

	SP	SX	SO
Zone 1	Health, energy (conservation of), environment	Arousal	Reading people & situations
Zone 2	Practicality, maintenance of life or practical wisdom	Attraction	Creating & maintaining bond or connections
Zone 3	Domesticity	Fusion	Contributions and participation

One way we enter into aliveness is through the Instincts. Subtype has nothing to do with it. **Instincts are energetic elements and intelligence connected with our aliveness that have very particular categories of sensations in our body.** There's a way that SP feels in the body. There's a way that SX feels in the body. There's a way that our connection with life (SO) feels in the body. SP and SX are more explicitly related to body needs and imperatives [eg, thirst is a command to drink]. Social (SO) is too but it tends to be more wrapped up in psychological stuff; eg, not wanting to be abandoned.

To awaken in the body is to begin to feel that we are part of the fabric of life, part of this planet, part of a natural order. And within that, everything is reciprocal. Everything is feeding everything else. Life exists because of mutual feeding. Everything that is alive will both feed and become food, without exception, including you and me. That's how life operates. Life metabolizes life. And in that it takes different forms and expressions and evolves – which is mind blowing. You start to experience through presence in the body, this vivid sense of participating in the ongoing activity of life. It takes a lot of practice. ~Russ Hudson, GR11

Enneagram **Instincts** - Catherine Bell Interviews Russ **Hudson** on the Instincts and Zones – April 10, 2020
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VEzGu1cBBao&t=5s>
 8/3/2020

Our primal drives have to do with our decisions. We have an animal nature; evolutionary survival instincts. Our less than desirable traits are intertwined with our instincts and when we misbehave, it's usually through the filter of one of the instincts. **They aren't subtypes.** They are instincts on a gut/body level. You find them somatically. They are sensations which can help us be present when we pay attention to them.

SP

Take a deep breath. Listen to your body. What is the sensation about needing food or water? My body knows – I don't have to think about it. I get instant feedback. When we are present and listening to our body, we get constant feedback which our personality can override by ignoring it or by getting freaked out about it coming from our history. Take a moment to check in with your body, no matter the dominant instinct. Learning to listen to that is a corrective no matter where it sits in your psychological being. Notice how paying attention to your body gets you more grounded and less fear-based. Feeling hungry is different than thinking about the fear of being hungry.

SX

The sexual is what I call the attraction instinct. One-on-one is misleading. It's *not* about intimacy or connection. It's about the state of **excitation, an activation of our nervous system.** How turned on I am – which goes beyond sexuality, but it definitely includes sexuality. So we look at this in terms of sensation. There a kind of electrical, stimulating energy. Some people's battery has more or less of a charge. It can be felt anywhere in the body; hands, feet, spine. Check in and feel the energy that flows around – it feels like pure energy, a tingle that can feel like a charge by a battery, no matter how faint.

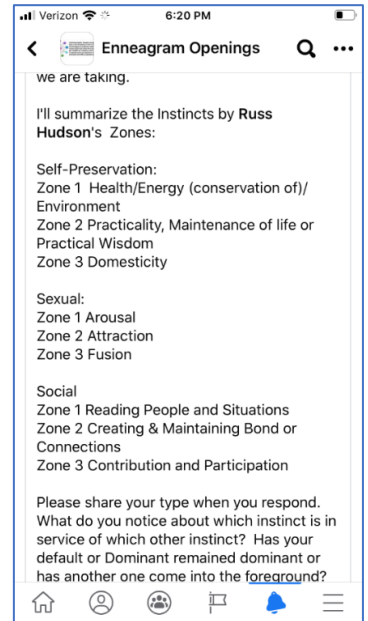
SO

The social instinct is what I also call the **adaptative instinctive.** It's about **how we sense what's in and around us.** It's not just messages *from* the body. It's messages I receive *through* my body about the quality of what's around me. I can also sense, as I relax, how my energy system is participating in what's around me, humans or animals. My body knows something about the relatedness about who or whatever is around me, or if no one is around me. I can feel that as a category of sensations. It's a little harder to describe this one. I can notice how closed or open I am. Sometimes I feel more shut down in relation to the environment. Generally as I relax there's a sensation that I extend out past my physical boundaries, and I'm sensing a bigger field where I'm taking in what is around me and in me.

