

Guidelines for Introducing the Enneagram in the Workplace

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Abstract

The notion of “spirituality in the workplace” continues to gain increasing attention in practitioner as well as academic circles. Social researcher Paul Ray (1996) has observed that in the U.S. alone, over 44 million people now subscribe to new values and ways of relating when it comes to work, success, and spirituality. This paper makes a case for using the Enneagram to enhance spirituality in the workplace. The authors, being proponents of action learning, contend that people can learn and change through action. Accordingly, they go on to suggest certain guidelines for practitioners to enable them to use the Enneagram in developing (or “liberating”) their employees.

The Enneagram (pronounced any-a-gram) is a circle enclosing nine equidistant points connected by nine intersecting lines (see Figure 1). Ennea is Greek for nine and gram means drawing. The Enneagram pictorially conveys a system of type classification. It has its roots in ancient spiritual practices of the East. The actual origins of the Enneagram are shrouded in mystery. References in various spiritual texts however indicate that Enneagram has been in use for over two thousand five hundred years. Untold generations of spiritual seekers in secret brotherhoods are believed to have developed this classification system to hasten the spiritual liberation of their wards. The technique was considered so powerful that its knowledge was zealously guarded lest it fall into wrong hands.

Insert Figure 1 About Here

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The credit for introducing the Enneagram to the West in the first half of the twentieth century goes to George Gurdjieff, the Armenian philosopher and spiritual teacher. Since then various other teaching “traditions” begun by Jesuit priests, and others like Oscar Ichazo (1982) have gained wide currency. More recently, scholarly works by Claudio Naranjo (1990) and Riso and Hudson (1996) have made some useful contributions to the Enneagram theory. Despite a number of publications on the Enneagram, confusion exists about whether the Enneagram is primarily a psychological system or a spiritual one. To us, this psychological versus spiritual debate seems misdirected. As Riso (1990) points out:

Knowing ourselves so that we can transcend ourselves and attain balance and integration is what psychology is about -- while transcending ourselves to make room for the Divine is what spirituality is about. Both go together and are not at odds with each other. (p.14)

Over the last twenty years, scores of books and hundreds of executive development seminars have found their way to the marketplace. Most conceptualize the Enneagram as a tool of understanding human personality and go on to relate these so-called personality characteristics to dos and don'ts in the work environment. While every book alludes to the spiritual origins of the Enneagram, there is hardly any attempt made to suggest how this powerful tool can be utilized to facilitate a person's spiritual quest in the workplace. While a full exposition of this complex topic is clearly beyond the scope of any one paper, we make a start in this direction by offering suggestions and exploratory guidelines as to how organizations can effectively use the Enneagram as a tool to facilitate the spiritual needs of their members.

“Interconnectedness” as an Overarching Concept

The notion of spirituality is somewhat difficult to define. A simple yet comprehensive definition was recently offered by Eckersley (2000), “spirituality is a deeply intuitive sense of relatedness or interconnectedness to the world and the universe in which we live.” This definition should be acceptable to both the secular as well as the religious types.

An empirical study on spirituality in the workplace conducted by Mitroff and Denton (1999) similarly concluded that the word “interconnectedness” best captures the meaning of spirituality and the vital role it plays in people’s lives. Findings of this landmark study indicate that employees who saw their own organizations as being spiritual also viewed them as being better than their less spiritual counterparts on almost every dimension. Interestingly enough, employees perceived spiritually inclined firms as being also “more profitable.” Respondents working for such companies reported that they were able to bring more of their “complete selves” to work. They felt they could deploy more of their creativity, emotions and intelligence in the workplace. In other words, according to Mitroff and Denton (1999), organizations viewed as more spiritual get more from their employees and *vice versa*. Another significant finding of this study was that in the workplace, the employees valued the “ability to realize their full potential as a *person*” (emphasis added) above everything else. It was this factor that provided the most meaning and purpose in a job situation. The authors go on to observe that modern civilization might have gone too far in separating spirituality from other elements of life. It is time to recognize the interconnectedness between spirituality and how people feel about their workplace, for there are obvious benefits in doing so.

We contend that Enneagram is precisely the kind of tool that organizations need in the current environment. Riso and Hudson (1996) have characterized the Enneagram as the proverbial philosopher’s stone that turns lead into gold. To quote Eli Jaxon-Bear (2000), “The Enneagram in service of self-inquiry is the wisdom mirror for consciousness to see itself and its false identification.”

Essence, Personality, and Fixation

The Enneagram is often seen as a vital link between the psyche and the spirit. Recognition of the interconnectedness between psychological aspects and spirituality is inherent in the Enneagram. According to the theory of Enneagram, there is a distinction between our “Personality” and our “Essence.” Personality is that which appears as our type traits that determine our automatic or unconscious behaviors. It is our conditioned being with which we readily identify. In many ways it is as false as wearing a “persona.” Essence is that aspect of our being that transcends personality, carries a universal quality, and serves as our contact with the spiritual. It is our “true” face. Naranjo (1990) cautions

us that rather than speaking of essence as a thing, we should think of it as a process, an ego-less, unobscured and free manner of functioning of the integrated human wholeness. In moving toward essence, we are striving to become a living manifestation of the divinity that lies dormant within each of us.

Eli Jaxon-Bear most eloquently presented the distinction between essence, fixation, and personality in his keynote speech on the Enneagram Conference at Stanford University in August 1994. Jaxon-Bear would like us to visualize three concentric circles (see Figure 2). The outermost ring or layer represents one's *personality*. This comprises of traits, habits, and behavior patterns. The layer below personality, that which makes the manifestation of personality possible, is known as *character fixation*. Spiritually speaking, what the Enneagram so accurately describes is not so much of one's personality, but one's character fixation. Character fixation is deeper than personality. It arises out of ego and it makes you identify with someone other than who you really are.

