

ENNEAGRAM REFLECTIONS for a THIRTY DAY RETREAT –Eileen Heaton

WEEK ONE: FREEDOM & UNFREEDOM

Oscar Ichazo, who is credited with bringing forth from the roots of Enneagram Wisdom what we know now as the System of Personalities, said this: “The awareness that Reality, moving with direction and fixed natural laws, **flows** with *certain force*. The easiest way to deal with this force is to move with it. This is true freedom.”

What *is* the “certain force” that we are meant to flow with? God? Creator? Source? Higher Power? What do you call this Pervasive Presence? Most of us grow and develop feeling separated from our Creator, from Divine Mother/Father, from Holy Truth and Basic Trust. We develop a strategy to survive this loneliness and felt sense of abandonment and the anxiety it causes. The ego gathers these fears, and anxieties, and disappointments and forms them into strategies in a protective way which eventually solidifies into fixed character traits which we know as personalities. Your EnneaType is a distortion of reality rooted in a disconnection from our Ground of Being. Each type circles around a sense of deficiency. In other words, until we listen to the voice of our interiors, we all share a sense of deficiency. Our Type is the way we distort reality to make it possible to live with that suffering. We experience our Type as the mid-point where our survival strategy, our distortions of reality, our sense of deficiency, and our passion meet. EnneaType is based on a strategic fixed or partial view of reality that we developed to survive in our early childhood. And because we’re here today sharing these moments of Inquiry into ourselves and seeking deeper discernment, we can say an internal “good job” to ourselves, and then recognize that we no longer need a strategy to live our lives. It can only get so far before our soul begins calling for freedom, freedom from the personality lens or way of seeing that now only clouds the Really Real and the Holy Truth, and ultimately, interferes with our access to the never-severed connection to Source. This from Julian of Norwich: “Faith is nothing else but a Right Understanding of our Being- trusting and allowing things to BE.” We are seeking a deeper perception in which everything is seen devoid of the wounds of our experience and the projections of the personality. We seek the Spiritual Freedom where we “lay down our swords”, all those ego strategies, and realize we already are part of the “flow of a certain force” (our Divine Source) that Ichazo mentions. We don’t have to *learn* how to flow with it, but rather realize that there couldn’t possibly have been a separation to begin with or we would not exist. The only barrier to this perception is our attachment to a belief in a separate self, a belief that God is “out there”, someone or something to please and serve. God can be seen as the ongoing unfoldment of God’s being in the Creationthat means all of us, humans, plants, trees, stars, black holes, and baby birds have the same source. Spiritual Freedom is to rest in the Holy Truth of this Unity. Our functioning and our actions are inseparable from the functioning of the Whole. From Africa the greeting word, UBUNTU, meaning *I am because we are*. Or from MLK’s Beloved Community, *we all belong to each other*. When we turn from this unifying “certain force” we simply suffer in our pretend aloneness. We are a participant in the expression of Holy Will when we experience the surrender of our ego strategies. When our will aligns with the Will of the Divine, we experience spiritual freedom. When our ego believes that it can function to *make* alignment happen, we delude ourselves.

We grow in Spiritual Freedom when we become more aware of our disordered attachments that get in the way of Love. It is the awareness, the experience, of being part of Cosmic Reality that enlivens us. We experience Spiritual Freedom when we recognize our belonging in Wholeness to even what we may

consider sinister, or objectionable, or wrong. As Richard Rohr constantly reminds us, Everything Belongs. We have no choice in the matter. We are charged with a radical detachment from anything that gets in the way of who we are called to be, including career, money, status, family, health. We participate in the world for the sake of Love not so that our lives look a certain way. But because “you were called for Freedom, Brother and Sisters.” (Paul’s Letter to the Galatians)

What is it that causes us to grasp so desperately to our Egos? Part of it is our lack of awareness that there is another way. The path to Spiritual Freedom begins in Contemplation and Meditation, where we experience a sense of inner self-acceptance and learn to recognize God acting in our interiors. The mystics say we will not recognize God later if we cannot recognize God now. M. Eckhart says “Those who know themselves, know all Creation”. People who are free recognize who they are with all their gifts and limitations and are comfortable in their bodies, minds, and hearts. That is Spiritual Freedom. Spiritual Suffering is expressed in this equation from Buddhism: $Suffering = pain \times resistance$. Drop the resistance to the pain and the suffering will end. You might spend time this week looking at the Characteristics of your EnneaType to find where your ego is resistant and work with your character traits regarding where you are suffering. And remember your ego will interfere with your work.

