

## UNDERSTANDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY TYPE: INTEGRATING OBJECT RELATIONS THEORY AND THE ENNEAGRAM SYSTEM

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### Abstract

The Enneagram system describes the nine different sets of patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving that get in the way of the creative and free-flowing expression of a person's real, creative self. These nine archetypes fit together with existing threefold theories of psychological development. The integration of the Enneagram system of personality and three three-phase developmental object relations theories can aid in helping adults understand the ways they responded to early psychic pain and how once vital defenses later become invisible, fixed, and rigid, limiting one's ability to grow to one's full potential. Understanding this integration can support and accelerate personal growth work, therapeutic interventions, and spiritual transformation.<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

As A.G.E. Blake (1996) explains in *The Intelligent Enneagram*, the enneagram symbol functions as both an expression of universal truth and an integrator of other systems:

Any combination of ideas, any kind of insight, can be represented in terms of the enneagram. It has universal relevance. It can even be said that the symbol itself will compare, evaluate, and refine what is brought into it. It acts as both an organizer and a filter. However, it can be understood at many levels because it is made up from a fusion of several interlocking parts. In its most superficial form, it is a pattern made up of nine points. (p. 24)

In this way, Blake highlights the power of the enneagram symbol to clarify and organize other forms of information. A representation of perpetual motion (Ouspensky, 1949), it provides a map of the underlying patterns that occur in the natural world and describes the evolution of living systems, including individual psyches.

The universal relevance and synthesizing capacity of the Enneagram will be affirmed and demonstrated in the present integration as the thematic correspondences between the Enneagram personality types and three different psychological theories of human development will be highlighted. This integration can be used to enhance our understanding of how personality forms in early life through showing how patterns emerge from early experiences. By demonstrating how the Enneagram personality types fit together with psychoanalytic theories that describe "object relations," or how early relationships

form the basis of personality development, this paper indicates how such a synthesis may enhance our overall knowledge of the development of character, psychological functioning, and psycho-spiritual healing and growth.

This synthesis will allow Enneagram experts and enthusiasts access to insights from established developmental theories and will teach psychotherapists how to take advantage of the Enneagram map of personality types, which expresses in great detail the personality styles that result from different childhood scenarios.

In what follows, I first provide a brief summary of the main insights about personality and development associated with the Enneagram map of character types. I then summarize some of the commonalities between the Enneagram view of personality and psychoanalytic descriptions of development, describing the points of agreement between the Enneagram and different psychoanalytic theorists' models. Finally, I discuss some of the implications associated with the synthesis I am highlighting, particularly for our understanding and treatment of psychological issues and suffering.

My central thesis is that the core themes of the operation of the three centers of the Enneagram system correspond directly to three threefold theories within psychoanalytic developmental theory, the only body of theory in western psychology that addresses in detail how personality develops in childhood.

### **History and Sources of the Enneagram**

The Enneagram system as we know it today originally came to the West through two different psycho-spiritual teachers, G.I. Gurdjieff and Oscar Ichazo. Although these two men taught at different times and places, using different language and approaches, their common aim was to help advance human transformation through teaching a program of inner work. Beginning in the early 1900s, Gurdjieff operated out of Russia and then France. Ichazo established the Arica School in Arica, Chile in the 1960s where he taught his students many aspects of human growth, including the Enneagram as a central piece of his "protoanalysis" approach (Naranjo, 1994; Palmer, 1988).

Although Gurdjieff did not reveal the sources of his teachings or the history of his own intellectual development, he suggested that his program of self-work derived from ancient esoteric "objective" knowledge. He taught that this knowledge had been discovered and preserved in secret schools in symbolic form so that its meaning would not be lost through the changing subjectivities of time and culture and unconscious human mechanistic functioning (Ouspensky, 1949).

Central to Gurdjieff's teachings was his emphasis on the difference between "essence" and "personality." Gurdjieff described "essence" as that which is "one's own," and "personality" as that which develops in a person as a result of external influences. Gurdjieff said that by learning about one's personality and committing oneself to a rigorous lifelong program of self-observation and self-study, one could eventually rediscover and develop one's essential self. He also suggested

that this was the necessary transformational work that humans must engage in if they are to wake up, evolve, and advance out of a largely unconscious state, both individually and collectively (Ouspensky, 1949).

The Enneagram system of personality types we know today came to us from Oscar Ichazo through Claudio Naranjo and Naranjo's students. At his institute in Arica, Chile, Ichazo taught an Enneagram-based system of personality and self-development he called "protoanalysis." Claudio Naranjo studied with Ichazo and brought his learnings and his original interpretations of Ichazo's teachings to Berkeley in the early 1970s. Naranjo led groups in people's living rooms, teaching people about the different personality types. He later published two books directly conveying his interpretation of Ichazo's material and integrating it with western psychological theories and spiritual understandings, *Ennea-Type Structures: Self-Analysis for the Seeker* (1990), and *Character and Neurosis: An Integrative View* (1994).

A native of Chile and an American-trained psychiatrist, Naranjo had studied personality from many different angles, including factor analysis, Jungian archetypes, Karen Horney's view of character development, existential theories, psychoanalytic understandings, and Gurdjieff's Fourth Way. When he encountered Ichazo's teaching he immediately recognized the power of the system as an integrative model of personality, that is, a model of personality that could bring the best of all the other disparate and disconnected theories of personality and development together into a coherent whole. He presented his articulation of this integration in *Character and Neurosis: An Integrative View* (1994). This present study represents a continuation and expansion of that integrative project.

### **Integrating the Enneagram and Psychoanalytic Theory**

The psycho-spiritual teachings associated with the Enneagram system and psychoanalytic theories of how people develop in childhood rest on some common assumptions about personality. Both theoretical systems generally view personality as a false self that develops as a result of the interaction of a young child's innate disposition and the child's environment. However, while psychoanalytic developmental theory focuses on the vicissitudes of early childhood relationships and their impact on the child's development, the Enneagram maps the resulting personality patterns that manifest in adulthood in terms of thinking, feeling, and behavior.

The holistic Enneagram approach to personality directs attention to the simultaneous interconnected functioning of the head, heart, and body, or intellect, emotion, and behavior (Palmer, 1988). Although western culture has tended to privilege the head as the only or main "center of intelligence," the esoteric traditions behind the Enneagram see a balance of the functioning of the three centers as necessary for health. Based in part on the "law of three," the Enneagram system thus represents a dynamic model of personality in which



roles that one automatically and unconsciously places onto new people one encounters. Thus, we repeat patterns in relationships because our unconscious expectations about what roles people play and how people act gets interpreted in terms of our internal representations of the external others (from the past) that shaped them in the first place.

Mitchell and Greenberg (1983) explain this idea when they define object relations as “an attempt within psychoanalysis to confront the potentially confounding observation that people live simultaneously in an external and an internal world, and that the relationship between the two ranges from the most fluid intermingling to the most rigid separation” (p. 12). The term “object relations” thus refers to theories that focus on exploring the relationship between real, external people and internal images and residues of relations with them, and the implications of these “residues” for psychic functioning.

### ***The Integrative Developmental Narrative: Naranjo’s Description of How Personality Forms***

In integrating the Enneagram model with western psychological theories, Naranjo (1990) explicitly draws upon object relations theory to describe his integrative view of personality development as reflecting early childhood experience and as necessarily involving patterns of feelings, thoughts, and behavior:

A derivative from the Greek *charaxo* meaning to engrave, “character” makes reference to what is constant in a person, because it has been engraved upon one, and thus to behavioral, emotional and cognitive conditionings. It has been one of the merits of contemporary psychology to elucidate the process of the deterioration of consciousness in early life as a consequence of early emotional frustration in the family context. (p. 2)

Just as Horney (1950) describes personality as developing out of an unconscious need to quell an early sense of basic anxiety, Naranjo (1990) states that, “in reaction to pain and anxiety, the individual seeks to cope with a seeming emergency through a corresponding emergency response, that, precisely in virtue of the perceived survival threat, becomes fixed, becoming a repetition compulsion, as Freud called it” (p. 2).

