

CMS-053 and 054
The Enneagram and The HAM's:
The Religious HAM Strategies
of
The 9

The 8-9-1 Strategies

The Primary Happiness Attainment Motivator (HAM) in the lives of the Enneagram's 8, 9 and 1 is Religion.

This religion might be a named religious belief system, an alternative to traditional religions, such as Atheism or Philosophy, or something they would never identify as "Religion", such as Psychology or Science,

No matter what it is, it is these people, the 8, 9, and 1, who predominately Filter by their Beliefs.

The 8-9-1 Strategies

Center 8-9-1 is referred to as the instinctive or gut center; they "know". The predominant motive in the lives of this group is Religion, and Anger is the primary Emotional Sin.

The anger is expressed differently in all three cases, but anger it is.

An angry Eight blocks out thinking, or thinks in caricatures; a compulsive One tends to see black and white only; and Nines are passive-aggressive.

The 8-9-1 Strategies

This group has a different approach than thinkers, they have an intuitive "gut feeling" way of making their way through life.

They "know" what is right and wrong, what is fair and unfair, and what is "okay".

And, they have a strategy for handling life.

The 8-9-1 Strategies

The Eight's Religious attention is accomplished by power and control, to making things happen, to protecting the weak, and to fighting Injustice.

With an intense, authoritative, and sometimes explosive energy, they are usually ready to face any challenge.

They "know" what is right and wrong, fair and unfair (Justice).

The Nine's Religious attention goes to connecting with others, maintaining harmony, peace, and comfort, and avoiding conflict.

They typically avoid direct confrontation but choose to work to bring conciliation, but if angered (and they are angry a lot), they are passive aggressive and conspire behind the back of their foe.

The 8-9-1 Strategies

The One's Religious attention is Righteousness/Perfection and goes to noticing and correcting errors; to identifying and adhering to standards of perfection in thought, feeling and behavior; to acting according to what is right or wrong; and to expressing their anger by judging and criticizing oneself and others.

The Nine

People of enneatype Nine are essentially looking to maintain a sense of peace, harmony and balance and to avoid conflict and disruption.

Nines tend to see the best in people, to be fundamentally optimistic about the future, and, when reasonably healthy, to have a calming and grounding effect on those around them.

The Nine

As a general rule, Nines are fairly "easy going;" they adopt a strategy of "going with the flow."

They intuitively know how to wait for the openings so that they can slip effortlessly into the stream.

Nines don't tend to "sweat the small stuff."

On the whole, they are self-effacing, tolerant, even-tempered and likable individuals.

The Nine

Nines aspire to be supportive, loving and gentle and more than any other enneatype, are likely to embody these valuable qualities.

Given such a portrait, it might seem difficult to understand what is so problematic about the type Nine fixation.

The central problem for Nines revolves around the fact that their desire to maintain peace and to avoid conflict is compulsive.

The Nine

As the potential for conflict in life is virtually ubiquitous, the Nine's inability to confront it forcefully and deal with it effectively, leaves the Nine at a serious disadvantage when it comes to living a full, satisfying and honest life.

This deeply rooted tendency to avoid discord plays itself out both internally and in the realm of external action, but generally manifests most centrally in close personal relationships, as intimate relationships more than anything else tend to trigger core defenses.

The Nine

Many Nines are "successful" when it comes to their interactions with the world.

They are frequently productive and often manage to rise through the ranks on the basis of their likability and reliability without having to engage too forcefully in direct competition.

Thus, even in a capitalist economic system, many Nines manage to "succeed" while maintaining an attitude of forbearance and cooperation.

The Nine

Nines are not necessarily without ambition either, something easily attested to by the sheer number of leaders who have had a type Nine fixation.

Some such Nines are able to take on leadership roles because they wear their fixations lightly.

Perhaps they enjoy the benefits of a fortunate upbringing or perhaps their work on themselves has borne fruit.

The Nine

Sometimes Nines who take on leadership roles seem to be the living embodiment of a solution that has been offered to us from the depths of the collective unconscious.

They represent the only possible answer to the exigencies of a time in which the forward path cannot be determined by aggressive self-assertion or even by clarity of intellect.

The Nine

Abraham Lincoln, perhaps the greatest of America's presidents, could modestly state "I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me."

Healthy Nines are in touch with their depths and are able to maintain their sense of self even in the face of the most forceful opposition or the most appalling conflict.

Even as they rule, they serve those they lead.

The Nine

Less healthy Nines who take on leadership roles however, tend to adopt a strategy of "muffling" from awareness the likely negative consequences of their actions. Often they surround themselves with like-minded others who reinforce their sense of security and who serve as a buffer from all forms of dissent, thus enabling the Nine to remain insulated.

The Nine

Most of the unhealthy Nine's insulating buffers against reality, however, are actually internal to the psyche.

