

Enneagramic-Self

Enneagram system, by categorizing human personality into nine types, presents nine types of Enneagramic-self, having their own specific positive and shadow traits. Though each of the Enneagram personality types should not ignore the positive characteristics imbedded in their Enneagramic-self, they need to be conscious of the shadow-traits associated with their Enneagramic-self because recognizing and accepting the negative road-blocks to spiritual growth is the first step towards any spiritual progress. The shadow-traits ingrained in an Enneagramic-self, stem from a deep-rooted specific compulsion and avoidance typical of that Enneagramic-self. The compulsion and avoidance, specific to each Enneagram type are experienced as basic driving forces, having significant influence on one's behavior.

A compulsion, and the avoidance associated with it, are not merely obsessions/preoccupations of one's consciousness, but they are the way a person's energy is channelized in his/her personal behavior, and often remains hidden and unrecognized. Therefore, compulsion and avoidance are unconscious and hidden defense strategies Enneagram types have developed for security and meaningful living, as they seek to protect that person, and guarantee his/her personal security. These defense strategies are carefully hidden that one is neither capable of consciously perceiving them, nor is able to reflect upon them. Thus, they prevent one from understanding oneself, one's motives, and the underlying drives of the Enneagramic-self. As a result, one fails to discover problems needing attention, as he/she make his/her spiritual journey, so as to achieve genuine growth, personal fulfillment, and spiritual progress. Recognizing one's compulsion and avoidance, and the problems they hide from him/her, through Enneagram work, can make one feel free to follow or not to follow their compulsion and avoidance. As long as one's compulsion and avoidance remain unnoticed, he/she will not be able to make such a choice. If the driving force of one's compulsion and avoidance is not faced head-on, it would influence him/her in making his/her decisions regarding himself/herself, his/her relationship with others, and every other aspect of his/her life.

Thus, compulsion and avoidance are as selfish as a typical sin. For this reason, compulsion and avoidance are hidden sins, if the term "sin" is understood as something that paralyzes one from being an authentic person, thereby hinders one's spiritual progress. Hence, the compulsion and avoidance of each Enneagram personality type would make each Enneagram type a "sin type." Seen in this light, all nine Enneagram types are "sin types" and none is less sinful than any other. Hence, one's willingness to accept oneself as a sinner, is vital for any inner exploration into that person's Enneagramic-self. Any attempt to discover and unveil the compulsion and avoidance associated with one's Enneagramic-self is not an easy task because it involves a "death" to oneself. This death to oneself consists in that the concerned person willing to critically investigate his/her consistent way of coping with life, which is said to be fully developed by the age of six.

Even after one has identified the compulsion and avoidance ingrained in his/her Enneagramic-self, let it get processed, and achieved healing, the negative-traits associated with

that Enneagramic-self will continue to remain. A person will always continue to be that "sin type". However, he/she can become "redeemed", if he/she takes the trouble to "befriend" his/her compulsion and avoidance, so that they won't any more be compulsive/obsessive. For a Christian, this process of "befriending" the compulsion and avoidance characteristic of his/her Enneagramic-self, and "being redeemed" from them, the Enneagramic personality of Jesus can play a significant role not only as inspiration, but also as healing presence, as Jesus is the God-man is both Divine and human.