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The Dynamic Enneagram: *Fives*

In America we have something called the “Adopt-A-Highway Program” in which an individual or an organization can volunteer to sponsor litter collection on a mile-long section of a highway. In return for paying a monthly fee, the sponsor’s name is posted on a sign visible from the road. The money pays for an Adopt-A-Highway maintenance crew which picks up litter, erases graffiti and landscapes the one-mile stretch.

Once I was driving through a remote part of Northern California. The road was long and straight, cutting across a high, lonely volcanic plain. At a particularly barren, windswept point I saw an Adopt-A-Highway sign coming up. Curious about who would take responsibility for a patch of road so far from anywhere, I slowed down to read the sign. “Loners of America,” it said.

As we shift from Enneagram style Four to style Five, we move out of the realm of image-matching and role-playing and enter the trio of Enneagram styles that is unconsciously grounded in fear. Unlike Twos, Threes and Fours, Fives, Sixes and Sevens are not confused about who they are or how they feel, but rather tend to unconsciously anticipate life’s dangers. They struggle with taking action, asserting their wills and comfortably wielding power.

Five’s fears are specifically social in that Fives habitually guard against being in-

Tom Condon

vaded or engulfed by others. They often do this by living in a world of their own and taking refuge in a cauterized

objectivity that protects them from their emotional shadows, what one Five called “a fortress of the clear and evident.” Unlike Fours, who inhabit their sensory-rich emotional imaginations, Fives are generally drier, thinkers who live in their minds more than their feelings.

Healthy Fives often have well-developed abilities to acquire and synthesize knowledge. Life long learners, they stay interested and mentally alive into old age. Fives can be perceptive, wise and objective; able to stay calm and rational when others around them are panicked or confused. At their best, they strike a balance between interacting with the world and withdrawing from it. Style Five is associated with knowledgeable competence and, sometimes, intellectual genius.

Many Fives live by the Latin motto, “Scientia Est Potentia” – “Knowledge is Power.” Healthy Fives express this actively, offering the fruits of their interests and research to the world. Teaching and writing are frequent occupations but whatever they do, healthy Fives seem to insist that their talent for learning count for something beyond itself. There is an idealistic quality to this drive that makes them willing contributors to a larger good. Fives ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

A Symbol Worth a Thousand Words

As with a picture, so too a symbol: it is worth a thousand words. That is, if it is an authentic symbol.

The enneagram appears to be such a symbol. Its curious geometry and mysterious origins, combined with its multiple applications, indicate that this is so.

It is no surprise, then, that newcomers find the symbol intriguing. In my experience in leading workshops and retreats, I have been asked any number of questions about it, such as: “Does it have something to do with Kabbalah?” “Why is there an opening at the bottom?” “Do the colors have any meaning?” (Beyond aesthetics, no.) “What do the arrows tell us?”

Apart from specific queries, participants are drawn to the overall intrinsic nature of the symbol itself. This is because symbols, in and of themselves, directly influence those who see them, and even more, those who meditate on them. Such influences have been recognized since the earliest of times, and prompt me to consider their significance.

Like other symbols, the enneagram is an emblem, token or sign that represents something other than itself. To most readers of *Enneagram Monthly*, it represents

Thomas Isham

the immaterial structure and dynamics of the psycho-spiritual self. In the view of G. I. Gurdjieff and others, of

course, it represents any number of additional processes. In this essay, it is the symbol itself – the combined circle, equilateral triangle and irregular hexagram – that I wish to focus on, while not neglecting related psycho-spiritual content¹.

Like other authentic symbols, symbols, that is, which are universal and primordial, the enneagram serves principally as a means of internal communication. It does so after the manner of symbols down through the ages, and, like them, it reflects primordial aspects of a psycho-spiritual nature. Unlike contrived symbols, the kind that are used to represent everything from commercial products to athletic teams, the enneagram, in its several versions, carries a stamp of authenticity, as do – to select a number of examples at random – the Tree of life, the Rainbow, the All-Seeing Eye, the Cross, the Labyrinth, the Radiating Heart, the Sun, the Moon, the Cave, the Fish, the Wheel, and various geometric patterns.

According to René Guénon, authentic or primordial symbols are “essentially synthetic” and thus “intuitive,” able to surpass words as support for intellectual intuition. The latter term – intellectual intuition ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

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Suppose being a head type involves noodling about this or that and one of my obsessions is understanding what affects us as individuals and how that translates in creating the type of society we live in. The theme that keeps returning goes something like this:

a. Some personality traits are hard-wired into our nature and may be impossible, or surely hard to change. Such traits are particularly noticeable if they are not tolerated or encouraged by the environment.

b. Traits, that are equally hard-wired but happen to be more in tune with the environment, are less noticeable and cause less friction, they may even pass as indicators of a high level of health.

c. Most of our life is about finding a balance between following our nature or blending with the environment. Buddhists are not the only ones who claim that “all decisions we make are fraught with conflicting emotions.”

