



PSYCHOSPIRITUAL INERTIA AND THE OVER-ADJUSTED DISPOSITION

ENNEA-TYPE IX

1. Core Theory, Nomenclature, and Place in the Enneagram

The words "laziness" and "indolence" with which Ichazo designated the ruling passion and the fixation (respectively) corresponding to the ennea-type IX, fail to convey what they were originally intended to signify—before "sloth" was introduced instead of the earlier Latin term *accidia*.

Professor Giannini, of the University of Chile, writes, "What Saint Thomas, Gregory the Great, Saint Isidore, Cassian (to cite only the more representative authors) designated as

accidia is a very complex phenomenon and far from translations such as lack of motivation toward action and other contemporary translations."¹

In turn, a translation from the Greek "a-chedia" (no care), *accidia* refers to a laziness of the psyche and of the spirit, rather than a tendency to inaction, and so does "indolence" in the context of this book. Such spiritual laziness may be spoken of in terms of a forgetfulness of God or, in non-theistic language, a deafening to the spirit and a loss of the sense of being to the point of not even knowing the difference—a spiritual coarsening. Psychologically, *accidia* manifests as a loss of interiority, a refusal to see, and a resistance to change.

Dorothy Sayers in her commentaries to Dante's *Purgatory* writes that *accidia* "is insidious, and assumes such Protean shapes that it is rather difficult to define." It is not merely idleness of mind, but "that whole poisoning of the will which, beginning with indifference and an attitude of 'I couldn't care less', extends to the deliberate refusal of joy and culminates in morbid introspection and despair. One form of it which appeals very strongly to some modern minds is that acquiescence in evil and error which readily disguises itself as 'Tolerance'; another is that refusal to be moved by the contemplation of the good and beautiful which is known as 'Disillusionment', and sometimes as 'knowledge of the world'."²

The combination of loss of interiority and the resigned and abnegated character that goes along with it, results in a syndrome of a good hearted, comfortable "earthiness" that may be exaggerated to the point of literalness and narrowness.

Ennea-type IX is not only one who has not learned to love himself or herself as a consequence of love deprivation, but also one who forgets his love frustration through a sort of psychological pachydermism, an over-simplification, a psychological amputation that makes him the least sensitive and the most stoic of characters. (Ennea-type IX stands opposite to the hyper-sensitives IV and V at the bottom of the enneagram).

¹H. Giannini, "El demonio del Mediodía," in *Teoria*, Dic. 1975, Santiago de Chile.

²Dante, *The Divine Comedy, Book 2 — Purgatory*, translation by Dorothy Sayers (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1955).

Precise as all the above may be, it fails to suggest the pervasiveness of spiritual laziness in the world and its manifestations outside of hermitages and monasteries. For it is not a lack of religiosity that characterizes ennea-type IX but rather the contrary--only that this tends to be a religiosity in the social and ideological implications of the word rather than in reference to its mystical core. Ennea-type IX is, as we shall see, the contented and generous type of person whose "sloth reveals itself not so much in an aversion to spiritual things as in a loss of inwardness, an aversion to psychological exploration, and with a resistance to change that exists side by side with an excessive stability and a conservative inclination. His motto—to himself and others—could be "don't rock the boat."

I imagine that the more dysfunctional among the "overadjusted" are diagnosed today as "dependent," yet dependency is something that ennea-type IX shares with ennea-type IV and, particularly, the avoidant form of ennea-type VI—the explosion of resignation into psychotic depression is much lower today than in Kretschmer's day.

2. Antecedents in the Scientific Literature on Character

Though Kurt Schneider addressed himself to the more deeply disturbed spectrum of the population we may recognize our ennea-type IX in his "abulic psychopath"—in which the main characteristic is "the lack of will and the incapacity to resist outside pressures." These are individuals "easy to seduce by others and by situations. In accordance with their malleable way of being, they are also accessible to good influences... these people who are nearly always kind, don't give the least trouble at the clinical and pedagogical establishments; they are reasonable, docile, laborious and modest." He remarks that they are "model guests in such establishments and yet, after they leave the influences of life take over, so the gains become lost."

Perhaps the best known of the syndromes corresponding to enneatype IX is that designated by Ernest Kretschmer³ as cyclothymia. In his study of the pre-psychotic personality of his manic-depressive patients reported in his classic volume *Physique and Character* (after statistical analysis of the data) he observed that the most frequent characteristics of this temperament were the following:

1. Sociable, good-natured, friendly, genial
2. Cheerful, humorous, jolly, hasty
3. Quiet, calm, easily depressed, soft-hearted

What for Kretschmer was the cycloid character became in the work of Sheldon—his intellectual continuator—a variable that people manifest to a different degree and only a minority exhibit in its maximum.

In his *The Varieties of Temperament* Sheldon⁴ tells us in "briefest summary" that "viscerotonia is manifested by relaxation, conviviality and gluttony for food, or company or affection or social support. When this component is predominant, the primary motive in life seems to be assimilation and conservation of energy."

