

Law of Three & the Enneagram Points

The Law of Three conceptualizes a new line of action – a third force – that allows two contradictory things that are causing an impasse, to come together in a whole new way. Our inner work is learning how to identify the two forces – the two lines of action, and then see that something is missing and out of balance, in order that a more expansive and enlightened nature can occur – a third force. The Law of Three is a means to be able to step back from what is going on and see from a larger perspective, instead of standing too close and identifying too tightly with what is happening.

The three forces or lines of action are called *affirming*, *denying*, and *reconciling*. The **affirming** force is a pushing force that initiates the action and carries the forward motion. The **denying** force resists or pushes back on the affirming force. The **reconciling** force allows the affirming force and the denying force that are going in opposite directions to come together.

One of the challenges is to see the affirming and denying forces without judgement of whether they are good or bad or positive or negative. What one person may deem as positive, another may deem as negative. For example, one person may see the affirming force in a given situation as staying quiet and more reserved, while another person may see the affirming force in the same situation as stepping out into the group in a more assertive and vocal manner.

The goal is the capacity for receptive, witnessing presence that can step back and see the bigger picture moment to moment, instead of being stuck in our fixations and reacting with old, habitual patterns of behavior.



The true purpose of the Enneagram is the realization and cultivation of presence.

~ Russ Hudson

What each type may need to support their inner witness –

Eights needs to know that the power of the Law of Three is not in power itself, but it's in patience and timing – trusting the timing in the process. We can't bully or force our way through any process.

Nines needs to know that the three forces, or lines of action, are separate forces. They are not blended together and are not a synthesis. They are woven together. Each line of action has distinct qualities and needs to be felt and experienced and held individually within our strong inner identity.

Ones need to be aware that the new arising third force is not the same thing as the affirming first force. They need to not assume that the affirming first force is simply a validation of their own idealization of what they think should happen in the given situation. The new arising as a result of the reconciling force will be related to both the affirming force *and* the denying force, but also totally different from them.

Twos genuinely want to help, and they need to realize that all three of the forces working together are a genuine means of helping; instead of assuming what they believe to be helpful really is helpful.

Threes need to be still and internally present in their own inner being in order to perceive the third force; instead of focusing on what is going on around them externally and getting caught up in outward doing.

Fours need to trust in the dynamic, practical, forward-moving process of these forces, instead of going off onto the mountaintop alone to mull over and dwell in their feelings.

Fives need to remember that these forces are lines of action, not lines of theory to just contemplate.

Sixes needs to know that the Law of Three is inherently about uncertainty; that any outcome is unpredictable, that they can't control it or prepare for it, and to trust that everything will in all probability turn out for their best good in the long run.

Sevens needs to know that any outcome cannot be planned, to allow the forces to flow, and to trust the natural rhythm of the process, which will undoubtedly end up changing any preconceived plan anyway.

As we grow in awareness on our spiritual journey, we come to understand and experience that we all have aspects of all nine types within us, and thus each type's support is support for each of us. We come to reconcile our body and head and heart Centers. Cynthia Bourgeault says, ultimately we grow up into our **heart**, no matter our type.