

# The Enneagram? What's that? Here's a Quick Overview

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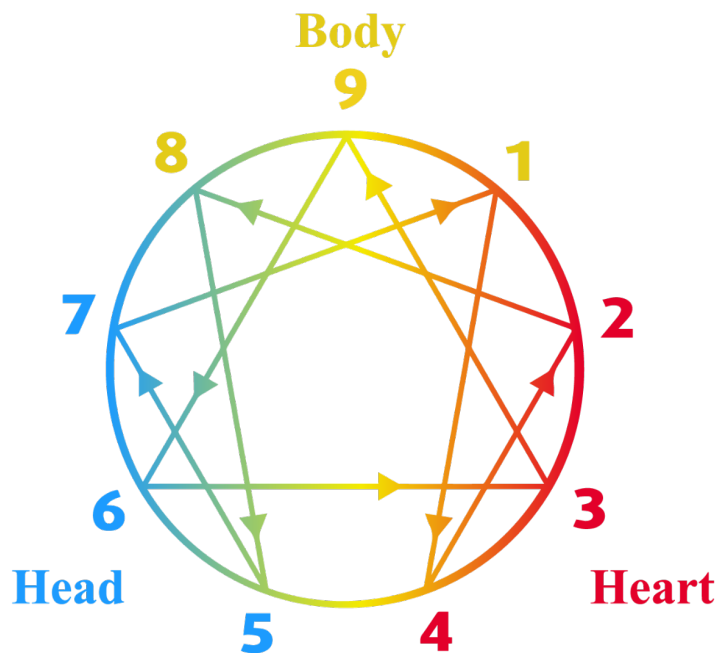


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## A Brief Overview of the Enneagram Model



**Figure 1 The Enneagram Model**

The Enneagram (*any-a-gram*) is a model of personality represented by a nine-pointed circle. While **Jungian** type is concerned with cognitive functions and how our brain makes decisions and processes information, the Enneagram is focused more on our internal drives, passions, fears and defense mechanisms. These are complimentary systems that deal with overlapping but distinct areas of personality. Using them together can deliver powerful insights.

The Enneagram is divided into three Triads or Centers of Intelligence:

- **Heart/ Image Center**
- **Head /Thinking Center**
- **Body /Gut Center**

*Every person has a single Core type, though we have all nine types within us.*

## The Three Centers

Each of these Centers governs different aspects of our Enneatype:

- The **Heart / Image Center** (e2, e3, e4) concerns recognition, daily affirmation, relationships to survive and relating issues, as well as the dichotomy between Love and Shame. As the name “image” suggests, it is also about how we wish to be seen by others. Those with a Heart Core type have a strong desire to be viewed a certain way in order to affirm particular emotions and to prevent them feeling that they do not exist.
- The **Head / Thinking Center** (e5, e6, e7) concerns managing chaos, analyzing environment, styles of thinking, what we need to know to survive, and people issues, as well as the dichotomy between Hope and Fear. As the name “thinking” suggests, it is about how we analyze the outside world. Those with a Head type as their Core type have a strong desire to calculate who and what to trust in order to feel safe.
- The **Body / Gut Center** (e8, e9, e1) concerns comfort, control, autonomy, conviction, senses and living issues, the dichotomy between Anger and Serenity. As the name “gut” suggests, it is about how we are present in our body and rely on our inner strength. Those with a Body type as their Core have a strong desire to rely on their own power to manage and resist their environment in order to feel at peace.

## A Brief Overview of the Nine Enneagram Types

### Heart Center

**Type 2s** are sometimes known as **The Helper**. They want to be seen as kind and generous. They feel an abundance of love and attempt to avoid shameful feelings through a persona of helpfulness. They want others to appreciate their generosity and selfless behavior and will go out of their way to help others in order to receive that appreciation.

**Type 3s** are sometimes known as **The Achiever**. They want to be seen as efficient and successful. They may feel robotic internally but are ultimately looking for love and appreciation, which they seek to get through a persona of achievement. They want others to appreciate them for their ability and results and will present themselves as winners in order to receive that appreciation.

**Type 4s** are sometimes known as **The Artist**. They want to be seen as authentic and unique. They tend to over identify with their shame and feel that love is a scarcity, and so

they adopt a persona of specialness in order to be noticed. They want others to appreciate them for their emotions and creativity and will present themselves as uncommon or even elite in order to receive that appreciation.

### **Head Center**

**Type 5s** are sometimes known as **The Observer**. They are anxious about the outer world and their ability to deal with it, and they retreat into the safety of their mind and away from the vulnerability of emotions. They are sharply observant and seek to become experts in their chosen field to give themselves the confidence to engage in the wider world. They may over-analyze before acting.

