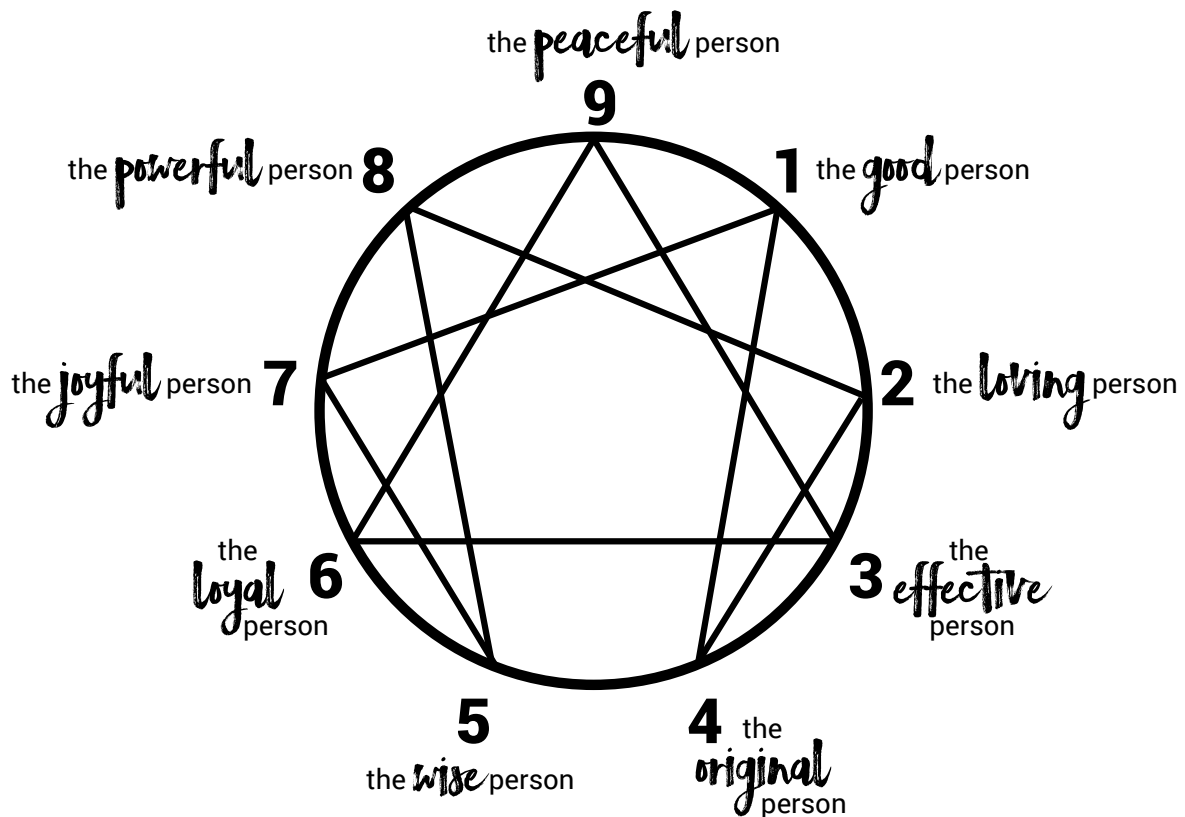


THE ENNEAGRAM

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.

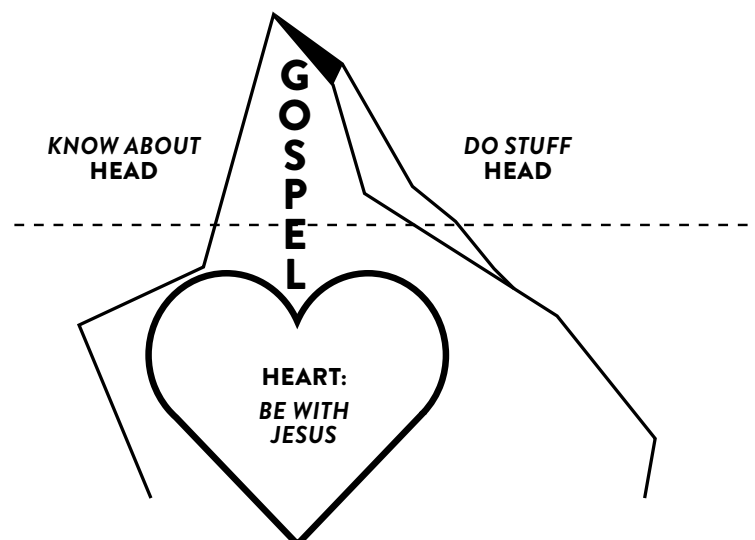
“... THAT ACCORDING TO THE RICHES
OF HIS GLORY HE MAY GRANT
YOU TO BE STRENGTHENED WITH
POWER THROUGH HIS SPIRIT IN
YOUR INNER BEING ... TO KNOW THE
LOVE OF CHRIST THAT SURPASSES
KNOWLEDGE ... ”

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?

