



Program: True Spirit of the Enneagram (with bonus *Spiritual Gifts of the Enneagram* by A.H. Almaas)
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INTRODUCTION

Hello everyone, and welcome. We have been looking forward to this for quite some time. Sandra and I have had a lot of fun getting together and looking at what we will be exploring today. The enneagram is fundamentally, originally, about presence. It is about coming back to ourselves.

MEDIATION (Russ)

We are going to kick it off with a period of meditation. We want to start by arriving where we are. The beautiful thing about the body is that the body can only be here and now. The mind can be anywhere. Emotions can be anywhere. If we are trying to collect ourselves, it really behooves us to become aware of the body on a deeper level. We begin by just generally relaxing, finding a place to sit where we can be relaxed, but awake and alert. We are not taking a nap. First just be a little more aware of your breath. Not thinking about it, but sensing it. It can be just in a general way, just noticing sensation. Maybe the sensation of your feet resting on the floor, wherever they might be resting. The sensation of the body resting on the chair, the cushion, the floor, wherever you might be sitting and to stay with that sensation. If you start daydreaming or visualizing or something, no worries. Come back to sensation to the best of your ability. Just keep coming back to the sensation and land in the kath, the belly center. See what happens. You can close your eyes or leave them very slightly open. See what helps you

TALK

Sandra

I just like to say how honored I am to be here with all of you and how much both of us are deeply honored that Hameed Ali, who writes under the name of H.H. Almaas, asked us to teach this course, and bring his new book into a living reality for all the participants of the course that we are about to embark on. So welcome.

Russ

Thank you. We are working within a certain context here. We wanted to kick it off by saying a little bit about how we have come to orient to the enneagram. Certainly, we will be talking about how the enneagram relates to the Diamond Approach and how the Diamond Approach relates to the enneagram actually. One thing that we can notice, no doubt, is that a lot of people are talking about the enneagram these days. There are tons of podcasts and webinars and books and articles and social media pages. Just everyone is yacking about it.

But I think Hameed - as we call them in the school - and the number of us are very interested in making available to a broader range of people interested in enneagram, more of its spiritual roots. Where did it come from? What was it originally for?

If we go back and look at the history of it, which I am not going to go into a lot of detail about right now, what we can say succinctly is that the enneagram was a development within contemplative communities. It arose within spiritual schools and teachings where people were striving to be present. In its original sense, the enneagram was all about what we might call the interface between our ordinary consciousness and the deeper dimensions of what we are as human beings. In the traditional enneagram language, which is shared in the Diamond Approach school, we have personality, and we have essence. A human being is both in some sense. But the idea is that 99% of the time, if we are lucky, we are identified more with the personality, with the egoic manifestations than the deeper roots of essence. They pop through here and there, just by grace, by the fact that they are more real than most of what we have our attention on.

Human beings can learn to locate their sense of themselves in this deeper reality, this essential reality. It is not exactly that we are trying to banish or get rid of the personality, but in meeting it with presence, compassion, groundedness, it takes its proper place. The idea is not to get rid of the ego or the personality but have it take its proper place to function in the way it can, in the way it can support us. The enneagram is very explicitly about that interface interestingly. I know Sandra is going to talk about this. This was a lot of the genius of what Hameed Ali brought to the world through his spiritual explorations. There are very precise and amazing connections between the deeper dimensions of our being, our essential nature our true nature and what manifests in our day-to-day egoic consciousness. There are connections.

So, the enneagram, in its original sense, was a really cool way to begin to explore the nature of those connections, which is what we will be looking at. I would say that the personality is very interesting. People love to learn about the personality. Everybody wants to have a good description of their personality and we get more and more and more elaborate with how we do that, which is okay. But I just want to suggest that at some point it becomes dissatisfying. It leads to a certain kind of dead end. If we do not understand this deeper dimension of the enneagram and indeed of ourselves, we are going to just get frustrated and bored and wander off to something else.

The idea here that we want to present to you is how the enneagram is a tool for exploring our deeper nature and seeing its relationship with our personality structures, but also how brilliantly the work of Hameed Ali, Almaas, has been in exactly that, and why the two can work very, very well together, which is what Hameed is offering in his book *Keys to the Enneagram*. Maybe, Sandra, you might talk more about how Hameed's work fits with this and how it relates to the enneagram.

Sandra

The thing that Hameed and I were both taught, we learnt the enneagram in the first SAT group that Claudio Naranjo led. For those unfamiliar with the name, he is really the father of what has become popularized as the enneagram of the personality. Most of the significant teachers in the world who teach the enneagram, their work is derived from his work. He, in turn, studied with Oscar Ichazo. Because Claudio was a psychiatrist, he embellished sort of the skeletal model that Ichazo had with his

understanding of various psychological dynamics and really fleshed it out. It became a true map of the personality or ego structure.

