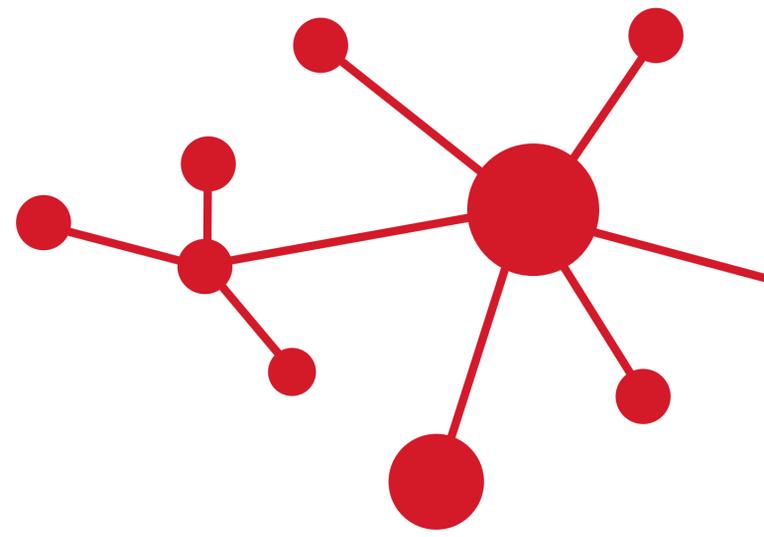


The Knowledge Project



Russ Hudson:

The Pursuit of Presence

EPIISODE #91

fs

Shane Parrish: Russ, so happy to talk to you, man.

Russ Hudson: Well, thank you, Shane. It's a pleasure to be here.

Shane Parrish: I've been looking forward to this for a long time. How did you get started with the Enneagram?

Russ Hudson: Well, like a lot of things, it's not a simple or a one-shot deal. Like a lot of people back in the 1970s, I was looking at various systems of spirituality. I was checking out Indian gurus, and I was going to churches, and I was doing all kinds of stuff. I encountered a book called, In Search of the Miraculous. It was a book written by a man named Peter Ouspenskii, but it was about the teachings of Gurdjieff. George Gurdjieff was a Greek guy who brought the Enneagram symbol and the teachings around it into the modern world.

So, I was really impacted by that book. After searching around for a while, I actually found an ongoing real Gurdjieff group and started studying it. That was long before I learned about how the Enneagram could also be about types, because the original sensibility, it wasn't that. The stage two of that process was that I read the first book of my friend, Don Richard Riso. That book was called Personality Types and came out in the mid 1980s. I was so impressed with it that I sought him out, and it turned out he lived about a mile away and his office was even closer. So we started talking and I started working with him.

Shane Parrish: Oh, that's awesome, and you've been doing that ever since.

Russ Hudson: Yes, indeed.

Shane Parrish: I was thinking about how to approach this with readers and I think there's just so much mystery around the Enneagram so we can start with the basics and work our way up. So, what is the Enneagram?

Russ Hudson: Well, I think it gets complex for people around the fact that it is more than one thing. Originally, the Enneagram is a symbol. It's

a circle with some inner lines in it. Some people think it looks like a pentagram, but it's not a pentagram. In fact, there's a triangle in the middle of it. That has certain esoteric meanings, the symbol itself. It's looking at the relationship between what things are in their fundamental nature, you might say, as consciousness. It's looking at how things come into form and the relationship between those things.

The part that got popular is that a man named Oscar Ichazo studying the symbol in relation to a lot of other long-term spiritual teachings, shall we say, started to see some connections, and brilliantly saw that there was a sensibility around each of the nine points. The Enneagram is a circle with nine points on it. He saw that there were elements of character that had been studied for thousands of years that fit in a certain pattern around that symbol. So, I think the part that most people learn about is the nine points and how they are actually representing facets of humanity.

I think sometimes people take it too far. The sort of popular version of the Enneagram that is also a turnoff for some people, is that it's nine boxes, which box do you go in. But that's not really what it ever was originally. It was originally about, these nine points were gifts, capacities that human beings have, needs that human beings have, but that when we get too identified with any one of them, a lot of our total humanity kind of drops out but that we get habituated to live that way. So the idea was to become aware of that to free ourselves up again.

Shane Parrish: I think of it as sort of like a topology.

Russ Hudson: Yeah. I mean, most simply, that's where it starts. It is a topology, but unlike some of the others, it's a topology for waking us up.

Shane Parrish: Go farther on that.

Russ Hudson: The way I tend to explain it to my younger students is that you have a type, most definitely, but you are not a type. It's not who you are, it's not what you are. But just like we have hair color or height, or certain predilections, we're not born a tabula rasa, a blank slate. We have certain predilections. We have tendencies. We have what psychologists call temperament. It's very interesting that there was a major study of temperament in infants done at New York University back in early 1960s by two famous psychologists, Thomas

and Chess. In that study, just looking at it empirically, they boiled it down to nine basic patterns of temperament that they found, and they correspond very nicely to the nine Enneagram points.

So the idea is your temperament is what you lead with. It's how you cope with things. When the chips are down, there's a certain way you're probably going to deal. Some of us, if there's a conflict, we get in people's faces. Some people when there's a conflict, we go hide. Some people when we're in conflict, we start brooding. But people have different reactions. So it's not really about just giving ourselves a free pass about all that. It's about noticing it so that we have some options and freedom, and can choose other behaviors other than just our default. If you see what I mean.

Shane Parrish: So is it safe to say that's our default human behavior, that would be your type. Just identifying that default, but you're not defined by that default, and part of being human is that you can overrule that default?

Russ Hudson: Exactly. Perfectly put. You have this default, and it comes in handy. We don't need to knock it, we've survived this long with it and it's very good for certain things. The point is, when we're just going on default, well, it's like we keep doing the same dance no matter what the music is. So sometimes that's helpful and sometimes it's not so helpful. Sometimes it messes things up. So the Enneagram originally was always paired with a study of presence or mindfulness. Be here now, pay attention, to notice what we're up to. It was to train us in a system of self awareness so that we could choose things other than that default. And it helps us do that by seeing how we fall into that default. How we keep getting sucked into a certain way of being, certain way of reacting to things. And again, to look at that without judging it or thinking it's bad, but just to notice, "Oh, I'm stuck. I have other options." It's like that.

Shane Parrish: How was this developed? Where did this come into being?

Russ Hudson: As I said, there's several pieces. A lot of credit has to go to a man named Oscar Ichazo, as I said, who passed away just a few weeks ago. He was originally from Bolivia, but lived a lot of his life in Chile. He learned about the Enneagram through Gurdjieff sources. He really was a brilliant genius guy who was looking at various ancient systems for

looking at human development. He was looking at ancient Jewish and Christian sources, some Buddhist sources, Hindu sources, et cetera, and seeing correspondences between them, the way they fit together. So he kind of came up with a map of these patterns, shall we say. There was a psychologist named, Claudio Naranjo, who was a gestalt. Actually a psychiatrist to be more accurate. He studied with Fritz Perls. He went and learned this from Ichazo, brought it to the United States and started teaching it to a small group of people.

Well, subsequent to that, it kind of exploded. My old friend and writing partner, Don Richard Riso, learned it through the Jesuits. He started to write about it. It took him 10 years to write his first book. It's sort of funny. I get a lot of enthusiasm from young people. It seems like a lot of people have discovered this work recently. It's not really so much about having a guru tag or being an amateur, it's not really about that. But I just am forever trying to explain to people, "You can learn the basics pretty quickly. You can learn the distinctions of these nine points, pretty mind blowing. To really master it, to make it useful, to be able to help people with it takes a long time, more than we bargain for sometimes."

Shane Parrish: It strikes me that we're looking for somebody to tell us why we do the things we do, not necessarily wanting to change or overrule the things that we're doing, or look inside ourselves and figure out what's really going on. Now we can just throw our hands up and absolve ourself.

Russ Hudson: That's right. "Oh, I did that because I'm a seven. I did that because I'm a four. I did that because I'm a three," whatever. Right.

Shane Parrish: Exactly. Where does the Enneagram align with and where does it differ from modern psychological research?

Russ Hudson: I think a lot of the interesting work that's been done in the last 30, 40 years has been aligning it more with psychology. Certainly, Don Richard Riso had a master's degree in psychology from Stanford, and in social psychology, as I recall. And we had Dr. David Daniels, another one who passed away recently, who was a professor in the School of Medicine at Stanford. So there were some seriously trained people involved in it. So there was always wanting to show and demonstrate how the ideas in the Enneagram link with things that we've learned, particularly from developmental psychology. How in the

process of forming a personality and ego, certain forces get set into play.

So, I think, over the years, my goodness, I've probably trained or taught tens of thousands of psychotherapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, a lot of people. They all marvel at, once they get beyond hearing the cruddy pop versions of it and they get into it, they're almost universally amazed at how it illuminates things that they learned in psychology, and vice versa. I think that we're trying to be good students of human nature. We're trying to really understand what goes on in the psyche and there's a lot of different avenues by which we can do that.

