

Diving Deep with the Enneagram

“Before we can make friends with anyone else, we must first make friends with ourselves.”
- Eleanor Roosevelt

The Enneagram Personality Theory

The Enneagram is a framework that categorizes people into nine different fundamental personality types.

It is a framework that merges psychology and Spiritual wisdom and draws on wisdom from mysticism and different religions and spiritual ideologies.

The Enneagram is a spirituality- based personality framework, believing that we are all divine beings on a journey of self-evolution towards our highest self. Hence, why I love it :)

“We believe that awareness of personality types is needed in many areas - education, the sciences, business, the humanities, and therapy - and above all, in spirituality and transformational work. While our restless yearnings may be universal, how they are expressed is much more particular and is, in fact, a function of the “filter” with which we approach all of life. The main filter that we use to understand ourselves and the world around us, to express ourselves, to defend ourselves, to deal with our past and anticipate our future, to learn with, to rejoice with, and to fall in love with, is our personality type.”
- Don Richard Riso and Russ Hudson from *The Wisdom of the Enneagram*

The Enneagram can be used for self-observation, self-knowledge and self-inquiry, giving us more insight into our behaviours and tendencies, allowing us to make changes and evolve as a more loving version of ourselves.

An important thing to remember with the enneagram is that we have all 9 types within us, the tests are just assessing which type we most strongly associate with.

I love personality theories and The Enneagram in particular because I feel it helps me:

1. Understand myself and feel less confused, frustrated or lost
2. Feel that others understand me and are on a similar journey (the people that wrote the enneagram and other people that are my primary type)
3. Feel less judgmental and more compassionate towards myself
4. Use strategies for self-improvement based on my particular type

“As much as the Enneagram reveals the spiritual heights we are capable of attaining, it also sheds light clearly and non-judgementally on the aspects of our lives that are dark and unfree. If we are going to live lives as spiritual beings in the material world, then these are the areas we most need to explore.”
- Don Richard Riso and Russ Hudson from *The Wisdom of the Enneagram*

For many years, I didn't understand why I struggled with feeling down and viewing the world in a more bleak, pessimistic way. I also felt very different from other people. I struggled with balancing social life with needed alone time. I struggled with low self-esteem.

When I did the Enneagram personality test, scored the highest for Type 4 - The Individualist, and read the description, SO MANY THINGS made more sense and I so strongly resonated with what they were saying.

Better yet, they had strategies and practices to help improve the way the type 4 thinks and acts to work on bettering oneself and one's life.

Spirituality and The Enneagram

The Enneagram helps us connect more to our 'True Essence'.

What is 'true essence'?

True essence is what we fundamentally are within and can be used interchangeably with the term 'true self' or 'highest self'.

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

Learning Your Type

I recommend that before you read descriptions of the nine different types below, you do a test so that your tests are as unbiased as possible.

To do a free Enneagram test, go here: <https://www.eclecticenergies.com/enneagram/test>
It's a little bit of a longer test but trust me, totally worth it!

Once you know your primary type, read the descriptions below...

You can also read descriptions of the nine types here: <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-descriptions/>

If you're getting different results with different tests, read through the descriptions of the types and whichever one's challenges you most resonate with, is most likely your primary type.

The Nine Enneagram Types

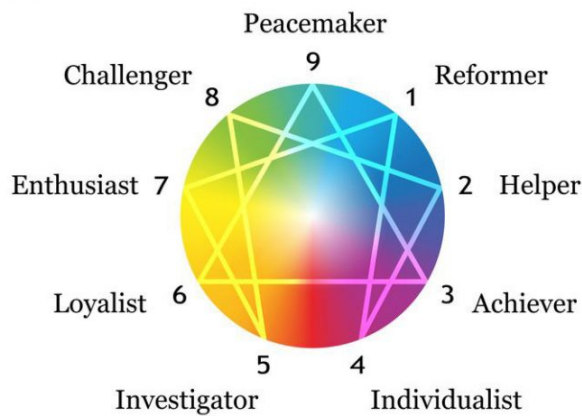


Image from: <https://www.learning-mind.com/enneagram-types/>

Enneagram Type Descriptions

Type	Description	PROS	CHALLENGES
1 - Reformer	“Ones are conscientious and ethical, with a strong sense of right and wrong. They are teachers, crusaders, and advocates for change: always striving to improve things, but afraid of making a mistake. Well-organized, orderly, and fastidious, they try to maintain high standards, but can slip into being critical and perfectionistic. They typically have problems with resentment and impatience. <i>At their Best:</i> wise, discerning, realistic, and noble. Can be morally heroic.”	Organized, principled, purposeful, teachers, noble	Can be perfectionistic, rigid, critical
2 - Helper	“Twos are empathetic, sincere, and warm-hearted. They are friendly, generous, and self-sacrificing, but can also be sentimental, flattering, and people-pleasing. They are well-meaning and driven to be close to others, but can slip into doing things for others in order to be needed. They typically have problems with possessiveness and with acknowledging their own needs. <i>At their Best:</i> unselfish and altruistic, they have unconditional love for others.”	Generous, helpful, loving, compassionate, unselfish, altruistic, unconditional love	Can be people-pleasing, possessive, focus too much on others, expecting of others
3 - Achiever	“Threes are self-assured, attractive, and charming. Ambitious, competent, and energetic, they can also be status-conscious and highly driven for advancement. They are diplomatic and poised, but can also be overly concerned with their image and what others think of them. They typically have problems with workaholicism and competitiveness. <i>At their Best:</i> self-accepting, authentic, everything they seem to be—role models who inspire others.”	Driven, excellent, adaptable, leaders, authentic, self-accepting	Can be competitive, focused on self-image/success, exhausts self, wears a mask for acceptance

