out their pain rather than feeling it. Hysterical activity alternates with deep depression as they become increasingly unstable and erratic. Numb and heedless, they go to extreme lengths to suppress their pain.
	Level 9	<i>Overwhelmed</i> <i>Paralyzed</i>	The realization that they may have ruined their health, their lives, and their capacity for enjoyment is too much for unhealthy Sevens. Feeling that they no longer have options or ways out of their pain, they are panic-stricken and feel trapped. Often their excesses have resulted in severe financial and physical problems, even chronic pain.

This style of wandering attention has far more serious consequences for Sevens since so much of their lives are ruled by it. *Thinking becomes anticipating*, and they do not stay with anything long enough either to experience it deeply or to get any real satisfaction from it. When Sevens miss their Wake-up Call, no matter what they are doing, they are pulled somewhere else. Their wandering attention compels them to jump up and turn on the television set, check the refrigerator for a snack, call a friend on the phone, or doodle on a notepad rather than get down to work—or even stay with the novel they were enjoying.

"I don't want to miss out."

TRAINING THE MONKEY MIND

Choose any ordinary activity and concentrate on it. As you bring your attention to whatever task you have chosen, also notice when your attention has wandered on to something else. Gently bring your attention back to the original task until it wanders again. Then bring it back again to the task and so forth, repeating the attempt to stay focused.

It will generally be difficult to do this, especially in the beginning. If you stay with it, however, and if you are able to identify what is distracting you away from the task, you will have made an enormously valuable insight into the triggers of your Wake-up Call. Are there physical tensions that are also triggers? Does hunger, tiredness, or anxiety cause you to become distracted?

The Social Role: The Energizer

Average Sevens define themselves as the "Energizer," the person who must pump energy and excitement into a situation so that everyone will be charged up—and so that they can stay excited themselves. Since Sevens have a great deal of energy, it is easy for them to play this role. Like all Social Roles, however, once it has begun to be identified with, the person finds it increasingly difficult not to act this way.

Playing the role of the Energizer, the Spark Plug or Catalyst—as well as coconspirator and tempter into mischief—allows Sevens to become the center of attention. Their company is frequently sought after because others' spirits are uplifted by their cheer.

Kansas is an accomplished actress who has also enjoyed a career as a casting agent.

It's nice to know that you can affect the lives of others with your energy. I can often see spirits rise right in front of my eyes. I like to make people feel happy. I enjoy having that power. At times it's a conflict, though, as I attract a few too many people who are basically "downers." Truthfully, I do not think they want to feel better. I'm trying to learn to let them go

"Come on everybody! Let's get some juice going."

their own way and save my energy for better uses, where it's appreciated. It's a gift to be able to lift the spirits of others in a natural way.

The problem arises when average Sevens begin to function only as superchargers who are outspoken and outrageous, who must be stimulating and dazzling all the time. This inevitably puts an enormous burden on them—and it becomes wearing on others as well. Most people, even other Sevens, find that relentless energy eventually becomes one-dimensional and tiresome. If others cannot keep up their pace, Sevens often interpret this as a form of rejection or abandonment that angers and frustrates them, leading them to move on to greener pastures and new audiences. Increasingly, however, they may feel trapped in their role, not knowing how to relate to others or get their needs met.

Velma, a multitalented educator and business consultant, experienced this frustration in her early teens.

As a child I felt free, uninhibited, full of life, and aware that I made people laugh. Other children sought me out because I was fun to be with. As a teenager, I wanted to be taken more seriously, but I never felt I was, especially by my family. So I responded to their level of expectation by acting out or by being silly, funny, or dramatic (rather than real) to get attention.

STIRRING THE POT

When you catch yourself entertaining others—getting the juice flowing, so to speak—notice whom you are doing this for. What does this excited state do for your contact with yourself? With others? Is it satisfying? What do you think would happen if you did not pump up the excitement in your environment?

Gluttony and Never Being Satisfied

The Seven's characteristic vice is *gluttony*, literally the desire to stuff oneself with food—and Sevens can be guilty of overeating and overdrinking, just as they can overdo all physical gratifications. Although a literal interpretation of gluttony can sometimes apply to Type Seven, it is more insightful to understand this Passion metaphorically, as the attempt to fill up an inner emptiness with things and experiences.

Gluttony is the emotional response of wanting to stuff the self with external gratifications in response to the experience of feeling frustrated, empty, and needy. Rather than experience emptiness and neediness directly, Sevens attempt to escape from anxiety by distracting

themselves both with pleasures of the flesh and with mental stimulation. The deeper their underlying emotional distortions from childhood, the less likely Sevens will feel that they have enough experiences to satisfy them—they must have *more* to completely fill themselves—thus falling into the “Passion” of gluttony.

Because Sevens keep their minds full in order to defend themselves from feeling anxiety, they have trouble taking in sensory information unless it makes a strong impression on them. Their identity is thus based on *staying mentally excited*; the content of their minds—their individual thoughts—are not as important as the degree of stimulation and the anticipation of gratification that is produced. Then again, Sevens seek strong stimuli so that the impressions that do filter in will register on their minds and satisfy them. Since their identity is dependent on staying stimulated, Sevens tend to put few brakes on themselves and dislike boundaries or limitations of any kind. They want to be free to respond to impulses and desires as soon as they arise, without delay. Like all of the Passions, gluttony is self-defeating in the long run because the more Sevens “stuff themselves” indiscriminately in an attempt to find the nurturance they feel they were deprived of in childhood, the more unsatisfied they become.

Seeking Stimulation and Acquiring New Experiences

No matter what type we are, we often pursue what we think will make us happy without considering whether our choices have the *capacity* to make us happy. Under what circumstances does happiness arise? What makes it endure for more than a little while? How can we increase our happiness without running the risk of going overboard in some way? These kinds of questions are the special themes of Type Seven.

Average Sevens are typically sophisticates, connoisseurs, and collectors—those who know the best French restaurant or cognac or jeweler, what new movies are worth seeing, and what the latest news and trends are because they do not want to miss out.

One of the clearest demarcations between the healthy and average Sevens is that healthy Sevens know that they are most gratified by being focused and productive; they are contributing something new and potentially valuable to the world. Average Sevens become less productive because anxiety causes them to focus more on ways of entertaining and distracting themselves. Their creativity becomes supplanted by an increasing desire to acquire and consume.

Tara, a filmmaker, recognizes this pattern in herself.

It's unfortunately true that my tendency is to get very excited about something new, then get bored with it and not follow through. For

“Life is a progress from want to want, not from enjoyment to enjoyment.”

SAMUEL JOHNSON

me, variety is the spice of life. Talking about doing something "interesting" makes me feel better, even if we don't do it. I like to learn new things. I love to take classes—whether it's cooking, or ballroom dancing, or Rollerblading, whatever. We get at least ten different magazines. I also like to bargain-shop because I like to check out all my options and make sure I have the most bang for the buck. It's also been hard for me to commit to a relationship because I'm always looking for something that might be better, making sure I've checked out all my options.

FINDING THE GIFT

Notice how the anticipation and desire for other experiences and things prevents you from savoring what you are experiencing right now. To explore this, you can play a game: take a moment to find something of wonder in your immediate experience. What is the gift you are receiving right now?

Boredom and Keeping Their Options Open

Sevens frequently complain about boredom and how much they hate it, although what they call boredom is the anxiety they feel when the environment is not providing adequate stimulation to keep pain and other negative feelings at bay. Similarly, feeling restricted and unable to move on creates not only boredom but even panic. They do not want to feel stuck in any situation that would "tie them down" or force them to confront painful feelings before they are ready to do so.

To defend against boredom and the feelings that it brings, Sevens want to keep their minds full of fascinating possibilities, and they want to make sure that their supply lines to the new, the exciting, and the fashionable will always be open.

Velma, whom we met earlier, elaborates:

I preferred variety in all things. I had specific friends for my intellectual side, different ones for my emotional side, and altogether different ones for my sexual side. I was driven to seek fulfillment for all of these different sides of myself. It was not possible to resist. The more experiences I had, the more I wanted and then grew to need. My energy was cycled and replenished by the diversity of my experiences. I managed to handle many different things without exhausting myself—I was compelled to "do" everything, and I had the energy for all of it. I never wanted to do the traditional thing. Everything new and different that I tried fed my desire to continue to seek out the new and different. An unrelenting cycle.

"The essence of boredom is to find yourself in the obsessive search for novelty."

GEORGE LEONARD

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Without inner guidance, Sevens must learn everything by a process of trial and error, and they are not likely to take other people's advice because they want to experience everything for themselves. They believe that by experiencing as many things as possible, they will know which options will make them happiest. But it is not humanly possible to experiment with everything: there are too many places to visit, foods to eat, clothes to wear, experiences to have. Their lives would be over before Sevens could have all the experiences they would need to have to be able to guide themselves from experience alone. Trying everything to see what it is like would take several lifetimes, and the near-infinite possibilities of the world would still not be exhausted. Furthermore, some of those experiences will most likely be damaging and dangerous since there are things in life that one needs to avoid, or at least be extremely cautious about. But for better or worse, Sevens usually have to learn things the hard way.

THE "B" WORD

Study what you are calling boredom. What does it feel like in your body? What is the sensation of boredom? As you are able to sense it, what associations or memories does it bring up?

Being Indiscriminate and Overdoing Their Activities

Average Sevens easily lose a sense of priorities, throwing themselves into constant activity, often overdoing things in many areas of their lives. They tend to be lavish with money to whatever degree their circumstances allow. They typically try to live life in the fast lane, whether they reside in a small town and must content themselves with trips to the local mall and bowling alley, or in a larger city with many more distractions and conveniences available to them. If they cannot get out, indiscriminate Sevens may watch television all day while chain-smoking or talking on the phone, or they may pass the time visiting friends or hanging out at the local bar.

Overdoing also applies to ideas, and Sevens tend to become stuck on something that catches their fancy, becoming so enthusiastic about it that they wear it into the ground. But the opposite is also true: as they become less healthy, they become less focused and less able to follow through. Many partially completed projects lie in their wake. The fact that many of their good (perhaps even brilliant) ideas are never realized becomes an additional source of frustration to them. If Sevens do not deal with the underlying anxieties that are keeping them in flight

*"Why can't everyone keep
up with me?"*

from themselves, they ultimately squander many of their best opportunities and inspirations.

Their quick minds and ability to talk can also deteriorate into being glib and facile, although Sevens generally consider this an ability to improvise for the sake of getting things moving or making for a better story. Average Sevens also tend to consider themselves instant experts on all manner of things, often getting in over their heads—and attempting to get through by “winging it.”

REALISTIC SCHEDULES

For a few days, keep track of how long it actually takes you to do things: how long it takes to get to work, to a store, to shop, to meet with a friend, and so forth. See how this fits with your intended schedule. Is it possible to drop one or two activities per day to give yourself a little breathing room and to ensure that you will be able to fully enjoy the experiences you have committed to?

Avoiding Anxiety and Painful Feelings

Just as, during wartime, an enemy can jam radio signals by transmitting another, stronger radio signal, Sevens “jam” their own awareness of pain, deprivation, and sadness by constantly keeping their minds occupied with interesting and exciting possibilities. This does not mean, however, that average Sevens do not feel pain or suffer or get depressed—awareness of their suffering eventually penetrates their defenses. But as soon as possible, Sevens are on the go again. In a similar way, Sevens become adept at using their agile minds to reframe their experiences—finding a way to accentuate the positive and deflect their deeper feelings about even major tragedies.

Jessie, a therapist who embodies many of the sparkling qualities of Type Seven, recalls reframing a major loss in her life.

At age eleven, my dad suddenly died of a massive heart attack. I can remember thinking, “What are my options? What is the best thing I can do now?” Mom is in shock and suicidal, and my little sister is acting out. I can grow up. I decided I can be as happy, cheerful, and helpful as I can be. There is no time to linger in pain. This is the only way I will ever remain free—free from depression and despair.

“A man who finds no satisfaction in himself seeks for it in vain elsewhere.”

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD

CONTACTING DEEPER FEELINGS

As an Inner Work task, allow yourself to stop and experience your feelings more deeply. Recall a person or event that you know you have strong feelings about. Contemplate that person or event until your feelings begin to emerge. Notice what happens and how long you are able to stay with your feelings before you become aware that your attention has shifted. Can you identify what prevented you from staying with your feelings? What distracted you?

Frustration, Impatience, and Self-Centeredness

Sevens can be extremely demanding: the more anxious they become, the more impatient they become with others and with themselves. Nothing is happening fast enough. Nothing meets their needs. Without realizing it, Sevens can move through life projecting an underlying feeling of frustration onto all of their experiences.

They can also become deeply frustrated and impatient with themselves. Sevens may avoid dealing with their pain, but they are generally too alert to avoid noticing that they are squandering their talents and resources. Many worthwhile ideas go unrealized because Sevens become too impatient with themselves to allow their projects to fully develop.

This underlying frustration makes them highly intolerant of the foibles of others and unwilling to put up either with expectations placed on them or with other people's inability to meet *their* expectations. Their impatience can also be expressed as exasperation and a cutting, dismissive attitude.

Velma, the business consultant, continues:

When I was a little girl, I would flop onto my mother's bed for a little chat, she would humor me for a while, then she would try to get rid of me. She told me that I didn't have any problems. She expected me to continue being the same happy girl I always was. I learned to be dismissive from my mother, and I catch myself doing the same thing to those whom I have no patience for.

Among the three frustration-based types (Fours, Ones, and Sevens), Sevens are perhaps the most overt in their expression of displeasure because they are also an assertive type. They are able to openly vent their unhappiness and frustration about whatever does not please them. Their underlying subconscious thought is "If I throw a big enough tantrum, I will get Mommy to come and attend to me." By acting out in such a demanding way, they often get what they want.

"I want it and I want it now!"

Others experience Sevens' impatience as unbridled self-centeredness. While Sevens can be attention-grabbing, they are not doing so because they want to be esteemed and admired by others, which would be a narcissistic motivation typical of types in the Feeling Triad. In fact, in certain situations, Sevens do not mind looking foolish if it will get the energy going and keep them out of contact with underlying anxiety. By contrast, Threes would never willingly let their foibles and imperfections hang out the way Sevens often do.

UNCOVERING FRUSTRATION

Observe the energy of frustration in yourself. When you notice that you are frustrated, stop and take a few deep breaths. What does frustration actually feel like? What happens when you sense it instead of acting it out?

Insensitivity and Impulsiveness

"It's not my problem."

Since keeping up the momentum of their lives is a primary value, Sevens can take a kind of hit-and-run approach that leaves others hurt and confused. Staying in motion means suppressing guilt and regret about their actions. Sevens do not generally wish to hurt others, but their defenses make it difficult for them to acknowledge the pain that they cause—or even to be aware of it.

Avoiding anxiety also causes Sevens to become increasingly impulsive—they leap before they look. Serious physical problems can result from heavy drinking or eating the wrong foods, smoking, or simply pushing themselves too hard in a constant search for stimulation. At their worst, they can be verbally abusive—intensely demanding, pushy, and rather nasty.

Devon speaks frankly about her way of dealing with problems.

There were times when I shut people out of my life on short notice. One day they thought we had a future, the next day I was saying good-bye. At the time, I had no remorse. They had driven me to leave, it was all their doing. Today I feel very bad that I had so little concern for their feelings, but the bottom line was if I began to feel pain, I didn't believe I would survive that pain. So I ran from it and found new pleasure elsewhere. It was a sure bet that when I felt down, I would get up, put my best dress and high heels on, and go out dancing.

CLEANING UP MESSSES

People who know you recognize that you do not intend to hurt them, but in more stress-filled periods, you may have done so inadvertently.

When appropriate, have a conversation with a friend or loved one whom you fear you may have hurt. Ask their permission to talk with them first, then after you have apologized, hear what they have to say. Share with them your feelings about any aspects that still remain unresolved. This may not be easy for you, but clearing the air this way can go far in reducing your own underlying hurt and anxiety—and your need to bury them in excess and activity.

Escapism, Excessiveness, and Addiction

Average Sevens see themselves as spontaneous and fun-loving, with a live-for-today philosophy. What they are not always aware of, however, is how much this attitude can cover over an increasingly escapist approach to life. To the degree that Sevens are driven by fears and anxieties, they are not as free and spontaneous as they believe. They may blindly and impulsively pursue whatever promises immediate satisfaction, not considering the costs of their impulses. Their philosophy is "Enjoy now, pay later."

Even painful, negative experiences can be exciting and can serve as a way of masking over deeper pain. For instance, the pain of alcoholism or drug addiction can be terrible, but for deteriorating Sevens, this pain is preferable to being overwhelmed by deeper grief and panic.