In the group with Claudia, we worked with it as a tool, not as an end in and of itself, not to know more about our psychology and our personality structure but only to do that as a means to discover what lies beyond our ego structure. From what I know what was imparted to me by Claudio that is the true function of the enneagram. As Russ was saying it is not about developing a stronger egoic identity with lots of concepts and labels about who and what you are but actually to get out of that enclosure within ourselves which, at a certain point, many of us find to be incredibly confining. We want to know more about who and what we are and that is really the beginning of an inner journey for people.

The innovations that Hameed made in the work of the enneagram are pretty staggering. He is quite a quite a unique individual and I am very grateful to know him in this life. He discovered that qualities of the divine that we call Being or True Nature, the various qualities of True Nature, the various ways it shows up are characterized by a sense of presence. There is a heft to them. There is a substantiality. When we talk about nondual reality what Hameed discovered and felt in his own interior experience, is those nondual experiences have a kind of substance to them. He also realized that presence, True Nature, has a presence that we call heft presence. The presence of True Nature differentiates into many different faces and colors many of which are commonplace in everyday human life which is really where the divine interfaces with ordinary egoic reality.

The experiences that we have of compassion, of people doing things that are altruistic, going beyond themselves, situations of like superhuman strength that is needed, for instance, for a mother to get her child out of a very dangerous situation, the capacity to persevere at something that is really challenging, Hameed discovered these are all different ways presence manifests. He also saw that the absence of contact with all of the different qualities of essence of presence show up in our psychology as very obvious, very characteristic issues that are universal to all human beings to the extent that they are disconnected from Being. Because of his background with the enneagram, he also saw that there is a direct relationship between these qualities of presence and each of the enneagram types which is to say, and this is really the understanding that is explicated in *Keys to the Enneagram*, that each of the enneagram types and their behavioral, emotional, psychological patterns correspond to a particular quality of presence that they are trying to emulate, trying to get, trying to capture through certain behaviors.

A quick example of that, for instance, I use the example of strength. One of the enneagram types is very determined to be strong no matter what, not to be vulnerable, not to show weakness. It is really an attempt, if we scratch under the surface of that personality structure, to reconnect with a sense of inner vitality, aliveness, a sense of to do, can do sense. Instead of it being something that is put on as it were, that is focused upon as an end rather it is just something that is a given. As we see in the *Keys to the Enneagram* each of the nine types has one particular quality of True Nature whose facsimile is elaborated in how the enneagram type functions.

Hameed calls his book *Keys to the Enneagram* because if we really can penetrate with our understanding - by understanding I mean just experiential understanding, not just mental, cognitive understanding - what it is that are problematic behavioral styles and ways of being are attempting to capture, attempting to emulate, then we begin to open the door to experiencing directly the quality of True Nature that each of the enneagram types is so associated with. In a nutshell, that is the focus of our course. We are hoping to give each participant the opportunity to discover all of the types within themselves because they are all different cornerstones of the ego or personality. We have them all. One is more highlighted. We are giving participants the opportunity to discover what all of the enneagram types are emulating, are trying to be and then, through the various exercises that will take you through, to get in touch with what that true quality is and what the direct experience of it is like.

Really in this way Hameed is bridging the realm of the Diamond Approach and the realm of the enneagram. It is a very revolutionary bridging from my perspective because the two streams have never been as fully integrated as I am seeing them integrated in this book.

Hameed's other book that many of you may be familiar with about the enneagram, *Facets of Unity*, talks about the nine enlightened views of each of the enneagram types the loss of which leads to the development of each of the enneagram types. This book and this course bring things down to a much more practical ongoing understanding of how these dynamics function in us in our ordinary daily life. Do you want to add anything, Russ?

Russ

I could add how I came upon the Diamond Approach and how important it was to me. I think it would be interesting for people to know that I got interested in the enneagram originally back in the 1970s, but not the typology, which was not really known at that point except to a few people. I was more interested in the Gurdjieff work. I studied under people in the Gurdjieff work who lived with Gurdjieff. So, it was not like by post office. I got the direct transmission, and it was very helpful.

We learned about the centers, which is important in the enneagram work. We learned about being asleep and what it might mean to awaken. We learned about a lot of things that are crucial to the understanding of the enneagram. I was in that work for fifteen years when I encountered Hameed. As Sandra was just saying, I had been studying the enneagram by that point when I met Don Richard Riso who had begun to work on describing the personality types. Don had been working on that also since the 1970s.

When I encountered Hameed's brilliant exploration and explication of these different dimensions and qualities of presence and essence, it was a mind-blowing revelation. So important to me. In most spiritual traditions there is a favorite quality. This is the correct thing. This is what enlightenment looks like. If you get this experience that is the experience. But what Hameed noticed is that as we become more transparent within ourselves, the deeper nature of what we are, what in the Diamond Approach we call True Nature, is liberated to express whatever needs to get expressed, to bring forth whatever needs to be brought forth. I might be trying to dial up one kind of quality of presence, but actually what my consciousness, my soul, needs in that moment could be something else.

We learn to trust that there is a deeper unfolding of these qualities. From that point of view the enneagram is about getting out of the box of how we limit are availability to the dance of reality.