The contemporary object relations model grew out of Freudian drive (instinct) theory and expands its focus from instincts to instincts and relationship. This relational model includes a recognition of primary instinctual impulses such as sexuality and aggression, but places equal (or greater) importance on the environmental response to the individual’s impulses and needs (Johnson, 1994). Guntrip (1975), among others, argued that Freud’s theory is necessary, but not sufficient, to describe how personality develops out of early experience.

Object relations theorists contend that the origin of what we are calling personality type, or the false self system, lies in the individual’s complex reaction

to the environmental frustration of early instinctual needs. Among these instinctual needs are an inherent need for relationship and a competing need for individuation, or separation, from sustaining relationships.

Human needs are complex, however, and many things can potentially go wrong in the parent-child relationship. When things go wrong and a need remains unmet or is overgratified, an adaptational or compensatory response comes into play. If the need remains unmet over time, the adaptational response may become fixed. Character, or personality, develops out of a constellation of fixated responses to a wide assortment of unmet or overindulged interpersonal needs.

A key point that Naranjo makes is that in becoming unconscious to one's essential self or to one's adaptive maneuvers, *one becomes unconscious to the fall from consciousness itself*. That is, we develop a personality out of reacting to our environment, then we forget that we have made this adaptation. Thus, we end up identifying with our personality, thinking that it is our real self, when it is really a defensive or "false" self that ends up blocking or inhibiting the healthy functioning of our real or essential self. As Naranjo (1994) explains, "this degradation of consciousness is such that in the end the affected individual does not know the difference, i.e., does not know that there has been such a thing as a loss, a limitation, or a failure to develop his full potential" (p. 2).

In his book, *Character Styles*, Johnson (1994) cites a "character-analytic" five-step model (from Levy & Bleeker, 1975) of how the frustration of early needs develops into a defensive character structure that both allows the child to defend against anxiety and constitutes a rigid and limiting characterological problem later in life:

1. Self-affirmation: the initial expression of the instinctual need.
2. The negative environmental response is the social environment's blocking or frustration of that need.
3. The organismic reaction is the natural, wired in response to frustration by the environment—usually the experience and expression of intense negative affect, particularly *rage, terror, and grief at loss*.

These first three stages are relatively straightforward. It is in the final stages that character is formed.

4. Self-negation: This more comprehensive form of turning against the self involves the individual's imitating the social environment in blocking the expression of the original instinctual impulse *and* blocking the instinctual response to that block as well. It is this *identification* with the environment that sets the person against himself, makes the block to self-expression internal, and creates psychopathology.

This is the beginning of an internal conflict, which can persist throughout a lifetime, between the irrepressible instinctual need and reaction, on the one hand, and the internalized blocking of those needs and reactions, on the other.

5. Adjustment process: essentially consists of making the best of it. This involves the construction of any number of compromises in an attempt to resolve the unresolvable conflict. (p. 8)

Johnson (1994) explains that this process is analogous to Sullivan's (1972) concept of the "security operation" or Winnicott's "false self." He states that what is described as character or personality consists of what parts of the real self one has suppressed and what parts one exaggerates. Psychopathology then, according to Johnson, can be seen in "the suppression, the exaggeration, or most often, in the individual's natural reaction to this kind of habitual, unnatural accommodation to avoid pain while maintaining contact" (p. 10).

In defining his integrated view of personality and neurosis, Naranjo (1994) ultimately describes the development of personality in the following way:

[In the face of a lack of what a child needs], life is not guided by instinct but through the persistence of an earlier adaptational strategy that competes with instinct and interferes with the "wisdom" of the organism in the widest sense of the expression. The persistence of such early adaptational strategy [sic] may be understood in view of the painful context in which it arose and the special kind of learning which sustains it: not the kind of learning that occurs gratuitously in the developing organism, but a learning under duress characterized by a special fixity or rigidity of what behavior was resorted to in the initial situation as an emergency response. We may say that the individual is not free anymore to apply or not the results of his new learning, but has gone "on automatic," putting into operation a certain response set without "consulting" the totality of his mind, or considering the situation creatively in the present. It is this fixity of obsolete responses and the loss of ability to respond creatively in the present that is most characteristic of psychopathological functioning. (p. 5-6)

Thus, the Enneagram personality types describe the nine different sets of patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving that get in the way of the creative and free-flowing expression of a person's real, creative self. And because these nine archetypes fit together with existing theories of psychological development, they can aid in helping adults understand the ways they responded to early psychic pain and how those once vital defenses later become invisible, fixed, and rigid, limiting one's ability to grow to one's full potential.

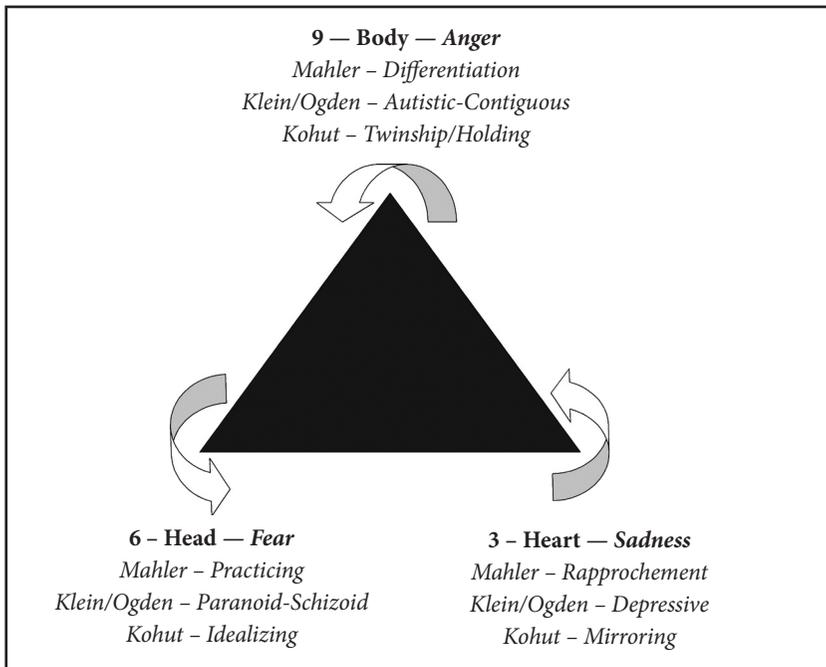
### **Threefold Process: The Dialectic Of Development**

If we compare the character issues and themes underlying the threefold structure of the Enneagram map of personality types built around the inner triangle with specific three-part psychoanalytic theories of development, we can see that the content of the different models is similar. Each of the threefold theories of human developmental experience described below can be mapped on the inner triangle of the Enneagram (as can the Hegelian dialectic of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, as well as different spiritual trinities). By recognizing the correspondences between these different descriptions of development, we gain

insight into the essentially dialectical nature of development, gain faith in the accuracy of these models, and enhance the usefulness of the common insights of the different models.

Margaret Mahler, Melanie Klein (with Thomas Ogden), and Heinz Kohut have all put forth threefold models of early developmental issues. With the help of the Enneagram, these three threefold theories can be synthesized into a coherent and meaningful dialectic of developmental tasks. These psychoanalytic theorists all view development as a negotiation of or a movement between three different stages or modes or needs. If the different threefold theories are all mapped on the inner triangle of the Enneagram, as in Figure 2, we can see how they all fit together with each other and the archetypes described by the Enneagram system located near the points of the triangle.

*Figure 2. Inner Triangle of the Enneagram = The Dialectic of Development*



### *Margaret Mahler*

According to Mahler's (1975) theory of the psychological birth of the human infant, which she calls the separation-individuation process, the needs that must be satisfied for healthy growth in early life correspond to three critical phases in childhood development. According to Mahler, these three phases correspond to the developmental tasks of 1.) *differentiating* from the mother; 2.) *practicing*, or

exploring and testing for danger as one moves out into the world; and 3.) *rapprochement*, or negotiating the move toward individuality in light of the need to maintain a connection with an important other.

