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Space & Time: Dimensions of Existence

How many opportunities in life are missed by being in the right place at the wrong time and at the wrong place at the right time?

Jack Labanauskas

changes to help the process of living life with awareness and wisdom.

A balanced understanding of time and space must include knowing *who* we are, as well as *when* we need to be proactive or when to wait. Students of the enneagram are well aware of the importance of knowing who they are, what motivates and supports as well as what hinders or hurts them. But the enneagram has no answers to the timing of when changes can be expected, what their nature may be, or how long they will last. These types of answers require developing some divinatory¹ or prophetic skills along with psychology or typology studies. A bird needs *two* wings to fly no matter how well *one* of those wings is developed. Let's look at both wings separately, first the nature and scope of the enneagram and then at timing the



how many ways of characterizing, grouping or categorizing there are. That's why there are so many typing systems.



We are aware of how complex human nature is and

For many the enneagram "hit the spot" giving the experience of being deeply seen and understood. What a gift to learn a system that triggers insights into how well sorted and organized personality patterns are in ourselves and others. This can feed a journey of discovery for years. But we live in a universe that is in constant flux — we change, and so does our environment. And it makes a huge difference if we happen to be living in sync with those changes or not. At this point we can see the benefits of adding a system like Astrology, Biorhythms or Chronobiology to our self-knowledge toolkit.

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Vignettes of Type Characteristics

Ones: Loosening Rigidities

Tom Condon

ture pillar of strength.

AOne client of mine was an accomplished business consultant. Whatever she attempted professionally turned out well, because she did it with finesse, focus and skill. At forty years old, Susan had been so successful that she could already retire but she still felt compelled to work.

She had grown up in a competence vacuum. Her father had deserted the family early in her life, and she had been a substitute companion and provider to her feckless mother, a heavy drinker who often acted helpless and Fourishly depressed.

Susan was bored with her career and felt as if a large part of her self was missing. She had few friends or interests and was beginning to long acutely for more of a complete life.

She was also intensely self-critical. In social circumstances, for instance, she would judge her every gesture and remark. For years she had been driven by a narrow sense of duty and had tightly controlled her own behavior. This strategy had helped her suppress her own needs and play the role of family provider and pre-

Susan was beginning to drink too much alcohol and was alarmed by the fact. When she drank, however, she relaxed, became playful and revealed a side of her character that delighted others. She wanted to be able to access those qualities without drinking.

I asked her to do an exercise during social dinners and business lunches. While dining with a friend or associate, Susan had to contrive a way to deliberately drop a fork on the floor and make it look like an accident. Then she had to reach down, pick it up, and put it back on the table.

As simple as this exercise sounds, the prospect of doing it initially horrified her. Susan went to several lunches before she could even try it. When she finally dropped her first fork, the experience was as bad as she had feared. Profoundly embarrassed she leaned over to pick up the fork, feeling the tips of her ears burning with shame. She stammered, "I'm sorry," to her companions and put the fork back on the table. The conversation resumed; no one seemed to care about the fork but it took Susan a while to recover. Her inner critic

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Dear Jack,

first of all I would like to thank you and your colleagues for publishing the *EM* and caring for it under your wing for so many years. I can only begin to imagine how much effort and passion for these ideas that must take. There is nothing comparable in Europe and so I'm glad to follow the discussions and insights as a subscriber.

Your article "How free are we to speak..." in the last issue has now led me to give up on just silently reading, and to write this letter to you as editor. Your analysis of the situation is astute and I agree in all respects. The internet (Facebook & blogging) has substantially changed our communication habits which is a blessing and a curse at once. My silence up to now is caused by the fact that I belong to one of the professions you're talking about and it's important to me to protect my privacy. As a result, I steer clear of social networks. Also, I'm not a native English speaker and hence cautious with remarks on complex topics. Your proposal to post on Facebook via you re-posting it anonymously, plus having potentially unclear language in the contributions edited solves those problems.

The lure and advantage of cyber-communication are obvious: a transcontinental, worldwide exchange in real-time that furthers the exploration and advancement of the enneagram. If we want to achieve that, we probably have to remind ourselves of shared principles from time to time to avoid the pitfalls so common in this form of communication. The enneagram helps us to understand the diversity and variety

The *Enneagram Monthly* has been pretty much at the center of our community, along with the IEA, several schools, teachers and authors. For the past 22 years it has been and remains a forum open to ideas big and small about the nature of individuality and the origins of personality. A hundred or more authors contributed over a thousand articles. It's fair to say that most cutting edge ideas in the field either first appeared here or were discussed in our pages.

