



*Through Personality to Spirit ~ Enneagram Studies with Karen Webb*

*Enneagram Spiritual Gifts*

The Enneagram describes the spiritual or higher functioning qualities of the visionary head centre and of the heart. The essential state of being experienced in the heart, an energetic quality that carries us safely and responsively through life is called the Virtue of Essence or Holy Virtue. The Holy Idea represents the state of awareness which is experienced, rather than thought of, by the head centre, a wordless knowing of the actual nature of reality.

The words assigned in the Enneagram to symbolise these gifts are not to be turned into verbs. For example, in type Six, 'Faith' does not mean 'being faithful in action', rather it is a state of knowing that one is sustained and safe in the Universe (regardless of what the thinking mind might say!); and 'Courage' is not mustering up or being brave despite everything, it is simply a quality of heart which manifests naturally without thought. And so on.

As this is a synopsis, I include a sentence to describe the psychological belief that normally drives the type, to contrast with what the true gift of the type is once we remember who we are. Also, there is so much more to be said, and in talking of spiritual matters words are always inadequate. These descriptions are merely a taster of, a pointer to, the full experience of the aware soul.

**TYPE ONE                      THE PERFECTIONIST**

*Underlying belief:* One must gain worthiness (love) through being good, correcting error, and meeting the requirements of the critical mind.

*Holy Virtue and Holy Idea: **Serenity and Perfection***

*Serenity* is not the cessation of emotion, but a state of awareness that allows all feelings to come and go in the body and heart, and be fully experienced as they do, without judging some as good or pleasant and others as bad or unpleasant. Ones who learn to let go of their anger experience a sense of being fully energised and yet light of heart and body, a joyful acceptance of all facets of being, and an ability to engage with life and feelings fully and serenely.

When fully engaged with life, Ones realise everything, including them, is already perfect even in its imperfection. The habit of resentment can be hard to let go of. If the mind is not the correct source of criteria for perfection, and if it may not assign blame, how can perfection be attained? When Ones allow themselves to accept that the mind, which is partial and imperfect, cannot produce perfection, they experience and celebrate the *perfection* – the integrity, the wholeness - in everything around them and all creation.

**TYPE TWO                    THE GIVER**

*Underlying belief:* One must gain approval, love, and have personal needs fulfilled through the agency of significant others, hence through giving important others what they want/need and hoping these others will give back.

*Holy Virtue and Holy Idea: **Humility and Will/Freedom***

The virtue of *humility* is mimicked by the pride which puts Twos at the service of others and denies their own needs. A person who experiences humility as a state of being knows and accepts their own nature, both strengths and weaknesses, and their real value to each person they encounter whether fleetingly or in a long relationship. They can embrace the fact they are not always needed, and that they have needs of their own, without feeling diminished or unlovable; they can celebrate what they have to offer to the world.

Focusing their attention on the necessity, and ability, to flatter means that Twos surrender their *will*, and therefore their *freedom*, to others' agendas. Taking pride in their independence and emphasising freedom, in fact they are dependent. Real freedom is experienced by Twos when they follow their own highest will, which is born of God's will and the true needs of the moment rather than an idea of 'I want' or 'I can give....'.

**TYPE THREE                    THE PERFORMER**

*Underlying belief:* One must gain love and acceptance through performance, doing, success, and by matching to the image of success and approval. The Three is what they do and perform.

*Holy Virtue and Holy Idea: **Veracity and Hope***

*Veracity* is an inner state in which there is no need to find a role to identify with. Rather than look to others to have their being validated, a person experiencing veracity knows that 'this is who and what I am, and this is enough'. They do not need to look outside and convince others, and so themselves, that they are loveable: they know it within themselves.

*Hope* in essence is not, as it often is in its day to day meaning, a sort of wishing. The mental focus of vanity can be stated as 'I am the one who can - and therefore has to - do it'. When Threes reach a state of awareness in which they know that essence takes care of what needs to happen, there is holy hope. They are able to let go and allow things to be done through them rather than by them. They can turn their leading, achieving and motivating skills to the service of other people, and experience the unconditional love they have always longed for.

**TYPE FOUR                    THE ROMANTIC**

*Underlying belief:* One must regain the lost original and ideal love through searching for that love or situation which is unique, special, missing, and longed for.

*Holy Virtue and Holy Idea: **Equanimity and Origin***

*Equanimity* is the experience of being harmonious and complete in oneself in the midst of any experience. The habit of envy places the source of completion outside the self. Fours who re-attain equanimity realise they already have everything they need, and have a genuinely important place in life by virtue of who they innately are. They are able to stay balanced, not needing to lose themselves in intense experiences as a way of proving their worth.

Along with this is the realisation that they have never lost connection with essence. Melancholy because they feel abandoned, Fours feel they must seek out perfect or divine love, the creative source. Once they look inside they find they are part of the *holy origin*, and are able to celebrate and let that creative source express itself through them in their lives.

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### TYPE FIVE                    THE OBSERVER

*Underlying belief:* One must gain protection from intrusion and feelings of inadequacy through privacy, self-sufficiency, limiting one's desires and wants, and compartmentalising life.

