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FORTY DAYS ON
BEING A ONE



ENNEAGRAM DAILY REFLECTIONS

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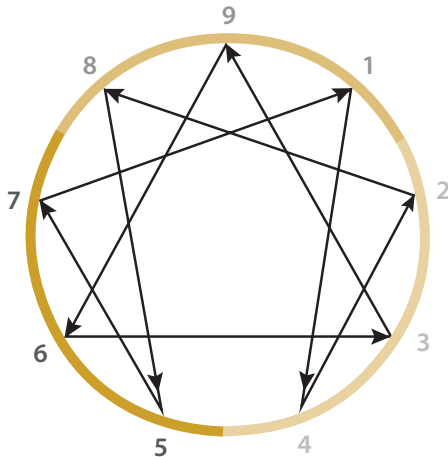


WELCOME TO ENNEAGRAM DAILY REFLECTIONS

Suzanne Stabile



The Enneagram is about nine ways of seeing. The reflections in this series are written from each of those nine ways of seeing. You have a rare opportunity, while reading and thinking about the experiences shared by each author, to expand your understanding of how they see themselves and how they experience others.



I've committed to teaching the Enneagram, in part, because I believe every person wants at least these two things: to belong, and to live a life that has meaning. And I'm sure that learning and working with the Enneagram has the potential to help all of us with both.

Belonging is complicated. We all want it, but few of us really understand it. The Enneagram identifies—with more accuracy than any other wisdom tool I know—why we can achieve belonging more easily with some people than with others. And it teaches us to find our place in situations and groups without having to displace someone else. (I'm actually convinced that it's the answer to world peace, but some have suggested that I could be exaggerating just a bit.)

If our lives are to have meaning beyond ourselves, we will have to develop the capacity to understand, value, and respect people who see the world differently than we do. We will have to learn to name our own gifts and identify our weaknesses, and the Enneagram reveals both at the same time.

The idea that we are all pretty much alike is shattered by the end of an introductory Enneagram workshop or after reading the last page of a good primer. But for those who are teachable and open to receiving Enneagram wisdom about each of the nine personality types, the shock is accompanied by a beautiful and unexpected gift: they find that they have more compassion for themselves and more grace for others and it's a guarantee.

The authors in this series, representing the nine Enneagram types, have used that compassion to move toward a greater understanding of themselves and others whose lives intersect with theirs in big and small ways. They write from experiences that reflect racial and cultural differences, and they have been influenced by their personal faith commitments. In working with spiritual directors, therapists, and pastors they identified many of their own habits and fears, behaviors and motivations, gifts and challenges. And they courageously talked with those who are close to them about how they are seen and experienced in relationship.

As you begin reading, I think it will be helpful for you to be generous with yourself. Reflect on your own life—where you’ve been and where you’re going. And I hope you will consider the difference between change and transformation. *Change* is when we take on something new. *Transformation* occurs when something old falls away, usually beyond our control. When we see a movie, read a book, or perhaps hear a sermon that we believe “changed our lives,” it will seldom, if ever, become transformative. It’s a good thing and we may have learned a valuable life lesson, but that’s not transformation. Transformation occurs when you have an experience that changes the way you understand life and its mysteries.

When my dad died, I immediately looked for the leather journal I had given to him years before with the request that

he fill it with stories and things he wanted me to know. He had only written on one page:

*Anything I have achieved or accomplished
in my life is because of the gift of your mother
as my wife. You should get to know her.*

I thought I knew her, but I followed his advice, and it was one of the most transformative experiences of my life.

From a place of vulnerability and generosity, each author in this series invites us to walk with them for forty days on their journeys toward transformation. I hope you will not limit your reading to only your number. Read about your spouse or a friend. Consider reading about the type you suspect represents your parents or your siblings. You might even want to read about someone you have little affection for but are willing to try to understand.

You can never change *how* you see, but you can change what you *do* with how you see.

ON BEING A ONE



I am a number One on the Enneagram. If you are a One, you know the weight of the world we carry. If you know a One, these readings will give you enhanced insight into our world. Either way, bring your work boots—you will need them!

My hope is that this book will shine a light on Ones and offer space for some “Yeahs” and “You mean I’m not the only One?” Give yourself permission to reflect on what might offer you more joy and spontaneity, peace of mind, and, dare I just say it up front, more freedom?

I started my Enneagram journey as part of a quest to know who I really was after experiencing a major depressive episode that shattered my sense of self. I lovingly refer to that episode and time in my life as “the crash.” What I learned about depression is that when Ones give up on themselves or others, they move to the low side of Enneagram Four behavior. At this point Ones often appear to be depressed to others. And some Ones (like me) do indeed become clinically depressed.

As I was recovering, I attended an Enneagram workshop in Houston, my hometown, at the Jung Center. I almost burst into tears as the facilitator spoke and unpacked my baggage over a few hours. I left the workshop feeling understood and poised for one of the most significant transformations that I would experience in the aftermath of my crash.

