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Character and the Enneagram: *The Yoga of Relationship*

In a more enlightened world, the discovery of a readily observable, highly focused, and deeply effective system of self-knowledge would be *Headline News*. Unfortunately, we live in an era where our values are extremely externalized with regard to the material, psychological and spiritual dimensions of our lives. In our culture, “more” is decidedly better, genuine self-reflection is rare, and God or what the Native Americans would call the Great Mystery exists solely as a belief in a power that exists outside of our selves. *Phenomena*, or our relationship to the experiences of our outer lives, including how we use our left brains to analyze our options in order to *do* things, counts for just about everything. On the other hand, *noumena*, or our relationship to what arises within our inner lives, including how we use our right brains

Douglas and Olivia Rosestone



to contemplate our thoughts and feelings in order to *be* ourselves, counts for little, or nothing at all. Therefore, if we cannot measure what we pursue via our five senses in order to get some kind of immediate payoff, material or otherwise, whatever else we may reflect upon remains of very little importance. Yet, I believe that a great deal of this could change for the better if people were able to understand and take to heart the following:

For the past twenty years, Olivia and I have been using the Enneagram as a primary tool for personal and spiritual growth in our life coaching practice. We see men and women of all ages, both married and single.

For our purposes, we see that the Enneagram symbol acts as a blueprint for the way in which nine character archetypes com- ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

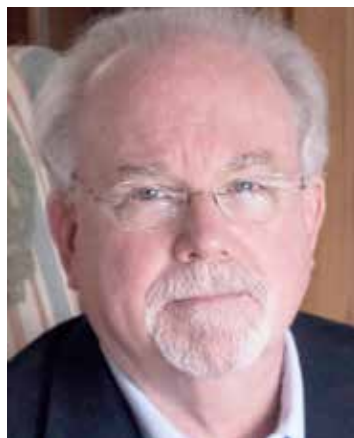
Enneagram Styles and the Cognitive Theory of George Kelly

George Kelly (1963) has been called the father of cognitive psychotherapy along with Aaron Beck, Albert Ellis, maybe the Greek philosopher Epictetus, who in the first century AD said it is not the event itself that determines our behavior but how we perceive the event, and even Evagrius, the fourth century monk who cataloged eight *logismoi*, a combination of thoughts and passions, which were later condensed into the Seven Capital Sins. How this paternity suit will be settled is not clear but, at least, Kelly is named as one of the fathers.

He developed his theory of personality and therapy in the middle of Kansas (where he was born) and in the middle of Ohio (where he taught at Ohio State) rather independently of other systems such as psychoanalysis and behaviorism.

Kelly’s metaphor, or construct, is we are all junior scientists trying to figure out our world so we can predict and control our envi-

Jerry Wagner, Ph. D.



ronment and the reactions our behavior will elicit from the environment (mostly our social environment.)

Kelly falls into the modernist *correspondence* tradition of critical realism which states we are continually updating our constructs or schemas or maps to approximate reality. As scientists we revise our hypotheses to fit the data. The postmodernist *constructivist* tradition, in contrast, says we can only be aware of the world as it appears in our mind (phenomena), not the world as it is in itself (noumena). So we create our world rather than discover the world. As artists we fashion a world congenial to our liking.

Kelly lays out his theory with a fundamental postulate and a set of corollaries that approximate unintelligibility. However when his logical English is translated into conversational English, it makes a lot of sense.

For example his **Fundamen-** ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

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A few days ago I was watching *Brain Games* on the *National Geographic* TV channel. It was about how much attention is placed on the object of focus and how little remains for the peripheral field of vision.

The setup: several alert looking male college students were to focus on a board marked with a large X that an attractive woman in cheerleader uniform (pink tutu) was holding in front of her.

The test subjects (one student at a time) were asked to keep looking at the X while two additional cheerleader uniform clad “women” approached, stood to the left and right next to the woman holding the X board for a few seconds, then walked away.

The Student was asked which of the two cheerleaders (also dressed in a pink tutu) that he had seen in his peripheral vision he would like to take out on a romantic date. His choice was noted and the experiment was repeated several more times, with different cheerleaders approaching the one holding the X. This experiment was repeated with several different students.

When the tally of their choices for dates was added up, all tested students had picked about an equal number of cheerleaders who had approached the X from the left as from the right.

The distance between the students and the cheerleaders was about 10’ (3 meters) and it was broad daylight. None of them had noticed that all “women” that approached the letter X holding cheerleader from the left side were actually robust, hairy legged, muscular males, some unshaven and a couple with beards...

The conclusion? We see what we want (or expect) to see. Apparently, we bundle about 90% of our focus (and that probably includes our analytical sense of discrimination) on the object of our attention which leaves only some 10% for the peripheral vision. Moreover, peripheral vision is favoring awareness of movement, rather than color or shape — obviously it developed this way given that for our survival, for example, it serves us better to notice the movement and speed of a car coming at us, rather than use precious micro-seconds on registering the color or model.