Insert Figure 2 About Here

One's *soul* or *essence* is what is deflected in character fixation. It constitutes the innermost ring in Jaxon-Bear's model. True character resides at the level of the soul. One can glimpse the essence only when one gives up the compulsion of living out one's character fixation. The qualities of essence are described in the Sufi system of subtle *latifas*. For instance, One exemplifies perfection, Two personifies love, and Three epitomizes creation in their purest form. But even the *latifas* do not describe the *truth* of the soul, which is completely empty of all forms. The inward journey then is to traverse from personality to the realm of truth. It is this travel that characterizes true spirituality. To quote Jaxon-Bear again, "As the momentum of character fixation is confronted by an unwillingness to act out the old patterns of veiling, fixation burns and true essence shines forth." In order to use the Enneagram as a spiritual map, we first need to understand how character fixation comes into being. In the postscript to *Personality Types*, Riso and Hudson (1996) write:

To face the world and the terrifying insecurity of human existence naked and defenseless seems like an overwhelming situation for anyone to be in. Each person's ego attempts to buffer itself from the full realization of the insecurity of its existence in different ways. Each type adopts different strategies for inflating the ego as a defense against being insecure and alone. (p.455)

In other words, when there is perceived fear, pain, or anxiety, the individual seeks to cope with this emergency through a corresponding emergency response that becomes a fixation, or, to use Freud's language, a repetition compulsion (Naranjo 1990). It is this fixation that eventually leads to a loss of contact with one's essence. By providing an understanding of the basic fears, motivations, passions, and defense system of personality types (or, more accurately, character fixations), the Enneagram can help liberate individuals from the tyranny of their respective numbers. To quote Claudio Naranjo (1990):

When one practices the pursuit of self-knowledge in an attitude of prayerful aspiration and objective recognition of one's aberration, and yet at the same time seems to make space in one's mind for such present imperfections as are unavoidable as a consequence of the imprints of past experience and the inevitable duration of the self-realization process, one comes to discover that self understanding is sufficient to itself. (p.154)

Enneagram theory reminds us that *part contains the whole*. A personality number is but a partial expression of a person's essential self that contains all numbers. Though a person may have one dominant number, each individual possesses an essence that includes the qualities of all the nine numbers as well as the potential to transcend the limitations that these qualities impose. The challenge for any spiritual aspirant is to get in touch with his or her essence to be all that he or she can be (Kale & Shrivastava, 2001). Individuals must first touch base with other numbers that lie dormant within them if they are to evolve and realize their full potential as humans. By increasing self-awareness, the Enneagram has the potential to recreate the tapestry of the workplace as woven by love, a truer sense of self, and meaningful relationships. The Enneagram, by uncovering our essence, helps us connect with Providence as defined by us. As Helen Palmer (2001) observed in a recent radio interview, "type is the fact that's in the way of having a spiritual experience. And what stands between me and a spiritual experience is me..." The Enneagram system provides us with an incredibly accurate map of "I-formation," and thus serves the sacred agenda of being one with all beings (International Enneagram Association, 2000).

Applying the Enneagram

The ideas behind the Enneagram theory are best grasped intuitively and experientially rather than experimentally. We believe that "delaying" of personality through to essence can only take place if the person is actually made to confront pain and anxiety and made aware—in real-time as it were—of the inherent tendencies to succumb to his or her fixations. Accordingly, our guidelines for applying the Enneagram have been informed by theory of action learning. We briefly mention the salient aspects of this theory in order to enable the reader to fully appreciate the rationale behind our guidelines.

The following discussion on the basic premise of theory of action learning has been excerpted from Anderson's (1997) doctoral dissertation:

Argyris and Schon (1974) assert that people hold maps in their heads about how to plan, implement and review their actions. They further assert that people are generally not aware that the maps they use to take action are not the theories they explicitly espouse. Also, even fewer people are aware of the maps or theories they do use... the distinction is not between "theory and action" but between two different "theories of action" (Argyris, Putnam, & McLain Smith 1985, p.82). Hence the concepts "espoused theory" and "theory-in-use". *Espoused theory*: The worldview and values people believe their behavior is based on. *Theory-in-use*: The worldview and values implied by their behavior, or the maps they use to take action.

To reiterate, Argyris and Schon (1974) suggest that people are unaware that their theories-in-use are often not the same as their espoused theories, and that people are often unaware of their theories-in-use. This raises the question, if people are unaware of the theories that drive their action (theories-in-use), how can they effectively manage their behavior? They obviously cannot. Argyris (1980) believes that such effectiveness results from developing congruence between theory-in-use and espoused theory. Argyris, Putnam, and McLain Smith (1985) recommend *double-loop learning* as a method of developing such congruence. In this form of learning, the basic assumptions behind one's views are confronted, hypotheses are tested publicly, and processes are dismantled. Such a learning process often leads to introspection and a change in action strategies. We believe that the Enneagram, when applied in the manner, is likely to prove far more effective in developing congruence between *theory-in-use* and *espoused theory* than anything that has thus far been suggested in modern organizational literature.

Introducing the Enneagram in the Workplace

To ensure maximum "buy in" within an organization, we recommend that knowledge of the Enneagram first be disseminated to those interested in using this tradition of spiritual evolution. We are assuming here that readers of this article are familiar with the theoretical underpinnings of the Enneagram. The uninitiated, or those

who could use a refresher course, are referred to a comprehensive list of resources available at www.best.com/~asci4d/enneagram/refernc.htm. We believe that the best way to facilitate the transmission of the Enneagram in the workplace is to have ten to twelve employees assigned to a mentor competent in Enneagram theory and application. The mentor will educate, counsel, guide, and inspire employees in their spiritual quest up to the stage of introspection. In this regard, the role of the mentor is that of a modern-day Gurdjieff (sans idiosyncrasies). The mentor would initially guide and inform, then coax and cajole, and eventually confront his or her wards as they journey towards self-realization.