A deeply entranced Nine simply dissociates from whatever is unpleasant or unpalatable, from whatever disturbs his preferred view of the world.

Such comfortably numb Nines simply fail to process any information which would be a cause of discomfort or disturbance.

The Nine

About this phenomenon, Naranjo comments, "Not wanting to see, not wanting to be in touch with one's experience is something akin to cognitive laziness, an eclipse of the experiencer or inner witnessing in the person."

Unhealthy Nines, even as they take on roles of leadership, which would seem to involve self-assertion, are often actually deeply entrenched in a peculiar form of self-abnegation*.

*The setting aside of self-interest for the sake of others or for a belief or principle..

The Nine

Hence we encounter the portrait of the "nice guy," the one who is affable to even the lowliest employee.

He has a ready smile and a genial manner. He means no one any harm.

So, no matter what harm he has done, he sleeps well.

His conscience is clear.

He never assumes any responsibility for the evil he has wrought.

The Nine

It is an almost universal rule that those leaders who rise to power in spite of, or even by virtue of their unconsciousness, have managed to do so because they have unwittingly embodied and reflected back the irresponsibility and lack of consciousness of those who brought them to power.

About such rulers, it would be fair to say that, even as they rule, they follow those they lead.

The Nine

While the above may seem something of an exaggerated portrait, exaggerations often serve to illustrate key points.

Virtually all Nines tend to see what they wish to see, to idealize those they love and to ignore whatever would disturb their comfort and peace of mind.

These tendencies are not left behind until a Nine is truly healthy.

The problem with this approach, of course, is that problems do not cease to exist, simply because the Nine ignores them.

The Nine

They have consequences, often deleterious ones, both for the Nine and for those in the Nine's life.

While some Nines do assume positions of leadership, most Nines are not especially ambitious.

They pay their dues to the world but essentially prefer to withdraw from it.

They are "home bodies" who are generally devoted to their families, especially to their children.

They enjoy their hobbies and appreciate some time to themselves.

The Nine

They generally value simplicity and cultivate the virtue of patience.

They are frequently creative in a modest and unassuming way.

They adopt an attitude of acceptance towards life.

They don't ask for too much; sometimes they ask for too little.

At a very deep level, at a level which seldom breaks through to conscious awareness, most Nines simply feel that they don't deserve too much.

The Nine

Nines would do well to develop a certain kind of healthy selfishness, as many of their difficulties turn on the fact that they are too selfless.

As mentioned above, the Nine's core issues tend to manifest most profoundly in the context of intimate relationships. It is here that the Nine's need to avoid conflict bears its most obvious fruit.

Many Nines seem to find it excruciatingly difficult to assert themselves against those they love, even when it comes to trivial matters.

The Nine

They would rather defer to their partner than assert their own preferences.

Their preference is not very strong, they reason, whereas the partner is willing to put up a fight. It seems only reasonable to "give in."

In that manner, the Nine gets to avoid the unpleasantness of a conflict and vicariously enjoy the pleasure that the partner feels.

Nines tend to merge with their partners and to empathetically take on the partner's feelings and desires.

The Nine

This naturally makes it difficult for the Nine to cause hurt or frustration to those they love.

On any individual occasion, this policy of appeasement might indeed be reasonable, but as a general policy it does not bode well for either the Nine or the partner of the Nine.

The problems generated from this policy follow a few predictable patterns.

The Nine's partner might actually begin to resent the passivity of the Nine.

The Nine

It can be difficult to respect someone who will not defend boundaries, who will not take a well defined position.

Other individuals gladly accept the willingness of the Nine to adopt their agenda and become overtly dominating and, in some cases, even abusive.

The Nine might even appear to accept such aggressions against them, although resentment invariably builds beneath the calm and placid surface.

The Nine

Nine's have a difficult time accessing their anger, as anger is the emotion which, in its pure form, signals to us that one of our boundaries has been violated.

As Nines tend to have a diffuse sense of their boundaries, they tend also to fall asleep to their anger.

The anger exists however and will manifest itself, perhaps in passive-aggressive foot dragging or "checking out" from important engagements.

The Nine

For some Nines, unprocessed anger manifests itself through the development of psychosomatic illnesses.

Other Nines experience instances in which pent up anger expresses itself inappropriately and unexpectedly with such a fury that it shocks those on the receiving end.

All of these manifestations of anger are naturally a good deal more harmful to the Nine and to the Nine's relationships than expressing it in a way which is appropriate to the needs of the situation.

The Nine

The ability of a Nine to acknowledge anger and recognize and deal with its causes is a pretty good measure of the Nine's general level of health.

The really crucial problem for type Nine individuals is that they tend to have an inadequate sense of self.

This leads to a tendency on the part of Nines to both downplay their own significance and to borrow a sense of significance from others.

The Nine

There is, in fact, a sort of paradox at the heart of the type Nine fixation.