Understanding our Enneastyle becomes a very effective tool in observing and removing the obscurations to that recognition. It requires us to receive and welcome into ourselves all that we wish to discard or what is false in our beliefs, reactions, and behaviors. The way of Freedom means living in accordance with things as they are, with ourselves as we are. It is not you who surrenders to Holy Freedom. It is the spiritual practice of removing what obscures the truth of who we are so that Divine Action functions in us without opposition or self-defense. To the ego, freedom means being able to do whatever you want whenever you want to do it. And when you can’t, you blame your ego’s version of what the lousy world really is. From the perspective of Holy Freedom, freedom is wanting whatever the Universe, or the Cosmic Christ or God, wants. When you align with that, you experience Spiritual Freedom. If you are constantly reactive or attempt to interfere with, or change what IS, you are only seeing the world through the screen of your personality projections, described in your Enneastyle. Your ego will feel none of the satisfaction its used to or wants to feel. It will be “something else”, the first steps in to Freedom. Consider this poem:

I have a feeling that my boat/has struck, down there in the depths/ against a great thing/. And nothing happens! / Nothing....silence....waves./ Nothing happens? Or has everything happened/ and are we standing now, quietly, in the new life? Juan Ramon Jimenez

This from a 13th century Buddhist teacher: “In any moment free of preference, sufferings vanish”. This describes a heart that is flexible, self-regulated, undefined by opinion and concept, while still participating in the world. It is not what we **want** but what **is** that is the heart’s true place of Freedom. Our egos are very busy and powerful constructing a world that has no truth. “I wish my childhood had been different.” “I wish my mother was still”, “I wish I didn’t have cancer.” The ego creates a world that is other than what is. When practicing non-attachment in the pursuit of Freedom, we are invited to change our relationship to the river-like life of our ongoing emotions and reactions. We can do this by observing ourselves in our habits and addictions. The Enneagram can be our map.

Looking at our Enneastyle, without judging it or differentiating how the false self covers up the true self, our sacred question becomes how you get the unconscious, clearly and firmly, into the conscious,

so it goes from automatic to intentional. And then discernment is about sorting out which of those automatics are healthy habits, and which of the automatics are not allowing me to be who I was created to be. This begins our search in the right place, which is our abundance. Abundance and giftedness which has been obscured and distorted by ego-made strategies. We want to get those in the conscious to look at with love and forgiveness, and maybe being more intentional about how to choose something different. The work of the Enneagram is inviting us to look at the shame and guilt and anger to let the Divine Source gaze on these elements along with us, that we futilely are trying to hide. The Holy Creator already knew about these distortions and now you know it, too. In Genesis, God said "I love you. Why are you hiding? You couldn't hide from my Love no matter how hard you try. You don't have to get rid of your shame and guilt and anger for me to love you."

Look at your Chart of Characteristics, note the fullness of these one-word descriptions that are active and moving, 24/7! For each of you, put your finger on the top of your descending Enneatype characteristics. Note the developmental unfolding from Virtue to Passion,(the top 2 lines, say the words out loud); On the next 3 lines, from Avoidance and Trap which moves us away from our Holy Idea; now notice how the Object of Attention triggers our Chief Feature, and say these 2 out loud, how does it feel to say "this is what I do"; how I defend myself with an Idealization, and then use a Talking style and a formal Defense Mechanism that creates a dichotomy in myself. All the while, your Essence is like a diamond in the rough laying on the burdens of your ego. The Enneagram supports us as we work with our awareness and with our attention. We can look at the chart and choose to be present to that which we are avoiding. For me, it is Imperfection. I can see the imperfection and stay with it instead of avoiding it and find out that nothing happens as long as I Stay. I prepare myself by aligning with Holy Will and get intimate with Imperfection until it eventually has no effect on me. What we need more than anything is to understand what we are about, so that glimpses of Freedom are not wasted. Look at your life patterns and you see where the addictions tend to take you, and you see where your avoidances are that can help inform or at least give you some of the caution signs. Can we maintain our soulfulness in the presence of that which we seek to avoid? (Gurdjieff) "And from this we could understand that always we are caught and held, identified with what we see. We project what we see, creating for ourselves an unreal, fantastic, world of possibilities, demands, hates, lusts, irritability and endless appraisal and criticism."

