

# Enneagram

Richard Rohr

## Knowing Ourselves

The **Enneagram** is a dynamic system for self-knowledge and spiritual transformation. It is a wonderful tool that can help us see and let go of the false self--which masks the image of God within us--and allow us to live from our True Self--the unique manifestation of Love that God intends us to be. It seems we are most defended against that which we most deeply know to be true, our original blessing. This ontological belovedness and okayness is hard to trust because this true mirroring has invariably been distorted, denied, or even betrayed. The Enneagram serves as a very helpful mirror to reveal our egoic habits that keep our authentic self from thriving.

Although the Enneagram is an ancient tool, with roots in the Desert Fathers and Mothers, it was neglected for centuries. I first learned about the Enneagram from the Jesuits who brought it to America during the early 1970s. The Jesuits discovered this tool for their gift of spiritual direction. It is used in "the reading of souls" to help people rediscover who they are in God. When used in conjunction with a regular practice of contemplative prayer, the Enneagram can be powerfully transformative. It can open us to deeper and deeper levels of understanding and insight, love and grace. In the next two weeks of Daily Meditations, I will barely scratch the surface of the Enneagram's potential to help us live to our fullest God-given identity.[1] But you will see that it very much continues our theme for this year, which is love.

The Enneagram describes nine different personalities, each of which covers a broad spectrum from "immature" to "mature," or "compulsive" to "redeemed." It is more about recognizing "energies" than it is about describing precise traits. People who know the Enneagram in a superficial way think it's about putting people into boxes, but its real goal is to let people out of their self-created boxes. It makes us aware of our *root sin*, our *passion*, our particular *trap* or *blindness* that prevents us from experiencing reality holistically and honestly. These passions were called the seven "capital sins" by Pope Gregory the Great in the sixth century, although predictably he missed the most common ones in Western civilization, which are *fear* and *deceit*. You can't see as sin what you have idealized as virtue.

Freedom from our habitual trap comes through some in-depth experience of Love, be it a sudden overflowing, hitting the bottom and being lifted up, or the gradual

opening through contemplative practice. At some point many people wake up and begin to realize, however tenuously, their own True Self, a one-of-a-kind reflection of God's love in the world. There's a part of us that has always been in union with God. Gradually we learn more and more to trust our deepest soul and draw our life from that Source. We learn how to live more consistently from this true identity of original blessing, who we are in God and who we will be through eternity. Then we know that any notion of heaven is not just later, but has begun here and now.

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## Type ONE: The Need to Be Perfect

For the rest of this week and the next, we will explore each of the nine individual Enneagram types. We'll see how all of us begin life in union with God, as our True Self, totally in Love. Each Enneagram type has a uniquely gifted way of being connected with the Real. It reveals our original "soul space."

Our Enneagram *passions* or *sins* come from the suffering and agitation caused by the perception that we've been torn from the womb of Love. The ego creates a false self, trying to recreate the original positive soul experience. Eventually, as Russ Hudson says, "The healing of the passion comes through turning back toward the grace. Allowing grace to work us over a long period develops our virtue." [1] Thus, the issues of the false self are only resolved by experiencing our forgotten but real connection with God.

I'm going to start with the ONE because it's the type I understand best, and I hope it will give us a template for the process of transformation in all the types. The primal knowing of ONEs is that the world and we are deeply good. ONEs are originally joyfully enthralled with the goodness and perfection of the Really Real. My mother told me I was so excited all the time as a boy; I would just squeal with delight and dance and sing. It was just a wonderful world, and I was a part of it, and I was happy to be a part of it!

But then the wound came. I don't know what it was, but somewhere along the way I realized it isn't a perfect world. No childhood is ever perfect. No longer able to rest in our original "home," the ego tries to manufacture perfection. ONEs like me move into overdrive to protect ourselves from our deep disappointment. "I will make it perfect anyway. I'm going to find a way to make

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it the way I want it!" But good intentions can only take us so far when we are not connected to Real Power. Here is where evil disguises itself as good, and the natural knowing of the True Self gets twisted into the false self.

ONEs become hyper-sensitive to anything we perceive as wrong or ugly. Hence we become critical, judgmental, and moralistic. This focus sent me off to a seminary at a young age. We are even more critical of ourselves than we are of everything else. Our root sin is *anger* or *resentment*—resentment that things are not the way they should be. We're perfectionists, and we're never satisfied with what we could always improve. This is my fallenness, my strategy for surviving. It's been my way of getting energy for so long that I cannot change it entirely. All I can do, by God's grace, is move toward some form of transformation that will allow me to fall and rest in my True Self.

The gift or virtue that marks mature persons of any type is always the reverse of the root sin, for it is the overcoming of your sin that becomes your greatest gift. For the ONE, this gift or virtue is serenity, meaning a nonreactive heart. Serenity holds the world with compassion and patience. As Russ Hudson puts it, "Serenity allows ONEs to be of service. Instead of reacting in anger and irritation, serenity lets ONEs show up in the face of difficulty, conflict, and suffering and see what's actually needed, what will be most helpful, and what will open things to the good. Serenity can trust the goodness, blessedness, and dignity that's in me and trust that same goodness, blessedness, and dignity is there somehow in the situation or person in front of me." [4]

How do we get from our root sin to this gift? First, for any type, it usually takes the major humiliation of seeing our root sin for what it is. I remember the day when my ONEness became obvious to me during a spiritual direction session in Cincinnati. I was in a daze of humiliating recognitions. "My God, I became a Franciscan for the wrong reason, I became celibate for the wrong reason, I became a priest for the wrong reason. Oh God, did I do anything right?" I realized that I wasn't right at all. My very best efforts stemmed from mixed motives, to make myself look good. This insight was the initial death of the false self. It also set me on a course that has become one of my central themes: the understanding of reality as paradox, reality as a seeming contradiction that in a bigger frame is not a contradiction at all.