At a largely subconscious level, Nines intuitively grasp that the constructed personality, the personality with which most of us identify, is not the true self; it is not who they are.

The Nine

This is, in fact, a very deep truth; the constructed personality is simply that – a construct through which consciousness operates, much of it built out of defenses and reactions to dangers which are no longer present; it is, in a sense, both a limitation and an obscuration.

But the constructed personality also serves a necessary function; it gives the individual a base from which to operate, a sense of self, however ultimately flawed and partial. While the constructed self is not ultimately who we are, it is a necessary step towards the development of true individuality.

Gurdjieff has this to say: "For inner growth, for work on oneself, a certain development of personality, as well as a certain strength of essence are required. An insufficiently developed personality means that...a man cannot begin to work on himself, he cannot begin to study himself, he cannot begin to struggle with his mechanical habits."

The Nine

Without a well developed personality, without a firm sense of self and adequately defined boundaries, the Nine is left in a state of permeability to forces both outside the ego and to those subterranean forces that reside beneath it.

Understanding this essential porousness of the ego of enneatype Nine is absolutely essential to an understanding of all of the basic manifestations of the Nine's specific problems and challenges.

The Nine

It is the difficulty that type Nine individuals have in addressing this core issue which is called in the traditional enneagram, the vice of indolence.

As already indicated, indolence does not here refer to laziness in the traditional sense, although it can manifest in that manner in some individuals, but to the lack of attention to the most important matter at hand, the lack of attention to what constitutes true work, i.e. the development of a solid sense of self from which the Nine can be truly effective in the world.

The Nine

According to the teachings of the traditional enneagram, the essential virtue of each type appears when the fixation or vice weakens.

Oscar Ichazo, the father of the modern Enneagram, indicated that the virtue of type Nine was what he called "Holy Love."

Nines, even at average levels of health, tend to be kind, compassionate and tolerant individuals; their personalities dimly sense and partially embody the nature of their type specific virtue.

The Nine

True love does involve openness to others and permeability of ego boundaries; it does involve acceptance and forgiveness; it does involve a sense of the interconnectedness of all things, just as Nines have known all along.

Like all of the fixations, the type Nine fixation can be viewed as a sort of failed short cut; it can be viewed as the personality's flawed attempt to achieve the true virtue.

As type Nine individuals learn to love and honor their own integrity, they are able to extend that love to others in a truly effective and beneficial manner.

The Nine

As they heal themselves, they heal their relationships with others and actively work towards healing the wounds of our ailing planet.

Nines are sometimes called "the peacemakers" but they are not really worthy of that name until they leave behind the idea that peace is synonymous with the absence of conflict.

Making peace requires the Nine to develop a truly active nature, the nature that Nines are able to manifest when they shed the passivity associated with their fixation.

The Nine

Nines with a One wing tend to be more cerebral and imaginative than those with an Eight wing.

They typically withdraw under stress more than those with an Eight wing.

They sometimes find it difficult to ground themselves.

They tend to lose focus and can get lost in worlds of their imagination.

The Nine

Nines with an Eight wing are overall more grounded and assertive.

They tend also to be more sociable than those with a One wing.

Nines with a One wing are more theoretical; those with an Eight wing more practical.

The Nine

Type Exemplars

Presidents Abraham Lincoln, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, Dwight D. Eisenhower and G.W.Bush are all examples of enneatype Nine.

G.W.Bush is a perfect example of the principle of disintegration; Nine goes to Six under stress.

But, G.W.Bush is not an over thinker who is fixated in the mental center; hence not a Six.

(His father is the Six.)

The Nine

Famous actors Uma Thurman, Liv Tyler, Jennifer Anniston, Sophia Loren, Jimmy Stewart, Ingrid Bergman, Kevin Costner, David Carradine, Keanu Reeves and Ray Romano.

Nines often have an intuitive grasp of the workings of the subconscious mind.

Consider Carl Jung and Joseph Campbell in this regard.

In an extended sense, we can even see Walt Disney, the fantasist, in this light.

The Nine

Musicians include Paula Abdul, Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, Dave Mathews, Josh Rouse, Willie Nelson and Janet Jackson.

Authors include J.K.Rowling and Laura Ingalls Wilder.

Also, cartoonist Charles Schulz.

Painters include Marc Chagall and Henri Matisse.

The Nine

Fictional examples include most of the hobbits in Tolkien's Lord of the Rings, as well as the author of that book and its sequels, and the director of the films - Peter Jackson.

Also, J.K.Rowling's famous hero, Harry Potter is a Nine.

Other fictional examples include Star War's Luke Skywalker, as well as George Lucas, the director of Star Wars.

The Nine

Possible Mistypes

Nines and Ones can be mistaken for each other if the wing is especially strong or the individual observed under a narrow set of circumstances.

