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The Ancient Spiritual Origins of the Enneagram as a Path for Self-Discovery & Wholeness

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Hudson studied Gurdjieff and how the Centers work together and integrate into a coherent unity. Gurdjieff's work is about presence; how to get back into the here and now. The initial inquiry is about asking what is happening when I'm not here and now. It's a tool for looking at spiritual and psychological practice.

5:15

Types are *not* our identity. They are better understood as our dominant coping mechanisms, along with the backup systems of lines and triads.

Our underlying essences are where our underlying issues are, which is why it's difficult to get in touch with either. So the more in touch we get with our underlying issues, the more in touch we can get with our essence. Today we're being given the opportunity to really take a deeper dive, and I think a lot of people are realizing that.

8:00

A lot of the enneagram history goes back to ancient history in Egypt, which made its way into philosophy and religions. In the beginning the monastics were not looking at types. They were looking at them as challenges to prayer and contemplation; the ways we go off track. They also observed that when we see the tendency that throws us off, and we get back on track, that that return restores something in us, restores a kind of spiritual gift. These teachings were coming about at the end of the Roman Empire when it was splitting into Eastern and Western, and people were starting to focus on the inner life as a way of helping them deal with the uncertainties of the time they were living in. We're in a similar situation now in which a lot of our basic assumptions about how life should work are being put to the test to find answers to the many challenges that we are faced with. We're seeing that the way we handle things on the personality level are not going to be sufficient to deal with the challenges that are part of our journey these days, right now.

11:15

There are several groups of 3 and the most basic are the **Centers**

- Body intelligence – our kinesthetic awareness
- Heart intelligence – our sensitivity and capacity to hold experience
- Mind intelligence – our place of knowing and creative realization

8 – Our capacity through our body and journey toward aliveness, realness, immediacy, empowerment
Devolves into toughness, dominating, bossy-ness

9 – Our capacity to get landed, settled and home to ourselves here and now, to reconnect with the world and reality
Devolves into zoning out into our own little world without the world getting to us

1 – Our capacity for integrity, alignment, our Goodness and sense of sacredness of life and reality
Devolves into rigidity and tightness, the need to be a certain way; we're right and everyone else is wrong

2 – Our capacity for heart connection, tenderness, responsiveness to needs and suffering in ourselves and others, how we hold and care for others
Devolves into codependence, sentimentality, manipulation; because we need to be needed

3 – Our capacity through our heart to find our sense of purpose and meaning, the sense of value and preciousness of our existence
Devolves into doing a lot of stuff to make myself feel valuable and that my life is significant

4 – Our capacity for the mystery, beauty and depth of who we actually are, our true identity; we know who we are by *being* who we are
Devolves into needing to be different, unique and introspective; fussing over my internal states and feelings all the time, and feeling alienated in the process.

5 – Our capacity through our mind to recognize Truth and to know what is real and to arrive at new discoveries about ourselves and our world
Devolves into memorization and retaining data

6 – Our capacity for attentiveness, awareness, noticing what's in and around me, the inner guidance about how to interact with and navigate what's happening right now, spontaneously knowing what to do
Devolves into freaking out and trying to figure it all out and handle the problem, which gets us into quite a pretzel

7 – Our capacity for open-mindedness, curiosity and exploration, a quiet satisfaction in knowing how the universe and I operate, joy in discovery, how we learn from experience
Devolves into being scattered into too many things, restlessness, dissatisfaction in not being able to linger long enough

When we start being aware and exploring when we are devolving, we come home to ourselves. We need to learn all these lessons, not just one. There's a tendency to the way they all unfold and unpack. They are life journeys and life lessons – things that we just need to be *aware* of in ourselves in order to have a complete and whole satisfying life of service and awakesness and compassion.

17:20

There's a distinction between the deeper real capacity and the way our ego or personality tries to tell us what our real capacity is and tries to imitate our real capacity.

21:30

How does our gift deepen our sense of purpose? How do we move to integrate the whole spectrum as part of a well-lived life?

We learn by *experiencing* it, experiencing our gifts. One of the ways of looking at this comes from Jewish Mysticism, from the holy Kabbalah and the idea that all of our souls emanate from different spheres or world of divine consciousness. The idea was that if you could become aware of what world your soul emanated from, it would give you all kinds of wisdom about how to live a good, righteous life. It would tell you about your purpose. So while the enneagram tells us our favorite way of coping and screwing up our lives, when we can see through that, the enneagram is also the road back to a deeper sense of our purpose. All spiritualities teach about our gifts and spiritual core. We also learn in process about the other 8 gifts [along with our own type] that lends support to us. It's a real living and organic process.