From our earliest years, we ONEs have lived with our unacknowledged and repressed anger. When we discover it, we can eventually get so fed up with being angry that, through the grace of God, we finally learn to deal with it better and more constructively than others! It's still in us just as much as ever, and it won't go away. But it no longer needs to be taken so seriously. Instead, as Hudson says, "the behaviors and reactions of our Enneagram type . . . [can serve as] reminders that we've forgotten what we love and what's most important. . . . This is how we turn our ego into a friend rather than an enemy." [5]

Many integrated ONEs say that three things help them: *prayer*, *love*, and *nature*. When I pray I can increasingly let go of the voices of duty and responsibility and let myself drop down into God, into Love. Love is "the perfect bond," as Paul says (Colossians 3:14). That is why I have to fall in love with somebody or something every day, even if it's only a tree or the wonderful turquoise sky over New Mexico. When I don't love, the negative voices immediately get the upper hand. Finally, nature helps me discover and accept perfection in the flux and chaos of creative evolution. *God, love, and nature are perfect precisely because they include and incorporate imperfection.* This is important! Without these three experiences, ONEs can scarcely imagine cheerful serenity and patience, but remain aggressive idealists and ideologues.

Hudson describes ONEs' unique gift: "ONEs begin life with a sense of the goodness, dignity, and blessedness of all creation. . . . The special mission of the ONE is to invite everyone into that fundamental truth by reflecting that face of God in the world." [6] I hope I am doing that somehow for you.

### References:

- [1] Russ Hudson, *The Enneagram as a Tool for Your Spiritual Journey* (CAC: 2009), disc 2 ([CD](#), [DVD](#), [MP3 download](#)).
- [2] *Ibid.*, disc 3.
- [3] *Ibid.*, disc 4.
- [4] *Ibid.*, disc 3.
- [5] *Ibid.*, disc 2.
- [6] *Ibid.*, disc 3.

Adapted from Richard Rohr, *The Enneagram: The Discernment of Spirits* (CAC: 2004), disc 2 ([CD](#), [DVD](#), [MP3 download](#)); and Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert, *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective* (The Crossroad Publishing Company: 2001), 45, 54-55.

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## Type TWO: The Need to Be Needed

TWOs, THREEs, and FOURs make up the heart triad. They are "other-directed" people, whose wellbeing depends on how their environment reacts to them. Their continuous activities secretly have no other goal than to be confirmed from the outside. We all have this same concern to some degree. It grows out of the mirroring we received or didn't receive as a child when we were first developing our sense of identity. "Who am I in your eyes?" is a central question for all the heart types.[1]

TWOs originally know themselves as the beloved of the universe. They know the truth that they are specially loved and chosen by a beautiful and loving God. When they cannot maintain this truth, they become manipulative and needy of the love of others to "reconvince" themselves of the truth they already deeply know. "Others must and will love me!" they demand, instead of resting in the love that they already are. They are driven to love, help, and serve others, without realizing that their motivation is the need for others to love them. TWOs are extremely sensitive to the needs of others, but not aware of their own needs. What they really want is attention. Although this is a legitimate need for anyone, to TWOs it seems selfish, and they won't admit to it.

In Russ Hudson's words, "The root sin of the TWO is *pride*, not in the sense of showing off, but pride as a kind of false humility." [2] Pride keeps them from seeing their own needs. TWOs need to be needed. For this reason they are easy to manipulate. As soon as they hear the little word "need," they scrape together the last remnant of their energy to rush to help you.

TWOs long to be loved, to love with their whole hearts, and to be allowed to live for their beloved. They sacrifice themselves for the welfare of others. They are benefactors, givers, and helpers. They give others precisely what they want for themselves. Their seeming altruism is a "legitimate" form of indulging their own egoism.

But let me warn you: TWOs have another side. "Hell hath no fury" like TWOs who suddenly realize that they are doing all the giving and not receiving what they feel they deserve in return. They suddenly become the opposite of the person they want to be. They can say extremely cruel things. Then they may run from the room in tears when they realize they've turned into a "dragon."

TWOs need a great deal of acceptance and "soft" love before they are ready to let themselves be challenged by "tough love." Sooner or later, however, this is exactly what has to happen: a confrontation, at once loving and unsparring, with their own pseudo-love, self-pity, and egocentricity.