Nines, in particular, can have an opinionated streak and strong moral convictions which they might express freely; in this way they might appear somewhat One-like. (The Nine's conflict avoidance is often enough not global, so that there are some Nines who will forcefully argue for e.g. their political positions while nevertheless deferring to their spouses on all matters of any significance.)

The Nine

But this potential similarity notwithstanding, Nines are far less likely to try to control others or the environment and are generally much more capable of seeing the elements of truth in opposing points of view, something which is often a weak spot for Ones.

On a personal level, Nines often struggle with self-assertion, whereas Ones find it comes more or less naturally.

Nines generally find ways to relax when feeling tense; Ones have generally tense personalities and experience real difficulties when it comes to relaxation.

The Nine

Nines and Twos can easily mistype.

It is especially the case that female Nines who are identified with a nurturing role might mistake themselves for Twos.

Both types tend to be generous and oriented towards feelings and relationships.

Nines, however, are truly humble and generally self-effacing, whereas Twos tend to have a high opinion of themselves and tend to want to receive recognition for their good deeds.

Twos are also far more aggressive when pushed than are Nines who characteristically withdraw under stress.

The Nine

Nines and Threes can mistype if the Nine is especially successful or the Three especially depressed.

Nines can identify with a social role, much as Threes can, and can be charismatic like many Threes.

But the overall pattern of their lives ought to indicate the true type.

Even very successful Nines tend to adopt an attitude of easy-going, unpretentiousness; they tend to be more cooperative than overtly competitive, unlike Threes.

The Nine

And even workaholic Nines seem to know how to relax, something which generally does not come easily to the more driven Threes.

Finally, while Threes can lose their motivation when depressed, their essential goal oriented nature is likely to assert itself fairly quickly.

The Nine

Nines and Fours can both be sensitive, creative, withdrawn and introverted and for these reasons can cross-type, although it is generally the Nine who mistypes as a Four or who is mistyped as a Four by others on the basis of these similarities.

Nines, in particular, sometimes recognize that they are far less happy than they let on, and many Nines feel inadequate when depressed; they therefore think they must be Fours.

The Nine

The internal landscape of Fours is much darker than that of Nines however, who tend to see the best in others and who characteristically detach from strong emotions, especially strong unpleasant emotions.

Nines are also not in search of an authentic self or the proper presentation of that self; they are generally somewhat oblivious to these concerns.

Finally, Nines tend to relate well to a greater variety of people than do Fours, who often feel like misfits.

The Nine

Nines and Fives are both withdrawn types and many Nines are systematic thinkers and intellectuals, therefore there are some commonalities which might generate a mistype.

It is generally Nines who mistake themselves or are mistaken by others as Fives; Fives almost never mistype as Nines.

One of the principle differences lies in their approach to thought.

The Nine

Nines tend to look for thought systems which offer some sense of harmony; Fives are attracted to what disturbs them and often embrace or struggle against nihilism*.

Nines relate well to a wide variety of people; Fives to only a few.

***1 a** : a viewpoint that traditional values and beliefs are unfounded and that existence is senseless and useless
b : a doctrine that denies any objective ground of truth and especially of moral truths

The Nine

Nines and Sixes can easily mistype or be mistyped by others, although Nines more commonly mistype or are mistyped as Sixes than the reverse.

This is exacerbated by the fact that both Sixes and Nines tend to be blinded to the nature of their respective fixations. In addition, many Sixes do not appear to be visibly anxious and some Nines do.

The Nine

Overall, however, Nines lack the nervous mental energy of type Six.

Nines moreover tend to be trusting and optimistic about the future; they tend to see the best in others.

This is almost never the case with Sixes who have a suspicious streak, generally believe that there is something possibly threatening just below the surface and often have a very cautious view about the future outcome of present events.

The Nine

Nines and Sevens are both optimistic, and Sevens can appear to be easy going and self-effacing, so the two might be confused, although Nines seldom mistype as Sevens and it is not common for Sevens to mistype as Nines.

Sevens tend to be self-centered, whereas Nines tend to yield too much to the preferences of others.

Nines tend to go with the flow; Sevens tend to push their agenda.

Sevens tend towards hyperactivity; Nines tend to be "laid back."

The Nine

A mistype between Nines and Eights might be generated if the wing is especially strong, but as a general rule, the two should be distinguishable in terms of the manner in which they assert themselves.

Assertion comes naturally to Eights; not so for Nines.

Nines tend to be conflict avoidant; Eights sometimes invite conflict in order to rev up their experience or to "clear the air." Nines tend to withdraw under stress; Eights to assert themselves.

The Nine

Coping strategy:

Because of the way they filter, some Nines saw their childhood as one in which they felt overlooked or ignored and felt they had to go along with the wishes of others.

Other Nines describe having had a pleasant childhood with almost no family conflict.