The steps suggested below for introducing the Enneagram in the workplace may be classified into three broad and sometimes overlapping categories: (1) *Awareness* of the Enneagram and oneself, (2) *Exercises* that transform awareness into early stages of spiritual awakening, and (3) *Introspection* with its antecedent desire to leave behind a fixation-ridden life.

Awareness

Step 1: Provide a Brief Introduction. The introduction should briefly cover aspects that we have discussed in the first three paragraphs of this article. Note that we have avoided a discussion on particular personality traits of the nine types in the initial stage. We believe that doing so at this phase would have the unintended effect of further strengthening the fixation or false identification.

Step 2: Administer Enneagram Questionnaires. Many different versions of “self-diagnosis” questionnaires can be found in books as well as on the worldwide web. The Riso-Hudson Enneagram Type Indicator (RHETI) or the Stanford Enneagram Discovery Inventory and Guide (SEDIG) are both worth considering. We advise that at least two self-diagnosis tests be administered. Records of the results should be maintained both by the employee and the mentor.

Step 3: Introduce Number-Specific Types. Only after the students have determined their own type numbers, should a discussion on peculiar traits, motivations, fears, and

desires of each number take place. A brief description of each personality type is given in Appendix 1.

Step 4: Explicate Theory of the Enneagram. This should be done with a view to reduce the incongruence between theory-in-use and espoused theory. For such a reduction to take place, it is imperative that employees understand why they behave in the manner that they do. The Enneagram offers this understanding. Outlined below are some of the more important concepts of the Enneagram theory that we deem important.

Three Triads: It should be explained that the nine basic types could be divided into the Thinking, Feeling, and Instinctive triads. It should also be pointed out that within each triad there are three personality types that are best characterized by the assets and liabilities of that triad (Riso & Hudson, 1996). For instance, those in the “feeling triad” (types 2, 3, and 4) tend to over express feelings, under express them, or are most out of touch with their feelings. This pattern manifests in the other two triads as well (see Figure 3).

Insert Figure 3 About Here

Wings: It is important to emphasize that no person is a “pure” type. Each of the nine “personality types” is influenced by a number on one of its flanks called the “wing” (Palmer 1995). According to Riso (1995, p.14), “Everyone is a unique mixture of his or her basic type and one of the two types adjacent to it on the circumference of the Enneagram. One of the two types next to your basic type is your wing.” While basic type describes one’s dominant personality (or, more accurately the basic fixation), the wing complements it, adding other, sometimes contradictory, elements to personality. Looking at Figure 1, for example, the Nine has either a One-wing or an Eight-wing; the One has either a Nine-wing or a Two-wing, and so on.

Direction of Integration and Disintegration: The Enneagram recognizes that people do change over time. Spiritually speaking, they either evolve or deteriorate. Whenever we evolve or deteriorate, the lines on the Enneagram predict the

direction in which we will change. The *direction of disintegration* (which signals breakdown) is indicated on the Enneagram by the sequence of numbers 1-4-2-8-5-7-1 and 9-6-3-9. The *direction of integration* (which marks personal growth of the basic type) is indicated by the reverse of these two sequences: 1-7-5-8-2-4-1 and 9-3-6-9. For example, a One who disintegrates will move to Four, while a One who integrates will move to Seven. Integration implies imbibing the positive attributes of the number indicated by the arrow whereas disintegration entails manifesting the negative qualities of the number. Note that in order to evolve, a personality type has to go against the direction of the arrows shown in Figure 1. The analogy of swimming against the current is apt in this context. It can be as difficult to change for the better, as it is to swim against the current.

Nine Levels of Development: Riso's observations (1990) have led him to conclude that an individual personality exists in one of the three states: healthy, average, or unhealthy. Within each state, an individual displays traits corresponding to three broad levels of development. Thus, as shown in Figure 4, we have a total of nine levels of development. The healthier levels tend to take a personality to its direction of integration, while the unhealthier levels to its direction of disintegration.

Three Primary "Instincts" of Human Behavior: In his original presentation of the Enneagram material, Ichazo (1982) identified three primary instincts of human behavior: self-preservation, social and sexual instinct. It is thus possible to combine the knowledge of these instincts to explain some of the real variations we see in people that cannot entirely be accounted for by wings or by levels of development. A type Five, for example, could be a Self-Preservation Five, a Sexual Five, or a Social Five. As the terms suggest, the Self-Preservation type considers being safe and physically comfortable as priorities; the Sexual type displays a desire for intimacy and intensity of experience irrespective of the nature of activity undertaken; and the Social type derives meanings, sense of value, or esteem by interacting with others and participating in collective activities.

The Myriad Nuances of Human Personality: At first glance, the system of personality classification may appear as a simple exercise in stereotyping individuals. Detractors of the Enneagram sometimes insist that such descriptions of personality types can make people jump to wrong and simplistic conclusions. This is certainly not the case. The Enneagram is not in any way more susceptible to being misused than other typologies currently enjoying wider appeal (c.f., The Big Five, etc.) In fact, the Enneagram acknowledges the complexities of the human psyche better than most other systems (Kale & Shrivastava, 2001). The tool captures at least 486 personality sub-types (9 basic types x 2 wings x 9 levels of developments x 3 instincts). If we allow for the fact that some people get more strongly influenced by their wings than do others -- i.e., one can be an Eight wing Seven with 20% influence from the latter and another can be an Eight wing Seven with the latter exerting almost 50% influence -- then we discover that potentially one can cater for as many variations as the number of people on this planet. However, to do so would defeat the very purpose of the Enneagram. The classification gives us enough insights about our own selves and about others to be of great practical significance.