The gift of TWOs is genuine *humility*, the reverse of pride. When TWOs reach the point where they recognize their real motives ("I give so I can get"), they may cry for days. When a TWO can finally cry tears of self-knowledge, redemption (healing) is near. At such moments, TWOs realize that they have perhaps damaged and injured other people while supposedly "wanting the best for them." This is deeply humiliating. TWOs are redeemed from themselves the more they experience God as the real lover and realize that their puny love can only consist in sharing in God's infinite love. This insight leads through a moment of deep shame to genuine humility. I like the way Hudson says it: "Real humility is a reflection of God's grace for us. It is allowing the holding of our own human limitation and being utterly gentle, compassionate, and real about that." [3] Redeemed TWOs deeply and profoundly know their innate value and preciousness and so don't need to be continually affirmed from the outside. They are finally free. As I've shared before, most problems are psychological and most solutions are spiritual.

### References:

[1] Russ Hudson, *The Enneagram as a Tool for Your Spiritual Journey* (CAC: 2009), disc 4 ([CD](#), [DVD](#), [MP3 download](#)).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

Adapted from Richard Rohr, *The Enneagram: The Discernment of Spirits* (CAC: 2004), disc 2 ([CD](#), [DVD](#), [MP3 download](#)); and Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert, *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective* (The Crossroad Publishing Company: 2001), 45, 64, 66, 68-72.

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## Type THREE: The Need to Succeed

THREEs began with the primal knowledge that everything is unstable and passing and that only God endures and gives us the endurance to withstand the passing nature of all things. But, at some point, an experience of wounding convinced THREEs that they are separate from God and Wholeness. This perception makes THREEs think it's up to them to keep things from falling apart. "I will prove by competence and

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overproduction that I will not fall apart," they say, instead of resting in the impermanence and fallibility that they deeply know and now deeply fear. They are afraid to look inside themselves because they feel there is really nothing there. THREEs need endless successes and feedback to reassure themselves against a very honest and realistic insecurity. They are afraid to say yes and cooperate with the dissolution and death of all things unless they reconnect with the permanence and endurance of reality, which is precisely a God-experience, whether they call it that or not.

The THREE is the central type of the heart triad. It's harder for THREEs to perceive their own feelings than for any other type. But they are experts at reading the people around them and immediately knowing just what role to play to be successful in others' eyes. They can slip into almost any mask that will please the people around them and act the part to perfection. The role protects and motivates them. They are really looking for praise from outside, because they often feel worthless inside. They identify with their group, organization, or project and they work very hard. They are efficiency experts. THREEs are show-people, achievers, careerists, and status-seekers. They live out of roles much more than their True Self, which they scarcely know.

THREEs are competitive and want to be winners. "I'm good when I win" is their motto. Many THREEs are physically attractive. Most of them seem optimistic, youthful, intelligent, dynamic, and productive. They run circles around others because of their amazing energy. They can sell anything because they first sell you on themselves. Immature THREEs have no longing for depth. What's the point of depth when superficiality works and when image without content sells? THREEs are extremely pragmatic: if it works, it's true. The question of objective truth isn't even raised.

The pressure to succeed leads to the root sin of the THREE, which is deceit. While they don't generally go around telling lies, they do embellish the truth and put the best face on everything. They create an image that looks good, can be sold, and can win. The person they deceive the most is their own self. They have often been so spoiled by success that in the end they believe everything they do is good and great.

Unredeemed THREEs avoid, fear, and hate failure. When it does occur, they find ways to extricate themselves. Sometimes they polish up their defeats and reinterpret them as victories. Often they blame others.

And they frequently leave the scene of the wreck as quickly as possible to plunge into a new, promising project.

THREEs find the way to their gift of *integrity* only when they take the painful path of self-knowledge and look their life-lies, big and little, in the face, refusing to gloss over them anymore. Since this is insight into their own failure, it is very difficult for them. THREEs who have found their way to truthfulness and authenticity can put their tremendous gifts to work to help other people competently and effectively, motivating them to discover their own potential. Redeemed THREEs manage to organize groups or communities sensibly, expose society's lies for what they are, and spread the truth in a way that is professional, efficient, and up-to-date. Their sin has now become their gift.

### Reference:

Adapted from Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert, *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective* (The Crossroad Publishing Company: 2001), 46, 81-82, 85-86, 88.

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### Summary

When used in conjunction with a regular practice of contemplative prayer, the Enneagram can be powerfully transformative. It can open us to deeper and deeper levels of understanding and insight, love and grace.

(Sunday)

When we are excessively fixated on our supposed gift it becomes a sin. Maintaining this self-image, this false self, becomes more important than anything else.

(Monday)

We need all three centers (head, heart, and belly) to be awake and integrated in order to do our inner work and to truly love ourselves, others, and God in a holistic, non-dual manner. (Tuesday)

Without prayer, love, and nature, ONEs can scarcely imagine cheerful serenity and patience, but remain aggressive idealists and ideologues. (Wednesday)

TWOs are redeemed from themselves the more they experience God as the real lover and realize that their puny love can only consist in sharing in God's infinite love. (Thursday)

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THREEs need endless successes and feedback to reassure themselves against a very honest and realistic insecurity. (Friday)

## Practice

### *Mind + Heart + Body Awareness*

It is hard work to open up our entire being--heart, mind, and body--to Love. From childhood, we're trained to protect ourselves by closing off one or more of these channels. Perhaps this was a necessary coping mechanism. But to develop a mature, holistic faith, we must learn to embrace and listen to each part in the safety of God's presence. We each depend on certain areas more than others. It will take some "exercise" to develop the neglected muscle of body, heart, or mind. Below are some suggested practices to nurture each area of being.

