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Issue 207

# Is it Time to Reform the Enneagram? A Free-flowing Exchange You Can Join

**W**e started this discussion by email and wanted to continue on Facebook, but since not everyone is on Facebook so we decided to select some of the essential points so we can keep you in the loop and invite you to jump in and participate in the discussion either by writing to the EM or if you prefer joining us on Facebook.

**Frederic & Bernadette Schmitt,  
Laleh Bakhtiar, Jack Labanauskas**

events, services, teaching, workshops, publications or websites; this is not the place for that. You are of course welcome to place ads in the Enneagram Monthly.

The rules are simple and the same for the EM as well as on Facebook:

. . . this is for people who want to share their ideas and passion about issues related to human nature and more specifically about the enneagram. Thoughts about relevant systems, applications and research are welcome. We encourage exploring distinctions between personality traits and how they affect our life, happiness and spiritual aspirations. Please bring an open, rigorous mind and keep communication courteous and respectful. These pages will be moderated minimally, to insure that the conversations are about the content of the subject matter, and not become about the individual(s) proposing the ideas. Please, no advertisement or promotion of

Our current subject of choice is a discussion about the basic principles that form the foundation of the enneagram theory. Some will argue that it has been long overdue, others will resent that the subject is even brought up as in “why fix what ain’t broke?” Others yet may believe that even to imply that our system is anything less than perfect or good enough, is heresy and divisive.

Well, nothing in nature is static and everything changes. Adaptation is a natural process that life demands of us every day. There is no option called “standing still.” Like it or not, even our dearest convictions and ideologies that make up our world view require ongoing flexibility... so without further ado we’ll jump in, the water is warm and everyone is welcome to join...

If you like to review the current subject matters, see the recent articles by Frederic and Bernadette Schmitt (issues #199, 200 & 206) and the Conversation with Laleh Bakhtiar (issue #202). Between the four ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

## The Enneagram & Western Metaphysics

**F**or the past year, I’ve taken something of a writing sabbatical. After publishing three books in five years, I suddenly found myself at a dead stop—no books, no articles, no new website material. It has been a little unnerving. But after a time, I realized that I needed a fallow period in which to let everything go, so that something new could form. That “something” that is beginning to emerge is a series of questions about the enneagram—what it is, where it can take us, and how our enneagram work is shaped by the larger culture, the culture of the enneagram field, and our individual nature and beliefs. This article is the beginning of an inquiry into these deeper questions—as such, it contains more questions than answers.

**Susan Rhodes**

project, but thought I might have enough time to pull together a short article for the *EJ* touching briefly on a topic that I found extremely fascinating: the relationship between time and space, and how the personality and process enneagrams brought the two together in a way that seemed paradoxical.

Briefly, the idea is that if Type X on the personality enneagram—which focuses on spatial perspectives—can be mapped to Point X on the process enneagram—which focuses on a transformational sequence of events—then the enneagram becomes a tool for describing a concept that quantum physicists call “time-space,” the idea being that time and space are actually a single concept or dimension of life, not two separate concepts. Although this idea sounds paradoxical (like much of quantum physics), it seems to have a firm theoretical foundation, even if most of us (including me) have a hard time wrapping our minds around such an idea. In that way, it’s a lot like accepting the idea that light can be both a particle and a wave: even if we know it’s been shown scientifically, ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

\* \* \*  
It all started with an article I submitted to the *Enneagram Journal* last March. I was in the semi-final stages of writing *The Integral Enneagram*, my third—and definitely most detailed—book on the enneagram. I was deeply immersed in that

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As all the pieces are beginning to fall into place, the Enneagram Monthly too is joining in the 21st century's style of communicating. The new website has been up for a couple of months and is a good place for beginners as well as veterans looking for a wide choice of introductory material, two free enneagram type and subtype test, as well as some in depth articles on various of related subjects...

For news that relate to EM, like announcements, previews of what's coming up in future issues, questions about writing articles and such you can go to:

[facebook.com/pages/Enneagram-Monthly/244569058907256](https://facebook.com/pages/Enneagram-Monthly/244569058907256)

We are still working on the content for the *Page*.

Meanwhile, for discussions and opinions we have the interactive Enneagram Monthly *Group*: [facebook.com/groups/332800796873243/](https://facebook.com/groups/332800796873243/)

As one who resisted to engage in Facebook, in favor of spending most of my time grappling with the complexities and purpose of life, wondering about people's nature and attending to daily chores, my technical skills were fed only on a "need-to-know" basis. Helen Palmer I believe likes to say, "energy follows where attention goes." So, after my inner-Luddite got tired of holding out, friends who actually understand and like this stuff came to the rescue and heaved me over the finish line to where EM readers need not wait a month or so to comment or respond to articles.