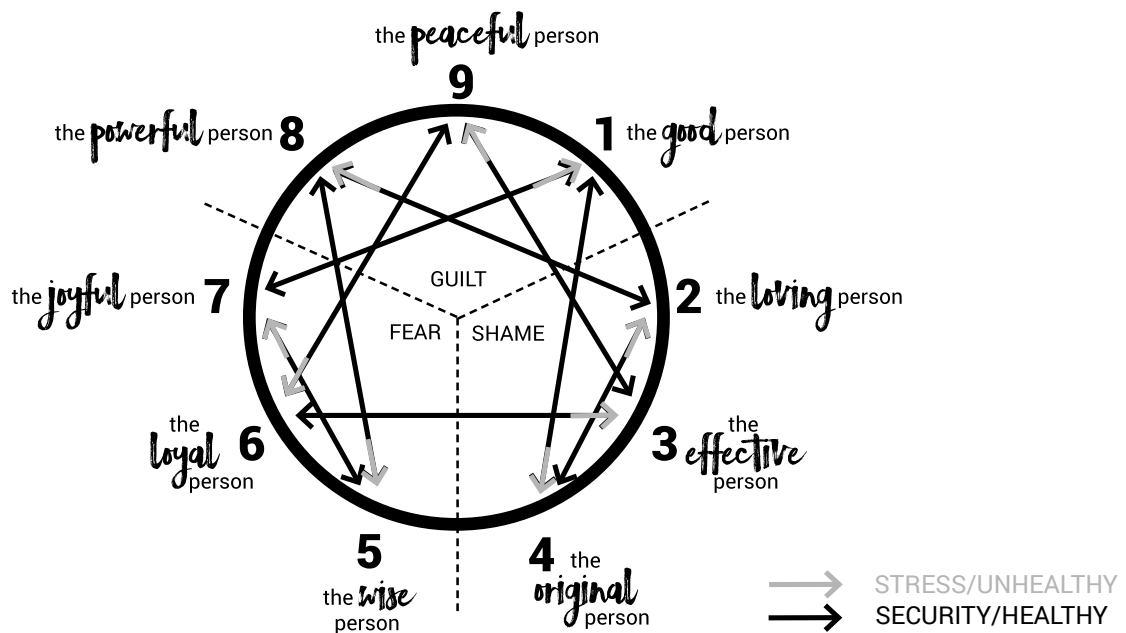
But how do we follow Jesus on this inward journey? How do we drive the gospel beneath the surface to strengthen our hearts in such a way that we can experience deep relationships with God and others?

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.

7

TYPE SEVEN

THE JOYFUL PERSON

IMAGE OF GOD

Sevens reflect the joy and abundance of God.

IN GENERAL

Entertaining, Spontaneous, Scattered, Manic

CORE DESIRE

To be truly happy and free

FOCUS OF ATTENTION

What's next

AVOIDANCE

Pain and suffering

DRIVING EMOTION

Fear

BESETTING SIN

Gluttony

CHILDHOOD WOUND

Not aloud or taught how to deal with emotional pain, experienced a loss of freedom, didn't get something they wanted or needed.

LIES SEVENS BELIEVE (FALSE NARRATIVE)

It's not okay to feel pain.

SURVIVAL STRATEGY/DEFENSE MECHANISM

I will be satisfied and happy if I stay busy, enjoy all the pleasures in life, and keep a positive outlook. I must live in the future by pursuing the next thing.

HEALTHY - THEIR BEST

Fun-loving
Spontaneous
Enthusiastic
Entertaining
Charming
Visionary
Engaging
Playful
Productive
Versatile
Optimistic

UNHEALTHY - THEIR WORST

Scattered
Impulsive
Unreliable
Escapist
Superficial
Reckless
Excessive
Flighty
Distracted
Manic
Addicted

Sevens are all about fun and joy and excitement. They are probably the most upbeat, extroverted, outgoing type of the Enneagram. They light up a room with their presence. There is a glow and positive energy that emanates from them. Many Sevens report carrying a deep childhood wound, which they try to avoid at all costs through the pursuit of new experiences, staying active, and entertainment. Their strategy is to repress their traumatic experiences from childhood and "paint their life story in positive colors, even when the scenario was anything but beautiful." "Appearing to be full of heart, Sevens actually operate from the head." They carefully think through their lives so that every day will promise as much fun and as little pain as possible.