Shane Parrish: Talk to me about the role of environment when it comes to personality or temperament.

Russ Hudson: Well, it's a factor. People ask all the time, "Does your Enneagram type come from nature or nurture.?" The correct answer is nobody knows. It's the same with psychology. It's probably both. What we can say is that the basic template is there in temperament, meaning we're born with it. We don't know if it's genetic or if it forms while we're still in the womb, but it's very early. In other words, we're sort of set on a certain track very, very early in life. In the beginning, infancy and before. It's not like you become a type because your mom forgot your birthday when you were six. That is way too late then.

However, one of the big contributions that Don Riso made was that we could be at different stages of development in any of these types. We could be in the more healthy expression of them, more grounded, more heartfelt, contributing, not having crazy thoughts in our head, or we could get sort of stuck in the more neurotic and difficult manifestations of it and that is definitely about nurture. How much I'm wedged into my type, how much I'm stuck in that stuff is a function of nurture. Because if I'm growing up in a crazy, difficult, scary, heartbreaking environment, and that's always going to be true to some degree, but if it's a lot, then of course the child has to form very intense defenses. Those intense defenses manifest as this kind of adhering to these survival patterns. Whether or not the coast is clear, we're going to still experience it as being in a siege situation, we're going to keep acting certain ways.

I don't think people can do anything about what their dominant type is, but what we can

do is work at freeing ourselves up from the scary parts of it and opening to the beautiful parts of it. That we can do.

Shane Parrish: We're going to get into the types here. I know everybody's just waiting to hear about the types. But before we get there, we sort of have to build this up a little bit and figure out where it comes from and what the limitations are. How does it help us grow?

Russ Hudson: I think it helps us grow by learning a few things. The growth comes from seeing our type in action, but also comes from learning a different orientation toward ourselves. We're learning to be self-aware, but compassionately self-aware, kindly self-aware. To not judge ourselves because we didn't decide to be this way. My dominant Enneagram point is five. I'm a dominant five. I didn't wake up one day and just decide I was going to be this. It just happened. As I start to see what that five-ness is, in real time, while I'm doing it, not just as a reflection later on but, as Don and I used to put it, to catch myself in the act. In that moment of seeing, "Right now, I'm stuck in my pattern," to take a breath, to pause, to get grounded, to look at it with kindness opens up a whole new toolbox, opens up a whole new palette of colors to paint with. Suddenly, I have access.

I always tell people this, as we get liberated from being identified with the pattern, as we get less stuck in it, the good sides of all of the nine points, which also represent human capacities or talents or gifts, start to come into play more and more. That's why we learn it, not so we could just be a type, but so we can be a more total human being.

Shane Parrish: How do we learn to debug our brain in real time? We have this execution path, it's default and habitual, and then we want to intersect it. How do we learn to do that as it's happening and not, as you mentioned, later, which is post and reflection?

Russ Hudson: Right. Well, as I was saying, the Enneagram was originally meant to go with the practices to help us be more present and awake in our life. We do that in the Enneagram by learning about what are called the three centers. The three centers of intelligence, which is the body, the heart, and the head. The body is kinesthetic intelligence. It's instinctual intelligence. As I tell people, if you're hungry, it's not a thought, it's not an emotion. Your body, in a very direct way, communicates that information, "Food is needed." The heart has its forms of intelligence, emotional intelligence. Heart has certain roles to play. And

the head. When the head is actually present, it becomes something different than what we're used to. It's not this inner chatter box. It's more a quality of deep listening, and not just listening externally, listening internally so that new ideas, new realizations can emerge and we're not just feeding on the stuff we already have thought about or already believe.

So we learn a practice of getting more grounded in our body, in the here and now. Good thing about the body is it can't be anywhere but here and now. My thoughts and feelings can be all over the place, but if I can feel myself breathing or feel myself resting in the chair, or standing, or wherever I am, in the car, wherever I may be, it brings me into a kind of contact with myself. From there, my heart becomes less reactive. When we're present with our heart, it brings out more of the qualities of kindness, patience, peacefulness, courage, a lot of good stuff. When we're not present with the heart, we're reacting to everything. Everything's pushing our buttons all the time, positively or negatively. But, if you take one, you get the other. And then cognitively, as we actually come back to ourselves, our mind simmers down. Not into a sleepiness, but a kind of calm clarity, where we just see what's going on in us and around us. And when you bring that sensibility to your personality, you can see it in action because you're not so identified with it.

The problem is not that we have an ego. I am not one of those people that goes around saying, "You got to get rid of your ego. You got to kill the ego." I think that's nuts. I think that even the people saying those kinds of things have an ego. The problem is now that we have an ego, it's that we identify with it to the extent that we forget there's other parts of us. We get lost in certain habitual identities and then we stop looking. So we're learning to be present with the manifestation.

That has an interesting implication. A lot of people think spirituality is about transcending, about getting the hell out of here. I mean we're all suffering a lot. Of course, we want to sort of shoot off into some non-dual condition where we won't be ouchy anymore. Completely understandable. But ultimately, I think that we need some experiences of that nature, but the more those are established, we start to bring that sensibility to our ego. When we do that, we're able to live what we've come to understand instead of it being an escape from how we are most of the time.

Shane Parrish: I like to think of ego as something that helps us or hinders us. We just

need to be aware of where we are on that spectrum between those two at any given time. Nothing great would be accomplished without ego. We'd never try anything new. We'd never endeavor to do anything because we need to feel confident. How do we identify when it's helping us and hurting us? And then a follow up question to that is, where does confidence come from?

Russ Hudson: Well, it's a tricky business, as you're saying. From my point of view, the ego is helpful to the degree it's taking its proper place. In other words, if I'm remembering what I am here and now, if I'm presencing with you here and now, then my ego is here as what it's for, which is to help me function in this world. It's a set of habits and customs and protocols and programs that just help me to operate in the world. I learned them very young and they still work. I don't particularly want to have to learn how to speak English all over again. So that is very functional and necessary. When we are present in those centers, like I was saying, the ego more naturally takes its correct position. It's meant to be a servant, not the master is the traditional way of putting it, and I think that's right.

Confidence can be different things. Confidence could be acting tough. That's a kind of ego version of it. But actually, organically, confidence arises out of our relationship with our body. The more I feel embodied, the more I feel I'm here. I feel like I belong here, like it's in a sense right for me to be here, or I have a right to be here. It's not an inner debate. It's not something that needs to be argued or asserted. It feels natural. So the more we're in our body, the more we're in our power, and that relates to when the Enneagram points. From this point of view, each of the Enneagram points is a vital ingredient for living a good human life. And that's why we want to learn to embrace all of them and not just act like a cartoon of one of them.

Shane Parrish: In your experience, teaching this to tens of thousands of people over the years, what are the limitations of the Enneagram? Where do people take this idea too far?

Russ Hudson: Well, they take it too far all the time. For one thing, they try to put everything into the Enneagram, and there are things about human beings that just have nothing to do with the Enneagram. Talents, for example. If you have musical talent or athletic ability or you have a good brain for numbers, whatever, all of those things really have nothing to do with your Enneagram point, they're independent factors. Enneagram can help us

understand certain kind of emotional problems and things, but for others, good old regular psychology will do the trick.

The big problem I see, you touched on this earlier, Shane, people learn this and they use it to reinforce their self-concept. And oftentimes, and this is what I have to be very patient with, I do not bust people on their Enneagram type. I don't believe in it. I think it's rude. And it's just also presuming that I know that truth, which I may or may not. I find that people identify with the concept, and sometimes it's not even their correct Enneagram type.

Shane Parrish: Oh, go on.

Russ Hudson: A classic example here in North America is that a lot of people read this and learn it, and they instantly assume they're a four. "I'm a four because I have deep feelings. 'Well, guess what? Everybody has deep feelings.' And I'm creative. 'Well, guess what? Everybody's creative.'" There's a lot of factors.

Shane Parrish: They just see attributes that they like and then they're like, "Oh, I'm that."

Russ Hudson: Yes, yes. Or, "I suffered in my childhood. 'Well, that's everybody.'" So there's a way that we can use it to actually block it getting to us. There's a way we can prevent it from actually doing its magic. We can use the knowledge to strengthen our ego defenses rather than to work through them. That's a common problem, particularly now that so many people are learning about it quickly online from people who never studied or trained in it, who read a book or two and learned the basics.

The danger of the Enneagram is that if you know even a little bit about it, it seems like magic. Like, "How did you know that? How did you know that about me?" So you can seem like a wise guru and you've just read a couple of books. But in point of fact, to actually be able to use this in service to ourselves and others requires a long apprenticeship in acquiring those capacity skills I talked about, presence skills and learning to be with people in that. That takes time.

Shane Parrish: Alexander Pope had that poem, A Pierian spring, where he said, "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing." We read a website and all of a sudden we're experts and

we can teach it to everybody else.