If you put all three of these Instincts together, that's a good indication that you are somewhat grounded in your body. It's about being aware of the many different layers of **body intelligence as a grounding in the here and now.** We can come back to our instincts at any time – which can tell us what we need and what we are ignoring and what we're scared about.

All the instincts in their pure form are helpful and necessary. And whatever your psychological arrangement might be, **you have all three.** Nobody is missing any instinct. They may get expressed in different ways given our history and culture, our gender, all kinds of things. Everybody has all three, just like everybody has all three **Centers.**

If we are present, our instincts just do what they are supposed to do. **Self-preservation (SP)** tells me I am tired and need rest. When we're running our personality, our type distorts our instincts in particular ways, and then fear runs the instincts instead of the instinct doing what it's supposed to be doing. For example, there's a big difference between noticing that I need food and feeling freaked out that I'm starving and constantly eating. I might overeat because my anxiety about survival doesn't deactivate, and I eat more food than I actually need to



because I'm not listening to my instinct. That's ego stuff stepping into the self-pres instinctual domain and distorting it.

So when we're in a time like we're in now [the Covid pandemic], SP anxieties are going to come up. Do we have all the supplies we need, like toilet paper! When these things get activated, the energy gets intense and floods our consciousness. And it doesn't help to shame ourselves or others about it – we already have enough shame! We have a lot of ego issues, and when they get provoked and activated, they are non-negotiable because they *feel* like life or death.

We all need to have self-pres right now. We need to social distance and wear masks and be mindful of a lot of things that threaten our survival. We can have courage and also be scared and freaked out, which doesn't enhance your survival odds. You might have all the supplies you need and still feel too anxious and die of a heart attack because we don't have a reliable read of the situation.

There are people in the healthcare professions who – out of their social instinct – are putting themselves in harm's way in order to help people who are sick. We hope these people on the frontlines are also being scrupulous about their self-pres. One thing about this virus is it's training us that nature doesn't care about our privilege, our address, our religion. We need to be mindful and in conscious connection with ourself and our self-pres instinct – which will help more of us get through this. Self-pres teaches us – beyond basic self-care – that self-care is really foundational if we're going to be there for others. If I get sick, I can't help you so this is a really interesting time to study the self-pres instinct; to get familiar with my trip-wires around it.

Some people have the SP as their dominant instinct so they are going to be prone to having more anxieties about it or lead with SP first. When it's your dominant it doesn't mean you don't think about the others; it just means you think about that one first. It's your first priority. There are clusters of self-care: food, sleep, time, energy, money, conscious management of your resources. Our assumptions during this time of crisis may be shaken so we want to be centered and grounded in order for our balanced mind and heart can come up with way better solutions than getting freaked out about all this stuff. And, yes, we'll get freak out sometimes! But we want to learn the way back home more quickly when that happens.

When we don't think about an instinct, it can be the blind spot or repressed instinct; it's something I have neglected most of my life. People with low SP tend to not have a lot of regularity in their life. Living in close quarters with others during the pandemic requires more scheduling and regularity. So from SP, we may have rigidity about some of our self-care habits that we have to alter – that's social (SO) helping SP.

The question is *not* which instinct am I; that's a bogus question that doesn't help you develop. What helps you develop is asking what is my relationship to self-pres, what are my habits? Where am I clear and clean, and where am I neurotic about it, being too rigid or too lax or even neglecting it?

Another zone of SP is being at home, domesticity, and liking being at home and making your home nice. SP can help us make

it a pleasant experience and make it work with other people in the house too, allowing this time to be a time of gestation and growth rather than imprisonment.