Sevens are caught in a cycle of anticipation, craving, and excess that we call *the chocolate syndrome*. One of the most exciting things about getting a box of expensive chocolate is the anticipation of the first bite. Similarly, it is not so much the experience itself *but their anticipation of the experience* that most excites Sevens. And as everyone (but Sevens) knows, a pleasure overdone can quickly become a source of displeasure. After several chocolates, we begin to experience the opposite of pleasure: pain and disgust.

The Seven's pursuit of gratification can take on the quality of an addiction: they require higher and higher doses of whatever has pleased them in order to stay in a state of stimulation and euphoria. Even dangerous experiences begin to leave them unaffected.

Tara speaks frankly about her past in this regard.

Avoiding things builds up anxiety, and as the anxiety becomes more and more intolerable, the need to distract becomes greater and greater. The distraction has to be "louder" than the anxiety to squelch it. I think this is why I got so out of control at various times in my life. Instead of being with the fear and pain, I'd run from it.

*"Whatever gets you
through the night."*

Avoid it at all costs, until it was impossible to run anymore. I could have easily overdosed on drugs, or gotten killed driving 140 mph.

ACCESSING YOUR FOLLOW-THROUGH

In your Inner Work Journal, make two lists. First, make a list of the major projects you have begun as an adult that you did not get around to finishing. Then make a list of the projects you have actually completed. Do you see patterns in both lists? Are you more serious about the excitement of having new plans and possibilities than the excitement of the process and satisfaction of finishing them? To what degree are you "addicted" to staying on the move at the expense of actually accomplishing something important to yourself? What do you think you have been running toward—and what have you been running away from?

REACTING TO STRESS: SEVEN GOES TO ONE



Under increased stress, Sevens become aware that they need to focus their energies if they want to accomplish things. Thus, like average Ones, they begin to feel the need to restrain themselves. They begin to work harder, feeling that they alone can do the job properly, and attempt to impose limits on their behaviors. In effect, they force themselves to stay on track, while quickly becoming frustrated with these structures and limits. They may get either more restless and scattered or more self-controlled and rigid, in which case their usual vivaciousness can give way to a grim seriousness.

Also like average Ones, Sevens under stress attempt to educate others—whether about an exciting book or workshop, a good place to shop, or a particular political or spiritual viewpoint. Their enthusiasm for their own opinions can rapidly shift into a tendency to debate or critique the views of others. They can become "short," impersonal, and highly impatient with any degree of incompetence in themselves or others. Under high stress, their underlying anger and resentment bubble to the surface, and they vent their frustration by scolding, nitpicking, and delivering withering sarcastic comments.

THE RED FLAG: THE SEVEN IN TROUBLE



If Sevens are overstressed for an extended period of time, if they have suffered a serious crisis without adequate support or coping skills, or if they have suffered from chronic abuse in childhood, they may cross the shock point into the unhealthy aspects of their type. This may lead them to a fearful recognition that their lives are becoming out of control and that their choices and actions are actually increasing their pain.

If Sevens can recognize the truth in these fears, they may begin to turn their lives around and move toward health and liberation. On the other hand, they may become even more scattered, impulsive, and

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manic, desperately throwing themselves into reckless activities to avoid their pain at any cost. ("Whatever gets you through the night is okay.") If Sevens persist in this attitude, they may cross into the unhealthy range. If you or someone you know is exhibiting the following warning signs for an extended period of time—more than two or three weeks—getting counseling, therapy, or other support is highly advisable.

WARNING SIGNS

POTENTIAL PATHOLOGY:
Manic-Depressive Dis-
orders, Borderline Conditions,
some elements of Histrionic
Personality Disorder, Ob-
sessive-Compulsive Disorders,
substance abuse.

- ▶ Extreme dissipation and attempts to escape anxiety
- ▶ Serious longstanding and debilitating addictions
- ▶ Impulsiveness, offensiveness, and infantile reactions
- ▶ Compulsive activities and highly elated mood
- ▶ Periods of being out of control
- ▶ Mania, depression, and wild mood swings
- ▶ Periods of panic and paralyzing terror

▶ When you are mentally revved up, take a moment to breathe and see what is really going on with you. Notice especially if you are afraid or upset about something, and see if you can observe how the velocity of your thoughts leads you away from experiencing these feelings. When you see your mind racing and free-associating, it is a good time to ask yourself, "What's up?" Almost always you will see that you are masking some source of anxiety. The word *boring* can be a big clue. Any time you feel in danger of being "bored," stop and see what you are avoiding.

▶ It is not so much that you ignore your negative feelings as that you process them *incompletely*. You more or less notice them and then want to move on to the next thing. Really allowing things to affect you, to impact you on a deeper level, is not the same as wallowing in negativity. On the contrary, letting the events of your life, even the painful ones, touch you deeply will only enrich your experience and make your joy more meaningful and real. See how your feelings are experienced in your body. What does sadness feel like? Where do you notice it? In your stomach or your chest or your face? How about eagerness? Simply identifying a feeling, saying to yourself, "I feel sad," is a beginning, but it is not the same as fully experiencing and being affected by your sadness—or your happiness, for that matter.

▶ Learn to notice your impatience and its roots. As a Seven, you can be extremely impatient with the pace and energy levels of others

PRACTICES THAT HELP SEVENS DEVELOP



but also extremely impatient with yourself. Because you are talented in many areas, you tend not to develop any one fully. You shortchange yourself both because of your impatience with yourself and with the process of learning and acquiring skills. Also be on guard for the "instant expert" syndrome. A basic grasp of a subject or a certain facility with a skill, combined with your charm and bravado, can certainly open doors for you. But if you do not really know what you are talking about, if you have not really done your homework, if your ideas are half-baked, others will soon catch on, and your reputation—despite your talents—will suffer. Sevens hate being referred to as superficial, but it is your impatience that causes others to perceive you that way. Take the time to bring your abilities to fruition.

► Find the joy of the ordinary. Like Fours, Sevens tend to seek out heightened reality—you like things to be extraordinary, fabulous, exciting, and stimulating. The amazing thing, however, is that when we are present, *all of our experiences are extraordinary*. Cleaning your room or eating an orange can be a totally fulfilling experience if you are in it one hundred percent. Each moment is a unique source of delight and amazement. Your fear of deprivation and your desire to entertain yourself prevent you from finding the fulfillment you seek. Think about which moments from your past were the most alive and fulfilling—a child's birth, a wedding, a picnic with friends during college, a perfect sunset. What about them made them so satisfying and real? Also notice that these moments do not necessarily make exciting stories, although they have another quality that makes them fulfilling. Your life will change to the degree that you find out what that quality is.

► Meditation can be extremely helpful for Sevens, as for Type Six, especially for quieting down the mind. If you begin to meditate, you will soon recognize the intensity of your mental chatter, and the effort to relax and identify more with your presence in the moment will be challenging. It is also extremely important to notice how you *end* your meditation. Sevens tend to lurch out of the meditation, as if the personality cannot wait two seconds to start revving up again. Be mindful as you end the sitting, and see if you can carry your inner quiet into your actions. The quality of the meditative mind will do little to transform us if it is confined to those few minutes a day we allot for our inner life.

► You do tend to be happier and more exuberant than most people. See what happens when you can share that feeling with others without pushing—and without "demonstrating" it to them. You are most profound and effective when you are grounded and steady—at such times your joy is evident and affecting to everyone. Besides, if

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Sevens tend to seek out extraordinary, fabulous, ex- however, is that when we ary. Cleaning your room experience if you are in it ue source of delight and desire to entertain your- you seek. Think about st alive and fulfilling—a during college, a perfect ring and real? Also notice exciting stories, although fulfilling. Your life will hat quality is.

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exuberant than most peo- that feeling with other- ing" it to them. You are grounded and steady—g to everyone. Besides, if

your joy is genuine, it does not depend on "stirring the pot" and cannot be reduced or lost if people are not reacting to it.

Even average Sevens tend to be creative, but when they are more balanced and grounded, they can be brilliant, multifaceted people, synthesizing and cross-fertilizing their many diverse areas of experience. Their varied abilities and interests, enjoyment of work, and extroverted qualities often lead them to success in the world.

Sevens, as they say, have their feet on the ground. They are not wool-gatherers or idlers—they are engaged with the reality and with the practical business of living life. They understand that they must be realistic, productive, and hardworking to have the financial means to support their many dreams.

Thus, healthy Sevens are not satisfied with merely consuming the work of others—whether that work is a hamburger or a piece of designer clothing. They know that their primary enjoyment of life comes from *contributing* something to the world. Healthy Sevens would rather design a dress than buy one. They would rather make a movie than watch someone else's. After all, then they can have it be exactly the way they want it to be.

One way that Sevens constructively work with their versatility and desire for different experiences is through multitasking. By maintaining several different tasks at any given time, they are able to shift from one to the other, to use a variety of skills, and to see ways that their different skills or interests relate with each other. All of this can be satisfying for Sevens, and as long as they can prioritize and set limits, they excel at this style of working.

Similarly, Sevens have a talent for generating ideas quickly and spontaneously. They are big-picture people who like getting projects started and are good at brainstorming fresh approaches to problems. Their minds almost overflow with creative concepts and possibilities, and they excel at considering options that others might not perceive. Healthy Sevens also maintain the discipline required to develop their ideas to fruition.

Perhaps Type Seven's greatest gift is the ability to maintain a positive outlook and sense of abundance. When this outlook is tempered by realism and a willingness to deal with difficult feelings, Sevens are able to generate an infectious enthusiasm for whatever situation is at hand. Far from timid, they live fully and encourage others to do the same. ("You only go around once.") Further, their willingness to explore and to be open to new experiences can lead them to be well rounded and knowledgeable. They truly make the world their home and enjoy sharing with others the riches they find on their journeys.

Tara continues:

BUILDING ON THE SEVEN'S STRENGTHS



"The world is my oyster."

Life is a big playground. Everything is interesting. There's a kind of spontaneous joy and curiosity I have about life. I feel supported by the universe, like everything will turn out okay. Even when things are dark and bad, something in me really believes that it will turn out all right in the end. The world can be cruel and awful, but my sense is that it isn't personally hostile toward me. Because of this basic feeling of security, I'm more willing to be open and curious about things.

THE PATH OF INTEGRATION: SEVEN GOES TO FIVE



Sevens actualize themselves and remain healthy by learning to slow down and quiet the rapid activity of their minds so that impressions can affect them more deeply, in the manner of healthy Fives. No longer addicted to seeking extraordinary experiences and distractions, integrating Sevens are able to stay with their observations and experiences long enough to discover all sorts of amazing things about themselves and the world around them. This both gives them more of the guidance they seek and enhances their productivity and creativity. Further, what they produce has far more resonance and meaning for others.

Cultivating a quieter, more focused mind brings Sevens into closer contact with their own Essential guidance; thus they are able to recognize which experiences will be of real value to them. No longer distracted by anxiety about making wrong choices and missing out on the best course of action, integrating Sevens simply *know* what to do. Exploring reality in greater depth does not cause integrating Sevens to lose their spontaneity or enthusiasm; on the contrary, they become more free to savor each moment.

Imitating the average qualities of Fives, however, will do little to help integrating Sevens. Getting lost in thoughts, emotional detachment, and anxieties about coping with the needs of others will only exacerbate the Seven's cerebral circus. Trying to force themselves to concentrate will not work either, because such efforts are based on repression. But as Sevens learn to quiet their minds and tolerate the anxiety that arises, they gradually and naturally begin to open to the clarity, innovation, insight, and knowing qualities of the healthy Five.

TRANSFORMING PERSONALITY INTO ESSENCE



The key thing for Sevens to understand about themselves is that as long as they are directly pursuing happiness and satisfaction, they will never attain them. Fulfillment is not the result of "getting" anything; it is a state of being that arises when we allow the richness of the present moment to touch us. When Sevens understand this and are able to let go of the conditions they place on their happiness, an inner spaciousness opens up, and the simple pleasure of existing arises in them. They understand that Being itself, pure existence, is pleasurable. Thus, they become deeply and profoundly appreciative of life itself.

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After years of inner work, Tara has also discovered this for herself.

I began to understand that life isn't always fun. I have redefined what is fun and not fun and realized that those ideas are generally false. A lot of what I thought was not fun, like washing the dishes, is actually just fine and is really no different or any worse from other activities I thought of as fun.

learning to slow but with Sevens, it is the primary way that they lose their connection that impressions with Presence. The most challenging part of the transformative process Fives. No longer for Sevens involves their ability to stay in contact with present reality. distractions, inte- This is difficult because staying more awake and present eventually and experiences brings into consciousness the very pain and deprivation that Sevens about themselves have been fleeing. At such times, Sevens might well remember that the more of the guid- suffering they truly fear has already occurred—and they survived. With creativity. Further the support of Presence, then, Sevens are able to be with their pain long ng for others. enough to really metabolize it. Grieving, like any organic process, has Sevens into closer a cycle and requires a definite period of time—it cannot be rushed. able to recognize Further, if we cannot be with our pain, we cannot be with our joy. ger distracted by

the best course of ability to be satisfied with very little because they realize there will al- exploring reality in ways be enough for them and for everyone else. Perhaps their greatest their spontaneity or gift is their *ability to see the spiritual in the material world*—to perceive for each moment the Divine in the ordinary.

will do little to Jessie, the therapist we met earlier, shares a moment in which this notional detach- ability served her well.

ners will only ex- themselves to are based on re- tolerate the anx- open to the clarity thy Five.

When my stepson was dying of AIDS, I held him in my arms and asked myself, What is the best option right now? What is the most wonderful thing he can experience in this moment? So I guided him toward the peace and comfort of the other side. Gregory was able to gently release the physical aspect of his life, to feel that his life was done, and to actually choose the moment of his last breath. Everything was complete and perfect, and we were with him.

THE EMERGENCE OF ESSENCE

mselves is that as action, they will ing" anything: it ss of the present and are able to let inner spacious- es in them. They able. Thus, they lf.

The Hindus say that God created the universe as a dance so that He could enjoy the pleasure of His own creation reflecting back to Himself. It is this feeling of wonder and awe at the beauty of life that fully infuses Sevens.

From this Essential point of view, the Seven personifies the quality of

"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life."

MELODY BEATTIE

"The fullness of joy is to behold God in everything."

JULIAN OF NORWICH

joy, the final state that human beings were meant to be in. Joy is a natural experience that arises spontaneously when we experience ourselves as Being—when we are free of the endless chatter, planning, and projects of our ego minds. In the Christian view, human beings were created to go to Heaven and to enjoy the Beatific Vision—to spend all eternity contemplating God in utter and complete bliss. Thus, *ecstasy* is our final and rightful state. When Sevens remember this truth, they are drawn back to joy as their essential state, and they embody it and spread it to others.

Jessie continues:

I have learned to recenter myself through quiet times of contemplation and reflection. I have discovered another whole world inside of myself. The spirit that is me is free, and I have found so much to feast on. My inner world transcends my outer doings, but it also spills out and colors all of it. The joy sometimes just bubbles up and life is a delight. I find that I do not need a lot, yet my life is filled. At my best, I am overcome with awe and gratitude. I live in the moment and trust that all of my needs will be met.

Above all, Sevens realize on the most profound level of their consciousness that life really is a gift. One of the big lessons that the Seven offers is that there is nothing wrong with life, nothing wrong with the material world. It is the gift of the Creator. If we were not to take anything for granted, we would be flooded with joy and gratitude all the time. When we have no claims on life, everything becomes a Divine gift capable of sweeping us into ecstasy. Of all the types, this is the struggle of the Seven—to remember the real source of joy and to live out of that truth.

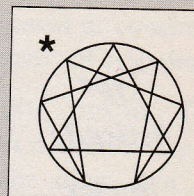
Add your scores for the fifteen statements for Type Seven. Your result will be between 15 and 75. The following guidelines may help you discover or confirm your personality type.

- ▶ 15 You are probably not an assertive type (not a Three, Seven, or Eight).
- ▶ 15–30 You are probably not a Type Seven.
- ▶ 30–45 You most probably have Seven-issues or a Seven parent.
- ▶ 45–60 You most likely have a Seven-component.
- ▶ 60–75 You are most likely a Seven (but could still be another type if you are thinking too narrowly about Type Seven).

Sevens are most likely to misidentify themselves as Twos, Fours, and Threes. Nines, Threes, and Twos are most likely to misidentify themselves as Sevens.

CHAPTER 14

TYPE EIGHT: THE CHALLENGER



THE LEADER

THE PROTECTOR

THE PROVIDER

THE ENTREPRENEUR

THE MAVERICK

THE ROCK

"From this arises the question whether it is better to be loved rather than feared, or feared rather than loved. It might perhaps be answered that we should wish to be both: but since love and fear can hardly exist together, if we must choose between them, it is far safer to be feared than loved."

—NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI, *THE PRINCE*

"It is fatal to enter any war without the will to win it."

—DOUGLAS MACARTHUR

"Power doesn't have to show off. Power is confident, self-assuring, self-starting and self-stopping, self-warming and self-justifying. When you have it, you know it."