**Heart:** loving-kindness meditation, deep listening, community, journaling

**Mind:** sacred reading, writing, dialectic argument, study

**Body:** ecstatic dance, yoga, meditative walking, chant, tai chi

### **For Further Study:**

Russ Hudson and Richard Rohr, *The Enneagram and Grace: 9 Journeys to Divine Presence* ([CD](#), [MP3 download](#))

Russ Hudson and Richard Rohr, *The Enneagram as a Tool for Your Spiritual Journey* ([CD](#), [DVD](#), [MP3 download](#))

Don Richard Riso and Russ Hudson, *The Wisdom of the Enneagram*

Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert, *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective*

Richard Rohr, *The Enneagram: The Discernment of Spirits* ([CD](#), [DVD](#), [MP3 download](#))

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## **Type FOUR: The Need to Be Authentic**

This week we will continue describing the Enneagram types, focusing on the ways the ego tries to falsely protect what it thinks is itself. As Russ Hudson says, "We all want something real; we're just going about it in a way that can't work." [1]

FOURs once lived serenely as an essential part of a united and beautiful world. But one day the union and beauty were seemingly broken. So for much of their lives FOURs desperately try to create an outer world of balance and symmetry. Hudson describes the essence of FOUR as "the mystery of our true identity. It feels oceanic, deep, unfathomable, mysterious. . . . [FOURs

live for] beauty, intimacy, and depth . . . the markers of drawing closer to our[original] union with God." [2]

The ego believes its job is to recreate that original blessing. But nothing is as good as the original, so FOURs are left feeling bereft. As much as they strive to be aesthetically attractive, to be exceptional, to be creative, "they can't stop feeling their grief for their disconnection from the Beloved." [3] They once knew the eternal wholeness/nothingness of God, and how it included and incorporated the dark. Now, feeling separate from God, they often seem to revel in suffering and darkness.

The root sin of FOURs is *envy*. Their life is primarily shaped by longing: the longing for beauty and the wish that the world and life would fit together into a harmonic whole. Often in their childhood they had the experience of the present being unbearable and meaningless. This may have been due to a painful loss that left them longing for their lost love to return and redeem them. Positive role models may have been missing, so the child turned toward their inner world for identity. They became more at home in the realm of the unconscious, of symbols and dreams, than in the real world. Symbols help FOURs to be with themselves and to express themselves. Metaphors for reality are almost more exciting than reality itself, if you are a FOUR. Thus their love of art, poetry, music, theater, etc.

Unredeemed FOURs may believe that for some reason they are guilty of causing the loss, rejection, or privation, so they consider themselves "bad." This shame may trap them in a cycle of repeatedly producing situations in which they are rejected or abandoned. It doesn't help that *longing* seems more important to them than *having*. As soon as they possess the object of their desires, they are generally disappointed. It is part of their inability to live in the present, which is always full of defects and deficits: as soon as their longing is realized, there is always something to find fault with.

FOURs are converted when they realize that their identity *is not* composed of the worst things that have happened to them. As Hudson says, "What you are is a magnificent mystery, a manifestation of God, existing now. And there's always the call of the Beloved, trying to call us home, right now to this meeting of lovers. In this meeting of lovers, we find out who we are. . . . When we are present it doesn't mean that the longing goes away, but it is purified. Then we receive the FOUR's virtue, which is *equanimity* . . . a spaciousness of the heart that lets me feel whatever needs to be felt

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without rejecting that feeling or adhering to it. So I am not pushing any feelings away and neither am I stuck in them in perpetual victimhood. All weather of the heart is welcome to a healthy FOUR. In that state there's room and expansion for longing to become a fire, a passion that can take me all the way to the marriage that we were all promised, of the Bride and the Bridegroom." [4] Thus FOURS often tend to be pan-erotic, androgynous, and seldom have any trouble understanding LGBTQ people. They are much more natural at non-dual thinking.

## References:

[1] Russ Hudson, *The Enneagram as a Tool for Your Spiritual Journey* (CAC: 2009), disc 4 (CD, DVD, MP3 download).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

Adapted from Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert, *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective* (The Crossroad Publishing Company: 2001), 46, 98-100.

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## Type FIVE: The Need to Know

The primal experience of the FIVE was of the absolute power and genius of God in controlling all the parts in one working universe. The FIVE's real power is in the now. Once separated from that, they experience a sort of emptiness, which the ego tries to fill with knowledge. Today I'd like you to hear from Russ Hudson, with whom I have taught several times. Hudson is "a person with a FIVE personality" as he phrases it, emphasizing "We are more than our personalities. We are a mystery that has taken a particular form and flavor that is our type." Hudson describes the FIVE:

The essential core of the FIVE is the soul's capacity to be illuminated and to illuminate, to make things clear. When you're clear, the world becomes more transparent. You notice the littlest things. You're more awake to everything. That illumination is exactly the same as what we call recognition. Whenever you have an "Ah ha" it's not thinking, exactly; it's a recognition of truth. It fills your whole body. We all experience that; if you're a FIVE, you *live* for that. It's your specialty. The other side is what I call black light, or God's bug-zapper. If you're present, there's not only the illumination of the truth, but there's the clearing away of the nonsense, the delusions, and our false beliefs and ideas.

