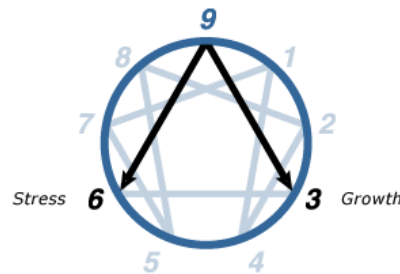


Personality Type NINE: The Peacemaker

*The Easygoing, Self-Effacing Type:
Receptive, Reassuring, Agreeable, and Complacent*



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

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

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

Recognizing Nines

Type Nine exemplifies the desire for wholeness, peace, and harmony in our world. Nines are easygoing, emotionally stable people. They are open and unself-consciously serene, trusting and patient with themselves and others. Their openness allows them to be at ease with life and with the natural world. As a result, others generally find it easy to be in their company. They are genuinely good-natured and refreshingly unpretentious. Because of their peaceful demeanor, Nines have a talent for comforting and reassuring others and are able to exert a calming, healing influence in difficult or tense situations. They make steady, supportive friends who can listen uncritically to others' problems as well as share their good times. In work settings, they can be excellent mediators, able to harmonize groups and bring people together by really healing conflicts.

Nines can also be quite imaginative and creative, and they enjoy expressing themselves in symbolic ways—through music, dance, images, or mythic stories, for instance. They tend to look at things holistically, focusing on the ways in which seemingly unrelated ideas or events are connected and part of a greater whole. Indeed, Nines are drawn to anything that affirms the fundamental oneness of the world. Whether they are working with concepts, diverse groups of people, art forms, or feuding family members, Nines want to bring everything and everyone back to a harmonious unity.

In short, Nines are the eternal optimists, always wanting to believe the best about other people, with hope for the best for themselves. They hope that every story will end with, "...and they all lived happily ever after." Healthy Nines will work hard to make things turn out that way. But average Nines will leave it to "luck and a prayer"—and they may be sorely disappointed.

Average Nines focus on keeping their lives pleasant and uncomplicated. They idealize others and live through a handful of primary identifications—usually with their family and close friends. Out of fear of creating conflicts with these people, average Nines hold back their own reactions and opinions and suppress themselves in many other ways. Oddly, Nines can be quite assertive on behalf of others and will work hard for others' benefit, but they can have great difficulty taking actions on their own behalf, or even voicing their own real feelings.

To "maintain the peace," Nines tend not to *show* their upsets very much, except indirectly— perhaps by eating, drinking, or watching television too much to escape into a more pleasant and comforting world. They also absorb a lot of tension and neglect—even outright abuse—before showing any kind of emotional response. But when their anger has been held back for too long, Nines can suddenly blow up, seemingly out of the blue. Once they have gotten something out of their system, Nines hope that the storm has blown over and that things will go back to the way they were before.

Fearing that change (and potential conflict) will threaten their comfort and peace of mind, average Nines become more complacent and disengaged. They entrench themselves in comforting habits and routines, puttering around and finding various kinds of busy work to lose themselves in. But the longer they do this, the more difficulty they have rousing themselves to take decisive action or to assert themselves in any meaningful way. They become passive, walking away from problems and brushing them under the rug. Their thinking becomes hazy and ruminative, mostly daydreaming about happy memories or passing time telling comforting stories. They begin to "tune out" reality to protect themselves from anxiety, often seeming "oblivious" and unresponsive as a result. Average Nines use passive-aggressive acts and stubbornness to resist attempts to engage them. But their peace of mind is little more than an avoidance of problems—a clinging to fantasies and unrealistic hopes.

Low functioning Nines can become fatalistic and resigned, trudging through life as if nothing can be done to improve their situation. Engaged in wishful thinking, looking for easy, magical solutions, Nines keep "waiting for their ship to come in," but without some constructive effort on their part, they may wait a long time, indeed.