**Type 6s** are sometimes known as **The Questioner**. They are anxious about both their outer and inner worlds, so they seek security in the form of allies or authorities. They distrust their own judgment as they tend to worry and overthink. They tend to rely on others as touchpoints to ground their thoughts and opinions. They can be phobic and conflict avoidant, or counterphobic and conflict-seeking, or anything in-between.

**Type 7s** are sometimes known as **The Enthusiast**. They are anxious about their inner world and seek to avoid negative feelings by remaining positive and upbeat. They trust their ability to think their way out of unpleasant situations and want a life of fun and freedom, for themselves and those they care about. They dislike feeling trapped or pessimistic and prefer an optimistic and free-spirited approach to life.

### **Gut Center**

**Type 8s** are sometimes known as **The Challenger**. They like to feel powerful and to protect the things and people they care about. They view peace and the good things in life as scarce resources that have to be fought for, and they have learned to toughen themselves up by denying their vulnerable feelings. They dislike weakness and view themselves as strong and upfront people who are comfortable expressing their anger.

**Type 9s** are sometimes known as **The Peacemaker**. They like to feel calm and in harmony with their world and try to avoid or endure things that disrupt their sense of inner peace. They are stubborn and powerful but slow to assert themselves. Instead, they present themselves as unflappable people who go along to get along. Expressing their anger makes them feel uncomfortable. They can usually identify a little bit with every Enneagram type.

**Type 1s** are sometimes known as **The Reformer**. They like to feel correct and morally righteous. They are principled people who prefer to follow their conscience and pursue

moral ideals. They hold others to a high standard but hold themselves to an even higher one. They have a strong inner critic that micromanages their thoughts, feelings and behaviors. They view anger as irrational and morally corrupting but sometimes make exceptions for moral outrage.

## Instinctual Drives

The Instincts are fundamental drives. They operate both as a subtype system within the Enneagram and as their own separate sub-system, both derived from the Enneagram and distinct from it. This highlights an extra layer of complexity and nuance in the formation of our personality.

The Enneagram recognizes three basic instincts that are universal to all human beings:

- The Social Instinct
- The “One-to-One” (Sexual) Instinct
- The Self-Preservation Instinct

While we each have all three instincts within us, we have them in a particular order known as *Instinctual Stacking*. Each of these instincts represents a subconscious orientation that stands on its own while also creating three distinct subtypes (or variants) for each type.

The **Social** instinct (So) concerns our focus on groups, hierarchy, belonging, social status, social issues, society at large, the desire to be part of some community outside ourselves. The focus is on social identity and the human need for company and involves tracking others and looking for social connection; a fear of social rejection; adapting to a group (or, resisting adaptation and resisting the group); conformity / nonconformity; awareness of etiquette, social customs and cultures and trends; and concerns about social embarrassment.

The **One-To-One** instinct (Sx) concerns our focus on finding a mate, finding our “favorite” people, wishing to spend intimate time with our significant others, and the desire to have deep personal bonds and to merge with specific people. The focus is not only love but the feeling of “falling in love,” as well as the desire to keep that feeling and spark alive for as long as possible. Most Sexual types are looking for a particular kind of excitement in their lives and especially from their relationships. In the absence of a mate, they might seek it in novel or “risky” experiences as a substitute.

The **Self-Preservation** instinct (Sp) concerns our focus on survival, prosperity, security, resources, comfort and routines. The focus is on “the self” and one’s own material wants and needs. It is the “earthiest” instinct and is focused on the concrete world and what it can provide us. Those who lead with this instinct may be particularly preoccupied with matters of money, food and drink, home life, mortality, comfort / discomfort, health and fitness, and how they physically feel or will feel in the future.

### **An Instinctual Drive Example: Enneagram Type 3**

All type 3s will focus on an image of success, but:

- **Sp 3s** will want to look successful primarily so they can secure resources and have a comfortable life.
- **So 3s** will want to look successful primarily for glory and social acceptance.
- **Sx 3s** will want to look successful primarily to attract and secure intimate relationships.

### **Learning More**

To learn more about the Enneagram and to get a more well-rounded and complete view of the nine Enneagram types, look at the core fears, drives and defense mechanisms, as well as at the instinctual subtypes. Below are some resources to aid in your journey of discovery.

### **Resources**

Narrative Enneagram- <https://www.narrativeenneagram.org/>

International Enneagram Association- <https://www.internationalenneagram.org/about/the-enneagram/>

Enneagram Institute- <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/>

Katherine Fauvre- <https://www.katherinefauvre.com/enneagram-types-at-a-glance>

The Enneagram in Business- <https://theenneagraminbusiness.com/about-the-enneagram/>

Dr. David Daniels, the Enneagram of Personality- <https://drdaviddaniels.com/the-enneagram-of-personality/>

Enneagram User Guide- <https://enneagramuserguide.com/>

Beatrice Chestnut, The Chestnut Paes Enneagram Academy- <https://www.beatricechestnut.com/cp-enneagram-academy>