

## ENNEAGRAM STUDIES



### IN THE NARRATIVE TRADITION

## *Through Personality to Spirit* *Enneagram Studies with Karen Webb* *Course descriptions*

### ENNEAGRAM 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE ENNEAGRAM

The Enneagram is an ancient, extraordinarily accurate, model of human personality and spirit. Describing nine personality types and their interactions, it enables us to look deeply into our own character, harmonise our daily lives and our relationships, and understand our particular, best, path to growth.

Taught in the narrative Tradition, participants come away with a living experience, rather than simply a theoretical knowledge, of the ways in which different types of people view and interact with the world. I use video clips, and where possible live panels, of people of each type describing themselves, and discuss the day-to-day difficulties and celebrations of each type. I also use guided imaging and meditations to help give a deep experience of each, surprisingly different, focus of attention.

On this introductory workshop you will:

- o Discover the chief emotional and mental concerns of each type
- o Learn some of the patterns of behaviour and interaction created by these often unconscious habits of perception
- o Recognise your own type and those of people you know
- o Understand how security as well as stress 'changes' your personality
- o Learn to improve relationships of all kinds, by
  - seeing yourself through others' eyes
  - understanding the different points of view of each type
  - realising how you react to different types
- o Learn the higher attributes of each type
- o Start to discover how to use your 'negative' patterns to fuel growth

### ENNEAGRAM 2: SUBTYPES AND ESSENCE

Joining insight about personality type with the technology of sacred tradition, the Enneagram demonstrates ways in which so-called negative emotional reactions such as jealousy or fear can become the raw material, the energy source for spiritual liberation.

Within each of the nine types, are three subtypes - one of the reasons why people of the same type may appear so different in their approach to life despite their shared focus of attention. Subtypes are sometimes called instincts, or instinctual responses, as they describe basic survival behaviours in the three main arenas of life: self-preservation, social interaction, and one-to-one intimate relationship. Each person generally focuses most on one of these areas.

Our personality's most unconscious strategies are also the greatest barrier to growth and higher awareness; and our subtype is the trigger for these. To identify and understand the subtleties of our subtype is to confront what really holds us back from awareness of our Essence.

Subtypes and Essence is an advanced Enneagram workshop. It is important that participants are familiar with the basic information on all nine types, and that they know their own type with reasonable certainty. However, if you are not entirely sure, the material on subtypes may well help you clarify your type.

This workshop will deepen understanding of the nine types in four main areas:

- o The ways in which Passion and Fixation manifest in Subtypes
- o Each type's Holy Virtue and Holy Idea as aspects of Essence
- o Head, heart and belly as centres of spiritual perception
- o Psychological and spiritual growth using the Enneagram, including meditations to bring us closer to our Essence

### ENNEAGRAM AND RELATIONSHIPS

In this workshop we look at how the types normally relate, their communication styles and listening blocks. We also explore how the three subtypes affect this, as all three both offer and desire very different things in relationship.

It is normally only run either for large groups with more than one person representing each type, or for a dedicated team whose members are willing to be open with each other. As well as discussion and themed exercises there is the chance, if you wish to take it (and only if) for role play, and to unlock specific 'problem relationships' through this.

### ADVANCED ENNEAGRAM: RELATING FROM ESSENCE

Most – if not all – misunderstandings, conflicts and alienations spring from the fact that type has a narrow and fixed point of view. The purpose of type is to protect us and to help us cope with a world which seems threatening – albeit in nine very different ways!

Given this, it's not surprising that faced with another human being – however well-intentioned - type reacts in automatic, defensive, and (fortunately for the purpose of growth) predictable ways. Unfortunately this is true even when we hope and long for intimacy. How rare, and how unforgettable, are the moments when our barriers drop and we come face to face, heart to heart, mind to mind with another. In that moment, love is known. It may even be a moment shared with a stranger; still, we recognise it and long for more of that quality of relatedness.

This workshop explores why we don't, and how we can start to, relate more and more from Essence. Come prepared to do so. It is preferable though not essential if you have some idea of your subtype before attending.

### FREING THE LIFE FORCE: SPIRITUAL GIFTS OF TYPE

The spiritual journey assisted by the Enneagram can be seen as process of freeing the life force – energy – from its trapped state in the personality type, so that it can animate the wisdom of the three centres of spiritual awareness.

The three centres operate, in spiritual awareness, as a harmonious whole. Their gifts of Presence, Awareness and Response are not separate, and are recognised in all mystical traditions, though with slightly different names. For example, Hindus name them Being, Consciousness and Bliss, whilst in Christianity they are named as Love, Faith and Hope.

Through discussion, practices and deep meditations we explore how our life force is trapped by type, and how we can liberate it and so free our spirit to engage with life as it truly is, rather than as seen through our habitual distorting 'lens of perception'.