Facebook is actually a neat invention. It allows a dialogue that can be shared by a whole group, making it easier than communicating by emails with multiple friends and is better suited for short comments, while allowing to post large articles, files or videos.

One flaw of course is that as the conversation flows, each new post is pushing down the previous ones. So, interesting posts can be buried by those less so and disappear out of sight...retrievable of course, but requiring a dedicated reader with some patience and tenacity. The other "flaw" is the issue of quality control and that can be avoided

We will be monitoring the posts to insure there is no abuse, slander, attacks on fellow posters or advertising spam. *The Enneagram Monthly Group* will be administered by trusted, mature and open minded friends in multiple time zones (USA, Europe, Asia, Australia).

Every month we plan to select the most interesting morsels out of the *Group* discussion for publication in the *EM*. This is a new process for us and over time we'll see how best to work with it. We'd love to hear from you on email or Facebook and appreciate you comments.

Meanwhile, with all this activity going on, the EM fell back an extra month but we are already working on the next issue (#208) that will follow this one within

## From the Editor

days. We hope both issues will get out in time for the IEA Conference starting on Thursday, July 24th...There is still time to sign up and I'm sure nobody will be denied access even at the last minute.

By the way, San Francisco is *the* place to be while the rest of the country is sweltering in the summer heat...Make sure you bring a jacket, just in case.

### In This Issue:

"Is it Time to Reform the Enneagram? A Free-flowing Exchange You Can Join" started out as an email exchange in a style that is similar to what may happen on Facebook. **Frederic & Bernadette Schmitt, Laleh Bakhtiar** and **Jack Labanauskas** are taking a look at the history, origins and correlations between the enneagram and principles known to our ancestors.

We look at principles that are at the core of the world's most sacred scriptures and have been studied, tested and commented on for many centuries.

*Nobody is as smart as all of us*, so where else can we find the distilled and seasoned knowledge collected over the ages of observations and study of mankind, but in the scriptures and commentaries?

Long before our time, and that of architects of the enneagram as we know it today; Ichazo, Gurdjieff, Lull, Evagrius and even Pythagoras, entire libraries in dozens of centers of learning existed and much of it has survived.

With our modern methods of sharing and communicating, mankind is for the first time in a position of compiling and placing all this knowledge within keypad and mouse of a vast number of scholars...

It truly is an exciting time to be alive, well, at a cost of course, and to be able to share ideas across continents, in the blink of an eye.

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"The Enneagram and Western Metaphysics" by **Susan Rhodes** offers a new look at an old problem: how to talk about the enneagram—which is clearly a system of esoteric wisdom—within the context of a modern, secular-minded culture which seems to have forgotten its metaphysical roots. She points out that this "forgetting" was originally enforced by brutal means—the burning of books, libraries, places of learning, and (ultimately) human beings condemned as heretics, witches, or black magicians. Later, the overthrow of Catholic hegemony and the rise of science (and with it, the new dogma of scientism) issued the final blow to the ancient wisdom traditions of the West. In this brief article, Susan discusses the factors that may have placed systems like the enneagram between a rock and a hard place when it comes to presenting their teachings to a modern audience and expresses her hope that we can find a way to bridge the gap between modern science and ancient wisdom.

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**Tom Condon** is very familiar with "The Six Trance: Childhood Themes" and sees Sixes generally as coming from childhood backgrounds where there were *security vacuums* or *atmospheres of hierarchy and domination*. Most Sixes experience one background or a mixture of both.

If the child grows up sheltered, protected and warmly included by their family they grow up feeling safe at home and with the familiar and distrustful of the dangers that may be lurking outside and remember the many messages of "careful about this that or other" they received. Sixes who experienced turmoil within the home, as with arguing parents, even if they were treated well, they feel frightened about the family's instability or the prospect of the parents divorcing. Phobic Six children respond by seeking later in life safe structures while counterphobic Sixes may rebel by engaging in risky behavior out of protest of their parents frightened behavior, while sharing the same fears.

In the trance of their Enneagram style Sixes have trouble living in the present. They often live in the past or the future or slide along a continuum between the remembered and the anticipated. Ones and Sixes are both described as natural troubleshooters but they do it differently. While a One can look at a present situation and see what is wrong or missing, a Six can look at the same situation and predict what *will* go wrong in the future.

