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Issue 210

The Enneagram, Loss and Grief

The Inspiring Path to Transformation, Freedom and Living Love

David Daniels M.D.

Brief Review of The Enneagram System of Nine Personality types

The Enneagram gifts us with a powerful and dynamic personality system that describes nine distinct and fundamentally different patterns of thinking, feeling and acting (“ennea” simply is Greek for nine). We each view the world through a set of lenses or filters that limit our experience and perspective. We see a slice of reality, but not the full 360-degree view. As we were growing up, each one of us developed one of these nine sets of filters or patterns over our mind, heart, and body as an adaptive strategy to hopefully assure a satisfactory life and to protect aspects of our essential self that felt threatened. Underneath each pattern or Enneagram type is a basic proposition (set of beliefs and processes) about what we need in life to meet our three basic needs for love, security and worth and hence a satisfactory life. These underlying propositions profoundly shape our view and ways of dealing with loss, death, and grieving. ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 19



Introduction

The ways we deal with the dying process or loss and with grief are fundamental to how we personally develop and live life fully. Here I present: (1) the key elements of the grief process including the four existential truths, the corresponding four spiritual pains and healing, and how these relate to our three centers of intelligence; (2) the universal and Enneagram type specific ways of working with loss and grief; (3) my personal experience with loss and grief, and (4) my concluding thoughts and understanding on immortality. *As you read this work, do give yourself the time to stop and reflect on these key elements in the loss and grief process especially as these relate to your own personality type structure.*

Night Visions: The Enneagram and Dreams

Out of the straits I called “YaH” Who answered me with spacious freedom divine

Howard Avruhm Addison

that dreams serve two functions. One is to compensate for imbalances of attitudes and behavior in our waking lives. If we have become overly intellectual or emotional, driven or unmotivated our unconscious sends us dream images to draw our attention to the opposite modality that we might consciously rebalance our lives. Dreams and their images also can play a complementary role, calling us to recognize, embrace or, at times, be wary of disregarded, devalued or repressed aspects of our selves.² Through these two functions dreams can provide us with intimations of possible futures if we integrate these currently unconscious elements into our conscious lives and warn us of potential consequences if we don't.³

As anyone who has ever dreamed (meaning everyone, as current studies indicate⁴) knows, dreams speak in the language of metaphor and image, usually in non linear and sometimes fantastic ways. As a twelfth century Jewish mystical/ethical text, *The Book of the Pious*, asserts:

...the symbolic imagery ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



These words, found in Psalm 118, echo the plea of one caught in life's narrow places, one who is impoverished or enslaved, seemingly trapped with nowhere to turn. Many of us can identify with these sentiments, even if we live in physical comfort or relative freedom. As we in the Enneagram community know, the “straits” which most readily trap us are our customary ways of seeing the world and responding to it. Constrained by our own narrow perspectives and habitual life scripts, we all too often react to the same stimuli with the same ingrained responses, even when they're no longer effective or beneficial. We might not be religious but, like the Psalmist, we too long for “Spacious Freedom Divine” and search for the openness and breadth of vision to achieve it.

Dream Work can provide us with a vital avenue to expand of our viewpoints and repertoire of responses. Carl Jung asserted

In This Issue

Part 2 Conversation with
Michael Damian
page 4

Enneagram for Teens
Elizabeth Wagele
page 8

Three/Four Couple
J. Schneider / R. Corn
page 11

Epilogue to L.I.A.
David Banner
page 12

New on EM's
Facebook
page 14

Letters

Dave Daniels' article on Harmony Triads is most interesting. Three equilateral triangles within a circle is an ancient symbol. Could the enneagram have been derived from this symbol?

If two lines are re-positioned - 2-5 to 2-4 and 7-4 to 7-5 - we have the current enneagram.

I must confess I've never understood Gurdjieff's idea of "lawful inexactitude." Could this be a prime example of "lawful inexactitude?"

Ed McInnis, Braintree MA

Frederic and Bernedette Schmitt's article on Constitution and Enneagram makes a good case for why typing is actually quite complicated. If we mainly rely on simple paper and pencil tests we are basically typing our mind only, missing other aspects of who we are.