I found the Diamond Approach and Hameed's teachings, and my wonderful colleagues and friends in the school to be a magnificent way of working on just that. I am kind of famous for a smart-alecky thing I said years ago, which is the enneagram does not put you in a box. It shows you the box you are already in without realizing it and how to get out of it. In a sense, obviously, what we are going to be doing in the course is using the wonderful perspective and practices of the Diamond Approach and the things that Hameed has written in *Keys to the Enneagram* as a guide to how we can all do that individually and collectively. We do not have the luxury of a ton of time anymore. Our capacity to show up, to really be able to follow our compassion, our ability to really meet each other on another basis than just our polarizing ego patterns is pretty important right now, and I suspect it will be even more so in the not-too-distant future. There is a kind of - I do not want to say exactly urgency - but like if not now when. I am really serious about this. Let us get on with it.

That is also part of my joy in doing this journey with Sandra with the support of Hameed and Karen and the school. It is time for us to really apply ourselves to understanding that there may be other boxes beyond our own individual one that needs to be explored and let go of.

Sandra

I want to second what you are saying Russ. I was watching the news last night and a lot of it was the catastrophes happening, different sorts of catastrophes all over the planet. Environmental catastrophes, catastrophes happening with people and starvation and so on. It is a very, very interesting and challenging time that we are living through. I know that the motivation for both Russ and I in doing this course and, of course, in doing everything else that we do as teachers is to really support the whole of humanity to open up, to get out of their individual boxes as Russ was calling, the containment that keeps us operating in ways that are harmful to ourselves and to others and to the planet. There is not a lot of time. It is important and it is important now. It is a very, very unusual time. I think we have never gone through this kind of passage in human history. We are hoping that this course will provide a support and the community of like-minded people to open up, to become everything that you can possibly be as a human being.

For myself, spiritual work has been part of my journey since I was twenty-one years old. I was twenty-two when I met Claudio and began working in his SAT group in 1971. It is where I met Hameed and Karen. Karen and I were roommates in art school at the time. That has been what my life has been devoted to. It has been devoted to inner work, spiritual work, work on moving beyond the box. I feel very fortunate to have come across the tools that Hameed, who was simply a friend and a colleague back in those days, discovered. They were downloaded to him, and they are really quite revolutionary in spiritual technology. The ancient forms of spiritual work were all about transcending the layer that the enneagram of personality describes as finding a way to you get out of it, above it, beyond it, into the nondual reality of Being. I had been around the block by the time I was in my mid-thirties, and I saw and knew that what he was developing was absolutely revolutionary in spiritual work because it was teaching about a way through.



He developed a method, helping people move through their ego structure instead of simply going beyond it or around it or above it. That is an incredible contribution.

For me personally, I had learnt the enneagram inside out and backwards with Claudio. We spent all of our time exploring it, exploring each other, giving each other feedback and so forth. By the end of the time that I worked with him, I was deep in a sense of emptiness and deficiency which is at the core of every single ego type. I tried to meditate my way above it. I spent two years in a meditation center, and it did not work. It was only when Karen did a little piece of inquiry with me one day when I got home that I moved through it. It was like I knew this is amazing. I also knew that this is what I wanted to be able to teach other people because it is just so incredibly important for all of us.

I just want to say personally I am very pleased to be co-leading with Russ. We have never taught together before. His background is very much a Gurdjieffian one which has been very, very interesting for me to find out more about. I think it is going to be a great adventure for us and for those of you who decide to join us. I suspect we are going to have some amazing times and a lot of fun along the way. Laughter and tears when there is real work going on.

Russ

Some of the things I feel moved to say, from what you are saying Sandra are a couple of things that I carried over from the Gurdjieff work because I saw them further articulated in the work that Hameed was doing. One of them is this idea of the fourth way. The enneagram, Gurdjieff described it as the seal and symbol of the fourth way. In various conversations I have had with Hameed and in meetings and in writing we have done, he said pretty explicitly that this school, the Diamond Approach Ridhwan school is a fourth way school. What does that mean? Well, in the way Gurdjieff explained it over a hundred years ago, the ways have to do with the awakening of the centers. The first way is the way of the body where we overcome our instinctual drives: celibacy, asceticism, embracing discomfort. Just like if you go to India, you can still see Fakirs doing stuff that you and I probably would not only not choose to do, but would have great difficulty doing. This has been around since the dawn of civilization, people working to overcome the body and its tendencies.

The second way is the way of the heart, which is like Bhakti or Yoga or devotional paths. Many elements in some parts of Sufism or Christianity have a lot to do with devotion and the transformation of the heart. The third way is the quieting of the mind, clarifying the mind. Zen and some of the Buddhist traditions might be good examples of that. These traditional ways were always around but they tend to require, if not a fully monastic life, some sort of retirement from full participation in the ways of the world. He said the fourth way was unique in that it works with all three centers simultaneously, which we do, and which requires a more refined understanding. Tools like the teachings of the Diamond Approach and the enneagram do bring that more precise understanding. However, the fourth way is always done within culture, in everyday life. There are no robes, no special uniform, you do not have to shave your head or grow a beard or anything. You just are in your community because the fourth way is about something Sandra touched on.