While these phases, or modes of experience, occur in linear or sequential order very early in life, as their capacities are set in place their development becomes cyclical and non-linear. This cycling through of the three phases of experience operates throughout life into adulthood (Mahler, Pine & Bergmann, 1975).

If we map these three phases around the inner triangle of the Enneagram, as in Figure 1, we can see that the developmental issues Mahler describes match the developmental issues that correspond to the Enneagram system's inner triangle and the three groups of three types organized around the triangle. Beginning with the core "body" type, Nine, the type most oriented to merger (or symbiosis in Mahler's terms) at the level of the body or being, the differentiation issues that Mahler describes line up with the issues and themes associated with the body types' personalities, the issues associated with practicing match the core themes of the head types' functioning, and the issues characterizing *rapprochement* correspond to the heart types' core themes.

Differentiation and the Body/Anger Triad. Although the three body-based types express differentiation issues in different ways, the drive for self-definition and the conflicts and patterns related to differentiation underlie the core developmental story of each of these three types. And while this piece of the developmental dialectic undergirds every individual's development in some way, differentiation remains a crucial sticking point for the three body-based types in a way that distinguishes them from the other personality types.

In other words, while all children need to differentiate from their parents, sometimes this process goes smoothly, and sometimes it goes less smoothly and there are problems or issues that shape the resulting personality. For the body-based personality types, these themes – the nature of one's physical/sensory experience of being in the world, and whether and how to separate physically vs. stay connected and held by a larger other – live on into adulthood as core factors structuring experience.

In Enneagram terms, if we imagine the developmental path Mahler describes starting at the core point of Nine at the top of the diagram with symbiosis or fusion with the mother, at which point, "from the infant's perspective, there is no differentiation between the two individuals comprising the symbiotic unit; he behaves as if he and mother are a unitary, omnipotent system" (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1980, p. 274-275), and then extending down around the circle toward type Eight and then type Seven, we can perceive a movement in Mahler's terms from total merger to increasing independence and self-referencing.

This first subphase of the separation-individuation process describes how the infant begins to differentiate from his symbiotic relationship with his mother. This happens through the gradual awareness of physical or body-based

separation from the mother, and in the optimal situation, this process is held well and supported by the mother who responds well to the baby's natural move toward differentiation. This optimal mother neither pushes the baby away prematurely nor smothers and holds onto the baby. However, mothers are human, and sometimes there are difficulties in this process.

The three body-based Enneagram types display core issues that reflect a problem of one kind or another in this optimally smooth flowing differentiation process. The attentional focus of type Ones on the need for structure and an adherence to rules and standards reflects an unmet need for or deficit related to the need for a holding structure within this early stage of development. Type Nines typically display tendencies to either get stuck in merger with others at the level of being or withdraw in response to an experience of too much merger. And the patterns of type Eights similarly reflect a compensation for a lack of holding: they become tougher as a result of not getting what they need to be a child that feels held safely in the world early on.

Mahler articulates the process of differentiation in terms of her observations of the largely physical separation that takes place during this early stage:

...it is during the first subphase of separation-individuation that all normal infants take their first tentative steps toward breaking away, in a bodily sense, from their hitherto completely passive lap-babyhood—the stage of dual unity with the mother. One can observe individually different inclinations and patterns, as well as general characteristics of the stage of differentiation itself. (p.55)

Here we can see the way Mahler depicts the nature of the first movements toward separation between mother and child and the fact that different individual children have different patterns within this universal experience. Thematically, a resistance to letting go of symbiotic merger is a core issue for Enneagram type Nine, the core point of the triangle that lines up with the Mahler's stage of differentiation. This occurs when they habitually "merge" with others and unconsciously deny or "forget" their separation from others and the world around them. Unconsciously unwilling to endure the painful knowledge of the early sense of separation entailed in differentiating out of symbiosis, or the womblike experience of oneness with the mother, Nines represent the prototype for this fundamental experience of the passive protest against early separation all humans experience.

A key theme communicated by Mahler and her colleagues in describing differentiation is the experience of a child who must continually reconcile his innate desire for independent, autonomous existence with an equally powerful impulse to reimmerse himself in the enveloping fusion from which he has come.

From Differentiation to Practicing, or From Nine to Eight to Seven to Six to Five. Similarly, Mahler's description of the practicing subphase corresponds to key developmental issues in the character formation of types Seven, Six, and Five. These three types have as a defining characterological trait a particular

response to childhood fear. Mahler and her colleagues (1975) identify this when they explain that anxiety is a key feature of the early practicing period: “During the early practicing subphase, following the initial pull and push away from the mother into the outside world, most of the children seemed to go through a brief period of increased separation anxiety” (p. 70).

The following quote from Mahler’s observations demonstrates the nature of the movement of the child from the differentiation phase into the practicing phase, and from the themes of core type Nine toward the personality patterns that correspond to types Eight and Seven:

With the spurt in autonomous functions, such as cognition, but especially upright locomotion, the “love affair with the world”...begins. The toddler takes the greatest step in human individuation. He walks freely with upright posture. Thus, the plane of his vision changes; from an entirely new vantage point he finds unexpected and changing perspectives, pleasures, and frustrations. ... During these precious 6 to 8 months (from the age of 10 or 12 months to 16 or 18 months), the world is the junior toddler’s oyster...the child seems intoxicated with his own faculties and with the greatness of his own world. Narcissism is at its peak! The child’s first upright independent steps mark the onset of the practicing period par excellence, with substantial widening of his world and of reality testing. Now begins a steadily increasing libidinal investment in practicing motor skills and in exploring the expanding environment, both human and inanimate. The chief characteristic of this practicing period is the child’s great narcissistic investment in his own functions, his own body, as well as in the objects and objectives of his expanding “reality.” Along with this, we see a relatively great imperviousness to knocks and falls and other frustrations, such as a toy being grabbed by another child. (Mahler et al., 1975, p. 71)

In this description, we hear echoes of some of the characteristics of types Eight and Seven as the child experiences a sense of independence and imperviousness and exhilaration at his newfound abilities. In this phase, the child focuses on practicing and mastering his own autonomous capacities and experiences a strong sense of delight in his expanding world. In Mahler’s terms, we can see some of the characteristics of types Eight and Sevens, as she states that the child at this stage is “quasi-enamored with the world and his own grandeur and omnipotence” (p. 71). In words that echo some of the core themes of types Eight and Seven, Mahler explains that we might consider the possibility that “the elation of this subphase has to do not only with the exercise of the ego apparatuses, but also with the elated escape from fusion with, from engulfment by, mother” (p. 71).

Some Sevens report having had an early startling experience of fear that caused them to retreat back into this stage of feeling a sense of independence and magical omnipotence. For Sevens with more engulfing mothers, we can see that this stage may represent a formative experience of escaping into freedom from too much closeness with and limitations from the mother. While most type Sevens typically do not experience an ongoing sense of fear, a central motivation

for their characteristic patterns of reframing experience positively and imagining stimulating possibilities is the (often unconscious) avoidance of fear and anxiety.

As the developmental path Mahler articulates moves toward the Enneagram Six point, fear can arise amidst the child's exhilaration at exploring the world. Mahler and her colleagues at times witnessed children at this stage experiencing what appeared to be an overwhelming sense of fear as they felt their increasing distance from their mothers. Sometimes this took the form of "desperate crying" and "visible bewilderment" as their ability to walk away from mother at times caused them to find themselves suddenly alone and hurt (Mahler et al., 1975).