—RALPH ELLISON

"Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression, and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love."

—MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

THE RISO-HUDSON TAS

Type Attitude Sorter

Score each of the following statements according to how true or applicable to you it is on the following scale:

1.....*Not at All True*

2.....*Seldom True*

3.....*Somewhat True*

4.....*Generally True*

5.....*Very True*

*See page 313 for
scoring key.*

- _____ 1. I am extremely independent and don't like having to rely on others for what I really need.
- _____ 2. I feel that "you have to break some eggs to make an omelet."
- _____ 3. When I care about people, I often begin to think of them as "my people" and feel like I need to watch out for their interests.
- _____ 4. I know how to get results: I know how to reward people and how to put pressure on them to get things done.
- _____ 5. I do not have much sympathy for those who are weak and vacillating—weakness just invites trouble.
- _____ 6. I am strong-willed and do not give up or back down easily.
- _____ 7. I am never prouder than when I see someone I've taken under my wing make it on their own.
- _____ 8. I have a tender, even somewhat sentimental side that I show to very few people.
- _____ 9. People who know me appreciate the fact that I talk straight to them and tell them exactly what's on my mind.
- _____ 10. I've had to work hard for everything I have—I think struggle is good because it toughens you up and makes you clear about what you want.
- _____ 11. I see myself as a challenger, as someone who pushes people beyond their comfort zone to achieve their best.
- _____ 12. My sense of humor is earthy, sometimes even crude, although I think most people are too prissy and thin-skinned.
- _____ 13. I can get into a towering rage, but it blows over.
- _____ 14. I feel most alive when I do what others think is impossible: I like to go to the edge and see if I can beat the odds.
- _____ 15. Somebody usually has to come up on the short end of the stick, and I don't want it to be me.

TYPE EIGHT

PERSONA

The Powerful, Dominant, Self-Confident, Determined

We have named all the types, Eights giving others opportunities in some way. They are of great capacities to persevere—often in their endeavors—from starting a household, to waging a war.

Eights have enormous energy when they are alive when they are in their abundant energy, they leave their mark on it—by their example, by their other people, from their age, Eights understand endurance—qualities to look for in others.

Thayer is a stock standing her Type Eight in which she could clear

Much of my tenacity told me not to let an I learned to master eight, a huge horse. horse, I resolutely was proud.

Eights do not want power over them (their physical, sexual, social, or financial) making sure that they are as long as possible. An businessman or a mogul in a religious community. No print on their sphere is a

Eights are the true "I" than any other type, they and resist being indebt

PERSONALITY TYPE EIGHT: THE CHALLENGER

The Powerful, Dominating Type:

Self-Confident, Decisive, Willful, and Confrontational

We have named personality type Eight *the Challenger* because, of all the types, Eights enjoy taking on challenges themselves as well as giving others opportunities that challenge them to exceed themselves in some way. They are charismatic and have the physical and psychological capacities to persuade others to follow them into all kinds of endeavors—from starting a company, to rebuilding a city, to running a household, to waging war, to making peace.

Eights have enormous willpower and vitality, and they feel most alive when they are exercising these capacities in the world. They use their abundant energy to effect changes in their environment—to leave their mark on it—but also to keep the environment, and especially other people, from hurting them and those they care about. At an early age, Eights understand that this requires strength, will, persistence, and endurance—qualities that they develop in themselves and that they look for in others.

Thayer is a stockbroker who has worked intensively on understanding her Type Eight personality. She recounts a childhood incident in which she could clearly see the development of this pattern.

Much of my tenacity and toughness comes from my dad. He always told me not to let anybody push me around. It was not okay to cry. I learned to master my weaker side early on. At the tender age of eight, a huge horse ran away with me. When an adult caught the horse, I resolutely dismounted without a tear. I could tell my father was proud.

Eights do not want to be controlled or to allow others to have power over them (their Basic Fear), whether the power is psychological, sexual, social, or financial. Much of their behavior is involved with making sure that they retain and increase whatever power they have for as long as possible. An Eight may be a general or a gardener, a small businessman or a mogul, the mother of a family or the superior of a religious community. No matter: being in charge and leaving their imprint on their sphere is uniquely characteristic of them.

Eights are the true “rugged individualists” of the Enneagram. More than any other type, they stand alone. They want to be independent and resist being indebted to anyone. They often refuse to give in to

► **BASIC FEAR:** Of being harmed or controlled by others, of violation

► **BASIC DESIRE:** To protect themselves, to determine their own course in life

► **SUPEREGO MESSAGE:** “You are good or okay if you are strong and in control of your situation.”

“We either make ourselves miserable, or we make ourselves strong. The amount of work is the same.”

CARLOS CASTENEDA

*"I am the master of my
fate."*

social convention, and they can defy fear, shame, and concern about the consequences of their actions. Although they are usually aware of what people think of them, they do not let the opinions of others sway them. They go about their business with a steely determination that can be awe-inspiring, even intimidating to others.

Although, to some extent, Eights fear physical harm, far more important is their fear of being disempowered or controlled in some way. Eights are extraordinarily tough and can absorb a great deal of physical punishment without complaint—a double-edged blessing since they often take their health and stamina for granted and overlook the health and well-being of others as well. Yet they are desperately afraid of being hurt emotionally and will use their physical strength to protect their feelings and keep others at a safe emotional distance. Beneath the tough facade is vulnerability, although it has been covered over by a layer of emotional armor.

Thus, Eights are often extremely industrious, but at the price of losing emotional contact with many of the people in their lives. Those close to them may become increasingly dissatisfied with this state of affairs, which confounds Eights. ("I don't understand what my family is complaining about. I bust my hump to provide for them. Why are they disappointed in me?")

When this happens, Eights feel misunderstood and may distance themselves further. In fact, beneath their imposing exterior, Eights often feel hurt and rejected, although this is something they seldom talk about because they have trouble admitting their vulnerability to themselves, let alone to anyone else. Because they fear that they will be rejected (divorced, humiliated, criticized, fired, or harmed in some way), Eights attempt to defend themselves by rejecting others first. The result is that average Eights become *blocked in their ability to connect with people or to love* since love gives the other power over them, reawakening their Basic Fear.

The more Eights build up their egos in order to protect themselves, the more sensitive they become to any real or imaginary slight to their self-respect, authority, or preeminence. The more they attempt to make themselves impervious to hurt or pain (whether physical or emotional), the more they shut down emotionally to become hardened and rock-like.

When Eights are emotionally healthy, however, they have a resourceful, can-do attitude as well as a steady inner drive. They take the initiative and make things happen with a great passion for life. They are honorable and authoritative—natural leaders who have a solid, commanding presence. Their groundedness gives them abundant common sense as well as the ability to be decisive. Eights are willing to take the heat, knowing that any decision cannot please everyone. But as much as possible, they want to look after the interests of the people in their

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THE CHILDHOOD PATTERN

Most Eights have told us that they felt that they had to become "adults" at an early age, perhaps to help bring in money to raise the other children in the family because of an absent father or some other calamity. They may have had to deal with a dangerous environment (such as drug dealers, or street gangs, or some kind of war zone), or with an erratic or violent adult in their home. Other Eights grow up in fairly normal families but may have felt the need to protect their feelings for other reasons. In short, Eights tend to grow up quickly, and *survival issues* are foremost to them, as if they were asking, "How can I—and the few people I care about—survive in a cruel, uncaring world?"

Roseann is an Eight who recalls the enormous pressure created by her childhood situation.

Being tough with my tough father set up a relationship with my mother as I got older. She would often ask me to go to my father with a request regarding a family outing, a movie—stuff like that. "You ask him," she'd say. "If I suggest it, he'll say no." On the one hand, this made me feel proud that she thought I was strong and tough enough to deal with him. But on the other hand, I resented it because even though my father and I seemed to be respectful of each other's temper, I was always afraid of him. I was just a little girl, after all. I just knew that I couldn't show it or ever admit it.

Young Eights soon get the idea that it is not safe to be gentle or giving. These attitudes feel "soft" and "weak" and in their minds only invite rejection, betrayal, and pain. They feel that it is best not to let down their guard, so if there is going to be any nurturing or warmth in their lives, someone else will have to provide it.

Eights often report that as children, they struggled with powerful feelings of having been rejected or betrayed. They were typically assertive and adventuresome and got into "situations" that led to being punished frequently. Rather than detach or withdraw from their punishers, young Eights defended themselves against the feeling of rejection with the attitude, "To hell with them. Who needs them? No one tells me what to do!" Of course, like anyone else, Eights want to be loved, but the more they felt rejected and treated like misfits, the more they hardened their hearts.

Please note that the childhood pattern we are describing here does not cause the personality type. Rather, it describes tendencies that we observe in early childhood that have a major impact on the type's adult relationships.

Arlene is a member of a religious order, and has been a constant source of strength and support for those in her community. She recalls an unhappy early event that brought out her Eight defense.

When I was two and a half years old, my younger sister was born. My mother was in bed nursing her, and I kept crawling into bed to be with my mother. She told me several times to stay with my aunt who would put me on her lap. My mother was concerned that I would hurt the baby. But I was persistent and kept crawling off my aunt's lap and getting back into the bed with my mother. My mother finally just pushed me off the bed, and when that happened, I think my feelings said, "I'll get even!" Later, when I was somewhat older, I determined that I would leave home for the convent after eighth grade, even though this deeply hurt my folks. But I didn't consider my parents' wishes and just did it anyway.

Young Eights may learn to play the role of the Scapegoat (the Black Sheep or Problem Child). In family systems theory, "scapegoats" typically make explicit the hidden problems in a family, through either word or deed. As adults, Eights become mavericks, rebelling against restraints and bucking the system wherever possible.

Sometimes the "decision" to steel themselves came when the child *felt betrayed by a parent* or another significant adult. The child may have been abandoned by the parents in a boarding school, or left with relatives, or had their savings or some other valuable taken from them unfairly. They may also have been the victims of physical or sexual abuse. But because of the gross imbalance of power between young Eights and those who treated them unfairly, they could do little or nothing about it except to make the decision never to allow this to happen to them again.

Kit is an accomplished entrepreneur in the fashion industry. Here she recounts a momentous decision she made as a young girl.

The sudden death of my black nanny when I was seven was an important turning point for me. She was secretly supportive of me and would comfort me in different ways when I was punished by my parents. But when she died unexpectedly, I felt truly alone. I was furious at my parents for not allowing me to attend her funeral, angry at my brothers for their apparent indifference, and irate at my nanny for leaving me. Yet I never shed a tear. I decided that I was truly on my own, and that I didn't need anyone.

Eights consider betrayal to be a pivotal point in their lives because it marked the death of their innocence and goodness. When their inner

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core was betrayed by someone important, Eights decided that they would never allow themselves to be vulnerable or innocent again. They would never allow themselves to drop their guard. For a time, Eights may secretly grieve their lost innocence, but eventually they accept this as the way they must be to meet life's challenges. If they have come from backgrounds that were remorselessly threatening, Eights tend to become as remorseless to themselves as they are to others. Once the heart has been buried, even grief over lost innocence can be forgotten.

THE EIGHT WITH A SEVEN-WING: THE INDEPENDENT

Healthy Having a quick mind combined with a vision for practical possibilities, people of this subtype are often charismatic and able to attract the support of others to join them in their vision. They are action-oriented, and want to have an impact on their world. They are also good at challenging others to stretch their abilities and to surpass their own expectations so that their lives can be better in some practical way. This is the most independent subtype, often entrepreneurial, and interested in creating projects that will ensure their independence.

Average People of this subtype are adventurous, risk-takers; they tend to have "big plans" and, in order to enlist the cooperation of others, to make big promises and exaggerate the potential of their ventures. They are also one of the most sociable types, talkative and outgoing, with great self-confidence. They are pragmatic, practical, and competitive and are not overly concerned with pleasing others or with putting up with what they perceive as weakness or inefficiency. They can become impatient, impulsive, and more likely to be led by their feelings than the other subtype. They are more openly aggressive and confrontational and less likely to back down from a fight.

THE EIGHT WITH A NINE-WING: THE BEAR

Healthy People of this subtype combine strength, self-confidence, and determination with quiet groundedness and a certain laid-back quality. They are noticeably steadier in the pursuit of their aims and are not as openly aggressive or as easily perturbed as other Eights. They are also warmer and more family-oriented, asserting power and leadership through protectiveness. There is less of a "wheeler-dealer" quality in their makeup: while they also want to be independent, they want to do so at their own pace. The ability to reassure and calm others enhances their capacity for leadership.

THE WING SUBTYPES



Examples

Franklin D. Roosevelt
Mikhail Gorbachev
Donald Trump
Barbara Walters
Don Imus
Frank Sinatra
Courtney Love
Susan Sarandon
Bette Davis
Joan Crawford

Examples

Martin Luther King, Jr.
 Golda Meir
 Toni Morrison
 John Wayne
 Sean Connery
 Sigourney Weaver
 Paul Newman
 Indira Gandhi
 Glenn Close
 Norman Mailer

THE INSTINCTUAL VARIANTS



Average These people seem to have a dual nature, manifesting themselves differently in different areas of their lives. For instance, they can be warm and affectionate at home but highly determined and aggressive at work. People of this subtype generally like to live quietly and unobtrusively, preferring to control their affairs from behind the scenes. They also tend to speak slowly and to be highly attuned to the nonverbal cues and body language of others—friendly while secretly sizing people up. Strategic and watchful, they almost dare others to underestimate them. Eights of this subtype can be stubborn, impassive, and quietly menacing. When they lose their tempers, the explosion comes suddenly and violently, and then is gone.

THE SELF-PRESERVATION INSTINCT IN THE EIGHT

The Survivor. In the average range, Self-Preservation Eights are the most no-nonsense kind of Eights. They focus intently on practical matters and on “bringing home the bacon” so that they will have enough money and power to ensure their well-being as well as that of their loved ones. They are the most domestic Eights, enjoying the privacy of their homes; but whether male or female, they definitely insist on ruling the roost. Self-Preservation Eights tend to be more materialistic than the other two Instinctual Variants, wanting money for the power it gives but also looking to acquire prized possessions (such as cars or homes) as symbols of their impact and importance. They are the most prone to workaholicism and may work several jobs or unusually long hours to earn enough income to feel satisfied and protected.

Self-Preservation Eights tend to worry about protecting their possessions and investments. Indeed, even within their homes, they can be extremely territorial about their personal belongings. (“No one goes into the garage without *my* permission!”) It makes them feel secure if they have a clear idea of where their possessions are and that they are safe. Thus, they are constantly checking to ensure that their finances, personal and professional position, and belongings are not threatened in any way.

In the unhealthy range, Self-Preservation Eights can become bullies and thieves, justifying their destructive behavior by the belief that they are “toughening up” others. After all, it is a jungle out there. At the very least, they often feel justified acting selfishly, going after their needs—often financial and sexual—without regard for consequences or for others’ feelings. They do not hesitate to undermine or attack others to protect their interests and to make sure that no one has the ability to threaten their material security.

THE SOCIAL INSTINCT IN THE EIGHT

Gusto and Camaraderie. In the average range, Social Eights express their intensity through the powerful bonds that they make with others. Honor and trust are big issues for them, and they enjoy making pacts with those who have proven themselves trustworthy. They will test the people they care about so that friendships feel solid and safe. Feelings of social awkwardness or rejection are eased by surrounding themselves with friends who are predictable and who accept them as they are. (Not everyone will be let into their inner circle, but for those who pass the test by demonstrating loyalty and solidity, the sky is the limit.) Having a night out, going on a big weekend jaunt, or holding court with the inner circle are Social Eight ways of relaxing, and Social Eights will do anything for the few that they care about. They enjoy hosting social events, wining and dining their friends, and sharing adventures with "real people." They also enjoy debates about politics, sports, or religion—the more heated, the better.

Lower in the Levels, Social Eights may take friends for granted or reject them over a disagreement. They can easily feel betrayed and tend to hold grudges longer than most. Once someone has been exiled from the inner circle, Eights are extremely reluctant to let the person near them again. Also, their penchant for storytelling can degenerate into gross exaggeration and "snowing" people. They become charming rogues and con artists, full of promises but offering little real support for others.

In the unhealthy range, due to feelings of rejection and betrayal, Social Eights can become extremely antisocial loners. They are often reckless and self-destructive and are particularly prone to substance abuse. The combination of intoxication and rage can rapidly destroy much of the good in their lives. In this state, Social Eights are generally unable to comprehend the damage they are doing to themselves or others.