What happens in FIVES with the loss of their primal connection [with God] is the loss of the ability to discern reality from illusion, and it's terrifying. What's safe and what's dangerous? The question for all the head types [FIVE, SIX, SEVEN] is "What can I trust?" The FIVE turns to a reliance on the mind, but the mind on this level is disconnected from the Knowing, so it can't produce that illumination. No matter how much I learn, memorize, and cogitate, I don't feel like I know.

The passion [or root sin] here is *avarice*. FIVES are avaricious for information and also for personal privacy and private space. Psychologists would define the old-fashioned word "avarice" as the schizoid state, where we just give up, retreat, and disconnect from our feelings and kinesthetic awareness. But the FIVE is not dissociative. The FIVE is *not* not paying attention. I'm paying a lot of attention, but only with my mind. Everything else I switched off. The core of avarice is the contracted heart, a hoarding of the self.

Like all the types, what FIVES need to do is what scares us the most. We've got to come out and make contact. What's the payoff? When you touch the living moment, the living moment reveals its nature, and this knowingness that I love is restored to its proper place.

As a FIVE takes that risk, comes out of hiding and starts to make contact, [that contact] begins to restore the real knowing, giving birth to the virtue of the FIVE, which I call *non-attachment*. (It's actually *not* "detachment," which means cutting off, the schizoid state we experience in the middle of our compulsion.) Non-attachment happens when you are in touch with the eternity of consciousness, of the divine Presence, when it's here illuminating things for you and you become profoundly aware of how fleeting everything is.

That non-attachment actually becomes a liberation of the heart. You're not clinging to anything nor avoiding anything; you're holding the world just as it is and in love with it. That's non-attachment. It's a clean-heartedness. [1]

Thus healthy FIVES are often great counselors, advisors, and even able to be calmly critical of themselves. They can often be objective when the rest of us can't

## References:

[1] Russ Hudson, *The Enneagram as a Tool for Your Spiritual Journey* (CAC: 2009), disc 5 (CD, DVD, MP3 download).

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Adapted from Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert, *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective* (The Crossroad Publishing Company: 2001), 115.

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## **Type SIX: The Need for Security**

SIXes have chosen an entirely defensive posture against their primal knowing, which was true and perfect Presence. Russ Hudson calls it "the quality of awakens in which you can feel very directly this Presence all around you and within you that gives you an unshakable courage to take your place and walk your walk in the world." [1] When SIXes lose the sense of resting in the full presence of God, instead of trustfully being held by Being they insist on forcing the issue. "I will assure it, I will prove it, and I will maintain it," they say. They once held an image of an utterly reconciled and peaceful world, a safe and secure universe; yet instead of trusting it from Another, they try to manufacture it themselves by laws, authority, and structures of certitude (conservative religion, patriotic militarism, highly conceptual theories). Thus they have an ambivalent love/hate relationship with all authority.

Hudson explains that when SIXes lose presence, their passion or root sin of fear or anxiety begins to grow and their awakens shifts to vigilance, then to watchfulness, hyper-vigilance, suspicions, and finally paranoia. "Their anxiety is awakens without presence, [just as] fear is excitement without breathing," Hudson says. He recommends breathing with the fear and anxiety, being with it as a signal of your own disconnection from the Presence. [2]

As in all the head types, a mental fixation feeds the passion and vice versa. A SIX may mentally decide that a certain look means their spouse wants a divorce. Hudson says, "Thinking that way keeps the anxiety going. To your nervous system, it's as if those things are actually happening. When you're a SIX, your life could be pretty good, but you're telling yourself all the ways it could fall apart, so it feels like it's falling apart. . . . SIXes get the sense that keeping myself keyed up like that will keep me on top of things. Fear becomes the false way I try to be with my wakefulness. I'm like a guard, trying to stay on duty, making sure my world doesn't fall apart." [3] Hudson calls this constant feeling of angst and anxiety "Pre-Traumatic Stress Syndrome." [4]

The pitfall of phobic SIXes is cowardice; the pitfall of counterphobic SIXes is taking foolish risks. All SIXes both overestimate and mistrust authorities. They feel weak, which can lead them to submit in a sort of blind obedience (Germany is a SIX country). But it also leads them to join other underdogs to find strength in common. The strong or orthodox group (like the Infallible Catholic Church or Biblical Inerrancy Churches) help them deny and overcome their personal insecurity. Counterphobic SIXes tend to be panicky. Before their fear-filled fantasies can gain power over them, they plunge into risky undertakings or rebel with the courage of despair.

The root sin of SIXes also has a positive side. SIXes are very loyal, cooperative, reliable team players, and in their own unique way usually quite humble. They are the work force of the world, and probably the most common number by far. Their friendships are marked by warmhearted and deep feelings. They do their utmost for the people they love.