I quote below the list of the twenty principal traits of viscerotonia that he singled out in the course of his research of the fifties:

1. Relaxation in posture and movement.
2. Love of Physical Comfort
3. Slow Reaction
4. Love of Eating
5. Socialization of Eating
6. Pleasure in Digestion
7. Love of Polite Ceremony
8. Sociophilia
9. Indiscriminate Amiability
10. Greed for Affection and Approval
11. Orientation to People
12. Evenness of Emotional Flow
13. Tolerance

³op.cit.

⁴op. cit.

14. Complacency
15. Deep Sleep
16. The Untempered Characteristic
17. Smooth, Easy Communications of Feeling,
Extraversion of Viscerotonia
18. Relaxation and Sociophilia under Alcohol.
19. Need of people when Troubled
20. Orientation toward Childhood and Family
Relationships.

Without contradicting Sheldon's view that viscerotonia may be observed in different degrees of expression, there can be no doubt to the effect that it is in the sloth type that its expression is maximum, for here viscerotonic traits are not only salient but seemingly the raw material on which the rest of the character is supported. We could say that the extreme extroversion of ennea-type IX not only has a constitutional root, but that constitution serves as a point of support for the defensive evasion of interiority. Arietti⁵ has drawn a distinction between two main types of depression, each supported by a different type of personality: The "claiming depression" (our envy type) and the self-blaming type, "where the main emphasis is on self-accusation and self-depreciation." Though Arietti deals mainly with the states of psychotic decompensation, which is opposite to the typical joviality of the indolent, it is possible to recognize the ennea-type IX pattern: we are told that this is a duty bound, hard worker type, with strong patriotic sentiments, conformity with a strong need to belong, and conservative ideas.

At present I observe that ennea-type IX individuals are being classed by Bioenergetics therapists as "masochistic":

"The masochistic body is often noted to be thick, with powerful muscles which are believed to restrain the direct assertion and block the powerful underlying negativity. Characteristically, the masochistic character is overly pleasing and self-sacrificing, while at the same time evidencing passive-aggressive behavior."⁶

⁵Arietti, Silvano, "Affective Disorders" in *American Handbook of Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1974).

⁶Johnson, Stephen M., Ph.D., op. cit.

A "Mother Hubbard" Script is described in Transactional Analysis.⁷

"She spends her life nurturing and taking care of everyone but herself. She chronically gives much more than she receives and accepts the imbalance because she feels she is the least important of her family and her worth is measurable only in terms of how much she supplies to others."

Of the DSM III⁸ categories, the one most congruent with ennea-type IX is "dependent personality," described in terms of the following characteristics:

"A pervasive pattern of dependent and submissive behavior, beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of contexts, as indicated by at least five of the following:

1. is unable to make decisions without an excessive amount of advice or reassurance from others
2. allows others to make most of his or her important decisions, e.g., where to live, what job to take
3. agrees with people even when he or she believes they are wrong, because of fear of being rejected
4. has difficulty initiating projects or doing things on his or her own
5. volunteers to do things that are unpleasant or demeaning in order to get other people to like him or her
6. feels uncomfortable or helpless when alone, or goes to great lengths to avoid being alone
7. feels devastated or helpless when close relationships end
8. is frequently preoccupied with fears of being abandoned
9. is easily hurt by criticism or disapproval.

Millon characterizes the syndrome by the fact that: "the dependent persons' 'centers of gravity' lie in others, not in themselves. They adapt their behaviors to please those upon whom they depend, and their search for love leads them to deny thoughts and feelings that may arouse the displeasure of others."

⁷I quote from "Banal Scripts of Women" by Wickoff, in Claude M. Steiner, *Scripts People Live* (New York: Bantam Books, 1975).

⁸op. cit.

According to Millon "dependents are notably self-effacing, obsequious, ever-agreeable, docile and ingratiating... They deny their individuality, subordinate their desires, and hide what vestiges they possess as identities apart from others."⁹

Though anyone acquainted with cyclothymia would characterize it as extroverted, in Jung's description of psychological types, ennea-type IX is most closely approximated by the introverted feeling type which he notices predominantly in women:

"Their outward demeanor is harmonious, inconspicuous, giving an impression of pleasing repose, or of sympathetic response, with no desire to affect others, to impress, influence, or change them in any way... Although there is a constant readiness for peaceful and harmonious coexistence, strangers are shown no touch of amiability, no gleam of responsive warmth, but are met with apparent indifference... Faced with anything that might carry her away or arouse enthusiasm, this type observes a benevolent though critical neutrality... Any stormy emotion, however, will be struck down with a murderous coldness"¹⁰

On revising this chapter just after the publication of Lorna Benjamin's *Interpersonal Diagnosis and Treatment of Personality Disorders*,¹¹ however, I see that her understanding of dependent personality disorder is essentially that of our phobic (self-preservation subtype of ennea-type VI). If her understanding reflects that of the professional world in general; it seems to me that ennea-type IX has become to the collective eye of the American medical world as invisible as ennea-type III.