THE SEXUAL INSTINCT IN THE EIGHT

Taking Charge. In the average range, Sexual Eights are the most quietly intense and charismatic kind of Eights. They are passionate about whomever they care about and want to feel that they have had a major impact on the lives of those in their sphere of influence. (This can be a positive or negative impact, of course, depending on the Level of Development.) Like Social Eights, they enjoy rabble-rousing good times, although there is more of a rebellious streak in Sexual Eights. They have a sly sense of humor and enjoy being "bad." Sexual Eights can be deeply loving and devoted, but they can also see

H E A L T H Y	Level 1	<i>Key Terms:</i> <i>Self-Surrendering</i> <i>Heroic</i>	Eights let go of the belief that they must always be in control of their environment, which allows them to let down their guard and heal their hearts. They also paradoxically achieve their Basic Desire—the desire to protect themselves, and become magnanimous, self-surrendering, courageous, forgiving, and sometimes heroic.
	Level 2	<i>Self-Reliant</i> <i>Strong</i>	Eights use their energy and willpower to become independent and in control of their lives. They are vigorous and action-oriented. Self-image: “I am assertive, direct, and resourceful.”
	Level 3	<i>Self-Confident</i> <i>Leading</i>	Eights reinforce their self-image by taking on challenges. They prove their strength through action and achievement, through protecting others and providing for them, and through bringing out others’ strengths. They are strategic and decisive and enjoy realizing constructive projects.
A V E R A G E	Level 4	<i>Pragmatic</i> <i>Enterprising</i>	Eights begin to fear that they do not have enough resources to succeed with their projects or to carry out their role as provider. Thus, they become more shrewd and expedient about getting the resources they want. Businesslike and competitive, they are more guarded about their feelings.
	Level 5	<i>Self-Glorifying</i> <i>Dominating</i>	Eights worry that others will not respect them or give them their due, so they try to convince others of their importance. They boast, bluff, and make big promises to get people aligned with their plans. Willful and proud, they want others to know that they are in charge.
	Level 6	<i>Confrontational</i> <i>Intimidating</i>	Eights are afraid that others are not backing them up, and they may lose control of their situation as a result. They try to pressure others to do what they want through threats and oppression. They are also bad-tempered and defiant of any demands placed on them, pushing others to the limit.
U N H E A L T H Y	Level 7	<i>Ruthless</i> <i>Dictatorial</i>	Eights fear that others are turning against them, and this may be true. They feel betrayed and unable to trust anyone, so they become determined to protect themselves at any cost. Seeing themselves as outlaws, they feel they are beyond the pale of society and can be predatory, vengeful, and violent.
	Level 8	<i>Megalo-</i> <i>maniacal</i> <i>Terrorizing</i>	Eights become so desperate to protect themselves and so fearful of retaliation for their actions that they begin to attack potential rivals before they can threaten them. They respect no boundaries, and rapidly overreach themselves. Delusions of invulnerability lead them to endanger themselves and others.
	Level 9	<i>Sociopathic</i> <i>Destructive</i>	The realization that they have created powerful enemies who are capable of defeating them is too much for unhealthy Eights. They try to destroy everything rather than let anyone triumph over them or control them. They can go on rampages, remorselessly ruining everything in their path, possibly murdering others in the process.

intimacy as a struggle for control or an opportunity to build their self-esteem. They can play rough with intimates, are stimulated by a good argument, and can be impatient with niceness. Like the Self-Preservation Eights, they can be competitive, but more for the thrill of competition and less for security reasons. In fact, Sexual Eights lose interest if they win too easily, and this extends into their intimate relationships as well.

Lower in the Levels, they demand loyalty, consistency, and attention and have little tolerance for wandering interests in the other. In fact, they see themselves in a parental, mentoring role and want to remold people into shapes that better fit their needs and plans. They have an opinion about every aspect of the other's life. Needless to say, this makes it difficult for them to maintain a relationship of equality.

In the unhealthy range, Sexual Eights can attempt to completely control and dominate their partner. They are extremely jealous, seeing the other as a possession, and may seek to isolate their significant other from friends or other contacts. In worst-case scenarios, spouse abuse, impulsive acts of revenge, and crimes of passion are possible.

Most Eights will encounter the following issues at some point in their lives. Noticing these patterns, "catching ourselves in the act," and simply seeing our underlying habitual responses to life will do much to release us from the negative aspects of our type.

THE WAKE-UP CALL FOR TYPE EIGHT: STRUGGLING FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Eights feel they need to protect themselves—which can become a fear of dependency of any kind. ("I do not feel safe, so I need to toughen myself and get more resources to protect myself.") Because Eights do not feel that they can look to others for support or help without losing their autonomy, they tend to feel at war with the world. Everything in life is difficult, a struggle, and Eights are constantly straining to assert themselves against what they see as an uncooperative or even hostile environment. ("I have had to fight for everything I have." "You've got to be tough or they'll eat you alive.")

Eights generally do not like working under others, preferring instead the risk and adventure of running their own activities. Many Eights are enterprising "wheeler-dealers" who are always thinking of getting a new project under way. They can also be openly competitive—not to feel superior but to ensure that they have the resources they need to maintain their well-being and security. As long as Eights feel that they are in control of their situation, they are able to relax.

THE EIGHT'S CHALLENGES TO GROWTH

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make even greater exertions to overcome it. Intensity only begets the need for more intensity.

There is also something of the daredevil in average Eights. They may not be race-car drivers or big-game hunters, but all Eights get hooked on the intensity and adrenaline rush of taking on a challenge and beating the odds. This can be exciting, but over time, it can also be exhausting and eventually wears down their health. For some Eights, the risk might simply be ignoring warnings about bad eating habits, cigarettes, or alcohol. ("It won't happen to me. I'm too strong to be affected by this stuff.") Prevailing becomes an addiction for Eights—the more often they win, the more this builds up a false sense of invulnerability that can lead them to make tragic miscalculations.

A further irony arises with lust in relation to control. As we have seen, Eights want to feel that they are in control of their situation. But being in the grip of lust is the antithesis of control: lust is a reaction to something outside the self that inspires it. To lust after a person or an object is to be under its power, whether it is lust for money, a sexual partner, or power. As with all the types, the Passion is a distortion that ultimately brings the opposite of what the type truly wants.

GETTING WORKED UP

Part of the reason you like to get into competitions and take risks is because of the sense of aliveness you get from these activities. How is this different from the sense of aliveness you get from relaxing? Can you consciously relax more right now? What does this do to your sense of yourself?

The Price of Running Things

Being practical-minded people, average Eights usually have some kind of dream for themselves, usually involving a money-making scheme, a business venture, or the stock market. This can be as complex as starting and running their own business, or as simple as playing the state lottery on a regular basis. Not all Eights have a lot of money, but most are looking for some kind of "big break" that would give them the independence, respect, and bargaining power that they typically want.

Ed, a therapist, recalls how his entrepreneurial spirit developed at a tender age.

When I was five years old, I remember going to a nearby vacant lot and gathering some seeds from the weeds. I then went to our land-

lady who lived across the street and told her that they were great birdseed. I sold her the seeds for five cents. I took the money and went to the local deli and bought two cupcakes. I then went to a local tennis court and sold the cupcakes for a nickel apiece. I returned to the deli with my dime and bought four cupcakes. There the tale ends, for when I went back to the tennis court, the man behind the snack counter yelled at me and threw me out.

To the extent that Eights fear depending on others, they want to make sure that they are in charge. While they have the satisfaction of being in control, they put a heavy burden on themselves to run everything. If they are parents, they focus on practical survival issues such as making sure that their children have food, shelter, and decent clothes and are getting a good education. If they have more money, they may feel that it is their place to provide cars and houses for their children and to set them up in a well-paying job or career. ("The old man will take care of everything.") They expend a lot of energy, having the vision, taking initiatives, constantly making all the decisions, and prodding others to implement them. Eights constantly radiate a kind of force field around themselves that can be energizing and protective for some, intimidating to others, and a subtle but real drain on the Eights themselves.

Intimacy therefore becomes a problem even for average Eights. They would often like to be close to people and to express the strong feelings they have, but do not know how to relax their defenses, especially their need for control. Given their inability to sustain more direct emotional contact, Eights begin to connect with others through competition, challenge, and physicality. They are stimulated by conflict, and this often becomes a source of misunderstanding with others. Eights like to get into intense discussions—even arguments—and passionately push home their point, only to be surprised that others have been hurt by their forcefulness. Many Eights express their connection with others through sexuality and physical contact. Or they may show affection by roughhousing or getting into verbal sparring.

Average Eights do not want people to know how much stress they are under, however. They try to handle all of their problems without telling anyone about them or at least not the extent of them. They tend to overwork, living on adrenaline and stress, and are unwilling to take steps to manage their stress until they are forced to by their deteriorating health. Constantly expending energy to the point of exhaustion, Eights frequently suffer from heart attacks, high blood pressure, strokes, and cancer.

*"I've got to bring home
the bacon."*

DENYING YOUR TENDERNESS

Eights put themselves under tremendous pressure to provide for others, to be strong for them, to never cry, show weakness, doubt, or indecision.

Explore the various circumstances in which you have put yourself under this kind of pressure. Who were you doing it for? Was the outcome worth the effort? What do you think would have happened if you had been a little easier on yourself?

"You've got to deal with me."

Self-Importance and Being "Larger than Life"

When average Eights fear that others do not recognize how much energy they are expending to "run things," they put people on notice about who is in charge. They let everyone know who is most important by making a lot of noise—much of it bluster and bravado—like the dominance displays of alpha males in the animal world. Average Eights want others to know that they are "big shots" and can get things done. ("I know somebody who can really help you out. I'll talk to her for you.") They may use expressions of apparent generosity to get people to cooperate with them, the well-known carrot-and-stick approach. They also make deals with people—"You do this for me, and I'll take care of you." Average Eights would prefer to use persuasion and incentives to get people to fall in line with their plans, although if they encounter resistance, they usually try to dominate people more aggressively.

Having the means to do favors for others becomes essential. Without bargaining chips of some kind, average Eights feel that they would have to deal with others from a disadvantaged position. Worse, they may end up indebted to someone without the means to pay back the debt—a situation that could trigger their Basic Fear.

They also try to keep extending their influence—in a sense, expanding their ego boundaries. They identify with their projects and possessions as extensions of themselves. ("This is mine—my castle, my property, my business, my spouse, my children. It all reflects me.") Conceiving projects and seeing them to completion is a way of gaining some degree of immortality; it announces to the world, "I have been here." The size of their empire is not as important as the fact that it is *theirs*—and that they are running things. If they are successful financially, they may have an entourage and travel like royalty, expecting deference, respect, and obedience. When they give an order, they want it to be carried out right away and without question.

RETIRING THE BIG SHOT

You pride yourself on being direct and truthful. How truthful are you being when you are trying to impress or overwhelm people? Does getting people "in line" this way make you feel more or less comfortable with yourself? Can you think of more effective ways of gaining the support and cooperation of others?

Self-Assertion Versus Aggression

Eights like straight talk and become suspicious when others seem to be beating around the bush, which is why the communication style of some of the other types can be a problem for Eights. They have difficulty understanding why others are not as forthright as they are. At the same time, some other types are confounded by how audacious and forceful Eights can be.

The reason is that Eights need clear boundaries: they want to know where they stand with others and, on an instinctive level, where they end and where others begin. They want to know what others will tolerate and what they will not. *Eights discover boundaries by testing them.* If a person in relationship with an Eight does not react to him or her, the Eight will continue pushing the boundaries until they get a reaction. Sometimes this can take the form of needling or teasing the other. Sometimes the pressure can be sexual, or it may simply be an insistence that the other answer the Eight immediately in a conversation.

Because of their self-assertion and directness, Eights tend to intimidate people. Others often interpret their in-your-face communication style as anger or criticism, although Eights say that they are just trying to get others' attention and let others know where they stand. Part of the problem is that Eights do not know their own strength. As we have seen, they tend to use more energy than is necessary for many of their activities. The more insecure Eights are, the more likely they will be to aggressively assert themselves, ironically creating more resistance and less cooperation in others.

Arlene comments on her large-scale Eight style:

I come across as invulnerable, or so I've been told. In general, I am sure of myself and am willing to take risks quite easily. I've "winged" it many times without knowing all the details of a situation. Almost always, I come out on top and as successful. Inside, however, I do not always feel as secure as I come across to other people. This has been quite difficult for me since it creates the problem of being a "threat" to people.

"What are you made of?"

When Eights feel threatened and insecure, they can become explosive and unpredictable. It is difficult for others around them to know what will set them off. It could be something as minor as a meal that is not ready on time, or a room that is not organized the way they want it, or simply a tone of voice. Fearing that others will defy them or get an advantage over them, more troubled Eights begin to impose their will indiscriminately. ("It's my way or the highway!" "Do it because I said so!")

Other typical ways of getting their way without resorting to outright aggression include undermining the confidence of others, and the strategy of divide and conquer. Eights may also resort to verbal abuse, screaming in someone's face if they are angry or frustrated. Of course, if they carry on this way for long, they often cause others to band together against them—one of the very things Eights most fear. Once caught up in their fears of violation and rejection, Eights seem unable to discriminate between the people who have actually harmed them in the past and the people they are currently dealing with. They feel as though others will almost certainly treat them unfairly, and they are determined to use whatever power they have to prevent this.

FEELING YOUR INSTINCTIVE ENERGY

The next time you feel reactive in a situation, try a little experiment. Instead of acting on your impulse, stop, breathe deeply, and see how the energy of the impulse moves inside you. See if you can follow it. How long does it last? Does it change over time? Does paying attention to it bring up other feelings? Take one of your hands and gently touch the area where you most feel this energy. What happens?

Control and Relationships

Eights' fears of being controlled are easily triggered; as a result, they may feel controlled even when nothing out of the ordinary is being asked of them. Not surprisingly, this can create major problems for Eights in their careers and in their relationships. For example, they have great difficulty taking direction from others, let alone orders. ("No one tells me what to do!") Eights' primary resource, their abundant energy and willpower, often ends up squandered on unnecessary conflicts.

The more dysfunctional their childhood background, the more control Eights will require in order to feel protected. For dysfunctional Eights to feel strong and in control of their situation requires more and more "proof" that this is so.

A former airline pilot, Ian, talks candidly about his need for control of his family, particularly of his wife.

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I don't feel good about this now, but when I was younger, I needed to prove to myself that I was the king of the roost in every way. I made my sons get up early in the morning like a drill sergeant, and I completely controlled the finances in the house. My wife had to come to me for every nickel, and I made sure that she didn't have any spending money of her own so she couldn't have much freedom to stray. If she didn't have money, she couldn't leave me.

"My way or the highway."

Eights' tendency to struggle for control can escalate into open conflict if they feel that others may get an unfair advantage over them. They marshal their powerful instinctual energies and steely determination, effectively drawing lines in the sand and daring others to cross them. ("There will be no raise, and if you don't like it, you can quit right now!") Unfortunately, once Eights have delivered their ultimatums, even if they were uttered impulsively, they feel that they must follow through with them. To back down or soften their stance feels like weakness—and potential loss of independence and control.

Left unchecked, the desire for control can cause Eights to see significant others as possessions. They begin to view those who depend on them as impractical and weak and therefore unworthy of respect or equal treatment. Having ignored their own emotional reactions and sensitivities, they can ridicule or dismiss others' pain or emotional needs. More troubled Eights are also threatened by subordinates who show strength and may attempt to weaken them by undermining their confidence, keeping them off balance with arbitrary commands, and when all else fails, launching withering verbal attacks.

WHAT IF SOMEONE DID THIS TO ME?

Remember an incident in which you pressured someone to do something against his or her will. Can you now think of a way in which you could have gotten what you needed or wanted differently? Was what you were after legitimate? What would it have been like if the other person had simply given you what you were after without your having to pressure them? Similarly, recall times when someone attempted to pressure you. How did their methods influence your desire to cooperate with them?

Defiance and Rebellion

As a way of asserting themselves and defying authority, Eights may get married young or to a person their family disapproves of, or refuse to go to school—or perform any number of other acts of defiance. Even as small children, Eights can show remarkable resistance to authority.

Ed recalls:

One of my problems as a child was a furious temper. What would make me see red was anyone trying to boss me around. I remember coming home from school when I was about eight years old and seeing some construction in the road. Curious, I walked up to the site. A policeman told me to stay away. I said “No way!” He took me home to my parents and described me as “the freshest kid I ever met.”

More troubled Eights have a chip on their shoulder and tend to confront and intimidate others to get their way. Eights may attempt to bulldoze people with escalating degrees of intimidation. Expecting rejection and noncooperation, they create adversarial relationships even with former allies and friends and can inadvertently turn family members against them. Eights may then wonder why they are resisted and resented. From their point of view, they *feel* that their actions have been largely for the good of others. Others will benefit—eventually. Their own feeling of hurt and resentment makes them feel justified in further hurting others or bullying them to get cooperation.

They usually do not want a fight but are willing to take confrontations to the edge to get the other person to back down. Eights threaten that there is “worse to come” if the other does not yield. (“You are really pushing your luck! You do *not* want to make me mad.”)

Kit well illustrates the Eight’s strong willpower and spirit of defiance.

