



# enneagram monthly

May 2016

Issue 226

## A Self-Aware School Leader:

### Nine Enneagram-Informed Views of the Principalship

In our work together as university professors, as well as in our former roles as school district administrators, we have found the Enneagram to be a powerful tool to aid our students (all aspiring school principals or supervisors) in achieving greater clarity of communication, enhancing conflict resolution skills, and understanding inner motivation of others and, importantly, self. Many of our students agree. Very preliminary results of our ongoing research centering on our students' perceptions of the Enneagram's impact on their leadership suggest most potential participants crave even more intense utilization of the model in their coursework.

While we lean heavily on some experts in our classrooms (Chestnut, 2013; Lapid-Bogda, 2004; Riso & Hudson, 1999; Wagner & Walker, 1983), a few years ago we also began developing school leader-

**Tom A. Stewart, EdD and Gary W. Houchens, PhD**



specific profiles for each Enneagram type. We found that these profiles, presented in a school/school district context, provided vivid examples of type-specific behavior manifestation in our students' current or prospective workplace environments. Our hope is that this synthesis of the completed work can now serve as a guide for other prospective or current school leaders seeking to improve or enhance their leadership by using the Enneagram.

#### The Perfection Seeker

In our first profile of Enneagram types as school leaders, we examine the Type One, commonly known as the "Perfectionist" or "Reformer." In our own work, we have begun to emphasize that the key difference

among types is *motivation*, or what we "seek" from work, relationships, and life in general. In this sense, we call the Type One the ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

## How Free Are We to Speak Our Mind?

We live in a time and with access to technology that offers an infinity of ways to communicate and exchange ideas. Great. But this comes, as do most things with its own rules of natural balance within the laws of yin and yang. The expansion in volume of communication had a collateral effect of dilution and shallowness. In the old days to write a letter or an article required settling in, getting our gear together, compose our thoughts, put them on paper, stick it into an envelope and take it to a mailbox — not something we'd do at the spur of the moment. Today much communication happens on the run; we scan a text, key in a reply and send via email or text message.

#### Jack Labanauskas

##### Quantity & Quality Changes in Relating Style

A. The tsunami of trivia communicated electronically requires us to rapidly "skim" for useful kernels of information.

B. A fundamental change is taking place in the way we relate with each other. In pre-electronic device days we had access to a more local and smaller universe of friends but our connections would happen on multiple levels. For example, being face to face offered a glimpse into the other person's energy, appearance, mannerism, along with their spoken words. We'd automatically take

all these factors into consideration as well as the meaning of the words. Today, it's mostly the meaning of the words on an electronic screen or on paper that we're left with.

Even hearing the voice on a phone or reading handwriting offers us additional information. Our voice as is our handwriting are generated by involuntary impulses that get filtered, molded and translated into movement. The movement is a meaningful (visual) synopsis of who we are to the graphologically trained eye, while less experienced eyes still get an impression of the writer by noticing precision, aesthetics, neatness... the tone of voice will also speak ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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A short editorial as I said enough in my appeal to people who who have reasons for holding back from writing and prefer to remain anonymous. Free Speech is what all progress is build on. You are codially invited to jump in, the water is warm.

#### In This Issue:

**Tom A. Stewart, EdD** and **Gary W. Houchens, PhD** are University professors, as well as experienced school district administrators, who made a study of the characteristics each enneagram type can bring to make a good principal.” A Self-Aware School Leader: *Nine Enneagram-Informed Views of the Principalship.*”

They found the Enneagram to be a powerful tool to aid students, teachers and school principals in achieving greater clarity of communication, enhancing conflict resolution skills, and understanding inner motivation of others. All ingredients that are crucial for effective teaching, keeping high standards while maintaining harmony between faculty, administration and students.

Going through all 9 enneagram types, they illustrate the strengths and inclinations of each type as well as areas that need special consideration and understanding. Tom and Gary offer excellent tips on how to deal with personal quirks that could cause frictions effectively. Most bothersome type-specific behaviors can be neutralized if we understand and learn how to re-directed them to the advantage of all. An excellent synopsis for school leaders seeking to improve their leadership by using the Enneagram.

“How Free Are We to Speak Our Mind?” is a question nagging **Jack Labanauskas** for as long as he can remember. The Founders wanted to protect freedom of speech at all costs and made it the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. This freedom allows for exchange of ideas, comparing theories, values, discoveries etc. Any infringement with very few

## From the Editor

enumerated exceptions (like shouting “FIRE” in a crowded theater, inciting violence, sedition or illegal revealing of secrets) should be discouraged.