If we turn from Jung's to von Franz's¹² descriptions, however, I notice that it is her extraverted sensation type¹³ in

⁹Millon, Theodore, op. cit.

¹⁰Jung, C.G., op. cit. There seems to be a measure of juxtaposition in Jung's description between ennea-types IX and V, since insistence on the scant expression of emotion, while appropriate, fails to reflect the equally characteristic affability of the cyclothomic character.

¹¹Benjamin, Lorna Smith, *Interpersonal Diagnosis and Treatment of Personality Disorders* (New York: Guilford Press, 1993).

¹²Von Franz, Marie-Louise, and James Hillman, *Lectures on Jung's Typology* (Dallas: Spring Publications, Inc., 1979).

which we find the best match to ennea-type IX and its typical paucity of inner experiences:

"The extraverted sensation type is represented in someone whose gift and specialized function is to sense and relate in a concrete and practical way to outer objects...it has the best photographic apparatus, as it were; he can quickly and objectively relate to outer facts. This is why this type is found among the good mountaineers, engineers and business people, all of whom have a wide and accurate awareness of outer reality in all its differentiations...Jung says that such people very often give an impression of being rather soulless. Most people have met such a soulless engineer type, where you have the feeling that the man is absolutely dedicated to engines and their oils, and sees everything from that angle...Intuition is also completely lacking; that is for him just the realm of crazy fantasy."

Turning to test profiles, I find ennea-type IX recognizable in the portrait of an ISTJ (with introversion-sensing-thinking-judgment dominance), characterized by "decisiveness in practical affairs," and "guardians of time-honored institutions." I quote Keirsey and Bates:¹⁴

"If only one adjective could be selected, dependable would best describe this type."

"Whether at home or at work, this type is rather quiet and serious...the thought of dishonoring a contract would appall a person of this type...they perform their duties without flourish or fanfare; therefore, the dedication they bring to their work can go unnoticed and unappreciated."

"ISTJ's interest in thoroughness, details, justice, practical procedures and smooth flow of personnel and material leads this type to occupations where these preferences are useful. For example, ISTJs make excellent bank examiners, auditors, accountants, or tax examiners.. They would be capable of handling the duties of a mortician, a legal secretary or a law researcher."

¹³The description of which in Jung matched our ennea-type VIII.

¹⁴op. cit.

"As a husband or wife, the ISTJ is a pillar of strength. Just as this type honors business contracts, so do they honor the marriage contract."

We can also recognize ennea-type IX characteristics in a different profile, however: that of an ESFJ (with extraversion-sensing-feeling-judgment dominance), depicted by Keirsey and Bates as the most sociable of all types:

"Harmony is a key to this type...ESFJs are the great nurturers of established institutions, such as the home, the school, the church and civic groups..ESFJs are hurt by indifference and need to be appreciated both for themselves and for the abundance, typically in the form of services, they give to others..conscientious and orderly, ESFJs may become restless when isolated from people." They "are likely to be aware of and enjoy discussing events and problems in the lives of their colleagues; but when conversation turns to abstractions of philosophy or science, the ESFJs may become restive."

"ESFJs want family decisions settled efficiently and quickly, and want family living routinized, scheduled, and correctly executed. They do not rebel against routine operations, are devoted to the traditional values of home and hearth, respect their marriage vows, and are the most sympathetic of all types."

In the experience of homeopaths the character corresponding to ennea-type IX has been clearly recognized, and its qualities of stability and neutrality have been compared to the properties of that of Calcium carbonate that is still used to paint white walls. The Calcium carbonate of the remedy is taken from the middle layer of the oyster shell, and the mollusc too is seen as related to the human type: "First, there is the animal itself—cold, pale, moist, limp, inactive. Second, there is the shell—thick, impenetrable, fixed to a rock, protecting the completely defenseless creature within. Third, within this otherwise undistinguished creature there grows a pearl of polished and delicate beauty, born through steady concretion around an irritating grain of sand...."¹⁵

I quote further from Catherine R. Coulter: "*Indolence* or 'inertness' (Hering) is a key characteristic. Recall the inactive

¹⁵Coulter, Catherine R., op. cit., Vol. 1, all quotations on *Calcarea* from pp. 39-46, reprinted by permission of the author.

oyster, the most passive member of the mollusc family, only opening and closing its shell to take in food or to reproduce....

"In general, Calcareo may retain a certain immaturity or undeveloped quality, even in adult life. He usually empathizes readily with children, and sometimes he is more comfortable with them than with adults...In fact, he often wants to remain a child—preferring its slow, protected, tranquil existence to the striving competitive world of adulthood....Calcareo's inertia is traceable to 'lack of determination' (Hahnemann) and the absence of such other qualities as ambition, energy, and drive. The individual is rendered inactive by being too easygoing, too resigned, or he may consider striving and work to be as unnecessary for others as they are distasteful to himself. He may thus be a failure by ordinary standards...because he will not push or compete in a world where a certain amount of pushing and competition is required."