One of the impulses of the Western spiritual tradition is the manifestation of True Nature in the world. In working through the structures of our personality, which has been the genius of the work that Hameed did, we are given more capacity to do that where our spirituality is not having vacations in nondual states and then coming back to be a maniac again. To find a way to embody our essential nature in our relationships, in our workplace, as we are stuck in traffic on the highway, as we are facing distressing news. It is really about this inner work in life. This is not a spacy kind of spirituality. This is embodied in the world, bringing the depth of our nature into the world. The two are not exactly two things anymore. They are integrated parts of a whole.

The other element that comes to mind is an idea of the original teaching of the enneagram from something called the Law of Seven, which is that things do not develop in a line. There are nonlinear shifts in our development. Certainly, you can probably see that in your own journey. You are going along. You are doing your practice and then something big happens internally or externally. You are in a different game. In the Gurdjieff work, we call this the shock point. Like you are doing it and then something else comes in and opens it up. Another possibility appears. I can tell you when I encountered the Gurdjieff work way back in the 1970s that was a shock point. It was a big shift. Suddenly I was not just reading books or doing a little Zen practice or something. I had a path and it really informed me.

I must tell you that another huge shock in my life was meeting Hameed. When I met him, and the impact of his being, of his embodying the very things he was talking about and then receiving the teachings was a big shock. It changed everything. Different journey, I mean I thought I was going to be a rock musician but, I am sure you know reality has other plans once we get touched by this impulse. Something else wakes up in us and we see a different picture. I just wanted to offer you this perhaps interesting little background about the enneagram. But the reason I am saying it is my sincere wish that this course will be a shock point for many of us in it, and for the future of the enneagram field and what it can be as a force in the world. That is what I am hoping. We can co-create in our time together.

Sandra

Beautiful, beautiful. I thought I would say a couple of words about how the course is structured. The course is going to take place on a Saturday and Sunday I think in most time zones for about three and a half to four hours, once a month, for the next eleven months. In that time, we will be doing meditation, which hopefully will be deepening and help you to really develop a meditation practice. We will teach through lectures exploring the material. One of the main things is that there will be interactive exercises, personal explorations that you will do with each other. This really will help you to make the material that you will be hearing about your own, finding it within your own soul, your own living consciousness. Learning about the practice of what we call inquiry in the Diamond Approach helps us to navigate through whatever is going on with us in such a way that it opens up and reveals something deeper. We are going to be teaching you inquiry, how to inquire.

In the course, of course, we are going to be inquiring into specific things at each meeting, but in the course of learning how to do that, you will be developing a capacity and a tool that you can use in the rest of your life as a way of personal exploration either by yourself or with others. We are also going to have periods of questions and comments in which you can ask Russ and I about anything that we have been



teaching about, any personal support that you need. Whatever is there for you as you are sitting with us. If you cannot make a particular weekend, the course will be recorded and you can make it up. You can do the exercises on your own or with others who perhaps have missed the weekend or others you know who are also taking the course.

One of the things that I have discovered in being involved in the Diamond Approach for - I hate to tell you how long it has been - almost forty years is that it never hurts to explore the same material twice because you will always learn more about it. The understanding that we are going to be teaching and hopefully opening up and making available for you in your direct experience is vast. It is limitless. The understanding that you can glean from it has no edges, has no stopping point. Another thing I wanted to say about my work with the enneagram, which I have been working with now for fifty-two/fifty-three years, there has not been a day that has gone by in my life when I have not had an insight about my own enneagram type or about that of people I am serving. This tells me that we as human beings are really a mirror of the fact that we are limitless. We are vast mysteries who can never fully be nailed down. There is no end to discovery within ourselves of what we are and also what we are not. Right now, I think it is time for us to take some questions

Russ

I think this is a good place. The other thing I would add is that when we hear about inquiry. We might think it is like an intellectual process. I can assure you it is not. Inquiry requires all of our centers and learning it is like learning any form of meditation or spiritual practice. It is something we get better as we go. It is a unique offering of the Diamond Approach and a really, really good match with the enneagram.

Sandra

Awesome. It really helps to unpack the enneagram.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Russ: So, let us see what they are asking out there.

PARTICIPANT: Thank you for this great presentation. I have a question. I am not real familiar with the enneagram, but I have taken the test a few times. I always come up as a four. What would you say as an example, what are the blocks to being in one's true nature. I seem to come up all the time with I am not good enough. I am not valuable enough. Is that the dark side of being a four? How would you use that for approaching a four to try to help them realize their true nature? What are my blocks? I want to get rid of them.

Russ: That is the whole course, but right now we can say something.

PARTICIPANT: Okay.