In response to these environments, they learned to identify with others' positions, forget their own point of view, and go along to get along.

The Nine

Major traits:

Nines merge with others energetically, taking on the feel and positions of others, thus losing touch with their own internal experience and priorities.

As one of the three anger types, Nines can be very out of contact with their own anger, which can leak out in the form of passive-aggression, stubbornness, and passive resistance.

Typically they are more focused on others than on themselves.

Strengths: Nines can be skilled mediators and loyal, steadfast partners and friends. They can also be warm, understanding and caring.

Challenges: They can also have difficulty feeling and expressing anger, dealing with conflict, knowing what they want, and differentiating their experience from others in their lives.

The Nine

No Priorities - The Instinctive Nine

We don't always have to go to the movies to see a type acted out in vivid color.

When we get to eights and nines, we can just remember the 1996 elections.

Dole was a clear eight and Clinton, a nine.

Clinton can easily be confused with a three because like a lot of nines, he gets swept up in whatever is going on.

Clinton is leading a three country in a three-ish job so when he just goes with the energy flow he looks like a three sometimes.

But here are some things that point to his nine-ness.

The Nine

The New Yorker (Sept. 23, 1996 p. 56) describes his giving a speech in this way: "He gave a long speech. It was not a good speech in any classical sense -- it was, as most of his speeches are, too multitudinous in specifics, and lacking in coherence -- but it was casual and fluid, moving from one part to another with an internal rhythm. It was likable, and the man who was delivering it was likable, too."

The Nine

Later, they describe his method of giving speeches: "Merely addressing what Clinton says is an exhausting, endless chore, as George Bush found, because he says so much and because the things he says are all so mixed together -- some are true, some not, some are important, some are meaningless; some have nothing to do with Clinton, some are real, some are vapor." (p.57) Dole may have thought this was strategy and it was, but it was his enneagram strategy.

The Nine

Nines do not have a clear grasp of what is primary and what is secondary and they are not organized thinkers, as a rule.

What the frustrated writers report is just the muddled, wandering, unprioritized, global thinking of a nine.

Like the 2-3-4 center has confusion about how to feel and the 5,6,7 center has a knot in the will, the 8-9-1 center, often called the gut center or instinctive center, has a knot in their thinking.

The Nine

In a certain way they don't think clearly, especially with words.

They often have uncanny intuition - a "gut feeling" but they tend not to be articulate. Clinton's speech patterns reveal the life struggle of the nines.

Nines tend to merge with their environment, go with the flow, include everyone.

They are often leaders because they know what everybody else wants and that is what they want.

The Nine

Clinton is not our only recent nine president.

Reagan was a nine. His falling asleep was metaphorical - nines are oblivious to themselves.

Reagan's cheerful oblivion was one way the nine minimizes life's struggles.

Eisenhower was a leader, but his campaign slogan had no content at all.

It simply said "I Like Ike." Nines are often lovable.

Reagan was loved even by people who disliked his economic and political policies.

The Nine

Quayle, another nine, is a little different. He manifests the same thinking problem that Reagan and Clinton do, only his was more of a vacant nobody-at-home symptom rather than the simplified Reagan thought cloud or the prolix unprioritized thought of Clinton.

These politicians are intelligent nines, but their intelligence is interpersonal, intuitive and non-verbal.

The Nine

Dole had a hard time attacking Clinton because Clinton was all over the lot. He had so many ideas, so many positions that Dole could shoot down one or some, but Clinton had no priorities, so Dole couldn't focus his eightish wrath on any important one.

Dole had a few broad planks (which he defended with fierce eightness).

Clinton had 300 skinny ones.

The Nine

Reagan was hard to attack, too (Teflon president), because he talked in anecdotes and little stories that really didn't have any cognitive dimension. How do you attack a little story?

Nines specialize in being hard to attack. From childhood they perfected the art of not getting caught in storms, of staying alive in a hostile or unstable environment.

They emotionally and intellectually just hunker down and lie low.

The Nine

They often have a sweet quality about them with no hard edges.

Nines have anger - a lot of it - but it's imploded, turned in on themselves.

It smolders, but it doesn't explode very often.

Rather it becomes passive aggressive - extremely hard to deal with.

Clinton is often attacked for having no agenda and that's almost right.

People sense this about Bill and Hilary.

He is our leader, she is his.

The Nine

Watch when Clinton ends his speeches, that plea for congress to work with him is real.

He doesn't like conflict deep down and he would really like to cooperate. His nine agenda is to get along with everyone, include everyone.

Remember his first inauguration - The Way America Looks - with every kind of music and art he could cram into it?

Nines often have difficult prioritizing - Clinton is no exception - and they merge with whoever has a strong agenda.