The picture of mental laziness is explicit: "The type puts off, is easily distracted, tarries, and fiddles with little things, unable to get down to the serious business at hand. He wears himself out with minutiae, so as to postpone undertaking the larger task....

"Calcareo can also present the polar opposite of the traditional picture of indolence [in which] what is stressful to Calcareo might be a part of another's normal routine.... Thus Calcareo is sometimes lethargic, apathetic, and phlegmatic, and at other times an immoderate worker who perseveres in order to overcome, or over-compensate for, his fundamental slowness and inertia. Indeed, this diligence can sometimes reach the point of 'exaggerated' or 'insane industry' (Kent), where he works day and night without letup...."

3. Trait Structure

Psychological Inertia

When I seek to bring order into the list of type IX descriptors through classification according to felt psychological commonality, I find that one of the conceptual clusters implies a trait that could be understood as a "paucity of inner experiences," to use Horney's expression in a paper of the same title, a lack of fire, a phlegmatic lack of passion. Along with these terms we may link "narcotization" (also introduced by Horney) and "thick-skinned" (a desensitization in the service of "long suffering"). An intellectual expression of the defensive loss of inwardness is a lack of subtlety and of imagination; an emotional consequence, a deadening of feelings, which may be either apparent (in an excessively phlegmatic disposition or in lack of communication about self) or hidden (under a genial or jovial disposition).

At the cognitive level, the most decisive aspect of it is the person's deafening to his or her inner voices—a loss of instinct well hidden by the apparent animalization (just as a pseudo-spontaneity of sexual and social freedom coexists with an inner deadening).

Not wanting to see, not wanting to be in touch with one's experience is something akin to cognitive laziness, an eclipse of the experiencer or inner witnessing in the person. In line with such eclipse of cognition in the light of a predominantly active disposition is a trait that may be called "concretism," the expression of which ranges from literalness to an excessively earth-bound attitude, a Sancho Panzaesque concern for survival and practicality at the expense of the subtle and the mysterious—a loss of openness to the unexpected and to the spirit.

Over-Adaptation

If spiritual laziness or *accidia* is the passion in enneatype IX, the interpersonal life strategy and associated life view may be seen in a cluster having to do with "over-adaptation," "self-denial," "self-neglect," "inattention to personal needs," and "an

over-controlled disposition"—which I am including in the same group—for it is not possible to adjust (to say nothing of over-adjusting) without the ability to take hold of oneself and inhibit one's impulses. It is against the background of this disciplined and controlled aspect of type IX (a trait that it shares with enneatype I with somewhat less intensity) that we can understand the alcoholic propensity of this character as well as the passion for eating. Both illustrate a compensatory indulgence of physical appetites that does not constitute an intensification of aliveness.

Other descriptors corresponding here are "deliberate" and "responsible." A type IX individual is not only one who ends up "carrying the bucket," but a dependable as well as generous person ready to carry a large load over his or her shoulders. If in most cases the failure to embody the ideal of loving one's neighbor as oneself comes from loving oneself more than one's neighbor, in enneatype IX, the situation appears as the opposite, for the over-adjusted postpone their own good and the satisfaction of their needs in an excessive yieldingness to the demands and needs of others.

It is easy to understand the connection between the two above-described traits: excessive adaptation to the world would be too painful to endure without self-forgetfulness.

Resignation

Both self-alienation and abnegated over-adaptation involve resignation—a giving up of oneself, an abdication from oneself and from life. It is as if the individual endorsed a strategy of playing dead to stay alive (yet becoming tragically dead-in-life in the name of life). Though resignation underlies over-adaptation it deserves to be considered by itself in view of the prominence of traits involving laziness in regard to one's needs, contentedness, and giving up or not standing up for one's rights.

Generosity

Related to a predominant orientation towards adaptation, in addition to a generalized "goodness of nature," "kindness," "helpfulness," "forgiveness," and, above all "abnegation,"

may be considered the "heartiness" of ennea-type IX, the friendly conviviality and the extraverted jollity of the "cyclothymic." It would seem that such jollity is part of an attitude of taking oneself lightly in order not to weigh upon others, just as friendliness is supported by the ability to be for the other more than for oneself. The convivial and hypomanic aspect of the "viscerotonic" was well known to Dickens, who gave us a wonderful portrayal of it in Mr. Micawber in *David Copperfield*. The over-adjusted individual characteristically likes children, is fond of animals, enjoys gardening. In his relation to others he is usually a good listener, ready to be helpful, sympathetic, and comforting, perhaps commiserating.