I was usually being punished when the rest of the family had privileges. Determined to win the battle of wills, I endured all punishments, feeling that “No one can make me do anything I do not want to do!” I would laugh when I was whipped so as not to show weakness, and I would sit in my room for hours rather than give in.

“No one tells me what to do!”

COSTLY TRIUMPH

Many of the Eights
in, or appear afraid.
In what early incidents
has any incidents from
feel physically? Emotions
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For how long?

As pressures build,
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At such times, Eights
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Periods of stress may
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Feelings of rejection
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If Eights have sufficient
coping skills, or if they
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This may lead them to
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COSTLY TRIUMPHS

Many of the Eight's health and relationship problems have their root in not wanting to back down, give in, or appear afraid. In your Inner Work Journal, answer the following questions:

In what early incidents did you see yourself as refusing to yield or concede to others? Can you remember any incidents from your school years, and from more recent times? How did these incidents make you feel physically? Emotionally? Psychologically? (Be as specific as possible.) What did it take to let you know that you had "won" the contest? What did the other person have to do first? How did this make you feel? For how long?

As pressures build, Eights can only push their particular methods of dealing with problems so far. Eventually, their self-assertive, confrontational stance leads them into challenges that feel overwhelming. When Eights have bitten off more than they can chew, they may go to Five, effectively retreating from conflicts to strategize, buy time, and gather their strength.

At such times, Eights may become solitary figures, spending many hours brooding, reading, and gathering information so that they can better size up the situation. They insist on having the time and space and privacy to sort things out before they are able to jump back into action. Like Fives, they can become deeply preoccupied with their plans and projects—staying up late working, while avoiding others and being secretive about their activities. They can also seem strangely quiet and detached, which often comes as a surprise to those who are more used to their more assertive, passionate qualities.

Periods of stress may also cause Eights to become high-strung, like average Fives. They tend to minimize their comforts and needs and generally take poor care of themselves. Insomnia and unhealthy diets are not uncommon.

Feelings of rejection may also lead Eights into some of the darker aspects of Type Five. They can become extremely cynical and contemptuous of the beliefs and values of others. Deteriorating Eights may become nihilistic outsiders, with little hope of reconnecting with others or of finding anything positive in themselves or in the world.

If Eights have suffered a serious crisis without adequate support or coping skills, or if they have suffered from chronic abuse in childhood, they may cross the shock point into the unhealthy aspects of their type. This may lead them to a fearful recognition that their defiant reactions and attempts to control others are actually creating more dangers for

**REACTING TO
STRESS:
EIGHT GOES TO
FIVE**



**THE RED FLAG:
THE EIGHT IN
TROUBLE**



them—they are less safe, not more. Eights may experience this as a fear that others, including trusted loved ones, are actually leaving or even turning against them. Indeed, some of these fears may be based on fact.

Coming to these realizations, while terrifying, can be a turning point in an Eight's life. On the one hand, if Eights can recognize the truth in these fears, they may begin to turn their life around and move toward health and liberation. On the other hand, they may become even more belligerent, defiant, and threatening and desperately attempt to stay in control at any cost. ("It's me against the world." "Nobody better even think about messing with me—I'll smash them!") If Eights persist in this attitude, they may cross into the unhealthy Levels. If you or someone you know is exhibiting the following warning signs for an extended period of time—more than two or three weeks—getting counseling, therapy, or other support is highly advisable.

WARNING SIGNS

POTENTIAL PATHOLOGY:
Antisocial Personality Disorder, sadistic behavior, physical violence, paranoia, social isolation

- ▶ Paranoid feelings of being betrayed by "their people"
- ▶ Increasing social isolation and bitterness
- ▶ Lack of conscience and empathy; callous hard-heartedness
- ▶ Episodes of rage, violence, and physical destructiveness
- ▶ Plotting vengeance and retaliation against "enemies"
- ▶ Seeing self as an "outlaw"; involvement with criminal behavior
- ▶ Episodes of striking back at society (sociopathy)

PRACTICES THAT HELP EIGHTS DEVELOP



▶ The suggestion to get in touch with your feelings may be something of a psychological cliché, but in your case, it is a helpful one. No one would question an Eight's passion, and no one knows as much as you do how much you secretly want to feel closer to people, but only you can learn to allow those feelings to surface. Vulnerability lets others know that they matter, that you care about them. No one is suggesting that you walk around with your heart on your sleeve, but denying your hurt or acting it out is not the solution.

▶ Grief work is very helpful for Eights. You are not the kind of person to sit around feeling sorry for yourself for long, but if you are suffering, it is important to find constructive ways of grieving your losses and hurts. That tough shell of yours got there for a reason. Maybe it's time to explore what some of the reasons were.

▶ Eights generally have a hearty sense of camaraderie and enjoy good times with others, but that is not the same thing as intimacy. Find

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people you can really trust, and talk with them about matters that are eating at you. If you already have someone like that in your life, dare to open up to them more and give them the same opportunity. Don't presume that others do not want to hear about your feelings or your troubles. Also, when you are unburdening yourself, listen to what others are saying to you. Notice that you are being heard when you are—and do the same for others.

► Take some quiet time to restore your soul. This doesn't mean watching television, eating, or drinking—really take time to be with yourself and enjoy simple things. Take a tip from your next-door neighbors, the Nines, and let your senses be revitalized by nature. Although your type would not be among the first in line for a class in meditation, quiet, centering practices are tremendously helpful to reduce your stress levels.

► Work is important, and your family and friends really do need you and appreciate your efforts to support them. At the same time, you will not be nearly as helpful to them if you work yourself to death. The same is true for immoderation in your "vices." Eights work hard and play hard. A little restraint on the intensity levels in both departments can help ensure that you will be around longer to enjoy your life in deeper and subtler ways. Question your need for intensity. What does it come from? What would happen to you if you or your life were a little less driven?

► Examine your expectations of rejection. Do you notice how often you expect people not to like you, or feel that you have to behave in ways that will head rejection off at the pass? These feelings underlie most of your sense of isolation, and in the long run they are what get you so angry. All of us feel deeply angry and even hateful if we sense that we have been continually rejected. Perhaps you are sending out signals that others are reading as a rejection of them, both because of their own issues and because of your self-protection. This leads us back to the vulnerability issue: the good feelings that you want are only going to touch you to the degree that you allow yourself to be affected.

Eights are people of action and practical intuition. They have vision and derive great satisfaction from being constructive—both literally and figuratively. A key element to their leadership is their practical creativity. They enjoy building things from the ground floor, transforming unpromising materials into something great. Eights are able to see possibilities in people and in situations; they look at a garage full of junk and see a potential business. They look at a troubled youth and see leadership potential. They like to offer incentives and challenges to

BUILDING ON THE EIGHT'S STRENGTHS



bring out people's strengths. ("If you get straight A's, I'll get you that car.") In this way, they help others to recognize resources and strengths that others did not know they possessed. A key word for Eights, therefore, is empowerment. Healthy Eights agree with the saying, "Give a person a fish and they eat for a day. But teach them how to fish, and they can feed themselves for life." Eights know this is true because they have often taught themselves "how to fish."

Honor is also important to healthy Eights: their word is their bond. When they say, "You have my word on this," they mean it. They speak directly and without subterfuge. Healthy Eights look for similar qualities in others and feel gratified when people recognize this quality in them—although they will not change when others do not appreciate their honesty.

Furthermore, Eights want to be *respected*, and healthy Eights respect others and the dignity of all creatures. They feel personally hurt by any violation of the needs and rights of others, and injustice causes healthy Eights to respond viscerally and to take action. They will step in and stop a fight to protect the weak or disadvantaged, or to even the score for those who they feel have been wronged. Courageous and strong but also gentle and humble, they are willing to put themselves in jeopardy for the sake of justice and fairness. Very high-functioning Eights have the vision, compassion, and strength to be a tremendous influence for good in the world.

Says Roseann, whom we met earlier:

It feels good to be an Eight, to be strong and in charge of the situation and have others respect me and want me around them. I remember feeling pretty good about the time I rushed to a friend's house in response to her call for help in handling an ex-lover who was stalking her. "Thank God you're here," she said. "You make me feel like the Marines have landed!"

Control, in a healthy Eight, takes the form of self-mastery. They understand that it is actually counterproductive to try to "beat the world" every day. On a deeper level, control is not really a healthy Eight's ultimate goal; rather, it is the desire to have a beneficial influence on people and on their world. Balanced Eights understand that this kind of influence comes from true inner strength, not from outward muscle-flexing, forcefulness, or trying to bend things to their will. They recognize that controlling situations or people is actually a form of imprisonment. Real freedom and independence arise through a much more simple and relaxed relationship with their world.

Finally, healthy Eights are magnanimous or big-hearted, possessing a generosity that allows them to transcend their self-interest. They feel

"I can look out for you."

confident enough to allow themselves some degree of vulnerability, and this enables them to experience their concern and caring for people. They express this in their protection of others, defending friends from schoolyard bullies or taking a stand for coworkers against an unfair policy. Healthy Eights are willing to take the heat and to do whatever is necessary to protect the people they see as under their charge.

When this happens, Eights achieve a degree of greatness on whatever scale they have been operating—the family, the nation, the world—and are honored and respected as a result. They achieve a kind of immortality that lifts them to the rank of hero. They are like forces of nature whom others intuitively honor and respect. History records many healthy Eights who were willing to take a stand for something beyond themselves—sometimes even beyond their immediate understanding—and much of the enduring good in our world has been achieved through their determination and struggles.

Eights become actualized and remain healthy by learning to open their hearts to others in the manner of a healthy Two. Eights do not need to add any new qualities for this to occur; rather, they need to reconnect with their hearts to see how much they care about people. Many Eights discover this side of themselves through their love of children or a pet. Children can bring out the best in many Eights because they cherish and respect the innocence of children and want to protect it. With children and animals, Eights can let down their guard and allow some of their tenderness to come to the surface.

For Eights to be able to embrace their bigness of heart, they must first gather the courage to reveal it. This requires that they trust in something beyond their own wits and power—and that, of course, requires letting go of many of their fundamental defenses. No matter how full of rage and shut down an Eight may be, the sensitive child that made the decision to protect itself still lives inside, waiting for the opportunity to contact the world again.

It is important to understand, however, that the movement to Two is not accomplished by imitating the average qualities of the Two. Flattering others and attempting to please them in a forced way will not lead to much heart-opening and will often strike others as false. Rather, the path for Eights lies in letting down their defenses and getting in greater contact with their hearts. Of course, an instant fear of vulnerability will arise, but as Eights learn to acknowledge this fear and let it pass, they become more comfortable with their gentler feelings.

Integrating Eights make outstanding leaders because they clearly communicate their profound respect and appreciation of other human beings. They are also effective because, like healthy Twos, they

THE PATH OF INTEGRATION: EIGHT GOES TO TWO



recognize boundaries and limits—especially the latter. As they learn to nurture themselves and to accept vulnerability in their lives, their health and sense of well-being improve. They work hard but also know when it is time to rest, to eat, and to restore their strength. They choose leisure activities that really nurture themselves, not overindulging their appetites or seeking more intensity.

TRANSFORMING PERSONALITY INTO ESSENCE



As Eights are able to allow their vulnerability to surface, they learn to come to Presence again and again and gradually let go of their self-image of always needing to be strong and in control. If they persist, they eventually come into direct contact with their Basic Fear of being harmed or controlled by others and understand the roots of this fear in their personal history. As they work through old fears and hurts, they become less attached to their Basic Desire to always protect themselves.

When a person becomes liberated from their Basic Fear and Basic Desire, there is a reversal of everything that has happened in the lower Levels of Development. The self-reliance and self-assertion of the Eight personality structure dissolves, creating the space for real Essential strength to emerge. This enables Eights to surrender to some larger plan than the one they have for themselves. Eights who do so can become extraordinarily heroic, like Martin Luther King, Jr., Nelson Mandela, or Franklin Roosevelt. These people surrendered concern about their individual survival to become vessels for a higher purpose. ("If they kill me, they kill me. I yield my life. The vision will live on.") Something inspiring and ennobling arises out of the freedom that has been created when their Basic Fear has been overcome.

THE EMERGENCE OF ESSENCE

In their deepest self, Eights remember the simple joy of existence: the exquisite satisfaction of being alive, especially at the primal, instinctive level. They still have some degree of contact with the purity and power of the instinctual responses and remind us that these, too, are part of the Divine order. Without a real connection to the wellspring of our native instincts, we are cut off from the basic fuel we need for our transformation.

The Essential core of the Eight cuts through the falsehoods and niceties of the personality, bringing forth a simple, unself-conscious embodiment of truth. Oscar Ichazo called this quality "Innocence," and in a way, Eights also long for the innocence they knew as children—an innocence they felt they had to leave behind in order to be strong.

Eights also express the innocence of the natural order, the inner-

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cence in which all creatures in the world manifest their nature. Cats innocently function as cats, even as they stalk their prey. Birds innocently function as birds, and fish as fish. It is humankind alone that seems to have lost touch with this innate capacity. We could say that the Essential nature of Eights reminds us of what it is like to be completely human, living beings, functioning as part of a vast, perfectly balanced natural order.

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When Eights give up their own willfulness, they discover the Divine Will. Instead of trying to have power through the assertion of their egos, they align themselves with Divine Power. Instead of a me-against-the-world attitude, they see that they have a role to play in the world, which, if followed wholeheartedly, could earn them a place of immortality among the great heroes and saints of history. The liberated Eight has the power to inspire others to be heroic as well, influencing people possibly for centuries.

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Eights also remember the omnipotence and strength that comes from being a part of the Divine reality. The Divine will is not the same as willfulness. As Eights understand this, they end their war with the world and discover that the solidity, power, and independence that they have been seeking are already here. They are a part of their true nature as they are part of the true nature of every human being. When they experience this deeply enough, they are able to relax fully into Being, feeling effortlessly at one with the world and with the unfolding mystery of life.

"Unless you change your life and become like a child, you cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven."

JESUS OF NAZARETH

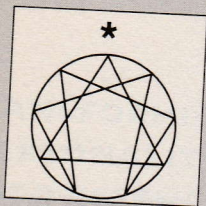
Add your scores for the fifteen statements for Type Eight. Your result will be between 15 and 75. The following guidelines may help you discover or confirm your personality type.

- ▶ 15 You are probably not an assertive type (not a Three, Seven, or Eight).
- ▶ 15-30 You are probably not a Type Eight.
- ▶ 30-45 You most probably have Eight-issues, or an Eight parent.
- ▶ 45-60 You most likely have an Eight-component.
- ▶ 60-75 You are most likely an Eight (but could still be another type if you are thinking too narrowly about Type Eight).

Eights are most likely to misidentify themselves as Sevens, Sixes, or Fours. Sixes, Threes, and Sevens are most likely to misidentify themselves as Eights.

CHAPTER 15

TYPE NINE: THE PEACEMAKER



THE HEALER

THE OPTIMIST

THE RECONCILER

THE COMFORTER

THE UTOPIAN

NOBODY SPECIAL

"Most people think of peace as a state of Nothing Bad Happening, or Nothing Much Happening. Yet if peace is to overtake us and make us the gift of serenity and well-being, it will have to be the state of Something Good Happening."

—E. B. WHITE

"There is a price which is too great to pay for peace, and that price can be put in one word. One cannot pay the price of self-respect."

—WOODROW WILSON

"Men need some kind of external activity, because they are inactive within."

—SCHOPENHAUER

"Indolence is a delightful but distressing state: we must be doing something to be happy."

—WILLIAM HAZLITT

- _____ 1. What people seem to like about me is that they feel safe around me.
- _____ 2. I don't mind being around people, and I don't mind being alone—either way is fine, as long as I'm at peace with myself.
- _____ 3. I've found a certain balance in my life, and I see no reason to mess with it.
- _____ 4. Being "comfortable" in every sense of the word appeals to me a lot.
- _____ 5. I would rather give someone else their way than create a scene.
- _____ 6. I don't know exactly how I do it, but I don't let things get to me.
- _____ 7. I'm pretty easy to please and usually feel that what I have is good enough for me.
- _____ 8. I've been told that I seem distracted and absentminded—the fact is I understand things, but I just don't want to react to them.
- _____ 9. I don't think I'm particularly stubborn, but people say that I can be hard-headed once I make up my mind.
- _____ 10. Most people get themselves worked up too easily: I'm much more even-keeled.
- _____ 11. You've got to take what life brings, since there's not much you can do about it anyway!
- _____ 12. I can easily see different points of view, and I tend to agree with people more than I disagree with them.
- _____ 13. I believe in emphasizing the positive rather than dwelling on the negative.
- _____ 14. I have what might be called a philosophy of life that guides me and gives me a great deal of comfort in difficult times.
- _____ 15. During the day, I do everything that needs to be done, but when the day is over, I really know how to relax and take it easy.

