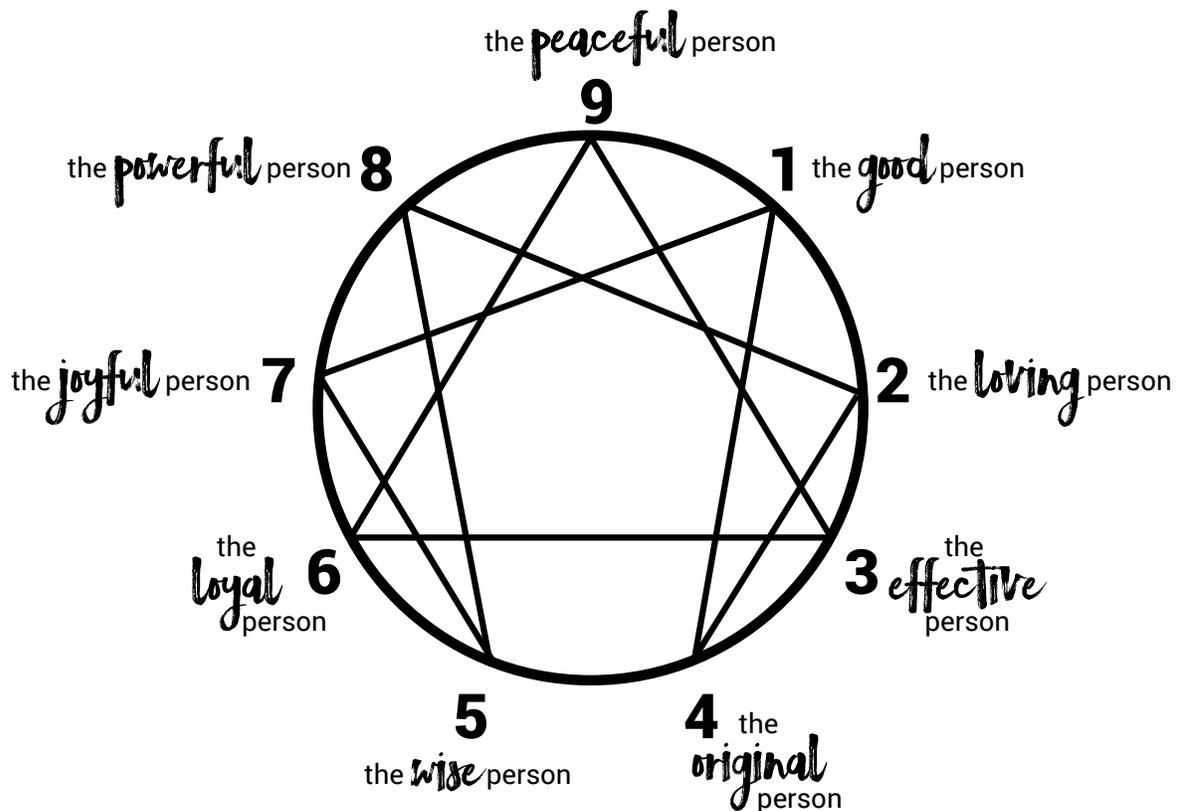


# THE ENNEAGRAM

MOVING  
FROM  
FALSE  
SELF  
TO  
DEEP  
CONNECTION



“...that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” (Eph. 3:16-19)

In the early hours of April 15, 1912, on its maiden voyage from South Hampton to New York City, the Titanic sank when it collided with an iceberg in the cold waters of the North Atlantic Ocean. Tragically, more than 1,500 people lost their lives. At the time, the Titanic was the largest, most well-built and luxurious ship ever conceived. It was thought to be unsinkable. As one crew member reportedly said, “Not even God himself could sink this ship.” But what those aboard the Titanic didn’t know was that hidden beneath the surface of the water something was waiting to sabotage the life of the great ship (and the lives of everyone on board). Ultimately the Titanic sank because people failed to acknowledge and deal with what was going on beneath the surface.