Ordinariness

Ennea-type IX individuals are frequently described as unassuming. Their self-concept is likely to be low—which often involves a resignation in terms of narcissistic needs. Their concern about excelling or shining is also low, and they may neglect their personal appearance. A characteristic ordinariness, a plainness and simplicity seem to derive from the giving up of the concern to excel and shine. (Type IX wants neither to shine, like type III, nor to be the best as type I). Though individuals with this character seem to have given up the wish for recognition, there is a deep and unconscious love thirst in their abnegated resignation and an implicit wish for love retribution. The sense of worth as well as the sense of existence of type IX is satisfied, not through applause, but rather, through vicarious participation, a living through others: lost identity becomes an identity by symbiosis with family, nation, party, club, team, and so on. We might speak of interiority through participation, either at the sentimental, the familial, or the larger group level.

Robotic Habit-Boundedness

Different traits emerging from the clustering of descriptors have to do with being "robotic." The over-adjusted are creatures of habit. They are bound by custom and regularity, as Sheldon observes of viscerotonics in general. They are

excessively concerned with the preservation of their balance. As a corollary, they tend to be conservative and tradition-directed to the point of rigidity. The same trait of psychological inertia may be thought to underlie an excessive attachment to the familiar, to the group norms or "how things are done."¹⁶ Robotization, of course, can be seen as a consequence of loss of interiority, of alienation from self. On the whole we are struck by the paradox that this most painstaking and long suffering way of being in the world is rooted in a passion for comfort: a psychological comfort purchased at such high price that, as intimated above, bioenergetics practitioners brand ennea-type IX individuals as "masochistic."

Distractibility

From what has been said it is clear that ennea-type IX approaches life through a strategy of not wanting to see, and this results in an over-simplification of the outer and inner world, a diminished capacity for psychological insight and also an intellectual laziness: a simpleton quality, characterized by excessive concreteness and literalness. It is not surprising that a loss of inwardness and insight entail a spiritual consequence—a loss of the subtlety of awareness required to sustain the sense of being beyond the manifold experiences in the sensory-motor domain.

That a perturbation of consciousness is involved in these various obscurations seems confirmed in the fact that ennea-type IX people describe themselves as distractible, confused, sometimes with a bad memory. It seems to me that it is common for type IX to break things or have personal accidents, and I think this observation may be the basis for the statistical fact of a correlation between death by car accidents and obesity. The nature of their attention problem seems to be a difficulty of concentration—which causes awareness to escape from the center of the experience realm toward its periphery. This distractibility of attention is assisted, however, by the

¹⁶Also, and perhaps as a compensation—in view of their over-adaptiveness—they are characteristically hard-headed and stubborn in a narrow-minded and prejudiced manner that they also share with ennea-type I.

individual's deliberate pursuit of distractions, as if driven by the desire not to experience or not to see. TV, newspapers, sewing, cross-word puzzles, and activity in general—in addition to sleep—serve the purpose of narcotization or "numbing out."

4. Defense Mechanisms

When I first presented my views on the correspondence between character structure and dominant defense mechanisms, I did not find a fully appropriate term for the characteristic way in which the ennea-type IX person distracts herself from inner experiences through attention to the outer world. The most appropriate I found and that which I adopted was Karen Horney's word "narcotization"-for her meaning is not only a loss of awareness but, more precisely, a "putting oneself asleep" through an immersion in work or in stimuli such as TV or reading the papers. Later I was to realize that this self-distracting maneuver is partly described by Erving Polster through the term introduced into the Gestalt therapy vocabulary as "deflection."

"Deflection is a neurotic mechanism¹⁷ for turning aside from direct contact with another person. It's a way of taking the heat off the actual contact. The heat is taken off by circumlocution, by excessive language, by laughing off what one says, by not looking at the person one is talking to, by being abstract rather than specific, by not getting the point, by coming up with bad examples or none at all, by politeness instead of directness, by stereotyped language instead of original language, by substituting mild emotions for intense ones, by talking about rather than talking to, and by shrugging off the importance of what one just said. All of these deflections make life watered down. Action is off-target; it is weaker and less effective. Contact can be deflected either by the person who initiates the interaction or by the respondent. The initiating deflector frequently feels that he is not getting much out of what he is doing, that his efforts don't bring him the reward he wants. Furthermore, he

¹⁷Some in the Gestalt movement today prefer, somewhat pedantically to my taste, "boundary disturbance."

doesn't know how to account for the loss. The respondent, who deflects another person's effect almost as if he had an invisible shield, often experiences himself as unmoved, bored, confused, blank, cynical, unloved, unimportant and out-of-place. When deflected energy can be brought back on target, the sense of contact is greatly heightened."¹⁸

While Polster's description makes reference to a watering down of interpersonal contact, however, I think that the defense mechanism involved in type IX's psychology is one in which a similar process takes place in regard to self-contact or contact in the broadest sense of the term. (Thus, for instance, I recall somebody who may be called a "TV addict" who listened to the news during mealtimes. I mostly thought of it as distracting from the personal situation around the table, but occasionally my attention would be roused by some particularly important piece of international news. Yet I soon observed that every time that something truly important was discussed, it was impossible to listen since he began to talk or, sometimes, switched channels to football). The mechanism of attending to the peripheral rather than the truly important may be seen as the basis of a generalized "defensive extroversion" in the "auto-intrceptive" type IX. I propose that it be simply called "self-distraction."