In brief, Nines want to find unity and wholeness, to create harmony in their environment, to feel spacious and at ease, to emphasize the positive, to avoid conflicts and tension, to resist change and preserve things as they are, and to ignore whatever would upset or disturb them. **Nines do not want** to have conflicts with loved ones, to feel cut off or separated from others, to be angry, to be upset or disturbed, to have their habits or routines interrupted, to arouse themselves or to be emotionally uncomfortable, or to be forced to face unpleasant realities.

Their Hidden Side

On the surface, Nines appear to be the most easy-going, pleasant people imaginable. They go along with others' wishes, apparently without any desire other than to make sure everyone is at ease and happy. But their hidden side is that they often suppress a huge well of anger that they conceal even from themselves. Nines want to get along with others, but they also want to hold on to their independence and autonomy—they do not want to be "messed with." To the extent that they feel they cannot do the latter without endangering their connections with the important people in their lives, they become resentful and enraged—although they also feel that they can never let this anger out without destroying their relationships. Thus, for Nines to develop themselves and their potentials they must come to grips with their suppressed rage and find constructive outlets for this energy.

Relationship Issues

People are often drawn to Nines as potential life partners for many reasons. They are comforting and supportive, warm and sensual. They adapt well to domestic life and enjoy being with their partner. And they *seem* to be utterly without any significant needs of their own. They are uncomplicated and undemanding to the extent that others get the false notion that the Nine will meet their needs without needing anything much from them. Therein lies the source of problems with Nines in relationship. Of course, Nines do have many personal needs, but to the extent that they are not being met, Nines shut down and withdraw from the other rather than risk getting into a conflict. Key issues include these:

- Going along with others or agreeing to things the Nine has no intention of complying with.
- Becoming emotionally unavailable to others: disengaging their attention or withdrawing rather than dealing with issues.
- Wanting to feel close with someone in their imagination while asserting independence in their behavior.
- The "No Talk Rule"—refusing to discuss the real problems.
- Suppression, control, and outbursts of temper—all of which are generally unrecognized and unacknowledged by the Nine.
- Emotional "collapsing" as a way of stopping discussion about troubling topics.

Type Compatibility

To learn more about compatibility issues and relationships with other types, see the [Enneagram Type Combinations](#).

The Passion: Sloth

Nines pay a price for their easygoing demeanor because much of it depends on their staying out of contact with their instinctual energies. Nines do this for two reasons. First, much of their instinctual aliveness is used to suppress their anger and frustration with people and with themselves. To experience their anger directly is extremely threatening to Nines: they feel that their rage could destroy their peaceful world very quickly. In order stay in their unrealistic, idealized world, they must constantly suppress their anger and instincts over and over again. But when Nines attempt to dam those energies, the result is inner numbness and general fatigue because so much of their inner resources is devoted to keeping their anger and instincts at bay.

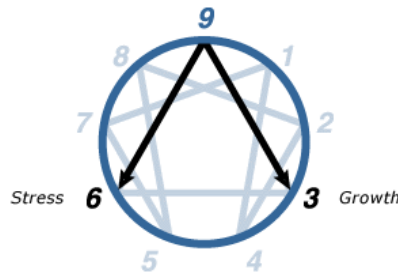
Thus, Nines end up becoming passive and disengaged. Rousing themselves to take an active role in their lives seems difficult—it will all be "too much trouble" becomes a constant refrain. So they retreat into safe and comforting routines—and the passion of sloth. Understood this way, sloth is not necessarily physical laziness; rather, it is an inner disengagement, a reluctance to show up in one's life with all of one's passion, immediacy, and presence available. The longer Nines remain in the state of sloth, the more they become convinced that they can never do what it takes to engage fully in their lives.

At Their Best

As Nines learn to assert themselves more freely, they experience greater peace, equanimity and contentment. Their self-possession enables them to have a profound effect on the world because they are truly present to themselves. They are intensely alive, awake, exuberant, and alert. They have learned not to give up their power to others or withhold themselves from a fear of self-assertion. They become dynamic and joyful, actively working for peace and healing their world as a result. They have enormous dignity and a genuine serenity that comes from deeply accepting the human condition.