Self-censoring speech for the sake of politeness, respect, or protecting privacy and safety is laudable, but must be our choice and not be imposed by bullying. Disagreeable ideas should be overcome by persuasion and not by silencing those with opposing opinions.

So many perfectly sensible thoughts end up suppressed or watered down in an effort to avoid offending the hyper sensitive who want protection from exposure to ideas different from their own.

Historically authors have used an alias for their books of controversial contents. We offer a similar option today and a way for anyone to publish good ideas and maintain anonymity if they so choose.

The “Giver and Observer (Two-Five Couple)” make a case for the attraction of opposites. **Jennifer Schneider** and **Ron Corn** show us how this coupling requires some flexibility on both sides to compliment and tolerate their differences. Balance is available when both respect and value each other.

Givers bring the heart to the table, and Observers bring logic to the relationship. Not to say that either was automatically lacking in these qualities. Just that in general, Givers are more expansive and extroverted than Observers who tend to be more contracted. The focus of Givers includes or is mostly on other people; Observers are comfortable with paying attention to their internal processes and may require more alone time. As with all opposite but complimentary couples, the good qualities of each will balance those of the other and together provide a combination that enriches both.

In recent issues much focus was on the Three Centers. It’s time for reasons of completeness to bring back **Antonio Barbato**. His profound insights into how experiences in early childhood become instrumental in the transition “From Essence to Birth of Ego” are unique and priceless.

Antonio just published a handsome volume of his massive research of many years. It is full of captivating real life examples that make it hard to put the book down. *The Enneagram of the Original Wound* [actually: *L’Enneagramma della Ferita Originaria*] goes deep into the role and nature of Instincts, the Polarity of Passions and many distinctive and illuminating descriptions of the Enneagram types.

It’s currently available in Italian and we are looking for someone to translate it into English (I’m too slow and busy to take on more than an occasional excerpt) Email me or Antonio <antoniobarbato@enneagramma.info> if you have a suggestion. Antonio’s article in this issue will give you a taste of the material.

“What Type am I, and Why?” are short essays by graduate students at Sofia University in Psychology. These are well prepared future counselors that are thoroughly familiar with numerous approaches and theories about the nature of mind, personality and inner dynamics etc. They bring a highly alert sensibility as well as a trained critical eye to the enneagram. Teaching this class was a very satisfying and instructive learning experience for us and we certainly learned as much as we taught. Part of the homework for the course were these answers. The question was to write about why they think they are a certain type, how they came to the conclusion and what questions have remained open, if any. Everyone could choose how to answer.

**Rena Robinson-Steiner, Shelia Kataria “Tasia” Watkins, Shilpa Jhingan** and **Kim Maree** each come from very different backgrounds and bring their unique perspectives. •

# How Free are We to Speak . . .

volumes to an attentive ear...

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### Communication by Print Only

Limited to seeing print on paper or screen, we try to extrapolate all the observations missing, that would have been there when interacting with a live person. Still, we do get an idea about the depth of thought, level of education, ethics and worldview. But, every word is naked as it comes with no mitigating or supportive gestures, tone of voice or expressions. There is no added nuance to what is written. In other words, we rely solely on words for interpreting the thinking, feeling and energy of the writer.

This “thin” or one dimensional channel of written words alone becomes the be-all end-all for judging a person’s meaning, character, nature and ideology. So, to be evaluated by writing alone makes what we write extra meaningful, even dangerous as we risk being “labeled,” misunderstood or misinterpreted.

### Political Correctness vs. Creative Thought

As publisher/editor of the Enneagram Monthly, I

get to hear brilliant opinions, observations or insights and often prod people to write about their point. Many light up at that prospect and agree but for various reasons end up not doing it. I used to think it’s apathy or being busy, but that is not the main reason since it is natural to want to share cherished ideas and most will gladly find time and make the effort. I believe now that many fear being attacked for not having the correct view or opinion and become defensive due to repressive speech codes and political correctness.

### Risks to Certain Professionals

Communicating with friends and subscribers who love the enneagram and use it professionally in counseling, business, or for their own purpose, I hear appreciation for how simple and easy it is to have instant communications with anyone and anywhere in the world. Some took to this media, and participated (mostly cautiously, some abusing it for self-promotion, others defending what they are passionate about or against), but most stayed incognito, reading

without commenting. Quiet readers and active communicators all shared mixed feelings about speaking their mind. The reservations most often mentioned can be summed up as:

1. Most conversation threads that start out substantive, can get watered down with shallow comments if there is no monitoring and standards to ensure a fair exchange of ideas.