Russ Hudson: Yeah. That's the thing. I have a friend named Suzanne Stabile who co-wrote a book called, *The Road Back to You*, with a man named Ian Cron. Their book is hugely popular. It's just out recently. And it's particularly popular with Evangelical Christians who are the new group that's just flooding into awareness of this. And it's understandable. I think a lot of Christians are seeking a deeper, more mystical relationship with their faith. Stands to reason. The Enneagram has some of its roots in Christianity, so that would be a natural. But Suzanne was talking with me and she asked me this great question. Just to paraphrase it, she's saying, "How do we old-timers hold the enthusiasm and energy of all these new people when a lot of that enthusiasm is based on an assumed knowledge or mastery of something that we've spent decades, our whole adult life trying to master."

Shane Parrish: Right, and you're not going to figure it out in five minutes on the internet.

Russ Hudson: Right, right, yeah. There's a thing here that it does reveal to me is that, it is true that everybody has access, everybody has a point of view, everybody has some kind of truth. But sometimes in that conversation what drops out is the value of experience, that there are people with more experience. And some things, like working with people psyche, you kind of want somebody to have a little more experience. I don't want to go and get brain surgery from someone who's just read a couple of medical books. I want somebody who's had experience in how to do surgery and had medical training and so forth. The Enneagram in a sense, goes into the core motivations. So it goes very deep, it's not like Myers-Briggs or some of the others, which has no diss to those systems, it's just that the Enneagram is looking at a deeper layer of human motivation so it opens up a lot more for people. So I suppose I'm just advocating for the fact that we need to be humble and patient in learning it because it takes a long time.

Shane Parrish: Can we dissect experience a little? As you were saying that, I was thinking back to this study I read a while ago about doctors and it was they stopped getting better after sort of five or six years of practice. So experience beyond that point doesn't actually correlate. And I'm going to have to look this up and try to find it for you, but experience doesn't correlate for beyond a certain point. What is experience? Is it just that you've gone through something, or is it the reflection component that you thought about it, and then

you come up with sort of heuristics on the other side of it or an understanding or simplicity because you've gone through the complexity? Walk me through your thoughts on what experience actually is.

Russ Hudson: Oh, what a cool question, yeah. Well, there's some elements to it in this work that's a little different than maybe what they were finding in that study. If I look at it more from a medical or a physiological perspective, one thing that they were studying out in California a few years back at UCLA Medical and some other places, was the fact that what we're calling mindfulness or presence changes some things about the human brain, which isn't surprising to people who have explored it, but it's interesting that they actually were looking at this. They were doing real-time brain scans, and they were actually studying people with OCD, Obsessive compulsive disorder, and seeing what methods helped them because it's known as a cognitive disorder. When they did this, they give placebos, they give drugs, they gave them different things to do, they do different kinds of therapy.

Then one group that practiced, they learn mindfulness, they learn Buddhist meditation, practice centering, presence, et cetera. What they discovered in doing these brain scans was something they did not expect, was that the group that was practicing mindfulness had good results in terms of their OCD. But also that it seemed to reactivate what psychologists call Neuroplasticity. Neuroplasticity is our brain's ability to rewire itself. Now it was thought for many, many years that there were limits to neuroplasticity and that basically we were hugely enabled to rewire in the first few years of our life.

Shane Parrish: Right, and then after that-

Russ Hudson: It kind of drops off precipitously. But the study suggests to those willing to look at the data that no, we stop being present around age five or six.

Shane Parrish: What does it mean to be present?

Russ Hudson: Well, that's a lifelong study right there.

Shane Parrish: I need the 30 seconds internet answer.

Russ Hudson: Okay, the short answer, yeah. Well, going back to the centers, the centers are a great way to sort of calibrate that. Am I with my breath? Can I sense my body here and

now? That's one indicator. Am I identified with my emotional reactions? By the way, being detached and shut down is a reaction. Or am I meeting my emotions with a fuller sense of heart? Is there any quiet in my mind or am I completely identified with that incessant inner dialogue? Right? So all of those are indicators on these different fronts and the more we're present, the more we are able to access these other resources and the way we learn to do that is simply by bringing attention to those things. As soon as I bring attention to my breath, to my sensation, to the kind of luxurious feeling of really being here in this body.

For example, just use that one center, the more we tend to be present and we'll start to notice things that we were not noticing before. That's the other sign, is that the field of our attention deepens, gets crisper, and we notice all kinds of things that ordinarily we don't notice because our attention when we're not present is sort of welded to these preoccupations and patterns, and that's what we're looking at with the Enneagram. That's what our type does without presence, it tends to become the survival machine.

Shane Parrish: I always thought of presence sort of as where you are on the spectrum between the past and the future, and there's only one moment right now. And if you're thinking about the future, you're not present. If you're thinking about the past, you're not present.

Russ Hudson: That's one way it can manifest. But I would suggest that you can be present too, thinking about the future.

Shane Parrish: Oh, go deeper on that.

Russ Hudson: Yeah. For example, if I'm really here in the moment with my body and breath, and I need to think about what I'm going to do next week, I can be aware of myself in the here and now and present with the thinking process and planning of that. Otherwise, we start to think of presence as a trance, which it isn't. That's a common error that people make, and this is the experience side of it. We think of presence as a groovy place to hang out where life won't bug us anymore, right? That's the trance of point nine for example, which is at the top of the Enneagram for a reason. When we are actually present, we're present with content. We're present with what's happening in our body. We're noticing our postures and how we're breathing. We're noticing what's in our emotions. We're noticing

what's in our mind.

And as we're noticing, again, it gives us options. In other words, instead of my mind just coming back to its obsessions and its fears and the paces it goes through every day. I used to say, "Can you imagine if we could, like in the matrix, plug something into the back of your head, but instead put a little TV screen on top of your head and along with our masks we're wearing these days, you put a little screen up there with two little speakers hanging down the side, and everybody could see what I'm thinking." I think people would quickly realize no one is thinking. No one is thinking about anything. Our minds are on idle just running and regurgitating the same nonsense over and over and over 98% of the time, and I'm being kind.

To think, to realize, to ponder, to not question as a position of skepticism, but question as to really be curious about something is not common. Those are attributes of being a little more present.

Shane Parrish: I like that a lot. Okay, let's finally dive into these types here. This is a question you've probably had a million times, but let's go through all nine and maybe you can give the name of them, and then maybe the one or two sentence summary of the key sort of behaviors associated with that dominant type.

Russ Hudson: So just diving in, a lot of times I like to start with Eight and people want to know, "Why don't you start with One?" Well, it's because there is a certain order to the way these are, they're not a random grab bag. And the Eight, Nine, and One represent what we call a triad, and they represent the intelligence of the body. So you go through Eight, Nine, and One, you get lessons about embodiment. What that means? Starting off with Eight, we call this type The Challenger. It's pretty easy to recognize a kind of person. So the way I like to talk about it is what's the gift here, and what's the challenge or the difficulty? The gift of the Eight is that when we're present and we're connected with what it's really about, we feel confident. To answer your earlier question, we feel empowered. We feel not like we're powerful, but we are empowered. And the more we are with that, the more we are living life in immediacy and fullness and energy, and we got it, and we are decisive, we don't dilly dally around, we're not timid.

The downside of this is each type, the ego does a substitute for the real thing. And so the substitute in the Eight, and the Eight part of all of us is to the degree, we don't feel that aliveness and energy and immediacy, we get tough and we harden ourselves, and we resist, and we also control. So we control our feelings. We don't want to cry. We control our lives in different ways. We control other people if we feel they're going to get to us. So, and to the degree that we're disconnected from the Eight gift, we're going to be some kind of a control freak, and that can go very far. So, as I said, a person who is an Eight, it isn't that they're not engaging the other eight types, but that's the main track they need to be aware of. That movement between that alive, real, sensitive empowerment, and that kind of hardening oneself.

So the Nine, next door neighbor Don and I call this The Peacemaker. Each Enneagram teacher tends to have their own names for it, but I always encourage people the names are just there to get you started. I always use the numbers because they're neutral. They don't say anything about the type, good or bad, and they don't highlight a particular quality at the expense of another. But Nines, The Peacemaker is about when we're present we're grounded, and we feel at home in ourself, and as feeling at home in ourselves, our agitation settles. We feel peaceful, we feel ready for life. This is the weird thing, the more present we are in our body, the more we feel connected with everything. We feel connected with nature, with life. We feel more of the wholeness of everything that comes through our body, it's not a cognitive thing.

So that's beautiful and a lot of great things come out of it. People who are Nines have that beautiful capacity to land and invite other people in for a landing. Nines also tend to be very creative type that always gets underestimated. A lot of great musicians and artists and writers are Nines. When Nines are not so present, what we do is we disengage. We're still there at the meeting, but we're not there at the meeting. We're saying, "I love you" to our partner, but we're just saying it. And there's a way we've sort of withdrawn ourselves into an inner world that we then protect against the outer world. Everybody does this to some degree, Nines are just the best at it. And it's something we learned to do in childhood to handle what was scarier, overwhelming, that's a great example. But when we're in there, it's costly in the long run to our relationships, to our work and so forth, and so that's

why that Nines don't really bring their gifts forward, even when they're brilliant and so talented. And so you can get into a place where people just wanting to connect with you feels threatening, so you just stay in the inner world.