4 - Individualist	<p>“Fours are self-aware, sensitive, and reserved. They are emotionally honest, creative, and personal, but can also be moody and self-conscious. Withholding themselves from others due to feeling vulnerable and defective, they can also feel disdainful and exempt from ordinary ways of living. They typically have problems with melancholy, self-indulgence, and self-pity. <i>At their Best:</i> inspired and highly creative, they are able to renew themselves and transform their experiences.”</p>	<p>Expressive, creative, self-aware, emotionally in tune, able to transform experience and use it creatively</p>	<p>Can be reactive, self-absorbed, self-conscious, overly emotional, melancholy</p>
5 - Investigator	<p>“Fives are alert, insightful, and curious. They are able to concentrate and focus on developing complex ideas and skills. Independent, innovative, and inventive, they can also become preoccupied with their thoughts and imaginary constructs. They become detached, yet high-strung and intense. They typically have problems with eccentricity, nihilism, and isolation. <i>At their Best:</i> visionary pioneers, often ahead of their time, and able to see the world in an entirely new way.”</p>	<p>Perceptive, innovative, inventive, curious, visionary pioneers</p>	<p>Can be isolated, pessimistic, detached, emotionally shut down</p>
6 - Loyalist	<p>“The committed, security-oriented type. Sixes are reliable, hard-working, responsible, and trustworthy. Excellent “troubleshooters,” they foresee problems and foster cooperation, but can also become defensive, evasive, and anxious—running on stress while complaining about it. They can be cautious and indecisive, but also reactive, defiant and rebellious. They typically have problems with self-doubt and suspicion. <i>At their Best:</i> internally stable and self-reliant, courageously championing themselves and others.”</p>	<p>Engaging, responsible, committed, reliable, hard working</p>	<p>Can be anxious, suspicious, fearful, defensive, evasive, self-doubting</p>
7 - Enthusiast	<p>“Sevens are extroverted, optimistic, versatile, and spontaneous. Playful, high-spirited, and practical, they can also misapply their many talents, becoming over-extended, scattered, and undisciplined. They constantly seek new and exciting experiences, but can become distracted and exhausted by staying on the go. They typically have problems with impatience and impulsiveness. <i>At their Best:</i> they focus their talents on worthwhile goals, becoming appreciative, joyous, and satisfied.”</p>	<p>Spontaneous, adventurous, versatile, playful, high-spirited</p>	<p>Can be scattered, distracted, impatient, exhausted</p>
8 - Challenger	<p>“Eights are self-confident, strong, and assertive. Protective, resourceful, straight-talking, and decisive, but can also be ego-centric and domineering. Eights feel they must control their environment, especially people, sometimes becoming confrontational and intimidating. Eights typically have problems with their tempers and with allowing themselves to be vulnerable. <i>At their Best:</i> self-mastering, they use their strength to improve others' lives, becoming heroic, magnanimous, and inspiring.”</p>	<p>Self-confident, decisive, willful, strong</p>	<p>Can be aggressive, confrontational, intimidating, use aggression to control</p>
9 - Peacemaker	<p>“Nines are accepting, trusting, and stable. They are usually creative, optimistic, and supportive, but can also be too willing to go along with others to keep the peace. They want everything to go smoothly and be without conflict, but they can also tend to be complacent, simplifying problems and minimizing anything upsetting. They typically have problems with inertia and stubbornness. <i>At their Best:</i> indomitable and all-embracing, they are able to bring people together and heal conflicts.”</p>	<p>Receptive, reassuring, harmonic, mediators, accepting, trusting</p>	<p>Can be complacent, resigned, slow to act, can be passive and stubborn</p>

Quoted descriptions from: <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-descriptions/>

“Our basic type reveals the psychological mechanisms by which we forget our true nature - Our Divine Essence - the way in which we abandon ourselves. ”

- Don Richard Riso and Russ Hudson from The Wisdom of the Enneagram

Keep in Mind...

- We have all types within us so try not to **ONLY** identify with your primary type.
- No type is better than the other - they all have positive and more challenging aspects to them.

>>> While working through RMA, it can be helpful to keep your primary Enneagram type in mind. Remember the positive aspects and remember the challenges for your type - this can help you complete the program reading and exercises from a place of greater understanding, awareness and insight and can help with effectiveness of the reflection exercises and practices 😊

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

If you enjoyed learning about the Enneagram, I recommend:

- The Complete Enneagram by Beatrice Chestnut
- The Wisdom of the Enneagram: The Complete Guide to Psychological and Spiritual Growth for the Nine Types by Don Richard Riso and Russ Hudson