Another psychological mechanism that is particularly prominent in type IX is one which Kaiser postulated as a "root of all emotional disturbances" and described as a fantasy of 'fusion and as an unrealistic carry-over into the adult life of the early symbiotic relationship with mother. The concept is echoed in the Gestalt therapy notion of "confluence," described as a "boundary disturbance," but could be called a defense mechanism just as well, inasmuch as it constitutes an attempt to reject from awareness the fact of one's isolation, aloneness, and individuality. I quote from the Polsters:¹⁹

"Persons who live in unhealthy confluence with one another do not have personal contact. This, of course, is a common blight of marriages and long friendships. The parties to

¹⁸Polster, Erving and Miriam, *Gestalt Therapy Integrated* (New York: Vantage Books, 1974).

¹⁹Polster, Erving and Miriam, op. cit.

such confluence cannot conceive of any but the most momentary difference of opinion or attitude. If a discrepancy in their views becomes manifest, they cannot work it out to a point of reaching genuine agreement or else agreeing to disagree. No, they must either restore the disturbed confluence by whatever means they can or else flee into isolation. The latter may emphasize sulking, withdrawing, being offended, or in other ways putting the brunt upon the other to make up; or, despairing of restoring the confluence, it may take the form of hostility, flagrant disregard, forgetting, or other ways of disposing of the other as an object of concern.

"To restore interrupted confluence one attempts to adjust oneself to the other or the other to oneself. In the first case one becomes a yes-man, tries to make up, frets about small differences, needs proofs or total acceptance; one effaces his own individuality, propitiates, and becomes slavish. In the other case where one cannot stand contradiction, one persuades, bribes, compels or bullies.

"When persons are in contact, not in confluence, they not only respect their own and the other's opinions, tastes, and responsibilities, but actively welcome the animation and excitement that come with the airing of disagreements. Confluence makes for routine and stagnation, contact for excitement and growth."

5. Etiological and Further Psychodynamic Remarks²⁰

Sometimes ennea-type IX individuals are markedly endomorphic—the "whales" of Sheldon's atlas are rarely found in connection with other characters—and it may be said that as a

²⁰ Writing on the etiology of the dependent personality (in Cooper et al.'s *Psychiatry*) Esman states that "no known biological foundations can be associated with this syndrome, but it is possible that certain innate temperamental variants may predispose to its development." He also quotes Mahler suggesting that such children fail to resolve the "rapprochement crisis" of the second year, experiencing intense separation anxiety and maintaining, therefore, a clinging attachment to the mother that interferes with a normal evolution of a differentiated self and object representations."

whole the group is the most endomorphic in the enneagram. It is also the most ectopenic, and in this we may see a constitutional predisposition to the lack of inwardness in type IX character.

Sheldon observes a lack of distinct features, not only in the endomorphic body build but also in the viscerotonic personality, though whether this is a constitutional given in the realm of temperament or a secondary development is difficult to say, for it has been claimed that symbiotic character²¹ arises from a difficulty in the individuation phase in development; yet it is possible that this developmental characteristic is itself constitutionally influenced, for Sheldon observes a lack of distinct features, not only in the endomorphic body build but also in the viscerotonic personality.

Though Millon has suggested that the dependency in subjects with dependent personality may derive from an excessive maternal care, this is definitely not what I have observed in ennea-type IX individuals, who typically come from a large family where parental attention was divided among many siblings or from very busy households in which hard work absorbed much of the mother's energies. Such antecedents are congruent with the resignation of the so-called dependent personality and the great effort to deserve love implicit in their self-denying, over-giving behavior. Only after the course of psychotherapy does type IX understand the love starvation of his childhood and the degree to which he has "naively" protected his parents from deidealization, persevering in a childlike over-trusting naivete.

While a constitutional viscerotonic endowment may support the contented disposition of ennea-type IX, it is often clear from childhood circumstances that there was not another way out for the child than yielding to circumstances. Sometimes it was not that mother's warmth was lacking, but circumstances prevented her from being more available, and the child perceived that complaining or calling attention to oneself would be of no help. On other occasions the child feels in a precarious position in the family, and this gives a sense that by complaining one might lose what little one has. In the following extract from

²¹That may be considered equivalent to the sexual subtype of the over-adjusted. See Johnson's book *Characterological Transformation*.

an autobiographic report we find two unusual yet paradigmatic events having contributed to the "solution" of over-adjustment: an exotic cultural pattern and extreme brutality.