As we move along the Mahlerian/Enneagram developmental path from Seven to Six to Five to Four, there is an increasing experience of fear and separateness. As Mahler et al. (1975) explain, as the toddler grows from 12 months to 24 months, an important emotional turning point is reached. The child begins to experience, "more or less gradually or more or less keenly" (p. 73) the obstacles that come up after the height of the child's "conquest of the world" in the practicing phase. At the same time that the toddler acquires greater abilities to think and perceive the world, there is an increasing experience of separation between the internal representation of the object (mother) and one's self representation. At the height of mastery, toward the end of the practicing period, it begins to dawn on the toddler that "the world is *not* his oyster," (p. 73) that he or she must cope more on his or her own, and the child can experience himself as "a relatively helpless, small, and separate individual" (p.73), unable to command relief simply by feeling the need for it as she does during the earlier stages characterized by a sense of omnipotence.

Mahler's Rapprochement Subphase and the Heart/Grief Types. Finally, the issues involved in the rapprochement subphase correspond to some of the defining characterological issues of the heart types, types Four, Three, and Two. Each of these types has a primary focus of attention on some aspect of the tension between the need to adapt to preserve an important relationship and the need to achieve and maintain a separate identity. The heart types get preoccupied with the conflict between asserting their essential needs and feelings on one hand, and identifying with and adapting to others' needs and others' desired image of them as a way of getting love, on the other.

In the rapprochement subphase, Mahler's observations correspond to many of the core themes and patterns associated with the Enneagram heart types. These include an increasing awareness on the part of the child of the distance between the mother and the child, the display of an increased range of emotions, an increased interest in interpersonal connections and the social world, and the growth of a separate identity that is optimally supported by the mother's love and emotional availability.

As Mahler et al. (1975) note,

...as the toddler's *awareness* of separateness grows—stimulated by his maturationally acquired ability to move away physically from his mother and his cognitive growth—he seems to have an increased need, a wish for mother to share with him every one of his new skills and experiences, as well as a great need for the object's love. (p. 76-77)

In this statement we can see the increased need for expressions of the mother's love during the rapprochement phase and the need for mirroring, or a clear reflection of and affirmation of the child's sense of self. This need for mirroring on the part of the growing child signifies the developmental stage in which the child looks to the mother for validation of its budding individual identity and assurance that it is okay to be separate.

During this phase, the child experiences what Mahler et al. (1975) describe as ambivalence, the mixed emotions associated with wanting to be a separate, independent self, and wanting to stay connected to the mother. Because of this, Mahler and her colleagues underscore the importance at this time of the mother's emotional support: It is the mother's love of the toddler and the acceptance of her ambivalence that enable the toddler to develop confidence in a sense of self that is both independent and lovable. Thus, in this stage we can see a core issue for the heart types in evidence: Faced with a lack of emotional support and mirroring in childhood, they tend to feel that they are unlovable as they are, and must either achieve (Threes) or give to and adapt to others (Twos) or be special and unique (Fours) to earn love.

In the rapprochement phase, the child begins to fear the loss of the mother that occurs as part of the separation-individuation process. In this we can see some of the themes associated with Enneagram type Four, both in the inevitability of the experience of separation and the feelings of loss this creates in the child. Mahler and her colleagues saw signs that fear of losing the love of the mother was increasingly evident in this stage. They also observed behaviors indicating resistance of separation and the desire for connection.

A major shift that occurs in the rapprochement subphase centers around the child's experience of the mother as a person in her own right, rather than an extension of the toddler or an internalized object. This is signaled both by the child's growing desire for the mother to take an interest in the things he or she does and a realization that the mother's wishes do not always coincide with his or her own. Mahler et al. (1975) note that the toddler increasingly relates to her mother as an independent person in the world with whom she wants to share pleasures, and that the child's focus of pleasure shifts from independent locomotion and exploration to social interaction.

Just as the Enneagram heart types exhibit a focus on relationships and experience struggles related to connection with a love object, the children in Mahler's study exhibited emotions and behaviors reflective of these concerns, including temper

tantrums and signs of greater vulnerability, impotent rage, and helplessness. During this phase they saw a recurrence of stranger reactions, characterized by “a mixture of anxiety, interest, and curiosity” (1975, p. 93). They observed children turning away from the stranger, as if the stranger represented “a threat to the already toppling delusion or illusion of exclusive union with the mother” (p. 93).

Thus, in Mahler’s description of the rapprochement phase of development, we can see many heart type-related themes that reflect both the joy of becoming a separate and unique self and the pain associated with a loss of closeness with the other. There are more rapid swings in the child’s mood at this phase and what Mahler calls an “ambitendency,” an alternating desire to push mother away and cling to her. Indecision was also identified as a typical behavior of this stage, as toddlers would stand at the threshold, caught between competing desires to join the social world and remain close to mother. During this period, the range of affects experienced by the toddler seemed to widen and become quite differentiated, with sadness appearing for the first time, as well as a tendency to identify with others.

In summary, Mahler’s description of the rapprochement stage of development echoes many of the core themes of the Enneagram heart types: ambivalence about connection and difficulty with autonomy vs. closeness; the struggle to find the optimal distance between self and other; increasing displays of a wider range of emotions, including sadness, disappointment, and guilt; the pain of loss and depressed mood; more frequent tantrums characterized as “intense emotional anguish”; identification with others; and a growing pleasure and engagement in social interaction. According to Mahler et al. (1975) at this stage there is a “fear of loss of the love of the object that goes parallel with highly sensitive reactions to approval and disapproval of the parent” (p. 107), which clearly echoes the central concern of the heart types with maintaining the love and approval of the other.

According to Mahler’s theory, although these three developmental stages (and Klein’s positions described below) happen in a linear order early in life, and rapprochement is in some sense a developmental achievement on a higher level than differentiation, all of the nine Enneagram types represent the same potential or capacity for development. This means that the types associated with the differentiation stage are not conceived of as in any way less developed than those associated with practicing or rapprochement. All people go through these developmental stages, but for each individual, the intrapsychic struggles associated with one of the three stages remain crucial fixations or sticking points, shaping the character in a way that can be seen in the Enneagram descriptions of the resulting adult personality type. Level of functioning may vary within a particular Enneagram type (see for example, Riso & Hudson, 1999) according to the experience and history of the given individual, but no one type is conceived of as inherently “more developed” than any other. Thus, in early life, these stages are linear, and after childhood, they become dialectical.

***Melanie Klein and Thomas Ogden***

In this section, it is important to note at the outset that the terms and phrases Klein and Ogden use can sound very pathological – that is, they can seem to indicate severe psychopathology. Therefore it will be important for the reader to remember that they use clinical terms derived in a particular era (the post-Freudian British psychoanalytic community of the 1920s through the early 1960s) that are meant to describe specific internal psychological states and experiences according to the lexicon of the field and the time.

The concept of developmental “positions” is one of Klein’s major contributions to psychoanalytic theory. She described two basic positions, the “paranoid-schizoid” position and the “depressive” position, which represent early developmental achievements and modes of experiencing. Each of these positions constitutes a whole phenomenological world characterized by distinct object relations, anxieties, defenses, symbolization, and subjectivity. She uses the word “positions” instead of “stages” to denote groupings of anxieties and defenses and experiences connected to her imagined internal experience of the infant. These positions evolve through the infant’s instinctual efforts to deal with overwhelming emotions and needs in early life, and they correspond to the issues Mahler described later in her depiction of the “practicing phase” and the “rapprochement” phase, respectively. They also match up with the core issues associated with the “head” triad of types and the “heart” triad within the Enneagram system, respectively.

Years after Klein put forward her theory, clinician and theorist Thomas Ogden added a third position to Klein’s model. So, there are now three positions or modes associated with Kleinian theory with Ogden’s enhancement of it: The “paranoid-schizoid position,” having to do with fear and anxiety (associated with the Enneagram head/fear types); the “depressive position” having to do with the feelings of loss, depression, and guilt, as well as learning that “good” and “bad” elements can exist in the same person or thing (associated with the Enneagram heart/grief types); and Ogden’s “autistic-contiguous position,” having to do with early experiences of order, structure, being held physically, and the development of a physical-sensory sense of being in the world (associated with the Enneagram body/anger types).