One is The Reformer. I've also called One, The Educator. One is the part of us that really loves integrity. It's a kind of when we're in our body, we kind of naturally don't slouch. We're not all crunched up. When people are present, there's a beautiful alignment and expressiveness to the way people are. There's an elegance and a dignity to people when we're present. And that dignity and alignment is what the Ones are generating and expressed behaviorally as integrity, honesty. There's a way that the Ones then when we're in that space, life feels more sacred. And I don't mean by that according to any particular religious point of view. Although if you have a religious point of view, it would make it more real and immediate for you. But people have sacred experiences that aren't necessarily connected with any religious belief.

So that beautiful part of the self is also, and it's hard to find language for this, but it's about goodness, feeling good, knowing there's goodness in me. The difficult part of the ego is that we feel not good, so much so that we even get defensive by trying to be badass. We're trying to be bad just as a defense against the despair of feeling the loss of goodness. So it's easy to look at the world and say, "Man, where is the goodness?" Right? And so the One out of presence can't feel or find that goodness in the same way, and so the world seems kind of corrupt, nasty, dishonest, mean spirited. So the ego rises up and says, "Well, I got to set things straight. I got to be a straight arrow," and that natural alignment becomes a kind of physical tension because it's all on my shoulders and I'm going to make sure things straighten up and fly right, at least in my world. And if I can affect beyond that, so much the better. So it's like being a warrior for goodness. But again, the ego in trying to do that, tends to create even more problems for myself and others. I become kind of rigid, kind of testy, impatient sometimes, judgmental. Not attractive traits and not things that I really want to be, but it's the ego trying to get someplace that is not really its province.

Moving along, we come to the Heart triad, which is Two, Three, and Four. Two is the part of the heart that where we feel connected with others. And obviously with someone we are in relationship, or love, or could be family member, could be friend and can be with

animals. A lot of people have their pets and my gosh, you can sure have a heart connection with your pet. But you can even have heart connection with nature, with the sky. It's the way our heart kind of goes out into some kind of sense of communion. And it's also the part of our heart that wants to respond. When we see need, when we see hurt, when we see suffering, this just natural, it takes a lot of conditioning to stop this part of a person. Can happen, but we naturally respond when we see someone in need. That part of us is the Two part. And it's intelligent. The heart is smart. It's not just having sentimental feelings. When it's liberated, our responses to people and they're difficulties are intelligent.

Sometimes we might see someone crying and we get the heart wisdom, "Give them space, this person needs to cry, they haven't cried for years. If I go over and fuss over them, that's actually going to stop something they really need to do." So that heart intelligence is attuned. Now, when we are not present that beautiful heart connection, we can't feel it. The beautiful attunement, the intelligence, that gets blurry. We get more impulsive if we are attuned to trying to do things for people, whether they need it or want it. And the other side of it is we're trying to connect all the time, which blocks us from noticing the ways we already are connected. I live here in New York city. I ride the subways and sometimes without being in any way creepy, you can just be sitting on the subway or a bus and you just make that little eye contact with somebody for a second, just a little smile and a nod. There's nothing that needs to be said. But in that moment, it's like two hearts said, "Howdy" and "I'm a human and you're human and we're on this journey," and there's something that can change your whole day, if you have a moment like that.

Shane Parrish: You feel connected.

Russ Hudson: That's right. That's a moment of essence. That's a moment of the deeper aspect that the Enneagram is trying to get us back to. That's not weird or far out, these are real normal human experiences that make our life livable. But we forget how to get there, that's the point.

Shane Parrish: And that's The Helper?

Russ Hudson: That's The Helper, yes. Thank you for reminding me to put the name in. Yeah, so that's The Helper, and you see why it's called that. The next point is Three, we

call this type The Achiever. And Three is having to do with the heart, although people are Threes might not initially recognize themselves as heart types because Threes are the doers of them all. They're doing stuff, they're active, they like to have things to do, they like to focus on getting things done, get that checklist done.

Shane Parrish: The type is the world who are waiting for this to get to the nine items.

Russ Hudson: That's right, get through the stuff and get to the goal. Threes are also thinkers. They can be very smart, they're strategic. They like to have plans and lay things out, and they like to be logical. All that being said, what's motivating them is from their heart because the heart is where we find meaning. Meaning is not cognitive. You can argue endlessly in your head about what's meaningful, but if it doesn't land in your heart, you don't get it. Meaning, purpose, a big word for Three is having a purpose. And it's weirdly the heart that connects ourself as consciousness with our functional life is through the heart, that we feel the connection between what we are beyond our personality and our actions in the world.

When that's happening, if we're talking about this in the business world, what we call flow. It's about when you are in that state of flow, you're just with your heart, you're present, and you're just doing what you do and you're loving it, and that you're not reviewing yourself or worried about what anybody else thinks about. You're just into it and doing it. And that's a hard thing, our hearts get so lit up when we're able to do that.

So Three's at their best they're finding, they're taking their amazing talents and skills, and boy, they really work to acquire those things, but those things are in service to stuff they care about. It's in service to what they love. Then in a way, what they're doing is an act of love. Whatever it is, whether they're helping out their family or whether they're doing their career, whatever and that's a gorgeous way to live. When we lose the presence, the doing stays, but the sense of meaning fades. So we think that by getting stuff done, we'll get that sense of meaning. We think that by accomplishing that goal, then we're going to feel all happy about ourselves. But you don't need to go too far looking at the newspapers and magazines and blogs to see that many enormously successful people are in great despair, get into addiction, commit suicide, et cetera, because it feels like such a rip off to work so hard, achieve those goals, and you still feel empty inside.

So the Three is about that journey back to the heart, being there in the midst of what we're doing in this world. You can think of all these as a journey or a lesson, as much as they are a type of person. If you are that type, it means that's your kind of personal myth. That's your life journey. That's your hero's journey, you could say. So the Four is the one I was mentioning earlier that everybody seemed to want to be in North America. This is not true by the way in Asia, they don't want to be Four's in Asia.

Shane Parrish: I was going to ask you after how cultures play into how we see ourselves. Let's go through the list first.

Russ Hudson: Okay. So Four is that our heart brings depth and intimacy. People always say they like intimacy. But when it actually starts to happen, they sometimes get a little scared because intimacy is the experience of landing the depth of what we are beyond our personality. So if we're really identified with thinking that we're our personality, when we actually have a moment of intimacy in that moment, who am I? Who is my friend? What's actually here? The mystery deepens. But as the mystery deepens, and we're actually moving closer to what we are beyond our personality, let's say our true identity, everything gets more beautiful. Everything's filled with a kind of resonance and mystery and beauty. Fours are on the lookout for that, and when they're in their healthier manifestation, they're bringing that to other people. They're inviting people into that. They're creating a life of intimacy and beauty and richness, and they're reminding other people to come back to their depth and humanity.

Shane Parrish: And Four's are The Individualists?

Russ Hudson: That's right. I don't often use examples, but I was posting the other day about your fellow Canadian Joni Mitchell as a great example of an Enneagram Four, who has done exactly what I was talking about, as that was her offering to the world. When we lose the presence, it's as though the mystery and the beauty fade, and then the world seems barren, ugly, pedestrian, purposeless, dull, and so forth. Just as the Three, there's no meaning. Why am I doing all this? The Four is like, "Who am I, what am I, what is the point of all this?" And there's a kind of existential despair about the loss of this depth and mystery and beauty. Everything seems ugly. I sometimes feel ugly, right? I've lost whatever it was that made me beautiful.

So the Four in the fixated pattern gets caught up in emotional reactivity because I know that what I lost has something to do with my heart, but I can't go to that deeper place without the presence. So what I see is all my reactions to the loss, my reaction to this ugly, crude, senseless world, or to myself in all the ways I feel I'm not being this truth of what I am. And so that reactivity kind of engulfs me, and that it makes it very hard to have a good life. So we move on to the Five, Six and Seven, the Head types, have to do with being more or less connected with our presence in the head center.

Shane Parrish: So hold on. The Eight, Nine and One were which type?

Russ Hudson: The Body or Belly.

Shane Parrish: Body. And then the Two, Three and Four were The Heart?

Russ Hudson: Heart.

Shane Parrish: And then, so the Five, Six and Seven are The Head. So the Five is The Investigator?

Russ Hudson: That's right, The Investigator. Another popular name is The Observer, which is fair enough, but I think it muddies the water a little bit because Nines are also good observers. Nines observe. But observing and investigating are kind of different. There's more of an aggression in investigation. You're going to go find out. You're not just looking at the beautiful stone, you're turning it over and looking at what's under it, or you're chipping off a piece and looking at what's inside. So Investigator is the Five, and the Five has to do with the capacity in human beings to come to realizations, to new awareness', to seeing new truth and think of where we'd be. If we didn't have that. We'd still be back in caves if we even found caves. So that capacity is enormous, to have a kind of clarity, a clarity of thought, of communication, of perception. And I would add that another big component here is that when we find our true mind, our deeper mind, it brings with it a sense of solitude. Solitude is a kind of inner quiet. That's not disturbed by the activities of life. Not disturbed by other people. So, that solitude is like, "I can hear myself think."