Russ: What you suggest there about feeling not good enough, that could be part of point four, but really, as we will learn in the course, deep down most human beings feel that way, that we all have kind of an inner emptiness, a sense of deficiency. We are forever trying to do something to overcompensate for that. As we will see in the course, it is really that deficiency does not really have anything to do with what we are doing or not doing. It has much more to do with our disconnect from our essential nature. So that is what we learnt. There are so many things. We could do a course on the answer to your question. In short, the issue of the four is a hard issue but it has a lot to do with the realization of what we might broadly call our true identity, which is not who we think we are or even what we think we are most of the time. So a lot of the early stages of working with self-observation can be around all the ways that we are constructing identity. How am I trying to be a unique individual? How am I trying to be different?

The other area you can work on has more to do with emotions, how we get addicted to certain moods. There are certain kinds of emotional atmospheres and when one is happening that feels like me, you chose to describe that emotional atmosphere as melancholy. There is a kind of attachment, a kind of melancholy, not exactly depression, but it can lead to depression, but it is the way again. I am trying to differentiate and discover and be who I really am, but in a way that is not ultimately going to satisfy. All the enneagram points are like that in some way. But as we go into the course, we have to look at what is this identity piece feels like? How do we recognize it? What happens when we disconnect from it and what goes on when we are just trying to survive in that disconnect. That is the kind of stuff we are looking at. That is again where we move from the enneagram just being a description of character structure to being a way, a path for our development. I am really glad you asked that question to kick us off because that is in the spirit of what we want to be exploring. Unfortunately, Sandra and I can only say so much in the time we have here with you, but I hope what I have said gives you a start anyway.

PARTICIPANT: Yes, it's good.

PARTICIPANT: I know of the enneagram. I have lived in Boulder, Colorado, for thirty-four years and the Ridhwan Society just moved next door to me literally a couple of months ago, curiously. My question, listening to your preamble about the enneagram, was if the enneagram and the enneagram types as we call them our coping mechanisms for dealing with separation from the divine.

Sandra: Yes, absolutely, universally. They are different styles that we adopt as human beings in order to cope with the disconnection. In addition to that part what Hameed has explored in *Keys to the Enneagram* is that it is not disconnection in general from True Nature but there are specific qualities that each of us is very specifically disconnected from that matter very much to us. We are drawn to certain ways of being and that has a lot to do with our enneagram type. That is a great question. That is exactly what the personality is, the ego is. It is a coping mechanism for the disconnection with True Nature.

PARTICIPANT: Cool. Thanks.

Sandra: Great question. thank you. Also, while we are waiting, I just want to add that it is not necessary to know a whole lot about the enneagram to do this course. We are going to be going over it as we talk

about each type, its qualities and characteristics and, at the same time, if you do know a lot about the enneagram, you are going to learn a whole lot more.

PARTICIPANT: Hi, Russ. Hi, Sandra. It is great to meet you finally. I have read your books and have been a student of yours without meeting you for a long time. It is a thrill to meet you and I am looking forward to the course. I have somewhat of a similar background in many ways. I worked in the fourth way for many years. I went on a nine-month basic course with the Claymont Society then I kind of graduated to Buddhism for many years. Then ten years ago, I really discovered both the enneagram and the Diamond Approach at the same time and separately. I found a Diamond Approach teacher with whom I have been doing one-on-one inquiry for about eight to nine years. Independently of that, I have been really working with exploring the enneagram and even starting to teach a little bit. It has always been interesting to me that in our inquiry sessions he rarely brings up the enneagram unless I bring it up. We do not explore it, so it does not seem to be a central part of what we do. It has been an amazing experience and has been incredibly important to my spiritual development to work one-on-one with a Diamond Approach teacher. But that is what my question is about. How typical and how important is it usually, when you are a Diamond Approach student, to work with your enneagram type or even work with the enneagram in general because I would love to do that with him. He does not seem to think that it is central to the approach. That is my basic question.

Sandra: Maybe I should answer that, Russ. You will find throughout the Ridhwan School that different teachers emphasize the enneagram more or less. The enneagram has a kind of interesting place in the Diamond Approach. It is another channel, a different stream. It is not exactly the same stream as the Diamond Approach and the overlap happens in some places. We do teach it at various stages in our work where it does overlap. Really in a sense it is a subset of the Diamond Approach and it is not central. Really it is more central to some teachers than it is to others. As the saying comes to mind: all roads lead to Rome. I think if you inquire into yourself and you explore, it is all going to be there. I think the enneagram is incredibly helpful to know as a shortcut because it really cuts through a lot of self-deception and a lot of beating around the bush with ourselves. No, I am not really like that. No, I could not possibly behave like that or think like that. You really get, yes, this is how I function. I think it saves a lot of years of work.

PARTICIPANT: Yes, that is certainly been my experience so far. I feel like I am always finding that there is something new and essential about exploring different aspects of the enneagram like the instincts. Really exploring the instincts, for example. I really am looking forward to your course.

Sandra: Good.