The second instinct is **sexual (SX)**. The challenge is living in a society where we can't talk openly and honestly about it. It's still sort of taboo to go into talking about sexuality. What we're doing with sexuality during this time [the pandemic] is an interesting question. Some of us are already in partnerships, and there could be stresses during which we can't get away from each other. There can be stresses in terms of exaggerated expectations and terms of neglect.

Sexuality is about attraction and repulsion, what we're repelled by, what draws us, like magnetism. And it has to do with not just sexual partners. It has to do with anything that turns us on, what gets us juice flowing.

There're a couple of problems I see during this pandemic. If you've been running on a certain kind of momentum and now that's broken, for a lot of people there is this deep question of what do I want with my time and attention – I can only binge so many Netflix series. What do I do with my energy and time, what gets my mojo working? If you don't have anything, we tend to get depressed and feel flat. If we don't have something that stimulates and activates us, our spirits get really down so.

The other side of it is, in ordinary circumstances, the main distortion I see for the sexual instinct is it tends to turn into **narcissism**. We tend to not be attracted to what's good for us. We tend to get attracted to what *isn't* good for us – to what is psychologists call a repetition compulsion. I'll keep dating the same jerk over and over again. I keep falling for the same nonsense. I keep being attracted to things that are often not good for me. It's like a little devilish pull. It isn't about comfort – that's more self-pres. Comforting ourselves is self-pres. These other attractions are little naughty rewards and things that we do to sort of get our energy going. You can notice when you're doing that in a way it serves your aliveness, your energy, you're your spiritual fire, and when you're doing something that's actually just screwing around.

We all want to be entertained and preoccupied and energized all the time. That's one end of it. The other is we resist – which is where it's our blind spot. And that could be very problematic. One thing I noticed when people have some kind of resistance or difficulty with the sexual instinct is that they tend to have *excessive* responsibility. They tend to think other people can have fun, other people can have creativity, other people can do this and that, but I have to hold the world together. There's a temptation during this time of Covid to really take that role on excessively, and it will be at great cost to your soul.

If you need to work on your sexual instinct, it doesn't mean you need to have more sex necessarily or have an affair. It means doing something out-of-the-box, doing something to break up your routine. Doing something that brings fresh aliveness, to remember that activating, stimulating energy. Pay attention to what brings that forward and what diminishes it. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. We're all different that way and the way I find that may be not how you find it. We don't get it by copying what somebody else does it. We have to find what's

stimulating and awakening and livening for myself. And the hunt for that is kind of fun too. What's the juicy thing I'm going to find today? Our attitude toward our day, and how we're living can be a good use of this, as opposed to just falling for these little devils that sit and wait. Sometimes that devil can look like staying up too late watching movies or TV shows or eating the third cupcake. We're all different that way.

That energy can also be in our emotions – what awakens us physically, but also stimulates us emotionally and what stimulates our mind, keeps awake and interested, and keeps us from turning into dull and boring. This is a time where we can read, study and learn new things. That's kind of the sexual energy supporting the head center. I'm just thinking of all this on the fly, so you're getting a little bit of me working with that energy as I'm talking.

The third instinct is **social (SO)**. Social instinct is *not* about being part of a group or liking to be in the group. If that were true that will eliminate about 88% of the people who are social instinct dominant. Lots of people social instinct dominant are **introverts**. And, a "group" can be a group of two. It's not about group dynamics, although it does include that but it's not the main thing.

The main thing is awareness of others and caring about them. Scientists can tell you the social instinct began with animals caring for their babies. But most of the animals on the planet don't do that. Creatures hatch, and they're on their own. Whereas some animals take longer to develop, and the adult animals have to have an instinct to stay and protect and attend the babies.

The three zones in the social instinct have to do with reading other people, reading where they're at emotionally, reading faces, reading between the lines, interpreting what people mean when they say something that may not be exactly what they said. There is also reading and recognizing needs. And, the part of creating and building connections. Some people think that is sexual because of the one-on-one stuff. When you say one-on-one, it blurs the social and sexual. **Sexual is not intimacy. Intimacy is from the heart.** Sexual instinct is life energy is mojo. Sexual and intimacy *not* the same.