So those are really important. In a healthy five, not only are those qualities there, but they're also in service of the heart. It's a Buddhist view here, the awareness and the realization,

the enlightenment about what's true and isn't, is helping me see what's needed and help people, help the world. It's in service of the heart, in service of compassion.

The other big element here is also, as you see what's real, you're also seeing what you've believed that isn't real. So it's the part of us that can liberate us from stuff we used to believe. That we now see, "Well, okay, that was like training wheels. It was good at the time, but I don't really need that now." And so we can let go of concepts and beliefs and ideas without getting freaked out. That's necessary for us to grow up and certainly if we're going to get any freedom from our personality pattern. So when fives are not so present, their challenge area is that they're trying to have that knowing and discerning of truth and untruth and their solitude, but without the basis of them. So, what happens then is my mind is constantly working, trying to figure things out.

"What's going on here? What is this? What's that?" You'll see sometimes little kids who are fives going around naming everything. Like, "Oh, there's a truck, oh and there's a plane." It's like, I'm constantly trying to establish what's here and what isn't. What's real and what isn't. That can lead to certain kinds of expertise, but can also really lead me down a rabbit hole of obsessive thinking. The need for solitude becomes the avoidance of human contact. So it's not true that fives don't want any human contact, but they want to be in control of the duration and amount of it.

Shane Parrish: Oh, that's interesting.

Russ Hudson: Yeah. "I'll go to the party with you, darling, but what time will we come home?"

Shane Parrish: Right, right. I need to know a destination when we're going for a walk or something.

Russ Hudson: Exactly. Yeah. It's like, "I'm willing to do it", but the sense of the five starts to be that more than a little, probably burn me out, deplete me or be too much. So depending on some variations within the type, which that's another whole topic, my capacity for being with people is perceived as limited. So then that can lead me to a lot of isolation, and the isolation, I get into weird thoughts, and away we go. One of the types that when we are having problems, they actually look like mental problems. Some of the types, they're still

running a company, or a country, and they got a lot of problems, but fives look like they got problems.

So six, we call this type originally the loyalist, although we don't call it that in Ireland. I also like to call this type the troubleshooter, because a troubleshooter is somebody who's anticipating problems and looking down the road and figuring out what could go wrong and then doing the necessary steps to make sure that those bad things don't happen. Or perhaps, they're also looking at problems that have happened and considering alternative things to do, to create safety. And that's what sixes do.

Sixes Are just as much thinkers as fives. They're very analytical. They think about a lot of things, but they're more overtly feeling than fives are. They're more openly emotional. They respond more to people's emotions. That being said, what is their gift? The gift of the six is the quality of alertness and awakesness and paying attention. Even the ability to pay attention, like how cool that we can be mindful. That we can gather our attention and notice what's what's going on. That serves them and paying attention to what's going on in their life, with their families, with their loved ones, with their company, et cetera. Sixes often we'll get this heart feeling of being entrusted with something. "I'm on my watch now. I'm in the night watch." A little for you Game of Thrones fans. "And I have a duty to uphold something, and to be aware. And on my watch, I'm going to do my best to make sure these things get taken care of and I'll use my mind to do that." So there's a devoted quality, a beautiful sense of service in sixes, that I find very lovely.

Now, when we lose presence, we lose that sense of alertness, awakesness. It's an interesting thing, too, that alertness, when it's present, it's also steadying. We feel more confident, courageous, steady. It stabilizes us, somehow. When we lose it, the awareness turns into hypervigilance. We're like deer that just heard a sound like, "What was that? What's going on? What's happening next? When's this pandemic going to be over? What's happening here?"

So our minds now get activated and we start to hyper think. And that hyper thinking is driven by anxiety. That anxiety then is not what my focus is, my focus is on my thoughts that are generated by the anxiety, but now, life isn't to be lived or enjoyed, it's to be handled. So I'm in my mind, forever putting out fires, fixing problems, dealing with life rather than

living. The stress of that can get really wearing. And I can get impatient with myself and others and really into a downward spiral where just I feel like nothing I do is ever good enough. And that, that I'm in a pit of sand. That no matter what I do, it just keeps getting worse.

Shane Parrish: The self-sabotage in that one seems very more apparent.

Russ Hudson: Yes. Don used to say, and I liked this, that the three anchors of the difficult parts of the ego can be found in the nine, the three and the six, that are on the central triangle. Self-forgetting is the nine, just forgetting to be present here. It doesn't matter if I'm here. Three is self-deception. I am the ego. And what the ego wants is what's important and what's going to fulfill me, wrong. But we have to convince ourselves to keep going with a lot of this stuff. And then six is, you named it, self-sabotage. How I keep my life off kilter so that there isn't the space to consider that there might be anything else going on here.

So anyway, you get the idea of that being anxious. Sixes are one of the types that sometimes thinks they're fours, because when they're caught in their stuff, they have a lot of emotions and they have a really low self-concept. So they can think they're fours.

Seven is our last stop on the train. Seven is also about the head center. So we saw that clarity of the five, the awakens of the six, seven is the openness of mind.

Shane Parrish: This is the enthusiast.

Russ Hudson: The enthusiast, right. So there's an enthusiastic, positive energy, curiosity, willingness to try things, try new food, try new experiences, travel, experience this world while we're here. And that openness also brings a sense of appreciation. That openness, experience, brings a lightness of heart and makes us feel positive, but not a positivity that's an avoidance of difficulty or pain. It's the positivity that's there for us when we're having difficulty and pain. It doesn't flee because we're having difficulty. It's the spirit in us that stays there, even when we're having a terrible time.

When sevens are in their power, they're the most exploratory, adventurous people. They check things out, they read, they study, they learn about a lot of things. If something grabs their attention, they check it out. And that's a cool thing. Not only that, but they're the

ones who bring hope. They bring positivity. When bad things are happening, they rise to the occasion and, and show people, “Don’t give up. We can still do this.” They keep the lights on. And so they’re the bringers of that positivity. The other big thing here, didn’t say is that openness is also the experience of freedom, but inner freedom. It’s freedom, not as the ego understands it. It’s not that I have freedom, it’s that my nature is freedom. In my soul, I am free. It’s funny how many people discovered that in prison.

Shane Parrish: Go deeper on that.

Russ Hudson: I was in South Africa, years ago. I used to go there and teach pretty regularly and, God willing and health permitting I’ll go there against sometime. Beautiful country, great people. But I was at Robben Island and went and visited the prison cell of Nelson Mandela. It was really small and very simple, very primitive, and just thinking of him in there for years. But it was in there that his vision of how to save South Africa and end apartheid came to him. And if you read his writings, it was there when he didn’t have the ego’s idea of freedom, he found his inner freedom. Now, we would want them to have the outer kind too. But the cool thing about the inner kind is you can’t take that away from somebody. Viktor Frankl wrote about this.

Shane Parrish: Yeah. I was just thinking that, about the Holocaust and his experience in Auschwitz. And he said the last of the human freedoms is like the ability to respond.

Russ Hudson: Yes. And exactly. And so people sometimes discover these deeper aspects. Sri Aurobindo in India, one of the great saints of the last couple centuries of Indian religion. He also came to his realization while he was imprisoned for a sedition against the British government. So, what we’re saying here, that doesn’t mean that it’s okay, that people are suffering, or imprisoned, that’s not what I mean. But that we will be dissatisfied by what looks like freedom to us, which on the ego is having more options, having more choices, being able to do whatever I want, which is I call that lovingly my inner two-year-old.

But real freedom, as one of my teachers used to say, is no longer being ruled by an inner two-year-old. Right. It’s another thing. You look at these figures who found it, they didn’t come out and just indulge themselves. They were pivotal figures for their cultures. So finding that inner freedom, that positivity, becomes a source of inspiration. When we lose it, then

we're just trying to find what's interesting, keep our options open, do this, do that. And the danger for sevens is that they scatter themselves. They're often brilliant, and talented people, but they lose patience with themselves before they get to the gold of whatever it is that they're exploring.

So they try this, they try that, but you can feel the frustration that I'm looking for something. I'm trying to find out who I'm supposed to be when I grow up. But the point of matter is that that mental activity, in the six and the five, is obscuring the freedom and the spaciousness that is my nature.

Shane Parrish: So just a recap for everybody. One was the reformer, two is the helper, three was the achiever, four was the individualist, five was the investigator, six was the loyalist, seven was the enthusiast, eight was the challenger, and nine was the peacemaker.

Russ Hudson: Right.

Shane Parrish: And I remember reading one of your books in preparation for this. And you said the dominant emotions in the triad were anger, anxiety and shame.

Russ Hudson: Yeah.

Shane Parrish: Walk me through that. Which is which? And that's when you're disconnected with your presence, right?