"My early childhood was divided up. When I was six months I was given away to my great grandmother, that's part of the early culture of the Zamoros. So I never knew my parents until I was nine years old when the war broke, and my Aunt thought that she should return me to my parents in case anything happened during the war. And already I was rejected and abandoned, and when I came back to my family, my brothers and sisters did not accept me, they thought I was an intruder to the family. So...my mother is quiet but domineering. My father is a drunkard and when he comes home, we know when he's coming home because he will be singing from work. We know what we are supposed to do; that we should disappear, and I always get the blame 'cause I am the oldest of thirteen children and anything that goes wrong in the family, I get the blame. I will get the spanking, and then my father will give me the belt, and I will give it to my brothers and sisters to let them know that I am the boss when my parents are not around, that they should listen to me. My mother is quiet but very domineering in her quietness. She controlled my father and, well, one thing about my father, we children never saw him raise his hand to my mother, but my mother would wait until he sobered up and then talk to him, and then he'd come home the next day the same thing—drunk from work. One thing I can say about my dad, that he never spent the money for his drink, he'd always bring the check home. He's a good provider and his friend would give him the drink. He never raised his voice on my mom. And we'd never see them quarrel. During the Japanese time he worked very hard, and yet when we'd collect the food the Japanese came and took the food from us. And my mother would go and collect some more of the food, we all went and helped her pick potatoes and all kinds of things, and a few days later the Japanese would come. So we were deprived of food at that time. I was nine years old. And toward the end of the two years we were in the Japanese camp, the Japanese collected all the men, eighteen up, and took them, before the Americans came in, and my father was one of them, but he escaped and the rest of the men that were taken, they were killed on the way. And my

mother hid me just before then because the Japanese were collecting them all up and put them in a cave and threw hand grenades in and killed them 'cause they were afraid that there would be an uprising. And they were going to finish us all but the Americans came in."

Though the events in this story are rare they are paradigmatic: it is clear that the girl in it had grounds to become resigned, i.e., she had to cope in situations where there was nothing she could do. When I said this to her after listening to her report, her immediate comment was: "That's why I'm always saying 'I'm OK'. I deceive people by laughing things off."

An element that often appears in the stories of enneatype IX is an expectation that they contribute to what work there is to do at home. A woman says, for example: "You always had to milk the cows, morning and night...another trait in both of my parents was the work before you play, you don't show emotions, you suffer it out, you stick it out, you don't complain by being sick."

A common variety of that situation is becoming mother's helper with younger siblings as in the following example: "I have a brother that's two years older than I, and then it's myself—and I was the baby for five years—and then my sister was born. And I don't know how that came about, but it seemed like I fell into being *responsible for my sister*, as a five-year old already, and that just came to me a couple years ago when I experienced some resentment against her, and I was trying to figure out why, and then it came to me that I kind of lost my childhood at that point. I remember one incident when she must have been a toddler maybe three or four years old, and we were standing on a busy street. My mother was in the store shopping, and we were waiting for my dad, and I had her by the hand and I would have been maybe eight years old then and all of a sudden she saw my dad coming and she broke loose and ran into this busy street, and the thing that I remember—my dad saw her too and he just ran out and stopped the traffic, or else she would have been run over. And the first thing that I thought of was if she had been hurt it would have been my fault. Now, it's a very strong impression. I don't think my parents ever gave me that, I don't remember that they did. But anyway...So then four years later another little girl came along, and by that time I was really ready

to be the mother and I guess I took it on—both parents coming from large families where it was taken for granted that each child would take care of the younger ones. I think that we just fell into it. It wasn't that I really had to, because Mom didn't work outside of the home and she could have really handled it quite easily I think. But that's where I think I got the idea of the self-forgetfulness and putting myself aside and not ever feeling real free to have fun and do what I wanted to do, because there I was always looking after the kids, keeping an eye on them and making sure that they were okay."

Regarding the personality of parents, it is common to find types IX and I, particularly in combination. The former influence, of course, has acted a model of self-giving, the second has brought in perfectionistic demands: "My mother was very puritanical and perfectionistic. Being good was the way of avoiding spanking." "I always received the message that it was not allowed and that in addition, one had to be ready for a time when it would be even less allowed."

Even though over-adjusting is very opposite to rebellion, it is interesting to observe that rebellion toward a parent may have constituted a motive in adopting this style, as for instance in the following report by a young man: "My mother (I) has always reproached my father (IX) before me, and I think that it has been a rebellion toward her that has made me what I am, because I always had to do what she wanted. It was also an expression of love toward him. He was not present a lot. He worked out of town and whenever he appeared there were problems according to my mother. But I, as a child, remembered beautiful things in connection to my father."