The Paranoid-Schizoid Position. For Klein, the paranoid-schizoid position is about separating the “dangerous” and the “endangered,” and the infant’s need to engage in the defense mechanisms of splitting and projection to feel safe amidst his own aggression and fear within a world of frightening objects (other people). The terms “paranoid” and “schizoid” have gained common use today as names of personality disorders described in DSM-IV (1994), the American psychiatric manual for clinical diagnosis. Generally clinicians today define paranoid as “a term commonly used to describe an overly suspicious person” and “schizoid” as someone “characterized by detachment from social relationships and restricted emotional range in interpersonal settings” (American Psychiatric Glossary,

1994). While Klein's conception of the paranoid-schizoid mode contains some of these elements, and thus can be seen to correspond to points Six and Five, her articulation of this mode of experience goes beyond these two definitions to articulate a particular kind of fundamental intrapsychic experience.

Experience within the paranoid-schizoid position is ruled by an experience of early fear and reactions to and defenses against that fear. While this mode should be understood as originating in an experience of early childhood fear, we can return to this mode of experience throughout life under certain circumstances. When a young child experiences another person in their world as scary or threatening, the child's immature psyche does not have the psychological sophistication necessary to sort out the exact nature of the threat and defend against it in adult rational ways, so it employs primitive (early) defenses to protect itself.

As a healthy adult, one knows how to measure the nature of a threat and can call upon the psychological resources necessary to deal with it. However, if one is a small child, whose psyche is not fully developed, who experiences threatening others as scary objects "out there," one must call upon some sort of internal defense mechanisms to survive fear early on so that one is not psychologically harmed by an overwhelming internal sense of imagined or actual threat. Through her clinical observations of adults and children, Klein theorized that the infant experiences and manages this fear in particular ways, principally by separating the endangered and the endangering through the defense mechanisms of splitting and projection. We can see the parallels to the head/fear triad of the Enneagram system as the fear types' characters are shaped through their relationship to and defenses against fear, and splitting and projection are the two main defense mechanisms of type Six, the core point of the head/fear triad.

For example, if the child's mother does something to create fear in the child, the experience of the loved mother doing something the child hates or fears can create intolerable anxiety, as the young psyche cannot yet hold or experience good and bad, safe and threatening as being present in or caused by the same person. Similar to the "bad guy" in a horror movie or when as a collective we demonize an enemy to rally against it – the monster, the enemy, the threatening other is perceived as all bad. By perceiving the other as all bad, the infant can evacuate the sense of threat through the defensive use of omnipotent thinking, denial, and the creation of discontinuities of experience (splitting).

As Ogden (1989) explains, the principal psychological dilemma to be managed in this mode is to manage the experience of loving and hating the same object, of loving one's mother when one's mother has done something threatening. In this mode, as Ogden (1989) states, "each time a good object is disappointing, it is no longer experienced as a good object – nor even as a disappointing good object—but as the discovery of a bad object in what had been masquerading as a good one" (p. 19). Good and bad, fearful and safe cannot be perceived as existing

together, so “instead of the experience of ambivalence [good and bad existing together], there is the experience of unmasking the truth” (p.19).

Thus, there is a way that time collapses in the paranoid-schizoid mode – what is happening now when the threat or anxiety is experienced is all there is. As Ogden (1989) states, “this results in a continual rewriting of history such that the present experience of the object is projected backward and forward in time creating an eternal present that has only superficial resemblance to time as experienced in a depressive mode” (p. 19). In this mode, there is no sense of history – that one’s mother was and is still good – there is just the experience of threat that must be managed by getting rid of the bad to preserve the good. It is like when one is afraid or caught “like a deer in the headlights,” there is a kind of freezing of time where there is only room for a focus on managing the present fear or threat.

So, the paranoid-schizoid position describes a mode of experience and related defenses that served to defend and maintain a young child’s psyche at a specific point in early development. This experience and the corresponding defenses match the themes of the internal experience of Enneagram type Six, the core point of the fear/head triad. The focus of this mode is on managing threat and risk, and is characterized by psychological defenses that aim to secure safety, including, introjection, projective identification, denial, omnipotent control, and idealization. All serve to help the young child protect himself from threats without and within, in the form of painful or anxious feelings, by creating a separation of some kind in time, in experience, and in the perception of what is real.

As Ogden (1989) explains, reminiscent of Mahler’s practicing phase, “the paranoid-schizoid mode is characterized by omnipotent thinking through which the emotional complexities of loving and hating are magically ‘resolved,’ or—more accurately—precluded from psychic reality” (p. 23). In this mode, guilt as it exists in the depressive mode, simply does not arise; it has no place in the emotional vocabulary of this more primitive mode. Since one’s objects, like oneself, are perceived in this mode as objects rather than as subjects, one cannot care about them or have concern for them. Whereas in the depressive mode, which corresponds to the heart/grief triad, one can experience empathy for the object, in the paranoid-schizoid mode of experience, “there is little to empathize with since one’s objects are not experienced as people with thoughts and feelings, but rather as loved, hated, or feared forces or things that impinge on oneself” (Ogden, 1989, p. 23).

While the paranoid-schizoid position is a feature of early childhood developmental experience, after childhood, this becomes one pole, together with the depressive position and the autistic-contiguous position, of a dialectic of experience that operates within and structures the human psyche. Thus, we can all experience the paranoid-schizoid mode if the circumstances invite it, but the head types experience it more than the other types. Psychological change

(“structural change”) can be understood in terms of shifts in the nature of the dialectical interplay of these three modes of generating experience.

The Depressive Position. Klein depicts the depressive position as involving an early reaction to the potential experience of loss that comes through the awareness of others as subjects with their own independent existence, not just objects within the child’s internal world (as in the paranoid-schizoid mode). The depressive position also marks the time in the child’s development that he or she learns “ambivalence” in Klein’s terms. That is, the child begins to grasp that “good” and “bad” can exist together in the same person or object. This developmental achievement has important implications for relationships, as the individual learns that one can be mad at someone and still love them.

The first of these two central shifts characteristic of the move to the depressive mode of functioning is the idea that the child has moved from perceiving the world as full of “objects,” to an experience of others and oneself as “subjects.” As Ogden (1989) explains, this means “other people are viewed as being alive and capable of thinking and feeling in the same way that one experiences oneself as having one’s own thoughts and feelings” (p. 12). This is a world of “whole object relations” in which the individual exists as more or less the same person over time, in relation to other people who also continue to be the same people despite powerful emotional shifts.

In contrast to the paranoid-schizoid mode, in the depressive position, “new experience is added to old, but new experience does not undo or negate the past. The continuity of experience of self and other through loving and hating feeling states, is the context for the development of the capacity for ambivalence” (Ogden, 1989, p.12). This reflects the fact that “historicity” is created in the depressive mode as the individual relinquishes his or her reliance on omnipotent defenses and learns to tolerate different kinds of feelings toward others, such as loss, guilt, love, and disappointment.

In an internal experience of extreme fear (the paranoid-schizoid position), it serves one to make the other concretely bad and one-dimensional in order to be able to create a safe distance between oneself and the threatening other. In the depressive position, which is not characterized by fear but by sadness, loss, and guilt, this defensive splitting into good and bad and the denial of history (when the other was good) is not needed.