Russ Hudson: Right. The idea is that when we start in the course of ego development, in childhood, to lose the felt sense of what we are, which must happen, it happens. Just for some reason, we go through these developmental stages and that's part of it. But in the course of losing that grounding, our heart goes into reaction and our nervous system goes into reaction. And so we talk about these as emotional, instinctual energies that are there in all ego states. So there's always some degree of anger or rage. And the way we look at this too, is that if you dig into particular psychological issues, you will sooner or later hit a layer that's just pure emotional energy. That what's really there underneath whatever the story is, is just a lot of anger that didn't have an outlet. We also talk about how each of these emotions is workable. It's not bad or wrong. But again, if we bring that three centered presence and kindness to it, it finishes its job, it does whatever it was there to do, and it

transmutes into an ingredient we actually need. So anger, if we're present with anger and only lasts a few seconds. When we're not present with anger, it can last our whole life.

Shane Parrish: Yeah. I like to think of that as we often just push feeling actually aside. We analyze it, we rationalize it, we investigate it, but we do everything but actually feel that feeling and that emotion. And because we don't experience it, it comes to crop up later and it boils over. And if you just take the time in the moment to feel what you're feeling, it'll pass.

Russ Hudson: That's right. This is where some people get scared of their emotions. There's a difference between feeling my emotion and acting it out. Many people think if they feel their anger, they're going to go around and smash things, or attack people. But that's not it. The people going around and smashing things and attacking people are not in touch with their anger. It's going instantly into a behavior. And that's how they've learned to control it. But that's not the same as being with it.

Shane Parrish: So what does it mean to be with your feelings, or your emotions?

Russ Hudson: Well, again, it comes down to this acquiring the capacity to be in the body. If I'm in the body with anger, anger has very particular sensations. It usually feels like heat, for one thing. We may feel it in particular places. Sometimes it manifests when we're resisting it, it locks up our jaw, our necks get tense, our shoulders, there's a whole musculature around the resistance and holding of anger. But when we let it go, it feels almost more liquidy and it feels like liquid heat. And that heat can be useful in dissolving these rigid places where I've been holding anger.

So, there's a logic to how we unpack. Some people study trauma, I think of Peter Levine, looked at how animals are so good at going through their physiological paces to release trauma. But trauma will usually come accompanied with really big emotional energies. It doesn't always have to be at the level of trauma, but we learn from that study that that's how you can work with these things. So, just getting in touch with the energy of it, moving, expressing, can all help to move anger through. When anger is presence, it transmutes into empowerment and confidence, and the ability to take a stand, to have a voice, to speak your truth. People who can't be in touch with their anger have trouble with all of those things.

Shane Parrish: What do we do with anxiety?

Russ Hudson: Anxiety, it's deeper root, I was looking for a long time to find the right word. And I use this for the so-called passion of point six. Each type has a particular "passion." But we don't mean being passionate. It means a form of suffering. And I couldn't find a good English word. So I turned to German and the best word is angst, angst, which is not just anxiety, but the suffering of anxiety. The twisted, anguished feeling. Anxiety is unprocessed fear.

Shane Parrish: Oh, tell me more about that.

Russ Hudson: Yeah, fear could be, you see something dangerous, somebody's approaching you with a weapon in their hand. Fear is just suddenly adrenaline pumps through your system and activates your arms and legs to move and groove you toward running away, or fighting back, or freezing. Fear is fight, flight, or freeze. However, when we don't process fear, it becomes this backlog of sort of jitters and unease and not being able to sink into yourself. It keeps our mind turning and turning and turning.

I noticed a lot of people as we're having this conversation, we're in the midst of this COVID experience across the planet. And a lot of people are having anxiety, needless to say. And so what's a manifestation? Sleeplessness, a lot of people having trouble getting to sleep at night. So this restless quality is the symptom of anxiety and the mind turning. Anxiety, when we, feel it, again, it's an energy in the body. It feels like battery acid. It's acrid, and energized and a little electrical feeling. When we presence anxiety, and we're with it in the body, with the heart, with the mind, to whatever degree we can, it transmutes into awakeness, into paying attention.

Because when we're scared, we're not sleepy, we're not out of it. Our attention may be misdirected, but we're paying attention. If you hear a bump in the middle of the night, you're suddenly not sleepy.

You're activated. So when you can relax the tense reactive part of that, when you can breathe through the anxiety, it becomes awareness, it becomes lucidity. I think it was a Virginia Satir who said that "anxiety is excitement without breathing." So they're all workable. But again, the five, six and seven tend to have more issues with anxiety. The turning thoughts,

the restlessness, and so forth. Sometimes people say, “I’m not sure if I’m a nine or a five.” I said, “Do you fall asleep easily or is it hard for you to sleep? Does mind keep turning and you can’t stop it? Or are you able to just chill out?” That’s one distinction.

Whereas the eight, nine and one have more issues with anger, and the expression of anger and finding out how to be with anger. The two, three and four, we talk about shame. We also talk about hurt, brokenheartedness. If you got an ego, you got some brokenheartedness. Part of the challenge of waking up is being able to be with our brokenheartedness. And my gosh, everybody else. But it’s a weird thing, we’re so afraid of it, yet it’s one of the main ways we human beings connect. When we can acknowledge each other’s hurt and the difficulties and how despite the difficulties we’ve been through, somehow we’re both still here. Well, that’s remarkable.

So there’s a sense of being able to learn, to be with our brokenheartedness and not be into some kind of narrative or story about it. Like it’s some proof, “There’s something wrong with me. I’m not lovable. I’m a flop. I’m boring. I’m not sexy”, whatever. We have all kinds of negative narratives that can come out of that. On the other hand, the defense against it is narcissistic grandiosity.

“I’m more loving than anyone. And without my help, everybody in my life will fall to pieces.” Well, that’s grandiose. “I’m the only one who knows what to do in this company. I can make things happen.” A little grandiose. “I’m the most talented person around.” Maybe. “I’m deeper and more profound than anyone I know.” Really, how do you know that? That’s a rather narcissistic view of yourself.

Shane Parrish: I need to be needed. I need that validation.

Russ Hudson: Exactly. Narcissism, if we look at it this way, is a pretty normal human thing. If we’re going to work with this stuff, it needs to stop being a dirty word. We need to acknowledge everybody has some. But it’s, “To what degree is it running my life? And what is it defending me against?” People who are more narcissistic, have big wounds and heartbreak around their lovability, their value, their sense of worth. And so they need to create an inflation as a defense against that. So, when you’re looking at this, this underlying shame and hurt, the shame actually is the recognition, “I can be present with it”, it’s the

recognition that, “I am aware that I’m not being my truth.”

“I’m aware that I’m not who I am.” And the first step I always tell my students is acknowledging that you don’t know who you are, is a step into who you are. To start to feel just that question alive. Then the shame becomes more of a fire that’s going to carry me toward the truth that will set me free. And so everything that we’re looking at is workable. And that’s why we learn it. There’s no point in just saying, “Here’s what’s wrong with you.” We already think there’s so many things wrong with us. This is how the Enneagram takes us from what seems to be malfunctioning in us and connects it with what is most beautiful in us. That’s I think the magic of it.

Shane Parrish: It’s both. Yeah. What are wings and stress arrows?

Russ Hudson: Wings are just the idea that whatever your Enneagram type, the two types on either side of your type on the circle represent tendencies, or variations on the theme. So for example, as a point five, my wings could be four, because going around the circle is four or five, six. So my wings could be four, or six, meaning as a five, I lean towards the four side of that, or I lean toward the six side of it. Now, I think the wings are a little more flexible. And I used to talk about this with my friend, Richard Rohr, who some of you may know. We both felt that people in childhood figure out one of those angles gets my needs met better than the other one.

Shane Parrish: Right. It gets fed.

Russ Hudson: People respond, you get taken care of by emphasizing some part of your type, the range of your type. But as you get older, usually in midlife, some people in their thirties, some people in their forties, some people in their fifties, you start to explore the other wing again. Like, “Oh, here’s this part I decided my type I didn’t use.” It’s like opening up some rooms in your home that you closed off. “Oh yeah, there’s some old stuff in here, it’s kind of interesting.” The cool thing about midlife and going into your later years, is you start to find these other parts of you that you didn’t necessarily develop in the first part of your life.

Shane Parrish: Why do you think we find that later in life?

Russ Hudson: I think because as we're getting started in life, we're eliminating things that don't get what we need and we're putting our eggs in the baskets that seem to provide the best means for us to get what we're looking for. So we narrow our focus. We're trying to figure out who we are when we're adolescents and teenagers. We're trying things on and eliminating things. So we're zeroing in on something. But having zeroed in on it and it producing whatever result it, in the latter part of life, we can relax a little bit. And say, "Okay, what else is there in life?" It's pretty normal. A lot of the people that I end up working with who are in mid, or later life, that's it. Like "I did X, Y, and Z, and now I'm feeling like, what are these chapters about? Other than playing golf or something?"

Shane Parrish: Right. What are stress arrows?