In this way we give ourselves the choice:

- o To be fully present to the moment,  
or to live in memory, fears and hopes
- o To discern the true nature of the moment,  
or to judge it from habitual thinking
- o To respond joyously to the needs of the moment,  
or to react defensively out of judgement

This is an experiential and meditative workshop, wear loose clothes, and expect to loosen mind, heart and body.

## ENNEAGRAM EXPLORATIONS

Many people over the years have expressed regret that a two day workshop has the paradoxical drawback of being extremely full and yet allowing too little time for each type.

Working in the oral tradition, we wish to involve ourselves with each other in discussion and discovery at a deeper level than simple psychological 'understanding' – only to find that just as the ice is broken it's time for the break! Moreover, one thing which everyone finds unexpectedly illuminating and refreshing, for which there is never enough time, is discussion with people of one's own type.

In designing this workshop I wanted to create a space in which there will be time to explore each type in depth, and also time for leisured conversation, relaxation, play and nourishment for the body, heart and spirit as well as the mind.

The three-day/four night format will allow us to go deeply into each of the three centres (one each day) and still have time to enjoy each other and the beautiful surroundings. We will use meditations, pair exercises, music and poetry (bring your own favourites!), and above all enjoy the privilege of witnessing and sharing in each type's self-exploration. As well as psychological insight, the conversations will deepen our knowledge of the day-to-day spirituality of our own as well as each other's type. Finally, we will re-affirm the compassion which comes through understanding, and re-discover the place in ourselves where we truly all are one.

Starting with supper on Wednesday evening so the workshop proper can start after breakfast on Thursday morning, we finish about 10.30 am on Sunday. Usually the venue is such that anyone who wishes to can stay for lunch, or even overnight, for a small extra charge. Indeed, you come earlier in the week as well.

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## 9 CANDLES OF CREATIVITY

All human beings are creative. To create simply means 'to bring into existence; to cause', and so every thought, feeling or action is a creative act. In every moment we are all bringing something into existence: a unique expression of ourselves that did not exist before.

Candles are used in every society that has them as symbols of our link with the divine; our prayers, aspirations, intentions and inspiration are carried heavenwards in the leaping or steady light of the flame. A candle's beauty symbolizes our yearning to be as whole / healed / holy as we can be.

This workshop explores the nine types in the light of how we express ourselves in the world, whether we feel 'creative' or not, and ways in which we can allow the flame that is our truest self to inspire our everyday lives. We might use the art room at some point, we might even have some music, and some movement, but do not think 'That's not for me, I'm not creative.'. You are, whether you want to be or not! Come and discover how.

## EDUCATING THE INNER OBSERVER SERIES: DIS-IDENTIFICATION FROM TYPE

We all know we 'are not' our type, yet it directs our perceptions, attitudes and reactions more or less all the time. It is a psychological structure, and therein lies the good news – it can be observed, understood, and we can free ourselves from its insistent nature. Spiritual growth can only go so far if we are still blind to the workings of type.

This workshop covers the psychological "pins" that constantly re-create a subjective and automatic point of view. We'll use panels, type group work, pair exercises and meditations to explore

- focus of attention
- payoffs and secondary gains of being identified with type
- identification
- the role of idealization specific to the Spiritual Qualities of higher consciousness

and gain practical learning that can be taken away and applied every day to enrich your life.

## EDUCATING THE INNER OBSERVER SERIES: RECEPTIVITY AND PROJECTION

This workshop investigates the selective way in which the mind sorts information, the nine mind states of type, and the nine defence mechanisms that create the structural cohesiveness of type. We all have an unconscious filter, and much of the Enneagram 'growth' work is about learning how our type, and that filter, affect us internally. One of our blind spots is the fact that this filter operates in both directions. We create the world we perceive – indeed, the world our type 'wants' to see – by projecting onto reality through this filter.

Here we look at how to recognize your own projective system, and how to relax projections instead of going on automatic, and creating self-fulfilling prophecies around us. Because of this, it's also an excellent program for improving relationships.

As usual, we approach the topic through a mixture of didactic, self-observation, pair and small group work, and inner work.

## EDUCATING THE INNER OBSERVER SERIES: PRESENCE AND SELF-FORGETTING

Each type is characterised by a placement of attention that acts as a way of forgetting, Presence. Likewise, our inborn orientations to Self-Preservation, Social, and One to One relating, are driven by an attentional bias, which opposes Presence in 3 specific ways. These pervasive habits constantly reinforce the narrow perspective of type, because the bias is embedded in our thinking.

It is relatively easy to discover from type panels WHAT they pay attention to. Yet HOW we pay attention doesn't come up much on panels, because it entails acute observation of our own conditioned awareness. The utter believability of our subjective point of view isn't just about what we pay attention to, it also resides in how we perceive the focal issues that drive us, and aspects of reality we consistently filter out.

This highly interactive workshop examines the placements of attention that oppose Presence in 27 (9x3) different ways. Panels, pair work, meditation and exercises throughout are structured to compare the conditioned awareness of type, with the reference point of inner Presence.