Ogden’s (1989) description of the lack of historicity in the paranoid-schizoid mode and the operation of historicity in the depressive position illustrates this important shift in experiencing the world in terms of fear (the head types) vs. in terms of sadness and loss (the heart types) in the depressive mode, when one can acknowledge that history and complex human subjects with feelings exist:

When, in paranoid-schizoid mode, one feels disappointed or angry at an object, the object is no longer experienced as the same object that it had been, but as a new object. This experience of the discontinuity of self and object over time

precludes the creation of historicity. Instead, there is a continual, defensive recasting of the past. In a depressive mode, one is rooted in a history that one creates through interpreting one's past. Although one's interpretations of the past are evolving (and therefore history is continually evolving and changing), the past is understood to be immutable. This knowledge brings with it the sadness that one's past will never be all that one had wished. For example, one's early relationships with one's parents will never be all that one has hoped. At the same time, this rootedness in time also brings a depth and stability to one's experience of self. (p. 13)

Where the paranoid-schizoid position is characterized by fear and defenses against it, a view of others as objects, and a need to manage threat through splitting and projection, the depressive position is characterized by a more complex relationship of self as subject to other as subject, with the corresponding possibility of sadness at losing the other, guilt at hurting the other, and empathy for how the other person feels.

Guilt becomes a central emotional feature in the depressive position, as it can be in the emotional terrain of the heart types. In the depressive position, it is possible to care about others as people, as opposed to simply valuing them as essential objects like food and air. The objects of the paranoid-schizoid position can be damaged or used up, but subjects in the depressive mode can be hurt. Therefore, only in the context of experiencing others as subjects, as real people who, like oneself, can be emotionally impacted, does the experience of guilt become a potential human experience (Ogden, 1989).

When the other is experienced as a subject as well as an object, one acknowledges the life of the other is outside one's omnipotence. In the paranoid-schizoid mode, the individual experiences the other as within one's omnipotent control—they can be made bad or good through defensive magical thinking designed to quell a sense of fear. In the depressive position there is a distinctly new form of anxiety not possible in more primitive (earlier) forms of experience, the anxiety that one's anger or bad behavior has driven away or harmed the person one loves. Thus, a whole range of new feelings and experiences characterize the depressive mode: Loss, sadness, guilt, envy, regret, desire for approval, loneliness, the experience of missing someone, and mourning. In a paranoid-schizoid mode, the need to control bad and good to deal with fear necessitates the magical restoration of the lost object, which short-circuits these experiences. There is no need to, nor any possibility of, missing or mourning a lost object when absence can be undone through omnipotent thinking and denial (Ogden, 1989).

The Autistic-Contiguous Position. Ogden (1989) later added a third position to Klein's conceptual framework. Ogden drew on the work done by psychoanalytic thinkers working with autistic children to describe an even earlier, more fundamental dimension of human experience that he referred to as the "autistic-contiguous" position. According to Ogden (1989), "the autistic-contiguous organization is associated with a specific mode of attributing meaning to

experience in which raw sensory data are ordered by means of forming presymbolic (pre-verbal) connections between sensory impressions that come to constitute bounded surfaces” (p.49). In other words, this earliest experience of the internal world of the youngest baby has to do primarily with the importance of what Winnicott calls, “holding,” the physical containment of the child that allows for an experience of contact with an as-yet undifferentiated outer world and affirms the small baby’s sense of physical being.

At the start of life, when the baby cannot speak or even conceive of self and other as separate, experience is dominated by the senses, the feeling of rhythm, and sensations at the skin’s surface. It is out of this early “psychological organization” that the earliest, most inchoate sense of self is built (Ogden, 1989). The autistic-contiguous mode describes the baby’s state at this earliest, most primary level of experience. Because it occurs before the child can use language or symbols, the experience of the child in this sensory state can be difficult to capture in words – and hard to understand from our adult point of view. As Ogden explains, “rhythmicity and experiences of sensory contiguity contribute to the earliest psychological organization in this mode. Both rhythmicity and experiences of surface contiguity are fundamental to a person’s earliest relations with objects” (p. 32). By experiences of rhythmicity and sensory contiguity, Ogden means the child’s felt experience of the nursing experience and the sensation of being held, rocked, spoken to, and sung to within enveloping arms.

In describing the internal experience of the autistic-contiguous mode, Ogden (1989) contrasts it to Klein’s other positions by explaining that in this mode, there is no relationship between subjects as in the depressive mode, nor is there a relationship between objects as in the paranoid-schizoid mode. Rather, it is a relationship “of shape to the feeling of enclosure, of beat to the feeling of rhythm, of hardness to the feeling of edginess” (p. 32). The earliest, most rudimentary self-experience, which at this point is simply that of “a nonreflective state of sensory ‘going on being’” (Winnicott, 1960, p. 303) derived from body needs, arises from the experience of sequences, symmetries, and contiguities.

As Ogden (1989) states, “the sensory experience is the infant in this mode, and the abrupt disruption of shape, symmetry, rhythm, skin moldedness, and so on, marks the end of the infant” (p. 35). This is why it is crucially important for infants to be physically held, to be rocked, to be touched, and to be “held” in a routine of eating and sleeping at particular times. This is how the individual comes to feel a sense of having a stable sense of being at the earliest stage of life. The individual comes to know experience itself through the sensation of “sensory surface”:

Contiguity of surfaces (e.g., “molded” skin surfaces, harmonic sounds, rhythmic rocking or sucking, symmetrical shapes) generate the experience of a sensory surface rather than the feeling of two surfaces coming together in mutually differentiating opposition or in merger. There is practically no sense of inside and outside or self and other; rather, what is important is the pattern,

boundedness, shape, rhythm, texture, hardness, softness, warmth, coldness, and so on. (p. 33)

In this description we can hear the echoes of the key fundamental themes of the anger or body-based Enneagram types, One, Nine, and Eight. At a deep level, experience is formed through merger, through mutually differentiating opposition, through the experience of one's sensory surface coming up against another, and through the rhythm that constitutes the earliest structure of experience. Just as Nines tend to merge, Ones tend to use the rhythm of routine and structure and rules to define experience, and Eights come up against others to feel where they are, this mode of experience suggests the earliest building blocks of a basic level of experience that constitutes one pole of the fundamental psychological dialectic constituted by these three positions.

### ***Summary of Kleinian Dialectic and Personality Type***

If, as Ogden (1989) explains, “experience is generated between the poles represented by the pure form of each of these [three] modes“ (p. 46), and “psychopathology can be thought of as forms of collapse between these poles” (p.46), superimposing this Kleinian dialectic on the Enneagram's inner triangle within the circle of nine types reveals how developmental arrests or preoccupations at a particular point in this dialectic result in the neurotic issues or habitual patterns associated with each of the nine Enneagram types.

In a way reminiscent of the “law of three,” this Kleinian dialectical represents a set of three modes of experience that are all held in a dynamic tension with each other, much as the work of the three centers of the Enneagram or an individual's three connected types (core type and stress and security points or core type and wings) create a dynamic tension within a given personality. Ogden describes this dialectic in the following way:

...human experience is conceived of as the outcome of a dialectical relationship between three modes of experience. The autistic-contiguous mode provides a good measure of the sensory continuity and integrity of experience (the sensory ‘floor’); the paranoid-schizoid mode is a principal source of the immediacy of concretely symbolized experience; and the depressive mode is a principal medium through which historical subjectivity and the richness of symbolically mediated human experience is generated....Experience is always generated between the poles represented by the pure form of each of these modes. (p. 45-46)

From this way of thinking, it follows that more fixed and rigid personality patterns can be thought of as forms of collapse or fixation in the direction of one pole or another, or toward one center or another. In Ogden's (1989) terms, “these modes of generating experience are analogous to empty sets each filled in their relationship with the others. Psychopathology can be thought of as forms of collapse in the richness of experience generated between these poles” (p. 46). In Enneagram terms, the more fixated we are on a particular mode of experience

(the anxiety and defenses of a specific type), the more we will act out the patterns associated with our particular type. Health, or richness of experience, occurs when we are able to move between the points and centers of the Enneagram, drawing on strategies of different points or modes in responding creatively to experience.