The Enneagram teaches us that when we remove these outer habits and addictions and lenses, and name them as distortions of the Truth, we are then Free to do something different: to wait for God. Spiritual Freedom is the only way we can prepare for the discernment we seek. We will not know what it will feel like or look like or "BE" like. Our egos confuse our progress because it keeps telling us not to let go because the ego is all we have! ("I am all that I have already"!) Our egos are always interfering because we let them. Those who believe you have your own separate world that you can "do, think, and feel" things in, will find the inner world in turmoil and will be slaves of your "Type". The Enneagram is **not** a tool to fix the ego. It is a map so that the distortions and illusions can be seen and named and recognized so that they no longer have a hold on who you think yourself to be. You see yourself as already Free as you cultivate this practice of not interfering with what arises, inwardly or outwardly, of just letting the Divine Will be what it is. Is it reactivity or selfless surrender which determines our actions? Are you taking yourself to be isolated and self-generated or a Manifestation of the Divine Flow? When we engage with our Enneagram Type we are interfering with reality, living in the world as though we are a separate individual with our own will. We need to experience the extent of the

freedom which makes it possible for us to CHOOSE the Flow of the “Certain Force”. You could build a whole first week experience on that. How have I been led during my destructive patterns and my life-giving patterns? Where is the Spirit been in that all along? And, am I grateful for where I’m am because of that?

This takes right use of our will. According to the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali “The right use of the will is the steady effort to stand in spiritual being”. Effort is the hallmark of false will, trying to make the ego strategy work and feeling the effort in it. The will center is in our hearts not in our thinking, nor in our instincts. To be effective, our will must be determined, skillful, and conscious. This kind of spiritual practice begins with our friendliness towards ourselves, with no rejection of parts of ourselves that we decided were unacceptable. That step makes it possible for us to be awakened to our interiors and no longer ashamed or angry or frightened of who we are. The next step is growing in discernment to recognize the difference between our ego-centric will *power* and the awakening of the spiritual will in our interiors which eventually takes possession of the ego and transforms it. The discipline required is our obedience to awareness. Your individual will then is Free to align with the Universal Will of Unconditional Love. Nothing in our personality can help us. Have you ever watched a violinist tune before a concert? They are listening for vibratory alignment. Or how about using binoculars to see a bird sitting on tree branch in the distance, waiting for the best focus? That’s what we are doing when we seek Spiritual Freedom. We are finding attunement or alignment which is already present and expressed in our deepest desire.

With further considerations of the very helpful Enneagram, we begin to see, feel, and understand the Freedom from the ego that is needed to bring ourselves into alignment with the will-to-be. It is only in our miraculous self-reflective consciousness that we can lose our way in mistaken beliefs that we formed to survive and now have become lost in. Follow the thread of the deeper pull to be free from suffering and to end the transmission of suffering.

Follow the Enneagram map to show you where you lack the Spiritual Freedom to do this work. As Rumi wrote “The spirit is so near that you can’t see it. Don’t be the rider who gallops all night and never sees the horse that is beneath you.”

Spiritual advancement is not made by any self-conscious resistance to old habits of being. It is a matter doing something else, something that is inherently right and free and new. We yield to our participation in life. The patterns/addictions of our earlier adaptations (or Enneastyle) are not wrong. They may have been appropriate in their own time so no need for guilt or shame. Such efforts produce conflicts and reinforce the patterns. What is not used begins to fade. Therefore, the invitation is relaxed inspection and awareness of the existing tendencies, patterns, behavior addictions, and feeling into a new orientation and regenerative function in the Wholeness of all three centers of your Intelligence.

A.H. Almaas: If you do not understand what Spiritual Freedom is, you will try to live your life by manipulating your *outer* experience to get your own way, or you will try to manipulate your *inner* experience one way or another, rather than surrender to the Certain Force that Ichazo spoke of. Either way, you end up with a specific suffering of ego: being locked in inner combat with one part of yourself pitted against another part. When you finally realize that you cannot *Will* what happens, only then does the deep longing for the end of suffering and the beginning of Spiritual Freedom bring true surrender to what is.

REFLECTIONS

“You are not a drop in the ocean. You are the ocean in a drop.
Can we bear so much freedom?” -Rumi

A Prayer for Detachment

I yearn to be released
from anything which separates
me from You, and You from me.
Remove anything that makes my strategy for living unworthy
of your sight and speech, your action, your supervision of my life,
of your benevolence and love, And mostly, from those delusions that keep
me from being Who you created me to be.
Cast from me every obstacle that stands in the way of my seeing you,
hearing, tasting, savoring, and touching you;
Knowing and being mindful of you;
trusting, loving, and in unity with You;
being conscious of your presence
and, as far as may be, enjoying you.
This is what I ask for myself
and earnestly desire from you.

In Gratitude, I pray.

Saint Peter Faber, SJ