Now, some might say that the Enneagram is simply a personality profile, but I would suggest that the Enneagram is a life-transforming insight into a way of living more deeply, richly, and ultimately in a more gratifying way. The Enneagram has been a door, a gate, and a light. It's no coincidence that these same words are also biblical references to Jesus. I am so grateful that the Spirit of God led me to that workshop at the Jung Center, because the insights I gained have given me hope for living the life Jesus assures us of—what Scripture calls the abundant life.

I wrote this in isolation without the counsel of other beautiful Ones to support or deny my claims, so I would love your take on the One you know or the One you are. Join me on social media and let's get talking!

Each day's reading will conclude with a section that you can use however is the most helpful for you—whether making it a time of journaling, self-affirmation, or forging a new practice. Feel free to explore them and see where they take you; do what nurtures your soul.

NOTICE WHAT YOU ARE NOTICING



NOT LONG AGO, MY HUSBAND, Rudy, and I agreed that it was time to make a shift from our busy lives since our way of living wasn't working anymore. I had been living for six months in Indianapolis to support our daughter and son-in-love in caring for our newborn grandson. I had never imagined being a grandmother. I had never dreamed of moving to Indianapolis or living anywhere other than Houston. After six months of Rudy commuting back and forth from Houston, we had a moment of awareness. We noticed that we had too much house in Houston for the shift that had occurred in this new season of our lives, so we downsized.

In Indianapolis, we purchased a small one-bedroom condominium in the complex where our kids lived so that my support for them didn't trespass against them or me. I am an introvert, and I need my space, silence, and solitude. Our little condo is in the lower level of a converted elementary school.

In Houston, we had previously purchased a much smaller home, a foreclosure in our old neighborhood next door to my eighty-eight-year-old mother-in-love. The plan was for it to be our rental for additional income; instead, it became our perfect new home. Rudy and our dear friend Willie Barnes worked on updating the house while I was away in Indy. They did an incredible job with Rudy's eye for design and Willie's craftsmanship. I am happy here in our new home.

This new home is the physical symbol of the significant change occurring in our lives. I have noticed that the reduced square footage makes this house comfy, cozy, and more intimate. I am enjoying that. It is an older home, so we have a front porch, something many houses no longer offer. We have made it a habit to sit on the porch in our rocking chairs, enjoying a glass of evening wine or hot morning tea—just being together, sometimes in silence and other times in raucous laughter. I notice that we are reconnecting with ourselves and our neighbors. Front porches can do that.

I enjoy gardening, and this house has just enough space along the north side of our driveway for a small, above-ground, organic vegetable garden. I planted kale, tomatoes, romaine lettuce, swiss chard, and jalapeños for my hubby. I notice how he loves picking his peppers fresh from our garden, something that has become a lil' bit of joy for him. I invested in a garden plan for our clean slate of a backyard, and it is allowing us to take our time and plant together the fruit trees

and flowers that we both had as children and around which we have fond memories. I wanted to attract butterflies to our garden, and we have been able to watch a dozen or so caterpillars eating their way toward transformation.

I have felt such joy here, and I notice that it has been good for our souls in all the right ways. Transformation or change doesn't have to be fraught with anxiety, friction, and chaos. Sometimes change is announcing itself as a conscious choice to notice what we are noticing.

Ones typically ignore or suppress what might have been sublime moments had we been present to them rather than checking the moment off of our to-do list. I am learning how to be present with my noticing, and it is creating such awareness that I can be open to knowing joy.

Sometimes the call for transformation happens suddenly with an announcement; other times it is a subtle shifting of energies or interest. How is your life inviting you into a new way of being?

LETTING GO OF OUR TRY HARDER



AFTER A WEEKLONG VISIT TO INDY, we returned to our home in Houston and I walked into the house as I typically do, settling into my routine, which includes opening the blinds and airing out the house, letting in some fresh air and sunlight.

I opened the blind nearest to the kitchen table and was shocked and startled to find a full-sized blue jay dead on the windowsill. It had come in through the fireplace and couldn't find its way back up and out. My heart went out to it. I imagined how desperately it must have tried to break through the glass. I wondered how long it had fought to live, stuck as it were. I saw the signs against the window where it had beat its breast, hoping to be free. I imagined how terrified it might have felt, not knowing any other way than to "try harder."

We Ones are so like the blue jay trapped in a pattern of "trying harder," and like the blue jay, we die a little every day until we come to see that our way simply doesn't work.

For much of my life, I was trapped in a life of doing-more, pushing-more energy—a just-try-harder kind of mental model. That way of being left me exhausted, depleted, and obsessed. In his book *You2*, Price Pritchett wrote, “If you stake your hopes for a breakthrough on trying harder than ever, you may kill your chances for success.”

What if the blue jay had stopped, looked, and listened? Would that the bird had stopped long enough to let go of its tunnel-vision, try-harder mentality. What if it had looked around at how it had flown in? Would that it had listened to the internal compass that is built in its DNA that allows it to migrate seasonally with such great success. No doubt, the blue jay could have found its way to freedom and real life.

What do you and the blue jay have in common?

How are your current challenges or opportunities inviting you into something different?

What would it look like for you to stop, look, and listen to your internal GPS, the Divine speaking in and to you now?

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