Russ Hudson: Stress arrows are the internal lines. If you look at the Enneagram symbol, it's got a circle, but each of the nine points has two internal lines connected to it. Now, one of the common misunderstandings is, and it came out of one of the, let's say, lineages of transmission in the early days, the Enneagram is that one of those directions is good and one of them is bad. Well, it's not like that. They both are ingredients that can be helpful because they tend to be ingredients that get dropped when we're overly focused on our core point. When we're too identified, too stuck in the fixated pattern of our own type, we're not conscious of the importance of these other two directions. So they're sort of like skeleton keys, they're magic. So when we're not particularly present, these are so important to us, we act them out in different situations in life.

Some more generally, some our loved ones are going to get. So for example, I'll use my example, again, I'm a five. When I am under stress, one of the directions is to seven. If you look on the Enneagram symbol, there's a line between five and seven. What that means is I can't focus, I can't contract, I can't withdraw anymore, I'm sort of fiving out, if you see what I mean. So the psyche automatically starts to compensate by bringing the opposite, which is the seven is to suddenly go out, explore things, do this, do that. I used to say, I could tell how overstressed I am by how many books I have stacked on my nightstand. Because instead of reading one, I've started six, and that's more like a seven in stress. So it's not like I become a seven, but the seven represents a reaction to me overdoing my fiveness, and a necessary reaction.

But it's a very different thing when I'm consciously invoking the good qualities of seven as a balance to my own type. The other direction would be for me as if I would be eight. That direction, I tend to be more blind to, but you know and the low side of the acting out of that can be real bossy. I can be real controlling. If there's a party going on, I'm going to decide what the music is or I'm not going to that party. I'm not going to listen to somebody else's terrible mix, unless I really trust them. Now I'm better at that than I used to be, but when I was a younger guy, forget about it. Very dominating. If you guys don't want to do what I want to do, I'll go do it on my own. But I didn't see that about myself.

Shane Parrish: March to the beat of your own drum.

Russ Hudson: And beyond that, I made other people march to the beat of my drum. But you see, I didn't see that about myself. But it represented yes, a five, I needed that grounded, confident embodiment so that there was an outlet and an output for all this stuff I had figured out. So when I brought it in consciously, see consciously is also acknowledging the shadow part of it. But they suggest paths of development again. So that's the really short version of it. You could do a big study of those in our lives. But some teachers say that they don't matter. I think if you take them out, you don't have the Enneagram. You just have, again, a tic-tac-toe board of nine descriptions, which won't get you too far.

Shane Parrish: One of the things I appreciated, when you were giving the descriptions is sort of what it looks like when you lose your presence and what it feels like and what happens in those cases. So you can sort of like feel yourself slipping away and see what that default response would be. How do you think about the mental biases arising from each of the nine sort of approaches or types?

Russ Hudson: Oh yeah, absolutely. We all are going to sort for what we value. And we're all going to look to certain kinds of responses. Some types are looking for an emotional response. They're looking for some kind of visceral real, put your cards on the table, get in the trenches with me and I'm looking for that. And my biases that people respond that way are straight shooters. That's somebody I can work with, that's somebody I trust. Some type want to be positive and want to be inspired and want to be reassured and they want to reassure. And that's their gift and it's their bias. And some types don't want to get into positivity or emotions, they want to be logical and reasonable. And so that's what my

prejudice is toward talking about things that way.

Shane Parrish: It needs to make sense to me, yeah.

Russ Hudson: Exactly. So I am always saying that if we're going to be skillful in human communication and working with people, we need to develop two other languages. Usually people are really good at one and kind of okay at another they just don't know that language. So if you're going to be good at this, you can be logical and rational, you can inspire and reassure and bring positive vibes, and you can be real and say, what's really going on in you and invite that from others. It sounds so easy and reasonable when you lay it out on paper, but actually doing it is not that common.

Shane Parrish: And how do we use this information? Like how do organizations use this commonly to improve their ability to hire people or be more productive?

Russ Hudson: Well, you know, people use it a lot of different ways. I've used it in a few particular modalities. There's things I think it's good for and things it's not good for, to go back to one of your earlier questions. My friend and colleague Catherine Bell lives out in Calgary and she's been using it in organization's a great bit. I have other colleagues here who have been doing so. I find that it's especially good for executive coaching and leadership development. It's kind of the formation of qualities that are needed for people to be effective in any kind of leadership role in organizations. And I also find it very good for team building.

Russ Hudson: And when I'm using it for teams, I'm not necessarily focusing on typing everybody in the room.

Shane Parrish: Oh, go on.

Russ Hudson: I'm getting more of a sense in a group, even a country, or any organization, has certain type memes if you like dominant, and every group has certain type capacities or ingredients somewhat lagging or, in some cases, even absent. And so you can look at a group that way and analyze what are we do well, what comes easily as a group? What's been our focus? What's kind of okay, and what really do we need to put a little loving attention into? Because in my experience, the stuff that you leave out comes back to bite you on the

backside later on if you don't deal with it.

Shane Parrish: What do you mean the stuff you leave out?

Russ Hudson: Well, for a practical example, I worked with a number of banks back in the mid to late naughts, you know, around 2007 or so. And not surprisingly, a lot of financial institutions were reaching out for help at that point, because in their 11:30 wake up call, they realized they were in big trouble. And a lot of times I would work with a group of directors of those institutions and what we found on their team over and over was they had a lot of energy that another grouping that we use in the Enneagram, they had a lot of assertive energy. They had a lot of go-getter energy. Which you would expect from somebody in finance and arbitrage and so forth. You kind of need to be that, if you're going to succeed in those businesses. And so there was a lot of that energy. A predominance of those types in the group, but also just their overall values were in that direction. So they saw goal, went for it.

There was a certain degree of what I call the sort of maintenance and standards types. That energy was there, like, maintaining things, making sure protocols were observed, making sure that things got connected, and there follow-through and all that stuff. They had a certain degree of that. What they were almost always absent in a was what I call strategic long view, or what in our book we call it the withdrawn style. They each have corresponded types. Three, seven, and eight is the go-getters, the assertive, the initiators. And the one, two, and six is dutiful style, altruistic, dutiful, make sure it gets done.

Shane Parrish: The mechanical sort of proficiency almost.

Russ Hudson: Well, just making sure that the right things happen, and willing to make sacrifices to have that occur. The four, five and nine are the withdrawn style, but in business they called them strategic long view, because they're the people who are really quiet at the meeting and sometimes have something to say at the end. But their style is to take in all the bits of what's going on and get the gestalt of it and say something about the bigger picture. Now, imagine banks in the mid-naughts, making money hand over fist, what were they not doing?

Shane Parrish: Thinking about the future.

Russ Hudson: They weren't seeing the bigger picture. They weren't seeing the implications. They were not hearing that waterfall that they were headed toward. They weren't reading the signals. They didn't want to, because they were getting excited about approaching the goals that they had. So, that's a really practical example and I think a pretty understandable one. So when you bring in that view, when I work with a group like that, I wouldn't necessarily say you got to hire a certain type, that may or may not be practical, but we'd look at the group and say, who in this group can play that role? Which one of you could reasonably, and then they have a interesting creative discussion about it.

When I use it in an organization, so I'm not usually going around typing people, because a lot of times people just get obnoxious with that. They use it to make fun of colleagues, I mean, that's not helpful. I use it to help them see their strengths and weaknesses in accomplishing whatever their particular mission is.

Shane Parrish: I think it's also, I mean, it sounds like it would be super useful in the context of a couple or relationship, right? Walk me through that. Let's dive into that.

Russ Hudson: Sure. You know, one thing that Don and I always used to say, people would ask us questions, like which type should I be with? I'm this type, what would be a good type for me? Don's funny answer was always healthy. Get a healthy type. The higher side of any of them, somebody who's done some psychological work is going to be more of a delightful person to live with. I would add, if you want to be with such a person, make sure you're ready.

Shane Parrish: Right. What does that mean to be ready?

Russ Hudson: Well, that you've been looking at yourself, you know yourself, you know your guts, you have some awareness of your strengths and weaknesses and you've done some psychological or some spiritual work so that you are able to engage meaningfully in conversations about these things should problems come up, and will problems come up? Yes.

Shane Parrish: How you handle those problems, it's sort of like everything, right?

Russ Hudson: Absolutely. So, I think gives a lot of couples language to talk about what's

going on with them. It helps them see where they align on values and where they see things differently. And so when I'm counseling couples that really are committed to working things out with each other, I'm always saying, "Okay, here's where you guys are different. How can you turn that into a benefit", where you're kind of coaching and helping each other with something that's your strength, but you're also receiving the strength and the wisdom of your partner who has a different set of values. We get into that talking about just the Enneagram types, but there are all kinds of other elements to that. We haven't talked about the subtypes or the instincts is another. You could do a whole podcast on that.