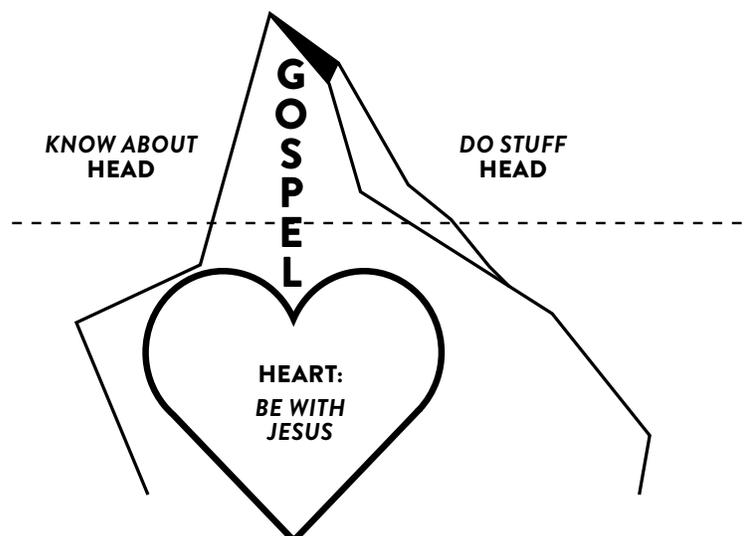
“... THAT ACCORDING TO THE RICHES  
OF HIS GLORY HE MAY GRANT  
YOU TO BE STRENGTHENED WITH  
POWER THROUGH HIS SPIRIT IN  
YOUR INNER BEING ... TO KNOW THE  
LOVE OF CHRIST THAT SURPASSES  
KNOWLEDGE ... ”

EPHESIANS 3:14-19

In the same way, our spiritual life—our relationships with God and others—is in danger of sinking if we don’t become aware of and deal with what’s going on beneath the surface in our lives.

## GOING BENEATH THE SURFACE

Human beings are like icebergs—what you see on the surface is only a fraction of the truth. Only about 10% of an iceberg is visible to the human eye, but there is typically a whole lot more going on beneath the surface. Similarly, there are mass layers in our soul that are hidden and remain untouched and unaffected by the gospel of Jesus: mistrust, unrepentant sin, false narratives, guilt, fear, shame, emotional wounds, misplaced worship. To paraphrase Paul’s prayer in Ephesians 3:14-19, we desperately need the gospel to make its way from our heads to our hearts—into the core of our inner being—to the places that need to be healed and transformed by the love of Christ. In a culture obsessed with information and busyness, it’s easy for Christians to drift into a surface-level relationship with Jesus in which we know about Jesus (head) and do stuff for Jesus (hands), but at our core we remain functionally disconnected from relationship with Jesus (heart). Paul essentially prays that we would go beneath the surface, where the real us meets the real Jesus, and we come to know and trust the love of Christ intimately for our redemption and true identity. This is why many have emphasized



that the most difficult and significant journey we could ever take is only eighteen inches long, from our head to our heart.

# HOW DO WE GO BENEATH THE SURFACE?

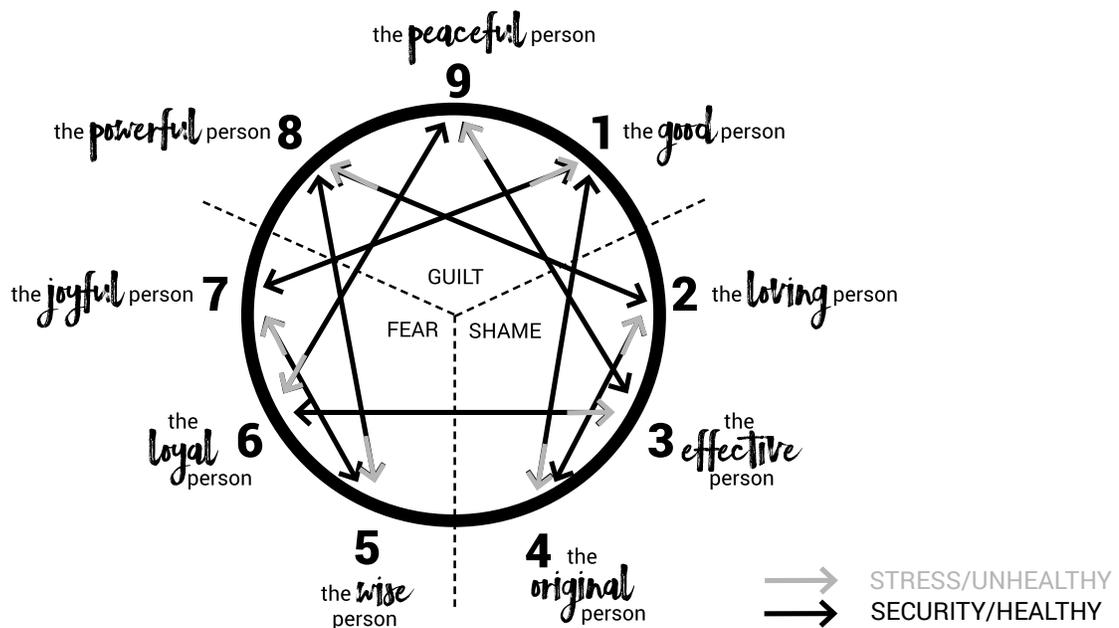
But how do we follow Jesus on this inward journey? How do we drive the gospel beneath the surface to strengthen our hearts in such a way that we can experience deep relationships with God and others?