We've had comments from readers, some published, but most were little notes sent along with the renewals of subscriptions and emails opining about some article or other and countless hours on the phone discussing the latest theories, brainstorming, answering questions or just listening to woes and gripes.

All in all, I'd say we've had our finger on the pulse of the community. In our pages are published the ideas of fellow enneagrammers and we noticed shifts in perceptions that went from seeing type as an affliction, a fixation to be overcome, that softened over the years to a more acceptable and positive or neutral expression of individuality; we reported too the creative applications of the system, of possible pitfalls and of ways to improve. There were multiple attempts to correlate and make connections to other systems like *MBTI*, *Graphology*, *Numerology*, *Four Temperaments*, *Yin and Yang*, *Five Elements*, *Four Elements*, *Three Ayurvedic Doshas*, *Three Sheldon body types*, *Morphopsychology*, *Brain Chemistry*, *Electroencephalogram*,

Letters

of personality traits as enrichment and not just as "incidental" (aside from the fact that we are at different levels of understanding what the enneagram is or how it should be used). The *IEAs* "Ethical Code" provides us with a clear framework for dealing with the enneagram that everyone can agree with.

In my opinion, we need to be mindful of the attitude we bring to this discussion. Do I present my point of view placing importance on "being right", or do I really want to understand in what ways others may think differently? Am I interested in advancing ideas even if it would take me out of my personal comfort-zone? Do I bear in mind my own enneagram type's biased perspective... (or by what other name we may call that in our particular enneagram-school – do we have here yet another opening for traps and presuppositions)? The cost for answers to these questions is EGO-reduction. But if we take into consideration the distortions and contradictions in some teachings and books, and the early inconsistencies in the teachings after the enneagram had been taught only orally for so many years? That might help us to bring enough patience, mindfulness and indulgence to this comparatively young internet medium and its communicative ramifications.

The last *EM* featured a lead article about school leaders and the effects of their enneagram-pattern/-type on their work. That article matches my personal

experience entirely. A leader sets the climate and the school-culture. This applies to every other field as well and even to enneagram teachers. Teaching the enneagram, we are responsible for the "didactic-climate" in the group. That leads me to a question which seems worthy of discussion to me: "What makes a good enneagram teacher?" Another question that surely many enneagrammers are grappling with is: "How can I be sure to have typed myself accurately?" These are questions that matter most to me. I believe that the reputation of the enneagram is substantially influenced by how authentic we are in our teaching the enneagram and how precise we are about accurately identifying our patterns and type.

If you are able to get the cyber-communication going as you intend to, and be able to have real conversations on this technical and impersonal medium, that would give a glimmer of hope in a time when the world is politically and societally going through choppy waters.

Along these lines I'm sending no assurance like (*Wir schaffen das*)* "We'll make it!" from Germany, but a sincere "May the exercise be a success!"

Katrin Richter,
Hamburg, Germany

[editors note:]

**Wir schaffen das* (*we'll make it* in German), is Angela Merkel's promise and call to the German citizenry to make the efforts needed to assimilate hundreds of thousands of refugees from Islamic countries. A controversial policy that ran into strong oppositions and is currently a hotly contested political issue.

From the Editor

finger-prints and others, you get the picture.

I suppose we could say that looking for correlations is motivated by two desires: the desire for certainty; for proof or verification of type and the desire for a better definition of the nature of type so as to better apply this knowledge in our lives. It's the holy grail of the enneagram; the quest for the key that will unlock our truest self.

And a worthy quest it is. But answers don't come cheap and our deepest reasoning often leads to paradoxes; to conclusions that seem senseless, logically unacceptable, or contradictory. Sacred scriptures of the most revered traditions seem to run into this a lot, and yet have also a track record of leading to illumination or enlightenment where intellectual pursuits are rewarded with direct experience of reality that can't be put into words, but can be lived... if we can believe the saints and sages who independently and in all cultures and times report the same truth.

So now what? I suppose we can continue to pursue answers to the big questions on two tracks and try to go deeper — the practical reality track that examines the physical, psychological and philosophical factors, and the metaphysical intangible reality that delves into the sacred, divine realms.