24:30

Gurdjieff taught first in Russia and then western Europe in Paris, New York City and other cities around the world. He taught about the Centers and the Fourth Way. To be called to the spiritual life and be of service, you tended to have to go a rigorous training and approach and dedication to a transformative practice, which were developed around the Centers.

- Body – working on the body through asceticism, both in the East and the West; fasting, sitting in a cave in order to overcome your instincts – no material comfort, abstinence from sex, and no social recognition or support, all requiring a retreat from life
- Heart – the way of devotion, eg Christian and Sufi; going from emotional attachments to pure love and compassion, usually developed through a love of a sacred image, icon, guru or divine figure; generally it's a monastic path that retreats from life
- Mind – the way of the Quiet Mind, Gurdjieff called it the way of the Yogi; where you do practices and stillness until you can get your mental chatter to simmer down and then knowing arises; Buddhism and meditation paths; for a period of life to get away from the distractions of life

The Fourth Way was working on all three Centers at the same time and also working in life. It requires to be good at living, making a living, running a business and having good relationships, to take care of things. The Fourth Way had to be

taken with the same sense of purpose and dedication as if we were joining a monastery. Instead we're in life, working with all Centers, so it requires a more precise knowledge and understanding.

Some spiritual practices are simple, like reciting a mantra or prayer, and after awhile you get results. The enneagram is more of a choreography and support in working with all of our Centers while we're in life, for the development of our consciousness.

30:00

The last part is the most interesting. Gurdjieff said the Fourth Way appeared to help humanity when we needed to make transitions, when there was some crossing that was necessary for our civilization to continue. It was brought into the world to help us in these transitional times. The enneagram as part of the body of teachings of the Fourth Way is a signal that we are in a time of great transition. Many of us know that we are living in a pivotal time, and the enneagram is one of the teachings that are emerging in the world to help us learn another way of showing up for each other, loving each other, and figuring out together how we're going to meet the challenges of this time and the huge changes that are upon us as a whole global civilization.

32:00

The capacity to see the world through difference lenses is at the heart of harmonization. The whole philosophical framework of the enneagram is given in the symbol itself which has to do with the idea of *trinity*. You can start to think in a *trinary* way, in three's, instead of getting stuck in the *binary* thinking of yes/no, right/wrong, good/bad, republican/democrat, white/black, man/woman. To be sure, we have these polarities which do have a certain existence. But if that's all we see, then there's no where to go. The enneagram is teaching us that through presence, we come to realize a third element – which is not a compromise. It is a creative possibility that we can't see when we're locked into seeing only right and wrong, or yes and no. **The deeper enneagram teaching is more about reformatting the way we think, the way we land in ourselves, and the way our heart operates.**

34:05

People are learning about themselves, but some of us having gotten the basics are asking the question, what is it for, what's it in service of? It's important that at least some of us understand there is a much deeper context, a much more traditional, grounded, time-tested orientation of the enneagram material that has the capacity to not just give us a tool for handling people but to transform our sense of ourselves and our relationships. It doesn't happen overnight, it's not a quick thing. It becomes an invitation to a time-honored spiritual path; not a path of transcendence or avoidance or renunciation. **It's a path of how to bring spiritual awareness and service into this world as we walk through it.**

32:53

There are a lot of interesting polarities and triadic relationships we can use for how to can handle conflicts and being stuck. There's always a third point of view, an us-ness of our me-and-you relationships that starts to inform us in a new way.

Two parts of putting this into practice: At first, we don't understand that there are aspects of us that can pick a different path. At first, our habits are more powerful than the part of us that can pick something new. So there's practice we do to strengthen our capacity to see other possibilities, and that works from developing our body intelligence, our heart intelligence and our cognitive intelligence, and also practicing *presence* so they can start working together and align and function more as a unity. That takes time and is central in all spiritual traditions. The mystical roots of any tradition emphasize some kind of practice to do this.

The second part is from that new platform of a more balanced, grounded body, kind heart and curious sense of self, we can begin to see the patterns we take to be reality. We assume we're being objective and telling it like it is; but we're really telling it only one-ninth of what it is. Our perspective isn't wrong – it's just limited. And it isn't just what the other person's perspective is either. No one knows what is needed.

39:08

The ego is like a dancer that's only learned one dance so whatever the band is playing, it just does that one dance. With presence, there's a way in which our vocabulary and our repertoire of responses expands as we grow, which takes a lifetime to do. At the same time as we're getting more skilled at seeing what we're just assuming to be true, we're also seeing what captures our attention, what is the habitual way we tend to approach relationships or problems or creativity. We're learning to paint with a lot more colors. It takes seeing habit and also cultivating the part of us that isn't habit.