As the SIX starts to breathe through the fear and anxiety, Hudson says, "the virtue of courage arises. It's the courage to show up, to live in the truth, to stop hiding in our ego delusions and live in the living daylight of this moment, right where I am as who I really am and not make excuses." The SIX must hold even their excuse making (i.e., their chickening out) "in compassion and see it and understand it, in the sense of letting it be illuminated. . . . Then like the little hobbit, Frodo, in *The Lord of the Rings*, they will take their stand and ask 'What must I do?' knowing with a true faith that nothing bad can happen ultimately because the victory is already won." [5] Redeemed SIXes have found their true inner authority which allows them to trust in the benevolent universe and perfect Presence they once knew. Then their over-reliance on outer authority significantly lessens, but it is always a struggle for them. Love and be patient with your dear SIX friends. It is not easy to suffer such constant self-doubt.

### **References:**

- [1] Russ Hudson, *The Enneagram as a Tool for Your Spiritual Journey* (CAC: 2009), disc 5 (CD, DVD, MP3 download).
- [2] Ibid.
- [3] Ibid.
- [4] Russ Hudson, *The Enneagram and Grace: 9 Journeys to Divine Presence* (CAC: 2012), disc 7 (CD, MP3 download).
- [5] Hudson, *The Enneagram as a Tool for Your Spiritual Journey*, disc 5.

Adapted from Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert, *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective* (The Crossroad Publishing Company: 2001), 46-47, 131, 137.

## Enneagram

Richard Rohr

from: Center for Action and Contemplation <no-reply@cac.org>  
date: Tue, May 3, 2016 at 1:14 AM  
subject: Richard Rohr's Meditation: Type SIX: The Need for Security

### **Type SEVEN: The Need to Be Happy**

SEVENs once knew God/Reality as total foundation and utterly satisfying. Russ Hudson explains that "SEVENs originally experienced their soul as a place of absolute freedom with no walls, no limits, and abundant resources, all of which gave them great joy. . . . As they lost connection with Presence, they lost all this and it was unbearably painful." [1] The ego tries to fix things by creating a personality that avoids pain and insists on the positive.

SEVENs are people who radiate joy and optimism. They are alive to the precious ingredients in every moment; they can feel childlike astonishment and experience life as a gift. They are full of idealism and plans for the future, and they can pass on their enthusiasm to others. They don't seem "cerebral" at first glance. They are relaxed, full of good humor, imaginative, sunny, and playful--until one day they notice that all this also serves to protect them from anxiety and pain.

In the course of their development, SEVENs may have had traumatic experiences which they were not equipped to process. Their response was twofold: First they repressed or whitewashed their negative or painful experiences. Second, they went into their heads and began to plan their lives so that every day will promise as much fun and as little pain as possible. SEVENs have so internalized their optimism that they have problems seeing the dark and difficult. It's hard for them to see the shadow side of anything, including themselves. Because they want everything to be beautiful and good, other aspects of reality fade out of view.

SEVENs love freedom. They want to leave all their options open and unconsciously avoid committing themselves too deeply, because that would limit their options! Besides, if you totally devote yourself to someone or something, your own limits and the limits of others might become visible--and that would be too painful.

The passion or root sin of the SEVEN is gluttony. Their motto is "More is always better." Mostly they are gluttonous for fun, joy, and options. They love thinking about plans, trips, adventures, and projects. SEVENs are very idealistic. They know the fulfillment of their soul has something to do with worthwhile service to the

world. But they distract themselves by trying not to miss out on any possibilities, and disconnected from God's guidance, they have a hard time landing anywhere.[2]

Here is Russ Hudson's take on a SEVEN's journey:

All these ego patterns are very addictive. A SEVEN is addicted to thinking about everything I'm going to do. The more I do that, the more I fall into the passion of the SEVEN, which is gluttony. The further away from Presence I am, the further away from the grace of God, the more I start to feel no abundance, no freedom, no fulfillment, no satisfaction. So my ego is desperately trying to find it, trying to get the experiences that I think will fill me up and make me happy again. But no matter how much I try, it doesn't work--because it's not in the content of experience that I'll find happiness, but in the quality of my attention and presence in any experience I have.

A SEVEN needs to recognize, as we all do, that everything we are looking for is right here, right now, if we are just still and open. Usually we're going to feel anxious and scared. . . . In fact, any time I'm breaking out of my old ego identity, I'm going to be scared. (I guarantee you all nine types will experience fear.) As I open more into the divine Presence, I'm moving into the unknown and I'm relinquishing the strategy that I've held since I was a little kid to be secure and to stay safe. But as I stay with Presence, the virtue of the SEVEN starts to grow in me. The virtue here is a kind of joyful sobriety and gratitude. In other words, I need nothing but this moment. I feel my heart filled, and I know the freedom is here. And suddenly I bring this clear, delicious satisfaction that is unshakable. Every moment is a moment for gratitude, whatever's happening.[3]

#### **References:**

[1] Russ Hudson, *The Enneagram as a Tool for Your Spiritual Journey* (CAC: 2009), disc 5 (CD, DVD, MP3 download).