In this Issue

"Space and Time: Dimensions of Existence" contain all things relative (from Late Latin *relativus* meaning "compared to each other"). **Jack Labanauskas** watched how most emphasis was being placed on the Space aspect and not enough on Time. Space and Time cannot be separated. Everything that exists exists in time, from inert matter to lofty thought. As mentioned above, we had plenty of forays into the details of personality, its origins, quirks, potential and ways of evaluating characteristics. We give little or no attention to the aspect of time, possibly due to its intangible nature and therefore not worthy of consideration.

We do not treat similarly intangible and elusive psychological or philosophical concepts in a dismissive or condescending way (as some scientism fans who place excessive belief in the power of scientific knowledge and techniques might do).

The study of time traditionally was every bit as important as that of human nature. The sages were clear that space and time was like yin and yang the polarities of every substance physical or mental — just as different aspects of the same object, for example weight and size can both be accurate, yet describe two different realities.

Historically, space and time were studied separately for practical reasons, not because one was hierarchically more important or relevant than the

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For subscription and advertising rates see back cover.

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other, or that one had nothing to do with the other, they were studied with the awareness that just as a flame has heat and light, we have to pay attention to both.

Great thinkers in the past and present, often had expertise in different subject areas; they were able to draw on complex bodies of knowledge to solve specific problems. Many greats respected the wisdom found in sacred scriptures, traditions, or myths as much as on their expertise or science. The preeminent subject addressing the element of (vast) time was Astrology. It looked at planetary periods, transits, alignments and how it related to the individuals life.

On the (narrow) side of time, scientists work with nanoseconds and atomic clocks measuring transition frequencies in the electromagnetic spectrum of atoms. We don't hear many voices questioning the accuracy or usefulness of what they do as it has the imprimatur of science and hence is next to godliness. Once upon a time astrology was given a similar pass. Today, we who are not into science simply accept nanoseconds as accurate on faith.

Well, check out the quotes below, by reasonable and respected individuals, thinkers and scientists who used astrology along with their area of expertise. Some day, we may see similar things said about the enneagram...

“We are born at a given moment, in a given place and, like vintage years of wine, we have the qualities of the year and of the season of which we are born. Astrology does not lay claim to anything more.”

“The starry vault of heaven is in truth the open book of cosmic projection...”

“The puzzling thing is that there is really a curious coincidence between astrological and psychological facts, so that one can isolate time from the characteristics of an individual, and also, one can deduce characteristics from a certain time...”

“Astrology is assured of recognition from psychology, without further restrictions, because astrology represents the summation of all the psychological knowledge of antiquity.”

— Carl Gustav Jung

“The cosmos is a vast living body, of which we are still parts. The sun is a great heart whose tremors run through our smallest veins. The moon is a great nerve center from which we quiver forever. Who knows the power that Saturn has over us, or Venus? But it is a vital power, rippling exquisitely through us all the time.”

“We need not feel ashamed of flirting with the zodiac. The zodiac is well worth flirting with.”

— D.H. Lawrence

“A mind is accustomed to mathematical deduction, when confronted with the faulty foundations of astrology, resists a long, long time, like an obstinate mule, until compelled by beating and curses to put its foot into that dirty puddle.”

— Johannes Kepler

“A child is born on that day and at that hour when the celestial rays are in mathematical harmony with his individual karma.”

— Sri Yukteswar

“Astrology can clear up or mix up a person as much as any other psychological, philosophical or

religious mirror, a looking glass in the endless mirror hall of life.”

— Markku Siivola

“Astrology is a fact, in most instances. But astrological aspects are but signs, symbols. No influence is of greater value or of greater help than the will of an individual.... Do not attempt to be guided by, but use the astrological influences as the means to meet or to overcome the faults and failures, or to minimize the faults and to magnify the virtues in self.”

— Edgar Cayce

“The celestial bodies are the cause of all that takes place in the sublunar world.”

— Thomas Aquinas

“Do not Christians and Heathens, Jews and Gentiles, poets and philosophers, unite in allowing the starry influences?”

— Walter Scott

“The controls of life are structured as forms and nuclear arrangements, in a relation with the motions of the universe.”

— Louis Pasteur

Why all this attention on time and astrology you may ask? Well, it's simple: I struggled with typing myself, was typed by the “experts” in five or six ways, and heard similar stories of serious students of the enneagram who were forced as was I (like the mule in Kepler's quote above) to switch type. The issue of accurate typing was always of special importance. We are complex creatures and some of the changes taking place internally are not always identifiable as caused by characteristics ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 12