### **Heinz Kohut**

Kohut's "psychology of the self" fits into this integrated model in two ways, both in terms of the defining theoretical focus on structural problems that may occur in the developing self (creating fixated personality patterns) and in Kohut's focus on the three primary "selfobject needs" of the self. Kohut defines "selfobject needs" as core needs that the developing self gets met by important others that enable the fledgling self to grow toward health. When the child gets a "selfobject need" met, it means they are having an experience with a parent (the selfobject) that they can then internalize and make their own. The internalization of this core need getting met strengthens their sense of a stable and solid and capable self, thus the term "selfobject"—it is an important "object" that contributes in a fundamental way to the growth of the structure of the "self" (Kohut, 1984).

The three basic needs of the developing self described by Kohut also correspond to the integrated developmental dialectic described above. In developing his own brand of psychoanalytic theory, Self Psychology, Kohut altered some of the traditional notions of development and treatment. In addition to suggesting some important refinements of psychoanalytic technique, Kohut also promoted a particular vision of the neurotic individual. By focusing his analytic attention not on instinctual drives or object relations but on the needs and architecture of the self, he highlighted three important categories of structural needs of the developing self.

Kohut used the architectural metaphor when describing the "self" to promote the idea that the individual's "self" has certain basic things it needs to have a solid foundation – to be structurally sound. He defined health as having a solid sense of self, one that has had certain needs met so that one could respond creatively in the moment throughout life without having to spend one's energy defending or compensating for weak spots in the self. Weak spots in one's sense of self represent important needs that did not get met. For example, if one did not have a parent (or anyone else) that was strong and protective and made one feel safe, one may not have had the opportunity to internalize an ability within oneself to find ways to feel safe in the world.

The thematic content behind these three basic "selfobject needs," the need for someone to idealize, the need for mirroring, and the need for a sense of twinship, also correspond to the integrative developmental dialectic I have presented so far. In their history of modern psychoanalytic thought, Mitchell and Black (1995) explain Kohut's conception of these three central needs:

According to the theory Kohut eventually arrived at, a healthy self evolves within the developmental milieu of three specific kinds of selfobject experiences. The first experience requires selfobjects “who respond to and confirm the child’s innate sense of vigor, greatness and perfection,” who, looking upon him with joy and approval, support the child’s expansive states of mind [mirroring]. The second type of developmentally necessary experience requires the child’s involvement with powerful others “to whom the child can look up and with whom he can merge as an image of calmness, infallibility and omnipotence” [idealizing].... And, finally, Kohut felt healthy development required experiences with selfobjects who, in their openness and similarity to the child, evoke a sense of essential likeness between the child and themselves [twinship]. (p. 159)

While in the case of Kohut’s model, the pieces do not fit perfectly with the dialectic, it is my belief that some of the areas of potential disagreement in the theories may help further refine Kohut’s theory, which he himself acknowledged was not complete.

Kohut’s description of the need for mirroring speaks to a core need of the Enneagram heart types, types Two, Three, and Four. Each of these types, in their own way, suffers from a lack of confidence in the acceptability of their innate sense of self. Each of these types, in different ways, compulsively focuses on gaining the approval of and connecting with important others. Each of these types doubts their inherent ability to be loved for who they are, and this characterological trait points to an unmet need for mirroring, for seeing an affirmation of one’s self in the mirror of one’s parents’ eyes in childhood.

In addition, the need for mirroring also relates to developmental issues cited by Mahler and Klein. Mahler emphasizes the tension between being able to be seen and affirmed as oneself and remain connected to an important other. The more a child is seen, affirmed, and loved for her self, the easier it will be to negotiate the move away from important others. The less a child is mirrored, the more he or she may seek affirmation in the eyes of others. The core dilemmas of the heart triad reflect this lack of mirroring and the attendant difficulty of negotiating the growth of the self in light of the unmet need for acceptance from others.

Similarly, Kohut’s depiction of the need for someone to idealize, the need for involvement with powerful others who help one feel safe and calm, corresponds to the fundamental concern of the Enneagram head types, types Five, Six, and Seven, with safety and security. Each of these personality types has core issues related to fear and the search for safety. Klein’s paranoid-schizoid position and Mahler’s “practicing” subphase also echo this central concern with finding safety when experiencing a sense of danger.

Kohut’s identification of the need for a developing child to have a strong authority through which to develop a sense of safety fits with these other theories and adds his “selfobject” component. That is, Kohut places attention on what the child needs from others to deal with the experiences that Klein and

Mahler describe. This correspondence also makes sense given the ambivalent relationship to authority characteristic of the Enneagram head types, often born of a lack of a trustworthy, idealizeable authority in early life.

Lastly, there is a slightly less direct correspondence between Kohut's twinship need and the body-based types at the top of the Enneagram, types Eight, Nine, and One. It is my sense that Kohut did not fully articulate his "twinship" need. In contrast to the need to idealize and the need for mirroring, it seems less clear and less well understood. If one interprets Kohut's twinship need in a particular way however, as relating to the tension between separation and union, being a separate whole being, yet belonging, in line with Mahler's description of differentiation, Ogden's autistic-contiguous position, and Winnicott's (1958) articulation of such issues as "the capacity to be alone" and the need to experience "going on being," I believe this need can be theoretically adjusted to align with the top pole of the dialectic.

Kohut (1984) described his sense of this third need as a need for twinship, or an "alter ego," or the experience of doing something with a parent silently that contributes to a sense of belonging. Kohut describes this third selfobject need in the last book he wrote before his death, *How Does Analysis Cure?*:

Why do I associate these experiences with archaic alter-ego relationships? I can best put my impression into words by saying that—parallel to the older child's sense of security as he feels himself to be a cook next to a cook or a craftsman next to a craftsman—the young child, even the baby, obtains a vague but intense and pervasive sense of security as he feels himself to be a human among humans. (p. 200)

Thus, Kohut seeks to articulate his own third pole of key structural needs as being related to creating a sense of being, of being human, and being a human that belongs with (has a separate being but is together with) humans. In this we can see some of the same themes related to the Enneagram body types – the need to have a solid sense of separate being, but be held by, or belong with, or come up against other similar beings.

The idea of dialectic underlying the integrated model I am putting forth here connects the present synthesis with profound philosophical traditions, most especially the Hegelian process of change. It also gains depth and meaning from its correspondence to the general idea of "trinity" and particular trinities from different spiritual traditions, such as the Buddhist idea of the three poisons underlying samsaric existence or the three roots of egoic consciousness, "ignorance," "aversion," and "craving." The connections between this developmental dialectic, echoed by different psychoanalytic theorists and spiritual and philosophical trinities further deepen the import, meaning, and scope of these developmental correspondences. The idea of dialectic itself points to the centrality of the law of three described by Gurdjieff, and the fundamental truth it points to – that three forces in tension with each other define many levels of human experience, growth, and transformation. And by understanding these

fundamental dialectics, we can clarify human experience and gain insights into the nature of transformation.

### **Implications**

This synthesis has many implications for the theory and practice of psychotherapy and other personal growth work and therapeutic approaches. I will now briefly outline some of the implications of this integrated model of human development in the areas of diagnosis, treatment, and the potential uses of a transpersonal model in therapy and personal growth.

### **Diagnosis**

This integrated model of development yields many diagnostic benefits. This synthesis of different views will allow psychotherapists and individual seekers to draw on a wider variety of insights and a more holistic model of human growth. It also provides a broader and more reliable model for use in diagnosis because it is based on a highly articulated theoretical integration that takes into account early experience and adult character patterns. The integrated model put forward here has the power to enhance our understanding of the etiology, the growth, and the treatment of neurotic character patterns.

In contrast to the DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders), which many clinicians in the United States use to structure their thinking and communication about diagnoses, the integrated model of personality presented above provides a more elaborated picture of personality and psychological problems rooted in established theories of childhood experience and the time-tested holistic Enneagram map of personality. One of its benefits is that it can be used in the treatment of individuals at different levels of functioning. Everyone has an Enneagram type, and the types can manifest in different ways depending on the individual's history, level of development, and functioning. Thus, a relatively high-functioning person can gain insight into his development and character based on the present model whereas the DSM personality disorders describe only more extreme deviations from a (culturally perceived) norm.