Step 5: Self Discovery Exercises. Naranjo (1990) notes that truth about ourselves can free us, for once we truly understand something about ourselves, that “something” will change without any attempt to change it. According to him writing down autobiographical notes – particularly the memories of painful situations and experiences in early family life and how we coped with them can give us some insights of how we lose touch with our essence and how we come to acquire a “persona”. Exchanging notes with close friends/colleagues can also assist the self-discovery process, as can meditation and the yogic technique called *Vipassana*, “After nearly 20 years of experimentation, I have come to the conviction that the most suitable background for Protoanalysis proper is that of *vipassana*, with particular emphasis on the mindfulness of sensations and emotions, while the practice of *samatha*, with its emphasis on tranquility, is the most appropriate...” (Naranjo 1990, p.159).

Step 6: Discuss Advanced Theoretical Concepts. After having participated in the self-discovery exercises, people should be better able to appreciate their own failings/fixations. Some concepts that need elaboration at this stage are presented below

Security and Stress Points: Enneagram theory suggests that people, under certain conditions of stress and security, abandon their basic personality type and temporarily access the attitudes and motivations of other personality types. But this “movement” to other personality types is not random; it follows a set pattern. Each number has its own stress and security points and when under stress or when feeling secure it tends to embrace the personality of these “pre-ordained” points. Notice in Figure 1 that each number either has an arrow going away from or moving towards it. Following the direction of the arrow that moves away from a number takes the number to its stress point and moving against the direction of the arrow that comes towards a number takes the number to its security point. For example, a Five has an arrow coming towards it from Eight and it has an arrow moving away from it towards Seven. Eight, therefore, is the security point and Seven the stress point for a Five.

Defense System: According to Enneagram theory, our defenses are organized into a cohesive pattern by three specific functions: idealization, avoidance and the defense mechanism (O’Hanharan, 2000). These specific functions work in a tri-partite arrangement to keep the structure of an individual’s personality in place. The first function, *idealization* is about who we think we ought to be in order to have value and self-worth. For example, Threes say “I am successful,” Sixes say “I am loyal,” and Nines say ‘I am harmonious.’ They spend a lot of effort convincing their own selves to maintain the illusion that they actually are successful, or loyal, or harmonious. Or they can end up feeling very bad about themselves for failing to live up to the ideal. But irrespective of whether they are successful in achieving their idealized state, this part of their personality can exert what we have called a “tyranny of their number,” everything is judged and measured by the yardstick of this number. We all like to avoid something that does not fit into our picture of who we are or how we should be. Our personality and attendant fixations protect us from those traits that we want to avoid. This second function, *avoidance*, though the opposite of idealization, operates in symmetry with it and in fact reinforces the idealization pattern. Idealization is supposed to keep us away from

what we want to avoid but there is a catch. For example, Nines want to stay harmonious so that they can avoid conflict, but as O’Hanharan (2000) points out, conflict has a way of building up when not directly dealt with. So, at first idealization and avoidance patterns keep us away from the place we do not want to experience, but eventually work to exacerbate the very situation we want to avoid. Finally, the third function, the defense mechanism, supports the dichotomy between idealization and avoidance and keeps the whole system in place. Almost subconsciously, we manifest behaviors, which ensure that our idealization and avoidance patterns remain intact. Table 1 represents O’Hanharan’s (2000) brief description of the defenses of the personality types.

Insert Table 1 Here

Personality, Character Fixation and Essence: This aspect has already been discussed earlier. The seven steps suggested thus far are geared towards preparing the uninitiated to fully grasp the psychic chasm represented in Figure 2. Mitroff and Denton (1999) report that employees feel indebted to those organizations that help them realize their full potential as a person. It should be pointed out that according to the Enneagram, individuals could realize their full potential only when their essence gets uncovered, i.e., when they shed off their persona, and get liberated from their fixations and defense system/conditioned responses. In order for this to happen, people must necessarily act in a manner that helps them touch base with other numbers that lie dormant within them. Individuals cannot get liberated; it should be emphasized, without suffering pain and attending to negative emotions. In other words, people should actively seek experiences that force them to touch base with their stress points. They should consider such experiences as great opportunities for learning and evolving. As Ichazo (1990, p.157) points out, “Awareness of endarkenment is the deepest aspect of conscious suffering—yet burning in this pain, for anyone who plunges into it, is the source of the most precious fuel for the work of transformation.”

Exercises

Stress point exercises involve a deliberate confrontation of an individual's basic fear and defense mechanism as identified by the Enneagram type. Such confrontation helps the individual reconcile the espoused theory with the theory-in-use. The intent of these exercises is twofold: to fully appreciate the enormous impact character fixation has on behavior, and to realize that it is within a person's power to counteract the impact of fixation. A word of caution is needed at this juncture. One needs to guard against the unintended and negative consequences that stress point exercises can have. Sometimes, they only strengthen the ego, thus making the subsequent journey toward essence all the more difficult.

Step 7: Stress Point Exercises. The knowledge imparted in Step 6 should sufficiently prime employees to volunteer for this penultimate step. We strongly urge that only volunteers who fully know their personality numbers *and* are strongly motivated toward spiritual development be subjected to this step. In stress point exercises, emotional turmoil is inevitable. The very intent of these exercises is to deliberately create painful states caused by the frustrations of the participants' passions. We recommend that specific exercises (pertaining either to the workplace or a real-life personal situation) be designed for specific personality types with the sole aim of forcing personality types to abandon their strongly held worldviews and embrace actions that they would otherwise avoid.