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"The Giver-Leader (Two-Eight) Couple" according to **Jennifer Schneider** and **Ron Corn's** *Understand Your Partner: The Essential Enneagram*

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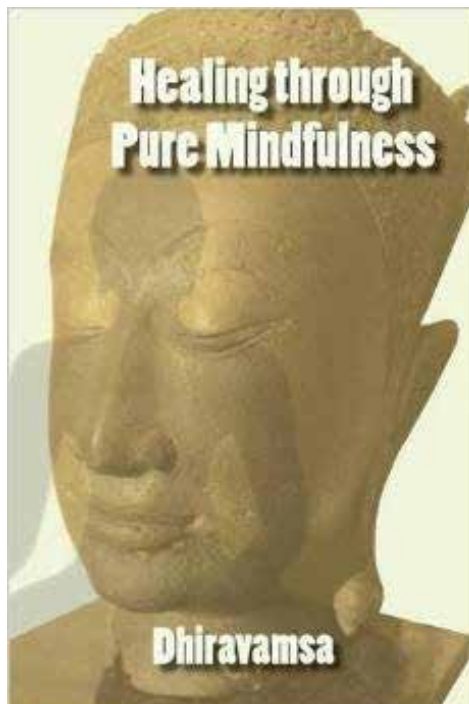
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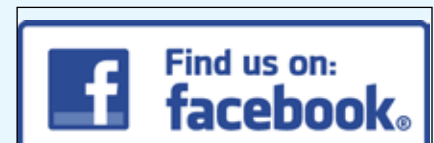
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**Enneagram Monthly Page &  
The Enneagram Monthly Group**

*Guide to a Better Relationship*, are balancing each other out and accomplishing something together more effectively than either could have done alone. The Two will temper the Eight's approach so that he or she can find acceptable solutions and the ability to soften. Whereas Leaders can jump-start Givers into action, especially when it comes to defending the defenseless. On a deeper level, you might say that the Two is helping the Eight to access their heart space, to maintain composure, while the Eight will be willing to listen and recognize the value of the Two's advice.

Sharing a connecting line on the enneagram makes it easier for them to understand and respect each others point of view. But given that the Eight values autonomy rather than connection, and tends to have a "large" footprint, it is hard to stay conscious of type Two's feelings. The Giver needs to take responsibility for his or her feelings and pride, not always easy. Keeping all the cards on the table, will go a long ways toward not allowing damage to accumulate to unacceptable levels.

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"Loving it All: *Living With an Awakening Heart*" according to **David Banner** is the answer to the eternal question of: what is love? Poets and artists have pondered this question for eons. What *is* it? Is it a feeling, an energy, a substance? Can you fall in love or out of love? Why does love seem so elusive, so fragile?

Given that we humans like to define things, David's attempt at a definition is: *Love is the binding force of the universe, that which holds all life in a divine design so that creative intelligence can work its magic.*

He goes through a detailed and historic examination of a variety of motivating conditions and influences that teach us what is of sustenance, what we need for survival and where what is called *conditional love* begins. How we *needed* our mother to feed us and care for us, how we developed strategies to "win" that love by being "good," or risked losing it by being "bad." During this process our *human shadow* gets formed, essentially all the parts of ourselves that get repressed or shoved into the unconscious because they are unacceptable. The human *ego* is what could be called the custodian or container of this "mind-made self" with all the beliefs, attitudes and values we have formed, since birth, that serve as our navigation system for life on earth. Part of this ego self is the shadow. This small, limited self that is not who we really are. Seeing the difference between our true self and the mind-made self is feasible and can be radically life changing.

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**Clare Cherikoff** is "Teaching as Story Telling: *Tapping into Wisdom Bypassing Resistances.*" Her book *Spellbind and Hoodwink* uses a lighthearted approach to convey very deep Vedanta/Advaita wisdom and enneagram types under the guise of participants in a story that is lively, exciting and easy for

the young as well as for mature readers. We know what spellbinding is of course, being fascinated to the point of distraction from all else, as is typical of living in a "trance" as Tom Condon would call it, or following a "schema" as Jerry Wagner calls it. No matter what the name, it's being blind to the actual needs of the moment.

Clare compares type to the hood covering a *hood-winked* falcon's hear to make him believe it's night and stay calm until the moment the hood is removed. Our true self would take flight like a falcon would once we realize that we are not our type, but that we manifest in the world in that style without being of it. Like a hood removed from our eyes, it breaks the spell and off we go free...

Teaching by using a story may just be the right (sweet) medicine for introducing wisdom in a playful and entertaining manner to young and old. The young who are no longer taught wisdom and left to find it on their own, and the old who were disappointed and stopped looking—for similar reasons. Think back, maybe you remember the two or three instances in your life when something in you "clicked" and you truly understood something deep and important. Did it happen during play? Did it happen while you were enjoying, feeling safe and open? Or, maybe it happened after a lot of agonizing. Given a choice, I'd pick the first method, although life often has other plans for us.