*Holy Virtue and Holy Idea: **Non-attachment and Omniscience***

A possible pitfall for Fives in their personal growth is confusing detachment, which is easy for them, with the higher awareness of non-attachment. *Non-attachment* allows feelings, experiences, and things to come and go, knowing that the universe is abundant. Detachment is a way of holding back, enabling them to deny that they care and are attached. As they start to allow their energy to flow more freely and share it with other people, they discover that it is self-renewing. The inner knowing that they will be taken care of by the divine itself gives a simultaneous ability to be involved and yet to let go.

*Omniscience* is the experience of essential mind in which all knowing is available without the need to think or accumulate knowledge. Fives pacify their unacknowledged fears by acquiring information. As their personal growth takes them more into the realm of immediate experience and non-attachment to their personality, they discover they have access to wisdoms other than that of the intellect. God gives them true insight as they need it. Safety is found in an inner experience of already knowing all they need to know.

### TYPE SIX                    THE QUESTIONER

*Underlying belief:* One must gain safety and avoid harm in a basically dangerous world through scanning, vigilance, an active imagination, and doubting.

*Holy Virtue and Holy Idea: **Courage and Faith***

*Courage* is trusting the body's and heart's intuition enough to act on them. When a car is hurtling towards you, the body does not wait for the mind to tell it what to do. Doubt questions even the instincts while trying to recreate courage through certainty. Many Sixes have a taste of the heart state of courage, when in the midst of calamitous danger they have simply known what to do, and done it. Sixes who achieve this awareness as part of their daily existence allow the immediate experience of life to affect them, and respond with caring and appropriate action.

*Faith* is not belief, nor can it be created by proof. When a projection has the kind of force and believability engendered by a fearful mind, it is hard for Sixes to realise they are looking for something outside to explain the sense of threat which may only exist within, a result of their habit of mind. By practising trust, initially as an act of will, Sixes reach the inner state of faith where they know they are sustained and can simply focus on a truthful positive experience without automatically questioning its truth or looking for the hidden negative.

### TYPE SEVEN                THE EPICURE

*Underlying belief:* One must (can) escape fright and pain by going into fearful situations, into imagination (possibilities/planning), and into pleasure.

*Holy Virtue and Holy Idea: **Sobriety and Holy Work***

*Sobriety* or constancy is a state of being in which the emotions are focused and single-pointed. Sevens look for fullness by sampling as much as possible of what the world offers. As they grow they realise that a complete experience is only available within themselves, with the deep and committed focus of the heart on what is truly worthwhile, and what is actually present.

Their internal plan, covering all possible routes to satisfaction, masks the fact that a sense of purpose, and willingness to go deep and complete that purpose, are what bring satisfaction.

*Holy work* is the equivalent in the mental realm of sobriety, allowing Sevens to transcend their fear of pain and enter deeply into the state that T S Eliot called 'the condition of complete simplicity costing not less than everything'. It is not an ideation, or a mental choice of a worthwhile job, but an experience of joyful necessity within the safety of the divine.

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### TYPE EIGHT THE PROTECTOR

*Underlying belief:* One must gain respect, assure protection, and hide vulnerability in a hard, unjust world by becoming strong, powerful and confrontative.

*Holy Virtue and Holy Idea:* **Innocence and Truth**

*Innocence* is a state of being in which the world is experienced as safe, without hidden intent, and in which an Eight too is innocent of agendas or defences. In innocence it is possible to respond to life appropriately in each moment through the bodily 'knowing' of what is right, without the need to judge or consciously evaluate. Eights realise that their grasping for experiences is an attempt to recreate the essential experience of the divine life force flowing through them fully and rightly at every moment.

Allowing and welcoming life as it is leads Eights to realise that *Truth* is not either/or but the totality of existence as it is. Any set of facts, or any concept, however right, is not necessarily true. In essence, there is only one truth, which cannot be arrived at or re-created by seeking justice, and truth changes continually without ever changing its nature. Eights learn moderation, above all through knowing that 'the truth which can be spoken is not the truth'.

### TYPE NINE THE MEDIATOR

*Underlying belief:* One must gain belonging and comfort by 'forgetting the self', attending to and merging with others, and dispersing energy to substitute objects.

*Holy Virtue and Holy Idea:* **Right Action and Love**

As Nines bring their attention back inside they find a source of great energy and intuitive wisdom in their belly-based awareness. Instead of looking for the motivation for action outside themselves they understand that it lies within. Instead of turning their attention to inessentials to disguise their fear of separation, they realise they are innately connected, to all that is, which is sacred, and from that springs the ability to know, and carry out, the *right action* in any moment.

This goes hand in hand with the awareness of *love*. In the grip of their fixation Nines believe that to be an "I" means to be separate, and to merge with another is to achieve the supreme oneness. They must be indolent towards their true selves to achieve merger. This is a spiritual trap, since to be at one is actually to experience the underlying unity of two (or more) separate entities. Love is a focus of awareness which includes all others rather than losing itself in them, and does not need to become like since it is already essentially the same.