WEAKNESSES: Sevens are driven by an underlying **fear** that goes back to their childhood. Their coping strategy is to have as much fun and entertainment as possible, which is why their besetting sin is **gluttony**. Sevens are prone to constant stimulation and consumption as a way of distracting themselves from an inner anxiety. This is their defense strategy against their emotional pain. They "gobble up"⁴³ every experience but are always left hungry for more. Thus, they are always looking for the next thing or the perfect combination of things that will heal them and make them truly happy. They tend to be thrill seekers. Their avoidance of pain and endless hunger for more make them prone to various additions, including chronic anxiety. Unhealthy Sevens would rather keep relationships on the surface because it would be too painful to know their whole story.

STRENGTHS: Sevens uniquely bear God's image in the ways they manifest the joy,

gladness, and genuine enthusiasm of God. Gospel means “good news” or “joyous, life-giving news”—Sevens naturally bring the vibe of the gospel into people’s lives. They naturally bring a “gospel mood” and “gospel presence” that awakens people to the joy of God. They’re the ones who get asked, “What is that you have that I don’t?” People love being around them—they’re typically the life of the party. When emotionally and spiritually healthy, Sevens are excitable, spontaneous, curious, optimistic, eager, outgoing, adventurous, talkative, appreciative, bountiful, thoughtful, accomplished, versatile, receptive, grateful, passionate, celebratory,⁴⁴ and most importantly satisfied, content, and at peace with their circumstances and life.

The lies Sevens believe: “It is not ok to depend on anyone for anything.”⁴⁵

The truth Sevens need: “You will be taken care of.”⁴⁶

SPECIFIC PRACTICES FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Sevens are tempted to gluttony and being driven by an underlying fear. The Spirit of Christ wants to transform this kind of sinful fruit into the fruit of self-control, love, joy, and peace (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.⁴⁷

THE DOWNSTREAM PRACTICES

- **Celebration:** The practice that will come most natural to Sevens is celebration. They should not feel shame over looking for ways to enjoy life to the fullest, to experience the abundant life that Jesus offers us in Himself (John 10:10). Sevens will feel alive through engaging with others through a variety of experiences: feasting, laughing, listening to music, watching movies, deep conversation, etc. Sevens should look to enter into these practices with a conscious awareness of God’s love and remember that true and lasting joy doesn’t depend on circumstances, but on the person and work of Jesus. This will help Sevens to use these practices as opportunities to open themselves up to others and share their story. The challenge for Sevens will be to not over-indulge.
- **Community:** Sevens are often extroverts or people-persons. They feel alive when surrounded by others. The practice of community will help them live into their true selves. They should look for weekly opportunities to connect with the body of Christ, where they can enjoy the sense of belonging and interdependence that comes with being part of God’s family. The weekly Sunday gathering, missional community family meal, participating in the MC mission, and fight clubs are the essential contexts for engaging and enjoying community in Fellowship.

THE UPSTREAM PRACTICES

- **Solitude and Silence:**⁴⁸ Sevens should set aside time each day to get alone with God and be still and silent before Him. Solitude releases Sevens from their stage persona, need to perform, and over-dependence on others. Silence allow them to feel whatever they’re trying to avoid beneath the surface and to meet with God in their inner being and emotional pain. Solitude and silence allows Sevens to slow down and enjoy the greatest gift of all—communion with God. It serves as a reminder that their identity and worth are not based on how others feel about them or how they feel about themselves, but on God’s love for them in Christ.
- **Fasting:** This discipline of fasting is good for Sevens because it helps them to not become addicted and overly dependent upon experiences. It is a way of awakening what they are truly hunger for—the presence of God—and is a pathway for indulging in His love and grace.

KEY BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

The Scripture Sevens should commit to memory is John 15:11, “These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.” The “these things” that Jesus is referring to are unpacked in John 15:1-10, the essence of which is summed up when He says, “Abide in me, and I in you” (15:4). Jesus is describing the glorious reality of the mutual indwelling of God and man through faith in the gospel. This is uniquely meaningful for a Seven in that it reassures them that no experience or substance can give them the joy they’re longing for. Their identity and sense of self is complete in Christ. Their joy is Jesus’ joy. This is the essence of the abundant life Sevens long for (John 10:10).

THE GOSPEL SEVENS NEED FOR HEALING & GROWTH

Jesus is my true and lasting joy. Only he can satisfy my heart. In Jesus I have life to the fullest (John 10:10) because his joy lives in me through his Spirit (John 15:11). I am not afraid of missing out because I possess the abundance of his love for me.

⁴³ Rise & Hudson, 149.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 145.

⁴⁵ Sherrill, 41.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ The language of upstream and downstream comes from Sherrill, chapter 5, Enneagram & the Way of Jesus.

⁴⁸ Sherrill, 100.

HOW TO LOVE ME WELL

- Appreciate my optimism, spontaneity and enthusiasm.
- Do things with me spur of the moment.
- Listen to my stories and grand visions (but don't let me do all the talking, gently make me listen to you).
- Remind me that problems will not go away and that I need to face it rather than deny or gloss over it.
- Remind me to be still.
- Remember that I am terrified of painful emotions and will do anything to run from them, so you will need to gently help me face my emotional reality.
- Be gentle with your criticism of me and my ideas.