Social instinct is about connection. It's about making connections and keeping them if they're important, and about participation and contribution. One of the questions that social instinct will ask us is, what can I do? There're a lot of people who need help and support right now during the pandemic. Maybe I don't have medical training, but there's probably some things I could do. Most of us have some kind of resistance to participating or doing things that help others out. Canada does better at this than the United States. But in North America, we are all kind of rugged individualists. We have the idea in our head that we do our own thing. But **we exist to support each other. Reciprocal connection is central for our survival and our existence.** We find that out experientially, and we realize how happy it makes us feel when we're able to be there for somebody, when we're able to do something that's a contribution, whatever it is. We all have different talents, different gifts. And if we're noticing it, the social instinct will help us see ways that we can do something.

The three zones of the sexual instinct are: There is **attraction and being attracted**. Others are attracted to us too, and what we're attracted to beyond just people. It can anything. Next is **exploration**, exploring the edge. What have I not done? What's out there? What's new? It's the energy of getting out of your box. If animals just stay in their burrow, they're not going to find a mate. They've got to get out and put themselves at risk in a sense – have an adventure, have the opportunity to mate in nature. And we're like that too. Humans would not have gotten very far if we had just stayed safe in our caves. We had to go out. The third zone is what it called **merging or fusion** – getting intensely involved in something. I think that's kind of where the one-on-one idea came from.

In terms of the crisis we're in, there's the opportunity to notice and engage our instincts in terms of our practice. Our practice isn't just the practice of helping us get grounded and calmed down, which never hurts, but it can also include coming back to a balance point of all three. But when we're running from our ego and personality, there's no way we can connect our instincts in a balanced way. I need to come back to myself and give a little time to each one of them.

How's my self-pres (**SP**) doing now? – which gives me data about how I'm doing that day. It's a way of checking in that isn't just driving fear about ourselves.

You can also check in with your activation and energy (**SX**) as you're moving through your life each day. What galvanizes you? What attracts you? What raises your energy? What lowers your energy? To be conscious of that doesn't mean you will have high energy all the time, but it means you're conscious and responsible for how you are with your energy.

Then thirdly (**SO**), you're aware that even though you might feel lonely sometimes – which most of us do, you're not alone. You're connected. You're part of all this. And, other people, believe it or not, are probably thinking about you. And, believe it or not, there are people who you're thinking about, and there are things that you can do that help. Everybody likes to know that somebody's got their back, and even in those times where I don't know if anybody's got my back, I could be the one who has somebody else's back. And that ends up being more than fulfilling. This is one of the greatest sources of appreciating our life that we can have. It usually feels pretty yummy when we can be there for somebody who needs us.

These instincts and zones don't exist in separate rooms or boxes. They're in constant dialogue and interconnected – part of the whole web of your survival system. The care workers out there risking their lives to save other people's lives – that's social instinct, but you can bet there's part of them that gets a lot of energy (**SX**) out of that too, or they wouldn't do it. And, hopefully they also are taking care of themselves and taking a lot of precautions and maintaining intelligent protocols (**SP**), which makes them able to stay motivated and energized.

This is all often oversimplified in a way that confuses people. People try to make the enneagram simpler, but then it gets confusing, because it doesn't cover the complexities and nuance of real human beings. The idea is not to find a way to cram yourself into one of these categories. It's not, which one are you,

and then fit yourself into it. These are just distinctions human beings have made for us to start the process of really looking and understanding ourselves; see how we automatically operate in the world. That's what gives us that little window of freedom where we can maybe choose some new behaviors, some growth edges, and that's what it's really for. It's not to just *be a category*. We have all three instincts. The helpful question is, What's my relationship with each one?

When we are present everything kind of spontaneously operates together. Our body, heart and mind are our lenses of these different intelligences, and they function as they need to.