THE RISO-HUDSON TAS

Type
Attitude
Sorter

Score each of the following statements according to how true or applicable to you it is on the following scale:

- 1.....*Not at All True*
- 2.....*Seldom True*
- 3.....*Somewhat True*
- 4.....*Generally True*
- 5.....*Very True*

*See page 340 for
scoring key.*

PERSONALITY TYPE NINE: THE PEACEMAKER

- BASIC FEAR: Of loss and separation; of annihilation
- BASIC DESIRE: To maintain their inner stability and peace of mind
- SUPEREGO MESSAGE: "You are good or okay as long as those around you are good or okay."

"I go with the flow."

The Easygoing, Self-Effacing Type: Receptive, Reassuring, Agreeable, and Complacent

We have called personality type Nine *the Peacemaker* because this type is more devoted to the quest for internal and external peace for themselves and others. They are often spiritual seekers who have a great yearning for connection with the cosmos, as well as with other people. They work to maintain their peace of mind just as they work to establish peace and harmony in their world. The issues encountered in the Nine are fundamental to all inner work—being awake versus falling asleep to our true nature; presence versus entrancement, tension versus relaxation, peace versus pain, union versus separation.

Ironically, for a type so oriented to the spiritual world, Nine is the center of the Instinctive Triad and is the type that is potentially most grounded in the physical world and in their own bodies. The contradiction is resolved when we realize that Nines are either in touch with their instinctive qualities and have tremendous elemental power and personal magnetism, or they are cut off from their instinctual strength and can be disengaged and remote, even lightweight.

To compensate for being out of touch with their instinctual energies, Nines also retreat into their minds and their emotional fantasies. (This is why Nines can sometimes misidentify themselves as Fives and Sevens, "head types," or as Twos and Fours, "feeling types.") Furthermore, when their instinctive energies are out of balance, Nines use these very energies against themselves, damming up their own power so that everything in their psyches becomes static and inert. When their energy is not used, it stagnates like a spring-fed lake that becomes so full that its own weight dams up the springs that feed it. When Nines are in balance with their Instinctive Center and its energy, however, they are like a great river, carrying everything along with it effortlessly.

We have sometimes called the Nine *the crown of the Enneagram* because it is at the top of the symbol and because it seems to include the whole of it. Nines can have the strength of Eights, the sense of fun and adventure of Sevens, the dutifulness of Sixes, the intellectualism of Fives, the creativity of Fours, the attractiveness of Threes, the generosity of Twos, and the idealism of Ones. However, what they generally do not have is a sense of really inhabiting themselves—a strong sense of *their own identity*.

Ironically, therefore, the only type the Nine is not like is the Nine itself. Being a separate self, an individual who must assert herself

against others, is terrifying to Nines. They would rather melt into someone else or quietly follow their idyllic daydreams.

Red, a nationally known business consultant, comments on this tendency.

I am aware of focusing on other people, wondering what they are like, how and where they live, etc. In a relationship with others, I often give up my own agenda in favor of the other person's. I have to be on guard about giving in to other's demands and discounting my own legitimate needs.

Nines demonstrate the universal temptation to ignore the disturbing aspects of life and to seek some degree of peace and comfort by numbing out. They respond to pain and suffering by attempting to live in a state of premature peacefulness, whether it is in a state of false spiritual attainment or in more gross denial. More than any other type, Nines demonstrate the tendency to run away from the paradoxes and tensions of life by attempting to transcend them or by seeking simple and painless solutions to their problems.

To emphasize the pleasant in life is not a bad thing, of course—it is simply a limited and limiting approach to life. If Nines see the silver lining in every cloud as a way of protecting themselves from the cold and rain, other types have their distorting viewpoints, too. For example, Fours focus on their own woundedness and victimization, Ones on what is wrong with how things are, and so forth. By contrast, Nines tend to focus on the bright side of life so that their peace of mind will not be shaken. But rather than deny the dark side of life, what Nines must understand is that *all of the perspectives presented by the other types are true, too*. Nines must resist the urge to escape into “premature Buddhahood” or the “white light” of the Divine and away from the real world. They must remember that the only way out is through.

THE CHILDHOOD PATTERN

Many Nines report that they had a happy childhood, but this is not always the case. When their childhoods were more troubled, young Nines learned to cope *by dissociating from the threatening and traumatic events around them* and by adopting the role of Peacemaker or Mediator during family conflicts. They learned that the best way to keep harmony in the family was to “disappear” and not cause anyone any trouble. They learned that if they were undemanding and had few expectations—in short, if they were a low-maintenance child—they could effectively protect themselves while calming down Mommy and

Please note that the childhood pattern we are describing here does not cause the personality type. Rather, it describes tendencies that we observe in the early childhood that have a major impact on the type's adult relationships.

Daddy. (In a dysfunctional family system, the term that most applies here is Lost Child.) The feeling is, "If I show up and assert myself, I am going to create even more problems, so if I stay out of the way, the family will stay together."

Georgia, a well-known therapist, has been doing Inner Work for many years.

My mother was alcoholic and had a volatile temper, so a lot of my energy as a child was directed to keeping out of the way and not rocking the boat. In this way I learned to stand on the sidelines of life and be accommodating to the needs of other people. I was afraid I wouldn't be loved if I asserted myself. I chose to live my life in a more inward way, which was actually very rich to me, without confronting other people.

Nines grew up feeling that having needs, asserting themselves, getting angry, or creating difficulties for their parents was not allowed. As a result, Nine children never learned to assert themselves adequately or, by extension, *to actualize themselves independently* of their parents and significant others. Young Nines learned to stay in the background where things could not get to them. In adulthood, their psychic space is so crowded with the issues and agendas of the people whom they are trying to accommodate that they are often unable to hear the voice of their own needs or desires.

They also learned to repress anger and their own will so completely that they became unconscious of even having anger or a will of their own. They learned to adjust and go along with whatever life or others presented to them. Seldom did it occur to them to ask themselves what they wanted or thought or felt. As a result, it usually takes some digging for Nines to get in touch with what they want for themselves.

Red has spent years working on the issues of self-effacement and repressed anger.

I have a clear sense of being left alone because I was such a "good little boy." My mother always tells people what an "angel" I was because I could be left alone for hours and would amuse myself. I think my mother is a Nine and I picked up a lot of her philosophy of life. . . . When conflicts between her and my father would break out, she would use expressions such as "Don't rock the boat" and "If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all." Another favorite was "It takes two to tango," which was her way of telling me that she could end an argument by refusing to argue.

In highly dysfunctional families, the young Nine may have been traumatized emotionally, physically, or sexually. Such Nines learn to

protect themselves from intolerable feelings by dissociating or shutting down. From one point of view, it is a kind of blessing that they are not aware of their traumatic memories or of their rage, but on the other hand the result is a widespread deadening of their ability to allow reality to touch them with any depth or vividness. Such individuals may become lost in fantasies or focus exclusively on whatever is positive and peaceful in their environment—no matter how much of an illusion this may later turn out to be.

André is a successful real estate salesman in a major metropolitan area; much of his success comes from being natural and unassuming, common Nine traits, although these were learned at a high price.

My mother was very depressed for much of my childhood. I knew that the less trouble I was for her, the safer I'd be, so I just tried to blend in as much as possible. I would escape to my grandmother's backyard, where I loved the tall trees and her collection of animals.

THE NINE WITH AN EIGHT-WING: THE REFEREE

Healthy People of this subtype mix the ability to be agreeable and to comfort others with endurance and strength. They are both powerful and gentle, able to easily engage with people and with things in the world, mediating between people and lessening conflicts. They often seek new projects to have an occasional change of pace from their normal routines. They are also practical and are typically concerned with their immediate needs and physical and financial circumstances. More sociable than the other subtype, they generally prefer to work with other people. They excel in the helping professions and consulting and can be effective in business, especially in negotiations or in human resource capacities.

Average These people enjoy socializing and good times and are more attracted to losing themselves in sensuality and comforting routines that interfere with their ability to stay focused on significant goals. They can be stubborn and defensive, tending to dig in their heels and refusing to listen to anyone. People of this subtype often have bad tempers, although it is difficult to predict what will set them off—threats to their sense of personal well-being or to their family, job, or beliefs are typical. They can be blunt and explosive but suddenly return to a state of calm and placidity.

THE WING SUBTYPES



Examples

Ronald Reagan
Gerald Ford
Lady Bird Johnson
Kevin Costner
Sophia Loren
Walter Cronkite
Whoopi Goldberg
Janet Jackson
Ringo Starr
Ingrid Bergman

THE NINE WITH A ONE-WING: THE DREAMER

Examples

Abraham Lincoln
Queen Elizabeth II
Carl Jung
George Lucas
Audrey Hepburn
Dame Margot Fonteyn
Rose Kennedy
Walt Disney
Garrison Keillor
Norman Rockwell

Healthy People of this subtype are imaginative and creative, often able to synthesize different schools of thought or points of view into a vision of an ideal world. They are particularly good at nonverbal forms of communication (art, instrumental music, dance, sports, or work with animals and nature) and can thrive in large institutions. They are typically friendly and reassuring but have a distinct sense of purpose, especially about their ideals. They often make good therapists, counselors, or ministers, balancing nonjudgmental listening with the desire to be of help to others.

Average They want external order as a way of giving order to their internal world. People of this subtype tend to get caught up in nonessential activities and busy-ness. They can be energetic but in a detached and uninvolved way that interferes with their ability to stay with long-range goals or to enlist others in joining them. They are less adventurous and more reserved than people of the other subtype, expressing anger with restraint and smoldering indignation. They are also concerned with respectability and often feel morally superior to different classes, cultures, and lifestyles. There may be a puritanical streak to them, as well as a prim and proper, perfectionistic quality to their personal style.

THE INSTINCTUAL VARIANTS



THE SELF-PRESERVATION INSTINCT IN THE NINE

The Comfort Seeker. In the average range, this variant is the pleasant, easygoing Nine who does not ask much from life. Self-Preservation Nines prefer simple pleasures that are readily available—eating at the nearest fast-food restaurant, watching a favorite rerun on television, or “zoning out” in a comfy chair. They are usually not ambitious, although they may be quite talented. They generally deal with anxiety by getting involved in busywork—puttering and routines—and may use small tasks to avoid dealing with bigger projects. They become increasingly attracted to minor rewards as compensation for not being able to pursue real desires—but always with some repressed underlying anxiety about not attending to their real needs.

Nines' inertia shows up most clearly in this variant. Apathy and self-neglect can cause Self-Preservation Nines to have difficulty mobilizing themselves to obtain what they really want or to take care of their genuine self-preservation needs. Increasingly, they use food and drink to suppress feelings of anxiety or anger and often possess large appetites and a tendency toward addiction. They do not want their pleasant

moods to be disturbed by others and often resist others simply by not responding to them, remaining stubbornly silent.

In the unhealthy range, Self-Preservation Nines fall into deep apathy about their lives and can become fatigued and ineffectual. They become the chronic couch potato, emotionally shut down and slowly wasting their health, relationships, and possibilities. Addictions are common.

THE SOCIAL INSTINCT IN THE NINE

One Happy Family. In the average range, these are the Nines most interested in bringing people together and in making peace. They like to be involved with others, to be part of whatever is going on, but they also resist having too many expectations placed on them. They can be emotionally and mentally disengaged while physically involved. Social Nines generally have a good deal of energy and like to stay active but within defined, familiar structures. They do not mind working or helping others, but they like to have a clear sense of what will be expected of them. They can be surprisingly conventional and conformist, in the sense that they will meet the expectations of their social circle, but they are also anxious about losing their identity, of becoming a "clone" or an appendage of someone else.

Insecurities about their worth plus their desire to please and fit in also cause Social Nines to have difficulty saying no to people. They often end up resisting others anyway, usually passive-aggressively. Trying to please various people or groups in their lives can lead them to being scattered and disenchanted, like average Sevens. They often have trouble setting independent goals and following through with their intentions.

In the unhealthy range, Social Nines can become resigned and depressed about their lack of development. Their neediness and intense insecurity are usually masked by emotional flatness. Displays of indignant anger may alienate people, thus heightening their feelings of social isolation.

THE SEXUAL INSTINCT IN THE NINE

Merging. In the average range, Sexual Nines want to take on the energetic qualities of the other, often gravitating to aggressive types. They can display minor aggressive traits themselves. They tend to be sassier than the other two variants, and their anger can be easily aroused if they feel that their connection with others is threatened. They seek a complete partnership, thinking of it as "our life" rather than "my life." It is as if they want the other to fuse with them. Sexual Nines often

idealize the other, not wanting to see his or her flaws, but they can also become critical and demanding, especially if they have a One-wing. Compliments to the other are compliments to the self; the same is true for insults or disappointments.

The other becomes the center of gravity, the axis of the Sexual Nine's identity. As a result, people of this variant may fail to develop their own identity or any real sense of independence. Sexual Nines can be highly romantic and resemble Fours. Unrealistic rescue fantasies, the "Cinderella complex," wishful thinking, and clinging to loved ones can all be part of the picture.

In the unhealthy range, Sexual Nines become highly dissociated and depressed and seem to lack a core self. Unable to merge with the other adequately, they feel lost. Fantasies of the other mix with fantasies of anger and vengeance, but the latter are rarely acted on. These types end up either in highly dependent relationships or floundering on their own, waiting for one. Or the self may become a function of past relationships. ("Meg and I were the most loving couple. I miss her so much since she died.")

THE NINE'S CHALLENGES TO GROWTH



*"I don't care. It doesn't
matter to me."*

Most Nines will encounter the following issues at some point in their lives. Noticing these patterns, "catching ourselves in the act," and simply seeing our underlying habitual responses to life will do much to release us from the negative aspects of our type.

THE WAKE-UP CALL FOR TYPE NINE: GOING ALONG WITH OTHERS

Beginning in the average Levels, Nines experience the temptation to be overly accommodating to others because they fear that if they get into conflicts with people, they will lose their connection with them. For instance, when asked by a spouse where they would like to go for dinner, the Nine may well answer, "I don't care, honey—wherever you want to go is fine with me."

Simply put, Nines get into the habit of saying yes to things that they do not really want to do. This strategy may avoid disagreement in the short run but almost inevitably leads to resentment on both sides. Further, the Nine's resentment usually causes passive-aggressive behavior—agreeing to do something and then not doing it—which ultimately creates much greater conflicts and misunderstandings with others. Their accommodation also puts them in danger of being taken advantage of since they are willing to pay a high price to keep the peace.

Hope, a talented therapist, recognized this pattern in herself.

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NINE: GOING ALONG

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Level 1	<i>Key Terms:</i> <i>Self-Possessed Indomitable</i>	Nines let go of the belief that their participation in the world is unimportant or unwanted; thus they can truly connect with themselves and with others. They also paradoxically achieve their Basic Desire—to have inner stability and peace of mind. As a result of their self-actualization, they become self-possessed, dynamic, serene, and present.
		Nines focus on the environment or on relationships as a whole, desiring to maintain a harmonious stability within them and in their environment. Self-image: "I am steady, easygoing, and kind."
		Nines reinforce their self-image by creating and maintaining peace and harmony in their world. They use their patient, levelheaded approach to mediate conflicts and to soothe others. They are often highly imaginative, inspiring others with a healing, positive vision of life.
Level 4	<i>Self-Effacing Agreeable</i>	Nines begin to fear that conflicts in their lives will ruin their peace of mind, so they begin to avoid potential conflicts by going along with others. They consider many matters not worth arguing about, but will also begin to say yes to things they really do not want to do.
Level 5	<i>Disengaged Complacent</i>	Nines worry that any significant changes in their world or any strong feelings will disrupt their fragile peace, so they set up their lives in ways that will prevent things from getting to them. They lose themselves in comforting routines and habits, putter around, and tune out problems.
Level 6	<i>Resigned Appeasing</i>	Nines are afraid that others will demand responses from them that may arouse anxiety and ruin their inner peace, so they downplay the importance of problems and try to deflect others. They stoically trudge through their lives, hanging on to wishful thinking and suppressing their anger.
Level 7	<i>Repressed Neglectful</i>	Nines fear that reality will force them to deal with their problems, and this may be true. They may react by defending the illusion that everything is okay and stubbornly resisting all efforts to get them to confront their problems. They are depressed, ineffectual, and listless.
Level 8	<i>Dissociating Disoriented</i>	Nines are so desperate to hold on to whatever shred of inner peace they have left that they fear acknowledging reality at all. They try to block out of awareness anything that could affect them through dissociation and denial. They appear desolate, numb, and helpless, often experiencing amnesia.
Level 9	<i>Self- Abandoning "Disappearing"</i>	Very unhealthy Nines feel unable to face reality at all. They withdraw into themselves and become completely unresponsive. They may attempt to eliminate their awareness to save their illusions of peace through fragmenting themselves into subpersonalities.

The Social Role of Nines is subtle to grasp, although it is palpable once you have experienced it. The identity of Nines is like a ring that holds a stone or like the frame of a painting. Their attention is on the stone or the picture, not on themselves, and their identity and self-esteem arise by having a relationship (if only imaginary) with those who seem to them to have more value.

