

## COURSE SYNTHESIS NO. 24

### THE ENNEAGRAM THE NINE TYPES OF MAN, ARISING FROM THE NINE TYPES OF CONDITIONING

On an inner path of evolution, each person is called upon to acquire knowledge of himself and the world and, on the basis of this knowledge, to *be* more. The more we know ourselves, the more we know the superficial personality that has belonged to us since childhood, and the more we are able to come closer to our essence, our profound being.

In order to better know ourselves from a psychological point of view, a tool exists that is known as the enneagram. In psychology, one usually searches as far as possible in the past for the causes of who I am today. The enneagram does not try to search for the causes in the past, but rather asks the question: given who I am today, what can I do in order to change? Toward which goal, physical, emotional, or intellectual, can I orient my life?

This tool permits us to better know ourselves, but also to better understand other people, since we start seeing in ourselves all the weaknesses we usually attribute to other people, and this naturally leads us to become more tolerant of them.

But when we study ourselves, we learn to detect our weaknesses very quickly. In this connection, one quality is certainly required at the outset, and this is humor; without humor, we easily lapse into a form of intolerance toward ourselves and have difficulty forgiving our own weaknesses. Our only possible source of guilt, however, is when we act against the development of our profound essence, and not what we feel with respect to this mask of a personality that we adopt in order to live in society and which often gives rise to feelings of guilt.

The enneagram is a symbol with nine faces, and it contains very elevated principles concerning the functioning of man and the cosmos. We are going to examine the enneagram exclusively from the point of view of man's typology, according to which he can be classified into nine types. Each type embodies a principle that was instilled in him during his childhood.

The education he received from his parents, school, and life experiences forge the child's personality. In order to respond to the expectations of the people around him, the child adopts a sort of behavior game that soon becomes automatic and of which he is no longer aware. He then becomes a prisoner of his conditioning, in other words, he identifies himself with the image defined by his education as being good or ideal.

When this image, this make-believe ideal, no longer corresponds to the reality around him, this gives rise to inner considering, internal chatter, and guilt, and he becomes destabilised.

These ideals are artificial, instilled in us through pressure; we are not good because we are hard-working, honest, likeable, cultivated, and so on, we are good for entirely other reasons.

The first type of conditioning is the conditioning of the child who was told, "You are good if you are honest, hard-working, well-groomed, and organised."

The second corresponds to the phrase, "You are good if you are likeable, always ready to help, ready to sacrifice yourself."

The third type of man was raised with the idea that one has got to be active, competent, and succeed in life. Never mind the means, the important thing is that

he succeeds. If he fails, he is bad. The child is often instilled with this sort of ideal upon entering school.

If the child belongs to the fourth type, he has been told, "You are good if you are cultivated, sensitive, and original." These are often the children of artists. Imagine the son of an artist who wants to become a butcher and the problems this is going to cause him. The principle in itself is not negative, but it becomes so when it is addressed to someone who does not have these particular qualities.

For the type n° 5, to be "good," according to the education he received, means to be intelligent, wise, or receptive.

For the type n° 6, it is to be obedient, loyal, and trustworthy. The fundamental principle here is obedience, followed by honesty, politeness, culture, and so on.

The man n° 7 tells himself, "I am good if I am nice, cheerful, and optimistic." Some children are raised in this way, rejected by their parents the moment they start to whine and whimper, the moment they have problems, since in this family one has always got to be cheerful and optimistic.

The type n° 8 was told, "You are good if you are strong, upright, just, and preferably superior."

Finally, we have the man or woman n° 9, who was told that he or she must always be calm, peaceful, and in harmony.

After this brief description, it is already possible for us to form an idea of our own type. But only the practice of observation will permit us to truly recognise ourselves, little by little, in one of the types. For those people who do not recognise themselves in any type, they need to continue observing. For those who recognise themselves in one type, and often a little in one of the two neighboring types (the one that precedes and the one that follows it on the circle), they need to continue observing in order to confirm whether their first judgement is accurate.

For those who recognise themselves in several types and the types are very distant from one another, their observation is insufficient; if they recognise themselves in two types immediately surrounding another type, their type corresponds to this type between the two.

Let us define the different types in somewhat more detail:

The type n° 1 says or thinks, "I am right." When you refuse to admit that he is right, he easily gets angry. This anger will be one of his key problems, and if he begins to work on this problem, this will have positive repercussions on all the other areas of his life.

The type n° 2, always ready to help and sacrifice himself, says, "I help," and when he finds himself in a situation in which his help is not asked for, refused, or not recognised, his pride is injured.

The type n° 3 tells himself, "I succeed, I am successful in all areas of life." He cannot bear to lose. In order to win, any means are perfectly fine with him – whether through lying or cheating, the end justifies the means.

The type n° 4, who has got to be cultivated, sensitive, and original, tells himself, "I am different." But since this is a form of conditioning that does not correspond to reality, when it manifests in the soul, it gives rise to jealousy.

The type n° 5 is the wise and intelligent type. Rather than "I know," he says, "I understand." He needs to understand everything and all the time, and when it happens that he does not understand, he feels like he is in bad form. The problem of the type n° 5 will be greed, on both the intellectual and material levels.