When we're not present, we're lock into habitual patterns that we develop at a young age or that we're born with. Some of them come from our culture, some of them are our own history of difficulty and trauma, and so forth. But when they're locked down, they can't help each other.

The **passion** of the enneagram type distorts the instinct. The enneagram type draws life from the instinctual energy. The type has to get its gas from somewhere, so it gets gas from our life energy. The **instincts are life force**. They're life energy; different kinds, different flavors. So our personality type will have a flavor of the fuel. And at the same time, our emotional needs get distorted. For example, have you ever been in a situation where some relationship was going south, and you thought if he or she doesn't call me, I'll just die! It feels that way. It's a classic example that is a heart, emotional issue and narcissistic – It's a childhood wound issue. You're self-pres instinct is activated. You feel you're going to die if you don't get that phone call! The SP instinct is no longer shared – that's the way personality works. It's conserving the life of the *ego*, not the real life of the *organism*, which is an interactive system.

Q about social instinct and antisocial.

If I'm antisocial, I'm still thinking about social – my attention is still on social. I'm just focused on how I don't want to be around people – that's active. In a sense, I'm avoiding people. That's an active choice of being antisocial. I'm not thinking from my self-pres, and my attention is not on sexual. It's on social, but about what I *don't* like about it.

In the same way, some elements of self pres can be reckless. People who are dominant in self-pres can eat themselves to death or eat a lot of junk food because it makes them comfortable. Or they're not intelligent with their resources like their money. There's a lot of variations on this.

When an instinct is repressed or what I call the **blind spot**, I just don't think about it. My attention is on another instinct altogether. So if I'm socially blind, I'm just thinking about self-pres or sexual. I may notice it if somebody points it out though. And it's not like I'm against it. Let go of the idea that social is about socializing – which it's *not*, and it all gets a lot clearer to see. People who are blind in social have trouble reading people, recognizing needs, interpreting what people really mean when they say something. They have difficulty feeling a sense of participation. They have difficulty maintaining relationships.

No matter which instinct is dominant, we're not going to be good at all three zones. Usually one of the zones need some work.

That's why, for example, you could be self-pres, and good at taking care of your health and having a nice home, but you're not that good with money and resources. Or, you will be working really hard bringing home the bacon, but you don't take care of yourself. Those are both are self-pres.

The difference is if an instinct is a blind spot, my attention is on something else. If I'm anti-social and social dominant, that means that I'm thinking about social stuff all the time. I'm thinking about those kind of issues and maybe I'm angry that I haven't found a way to participate. My attention is on social things, even though I'm having an adverse reaction to them.

Q about SP being easier to spot; if I'm hungry, I will go eat. If I I'm tired, I will rest. Same for social; if I need to connect, I will. But for sexual it's not that easy for me to access. The people who are social dominant might be around a lot of people, but given their difficulties, there isn't a feeling of connection. They could be really gifted at reading situations, but it feels like it's never fulfilled. I know dominant self-pres people who never have enough resources. They're in the 1% of wealthiest people on the planet, and they still never feel secure enough or safe enough, so they just keep working themselves to death. **So it isn't necessarily what the behavior may look like externally – internally it may not feel a lot different. The outside is different than the inside. That's one thing that applies to everything we're learning about the enneagram.**

In terms of the sexual instinct, if we have that amazing conversation, which everybody loves, and you know you've found somebody that you have beautiful chemistry with, you could also have that sexual fusion with beautiful music and with beautiful art and with a lot of different experiences in life.

For social, ask yourself, what raises my energy and the feeling of the richness of my life, and what diminishes that? What brings my energy down? As we pay attention to that we start to find and build a life that has it. **When we're still neglecting our blind spot, whatever it may be, we're never going to feel fulfilled in the dominant.** It's like a bucket with a hole in it, and we keep pouring water into it, and it never fills up. So when we do work on our neglected instinct, it helps us find more satisfaction in our dominant.