The Nine

Speaking Style: A Kind of Low Key Absence

The Numb Nine

"I have a young friend who has the maddening habit of calling me up and talking for a long time and saying only one or two things. He repeats and repeats and repeats until I am ready to ask if he is deliberately torturing me. If he is, I will give him whatever he wants. And I like him. He has a heart of gold, a smile that is negotiating currency and he wouldn't hurt anyone or anything. He's a nine."

The Nine

Why then, does this nine repeat?

Because he has an inner conviction that his words don't get through.

Which in turn is rooted in a deeper conviction that they don't count, because he doesn't.

Repetition can function like screaming.

(Mothers often combine them with "If I've told you once, I've told you a hundred times....")

At the heart of the nine strategy is a deep seated, often unacknowledged hopelessness.

The Nine

Their sin is traditionally called sloth, which is best understood as spiritual laziness.

Don't expand it to all kinds of laziness, many nines work extremely hard.

But they fail to pay attention to their own spiritual needs, they ignore their most important task in life, the cultivation of their own soul.

Laziness in this context means doing the extra-curricular and not paying attention to the main concerns.

The Nine

Nines often have trouble staying on track to get a job done.

They can be distracted -- by anything.

Focus is difficult for them, so they will set out to clean the garage and end up deciding to plant the seeds in an old packet they found, but of course they had to dig up the garden first....

They raise passive aggression to an art form.

They see how energetic you are, but that's easy for you to do, you have a life.

The Nine

There's a great nine country western song: "I spent my whole life pleasin' everyone but me and making love in someone else's dream." (That could be a two, also...) Nines and twos are often hard to tell apart because they both have this tendency to merge and carry out someone else's agenda. The difference is that the twos keep track and the nines lose track of what they did. Nines are hard to identify because they go with the flow of whatever energy is available and they'll look like their environment.

The Nine

They have a hard time self-identifying because they identify a little bit with everyone.

Unhealthy nines are numb because that is their defense.

They don't attack, they take the anger they feel about the situation and turn it in on themselves.

They implode instead of explode.

They're sitting on a lot of anger, but they can't/don't show it.

Instead they go numb.

The Nine

Sometimes they use drugs (especially alcohol), sometimes they just sit and eat, and they make really devoted couch potatoes.

They can just sit and watch and somehow they don't even pay attention to the TV. Or themselves.

Their sedentary lifestyle can cause them weight problems.

But many nines are not at all sedentary.

They are numb inside, but quite active and energetic in their work or hobby.

The Nine

The numbness is about their spiritual task, their activity often functions as a distraction.

"I knew a successful interior decorator who told her husband after 20 years she wanted a divorce and revealed during counseling that she hadn't loved him for as long as she could remember, she just never got around to divorcing...I told that story at a seminar and an old woman in the back row got up and said that that was her story except it was 46 years instead of 20."

The Nine

Their ability to merge and identify with other's agenda has a lovely secondary gain. Nines are often uncommonly sweet, even the males.

They have few hard edges, they know well how not to offend anyone.

They can negotiate because they see everyone's position so clearly (but have a bit of trouble with their own....)

Nines often have a childhood background in which conflict raged and they just hunkered down to let it go over their heads.

The Nine

Or they were faced with conflicted parents and it would have been emotional suicide to take sides.

So they learned to straddle, to be inconspicuous, to look friendly to opposing sides.

And in the process, they learned to delete themselves and their opinions.

Their agenda is to get along, not to push their own views.

The psychological consequences are a kind of spacing out, a neglect of themselves, and a kind of low key absence.

They join but they don't lead.

The Nine

They join but come late or stay on the margins.

Until they get focused.

They are practically immovable.

Think of Anita Hill, a young black female facing the most powerful white males in captivity as they grilled her about Clarence Thomas.

She didn't get angry, she didn't get defensive, she didn't rattle. She stood firm.

Nines can be the most powerful number on the circle.

They can get everyone together, they can hold the team and keep it productive.

The Nine

An Affinity for "Things"

The Self-Preservation Nine

"Sorting" is a technical term meaning an inner disposition or preparedness to look for one thing and not another.

A hungry person sorts for food. He looks at the entire environment, but all he sees is food.

When try to "sort" for the Nine energy, we face a difficult task because we are sorting for what is missing or nonexistent.

We are looking for someone who is acting out of a sense of a missing self.

The Nine

While some may be born with a Nineish energy, a frequent scenario has the child feeling overlooked in some fundamental way.

The Nine child then decided that being overlooked is the way life is, so they overlook themselves.

They see what others want and need, but have a difficult time seeing clearly what they want and need.

With that starting point, let's look at the self-preservation type, if Self-Preservation Nine isn't an oxymoron.

The Nine

Remembering Thomson's law that we never get enough of what we really don't want, it is symbolically consistent that the Nine will seek a substitute for the unclaimed self.

The word we use to describe this in action is appetite.

Nines who focus on themselves (remember the three foci: the one, the few and the many) develop and distort their need for "things."