For example, an exercise designed for Eights should force them to rely and depend upon other people. Similarly an exercise for Threes should make sure that no matter how hard they try, they do not win. If need be, ground rules of exercises could be changed mid-way to ensure the desired outcome. It is beyond the scope of this paper to suggest specific exercises for each type. As must have become evident, understanding the defense system of a personality type and the attendant patterns of behavior and movement during stress is the key to designing such exercises. Off-the-shelf exercises designed for defense forces may lend themselves to being suitably modified for our purpose.

The mentor and an external Enneagram expert should debrief participants at the end of each exercise. This would entail an explanation of how the participants' defense

system worked in the course of the exercise and what qualities each participant exhibited under stress. If possible, the exercise sessions should be videotaped, so that participants can revisit the scenarios and reflect on them.

The intent of reflection is to bring into focus our hidden self. This involves an individual's seeking answers to questions such as: (1) What am I *really* like? (2) Why do I say the things I say? (3) What within me makes me so difficult? (4) What is good for me? (5) What is bad for me? (6) What must I do to change? (7) What is needed for me to become whole — psychologically and spiritually?

On the theoretical front, Step 7 should make it possible -- for those with a research bent -- to construct a multitrait –multimethod matrix (see Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) to reach some definitive conclusions about the internal consistency of the Enneagram instruments in question. Clearly there is a need for academics and practitioners to collaborate so that the Enneagram achieves wider acceptance within academic circles. Such collaboration, we believe, will enable the Enneagram establish itself as one of the most valid and premier theories of type classification. This is an honor that the Enneagram theory richly deserves.

Introspection

Step 8: Facilitate Introspection. As the German philosopher Nietzsche has said, “One’s own self is well hidden from one’s own self: Of all mines of treasure, one’s own is the last to be mined.” At the introspection stage, the mentor steps back, and lets the students see themselves in new light as provided by the exercises and Enneagram theory. The mentor’s job now is that of a sounding board should the employees choose to share their feelings and insights with him/her.

At the root of introspection lies the acknowledgement of both positive and negative aspects of one’s type. It is at the introspection stage that a person ponders on what needs to be done to leave the trap of identification behind and discover one’s true essence. The answer can never be general; it will be unique to each seeker. Furthermore, the answer can only emerge if there is a burning desire to end the suffering of living life as a fixation (Jaxon-Bear, 2000). With cessation of the mind, the silent consciousness emerges. This

consciousness is “untouched by the waves of fixation that arise from silence and return to silence” (Jaxon-Bear, 2000).

We recognize that few within any organization will achieve this ideal state. We are also aware that the time taken to reach this stage, for the very few who do, can never be predicted. For the purposes of the mentor, guiding the employees up to the stage of introspection is all that matters. The rest is up to the employees, and will be a function of their intensity in wanting to live a fixation-free life.

Conclusion

This paper introduced the Enneagram as a tool for spiritual development within the workplace setting. We provided basic guidelines to harness the Enneagram’s potential toward this goal. To some, these guidelines may sound far too idealistic or even impractical. Others may view them as unnecessarily time-consuming or detracting in terms of an organization’s basic mission.

We nonetheless believe that the Enneagram can be of significant import at least in the early stages of a person’s spiritual development. The beauty of the Enneagram is the diversity of areas in which it can be applied. It can be used for team building and sales force management or it can be used for self-discovery and spiritual evolution. Using the Enneagram within an organization for pecuniary gains does not preclude it from being used for spiritual development. Rather, the two application areas represent the lower and upper rungs of the same ladder.

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Figure 1. The Enneagram

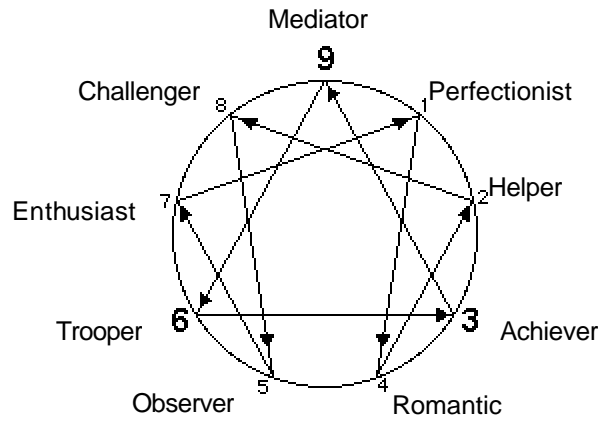
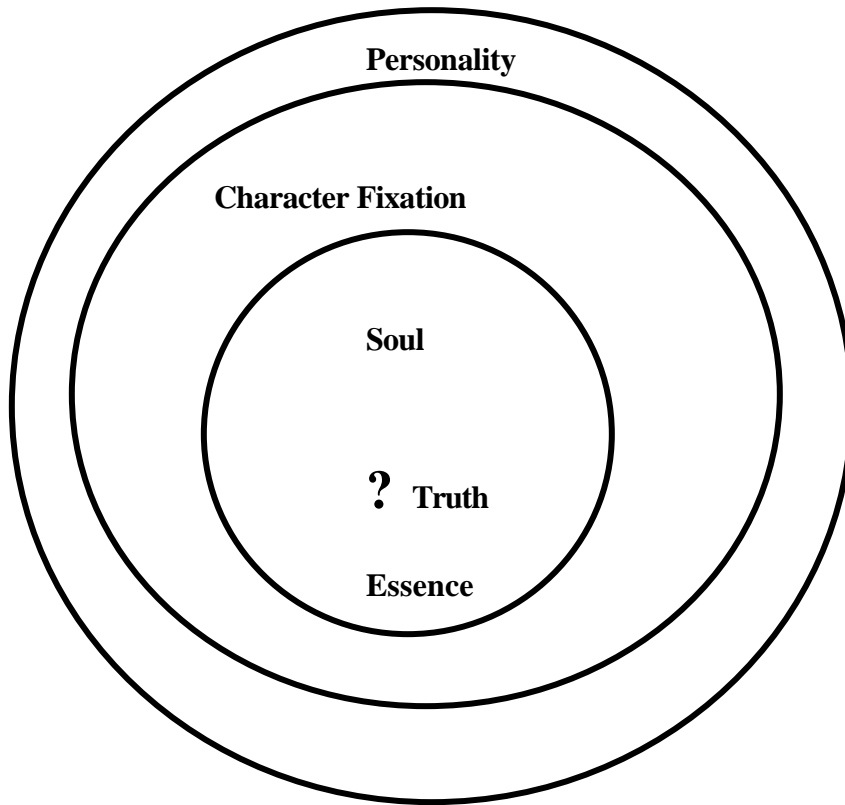
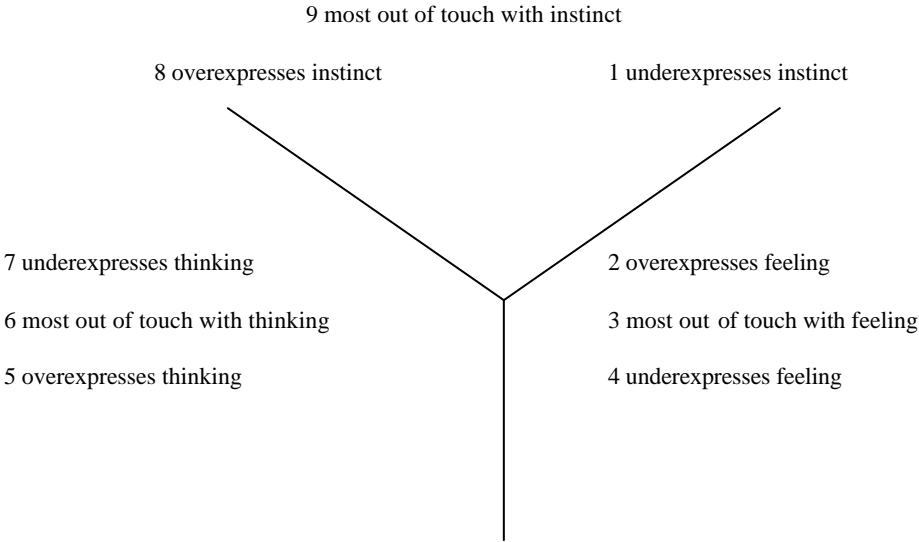