So my question is always this: How do we reconcile the pursuit of individual fulfillment without allowing our environment to dictate what we should believe or how we should act? At the same time, to what degree are we free to indulge in our individual

From the Editor

pursuits if they get in the way of the freedom of others? If you have a good answer, let us know.

In this issue:

“The Dynamic Enneagram: *Fives*” continues **Tom Condon’s** series in which he methodically exposes those parts in us that are clearly type-related. In this issue, we move out of the realm of image and role-playing so familiar to the Heart triad we enter the Head triad that is unconsciously grounded in fear. Unlike Twos, Threes and Fours, Fives, Sixes and Sevens are not confused about who they are or how they feel, but rather are unconsciously preoccupied with life’s dangers. Five’s fears may be social in that Fives habitually guard against being invaded or engulfed by others. They seem to find comfort with a world that is drier, and prefer to live in their minds more than their feelings.

The abilities of Fives to acquire and synthesize knowledge are legendary. The joy of learning is their fuel and it keeps them interested and mentally alive into old age. Being less focused on emotions, Fives can often be more objective and calmer when others

around them are panicked or confused—unless of course they feel invaded and have to resort to the safety of their “castle” where they can avoid interacting with the world. Tom explores the compartmentalized yet fascinating world of the Five, allowing us to better understand their unique “take” on life.

They say “A Symbol is Worth a Thousand Words” and **Thomas Isham** most definitely includes the enneagram in the ranks of world class symbols, where a symbol is an emblem, token or sign that represents something other than itself. According to Tom, it’s the synergy between visual symbol and verbal content that gives the enneagram its extraordinary power. But to view a symbol as more than an arbitrary figure only makes sense if the universe is in fact the creation of the Divine Word or *Logos*; the creation, that is, of a Being or Principle who is Source and Sustainer of All That Is. If everything in existence arises out of the Divine Principle, then everything—actual or symbolic—is represented by that Principle, according to its own order of existence, from one order of being to another, with all things linked to all the possible planes of being.

“The One Thing” is a famous passage in Rumi’s writing about the importance of finding our true pur-



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For subscription and advertising rates see back cover.

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pose in life. This inner principle is a subtle thing that hides its face from the light of day. No scientific experiment can be done to prove its existence; no meditation, affirmation, or magic spell can force it to reveal itself to us in the absence of understanding. But according to **Susan Rhodes**, the enneagram can help us find The One Thing in our lives. In Chapter 1 of her newest book, *Archetypes of the Enneagram*, she talks about how we can use our understanding of the enneagram subtypes to discover our inner soul nature and our soul's purpose in life. The book should be available by the end of July on Amazon. "The One Thing" is Chapter 1 of the book and contains a thumbnail overview of the book.

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In part 2 of the "Conversation with **Ginger Lapid-Bogda**" Ginger speaks of her techniques and philosophy that guide her work. For example, she's not a proponent of hiring people based on their Enneagram type. In her view there is no evidence that Enneagram type is correlated with skills; companies need to hire based on the degree to which an individual's skills match the needs of the job. Self-mastery-level matters far more for hiring than Enneagram style, though self-mastery level or emotional maturity level can be difficult to assess in a job interview. That should be left to licensed psychologists, which saavy organizations know how to use effectively.

One of Ginger's main interests is the relationship between different Enneagram styles and how they fit with the company's culture. In her work with organizations, she has had them explicitly define their culture, so that she can examine the extent to which individuals of the different Enneagram styles will function easily within that culture and which individuals will find it more difficult.

Clare Cherikoff has a sparkly spirit that bubbles with seasoned wisdom. "A Jolly Shortcut from Trance to Freedom" is a testament to the old adage of you *catch more flies (let's make it bees, shall we?) with honey than vinegar*. Her style is humorous, disarming and insightful. It's based on solid experience with teaching, training and writing about the enneagram using pithy statements that are easy to memorize.

Clare finds that we can also use the nine enneagram patterns as precise gateways to discovering what lies within us all. When we discover it is our conscious awareness that never changes (as opposed to our thoughts which come and go within that awareness), we find a place within us which is free of the nine patterns. Regardless of type, what lies beneath our thoughts is our real nature which is both free and ever-present.

"The Enneagram Triads Part 2" in this issue completes the series of charts excerpted from **Ed Morler's** expanded second edition of *Finally Growing Up: Recognizing and Releasing Patterns of Limitations*. The charts are self-explanatory and very effective as memory props or for a quick reference. In the old days I remember studying things that required memorization by carrying flash cards around. It's a good system and it works. •

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- The Foundations of Spiritual Method and the Typing process (Part 2) come to California in July 2010.
- Check our website for David's radio shows and video.

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