So what’s all this about? Well, in last month’s editorial, in the context of Claudio Naranjo returning to California to give a seminar, he may find many changes to what he was teaching in the early 70’s.... I was mentioning how the enneagram (or any other system for that matter) will quite naturally be distorted or personalized by the “brain games” each individual is hardwired to play, not necessarily in pursuit of any particular agenda. We can’t help to see the world and learn new subjects always already “pre-programmed” by our past experiences, awareness and ability to comprehend. We interpret and understand what we hear or see, based on who we are — creatures formed by the sum total of all our previous individual experiences. Like it or not, we develop a unique understanding and opinion about everything in life, including our faith, religion, philosophy or ideology.

Questions will and must arise when aspects of the enneagram are discussed or disputed. Are the arrows actually following a specific direction? Do the wings matter? How do subtypes relate to E-types. Did the

From the Editor

chicken or the egg come first?, etc.

Whatever answer we give to a question, it’s always tainted to some degree by who we are. And yet, there is also an “objective truth” which (due to its relative nature) can never be totally absolute, but for most intents and purposes is “workable,” a sort of “golden middle way.” So the question becomes one of selecting the best answers from an infinite pool of possibilities. And as curious Seekers After Truth, we’ll try to acquire as broad and profound a pool of knowledge as we can.

I believe this type of attitude towards research and pondering has a good chance of leading to wisdom. Wisdom therefore is not based on acquisition and retention of a lot of information but on our ability to be mentally nimble. Quite naturally we’ll want to test new information by comparing it with what we already know to be fairly (but never absolutely) true based on our own experience and understanding.

Like a muscle that needs to be flexed and stressed in order to grow, our mental capacity requires constant training to expand. Training can be hard and as children (we retain large parts of those qualities for as long as we live) we prefer to play. And yet, we are drafted to go to school and often forced to learn subjects we have no intention of working with later in life. For me it was Latin and Algebra that I resisted... and before that, being pulled away from playing with friends and forced to learn reading and writing... Now, decades later, I have come around to re-frame and appreciate that early “pain” as a useful sacrifice to help stretch my neural pathways. And, there were many uses where Latin came in handy. It helped me pick up French & Italian, muddle through some Spanish, make more sense of scientific and medical terminology... Come to think of it, given my interests later in life, I should have had Greek and Sanskrit as well, but if it was crammed down my throat as a child, I would have run away from home and school... Algebra was useful in confirming that mathematics is useless as a career of choice for me, although rudimentary calculations do come in useful when struggling with finances and taxes...

So, learning algebra ended up being purely and exercise to expand the neuroplasticity of my brain, whereas Latin trumped it in usefulness by supplying a basis for languages and communication.

You would not be reading this unless you were interested in psychology, philosophy, the realms of mind, soul and character. I assume that these interests are maybe peripheral but useful to the study of personality type, instincts and the enneagram. So let’s work at broadening our peripheral vision and encourage the growth of wisdom by stretching our awareness to including other well researched and distilled insights in related fields.

In this Issue:

Douglas and Olivia Rosestone think quite rightly that “Character and the Enneagram: *The Yoga of*

Relationship” would be immensely popular if we were living in more enlightened times. Not that we are living in some “dark age” where knowledge is not available, but rather that the modern lifestyle favors placing material and external needs into the foreground of our mind, leaving

genuine self-reflection and the notion of God or purpose of life in the background — as if *that* was outside of ourselves or peripheral to the main focus in our existence.

Douglas and Olivia see the nine character archetypes as the building blocks of human character (not to be mistaken for clusters of changeable personality traits). Our *individual* archetypal styles are analogous to the original, hardwired designs of computers that translate, interpret, direct, manage, and referee our individual responses or “run” our applications like a “Unix” operating system or “Windows,” etc.

Archetypes are recurring themes and patterns in the human psyche. At various times in our history, and among various cultures recurring themes were observed that gave rise to systems of Astrology, the I Ching, Tarot, the Runes and others. All such systems were designed to help us reconcile the inner and the outer aspects of our lives. So that instead of being at odds with each other, they would work together in concert. Having this capacity would allow us to grow on many levels to reach our potential: physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

Don’t let the dry title of “Enneagram Styles and the Cognitive Theory of George Kelly” fool you into believing that **Jerry Wagner** will set aside his ram-bunctious sense of humor describing the playful variety of choices and schemas different types employ for tackling life’s situations. As we well know, the enneagram styles make us see the world through a lens tinted by our type, just like the parable of Nine Blind Men (of Hindu, Jain or Sufi lore, long before John Godfrey Saxe’s poem) who were groping an elephant and each reporting a different description. Not to be outdone, scientists when they grope a subject may come to similarly varied conclusions as the nine blind men.