Figure 2. The Nature of Ego



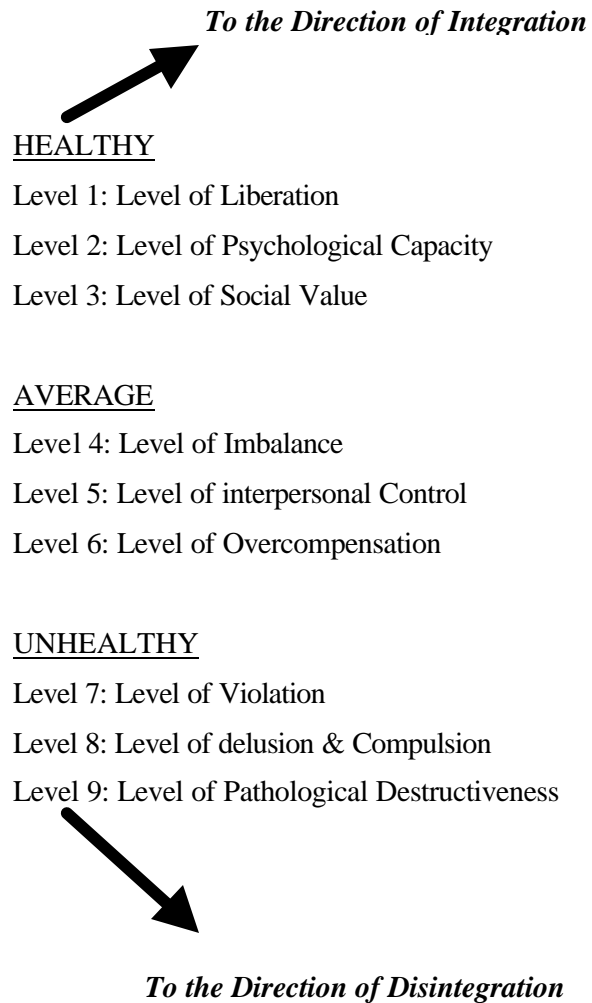
Source: Jaxon-Bear, E. (2000), <http://www.leela.org>

Figure 3. The Triads of the Enneagram



Source: Riso and Hudson (1996)

Figure 4. Levels of Development



(Source: Riso, 1990; Riso & Hudson, 1996)

Table 1: The Defense System

Important: Note that in the descriptions that follow, the first phrase labels the defense mechanism, as in “Ones use reaction formation”. Then follows a description of the avoidance pattern (ones avoid anger) and idealization (ones like to maintain the self image of being right).

Ones use *reaction formation* to avoid anger (i.e., direct anger) and to maintain a self-image of being right. Reaction formation is feeling one thing and then doing the opposite, such as feeling resentful but acting nice.

Twos use *repression* of personal needs and feelings to avoid being needy and to maintain a self-image of being helpful. Repression is putting one's "unacceptable" feelings out of awareness and converting them into a more acceptable kind of emotional energy.

Threes use *identification* to avoid failure and maintain a self-image of being successful. Identification is a kind of pervasive role playing and losing oneself in image.

Fours use *introjection* to avoid ordinariness and maintain a self-image of being authentic. Introjection is both an attempt to overcome deficiency by bringing in value from outside oneself and the habit of internalizing blame for what goes wrong.

Fives use *isolation* to avoid emptiness and maintain a self-image of being knowledgeable. Isolation can be physical and geographical, but it also means being cut off from one's emotions.