Although the DSM personality disorders are not directly related to developmental theory, many western clinicians think with some of these character dynamics in mind and therefore it is instructive to contrast the Enneagram types with the DSM personality disorders. The Enneagram offers a system of personality descriptions that are similar to the DSM, yet different in important ways, the most meaningful of which is the Enneagram types' clear relationship to developmental theory. This means that when someone displays certain symptoms, instead of merely putting that individual in a category based on a classification of symptoms, we can begin to theorize about the etiology and causes—and thus the healing path—of that set of symptoms.

For those who use the DSM-IV in making diagnoses, I would argue that the Enneagram system represents a more complex, more nuanced, and more effective diagnostic tool than the DSM in that it details categories that describe different levels of functioning, that are logically internally consistent, and that are systematically interconnected. These levels of functioning refer to the vertical dimension of the Enneagram, that is whether one ascribes to a particular framework of levels of functioning (e.g. Riso & Hudson, 1999) or not, in contrast to the DSM, which only defines a low (and pathological level of functioning), the Enneagram personality types manifest differently along a spectrum of levels of functioning and development. And, if Naranjo (1994) is correct, and all psychopathology is characterological, the Enneagram provides an accurate and dynamic map of character.

In the Preface to Naranjo's (1994) *Character and Neurosis*, Frank Barron states that Naranjo makes a good argument for the necessity of the integrative typology he proposes. Naranjo's point, Barron writes, is that "factor analysis on the one side and psychiatric diagnosis on the other have brought us to a point where correspondences between the two sets of results cry out for understanding" (p. xix). Often, clinicians recognize that there are personality traits that cluster together on one hand and psychological insights about personality development on the other—but the links between the two aren't always thoroughly understood.

The integrative model presented here speaks directly to this need for a deeper understanding that can lead to diagnostic tools based on a more fully articulated map of the links between observable symptoms and deeper psychological understandings of development. That is, if someone feels depressed, and that depression takes the form of sadness, hopelessness, low self-esteem, a focus on difficulties in relationship, and a strong (and perhaps frustrated) need for the approval of others, the Enneagram-savvy clinician using this integrated model would direct inquiry toward early experiences and frustrations having to do with the Enneagram heart types, Mahler's rapprochement issues, Klein's depressive position, and Kohut's mirroring need. This clinician's search for the causes of suffering and the path of healing might thus be usefully and quickly centered around the core issues of the Enneagram heart types and the developmental issues associated with this center and its core developmental themes and patterns.

### ***Therapeutic Treatment***

It follows from the fact that the proposed synthesis has profound implications for the diagnosis of psychological problems that it would also impact psychotherapeutic treatment. If we have more insight into the nature of personality, neurosis, and psychopathology in general, and especially if we acknowledge that all psychopathology is characterological, that is, related to and

expressed through the personality, we immediately gain insight into how to heal psychological suffering more effectively.

With a clearer, deeper, more elaborated map of personality and psychopathology that ties together different theories of development and psychological functioning and spans the distance between childhood and adulthood and into higher levels of consciousness, clinicians may draw on a greater amount of information and a clearer definition of personality in addressing the needs of clients.

The Enneagram system of personality also underscores the fact that different personality types may require different approaches on the part of the therapist. By articulating the basic elements of each personality style the Enneagram provides therapists with an accurate and useful map of different groups of symptoms and organizing principles. In addition, it reminds therapists that different personality types require different approaches. This means that working with a type Five person may entail using a specific method that is different from the optimal way of working with a type Two. A type One person may benefit from approaches that differ from those best used with a type Seven. Head types may require one approach, while body-based types are best treated with another. Discerning a client's personality type may help the therapist to focus the therapy more (and more quickly) on the most important themes using the most targeted, and thus the most effective and efficient, methods.

As McWilliams states in her 1994 book, *Psychoanalytic Diagnosis*, "assessment of someone's character structure, even in the absence of a personality disorder, gives the therapist an idea of what kinds of interventions will be assimilable by the client and what style of relatedness will make him or her most receptive to efforts to help" (p.147). By recognizing an individual's type, one immediately has access to a map of that person's defensive patterns in generic or archetypal terms and the psychoanalytic insights that correspond to that particular type. One can then make use of this information to gain insight into how the individual's early needs may or may not have been met, his or her responses to early frustrations, the defensive maneuvers in response to these frustrations, and the likely consequences of this history. Over time, the process of more consciously acknowledging, understanding, and possibly reexperiencing early issues in a healing context may then help to free the person from the unconscious repetitive habitual functioning that is the residue of those early frustrations.

Finally, the Enneagram system can also aid in the therapist's recognition of his or her own patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving, which can help in decoding countertransference information. As most contemporary psychotherapists know, the therapist's own personality and presence necessarily influence how he or she meets or misses clients in the therapeutic relationship. Thus, the Enneagram can aid in the vitally important project of understanding one's own personality style and sorting out and interpreting countertransference data (thoughts and feelings

that arise in response to a client) so therapists can continually work at ensuring their own reactions do not interfere with the healing the client needs to do.

### ***The Use of a Transpersonal Model***

The personality type system built around the Enneagram symbol has a connection to esoteric spiritual traditions, an internal logic or systematic coherence, as well as a structural correspondence to some of the central ideas in psychoanalytic theory. As such, it provides a solution for a growing number of people who desire a psycho-spiritual framework for therapeutic work.

In his book, *Psychotherapy and Spirit*, Cortright (1997) defines transpersonal psychology as “the melding of the wisdom of the world’s spiritual traditions with the learning of modern psychology” (p. 8). He explains that transpersonal psychology is concerned with attending to both the ego and the spirit, but indicates that many questions arise when confronting the sometimes-blurry boundary between the spiritual and the psychological. However, aside from cataloguing various transpersonal ideas and techniques, he does not really provide a model of “transpersonal psychology” that can be usefully or systematically applied. The Enneagram system does this. It brings forth a way of exploring what Huxley (1944) described in *The Perennial Philosophy*, the idea that the messages underlying the world’s mystical spiritual traditions and the key aims in real psychological work are one and the same, offering a distinct and useful framework for making sense of human development and transcendence. By observing and studying one’s own personality and the formation of that personality through one’s life, one can gain peace, end suffering, have better relationships, and discover the divine within.

Because it encompasses a theory of development that can simultaneously address depth psychological problems and spiritual transformation, the Enneagram-based view of character structure provides a powerful transpersonal model that unites contemporary psychological theories and spiritual teachings in a unique and useful way. In addition to enhancing our perception and treatment of neurotic suffering, it shows how the psychological and the spiritual can be brought together in a broad and versatile model of human transformation.

As Ouspensky (1950) argues in his book, *The Psychology of Man’s Possible Evolution*, most forms of western psychology deal with “man as he is,” and a transpersonal approach, such as an Enneagram-based method, studies human beings from the point of view of mankind’s “possible evolution,” from the starting point of “man as he is.” As an essentially transpersonal model, the Enneagram of personality types incorporates a way of understanding “man[kind] as he is,” so that it can link the development of an individual from childhood through adulthood to a path of transformational work that matches that person’s personality structure and allows him to transcend the unconscious habits associated with his personality.

The Enneagram provides a map of the individual's personality and the teachings behind the Enneagram show how the neurotic personality can be the starting point for and the means of one's higher evolution. Before we can evolve, however, we must identify and study that which is automatic or mechanical in us, and that is our personality, the false self that we took on as an adaptation to survive in the specific environment we each experienced early on. The transpersonal Enneagram teaching thus emphasizes that what gets in between an individual and God is the same thing that gets in the way of that individual and his human relationships: the personality and the habitual thoughts and feelings that drive it. Psychoanalytic insights about personality development necessarily ground this study of the origins and structure of one's personality in one's early narrative as a way of tracing one's most fundamental habits to their source: one's conditioning in childhood.

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