HOW I CAN LOVE OTHERS WELL

- Realize that not everyone is going to share my level of enthusiasm and be willing to take risks like me.
- Be influenced by those who display a steadfast commitment and loyalty to their relationships and projects.
- Don't be superficial about someone else's pain but sit in with them and listen.
- Stay present in difficult circumstances and emotions with myself and with others.
- Stay more focused. It will help me stay on track in conversations with people.

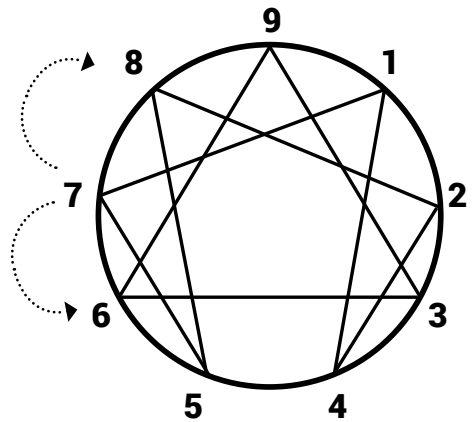
WINGS

Type Seven with Six wing — 7w6 “The Entertainer”

They are more loyal, endearing, responsible, outgoing, relationship oriented, playful, child-like, and anxious.

Type Seven with Eight wing — 7w8 “The Realist”

They are more free, passionate, adventurous, strong, seek intensity, are leaders, quick-minded, and creative.

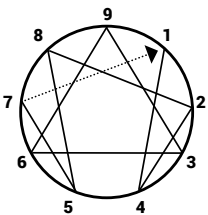


STRESS

What we are like when we are UNDER STRESS

Type 7 moves toward average to **unhealthy Type 1**

- They become perfectionist and critical.
- They are cynical and hypercritical in trying to change people.
- They blame others for preventing fun.

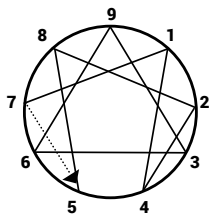


GROWTH

When the Holy Spirit enables us to begin to transform.

Type 7 moves toward **healthy side of Type 5**

- They become more focused and profound.
- They place more value on wisdom and discipline.
- They become more accepting of all of life: good and bad, happy and sad.



TYPE SEVEN :: LEVELS OF DEVELOPMENT

The Levels of Development are measuring our capacity to be fully present, bearing the image of God uniquely as persons He made us to be and using our personality and gifts in life-giving ways.”⁴⁹

HEALTHY LEVELS

- **Level 1** (at their best): Assimilate experiences in depth, making them deeply grateful and appreciative for what they have. Become awed by the simple wonders of life; joyous and ecstatic. Intimations of spiritual reality, of the boundless goodness of life.
- **Level 2**: Highly responsive, excitable, enthusiastic about sensation and experience. Most extroverted type: stimuli bring immediate responses—they find everything invigorating. Lively, vivacious, eager, spontaneous, resilient, cheerful.
- **Level 3**: Easily become accomplished achievers, generalists who do many different things well; multi-talented. Practical, productive, usually prolific, cross-fertilizing areas of interest.

AVERAGE LEVELS

- **Level 4**: As restlessness increases, want to have more options and choices available to them. Become adventurous and “worldly wise,” but less focused, constantly seeking new things and experiences; the sophisticate, connoisseur, and consumer. Money, variety, keeping up with the latest trends important.
- **Level 5**: Unable to discriminate what they really need, become hyperactive, unable to say “no” to themselves, throwing self into constant activity. Uninhibited, doing and saying whatever comes to mind: storytelling, flamboyant exaggerations, witty wise-cracking, performing. Fear being bored; in perpetual motion, but do too many things—many ideas but little follow-through.
- **Level 6**: Get into conspicuous consumption and all forms of excess. Self-centered, materialistic, and greedy, never feeling that they have enough. Demanding and pushy, yet unsatisfied and jaded. Addictive, hardened, and insensitive.

UNHEALTHY LEVELS

- **Level 7**: Desperate to quell their anxieties, can be impulsive and infantile: do not know when to stop. Addictions and excess take their toll; debauched, depraved, dissipated escapists, offensive and abusive.
- **Level 8**: In flight from self, acting out impulses rather than dealing with anxiety or frustrations; go out of control, into erratic mood swings, and compulsive actions (manias).
- **Level 9**: Finally, their energy and health is completely spent: become claustrophobic and panic-stricken. Often give up on themselves and life; deep depression and despair, self-destructive overdoses, impulsive suicide. Generally corresponds to the Bipolar disorder and Histrionic personality disorder.

⁴⁹ Riso & Hudson, 78.