We have found the Enneagram to be one of the most effective tools we can use to follow Jesus on the inward journey into our hearts. To be clear, there is no power in the Enneagram. The Enneagram is just a tool. All the power for salvation and transformation lies in the gospel of Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:16). The Enneagram is helpful because it has the ability to serve the gospel. The Enneagram is a vehicle the Holy Spirit can use to drive the gospel into the uncharted terrains of the soul, so that we can be strengthened with power in our inner being— to know and grow in the love of Jesus.

“THE MOST DIFFICULT AND SIGNIFICANT JOURNEY WE COULD EVER TAKE IS ONLY EIGHTEEN INCHES LONG, FROM OUR HEAD TO OUR HEART.”

# WHAT IS THE ENNEAGRAM?

Unlike other personality theories that measure how you do tasks, the Enneagram is an ancient tool that describes your personality in terms of who you are and how you relate to God, to others, and to yourself. Enneagram is a Greek word—ennea meaning “nine” and gram meaning “diagram.” So, as you can see below, the Enneagram is a diagram that represents nine different yet interconnected personalities or ways of relating.



# TRIADS

As the diagram also reflects, the nine personality styles are divided into three triads. The Gut triad consists of 8's, 9's and 1's; these are people who process the world and relate intuitively. The Head triad is made up of 5's, 6's and 7's; these are people who process the world and relate cognitively. In the Heart triad we have 2's, 3's and 4's; these are people who process the world and relate emotionally.

# MOTIVATING EMOTION

As you can see, each triad shares the same core emotional struggle: Gut people battle guilt and a sense that they are not good enough, Head people battle fear and a sense that they are not safe, and Heart people battle shame and a sense that they are not accepted. These three primary emotions—guilt, fear, and shame—and the defenses we develop to manage and overcome them form the primary barriers in our relationships with God, others and ourselves. We see this for the first time after the fall in Genesis 3:

- Genesis 3:7 — underlying emotion: shame; defense strategy: I cover
- Genesis 3:8-10 — underlying emotion: fear; defense strategy: I hide
- Genesis 3:11-13 — underlying emotion: guilt; defense strategy: I blame

John Starke writes, *“The Enneagram helps us see how fear might be controlling us, how shame might be motivating us, how guilt might be crippling us. Like a tracer chemical in the blood stream that helps identify the disease, the Enneagram brings to the surface indicators of what might be motivating sinful or harmful actions and patterns. With those resources, we can press into Christ, seeking healing and transformation in the gospel.”*

# HEALTHY & UNHEALTHY ARROWS

The above diagram also shows that each personality has stress and security arrows. These arrows indicate the direction of growth or integration and the direction of unhealth and disintegration. In other words, there's a number you slide to when you are growing in health and functioning out of your God-given identity in Christ and there's a number you slide to when you are not healthy and operating out of the flesh. As you grow, you tend to slide over and borrow from the blessings of that type. When you fail to grow, you tend to slide over and borrow from the brokenness of that type.

