

## Enneagram Basics

Based on nine distinct and fundamentally different patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting, the Enneagram (a nine-sided figure) is a marvelous tool for developing awareness of self and others. The Enneagram provides a universal language of human behavior and motivation that underlies race, religion, nationality, culture, gender, and any other form of group identity.

Psychologists say that we have a “sacred or essential nature,” and we have a personality “type” that we acquire during the course of our lives. In essence, we are like little children at play. We are just being our natural selves! As we grow, we develop patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving – a personality.



Attention ⇌ Energy ⇌ Behavior

In the Enneagram personality system, people are grouped based on where one’s ATTENTION typically and habitually, often unconsciously, goes.

Wherever your attention goes your energy follows providing a pretty accurate explanation for why you typically do what you do – your core motivation

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*Studying the Enneagram is an excellent way to:*

- *Uncover and validate your strengths and gifts;*
- *Understand, appreciate, and harness your core motivation; and*
- *Guide your growth and development.*

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Each Enneagram type has specific gifts, distinct limitations, and a fairly challenging path for continued growth and development. As you develop your awareness and see these patterns in yourself, you begin to realize that others have their distinct gifts, challenges, and their own unique paths to growth and development. **Developing your "wise self" requires this kind of deep understanding of self and others.** With enhanced understanding, you can share your accumulated experience and knowledge with kindness and a sensitivity to and respect for the reality of the other person.

Here are two ways you can develop your wise self.

- **Platinum Rule: Do unto others as they would like you to do unto them.**

Consider adopting the Platinum Rule when you want to become more connected with the people in your life. Most of the time, we try very hard to do unto others what we would want them to do unto us, aka the Golden Rule as we all know it. However, what if what they want is different from what you want -- or what you would want for them? Adopting the platinum rule requires finding out what the other person would truly like or prefer -- as well as developing a deep and abiding understanding of the WHOLE of the person, in type as well as in essence.

- **Golden Rule: listen and learn**

Apply this rule when you want to understand another person in greater depth and detail. When learning about others – listen, ask questions, and simply listen to their responses. People want to be understood and validated. When listening – allow others time to reflect and speak for themselves; refrain from responding or giving feedback or your point of view (unless asked). People truly want to be heard. When they feel deeply heard, they can then listen to you.