Self-Preservation Nines take "things" with them.

The Nine

Purses full of everything from spare batteries, plenty of sweets, maps, fingernail clippers, extra money, the address book - you get the picture.

Self-Preservation Nines can take an hour to pack for a 30 minute trip.

Office supplies will abound at home, the car can have almost no trunk space left and let's not talk about closets and pantries.

Food, of course, is primary.

The Nine

And, concomitantly, personal weight can be a problem.

Unless the Self-Preservation Nine has an unusually forgiving metabolism, s/he will run the risk of obesity.

When I did my survey, about half of the reporting Nines had a weight problem. Food is comfort, food is escape, food is ritual.

Food is how Nines will symbolically love themselves.

And because food is symbolic love, it feels like the missing self is being nurtured.

The Nine

Nines in general have a shortage of energy about accomplishing what most needs to be accomplished.

Many compensate with ritual or structure. When they rise in the morning, the day is on automatic pilot so they don't have to exert the mental aggressive energy to decide.

So they just do what they usually do on every day like this.

The Nine

The same foods, clothes, routes to work, drinks after work.

For many couch potato Nines, television can be a serious problem. If certain programs become part of life, they become really attached.

The usual descriptive word is to "veg out." Rituals can substitute for personal decision.

Nines, if unhealthy, can be quite irresponsible and when they are, they pay closer attention to the preconceived rituals than to what they should be doing for their own good.

The Nine

Another place appetite shows up in the Nine is in collections.

Books, mugs, trinkets, trophies, almost anything will do, as long as it diverts the Nine away from what they need to be doing for their soul.

Unlike Fives, who might collect for investment and do so quite shrewdly, Nines often don't distinguish between the essential and the trivial --- so they collect promiscuously.

Boxes, closets, halls, and attics are all fair game for storage.

The Nine

Appetite Nines on the one hand gather all sorts of comforts around them.

On the other hand, as a life posture, they ask very little of life.

These little creature comforts are really all they demand.

The implicit bargain with life, of course, is that life isn't supposed to ask much of them, either.

Watch William Hurt in *The Accidental Tourist*. His central preoccupation is to avoid hassle (read: involvement, demand, intensity, position, taking a stand for what you really want).

The Nine

Live and let live is good advice for some numbers, for a Self-Preservation Nine it is redundant and is a neurotic defense.

The 9

Generally, Nines are patient, steady, easygoing, receptive, relaxed, unselfconscious, agreeable, uncomplicated, contented, comforting, sensual, and idealizing.

Nines get into conflicts by being emotionally unavailable, complacent, inattentive, unaware of their own anger, ineffectual, passive-aggressive, unrealistic, resigned, and stubborn.

At their best, Nines are self-aware, dynamic, inclusive, steadfast, healing, proactive, contemplative, natural, imaginative, serene, and exuberant, engaged and passionate.

The 9

The Way 9's Generally see Themselves:

"I seem to be able to see all points of view pretty easily.

I may even appear indecisive at times because I can see advantages and disadvantages on all sides.

The ability to see all sides makes me good at helping people resolve their differences.

This same ability can sometimes lead me to be more aware of other people's positions, agendas, and personal priorities than of my own.

The 9

The Way 9's Generally see Themselves:

"It is not unusual for me to become distracted and then to get off task on the important things I'm trying to do.

When that happens, my attention is often diverted to unimportant trivial tasks.

I have a hard time knowing what is really important to me, and I avoid conflict by going along with what others want."

The 9

The Way 9's Generally see Themselves:

People tend to consider me to be

easygoing, pleasing, and agreeable.

It takes a lot to get me to the point of showing my anger directly at someone.

I like life to be comfortable, harmonious, and others to be accepting of me."

The 9

Recognizing Nines

Type Nine exemplifies the desire for wholeness, peace, and harmony in our world. Nines are easygoing, emotionally stable people. They are open and unself-consciously serene, trusting and patient with themselves and others. Their openness allows them to be at ease with life and with the natural world.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

As a result, others generally find it easy to be in their company.

They are genuinely good-natured and refreshingly unpretentious.

Because of their peaceful demeanor, Nines have a talent for comforting and reassuring others and are able to exert a calming, healing influence in difficult or tense situations.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

They make steady, supportive friends who can listen uncritically to others' problems as well as share their good times.

In work settings, they can be excellent mediators, able to harmonize groups and bring people together by really healing conflicts.

Nines can also be quite imaginative and creative, and they enjoy expressing themselves in symbolic ways—through music, dance, images, or mythic stories, for instance.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

Indeed, Nines are drawn to anything that affirms the fundamental oneness of the world.

Whether they are working with concepts, diverse groups of people, art forms, or feuding family members, Nines want to bring everything and everyone back to a harmonious unity.