Thus, high-functioning Nines are extraordinarily vital, self-possessed, and independent. They understand that by being grounded in the present moment, they can have both independence and connection with others: it is not an either/or situation. Further, their natural creativity and leadership can come to the fore because they are in touch with their own strength and capacities. People also instinctively trust healthy Nines because they will use their active influence to do what is necessary to create and sustain a truly harmonious environment, one in which everyone can thrive.

Personality Dynamics & Variations



Learn more about the [Directions of Integration \(Security\) and Disintegration \(Stress\)](#).

Under Stress (Nine Goes to Average Six)

Nines attempt to avoid anxiety and conflict by detaching emotionally from active participation and by not talking about their real concerns and issues. But they can only use this defense up to a point, beyond which they can no longer contain their anxiety, frustration, and fear. At such times, they will begin to exhibit many of the characteristics and behaviors of average-to-unhealthy Sixes. The usually stable, easygoing Nine becomes worried, testy, and defensive. They begin to see others as the source of their unease, complaining to anyone who will listen, and blaming everyone else for their distress. They may also have issues with authority, feeling put upon or controlled by those they see as having power over them. Under prolonged stress, Nines completely lose their placid demeanor and become more and more reactive and nervous. They may seek help and reassurance from others but may just as quickly disparage them for "dominating" or "overwhelming" them.

Security (Nine Goes to Average Three)

Nines usually feel unimportant and may feel that their own needs and viewpoints are not worth mentioning. With trusted others, however, they may attempt to demonstrate their value, desirability, or even superiority, in the manner of average Threes. In secure situations, Nines will deal with stress also by working more and by being productive—even if their productivity is really "busy work" designed to keep awareness of more crucial problems out of awareness. This busyness is the Nine's way of trying to build a sense of confidence and value. Nines may also try to impress intimates with their accomplishments, status, or attractiveness—although, ironically, they are usually completely unaware of how they are coming across to others.

Integration (Nines Goes to Healthy Three)

As Nines work through their belief that they are invisible and unimportant, they begin to recognize their true value. They see that others really do want them to show up and share themselves fully. Healthy Nines begin to understand that their very existence makes them valuable—God did not make a mistake in creating them. Their experience is much like the adventures of the Jimmy Stewart character in *It's a Wonderful Life*. They see that the world would be poorer without them and that they have much to contribute to their fellow human beings. They understand that the peace of mind they seek comes from fully sharing their talents,

intelligence, and heart with the world. Thus, integrating Nines begin to invest time and energy in themselves, to develop their talents, and to feel a healthy degree of self-esteem. In short, they learn to take pleasure in their own value and goodness.

The Levels of Development

[Learn more about the nine Levels of Development.](#)

Healthy Levels

Level 1 (At Their Best): Become self-possessed, feeling autonomous and fulfilled: have great equanimity and contentment because they are present to themselves. Paradoxically, at one with self, and thus able to form more profound relationships. Intensely alive, fully connected to self and others.

Level 2: Deeply receptive, accepting, unselfconscious, emotionally stable and serene. Trusting of self and others, at ease with self and life, innocent and simple. Patient, unpretentious, good-natured, genuinely nice people.

Level 3: Optimistic, reassuring, supportive: have a healing and calming influence—harmonizing groups, bringing people together: a good mediator, synthesizer, and communicator.

Average Levels

Level 4: Fear conflicts, so become self-effacing and accommodating, idealizing others and "going along" with their wishes, saying "yes" to things they do not really want to do. Fall into conventional roles and expectations. Use philosophies and stock sayings to deflect others.

Level 5: Active, but disengaged, unreflective, and inattentive. Do not want to be affected, so become unresponsive and complacent, walking away from problems, and "sweeping them under the rug." Thinking becomes hazy and ruminative, mostly comforting fantasies, as they begin to "tune out" reality, becoming oblivious. Emotionally indolent, unwillingness to exert self or to focus on problems: indifference.

Level 6: Begin to minimize problems, to appease others and to have "peace at any price." Stubborn, fatalistic, and resigned, as if nothing could be done to change anything. Into wishful thinking, and magical solutions. Others frustrated and angry by their procrastination and unresponsiveness.