The type n° 6 is required to be loyal, obedient, and trustworthy. He says, "I do my duty." What happens when he doesn't do his duty? In his soul he has a bad

conscience, and this eventually leads to fear and anxiety. The problem of the “I do my duty” type is that he is afraid of not doing his duty, of not having the desire or will to do his duty.

The type n° 7 is told, “You are good if you are always nice, cheerful, and optimistic.” He constantly affirms, “I am happy!”, and at the same time he feels it is his obligation to always be happy in life. This type n° 7 is in constant search of happiness. Since he cannot be happy all of the time, he is always searching further. His problem is excess, intemperance, and indulgence, since he has got to be happy at all costs. Otherwise he does not exist, since he was told, “You only exist if you are happy.”

The type n° 8 has got to be superior and strong. And he will go even further in his indulgence than the preceding type, to the point of dissipation and debauchery. This is his problem.

The type n° 9 was told that he has to be calm, peaceful, and harmonious. He says, “I am satisfied.” It is true that when we are satisfied, we are indeed calm and peaceful. But in his case, this is only an illusion. On the other hand, if we *are* satisfied, there is nothing left to do, and we can rest upon our laurels. The problem of the type n° 9 will thus be laziness.

In any given type, there are several possible levels: a pathological, immature attitude in connection with an unresolved problem, a normalised attitude, a family or social façade corresponding to a problem that has apparently been resolved – and finally, if it has truly been resolved and integrated, the problem disappears entirely.

Thus the attitude of type n° 1 – who has got to be honest, hard-working, and organised at all costs, and who asserts, “I am right” –, if he has not resolved his problem, will be that of the Pharisee, full of his unimpeachable legitimacy, but without hypocrisy. He will always be finding fault and splitting hairs, especially in matters concerning himself and his own ideas, and he will have a demoralising effect on other people. If he has apparently resolved his problem, he will be scrupulous, a perfectionist, which are very positive qualities but which are often simply reflections of his inner hesitation. If he succeeds in overcoming this conditioning, he will develop a just critical faculty and a high moral conscience.

The immature attitude of type n° 2, who is always ready to help and sacrifice himself, and who is very proud of this, is to be dominating and manipulative: “I sacrifice myself, so I have rights over you!” His normalised attitude will be rather maternal, very active and protecting. If he overcomes his conditioning, he becomes simply kind and amicable, and he then often acquires a certain originality.

The type n° 3 is only happy when he succeeds, even if this means cheating other people. If his attitude remains immature, he will be an opportunist who makes use of everything at his disposal in order to succeed. In the professional domain, he will be a careerist. When he normalises his attitude, he will see himself as pragmatic, with a sense of the role he has to fulfil and of his own status, which is naturally superior! If he succeeds in overcoming the conditioning that was placed in him, he will reveal himself as someone who is truly competent, trustworthy, and who carries out the responsibilities that are entrusted to him because of the qualities he has integrated, and no longer simply because of his conditioning.

The tendency of type n° 4, who has to be cultivated, sensitive, and original, is to whine and complain, a misunderstood artist. In contrast, if he succeeds in overcoming this tendency, he will become truly creative and disciplined.

The type n° 5, who has got to be intelligent, feels isolated. His immature attitude will be this isolation. When his attitude is normalised, he will be recognised for his highly developed, yet somewhat abstract, analytic spirit, and he will be seen as rather distant and cold. If he succeeds in developing further, he will become someone who is truly wise, active, and inventive.

The unresolved problem of type n° 6, who is loyal, obedient, and trustworthy, will be dependency and aggressiveness, which arise from this necessity of being constantly obedient. He will think he has resolved his problem by becoming prudent and apparently having a sense of his duty, and he might be authoritarian or anti-authoritarian, both of which are fundamentally the same. If he succeeds in overcoming his conditioning, he will become someone who is truly loyal, courageous, and confident in life.

The type n° 7 only has value if he is constantly cheerful, nice, and optimistic, and since this is not always possible, he will tend to be excessive, a bit of a profiteer or hedonist, or else a dilettante who never goes to the bottom of things, who is involved in a thousand things at once. If he succeeds in overcoming this conditioning, he will become someone who is truly joyful, with a clear mind and capable of having deep interests.

If the type n° 8 believes what he was told, that he has always got to be superior, he will have a dominating, tyrannical attitude towards other people, and may even be violent. When he is normalised, he will see himself as someone who is simply a little direct, and that it is after all necessary to control things to a certain extent. When he succeeds in integrating his problem, he will become someone who is generous and protective, and who is capable of leading other people and directing projects.

For the type n° 9, who always has to be calm and peaceful, the danger is laziness. This type n° 9 is often rather immature, fatalistic, and disoriented in life. His mental laziness also limits him. If his conditioning is normalised, in spite of the fact that he remains disoriented and indecisive, the type n° 9 will say that he is adaptable. If he succeeds in integrating his conditioning, he will become capable of orienting himself toward a goal, and he will no longer be falsely peaceful, but innerly peaceful and genuinely open.