Sixes use *projection* to avoid personal rejection and to maintain a self-image of being loyal. Projection is a way of attributing to others what one can't accept in oneself, both positive and negative.

Sevens use *rationalization* to avoid suffering and to maintain a self-image of being okay. Rationalization is a style of explaining and justifying in order to keep pain away or to refuse to take responsibility.

Eights use *denial* to avoid vulnerability and to maintain a self-image of being strong. Denial is a kind of forceful re-directing of attention and feeling based on willfulness and control.

Nines use *narcotization* to avoid conflict and to maintain a self-image of being comfortable or harmonious. Narcotisation is using food and drink, entertainment, or simply repetitive patterns of thinking and doing to "put oneself to sleep."

(Source: Kale and Shrivastava, 2001)

Appendix 1

Description of the Nine Personality Types

Type One: The Perfectionist. Type One in the Enneagram can be characterized as the rational idealistic individual. Ones live life in a principled, purposeful, and self-controlled manner. The basic desire of the One type is to do good to the world and live a balanced life. Ones possess a strong sense of right and wrong, and solidly adhere to religious and moral values. These values often cause them to be dissatisfied with reality. Such expression of dissatisfaction by Ones leads others to perceive them as being high-minded idealists or as being highly opinionated. Ones are very concerned about how others perceive them. Overly sensitive to criticism from others, they manifest strong apprehensions of being judged negatively. They are also quick to form opinions about other people. In judging others, Ones look for evidence of ethical character as manifested by discipline, manners, appearance, and showing respect (Palmer 1995). Preferring doing to feeling, Ones focus more on work than on relationships. They dread being compromised by the mistakes of others. Extremely risk averse, Ones do not believe in taking chances as risks and chances lead to mistakes and doing the “wrong” thing.

Type Two: The Helper. Type Two symbolizes the caring interpersonal type whose basic desire is to feel loved. Twos exude a compassionate and empathetic persona that manifests in warmth, thoughtfulness, and sensitivity toward others. Forever wanting to be close to others, they sometimes tend to become “people pleasers,” engaging in seductive attention and flattery (Riso & Hudson, 1996). Highly responsive to approval and encouragement, Twos expend considerable effort seeking positive strokes from those around them. They like to feel needed and even indispensable. This dependence on people-approval results in a lack of personal freedom. By overly focusing on others, Twos’ often tend to neglect their own needs. Twos virtually tend to wear their emotions on their sleeves. Their exaggerated emotional displays can sometimes mask their true feelings. “Over giving” on the part of Twos often brings out their escapist tendencies and can lead to physical and emotional exhaustion (Palmer, 1988). Twos get very angry when their real needs are at odds with their habitual pleasing behaviors. The people-centered approach makes them adept at relating to people and making friends. Generous, caring, and warm, they intuitively know what others need and what will make the lives of others better. Although outwardly unselfish, Twos do expect reciprocation for their good deeds. They feel devastated, hurt, and angry if their good actions are not acknowledged by way of cards, gifts, or other signs of appreciation.

Type Three: The Achiever. Threes can be described as self-confident, adaptable, energetic, and outgoing. Possessing high self-esteem, they take a great deal of pride in themselves and their abilities. Striving for excellence is the singular hallmark of Threes. This success-orientation drives them towards becoming social climbers and careerists (Riso and Hudson, 1996). Type Three comes closest to the “narcissistic personality,” which usually goes hand in hand with exhibitionist and seductive behaviors. Threes sometimes tend to employ opportunistic and exploitative means to preserve their perception of self-superiority. Perennially in quest of the perfect public image, Threes crave affirmation, always wanting to be the center of attention. The uncommonly strong desire for achievement in Threes motivates them to acquire social sophistication and skill. Fiercely competitive and highly efficient in their manner of living, Threes believe that “love comes from what you produce, rather than from who you are” (Palmer, 1988). Focused in their chase of success, Threes shoot for well-defined goals and feel amply rewarded when goals are achieved. This reward seeking impulse often blinds Threes to their intrinsic value *sans* their external accomplishments. Whatever insecurity Threes may have is masked and compensated for by their arrogance. Threes recover quickly from setbacks, thanks to their optimistic nature. They do not like to be burdened by negative emotions or people and actively seek affiliations with successful and powerful individuals. Threes effectively use their credentials, titles, and degrees as means to impress their value and worth upon the world. Addiction to success can make Threes highly susceptible to work holism and manic-depression.

Type Four: The Romantic. The basic desire of Fours is to “find oneself” and reveal one’s “unique significance” (Riso & Hudson, 1996). Fours take on an artistic, romantic orientation to life, often creating beautiful and aesthetic environments around them. They are capable of phenomenal inspiration as manifested in works of art, literature, or music. Fours crave for a deep emotional connection in all their experiences. As such, they are attracted to melancholy and intense situations including grief, death, and depression. Survival for Fours is contingent on being true to their emotional terrain. They take pride in being “special” or “different”. Fours invariably complain that something is missing, something that would make their life whole. They secretly envy that others have that “something” which they do not. Consequently, Fours develop an obsession for the element in their life that is absent: a lover, a friend, or an unfulfilled dream. This preoccupation subjects them to experiences of dark moods, emptiness, and despair. Fours crave intensity and stimulation in order to feel alive. This sometimes leads them into dangerous situations: taking physical risks, breaking the law, or taking chances with their money. Ordinary reality is treated with disdain and Type Four will go to any lengths to intensify the experience of

day-to-day living. Mundane experiences are often transformed through artistic sublimation or through fantasy and drama.