2. Posters who disagree with a stated point, may become aggressive, personal or rude. Emotions enter where clear thinking is needed.

3. It is risky to express your opinion that are not politically correct or go against orthodoxy/beliefs in other cultures. *EM* and Facebook have international readership culturally “wise or otherwise” and may find your comments unacceptable, offensive, or reflecting ill on your character. A too common impulse when the subjects are political candidates, elections, ideologies, or other themes near and dear to us.

4. Rather than keeping the discussion on the

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The Enneagram Monthly, Inc. was founded by Jack Labanauskas and Andrea Isaacs as a not-for-profit corporation. Its purpose is to gather and disseminate information in the field of the Enneagram, that is most commonly known as a personality typing system.

For subscription and advertising rates see back cover.

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merits of an idea, some may pass judgment on the character or level of intelligence of the one expressing an opinion, misunderstanding the original purpose completely.

5. People who feel their understanding threatened may choose to defend their intellectual comfort zone by impugning opposing viewpoints rather than making a case for their idea as they fear to be misunderstood and not allowed to express what they think fully.

6. Authors/teachers who have already established a "brand/reputation" by advocating certain positions, are worried that expressing doubts or by changing their earlier views, they will be perceived as incompetent rather than as open minded "seekers-after-truth." That could be bad for business.

7. The most common fear is to be seen as holding principles that are disagreeable to our circle of friends, family, students or clients... or, you may live in an environment or have a profession where you are expected to follow strict rules that only allow a specific set of considerations where personality, instincts, type etc. are not seen as acceptable. For example: religious or legal professions, jury selection, judges, power of attorney or competence evaluations; psychological or medical evaluations as in custody cases, social work, family counseling, divorce issues etc. These are people who are in direct contact with the most crucial and life altering decisions but are sworn to secrecy and tight professional standards of confidentiality. It would be a great loss of we can't find a way to use their wisdom without compromising their privacy.

8. For every strongly held belief we have, there will be others who believe the opposite. By not en-

gaging in a free and open discussion, we are less likely to sway those who may be wrong towards our point of view; or, if we realize to be wrong, gratefully accept the better point of view.

9. How about a safe place for posters to say what they really think, without having to walk on egg shells or tie ourselves into knots trying to be diplomatic and not offend anyone.

**How do we get around these Reservations**

One way to remedy this situation will require some editing submissions before posting them (this can apply for the printed edition of EM as well as all electronic versions). You will have to trust me for that part, as Facebook does not allow setting up of accounts under a pseudonym, the simplest way around it would work like this:

1. You email me jack@guna.us (nobody else has access to my email), requesting an anonymous alias to post on the "Enneagram Monthly Group". I will assign you a pseudonym (only you and I know). For example let's call you (A-18). So, future posts you want to be anonymous, email them to me, I post them as: *me posting for you...* (A-18). Someone else will be (A-19) etc... nobody except me will know who any of the (A-#) are.

2. You can of course continue posting under your own name directly on the Facebook group as usual, and only when preferring to be discreet, email you post to me and I'll post it as you (A-18) . Your choice. If some day you want to reveal your identity that's entirely up to you.

3. You could also have more than one (A-#) identity. If this gets too confusing or crazy for me, I will let you know and we can decide how to remedy

the situation.

Of course I have to read every anonymous post before posting it and edit if needed. I assume that posting under an alias should not to be used for innocent or trivial banter. It's for serious discussion.

Normal standards continue to apply. If a post happens to be disrespectful towards other posters, authors etc. or not relevant to the subject discussed, I'll let you know and ask you to modify your statement. You can always bypass this step and post directly under your own name, in which case I or an administrator will have the option to deal with the post as a regular administrator.

Current and new posters/authors or members can simply continue doing as before. This anonymous feature is your choice entirely. When, or if, you choose to discontinue posting, your A-# will never be given to someone else and remains yours, should you in future want to use it again.

As the founder, publisher and editor in chief of the *Enneagram Monthly* I have tried to maintain standards for the past 22 years. My aim was to have a forum for the enneagram community with minimal editorial intervention; to be as neutral and open as possible to all schools of the enneagram, all teachers, authors, theories and opinions. It is my intention to maintain the same attitude and resolution dealing with the *Enneagram Monthly*, the *Website*, *Facebook Group* and *Page*.

I hope you can trust me enough to give it a shot and see how it goes. I would expect that opening the door for more heartfelt opinion with a greatly reduced possibility of unwanted consequences will make up for the additional annoying indirect way of having your voice heard while your identity stays protected. •