It is easy to understand why sometimes a type IV mother appears often in type IX histories; as in the case of a perfectionistic parent, this has involved demands and the need to defer to somebody else's need. In the following example this element appears along with another common feature in the childhood of ennea-type IX, that of seeking to be a pacifier between the parents: "I always remembered my mother disparaging my father saying that he was lazy, that he had to work, that she had managed things, etc. But I could not believe that my father was such a bad person, and I wanted to be like him—peaceful and leisurely. He has little but manages with

little. I also need little, just affection. I became like a bridge between them. I tried to make it better between them as a mediator."

While the search for love in other characters has visibly turned into the search for love substitute or into the search for something that was originally perceived as a means to attracting parental care, in the "slothful" it appears to have been a resignation in regard to love and attention. Yet this resignation is only maintained through a loss of inwardness, for compulsive generosity does entail an unconscious expectation of reciprocity. While the unconsciousness of the love wish makes it inappropriate to speak of seduction or baiting, the individual is most grateful when his or her giving is acknowledged, and we may say that her search for love mainly takes the form of this wish to be acknowledged in her givingness and her selfless generosity.

6. Existential Psychodynamics

Just as at the bottom of the enneagram (IV and V) conscious existential pain is maximal, in ennea-type IX, at the top, it is minimal; and while ontic obscurity in type III is better intuited by an outsider who may ask "What is all the rush about?" than by the subject himself, in type IX not even an outsider would guess the loss of inwardness on the individual's part, for his contentedness seems to radiate in such a way that he seems more *there* to others than he himself feels. Precisely in this lies the special characteristic of the ontic obscurity in the indolent, over-adjusted disposition—that it has become blind to itself.

Throughout the elucidation of the loss-of-being in the other characters we have noted how a craving for being, in its impatience, seems to fix itself upon different appearances where there lies an ontic promise. In the case of ennea-type IX, rather, it is not the intensification of "ontic libido" that stands in the foreground but, on the contrary, a seeming lack of craving that gives the person an aura of spiritual fulfillment.

Yet the seeming enlightenment of the "healthy peasant" entails an unconsciousness of unconsciousness, a falling asleep to one's yearning. I cannot understand Ichazo's statement to the effect that in indolence "the trap" is being too much of a seeker. Characteristically, the opposite is true: type IX is not enough of a seeker, despite the subjective sense of being so and despite manifestations of displaced seeking such as erudition, traveling, or collecting antiquities. Indeed such negative transmutation of the transformative urge into impulses oriented toward a less dimensioned venture is typical, and may express itself in a desire to know curiosities. Dickens' Mr. Pickwick is a good literary example in his venturing beyond the outskirts of London, learning languages, and so on.

As I have examined the existential psychodynamics of the different characters thus far, I have been spelling out the contention—expressed by the central position of ennea-type IX in the enneagram of characters—that the "forgetting of self" is the root of all pathologies. While in other instances this transpersonal perturbation seems the background for striking interpersonal consequences, in type IX it is the foreground, and a relative paucity of compensatory consequences gives the impression of interpersonal health, "pseudo maturity." We may say that type IX is less neurotic than other characters in the ordinary sense of the word that makes reference to psychological symptoms proper, and that its perturbation is more purely spiritual.

Even though the being-substitutes of ennea-type IX are not in the foreground—as in the frantic speeded-up psychology of vanity or in the intensity search of the masochistic or the sadistic personalities—this "search for being in the wrong place" is there, as it is in all characters. One of its forms I have called "over-creaturization": a search for being in the realm of creature comforts and survival-related practicalities. Such a person might say, "I eat therefore I am." Another form is the pursuit of being through belonging. For the ennea-type IX individual, the needs of others are his own needs and their joys are his joys. Living symbiotically, he lives vicariously. He could say, "I am you, therefore I exist"—where the "you" can be a loved one, a nation, a political party, a Pickwickian club, even a football team....

Though compulsive abnegation develops in part as a response to the belonging drive, it also serves as function of ontic compensation: "I am because I can do," "I am because I can be useful." Just as being can find substitute satisfaction through belonging, it can also take substitute satisfaction through ownership—as pointed out in the title of one of Erich Fromm's books: *To Have or To Be*.²²

On the whole, the physical and obvious afford the Sancho Panzas of the world a most satisfying "ontic pacifier," and the search for being in the concrete, seeming most commonsensical, turns out to be the most hidden. It's hiddenness reminds us of Nasruddin's donkey: It is told that Nasruddin was seen at a remote outpost of customs officials crossing the border again and again on his donkey; he was suspected of smuggling something, but never were the customs inspectors able to find anything other than hay in his donkey's bags. When one of them ran into Nasruddin much later in life, at a time when both lived in a different country and had left behind the circumstances of their past, he asked the Mulla what it was that he was surely smuggling so astutely that they were never able to catch him for it, Nasruddin's answer was: donkeys.

While in its highest sense a pointer towards the hiddenness of God ("closer than our jugular vein), Nasruddin's smuggled donkey can also serve as a paradigm for the invisibility of ignorance and for the singular unobtrusiveness of ennea-type IX neurosis.

²²Fromm, Erich, *To Have or To Be* (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1982).