Unhealthy Levels

Level 7: Can be highly repressed, undeveloped, and ineffectual. Feel incapable of facing problems: become obstinate, dissociating self from all conflicts. Neglectful and dangerous to others.

Level 8: Wanting to block out of awareness anything that could affect them, they dissociate so much that they eventually cannot function: numb, depersonalized.

Level 9: They finally become severely disoriented and catatonic, abandoning themselves, turning into shattered shells. Multiple personalities possible. Generally corresponds to the Schizoid and Dependent personality disorders.

Personal Growth Recommendations for Type Nines

Nines grow by recognizing that the more they seek peace of mind by turning away from conflicts and problems, the greater is the likelihood that they will bring about disturbances in their lives and relationships. Their avoidance of conflicts causes others to *have* conflicts with them. Growing Nines must also remember that they will never have union with anyone else unless and until they have union with themselves. If they are accommodating to a fault, they will eventually lose the other person because they have never possessed themselves. When they learn that self-assertion is not an aggressive act but a positive thing, Nines are in a position to truly bring peace and harmony to everyone in their environment.

- It is worth examining your type's tendency to go along with others, doing what they want to keep the peace and be nice. Will constantly acquiescing to the wishes of others provide the kind of relationships that will really satisfy you? Remember, it is impossible to love others if you are not truly present to them. This means that you have to be yourself, that you (paradoxically) have to be independent so that you can really be there for others when they need you.
- Exert yourself. Force yourself to pay attention to what is going on. Do not drift off or tune out people, or daydream. Work on focusing your attention to become an active participant in the world around you. Try to become more mentally and emotionally engaged.
- Recognize that you also have aggressions, anxieties, and other feelings that you must deal with. Negative feelings and impulses are a part of you and they affect you emotionally and physically whether or not you acknowledge them. Furthermore, your negative emotions are often expressed inadvertently and get in the way of the peace and harmony you want in your relationships. It is best to get things out in the open first, at least by allowing yourself to become aware of your feelings.
- Although this will be very painful for you, if your marriage has ended in divorce or if you are having problems with your children, you must honestly examine how you have contributed to these problems. Examining troubled relationships will be extremely difficult because the people involved have been close to your heart. The feelings you have for others endow you with much of your identity and self-esteem. But if you really love others, you can do no less than examine the role you have played in whatever conflicts that have arisen. In the last analysis, the choice is simple: you must sacrifice your peace of mind (in the short run) for the satisfaction of genuine relationships (in the long run.)
- Exercise frequently to become more aware of your body and emotions. (Some Nines run around doing errands and think that they are getting enough exercise.) Regular exercise is a healthy form of self-discipline and will increase your awareness of your feelings and other sensations. Developing body-awareness will help teach you to concentrate and focus your attention in other areas of your life as well. Exercise is also a good way to get in touch with and express some aggressions.

From *Discovering Your Personality Type*, pp. 164-173. See also *Personality Types*, pp. 338-75, *Understanding the Enneagram*, pp. 60-62, 119-26, and 349-51, and *The Wisdom of the Enneagram*, pp. 314-40.

Examples

Queen Elizabeth II, Princess Grace of Monaco, Claude Monet, Norman Rockwell, Abraham Lincoln, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, George W. Bush, John F. Kennedy, Jr., General Colin Powell, Walter Cronkite, Carl Jung, Carl Rogers, Joseph Campbell, Walt Disney, Jim Henson (Muppets), Garrison Keillor, Walter Cronkite, Gloria Steinem, Tony Bennett, Ringo Starr, Carlos Santana, James Taylor, Janet Jackson, Jack Johnson, George Lucas, Ron Howard, Gary Cooper, Jimmy Stewart, Audrey Hepburn, Sophia Loren, Kevin

Costner, Annette Bening, Jeff Bridges, Morgan Freeman, John Goodman, Matthew Broderick, Whoopie Goldberg, Woody Harrelson, Geena Davis, Jason Segel, Lisa Kudrow, Toby McGuire, Zooey Deschanel, "Mister Rogers," "Homer and Marge Simpson"