Thanks for doing an excellent job of pulling Mind, Energy and Body into the mix, and tying it so effectively to traditional principles of wisdom and medicine.

Jonah Whales, Halifax NS Canada

Last month we encouraged readers to participate with comments or suggestions on the topic of "Enneagram and Constitution" by **Frederic and Bernadette Schmitt**. Their article (issue, #209) is also on the *EM* website <http://www.enneagram-monthly.com/up-for-discussion.html> and anyone, subscriber or not, is welcome to join the conversation on this subject by going to Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/332800796873243> or emailing your thoughts directly to the *EM*.

My experience with technicalities of Facebook and electronic media is rather limited to a laconic "need to know" level, and I believe some of the settings and links last month were rather confusing or dysfunctional...well, that's hopefully corrected (with the help of a computer genius). So please read that article, and then come to the Facebook Group for comments.

In this Issue:

David Daniels addresses a theme that is close to all and yet rarely mentioned in these pages: "The Enneagram, Grief and Loss: *The Inspiring Path to Transformation, Freedom and Living Love*." His article is an invitation to reflect upon key elements in the loss and grief process as it relates to the character structure of your own type. David covers four key elements of existential truths, including the corresponding four spiritual pains and healing, and (1) how these relate to our three centers of intelligence; (2) the universal and Enneagram type specific ways of working with loss and grief; (3) his personal experience with loss and grief, and (4) his concluding thoughts and understanding of immortality.

David then summarizes the salient points that play a role in each type structure aside from the universal factors common to all.

Another subject that is close to all and equally

Jane Welzel, 59, beloved friend and Narrative Enneagram teacher from Ft. Collins, Colorado, died August 31st five months after receiving a pancreatic cancer diagnosis. If you've seen the "Breaking Out of the Box" video, Jane is the Six exemplar, five-time Olympic Marathon Trials participant, who after a severe car accident left her in a body cast for three months, came back to run marathons. They said she would never walk yet run again at the time, but they didn't know Jane. Her loving and fierce determination made her a champion in many of our hearts. When Jane quit running professionally, she became a psychotherapist and Enneagram teacher, continuing to share her many gifts.

Jane's close friends (she was blessed by amazing care in Doug and Steve), Enneagram family, and running circle, made a huge impact on her final months. She was surrounded by endless love allowing her heart to open in truly beautiful ways. Jane was a feisty soul and we're sure she's stirring the pot wherever she is. We will miss you dear, dear friend and you will always remain "our Jane."



This summer, local runners gathered at CSU's Jack Christiansen Track for one of Jane Welzel's "Tuesday Night Track" sessions. They formed a heart of love around Welzel. (Photo: Courtesy of Doug Mason)

From the Editor

rarely talked about is "Night Visions: The Enneagram and Dreams." **Howard Avruhm Addison** takes a look at life's narrow places, where we may feel impoverished or enslaved, seemingly trapped with nowhere to turn. Many of us can identify with these sentiments, even if we live in physical comfort or relative freedom. This is about our customary ways of seeing the world and responding to it in a constrained way by our own narrow perspectives and habitual life scripts, especially when they're no longer effective or beneficial.

Dream Work can provide us with a vital avenue to expand our viewpoints and repertoire of responses. According to Carl Jung dreams serve two functions. One is to compensate for imbalances of attitudes and behavior in our waking lives. For example if we have become overly intellectual or emotional, driven or unmotivated. Our dream images may serve to draw our attention to the opposite modality so that we might consciously rebalance our lives. Dreams may also play a complementary role, calling attention to the need to embrace or, at times, be wary of disregarded, devalued or repressed aspects of our selves.

Given that dreams speak in the language of metaphor and image (usually in non linear and sometimes fantastic ways), it takes a special kind of mental flexibility and awareness of our characteristic predispositions to hear their message.

Howard has been exploring how the Enneagram might help us to discern what is being shown in the dream ...and for what its symbols might stand, by combining certain contemporary dream interpretation techniques with insights from Enneagram theory.