# CHILDHOOD WOUND

The Enneagram resonates with most people as it aids our understanding of how the gospel story intersects with our personal story. The truth is, our present is shaped by our past; who we are is shaped by where we come from. No matter how healthy and godly your family of origin or childhood experience was, on some level every family is dysfunctional, and in a fallen world nobody gets out of childhood unscathed. We all carry emotional wounds from our earliest relationships and experiences. These wounds, if we do not name them and process them, will infect our relationships with God and others. The Enneagram helps us go back so that we can go

forward— identifying the childhood wounds we carry and the false scripts and defensive strategies we learned to help us survive, so that we can bring those to Jesus and begin to heal and re-learn to trust him completely.

Each personality has particular gifts and weaknesses they bring into their relationships. In essence, the Enneagram is trying to introduce you to your false self and the unique ways you bear the effects of the fall, and your true self and the unique ways you bear God's image in your relationships. The false self is an image we create in self-defense to help us feel safe, loved, and accepted apart from trusting in the love of Christ. In this way, the design of the Enneagram helps you take off the mask, so the real you can meet the real Jesus and you can experience the life you were made for in deep relationship with God and others.

# 6

TYPE SIX

# THE LOYAL PERSON

## IMAGE OF GOD

Sixes reflect the faithfulness and steadfastness of God.

## IN GENERAL

Loyal, Responsible, Anxious, Suspicious

## CORE DESIRE

Safety, Security, Stability, Certainty

## FOCUS OF ATTENTION

What could go wrong

## AVOIDANCE

Deviance and punishment

## DRIVING EMOTION

Fear

## BESETTING SIN

Anxiety

## CHILDHOOD WOUND

Absence of guidance, unstable emotional environment, sense of unsettledness, wondered who or what could be trusted to take care of them, authority figures made them feel unsafe.

## LIES SIXES BELIEVE (FALSE NARRATIVE)

It's not okay to trust myself.

## SURVIVAL STRATEGY/DEFENSE MECHANISM

I must be dutiful, diligent and think everything through in order to be safe and sure.

## HEALTHY - THEIR BEST

Loyal  
Trustworthy  
Committed  
Sensible  
Stable  
Practical  
Likable  
Courageous  
Supportive  
Cooperative  
Prepared

## UNHEALTHY - THEIR WORST

Cautious  
Worried  
Controlling  
Worst case scenario  
Paranoid  
Indecisive  
Rigid  
Timid  
Suspicious  
Defensive  
Self-doubting

Sixes value being faithful, reliable, prepared, dutiful, responsible, and conscientious. Above all, they value safety, security, and stability. Many sixes report growing up in unstable homes, where the emotional atmosphere was up and down. It's possible that the authoritative figures in their lives didn't use their power in a way that made them feel safe. They might have been emotionally unreliable, overly protective, or even abusive. Basically, they were inconsistent in their care. As a result, Sixes struggle to trust authority and learned they need to try to win over the authoritative figures in their life in order to feel protected or oppose them in order to protect themselves.

**WEAKNESSES:** The underlying emotion Sixes are trying to overcome is **fear**, and their besetting sin is **anxiety**. They are the most anxious type of all the personalities. They live in their heads and let their thoughts run away from them. They tend to worry about what they're going to worry about. It's not just that they struggle to trust others, but Sixes really struggle to trust themselves. Sixes are plagued with self-doubt. They tirelessly look for some kind of structure to hide in, an environment that will reassure them and make them feel safe and secure and stable. The questions their soul is asking are, Where am I? Am I safe? Unhealthy Sixes are suspicious of others, especially authority.

**STRENGTHS:** Sixes bear the image of God particularly in their faithfulness,

steadfastness, and loyalty. When emotionally and spiritually healthy, Sixes are a very stabilizing presence. They have the ability to ground people in reality and draw out their emotions. They are faithful, reliable, hard-working, courageous, leaders, self-expressive, vigilant, secure, charming, funny, and affectionate. <sup>36</sup>