Identifying themselves as Nobody Special also offers Nines a certain camouflage, an ability to blend into the background where they will not be intruded on. Their Social Role also gives them the hope that if they do not take care of themselves, others will see their self-effacing humility and rush to their side. They may also believe that because they are humble and self-effacing, life will never present them with sorrow or tragedy. Unfortunately, things do not always work out this way, and by putting themselves last in line, Nines tend to court a certain amount of loneliness and depression. Opportunities pass them by, and others begin to not take them seriously.

Philip is a distinguished college professor whose active academic life does not betray his inner sense of himself.

I've lived with a sense of not being important. I've always assumed that other people count more than I do, that they should be considered first, that their needs are more consequential than mine. A good example of this is the way in which I have responded to health problems. If I'm experiencing symptoms, say, I'll usually live with them for quite a while. On the other hand, when my children were small, if one of them took ill, I immediately made an appointment and took them to a doctor.

Left unchecked, the Nobody Special role can leave Nines with limited energy and little confidence in their ability to cope with life. They become depressed, easily fatigued, and need frequent naps and many hours of sleep. Taking any positive action for themselves becomes more and more difficult.

I'M WORTH IT

Make a list of the things in your life that excite you. Don't edit yourself. What kind of person would you be if you could? What steps could you take today to become more like that person? This week? This year?

Sloth and Self-Forgetting

"It is nothing to die; it is frightful not to live."

VICTOR HUGO

Sloth in Nines has to do with not wanting to be internally engaged with what they are doing. They are not necessarily lazy about doing ordinary daily things—on the contrary, they might be extremely busy at work or running a business or a household. Their sloth is internal, a spiritual sloth that makes them not want to be deeply touched or affected by reality. They do not want to show up in their lives in an active, self-initiating way. The result is that even average Nines go on automatic pilot, so that life becomes less immediate and less threatening to them. Life is lived at a safe distance, so to speak.

The sloth is thus a sloth in self-remembering and self-awareness. Nines do not put energy into making contact with themselves, with others, or with the world. To identify with the body and its instincts is to become directly aware of our mortality. Nines hold on to certain comfortable inner states or identify with something beyond themselves, in effect, *diffusing their awareness* so that the full impact of mortality does not touch them. The world goes into soft focus, and Nines feel safer, but at the expense of their full vitality and aliveness.

Despite the fact that they may be spiritual seekers, Nines often attempt to get the emotional and psychological benefits of inner work by doing the opposite of being present. They go to sleep, numbing themselves to what they really feel and tuning out reality while still expecting to function effortlessly in it. Ironically, Nines want unity between themselves and the world but end up achieving only an ersatz peacefulness, the false peace of numbness and dissociation—such a precarious "peacefulness" that it is disturbed by everything. Like all ego projects, it is doomed to failure.

Unself-Consciousness and Numbing Out

As paradoxical as it sounds, Nines create and maintain their sense of identity by being unself-conscious, by not being too aware of themselves as individual persons. All of the other types *do something* to create and maintain their sense of self—for instance, Fours constantly dwell on their feelings and inner states, and Eights constantly assert themselves in various ways. By contrast, Nines create their identity by not being directly aware of themselves. Instead, they *focus on their relationships with others*. It is as if they are the room in which others gather or the page in a photo album in which pictures of others are pasted. Their sense of self is thus a "negative capability," a capacity for holding the other—not themselves.

This allows healthy Nines to be extraordinarily supportive of others.

ers. But the fundamental mistake Nines make is to believe that to stay connected with others, they must not be connected with themselves. It also causes problems for Nines, because to maintain their negative capability, they must increasingly *resist* whatever would disturb their sense of harmony and connection. Their sense of self depends on keeping many impressions out. They particularly must resist anything that would make them aware of their rage, pain, frustration, or any other negative feeling.

Outwardly, Nines may do many things, but much of their activity has the quality of busywork. They putter around and run errands but postpone dealing with more critical problems. In this state, Nines do not understand why people get frustrated with them. They are not bothering anyone, so why should anyone be upset with them? What they do not see is how frustrating their lack of appropriate response can be for others. They also do not see that they are laying the groundwork for a self-fulfilling prophecy: the disengagement of average-to-unhealthy Nines will eventually bring about the very thing they fear most—loss and separation from others.

It is important for Nines to understand that *numbness is not relaxation*. In fact, numbness depends on maintaining physical tension. When we are relaxed, we are deeply aware of our breathing, our body sensations, and our surroundings. Real peace has the quality of aliveness and energy and is not the flat detachment that we see here.

André continues:

At my worst, I feel numb. Not even really depressed, just numb. The smallest things can feel like an enormous effort. Long stretches of time can pass by while I simply stare out the window and think, or crash in front of the TV and channel surf. Time simply stops. It's like becoming a zombie. I can still function in terms of going to work and appearing friendly, but inside I'm feeling completely shut down. There is a sense of hopelessness about finding a direction in life.

CHECKING OUT

Whenever you become aware that you have "checked out" and have been unself-conscious for any noteworthy period of time, think back to what circumstances preceded your checking out. What seemed to be threatening you in some way that made you want to remove yourself from the scene? Did the threat seem to be only in the environment, or to be a state or reaction in yourself? As you become aware of what you uncover, use this information as an early warning system to help prevent you from becoming shut down in the future.

*"I don't let things get
to me."*

Moving into the Inner Sanctum

Appearances to the contrary, Nines are actually the most withdrawn of all the types, although because their withdrawal is not physical, this is not as obvious as it is in other types. Nines continue to participate while withdrawing their attention from an active engagement with the world. They seek to create and maintain an Inner Sanctum, a private place in their minds that no one can tamper with. ("In here, I'm safe, and nobody can tell me what to do.")

Nines withdraw to this Inner Sanctum in times of anxiety, upset, or even when conflicts merely threaten. They populate their Inner Sanctum with idealized memories and fantasies; real people and the real world with their real problems are not allowed to intrude. Their Inner Sanctum is the one place Nines feel they can go and be free of the demands of others. Positively, this can allow them to remain calm in a crisis, but it can also lead to interpersonal problems and a lack of self-development.

On the higher levels, this can manifest as an inner reserve of calm, as André recounts.

Most of the time I feel calm and tranquil—a contained, safe feeling. I like that about being a Nine. For example, during a recent earthquake when my house sounded as if it were being ripped apart, I wasn't particularly frightened. I had guests in from New York, and I heard them yelling in the living room, but I felt as if I were observing the quake from some other plane. I actually found it rather interesting. It seemed pointless to get upset; I couldn't control what the earth was doing, so why worry?

The more they inhabit their Inner Sanctum, the more Nines lose themselves in hazy daydreaming. Obliviousness to what is going on around them gives them the illusion of peace and harmony, but they are increasingly absentminded, which only frustrates others and makes Nines less productive and capable. If they fall deeply into this trance, Nines may well have feelings for their loved ones, or even for strangers and animals in distress, but their feelings do not connect with meaningful action. Increasingly, their relationships occur primarily in their imaginations.

EXPLORING THE INNER SANCTUM

Your Inner Sanctum is calm, peaceful, and safe, but living there comes at a high price, as perhaps you are beginning to understand. Can you identify moments when you shift your attention into your Inner Sanctum? What are the elements or qualities of your Inner Sanctum that make it a safe haven for you? What are its unrealistic elements? Become more clear in your own mind about how much you would gain if you could stay engaged in the real world more often rather than seek sanctuary in your Inner Sanctum.

Idealizing Others in Relationships

Nines idealize others and live through a handful of primary identifications, usually with family and close friends. As one Nine put it, "I do not have to be in constant contact with somebody as long as I know they are there." As this continues, Nines begin to relate to the idea of the other rather than to the other as he or she actually is. For example, a Nine may idealize his family, but if one of his children actually has a drug problem or some other serious crisis, he will generally have a very difficult time dealing with that reality.

Idealization allows Nines to focus on someone else rather than on themselves. It also allows Nines to have a positive emotional reaction toward others, satisfying their superego message. ("You are good or okay as long as those around you are good or okay.") Idealizing Nines are often attracted to stronger, more aggressive people, looking to them to supply the "juice" in relationships. Their more energetic, dynamic friends and intimates provide them with the vitality that they tend to suppress in themselves. Often this unstated bargain works relatively well, since more assertive types generally look for someone to go along with their plans and adventures. Idealizing others also indirectly maintains (or even increases) their self-esteem: if an outstanding person is in some kind of relationship with them, their sense of self-worth is increased.

But there are three major dangers with this arrangement. First, Nines can be taken advantage of by these more assertive, independent, and aggressive types. Second, the more freewheeling, independent types will often lose interest in the more complacent and unadventurous Nines. Last, and most important, as long as Nines are trying to fill themselves by merging with the vitality of another, it is unlikely that they will do the work necessary to recover their own vitality.

FINDING YOUR HIDDEN STRENGTHS

Whenever you idealize someone in a relationship, notice what qualities about the other person you tend to focus on. Are these qualities that you feel you are missing in yourself? Remember that in your Essential nature, you already have these qualities—and that, from this point of view, the other person is simply acting as a reminder to you of what is blocked in yourself. Your idealizations can therefore act as a trustworthy guide for your own Inner Work to uncover and claim more of your own positive qualities.

*"One day my ship will
come in."*

Living by Formulas or a "Philosophy of Life"

Average Nines increasingly rely on a "philosophy of life," which is usually a mixture of homey aphorisms, common sense, scriptural texts, and proverbs, as well as folk sayings and quotations of all kinds. These formulas give average Nines a way to deal with people and potentially upsetting or troublesome situations. They have ready-made answers for life's problems, but although their "answers" may be true in some circumstances, they tend to be simplistic and not allow for nuance or individual cases. The problem is that Nines use these airtight philosophies to shield themselves from upset rather than to guide them toward deeper truths or real understanding. Furthermore, many of the philosophies embraced by average Nines offer solace. ("I am God." "All is One." "Everything is love.") Without requiring any effort, they can then become excuses for further disengagement and passivity.

Less healthy Nines may use spirituality to defend a kind of fatalism, accepting negative or even damaging situations as if there were nothing that they could do about them. ("It's God's will.") Deeply defended Nines also dismiss their own intuitions, commonsense judgments, sense perceptions, and even personal experience and professional expertise in order to cling to what they wish to be true. It is as if they could ignore their own inner warning bells without consequences to themselves or others. They become prematurely resigned, trying to convince themselves and others not to worry about anything or to get upset. After all, the angels will take care of it.

AIRTIGHT PHILOSOPHIES

Whenever you "catch yourself in the act" of thinking or saying some kind of aphorism or proverb, notice two things. First, note what unpleasant or negative feeling you are using the saying to counteract. Can you move your attention into your body and become aware of whatever sensations you are feeling? Second, begin an exercise in which you see how the proverb is not true—that perhaps the exact opposite of it could be called for. Perhaps the real truth lies somewhere in the middle.

Stubbornness and Inner Resistance

Nines may well know that their attention and energy are required for their own self-development, for addressing problems, or for meaningfully engaging with others. But they feel an indefinable hesitancy, as if some extraordinary effort were required to participate more fully in their own lives. It all seems like too much trouble. Most of us can recall mornings in which we have been enjoying a pleasant dream but have to get out of bed and face some challenging task in the day ahead. We are often tempted to hit the snooze button to allow ourselves a few more minutes of pleasant dreaming. We may even hit the snooze button several times—enough to make us late. Average Nines have a similar mechanism in their psyches that causes them to postpone awakening.

The more others pressure average Nines to wake up and respond, the more they withdraw. They want to get people “off their backs,” so they appease others, seeking peace at any price.

André talks about the futility of trying to stand up for himself against his mother’s demands.

The only thing that seemed to give my mother any satisfaction was decorating our home. A Four, she worked hard at making our ordinary suburban home distinctive. When it was time for my room to be decorated, she removed all my posters and replaced them with foil wallpaper in a variety of pastel shades. I felt erased. I hated it, but knew she wouldn’t change it, so I just didn’t get upset. It was a waste of energy to even become involved in a discussion with her about it.

Even though Nines tend to be accommodating, they have an inner core of stubbornness and resistance, a desire to not be affected by anyone or anything they see as threatening to their peace. Others may see such Nines as passive, although they internally harbor enormous strength and determination—in service of being left undisturbed. Beneath the surface calm, average Nines are brick walls; beyond a certain point, they are not going to budge.

While many Nines do not want to be changed or influenced by others, less healthy Nines also do not want to be affected by their own reactions to events. They feel that anything that could rock the boat is threatening. This includes not only negative emotions but, ironically, positive ones as well. Allowing themselves to get too excited about something can be as threatening to their emotional stability as a legitimate disaster.

Strangely, no matter how unpleasant the circumstances of their lives, less healthy Nines powerfully resist any effort to help them get out of them. Their patience has turned into grim endurance: life is to

*“I’ll deal with this
a little later.”*

be gotten through, not to be lived, and certainly not to be actually enjoyed. What pleasures they allow themselves are used to distract them from their growing internal deadness. But eating snacks while watching reruns on TV, or hanging out with friends, or living vicariously through others cannot entirely cover the pain of realizing that their lives are stalled.

STOP POSTPONING YOUR LIFE

Take a few moments in your Inner Work Journal to inquire about the many different ways in which you postpone showing up more fully in your life. Where and how do you typically hit your snooze button? Are there particular conditions that trigger this behavior? At home? At the office? With particular people or circumstances? What conditions do you require to wake up?

Suppressed Anger and Rage

Lower-average Nines seem not to have an aggressive (or even an assertive) bone in their bodies. Underneath their outward appearance of contentment and neutrality, however, we often find a great deal of hidden anger and resentment that Nines do not want to acknowledge, much less deal with.

Anger is an instinctual response, and if it is not processed, it is eventually transformed into rage. If their rage remains bottled up, many other powerful human feelings and capacities—even the capacity to experience love—do, too. Average Nines fear that if they were to allow their rage to surface, they would lose the two most important things in their lives: their peace of mind and their connections with other people. Actually, the opposite is true. Once Nines become aware of it, repressed rage can serve as the very fuel they need to escape their inner inertia.

Nines are angry (rageful, negative) for a number of reasons, not all of them obvious. Subconsciously, they are angry because they feel that they do not have “space” to have a life of their own. They are so busy trying to accommodate everyone else and maintain harmonious relationships that a good deal of resentment builds up. They are also angry because they feel that others are continually upsetting them, trying to prod them into action when they want to be left alone, or reminding them of problems and difficulties when they would rather not think about them. Last, Nines are angry because others may have been abusive or have taken advantage of them in some way, and they have felt powerless to do anything about it.

Less healthy Nines have the tendency to become “doormats” and

“The more you bring it up, the less I’m going to do it.”

to passively suffer whatever others dish out. Average Nines freeze up whenever their instinctive self-protective responses are needed. They feel unable to defend themselves appropriately, to speak up for themselves, or to take timely action to further their own interests. Feeling powerless is one of the most powerful causes of suppressed rage.

We often think of anger as something negative. But the less understood positive side of it is its ability to sweep away the blockages that keep us locked in our old patterns. There is a salutary side to anger which might be called *holy anger*—the ability to put one's foot down, to draw a boundary, and to defend oneself. Much recovery work for Nines involves getting in touch with how clamped down their energy is and with allowing themselves to feel their anger.

INTEGRATING YOUR ANGER

You need to practice being okay with being angry and with seeing anger as a force that you have a legitimate right to experience and exercise. From a spiritual point of view, anger gives us the ability to say no—to protect ourselves from something we do not want to have in our lives. It will therefore be helpful if you could start by allowing yourself to say no to the things that you really do not want. If you feel guilty or fearful as a result, just note those reactions and stay calm and centered. Be mindful, however, of learning to say no in meaningful, legitimate situations: but if you err, err on the side of overdoing no-saying, at least for a while, until you become more practiced at it.

As we have seen, Nines attempt to manage stress by downplaying their own choices and desires and by retreating to their Inner Sanctum. When these coping skills are insufficient to contain their anxieties, Nines go to Six, investing themselves in ideas or relationships that they believe will give them more security and stability.

When worries and anxieties surface, Nines focus intensively on work and projects. It is as if, after letting things go for a while, they snap to and try to cover all of the bases at once in a high-pressured phase of frantic activity. At the same time, they are often highly reactive to the demands of others, becoming more passive-aggressive and defensive. Their positive "philosophies of life" crack to reveal the doubts and pessimism that they have been defending against. Also like Sixes, Nines under stress may bring up long-hidden complaints about others and their lot in life. While venting does temporarily lower their stress, its benefit is usually short-lived because Nines are still reluctant to come to terms with the roots of their unhappiness. Under extreme stress, they may develop a siege mentality. Paranoid suspicions can rapidly escalate into blaming others for their problems and reacting

REACTING TO STRESS: NINE GOES TO SIX



defiantly. Angry outbursts and displays of temper can be as surprising to Nines as they are to those who witness them.