[2] Drawn from *Ibid.*

[3] Adapted from *Ibid.*

Adapted from Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert, *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective* (The Crossroad Publishing Company: 2001), 47, 146-148, 150.

from: Center for Action and Contemplation <no-reply@cac.org>  
date: Wed, May 4, 2016 at 1:11 AM  
subject: Richard Rohr's Meditation: Type SEVEN: The Need to Be Happy

## Enneagram

Richard Rohr

### **Type EIGHT: The Need to Be Strong**

With EIGHTs we return to the domain of the gut, which embraces EIGHTs, NINEs, and ONEs. The EIGHT's primal knowing was that God/Reality was warmth, food, protection, empathy, relationship, and total understanding of how weak, needy, and hungry we all are. Feeling separate from such a nurturing God leaves the EIGHT vulnerable and needy. To seemingly "fix" this dilemma, the EIGHT's ego decides to hate, reject, deny, and project that neediness everywhere else--so they don't have to cry over it inside themselves. "I will never cry," they say, and "I will protect the little ones from crying." They decide to do God's work themselves. "I will partner everybody and everything and take away this horrible aloneness, this unnecessary sadness, this unjust world. Because I know it to be softer and kinder than it appears." And they do!

EIGHTs do a good job of hiding their vulnerability. They impress us as strong and mighty; they are capable of imparting a feeling of strength to others as well. They have a strong sense of justice and truth. They instinctively know when dishonesty or injustice is at work. EIGHTs address such situations openly and directly. They can be a rock of reliability for others and develop a tremendous sense of responsibility. When they commit themselves to a cause, they can bring enormous energies to bear on it. Mother Teresa was an eight, but so redeemed that she appeared to the world to be a TWO, exactly as the Enneagram predicts.

Early on, EIGHTs got the impression that the world punishes soft tendencies. They may have experienced being repressed or pushed around as children. Perhaps they could trust no one but themselves. Some EIGHTs also report that their parents rewarded strength. EIGHTs have developed the feeling that the strong rule the world and the weak have drawn the short straw. For this reason they have decided not to be good, not to conform, but to develop strength, to resist, to break the rules, and to order others around rather than to let themselves be ordered. EIGHTs avoid appearing helpless, weak, or subordinate.

Fortunately, EIGHTs like to take the side of the weak. Their passion for justice and truth often leads them to side with the oppressed and defenseless. This is because they unconsciously know that within their own innermost self--behind a façade of hardness, invulnerability, curses, or even brutality--there's a vulnerable little boy or a little girl (which they reveal to very few people). When you're really poor, helpless,

and weak, the EIGHT's protective instinct is aroused, and they will do anything to assist you. But as soon as you express in any way that you have your own power, then the EIGHT will prove that they have more power.

The passion or root sin of the EIGHT is called lust. Russ Hudson interprets this as an addiction to intensity that arises from the loss of their original connection with God. Losing the divine Presence that felt like their life, strength, energy, and protection makes EIGHTs feel vulnerable, deflated, and dead. The ego tries to force life into feeling real and alive again. But first EIGHTs must take off the armor of toughness they've worn to protect their vulnerability, because real aliveness means letting our heart be affected again.[1]

Hudson says, "Virtue is what's cultivated in a person who has continually oriented his or her heart toward the Truth. The more an EIGHT opens to that grace, being willing to be affected, the more the virtue starts to manifest. . . . The virtue of the EIGHT is [traditionally called] innocence. We call it **mercy**. To be powerful, strong, and merciful, like a true king, is the journey an EIGHT is here to take. . . . It will always be about remembering where the real strength comes from, restoring the heart, the tenderness . . . and letting this mercy be cultivated in you." [2] There is also a good passion, a robust lust for life, that often shows itself in healthy EIGHTs. Who would not love that? Even if it wears you out.

#### **References:**

[1] Russ Hudson, *The Enneagram as a Tool for Your Spiritual Journey* (CAC: 2009), disc 3 (CD, DVD, MP3 download).

[2] *Ibid.*

Adapted from Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert, *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective* (The Crossroad Publishing Company: 2001), 47, 162-164, 166, 167.

from: Center for Action and Contemplation <no-reply@cac.org>  
date: Thu, May 5, 2016 at 1:14 AM  
subject: Richard Rohr's Meditation: Type EIGHT: The Need to Be Strong

### **Type NINE: The Need for Peace**

NINEs once knew that reality was all about love, all connected, operative, and effective. They knew a kind of optimism and motivation that all could be worked out and fixed because God is Love. Love changes everything; love resolves everything. Russ Hudson emphasizes that the core of the NINE is about being itself. The primal knowing of the NINE is that "I am. I am a manifestation of God. . . . I feel that divine Presence and how that divine Presence is producing this

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life. It's all some unfathomable huge unity right now. . . . I feel so harmoniously related to everything that exists. We're all manifesting out of this Oneness, this divine Presence. . . . This is what NINEs are here to teach and remind the rest of us." [1]

Hudson explains that the NINE's passion or root sin--sloth--emerges from the loss of this oneness. The NINE feels, "I don't exist, I don't matter, I'm nothing, I'm not real. I'm peripheral. I'm disconnected from everything. I'm a little insignificant nothing. (All egos feel that on some level.)" [2] Sloth in NINEs is really the lack of focused energy. NINEs don't put out any energy that lets you get a handle on them. It's the attitude of checking out, because at the center of the gut triad, NINEs feel life is just too much. NINEs seldom take initiative in relationships or in projects. They need a fire lit under them. They need to connect with an institution or structure or have someone like a spouse or a child depending on them. Otherwise they'll just float and get pulled in all different directions because they don't know what their priorities really are.

NINEs are naturally humble. They allow themselves to be overlooked. They like to stay in the background and cultivate the self-image of not being anything special. They consider themselves simple and uncomplicated and present themselves accordingly.

