

# AWAKENING NEWSLETTER

## #18

In the next several newsletters we shall be exploring the 9 pathways delineated by the Enneagram, an ancient teaching used by the Sufis and the Egyptian Mystery Schools.

The Enneagram describes 9 types of “trance”, 9 delusions that underlie misidentification of who we are in 9 specific ways. At the core of each type there is a quality of Being, of Essence, that got distorted or diminished. The developing ego structure is an attempt to imitate, or recapture that quality. But ego cannot produce Essence, it only produces an imitation that keeps us farther away from Truth.

Each pathway involves a search for what is perceived to be missing. Today we will be examining **The Search for Perfection**. I will be offering a two day training in the Enneagram system at the end of September if you’d like to learn about this fascinating tool for self discovery and working with others.

## THE SEARCH FOR PERFECTION

***Everything is just right, as it ought to be. Whenever we really show up fully in the here and now, we recognize that the Divine Plan is unfolding exactly the way it needs to. There is no need to change or improve it.***

In this pathway, what has been lost is the idea that all things are perfect as they are. We develop the mistaken notion that there is good and evil. We begin to see daylight as good and night as bad, men as superior and women inferior, happy times as good and sad ones as bad, instead of recognizing the Essential unity that continually flows between yin and yang. When we become disconnected from this quality, we see things through the filters of our judgments and preferences, likes and dislikes, our ideas of how things are supposed to be. We compare reality, and ourselves, to a set of standards of how they “should” be, and then try to make them that way.

In the Bible, when Adam and Eve ate of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil they were expelled from Eden – they lost the Essential Unity of all things and became divided, they fell into dualistic, good-and-evil thinking. They lost the idea of the perfection of Essence as it is. Now they see imperfection where only perfection existed. They lost The Garden. This is the core delusion of this pathway. How does this form?

Imagine a childhood where you were rejected, abandoned, called bad a lot, all your mistakes are pointed out. You had to be a certain way or risk disapproval. You got messages to behave yourself, try hard, you can do better. You were criticized for responding spontaneously to pleasure, and so learned to distrust your emotions and instincts. Over time, this story becomes internalized and identified with. The standards and expectations of who you are supposed to be supersede the flowing experience of Self-as-perfection as it is. You begin to worship these standards as truth and forget yourself. You determine not to be caught off guard by criticism, and so develop a filter for seeing flaws, mistakes, ways it could be better, how it's not good enough yet. Implicit in this approach is a smoldering anger that things are not right.

You learn to identify with the "good" parts of yourself – those that have been judged acceptable - and try to reform the "bad" parts. Being so focused on what should be done, there is little space left for your own real desires, and so you are resentful –a chronic irritation that constantly reheats just under polite behavior.

This is the home of judgment, criticism, pickiness, morals and etiquette. (Recall Felix Unger on the Odd Couple). It is the struggle to improve reality, idealized as noble action, that leads to things like jihads, The Crusades, and The Inquisition. This is the concept of Original Sin. When we lose contact with Perfection we try and make perfection - purifying, cleansing, renouncing, repressing ourselves and others. We become polarized toward controlling ourselves and against pleasure. We fight our desires and label them as "bad". If we allow ourselves to do as we please, we fear being swept away by our wildest impulses.

The egoic mind is convinced something is wrong with you and reacts by trying to make yourself better - comparing, checking with the standards to correct wrongness, try to set it right. We have forgotten we are already right, intact, and whole, and try to create that experience by living in a divided house with the Judge on the top floor. We become moralists instead of moral.

Rudolph Giuliani, Ralph Nader, Hilary Clinton, Ned Flanders, and Dr. Laura are some examples of this pathway. Switzerland, with its precise timekeeping and fastidious cleanliness, reflects this orientation.

### **The Awakened Perfectionist**

Each of the Pathways awakens to a particular quality of Being. This Pathway opens into the experience of serenity. Here we allow all feeling impulses into awareness without deflecting the ones judged unacceptable. We see the wholeness in ourselves and in all things, we recognize the rightness of existence of both ends of polarities, not just the one we judge as "right."

Along this pathway, we have had to develop a keen ability to assess potential for improvement in any situation. This energy, when liberated from false

identification, allows us to quite naturally notice what is in alignment or not in all areas of life and to be highly motivated to improve it. We can become responsible, dependable, ethical people who naturally act with honesty and integrity. We are willing to stand up to authority, against the rules, for a higher moral purpose. We truly understand how to improve and make the world better. **Nelson Mandela** is an exemplar of the liberated dimensions of this Pathway.

**If this trance is prominent in you, here is what is helpful in loosening its grip:**

Notice the tendency of the mind to judge and criticize. Interrupt the pattern by questioning its validity – is there another valid way of experiencing?  
Remember that where never you are insistent you are right about anything, you are wrong. Notice how having to be right diminishes our relationships with others. When you are angry, be angry cleanly, not righteously. Own your anger instead of justifying it.  
Lighten up. Play. Have fun. It's OK to do what you please and enjoy it.  
Break the rules in some harmless ways  
Cultivate forgiveness and compassion – error is a part of learning.

**Here are some quotes from the September Awakening Intensive:**

***"I have done many workshops before but was still stuck in poor me and being the martyr. I was desperate, making unwise choices, reenacting my childhood and stuck in it, angry and lashing out. What I got was unbelievable! I had the beautiful experience of seeing myself. The dam is gone, there is a big ball of love expanding, and it's all in me." – Malinda, Yoga Instructor***

***"My life had fallen apart, I felt like I was dying. I was filled with confusion, anxiety and depression. I finally get it! The only person who can give me freedom and love is me. I love life. I am fearless and happy, joyous and free. I found a place of peace I have never experienced before." – Robin, Spa Owner***

***"This was incredibly empowering and reassuring. I was living from my intellect. I faced grief and terror and realized I can trust my heart without having to understand. I found 3 components – my beautiful child, a passionate juicy Goddess, and a wise old warrior. I feel really whole and am so grateful.***

***Now I am stronger than any challenge life can throw at me. This was a reminder that the Universe is on our side.” - Marah, Marine Biologist***

***“I came here because I didn’t want to put the knife to my own throat anymore. I was controlling and thought people sucked. Now I am my own man again. I know how to have fun. Thank you for being there at the right time to help me finally wake up. You showed me the real high I have been seeking in all the wrong places. I feel really free!” – Dave, Sales***

***“I was very skeptical about this. What I got was a sense of genuine self and what I have to give. I am a beautiful loveable woman. This was really cool!”– Rina, Tax Professional***

***“There was a deep sense of something missing. I had to be perfect. The Door of Abundance was right there but I couldn’t allow myself to open it. I gave this work everything I had and now I am whole, strong and ready to move mountains, not concerned with what others think. The joke was on me and I got it!” – Andrew, Sales Consultant***

***“In order to survive, I thought I needed to fit in or look good or avoid conflict with others. I love and forgive myself for all of that. It’s great! I claim my power, strength and courage.”  
– Linda, Retired***

***“I was very stuck and couldn’t move. I had all the answers, I got the concepts, but it didn't connect. I was a lost boy with demons surrounding me all my life. Now I feel purified.”  
– Mike, Environmental Protection***

***“My little girl jumped in my arms and embraced me. God embraced me. I am a beautiful, feminine woman full of light and love.” – Melissa, Student***

***“I was living in a optimistic trance - I’m fine, I have no problems. I was living in the future, glossing over, and***

***disconnected from my depths. Now I am way more whole,  
integrated and healthy. I am love.”– Bitsy, Real Estate***