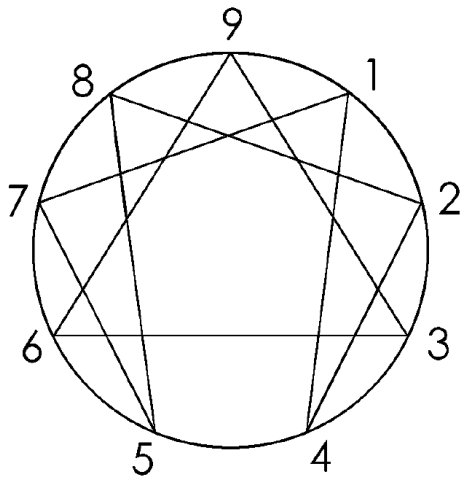


# 09

## Enneagram workshops

The Enneagram places 9 points on a circle, which focus on the basic spiritual issues of human life:

- the way people hurt themselves and alienate others
- the path for constructive relationships with other people
- the direction towards integrating the infinite variety of our potential.



Enneagram is not so much about the way we are perceived by others, as it is about the way we see ourselves, our world and our God. Each person is invited to be their own inner observer. With the same detached impartiality of the scientist or the close attention to detail of the detective, one becomes the objective observer. We are such a cluster of core traits that ever since childhood we have been partial to a particular pattern of reacting. We have become prone to a habitual response and rather like a gramophone needle going round in the same groove, we tend to get stuck in the rut

over and over again. Our range of response is limited, our view of reality is distorted and our defensiveness ultimately deceives us.

The Enneagram offers enlightenment as to why we so often mask our own mistakes and misconstrue the motivations of others. There are, for example, three different ways of feeling at the heart level, thinking at the head level and relating or being at the gut level. As we wake up to our prejudices and own up to our pride we recognise that all is not right and that something essential is missing. When we are able to go further and lower our defences, then we become clearer how unbalanced we have been. This has been referred to as our 'chief feature' Christianity would call it our besetting sin.

Enneagram is all about self-transformation. We can change and it shows us how. Appropriate paths for spiritual direction indicate the way we can go if we are willing to change and be converted. Being "a wonderful tool of compassion" our very fall from grace becomes our teacher and our guide.

Nine words indicate the behaviour with which we are preoccupied. If we can mobilise our attention, largely asleep because unacknowledged, we can become more conscious of our real needs rather than leave them submerged. The seed buried in the dark earth is called to come forth, break out and bloom.

For the many who set out on an inner journey, the Enneagram presents a challenge. Like the detective, every step of the way will contain clues to unknown strengths and weaknesses. Searching through the undergrowth and digging in the field, we uncover the pearl of great price which is our True Essence/Self.