In short, Nines are the eternal optimists, always wanting to believe the best about other people, with hope for the best for themselves.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

They hope that every story will end with,
"...and they all lived happily ever after."

Healthy Nines will work hard to make
things turn out that way.

But average Nines will leave it to "luck
and a prayer"—and they may be sorely
disappointed.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

Average Nines focus on keeping their lives pleasant and uncomplicated.

They idealize others and live through a handful of primary identifications—usually with their family and close friends.

Out of fear of creating conflicts with these people, average Nines hold back their own reactions and opinions and suppress themselves in many other ways.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

Oddly, Nines can be quite assertive on behalf of others and will work hard for others' benefit, but they can have great difficulty taking actions on their own behalf, or even voicing their own real feelings.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

To "maintain the peace," Nines tend not to show their upsets very much, except indirectly—perhaps by eating, drinking, or watching television too much to escape into a more pleasant and comforting world.

They also absorb a lot of tension and neglect—even outright abuse—before showing any kind of emotional response.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

But when their anger has been held back for too long, Nines can suddenly blow up, seemingly out of the blue.

Once they have gotten something out of their system, Nines hope that the storm has blown over and that things will not go back to the way they were before.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

Fearing that change (and potential conflict) will threaten their comfort and peace of mind, average Nines become more complacent and disengaged.

They entrench themselves in comforting habits and routines, pattering around and finding various kinds of busy work to lose themselves in.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

But the longer they do this, the more difficulty they have rousing themselves to take decisive action or to assert themselves in any meaningful way.

They become passive, walking away from problems and brushing them under the rug.

Their thinking becomes hazy and ruminative, mostly daydreaming about happy memories or passing time telling comforting stories.

The 9

They begin to "tune out" reality to protect themselves from anxiety, often seeming "oblivious" and unresponsive as a result.

Average Nines use passive-aggressive acts and stubbornness to resist attempts to engage them.

But their peace of mind is little more than an avoidance of problems—a clinging to fantasies and unrealistic hopes.

Low functioning Nines can become fatalistic and resigned, trudging through life as if nothing can be done to improve their situation.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

Engaged in wishful thinking, looking for easy, magical solutions, Nines keep "waiting for their ship to come in," but without some constructive effort on their part, they may wait a long time, indeed. In brief, Nines want to find unity and wholeness, to create harmony in their environment, to feel spacious and at ease, to emphasize the positive, to avoid conflicts and tension, to resist change and preserve things as they are, and to ignore whatever would upset or disturb them.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

Nines do not want to have conflicts with loved ones, to feel cut off or separated from others, to be angry, to be upset or disturbed, to have their habits or routines interrupted, to arouse themselves or to be emotionally uncomfortable, or to be forced to face unpleasant realities.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

Their Hidden Side

On the surface, Nines appear to be the most easy-going, pleasant people imaginable.

They go along with others' wishes, apparently without any desire other than to make sure everyone is at ease and happy.

But their hidden side is that they often suppress a huge well of anger that they conceal even from themselves.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

Nines want to get along with others, but they also want to hold on to their independence and autonomy—they do not want to be "messed with."

To the extent that they feel they cannot do the latter without endangering their connections with the important people in their lives, they become resentful and enraged—although they also feel that they can never let this anger out without destroying their relationships.

The 9

Recognizing Nines

Thus, for Nines to develop themselves and their potentials they must come to grips with their suppressed rage and find constructive outlets for this energy.

The 9

Relationship Issues

Key issues include these:

Going along with others or agreeing to things the Nine has no intention of complying with.

Becoming emotionally unavailable to others: disengaging their attention or withdrawing rather than dealing with issues.

Wanting to feel close with someone in their imagination while asserting independence in their behavior.

The 9

Relationship Issues

The "No Talk Rule"—refusing to discuss the real problems.

Suppression, control, and outbursts of temper—all of which are generally unrecognized and unacknowledged by the Nine.

Emotional "collapsing" as a way of stopping discussion about troubling topics.

The 9

The Passion: Sloth

Nines pay a price for their easygoing demeanor because much of it depends on their staying out of contact with their instinctual energies. Nines do this for two reasons.

First, much of their instinctual aliveness is used to suppress their anger and frustration with people and with themselves.

To experience their anger directly is extremely threatening to Nines: they feel that their rage could destroy their peaceful world very quickly.

he 9

In order stay in their unrealistic, idealized world, they must constantly suppress their anger and instincts over and over again.

But when Nines attempt to dam those energies, the result is inner numbness and general fatigue because so much of their inner resources is devoted to keeping their anger and instincts at bay.

The 9

Thus, Nines end up becoming passive and disengaged.

Rousing themselves to take an active role in their lives seems difficult—it will all be "too much trouble" becomes a constant refrain.

So they retreat into safe and comforting routines—and the passion of sloth.

**Next Week:
The One**