Russ: One short thing, just that the Diamond Approach is what I would call a living school, which means that its teachings are not fossilized. Hameed and Karen are very interested in finding ways to make sure we can delay any fossilization here as much as possible. As such, the way it comes through to the different teachers, what they get from it is something organic about who plays with the enneagram and who does not. Also, to note that this course represents a shift in that kind of orientation around the enneagram for the school. We are all learning here. We are all still evolving while discovering new

dimensions. If you hang out with Hameed or Karen and their teachings or Sandra and for that matter me, you will see that at each stage we keep coming to new realizations about what we are up to or what is actually going on here. It just keeps getting more interesting.

PARTICIPANT: It is very nice to meet you guys in person. I have talked to Russ a few times. I am just really excited for this. I actually have read all of your books. I love it so much. I have a type five. The question I wanted to ask Russ is like what was the defining like points for you finding out that you were a five? I am trying to figure out what is my dominant type. It has been a lot of work around trying to get into my body because of fear of emptiness and going within like without trying to constantly figure things out. I am wondering about when you found out.

Russ: Well, there is a lot of things I could say but I will try to give the concise version. When I first learned the enneagram points of the personality types, I thought I was a four like about two thirds of the people when they first find the enneagram. Everybody thinks they are a four. We are deep and we are sad, and we are misunderstood. If you go out into the websites, there are armies and armies that are four but about 25% of them might be. For some reason, they go being creative, deep, having feelings. I tell people that is not a type, that is a being a human being. I thought that at first. I learned this a long time ago before there was a lot of literature about it but over time, in working with Don Riso, I started to realize no, probably not a four. But why was that?

This is where what Sandra was saying earlier comes in handy because you stop thinking about it as just a kind of personality, and instead think of it as a map for your liberation and development. The first question I always ask people is which one helps you wake up the most. That is where you want to play and yes, it is seeing your character structure. For me, and we will go into this in the course if you do not understand this out there, the enneagram has these inner lines that make an interesting pattern. They have meaning and they are part of the unfolding of the point. They are part of the unfolding of the type. So, for me, very simply, when I saw that as metaphor for what I needed for my development had a lot more to do with eight and seven. The two points are connected. Then it did for one and two which were the points connected to point four. That was not really my issue in a certain way, but the seven and eight were. When you start to look at the whole thing as a map, as a runway actually for you taking off into the exploration of what you are beyond all this, that is what becomes helpful. So even you saying, for example, you are just starting to notice you are not so in touch with your body, that is a great start.

PARTICIPANT: Yes, it was because I feel like it is easy to look at the external manifestation. Like just the behavior of it and people type me as a six. But inside, I do not feel like that is it. I feel the fear, but it feels like the way I cope with it is by detaching, withdrawing, but I still have the sexual instinct. I still want to connect with people and kind of what my confusion is about because of the sexual subset being the counter type or something.

Russ: It is called that in some circles, yes.

PARTICIPANT: I am going into my body and like embodying more of the eighth warrior quality. It has actually been incredibly helpful for me. Maybe like it is the five that will be more a growth path, like even

asking questions here. It feels kind of going against that vulnerability and just pushing against the wiring of like Oh, I should just kind of stay withdrawn and not go out there.

Russ: Again, if you are looking at it from the point of view of that, we will be looking at how does it help you. For, in my fiveness, my religion is contact. Because my schizoid temperament that I was imprinted with withdraws from contact, contracts from contact. This was there from my very early stage, so there is a process. For me embodiment means the sense of contact and that is a way I know I am not just making it up. I am just glad to be talking with you about this because this is how we want to explore this. It is like debating between various descriptions of what a person is like. It is interesting but, as I said, it can just lead us around in circles for a long time. When you really are confronted with what is catching you, what you keep turning to, what you keep getting stuck in, you have glimpses of what naturally manifest as your gift. Then you are in the right direction.

PARTICIPANT: Maybe it is hard for some people to find their type just because they do not want to see. They just want to go around all the other ones, too. Probably the one that actually hurts to look at is for you. That was like the five, that is my relationship pattern so just seeing that is like, Oh, actually, that is it.

Russ: Well, I hope you come on the course and we can explore that a whole lot further.

PARTICIPANT: Oh, that is neat

Sandra: I think the material we are going to be exploring can give people a big hint about what they gravitate toward and how that is connected with the particular enneagram type. I was aware that when you said everyone thinks they are a four at the beginning, I was shaking my head. I hoped I was a four when I first heard about it. I profoundly wanted to be a four and the last thing in the world I wanted to be was a two.

Russ: The force always says the people who are a four do not understand why everybody wants to be a four.

Sandra: Right.

Russ: It is cute, but you know this is the sort of fun of exploring it. I just want to say we need to approach the whole topic with the certain degree of humility because we, human beings, are not really educated by modern society to be aware of this level of our being. We are just not. The fact that we resonate with this or that description is all very well, but that does not necessarily reflect the dynamic that is operating in your consciousness. That is why the practices we are working with and learning, that is why the presence practices, the inquiry practices all of that is to begin to see what is going on in us more accurately. Then one day you cannot miss it. It is like 'oops there it is' to quote the old song. It is obvious what is going on. But we have to give ourselves some patience and kindness because frankly, we have not been educated by life to see this dimension of ourselves so easily.