Type Five: The Observer. Fives are characterized by their singular ability to detach themselves from feelings, material needs, and people. This ability arises in response to their basic fear of being overwhelmed by the world. Fives structure life in a manner that makes them as independent as possible. Disengagement with life translates into the Five's preference for thinking over acting and for observing over participating. Fives observe the reality around them with extraordinary perceptiveness and insight (Riso & Hudson, 1996). This power of observation, combined with the aloof persona, makes Type 5 mentally alert, endowed with a searching intelligence. Fives are motivated to possess knowledge and believe that only knowledge can shield them from the world's intrusions. Such cognitive orientation inevitably leads to postponement of action (Naranjo, 1990) and the delaying of emotions (Palmer, 1998). Rather than experiencing emotions, Fives want to understand emotions. They take a special interest in analytic systems that explain human behavior. Preoccupation with thoughts often results in Fives neglecting their physical health and appearance. They have little patience for big parties, loud music, overdone emotions, or anything else that they may deem as intrusion of privacy. Fives' sense of integrity translates into actions that they believe are right and not influenced by social pressure (Baron & Wagele, 1994).

Type Six: The Trooper. Type Six symbolizes the committed, security-oriented, loyal type. Sixes are deeply devoted to individuals and movements in which they firmly believe. They are hardworking and persevering in their quest for stability and security. Sixes keep looking for authority figures they can trust but also believe that most authority figures abuse their power. They have therefore been termed as "loyal skeptics." Doubt and anxiety in most facets of a their life results in "amnesia with respect to success and pleasure" (Palmer, 1988). It is imperative for Sixes to have a support system in place. They tend to be the least independent of all types. As allies, Sixes are extremely loyal, expecting loyalty to shield them against life's doubts and anxieties. They exhibit great potential for emotional bonding with others, and value group identification, sociability, industriousness, and commitment to larger causes (Riso, 1992). The most security-conscious of all types, Sixes exhibit feelings of being persecuted, abandoned, and trapped when that security seems to be lacking. They are averse to assuming responsibility for their own actions and tend to blame others for their problems and mistakes. In their interactions with others, Sixes tend to be direct and assertive. Always anxious and hyper-vigilant, they tend to sense danger where none exists. Sixes critically analyze the ramifications of their actions in order

not to jeopardize their safety (Baron & Wagele, 1995). They stand by their in-group and are often skeptical of outsiders.

Type Seven: The Enthusiast. Type Seven is the "fun-loving" type: spontaneous, extroverted, and enthusiastic. Sevens tend to be practical, productive and worldly-wise (Riso & Hudson, 1996). They want to maintain their freedom and happiness, to immerse themselves in worthwhile experiences, and to feel excited and occupied. Believing firmly that life is an adventure that bestows unlimited possibilities, Sevens see the bright side of any situation. They are idea people: endlessly conjuring up visions and potentialities. Sevens value options over closure and this leads them into difficulties when committing to tasks and people. They are often perceived as being hedonistic and gluttonous. These qualities stem from their need to maintain high levels of excitement and from their "rationalized escapism to avoid difficult or limiting tasks" (Palmer, 1988). Sevens seek out people who will admire them and are thus most prone to sycophancy. Their desire for change and variety often translates into hyperactivity, superficiality, and impulsiveness (Riso, 1992). Instant gratification is the hallmark of Type Seven. They absorb themselves in seeking and maintaining high levels of stimulation, engaging in multifarious activities, and focusing singularly on the bright side of life. Stimulated by intellectual sparring, by different experiences, and by the possibility of being on the cutting edge, Sevens cannot bear the thought of their life being stable, secure, and routine.

Type Eight: The Challenger. Riso and Hudson (1996) describe type Eight as "the powerful dominating type." Eights tend to be self-confident, decisive, willful and confrontational. They are driven by self-sufficiency, financial independence, and autonomy. Eights like to exert their influence on those around them and feel a sense of accomplishment when their attempts of influence are successful. Direct and straightforward, Eights tend to be "what you see is what you get" kind of people. They are able to take charge and make quick decisions. Believing that only the strong survive, Eights divide the world into those who are worthy and those who are not. Eights do not care much about being liked; to them it is respect that matters. They look for power in all situations and often tend to inflate their presence in the company of others. Eights' desire to dominate often results in them being perceived as insensitive and punitive. They are given to aggression and open expression of anger (Palmer, 1988). Type Eight is most comfortable viewing the world dichotomously: fair or unfair, strong or weak, good or bad. There is no possibility of a middle ground. Eights cannot tolerate ambiguity or lack of information. They have little patience

for even small oversights on the part of others. Eights enthusiastically enforce those rules that match their personal agenda and flagrantly bend the ones that do not. Their main strengths are self-reliance and self-determination; their main weaknesses are ruthlessness and combativeness.

Type Nine: The Mediator. Nines tend to be easy-going, receptive, agreeable, and complacent (Riso & Hudson, 1996). Patient and unpretentious, they radiate equanimity and contentment. Nines have a deep fear of conflicts and tend to be self-effacing and accommodating. They find it easier to go along with others' preferences rather than trying to find their own. Often, it is difficult for them to figure out what it is that they want. They are also fearful of their desires conflicting with the desires of those around them. Wanting life to be harmonious and comfortable, Nines develop a deep acceptance of different people and viewpoints. They feel energized by other people's enthusiasm. Nines often display a preference for procedures and set processes. They are perennially in quest of peace and harmony, and this pursuit tends to make them over-accommodating. Forever pacifying others, Nines are prone to neglecting themselves and their legitimate needs. They often engage in rituals such as watching TV, sleeping extra long hours, or working on the computer to suppress their feelings of anxiety and dissonance (Baron & Wagele, 1995). While Nines have a difficulty in maintaining a personal point of view, they readily resonate and support the position of others. Staying on the fringes is their preferred mode of avoiding conflicts.

(Source: Kale & Shrivastava, 2001)