"Conversation with **Michael Damian** part 2" gave **Jack Labanauskas** and **Sueann McKean** with an assist of **Somik Raha** a chance to go deeper into exploring what it means to be awakened and in touch with essence or pure consciousness. Michael responds to our questions about common misconceptions about spirituality.

For example, when people have a lot of nasty, divisive thoughts and feelings in their mind and want to overcome this condition, the mistaken conclusion is that if thinking and perceiving differences is what created this false self and conflict in the world, then surely we can reach oneness by not thinking, by not having a mind. This is the false "no mind" idea of enlightenment. We see this delusion in the hippy movement that arises anew in every generation of teenagers. It is an attempt to find freedom by refusing to develop the intellect and the will, and to identify only with energy, sensation, and emotion. As we can see, this only creates a dull mind that resents society for forcing it out of the ignorant bliss of childhood. Many yogis adopt a more sophisticated version of this, believing that enlightenment is a blissful, sustained samadhi.

Another misconception is the idea that feeling is superior to thinking. In fact we need skillful thinking to inform feeling. If our thinking is unrefined, our feelings will also remain primitive and untrustworthy. The goal is not to have a dead mind, but rather a liberated and luminous mind.

The mind does not need to be removed and it can't be. All that needs to happen is for the false belief in separateness to be removed from the mind, so that the intellect is put in line with truth. And we are not talking here of a pseudo-removal, that's what political correctness is all about and the idea that we can liberate humanity by censoring thought and language itself, making certain ideas and words wrong.

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For subscription and advertising rates see back cover.

The Enneagram, Loss and Grief.	David Daniels	1
Night Visions: <i>The Enneagram and Dreams</i>	Howrd Avruhm Addison	1
Letters		2
From the Editor.	Jack Labanauskas	2
Conversation with Michael Damian Part 2	Jack Labanauskas, Sueann McKean, Somik Raha	4
The Enneagram for Teens	Elizabeth Wagele	8
The Achiever-Romantic (Three-Four) Couple	Jennifer Schneider & Ron Corn	11
An Epilogue to <i>Loving It All</i>	David Banner	12
What's on EM's Facebook	Various Contributors	14
Teacher's Listing		23
Subscription Forms and Ad Rates		24



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We shut down objectivity and truthfulness in the name of politeness all the time. We do this because we cannot see how to reach peace except through the relativism that flattens the world by rejecting all hierarchy of values.

Elizabeth Wagele just published her latest charming and well illustrated book “The Enneagram For Teens,” and not a moment too soon, if we want to get the attention of the younger generation(s). After having placed so much focus on issues plaguing seasoned seekers after truth, we often forget that the search for truth is probably most active in teenage years. But in our cultures much of youth is filled in pursuit of practical issues of adaptation, hormones and choosing a future. With an entire life ahead, it's easy to lose sight of the forest, what with all those trees... A good time to have a road map and a compass is at the beginning of a journey and *The Enneagram For Teens* is perfect for that.

Jennifer Schneider and **Ron Corn** see how “The Achiever - Romantic (Three-Four) Couple” both being in the heart (or image) triad or center, are very tuned into how other people perceive them. Achievers want to be seen as successful and accomplished, whereas Romantics want to come across as unique or special. Helen Palmer refers to this combination as “successful elegance.” Threes' inner world is filled with thoughts of their work and how they are perceived outside, whereas the interior of the Four is focused on feelings and inner dramas, i.e. mostly with relationships. The practical Threes help Fours connect with reality and the outside world, follow through on their goals and get things done; while Fours help Threes get more in touch with feelings, how to “take it slowly, relax, savor the beauty” and not to lose touch with the dark side of life.

David Banner wrote “An Epilogue to Loving It All” which is concentrated substance summing up the content and objectives of his book. David encourages us to understand and adopt the advantages in life that come from *living with an awakening heart*. It's easier said than done, you may say, but David makes a good case for how minimal the effort is compared to the value of the benefits; and he describes many effective ways in which we can facilitate this experience.

It begins of course with clarity about our ego's role and with the cultivation of the *Mother of All Remedies* to life's ailments... *GRATITUDE*. •

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