The lies Sixes believe: *“It is not ok to trust yourself.”* <sup>37</sup>

The truth Sixes need: *“You are safe.”* <sup>38</sup>

## SPECIFIC PRACTICES FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Sixes are tempted to be anxious and afraid, leading them to struggle to trust God, others, and themselves. The Spirit of Christ wants to transform the fruit of anxiety, fear, and mistrust into joy, peace, courage, and the capacity to trust deeply (Gal. 5:22-23). Spiritual disciplines should be selected with this trajectory in mind. **Downstream practices** are those that come naturally for this type. **Upstream practices** are those that are more challenging for this type because they confront the false self or flesh. <sup>39</sup>

## THE DOWNSTREAM PRACTICES

- **Singing & Journaling:** These are grounding practices that come naturally for Sixes. Singing and journaling are ways of expressing faith in the face of fear and solidifying the truth that in Christ they are truly safe. <sup>40</sup>
- **Meditating on God’s Word:** Sixes should commit to a specific way of reading Scripture known as *lectio divina* (Latin for “divine reading”). This method invites the Holy Spirit into the reading as it moves through four distinct phases: read, meditate, pray, and contemplate. <sup>4</sup> This practice encourages Sixes to slow down and have their fears confronted by God’s voice and cast out by God’s love as revealed in His Word.

## THE UPSTREAM PRACTICES

- **Scripture Memory:** <sup>41</sup>This practice challenges the anxious, busy mind for Sixes. It requires discipline and focused effort. Scripture memory can be transformative for Sixes because it anchors them in God’s Word and anchors God’s Word in them. This means that God’s Word is hidden in their hearts to remind their conscience that they are hidden safely in Christ. The Word of God goes with them consciously everywhere they go. Whatever is going on in their soul to make them anxious, they can call the truth of God to memory and have courage.
- **Fasting:** This discipline of fasting is good for Sixes because it helps ground them in the reality of God and helps them live consciously aware of his presence. Awakening their inner hunger for God is a way of reinforcing that God is enough and that he is faithful to have met their deepest need in Christ.

## KEY BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

The Scripture Sixes should commit to memory is 1 Peter 5:6-7. Sixes will have their fear transformed into courage and confidence as they humble themselves before God and cast their anxieties on Him. The most important thing for Sixes to remember is that they are safe to come to God with their fears because “He cares for them.” Sixes can rest and act courageously because they have a God who promises to take care of them. When they doubt this truth, they need only to look at the cross to see the extent of God’s loving care. Sixes should regularly call to memory the truth of 1 John 4:18, that “perfect love casts out fear.” God has stewarded His authority to love and not harm. God’s love is ultimately safety, for it is our salvation.

## THE GOSPEL SIXES NEED FOR HEALING & GROWTH

I am safe in Jesus. My life is hidden with God in Christ (Col. 3:3). I have nothing to fear because Jesus took my punishment and has forgiven my sins and he is my rock and foundation. Perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:8).

<sup>36</sup> Riso & Hudson, 135.

<sup>37</sup> Sherrill, 38.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> The language of upstream and downstream comes from Sherrill, chapter 5, *Enneagram & the Way of Jesus*.

<sup>40</sup> Sherrill, 98.

<sup>41</sup> Sherrill, 99

## HOW TO LOVE ME WELL

- Please don't shame or embarrass me for my anxiety.
- Encourage me to talk about my fears, and when I do, just listen without trying to solve them.
- Help me focus on the best things that could happen rather than on the worse.
- Tell me directly (yet gently) when my anxieties are driving you up the wall.
- Back off when I blow up. (You can do that when you recall that there is a lot of fear deep down in my soul that has nothing to do with you.)
- Encourage me to take risks.
- Reassure me that everything is going to be ok.
- Laugh and cut up with me. I like to have a good time.
- Tell me that I'm doing a good job.
- Acknowledge and appreciate that I am loyal, responsible, and capable.

## HOW I CAN LOVE OTHERS WELL

- Remember that people are not against me but for me. I do well to take them a face value rather than being suspicious or looking for an ulterior motive.
- Know the gift that I bring is loyalty, dedication and stability to relationships, projects and mission.
- Give the gift of faith and encourage when challenges are steep.
- Pay attention to how I am relating to authority—not being too compliant or too confrontational.
- Know that I can become aggressive and confrontational out of fear. So take a step back and calm down.
- Remember that I don't have to protect myself. I can trust myself and others.