PARTICIPANT: First of all, I want to express my gratitude to you both for taking this time out to tell us about the course and to tell us what your orientation is about the enneagram and Diamond Heart and also the Gurdjieff work. I am familiar with all of them. I did Gurdjieff work in New York for years. I also did Diamond Heart 6 for a while here in California. I really appreciated it. Russ, your orientation or perspective on boxes, that was very helpful to hear that is where you are coming from because when I was starting to study any enneagram, I started initially with Helen Palmer and then moved on to Riso and others.

What I came to understand is that stepping outside the conventional boxes of Western psychology it seems like I was stepping into another box with this typology system, and I did not want to go there. I had boxes and I did not want to go into any more boxes. Maybe it is a trick of language but even the way that we are talking about it being a four or being a six, it seems like it is reifying the situation still. I just wonder if the course that you are offering is going to help us to break out of those boxes. I do not want to be a thing. If anything, I am more of a process, more of a wave than the particle, I get that. One of the most influential books I ever read in my whole life was *Spiritual Dimensions of the Enneagram*, Sandra. So, I wanted to thank you personally for having written it because it did open my eyes to that, that this is not something that we are trying to put on ourselves. This is a process of really releasing or revealing qualities that are inherent in our very being. That is why it is called True Nature.

Sandra: Yes, exactly.

PARTICIPANT: Maybe the very points that we are fixated to, the ones that we are attracted to are the very places we need to go to go into a deeper understanding of reality.

Sandra: Yes, exactly.

PARTICIPANT: That is what I got from the book. But I did want to ask you about, maybe again it is a trick of language. It is just when I found out about the Diamond Heart, I was in diamond Heart 6 for over a year, and when I found out about it, I had a teacher and I was also doing Buddhist practice at the same time. In consultation with her, she thought maybe I should just commit to one of them. I found I could not make the full commitment to Ridhwan even though I wanted to because it was wonderfully psychologically wise. I decided to go to the path of emptiness in the Mahamudra path, and I have been doing that ever since, like twenty more years. My question has to do with is it a path of emptiness? Is this a path where we are not trying to lock down or fix anything, but we are trying to reveal, trying to leave it open for exploration. I mean I know that is what inquiry does and I learned that in Diamond Heart. Even some of the questions today have to do with I am a five, I am a six, I am this, I am that. That does not seem to be, for me at least, the way I want to go. I want to open things up, not close them down into categories.

Sandra: Well to say things like that, I am this enneagram type or that enneagram type, is really a shorthand, as I see it, for saying the long version which is the way that my personality or my ego is structured is in this particular pattern. It does not mean this is who you are. That is a problem that I think a lot of people encounter when they engage in the enneagram. Some people go to it to try to get



another better, more accurate label for themselves or a sense of identity, more of a reification to use that language. But ultimately, what Russ and I are both saying is that the enneagram is a tool to break out of our reifications. It is a tool to break out of the patterns that define how our ego functions. But our ego, our personality is not who we are. It is not who we are. Our enneagram type likewise is not who we are. It is just a way of labeling a pattern that our ego structure takes and that in turn influences how we function as a human being.

PARTICIPANT: Thank you. I think what I am hearing, but maybe I am interpreting in my mind, is that the enneagram type that we identify with or can identify with is actually a gateway to greater dimensions of being.

Sandra: Absolutely. You got it.

PARTICIPANT: I will give myself a gold star later.

Russ: I have one little thing. That is one side of the danger zone. The other is spiritual bypass. It is very popular. I am sure in your journey you have run into a lot of checkout individuals who think they are enlightenment, right? But my short take is that we are not our enneagram type, but we have one and it is not going anywhere. But as we become conscious of it, as I was saying earlier, it takes its correct place. It becomes integrated into that emptiness, into the more vast elements of our nature. If I had a dollar for every person I met declaring their nondual liberation absolutely from their fixated enneagram pattern, we could all go out to a nice dinner. Any way we look at it, the Diamond Approach is trying to honestly look at that depth that you discussed but also realistically at where we are most of the time. We have to take that into account, too, you know how does that fit together?

CLOSING COMMENTS

Sandra

Well, thank you for coming, and if your heart feels moved to join us to continue with us, we would be most happy to have you. We really hope that our work today, and in the course, is of benefit to you personally, and ripples out to the whole of humanity.

Russ

I am very grateful and thrilled to be on this adventure. Teaching this with you Sandra, with Hameed and Karen's backup and blessing. As I said earlier, I think this course is perfectly timed to release the new wave into the whole field and hopefully from there maybe have some good influence in this world.