THE RED FLAG: THE NINE IN TROUBLE



If Nines have suffered a serious crisis without adequate support or coping skills, or if they have suffered from chronic abuse in childhood, they may cross the shock point into the unhealthy aspects of their type. This may lead them to a fearful recognition that the problems and conflicts in their lives are not going away and may even be getting worse—especially because of their own inaction. They may also be forced by reality to deal with their problems. (Despite the Nine's denial, the police bring a child home, or the spouse with a "slight alcohol problem" gets fired for drunkenness, or the lump in the breast has not gone away as hoped.)

Coming to these realizations, while terrifying, can be a turning point in a Nine's life. They may begin to turn their lives around and move toward health and liberation. On the other hand, they may become even more stubborn and determined to maintain the comforting illusion that everything is okay. ("Why is everyone trying to upset me?" "The more you bring it up, the less I'm inclined to do anything about it!") If Nines persist in this attitude, they may cross into the unhealthy Levels. If you or someone you know is exhibiting the following warning signs for an extended period of time—more than two or three weeks—getting counseling, therapy, or other support is highly advisable.

WARNING SIGNS

POTENTIAL PATHOLOGY:
Dissociative Disorders, Dependent and Schizoid Disorders, anhedonic depression, extreme denial, severe long-term depersonalization

- ▶ Denial of serious health, financial, or personal problems
- ▶ Obstinacy and long-standing resistance to getting help
- ▶ General awareness and vitality dampened and repressed
- ▶ A sense of inadequacy and general neglectfulness
- ▶ Dependency on others and allowing themselves to be exploited
- ▶ Chronic depression and emotional flatness (anhedonia)
- ▶ Extreme dissociation (feeling lost, confused, deeply disconnected)

PRACTICES THAT HELP NINES DEVELOP



► While real humility is an admirable trait in human beings, it is not one that you have to work at. Learn to discriminate between genuine humility and the tendency to discount yourself and your abilities. In other words, remember the Nine's Social Role, Nobody Special, and notice when you are falling into it. You may feel overwhelmed by life's problems and that you have little to offer others, but a quick look at the discord, violence, and pain in the world may guide you to a quiet wisdom about what you *can* do. If there is an energy that is needed to restore a balance on this troubled globe, it is certainly the calm, healing, reconciling energy of healthy Nines. Know that when you are truly connected to yourself, you have all the power and capacity you need for whatever situation you face.

► Learn the value of the word *no*. It is quite natural to not want to disappoint others, but when you are presented with a proposition that you are uncomfortable with, it is better to make your misgivings known at the outset rather than silently acquiescing and regretting it later. Further, others are much more likely to be upset with you if you resist their plans passive-aggressively after you have initially agreed to them. Most people want to know what your real opinion or preference is—even if it seems unimportant to you at the time.

► Learn to recognize what *you* want from a given situation. Often you will be so busy taking into account the positions and views of others that you will tend to neglect your own. Because of this habit of mind, you may not know what you want immediately. If necessary, do not be afraid to ask others to give you a moment to consider the options. And don't be afraid to pursue the option you prefer when it arises. Remember that you are allowed to have wants.

► Take a tip from healthy Threes and invest time and energy in developing yourself and your talents. There are many pleasant, perfectly valid ways to spend your time, entertaining yourself or hanging out with friends or loved ones—but make sure you do not shortchange yourself by neglecting your own development. The initial struggles may bring up many of your anxieties about yourself, but the rewards of persisting in your development will be much greater and more deeply satisfying. Further, investing in yourself will not lead you away from your connection with others: everyone will benefit from a stronger, more fully actualized you.

► Notice when you are imagining a relationship with someone instead of actually relating with him or her. For most people, sitting on a couch with you while you daydream about a camping trip or a recent episode of your favorite TV show is not very satisfying. If you find that you are "checking out" with a particular person, you might well ask yourself if you are uncomfortable or angry with them about something.

In any event, talking about it may help you reconnect with yourself and with them.

► Learn to recognize and process your anger. For most Nines, anger is very threatening. Of all the emotions, it feels like the one that can most easily destroy your inner peace. Yet it is only through anger that you will connect with your own inner power—it is the fuel that will burn away your inertia. This does not mean, of course, that you need to go around yelling at people and being aggressive with strangers. But it does mean that if you feel angry, it is all right to tell others that you are upset with them. Learn to *sense* your anger in your body. What does it feel like? Where does it register most strongly in your body? Becoming familiar with it as a sensation can help you to be less afraid of it.

BUILDING ON THE NINE'S STRENGTHS



One of the greatest sources of strength for Nines is their profound patience: a deep “letting be” of other people that allows others to develop in their own way. This is the quality shown by a good parent who patiently teaches his or her children new skills while remaining at a respectful but watchful distance.

Nines’ patience is supported by a quiet strength and tremendous endurance. They are able to “hang tough” through hardships and difficult experiences. Nines often report their ability to outlast flashier competition in work settings or in relationships—much like the parable of the tortoise and the hare. When they are healthy, Nines are able to work steadily and persistently toward their goals and often achieve them. Their willpower is liberated, and they discover incredible grit and stamina—as befits the type at the center of the Instinctive Triad.

Healthy Nines are also highly effective in handling crises because they have an extraordinary inner stability. The little ups and downs of life do not knock them off balance; nor do major problems, setbacks, and disasters. When everyone else is overreacting with anxiety, Nines become the still, calm center that moves ahead and gets things done.

André knows how simple—and how challenging—this can be.

Getting out of a period of malaise and numbness is simple: admitting to myself there is something wrong, then telling someone I trust how I feel. It is painful connecting with “messy” emotions, but doing so seems to diffuse them. Another strategy that helps is reconnecting with my body by going to the gym, getting a massage, etc. Having a dog has also been great for me. He is so “in the moment” and demanding of my full attention that it’s hard to go into zombie mode.

Healthy Nines are extraordinarily inclusive of others, an especially important talent in today's diverse global society. (This indicates why Sixes who tend to be exclusive and to segregate people into "in" and "out" groups need to integrate to Nine.) While Nines see the good in others (and desire to merge with them), really healthy Nines can also see the good in themselves (and desire to become more independent and personally engaged with their world).

Although Nines are clearly interested in supporting others, they are not identified with the role of the Rescuer or the Helper. They are valued because they listen without judgment, offering others the freedom and dignity of a live-and-let-live philosophy. They are forgiving and give others the benefit of the doubt, always looking for the positive interpretation of a situation. Their ability to create space for others and to give everyone a fair hearing causes people to seek them out. They can entertain different points of view, but they are also able to take a firm stand when necessary. Their simplicity, innocence, directness, and guilelessness put people at ease and make others trust them.

In healthy Nines, differences of opinion, conflicts, and tensions are permitted and even valued. They often have the ability to arrive at a new synthesis that resolves the contradiction or conflict at another level. Thus, Nines can be highly creative, although they tend to be humble about their talents. Further, Nines typically like to express themselves nonverbally—through music, art, painting, or dance. They can be extremely imaginative and enjoy exploring the world of dreams and symbols. Nines think holistically and desire to maintain a sense of being at one with the universe. Myths are a way of talking about the larger themes of human nature and about the moral order of existence: in the end, everything is good and working out as it should.

Nines become actualized and remain healthy by learning to recognize their own Essential value, like healthy Threes. In effect, they overcome their Social Role, Nobody Special, and recognize that they are worth their own time and energy. They work at developing themselves and their potential and put themselves out in the world, letting others know what they have to offer.

The biggest obstacle to their self-actualization is their tendency toward inertia. Integrating Nines will frequently encounter feelings of heaviness or sleepiness whenever they try to do something good for themselves. But as they integrate, they will find their energy increasing, and with it their charisma. After thinking of themselves as invisible for most of their lives, integrating Nines are amazed that others not only listen to them but in fact seek them out. As they recognize their own value, others appreciate them more as well. As they reclaim the vitality

"We can all get along."

**THE PATH OF
INTEGRATION:
NINE GOES TO
THREE**



of their instinctual nature, they become energizing to others. Thus, as integrating Nines discover their innate value, they find it mirrored by other people, which surprises and delights them.

Integrating Nines also come in contact with their heart, the seat of their identity, and express themselves with a simple authenticity that can be very moving. They are able to assert themselves as they need to, understanding that self-assertion is not the same as aggression. Further, their resistance to reality falls away, making them more flexible and adaptable to circumstances.

Of course, integration for Nines does not mean imitating the average qualities of Type Three. Becoming driven, competitive, or image-conscious will do little to build genuine self-esteem—on the contrary, it will sustain their anxieties about their own worth and keep them dissociated from their true identity. But as Nines find the energy to invest in their own self-development, the love and strength of their own heart becomes an indomitable, healing force in their world.

TRANSFORMING PERSONALITY INTO ESSENCE



"Unity is not something we are called to create; it's something we are called to recognize."

WILLIAM SLOAN COFFIN

Ultimately Nines reclaim their Essential nature by confronting their Basic Fear of losing connection and by letting go of the belief that their participation in the world is unimportant—that they do not have to "show up." They realize that the only way to truly achieve the unity and wholeness they seek is not by "checking out" into the realms of the imagination but by fully engaging themselves in the present moment. Doing so requires that they reconnect with their instinctual nature and with their physicality in an immediate way. Often this requires confronting repressed feelings of anger and rage that can be extremely threatening to their ordinary sense of self. But when Nines stay with themselves and are able to integrate their anger, they begin to feel the stability and steadiness that they have been seeking. From this platform of inner strength, actualizing Nines become indomitable forces, grateful and powerful and aligned with the Divine will. We can see such qualities in extraordinary Nines such as Abraham Lincoln, or His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

In order to achieve true connection and wholeness, this realm of mortal experience is what Nines must learn to accept and embrace. While it is true that there are many aspects of reality beyond the manifest world, we do not become realized by *negating* or denying the world. In other words, we cannot really transcend the human condition: only by embracing it fully do we arrive at the fullness of our true nature.

When Nines realize and accept this truth, they become extraordinarily self-possessed and independent. They learn to assert themselves more freely and to experience greater peace, equanimity, and

tentment. Their self-possession enables them to create profoundly satisfying relationships with others because they are truly present to themselves—alive, awake, exuberant, and alert. They become dynamic, joyful people, working for peace and healing their world.

Far from being detached or repressed, they discover that they enjoy being engaged with life and make amazing discoveries for themselves, as Red notes.

I know exactly what I need to say and do, and I have the strength and conviction to do it. I stop trying to please others and focus on pleasing myself. Strangely enough, this effort to meet my own needs very often meets the needs of the group, as if by concentrating on my own needs I have intuitively anticipated the needs of the group.

THE EMERGENCE OF ESSENCE

Nines remember the Essential quality of wholeness and completion. They remember the interconnectedness of all things—that nothing in the universe exists separate from anything else. This knowledge brings great inner peace, and the Nine's purpose in life, from an Essential point of view, is to be a living reminder of the spiritual nature of reality and, consequently, of the underlying unity of our true nature.

Liberated Nines are fully present to and conscious of the wholeness and unity of existence while simultaneously retaining a sense of self. Less healthy Nines have a capacity to perceive some of the boundless qualities of reality but tend to get lost in or merge with their surroundings. Liberated Nines do not forget themselves in these states or lose themselves in idealistic fantasies. They see how good and evil are mixed together. ("God sends rain on the just and the unjust alike.") They accept the paradoxical union of opposites—that pleasure and pain, sadness and joy, union and loss, good and evil, life and death, clarity and mystery, health and illness, virtue and weakness, wisdom and foolishness, peace and anxiety—are all inextricably linked.

This is a lesson that Martin, a business consultant, has come to for himself.

When my wife died last year, I was devastated until I realized that her life and her death were all part of some larger event. Maybe one that I couldn't quite wrap my brain around, but one that seemed to be of a piece. Once I accepted the wholeness of her life, then her death was just part of that bigger whole, and I could and did accept it.

"Happiness—to be dissolved into something complete and great."

WILLA CATHER

Another Essential quality of the Nine is what Oscar Ichazo calls "Holy Love," although this must be understood rightly. The Essential love to which we are referring is a dynamic quality of Being that flows, transforms, and breaks down all barriers before it. It overcomes feeling of separateness and isolation within ego boundaries, issues that plague the Instinctive Triad. This is why real love is frightening—it entails the dissolution of boundaries and the death of the ego. Yet as we learn to surrender to the action of Holy Love, we reconnect with the ocean of Being and realize that at our core, we are this Love. We are this endless, dynamic, transforming Presence of loving awareness, and it has always been so.

Add your scores for the fifteen statements for Type Nine. Your result will be between 15 and 75. The following guidelines may help you discover or confirm your personality type.

- ▶ 15 You are probably not a withdrawn type (not a Four, Five, or Nine).
- ▶ 15–30 You are probably not a Type Nine.
- ▶ 30–45 You most probably have Nine-issues or a Nine parent.
- ▶ 45–60 You most likely have a Nine-component.
- ▶ 60–75 You are most likely a Nine (but could still be another type if you are thinking too narrowly about Type Nine).

Nines are most likely to misidentify themselves as Twos, Fives, or Fours. Sixes, Twos, and Sevens are most likely to misidentify themselves as Nines.

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PART III

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*Tools for
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THE ENNEAGRAM AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

IN ITSELF, the Enneagram is not a spiritual path. It is an exceptional tool and a tremendous help to us for *any path* that we might be on. Nevertheless, the insights gained from it must be combined with some kind of daily practice. Practice grounds the information that the Enneagram provides in our daily experience, and it helps us return to the fundamental truths that the Enneagram is revealing to us.

Combining knowledge of the Enneagram with spiritual practice consists of:

1. Becoming present and aware as much as possible throughout the day
2. Seeing your personality in action
3. Not acting out your impulses

These three elements underlie all the other tools and practices in this book. Whenever we become aware of an aspect of our personality, we can remember to breathe and relax as much as possible while continuing to observe and contain our impulses until something shifts and our state changes. Analyzing what we find is not as important as awareness, relaxing the body, and not acting out.

Even though the Enneagram is not itself a complete spiritual path, it offers immense insight to anyone who is on a spiritual or therapeutic path of any kind. The insights into human nature it provides, particularly when the specificity of the Levels of Development are taken into account, are so "on target" that they cannot help but catalyze our growth.

IN ITSELF, the Enneagram is a tremendous tool and a tremendous help on. Nevertheless, the insight with some kind of daily practice that the Enneagram provides return to the fundamental us.

Combining knowledge consists of:

1. Becoming present the day
2. Seeing your person
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CHOOSING A PRACTICE

The great religions of the world have provided a multitude of practices for personal transformation; so have modern psychology, the self-help movement, and contemporary spiritual thinkers. No matter what practice we choose—whether it is meditation, prayer, yoga, reading inspirational books, or another—there are three criteria for assessing its helpfulness for transformation.

First, does the practice assist us to become more mindful, awake, and open to our lives—or is it actually supporting our cherished illusions about ourselves, even negative ones? Does it cultivate a sense of Presence and emphasize the importance of being in contact with our life here and now?

Second, does it support us in exploring some of the uncomfortable aspects and limitations of our personality? Many paths offer a kind of “spiritual glamour,” reassuring followers that they are somehow separate from and better than the mass of humanity and that they can soon expect to receive grandiose, cosmic powers. While attaining extraordinary powers is always possible, they are more often a distracting sidetrack than a mark of genuine realization. (On the other hand, any path that is continually shaming or judging us is also probably unbalanced.)

Third, does the path encourage us to think for ourselves? Growth comes from the desire to look more deeply into our own natures as well as into the nature of reality. Ready-made answers from gurus or hide-bound doctrines of any sort discourage this process. Such “answers” may soothe our personality for a while, covering over our deeper anxieties and wounds, but their limitation is usually exposed when a real crisis comes along.

In fact, *life is our greatest teacher*. Whatever we are doing can be instructive, whether we are at the office, or talking to our spouse, or driving a car on the freeway. If we are present to our experiences, the impressions of our activities will be fresh and alive, and we will always learn something new from them. But if we are not present, every moment will be like every other, and nothing of the preciousness of life will touch us.

No single psychological tool or spiritual practice is right for everyone at all times. Our different states and conditions often require different choices. Sometimes our minds and hearts may be quiet, and we can easily engage in meditation, contemplation, or visualizations. At other times, we will be tired and find that we cannot meditate; at such times perhaps prayer or chanting, or a walking meditation, will be more helpful.

What type we are will also probably influence which practices we

“One of our problems today is that we are not well acquainted with the literature of the spirit. We’re interested in the news of the day and the problems of the hour.”

JOSEPH CAMPBELL

“Meditation is not a way to enlightenment nor is it a method of achieving anything at all. It is peace and blessedness itself.”

DOGEN