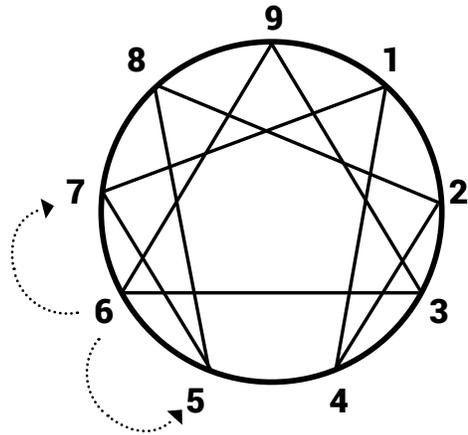
### WINGS

#### Type Six with Five wing — 6w5 “The Defender”

They are more introverted, intellectual, cautious, focused, paranoid, have heightened anxiety, and standoffish.

#### Type Six with Seven wing — 6w7 “The Buddy”

They are more extroverted, materialistic, sociable, playful, funny, energetic, active, and impulsive.

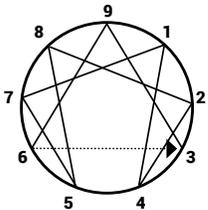


### STRESS

#### What we are like when we are UNDER STRESS

Type 6 moves toward average to **unhealthy Type 3**

- Become competitive and arrogant.
- Avoid feeling anxious by being busy.
- Reluctant to try anything new if failure is a possibility.

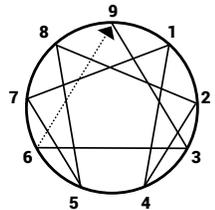


### GROWTH

#### When the Holy Spirit enables us to begin to transform.

Type 6 moves toward **healthy side of Type 9**

- They become more relaxed and optimistic.
- They empathize with others more.
- They take life less seriously and free up their energy to relax.



# TYPE SIX :: LEVELS OF DEVELOPMENT

The Levels of Development are measuring our capacity to be fully present in our relationships and use our personality and gifts in life-giving ways.<sup>42</sup>

## HEALTHY LEVELS

- **Level 1** (at their best): Become self-affirming, trusting of self and others, independent yet symbiotically interdependent and cooperative as an equal. Belief in self leads to true courage, positive thinking, leadership, and rich self-expression.
- **Level 2**: Able to elicit strong emotional responses from others; very appealing, endearing, lovable, affectionate. Trust important; bonding with others, forming permanent relationships and alliances.
- **Level 3**: Dedicated to individuals and movements in which they deeply believe. Community builders; responsible, reliable, trustworthy. Hard-working and persevering, sacrificing for others, they create stability and security in their world, bringing a cooperative spirit.

## AVERAGE LEVELS

- **Level 4**: Start investing their time and energy into whatever they believe will be safe and stable. Organizing and structuring, they look to alliances and authorities for security and continuity. Constantly vigilant, anticipating problems.
- **Level 5**: To resist having more demands made on them, they react against others passive-aggressively. Become evasive, indecisive, cautious, procrastinating, and ambivalent. Are highly reactive, anxious, and negative, giving contradictory, “mixed signals.” Internal confusion makes them react unpredictably.
- **Level 6**: To compensate for insecurities, they become sarcastic and belligerent, blaming others for their problems, taking a tough stance toward “outsiders.” Highly reactive and defensive, dividing people into friends and enemies, while looking for threats to their own security. Authoritarian while fearful of authority, highly suspicious, yet, conspiratorial and fear-instilling to silence their own fears.

## UNHEALTHY LEVELS

- **Level 7**: Fearing that they have ruined their security, they become panicky, volatile, and self-disparaging with acute inferiority feelings. Seeing themselves as defenseless, they seek out a stronger authority or belief to resolve all problems. Highly divisive, disparaging and berating others
- **Level 8**: Feeling persecuted, that others are “out to get them,” they lash-out and act irrationally, bringing about what they fear. Fanaticism, violence.
- **Level 9**: Hysterical and seeking to escape punishment, they become self-destructive and suicidal. Alcoholism, drug overdoses, “skid row,” self-abasing behavior. Generally corresponds to the Passive-Aggressive and Paranoid personality disorders.

<sup>42</sup> Riso & Hudson, 78.