

# The Enneagram of Personality



Explore human behavior through these nine interconnected personality types

Following our workshop at Soho House West Hollywood, we spoke to human behavioral expert Candace Silvers to hear more about the nine interconnected personality types, and how learning where you fall can benefit you in business, love and interpersonal relationships.

‘We have all this new-age stuff going on in our world today, but this is old-age material,’ Silvers explained. The Enneagram – a model of the human psyche correlating to a typology of personality types – dates back thousands of years, with each point corresponding to a different personality type. ‘Americans don’t like to hear it, but this is the stuff that proves that we’re not special, individual or different. Everyone falls into one of the nine suits.’

Even countries fall into one of the nine types, based on their culture, Silvers explained. ‘America is very much a “3” culture, much like Germany is a “6” culture. In Switzerland, everything is very clean, and it’s a very 1-oriented society.’ You can even break countries up by region, she explained. ‘The state of Indiana, for example, is more of a “9” culture, because it’s more about helping others and not about helping yourself. Each culture operates differently.’

‘Once you see which one you fall into, it becomes easier to operate outside of your realm,’ she said. ‘The idea is to find out information that you can use, rather than exposing this place that you’re stuck in’ Take a look at the below and see if you feel like you fit into one of these categories. ‘And if you’re a six,’ she said, ‘You’ll doubt that you fit into any of them.’

## **Point 1: The Reformer**

This type tends to be uptight and/or a perfectionist. Ones have to control everything so that nothing can ever go wrong; they can't handle being in the world when they're not in charge. Everyone loves them and looks to them for guidance, but they have a hard time looking at themselves. Ones fear a loss of control and the possibility that something may go wrong, which can often lead to explosive anger.

## **Point 2: The Helper**

Twos are generally seen as needy people. They search for love and acceptance through what they can offer to another person. Whatever a two has two offer to someone so that they feel safe, liked, protected, they will. This often takes the form of their sexuality, and often if a two feels sexually desired, then they feel at ease. This can be accompanied by the resentment that those around the two only like them because of what they can provide to others.

## **Point 3: The Achiever**

These people feel safe and okay when other people perceive them as being having, wearing, or being involved in the right thing — this personality type is very much about image. If you care about the brand of your car or clothes, the prestige of your neighborhood or where you take your vacation, you're a three. The fear here is that what is on the inside is not enough. When a three encounters a situation in life that makes them feel internally not enough, they go to what they have. America is very much a '3 culture.'

### **Point 4: The Individualist**

These are the kinds of people who will start crying from watching a cute dog video. Fours identify as their feelings, or more accurately, their feelings identify them. And they feel everything deeply. To a four, their feelings make them special and individualistic. But these feelings are also a place they run to.

### **Point 5: The Investigator**

Fives like to hide, and when faced with something they can't handle internally, they retreat into their own little worlds. Fives can sit in their rooms for days, telling themselves that they're happy there, while wanting nothing more than the ability to come out and be a part of the world. Often fives will live in their minds, even in social setting they are not 'present' because they are in their heads. Getting in the game is often just too dangerous for a five so they stay on the fringes and observe.

### **Point 6: The Loyalist**

These people are never sure about anything. Making a choice is next to impossible for a six, as if there is a 'right' answer that they never have. When they these people finally do make a choice, they get stuck in questioning 'was this the right choice.' Sixes are always looking to figure out what's wrong with their lives and how to make it better. This is a diversion not to take responsibility for what's in front of them, because they fear they could be wrong.

### **Point 7: The Enthusiast**

Sevens are always on the move. A seven's way of staying safe from life is to move on to the next thing before they can have a feeling. This doesn't necessarily mean picking up and moving to a different city; it can take form of the next guy or girl, the next job, the next great idea. Commitment carries fear, and a seven will move on before anything gets too real.

### **Point 8: The Challenger**

Eights are often openly aggressive and have anger issues. These people have very strong personal positions which they feel the need to defend. Anything and often, everything, can feel like a confrontation to an eight. In their mind, they are constantly being attacked by those around them and must defend themselves. These are the types of people who others try to help, but they see that as you trying to hurt them.

### **Point 9: The Peacemaker**

Nine are leaders and providers; they tend to be therapists or teachers. It can look great to be a nine because they are always taking care of everyone. The catch is that nothing can ever be about them, while they desperately want it to be about them. Nines often have anger issues as well but keep them buried below the surface.