Program: Spiritual Gift of the Enneagram

Teacher: A.H. Almaas

I think it is important for each type to know what is their gift. What I call the natural endowment. The natural endowment means as we come into the world, there is a particular spiritual quality of the spiritual dimension that we are naturally endowed with. We do disconnect with it as we develop an ego but as we open up that is one of the things that opens first and can help us connect with the rest of our spiritual nature.

For number one, for instance, I talk about the aspect of kindness, pure kindness which is a quality of pure brilliance where the brilliance is presence, not a brilliance of mind or brilliance of something but brilliance as an isness. Brilliant light that has a compact fluid brilliance that appears as intelligence, as perfection, lightness, how to know what is right. It has to do with the right of things, the right way to live, the right way to be. It gives a moral compass. It is also the aspect of pure intelligence. If you go to number two, it is very different. Actually, in the Diamond Approach, the qualities of one and two are very central.

Point two has to do with what I call merging love, which is love that has connection, communion, bounding, sharing, giving with generosity and richness and nurture and all of that. Classically, throughout the ages, the brilliance somehow got associated with the fathering figure, whatever we call it, while the merging gold got associated with the mothering figure. Maybe things now are different because of the gender identity going in full flux and changing. It might change but the way I saw them in the 70s and 80s, those two became father and mother which, of course, is the main thing for a child and parents. These qualities are important that way.

When we go to number three, there is an interesting thing about being. The quality is how to be an individual being but really a being of spiritual nature, a being of pure consciousness, a being of pure presence, a person of presence with a sense of capacity, capability, effectiveness and efficiency which makes us see how the three is trying to be that way. We go to something else which is interesting which has to do with identity because the self has a sense of being an individual but self-knowing identity, what I am, who I am. This is identity in the essential level or a spiritual level. It is what is called the Point of Light, presence. I call it the Point of Existence which is known by many teachings. You can experience the Point of Light. It seems like brilliance of number one but as a living point with its own intelligence, with its own light, its own qualities. It has a sense of uniqueness, simplicity and originality and all of that which is the thing that is idealized.

If we go to number five, the quality has to do with understanding. Many people think that five want knowledge. I do not think so. I think five want to understand things. They accumulate knowledge sometimes thinking it will give them understanding but all the fives I have known, they want to understand reality themselves. The quality of understanding has to do with that I call Diamond Guidance which is a certain form that True Nature manifests. It has to do with clarity, precision and discernment. Its function helps us, guides us in our understand of ourself so we know the right direction further illuminating what is happening. That is an important thing, I think, for people to know about fives. I

remember at the beginning five idealize knowledge, they collect knowledge but the more free the five is from their fixation, the more what they want is not to collect as much knowledge as possible. They want to understand things. What is the point? Even scientists collect all of this information. It is so they can understand what they are studying and can solve problems or develop something. Understanding is really more important than just knowledge.

Point six brings up the quality that six usually tend to lack which is the sense of confidence, self-confidence, sense of grounding. The sense that I call inner will. It is different from the ego will. Ego will is I have my own choice, own volition, own decision. Here, will is not that. It is more the confidence to be able to do what I want to do. It comes as the capacity of doing and steadfastness do to something, to accomplish something, to fulfil a task. You not only feel supported to do it but you need to feel you can continue doing it. That is the difficulty. True will has to do with capacity that makes us feel we can stay steadfast. We will not be swayed.

Number seven is usually known as the one that is always looking to enjoy life. Go for one thing that is exciting and fun to another, from one kind of cuisine to another, from one kind of spiritual experience to another. It means it is about pleasure but the quality of pleasure that I call for the seven is the form of True Nature that shows that there are many kinds of pleasure, of true pleasure where your whole being is pure pleasure. That appears in many qualities. That explains why sevens have this pleasure: Oh, that feels like tangerine, bliss, wonderful. In a day or two, they say Oh, yes, it is more like banana. Tangerine every day is boring after a while. It gives us a whole slew of flavors. That explains the essential quality that I call the Markabah which means vehicle

Then we go to number eight. Eights are known to be bold, boaster and all of that but really that is the outer expression of fiery, the fierce, bold, expansive quality that is naturally dominant in eight which is called essential strength. It is a fiery aspect of spirit that has energy, has aliveness, has expressiveness, a sense of capacity. I can, not I will do but I can do.

Then we go to number nine which is considered the center of all of them. What you find there because nine are supposed to be the moderator, the mediator, people who want to make people comfortable and people taken care of because their true endowment has to do with some kind of love that is a comforting love a holding kind of love. Love that is not only just for one person but for everybody, for the whole situation. That is what I call Divine Love. It is talked about as a whole dimension. You may experience it as underlying the whole of the universe, all of the isness, which all the spiritual teachings say is the spiritual nature underlying the whole universe. But here, it shows the goodness of that spiritual nature so it is really true goodness.

This might help people who know the enneagram only as a topology to see what awaits them, all the treasures that awaits them. You not only get the quality of your type. You get the qualities of all of them. All the types are within you. You get your type which is the easiest and it makes the other types accessible to you so you can connect to all the qualities.