George Kelly took notice of that, made a study of it, and came to the conclusion that scientists indeed have types of bias he classified into eight categories. That did not escape Jerry’s sharp eye. He immediately saw the strong resemblance to the Enneagram styles and even wrote about some of this in his book *Nine Lenses on the World, the Enneagram Perspective* (2010). But he leaves it to the reader to decide whether, in linking Kelly and the Enneagram, he is approximating reality in the correspondence tradition or just making it up in the constructivist tradition.

In memoriam of **Gloria Davenport** we have “Subtypes Revisited Part2” and two articles that reflect the evolution of her thinking (4 years later, 2005) after continuous work on her book about the History of the Enneagram Movement. Gloria was constantly studying, comparing and updating the theories of “everyone who’s anyone” in the enneagram field of publishing/teaching. She put in a lot of pain and effort trying to establish an accurate line of ‘credit’ for

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For subscription and advertising rates see back cover.

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who came up with *what* and *when* of the fast growing body of knowledge. She went back in history to pre-Ichazo/Naranjo rather murky times into the rare references relating to the enneagram by George Gurdjieff, Raimundus Lullus, Evagrius Ponticus and possible connections to Sufi or Greek sources.

Gloria used her Ph. D. in Philosophy in Education well and did an enormous amount of research also in a more "horizontal" direction comparing the concepts of instinctual subtypes for example, with current findings among more recent and contemporary leaders in psychology and philosophy. As a good type One, Gloria kept discovering that with each new answer came additional questions that required satisfaction. Her book continued to grow and grow over 10+ years. I'm trying to track down most of this material which is with her family I suppose, and in the meantime we can only offer a couple of excerpts that Gloria submitted some nine years ago: "Confusing Instincts and Subtypes" is as the title suggests an update on the earlier (2001) series of *Subtypes Revisited*.

And, what would the enneagram teach us if we could not detect a strong craving for perfection and integrity in Gloria's concern about the "Misuse of the Enneagram of Personality??" I'm sure that she added the question marks at the end of the title as a self-corrective gesture, being fully aware of her predilection towards extra-strong opinions about what it means to be ethical...

"The Romantic—Detective (4-6) Relationship" from **Jennifer Schneider** and **Ron Corn's** *Understand Yourself, Understand Your Partner: The Essential Enneagram Guide to a Better Relationship*.

Fours and Sixes share a few traits, fear of commitment would be one, but for different reasons. The Romantic is afraid of opening up to being abandoned while the Detective is afraid to open up and getting hurt. Both will be struggling with maintaining enough distance to feel safe. There can be a lot of push and pull with intimacy, resulting in a nervous

climate, like a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs [sorry, that just slipped in and has nothing to do with most 4-6 relationships...well, maybe anyway].

A Detective, in order to take the first step in moving toward intimacy must come up with an amazing amount of courage, a huge leap of faith, stepping off into what surely feels like the abyss. But once the doubts are set aside there are a lot of benefits that love and commitment will provide.

Whereas for the Romantic their trepidation has to do with fear of abandonment – imagine allowing someone to see you warts-and-all and not expect them to flee?

Both types share a quest for "truth" (6) and what is "real" (4). This relationship will thrive on mutual loyalty where fears of abandonment and betrayal are no longer an issue.

"Nine Gardens: *Worthy Me and Not Me*" by **Amy Zoll** continues with the metaphor for exploring the nine enneagram patterns of ego that contain both

positive and negative tendencies or pairs of opposites that form our personality. Type Three, Four and Five's personality patterns each with its own ideas about what is good and bad, right and wrong, desirable and undesirable, or worthy and unworthy are on the menu this month.

Amy encourages us to be like a gardener, who cultivates the desirable tendencies and to mulch out of sight the weeds we perceive as undesirable. Why not just import the desirable tendencies and rip out the undesirables ones? Well, if it was that easy we'd have long unemployment lines of counselors, coaches, teachers and gurus. The problem is that undesirable traits are often fed by the same energy that also feeds our desirable traits. So to "get rid of them" would mean to risk forfeiting the benefits of desirable traits. So, nothing is what it may seem on the surface and like a good dentist we have to make repairs with refined tools using some Novocain if needed, and not try to rush the process with a pliers & hammer approach.

Understanding the Enneagram's 27 Instinctual Subtypes (Part 2):

Working With Your Subtype to Achieve Greater Self-Knowledge and Personal Growth

with Beatrice Chestnut, Ph.D.

CHICAGO May 3 & 4, 2014 Sat. 9:00–4:00 Sun. 10:15–4:45

In this 2-day workshop, you will learn to recognize and work with the specific personality characteristics of the 27 subtypes as seminal Enneagram author and teacher Claudio Naranjo has defined them in his most recent work. Through lecture, group discussion, exercises, and narrative panels, we will explore the nuanced insights about ourselves we get when we understand the subtype level of the Enneagram personality framework. We will investigate how learning our subtype and its dynamic operation in everyday life opens up a whole

new level of self-understanding and opportunities for transformation.

This seminar builds on the introductory subtypes workshop but you will still profit from this transforming applications Part 2 even if you haven't attended Part 1.

12 CE's are available for social workers and LCPC's.

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