Shane Parrish: Oh yeah, we'll be here a week just for that. Yeah. But like maybe we could break it up into the triad a little bit. And if I'm in a relationship or I'm married to somebody who's thinking, like, how can I go deeper into my connection with them? Or what if they're feeling? What do I do as a partner to bring that to a more meaningful place? Or what if they're anxious? How do I respond when they are anxious? What are the things that we can do as partners to improve that aspect of our relationship and go deeper with our partner?

Russ Hudson: Well, it's kind of a two-parter, and there's general principles I could give us in the timeframe we have. People when they're having difficulties are always hoping that someone will show up for them in the way they would for us when they're at their best. For example, if I'm in a relationship with a nine, when I think about my nine beloved or my nine friend, what do they do that's so helpful to me when they're at their best? They're just there. They're not laying trips on me. They're not putting an agenda on me. They're not trying to fix me. They're just there in a steady, kind, understanding way. And in that I can kind of find my feet and get back into orientation again.

Shane Parrish: They're present, you feel safe.

Russ Hudson: They're present, you feel safe, not laying trips. Guess what my beloved nine wants me to do, right?

Shane Parrish: Be there in the same way.

Russ Hudson: Yes. Now I may bring also the gift of what I can do from my type, but don't have to think about that. I just do that very automatically. But if I do that in the context of what that person is seeking, that reminds them of them at their best, which helps them

find their center. So my eight friend would be really fiercely there with me, would be so there, would be inviting me to talk about what I was feeling, would let me know that they're strong enough they can take it, let me know. Right. And that kind of bid for realness, that's what they want. They want to know I'm in the trenches with them, I'm with them. I'm not feeling their feelings for them, but I get it, and I'm there and I care.

Shane Parrish: Right, I got you.

Russ Hudson: That's it. So, if you study your partner as what they do as their gift to you when you're having trouble, see if you can bring some of that to them. That's one thing. The other thing is that by those triads, as you were asking me, each triad, meaning the belly-oriented types, the heart-oriented types, they're looking for certain things from their relationship. For the eight, nine, and one, they're looking for respect. They're looking for a field of respect. So if you look at the eight, nine, and one, even if they're troubled, even if they're having a terrible time, they can feel if you're there in a way that honors their integrity, their autonomy, who they are, you're with them, respecting them and who and what they are, even in the midst of their difficulty, and they will pick that up. Because again, at their best, that's what they do. And again, it's kind of a non-negotiable.

Eight, nine and one, you know, if I don't feel you're respecting me, the deal's off, I'm done with you. Nines might be nice about it. They Namaste with a certain Anglo saxon phrase that follows it. But, you know, I've written you off, you don't respect me. But it's also true that they, when they're really angry with somebody, they punish people by not respecting them.

Two, three, and four want to be seen, known and validated. You see me, you get me, you're validating, you're okaying, you're with my feelings. All those types may later on want to sort things out. Okay, let's see what this is really about. But that ain't going to happen if, first, there isn't that sense that you're with me, you're seeing me, you're getting me, you're really wanting to know me. You care about that I'm having these feelings and you're letting me have these feelings. Right. They work that out in different ways.

It's sort of interesting because fours, that's leads. They're going to put those feelings out right away and see what the other person does. The two and three are more cagey. I don't

necessarily trust that you will be with my feelings or see me. But if I perceive that you do see me and get me and see that I'm struggling and you're making that okay, I'm relieved and I'll come forward and I will meet you more. And that, you know, all three of them really don't expect. They're surprised when they perceive that someone sees them or gets them. They don't expect it. Of course everybody's like that to some degree, but twos threes, and fours, that's the main thing. And again, when we are not doing too well, we punish others by withdrawing, our seeing and validation of them. We just kind of cut them off emotionally.

Five, six, and seven, it's a little harder to put into words, but they're looking for someone who can just be there with them in a steady way. Not approaching, not withdrawing, not glomming on or taking over or fixing and not abandoning. Like, you're not leaving me and you're not getting into my stuff.

Shane Parrish: Just consistent.

Russ Hudson: Consistent. Right. So if I perceive that, that you're just here with me and I'm going to work this out. All five, six, and seven has that conviction, I will work this out. But if I know you're there, you're my ally, you're in this with me and you're not leaving me and not trying to take over. And all three -- five, six and seven -- hate to be the recipient of someone else helping them or saving them.

Shane Parrish: Right. Don't solve my problems for me, just hold my hand and like go through it with me.

Russ Hudson: Exactly. So as I feel someone will do that, then I will start working it out and I'll feel more connected and it helps heal what's ever going on in the relationship. And of course, again, five, six, and seven are the worst at being steady for somebody when they're not having troubles. Am I in the relationship? Am I out? Am I too close? Am I running away? I'm all over the place. Nobody knows what I'm going to do, including me. So that's one bit of advice around all that stuff.

Shane Parrish: That's amazing. I know we're coming up on time here. So two final questions. What's the best starter material? Like, where can people go to learn more about the Enneagram, if they're interested in curious?

Russ Hudson: Well, you know, there's a lot of good material out there. There's a number of books, kind of depends on your orientation. I, of course, feel that some of the books that Don Richard Riso and I wrote together are very solid and helpful. A lot of people would say that the book, the wisdom of the Enneagram, that he and I wrote.

Shane Parrish: That's the best one.

Russ Hudson: Yeah. A lot of people, you know, including other teachers, will sort of acknowledge it's like a classic textbook. You know, I've done 20 more years of study so there's a few quibbles about what things I said in that book. But overall, I think it's powerful because it also gives you the orientation. It's not just describing types. We wrote a number of books and any of them would be worthy. We have websites, the Enneagraminstitute.com, just Enneagraminstitute.com.

Shane Parrish: Is that where people can find you on the internet is sort of the Enneagram Institute?

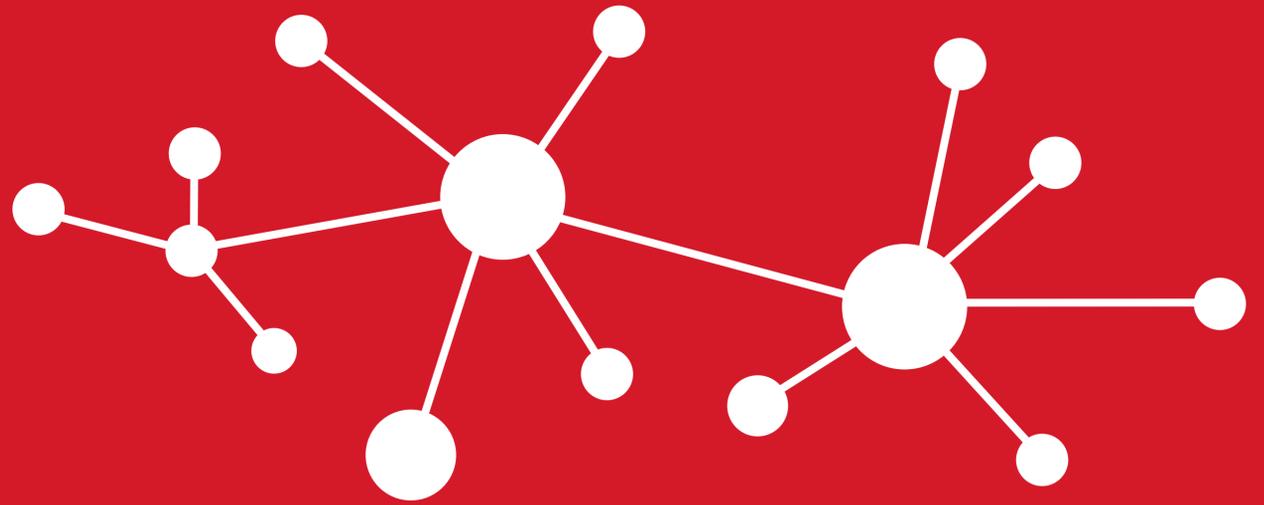
Russ Hudson: Well, two places. That would be the site that was created for Don Riso and me. And our work is on there and our Enneagram tests, the RHETI, R-H-E-T-I, is on that site. Also, I have a site just for what I'm doing that includes stuff that I'm not doing with the Institute and that's just Russhudson.com.

You know, some of my colleagues had done wonderful work. I would say, you know, you're better off with people who have been studying this awhile. I would also say that whatever book you look at, consider that it is a view on this. None of them is the Bible. None of them is the final say. And you'll feel in just what's helpful, what's useful, what actually opens things up for you and what tends to reinforce.

The other thing I always look for in any Enneagram book or teaching or teacher, how even-handed is it? How much are the teacher or writer's prejudices hanging out? Like, they had a bad relationship with a four, so the four gets a lot of shade, you know, or maybe it was a three, or some type is still idealized for some reason. So when you have more mature teachers or teachings, there's a fair and a seeing the light and shade of each of Enneagram types.

Shane Parrish: Russ, thank you so much. This has been an amazing conversation.

Russ Hudson: Thank you so much, Shane. I had a lot of fun. These were really good questions for me to think about too.



THE

Knowledge Project

A podcast about better thinking, problem
solving, and decision making.



[FS.BLOG/PODCAST](https://fs.blog/podcast)

fs