NINEs are peacemakers. They avoid conflicts. Their gift of accepting others without prejudice makes people feel understood and accepted. NINEs can be unbiased arbitrators because they can see and appreciate the positive aspects of both sides. Their sense of fairness may make them committed fighters for peace and justice. They express harsh truths so calmly and matter-of-factly that it's easy for others to hear these truths. In the presence of a NINE many people find it easy to come to rest themselves. NINEs somehow harmonize the energy in a room.

The life task of NINEs consists in discovering and developing their feelings of self-worth and their own inner focus and drive. They find their way to real love when they have found their way back to their own center. Then the virtue of the NINE emerges which is, surprisingly, decisive action. At first NINEs waiver and hesitate, putting off everything. But when they reach a decision, it happens in a moment of absolute clarity. They know in a flash what's involved, and they will do it, often quite well--and look anything but lazy or slothful.

## References:

[1] Russ Hudson, *The Enneagram as a Tool for Your Spiritual Journey* (CAC: 2009), disc 3 (CD, DVD, MP3 download).

[2] *Ibid.*

Adapted from Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert, *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective* (The Crossroad Publishing Company: 2001), 47, 178, 181-182, 185, 187; and Richard Rohr, *The Enneagram: The Discernment of Spirits* (CAC: 2004), disc 2 (CD, DVD, MP3 download).

from: Center for Action and Contemplation <no-reply@cac.org>  
date: Fri, May 6, 2016 at 1:16 AM  
subject: Richard Rohr's Meditation: Type NINE: The Need for Peace

## Summary

The essence of the FOUR is "the mystery of our true identity. It feels oceanic, deep, unfathomable, mysterious. . . . [FOURs live for] beauty, intimacy, and depth . . . the markers of drawing closer to our [original] union with God." --Russ Hudson (Sunday)

"The essential core of the FIVE is the soul's capacity to be illuminated and to illuminate, to make things clear." -Russ Hudson (Monday)

The original blessing of the SIX is "the quality of awakens in which you can feel very directly this Presence all around you and within you that gives you an unshakeable courage to take your place and walk your walk in the world." --Russ Hudson (Tuesday)

SEVENs are people who radiate joy and optimism. Their motto is "More is always better." Mostly they are gluttonous for fun and options. (Wednesday)

Losing the divine Presence that felt like their life, strength, energy, and protection makes EIGHTs feel vulnerable, deflated, and dead. The ego tries to force life into feeling real and alive again. (Thursday)

NINEs once knew that reality was all about love, all connected, operative, and effective. They knew a kind of optimism and motivation that all could be worked out and fixed because God is Love. Love changes everything; love resolves everything. (Friday)

## Practice

### Opening to Love

Each of the nine Enneagram types has a different trap, a different "sin" that keeps us from living out of our True Self, which is Love. Brother Joseph Schmidt shared with us this paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 (original author unknown). I invite you to read these statements and see yourself in them. Only when we face and

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embrace our false self with humility can we begin moving toward freedom and wholeness, toward being Love.

If I live my life to perfection, doing what is right and good on behalf of others, but act with compulsion and without love, then I am nothing at all.

If I take care of the needs of everybody in the world, especially the poor, because of my own need to help, but am without love even for myself, then I am nothing at all.

If I am efficient and successful in all that I do for the sake of justice, but act out of drivenness and without love, then I am nothing at all.

If I am cultured and refined, and in touch with the pain of existence, but am absent from the pain of persons in the present moment who need my empathy; and if I act without love and compassion, then I am nothing at all.

If I have the gifts of wisdom, insight, and understanding, but am not engaged with those around me in the present moment and am without a spirit of compassion and love, then I am nothing at all.

If I am faithful, loyal, and obedient, and never deviate from the law, but am judgmental and blaming, and am without love, then I am nothing at all.

If I live in a pain-free world of dreams and plans, enjoying optimism and pleasurable options, but am not addressing present problems and am avoiding people in actual distress and am without love, then I am nothing at all.

If I am strong and powerful, but lose my best self in a spirit of resentment, retaliation, and vindictiveness, and know nothing of the vulnerability of love, then I am nothing at all.

If I am settled and accommodating, holding onto a sense of distance and calm, but am not journeying inward to know and appreciate my weaknesses and gifts, and am neglecting my own legitimate calling to love myself, then I am nothing at all.

Love is always patient and kind;  
it is never jealous;  
love is never boastful or conceited;  
it is never rude or selfish;  
it does not take offense, and is not resentful.

Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins but delights in truth;  
it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes.

Love never fails, never ceases.

--1 Corinthians 13:4-8

### For Further Study:

Russ Hudson and Richard Rohr, *The Enneagram and Grace: 9 Journeys to Divine Presence* (CD, MP3 download)

Russ Hudson and Richard Rohr, *The Enneagram as a Tool for Your Spiritual Journey* (CD, DVD, MP3 download)

Don Richard Riso and Russ Hudson, *The Wisdom of the Enneagram*  
Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert, *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective*

Richard Rohr, *The Enneagram: The Discernment of Spirits* (CD, DVD, MP3 download)

from: Center for Action and Contemplation <no-reply@cac.org>

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