

Brief Overview of the Enneagram of Lies

Lies are characteristic attitudes and orientations in which each type deceives himself and others about reality. Characteristic ways each type forsakes its own truth:

- ✓ Anger has been defined as a “standing against reality” and perhaps this sense of being at odds with what is, most purely describes this passion. **Ones** meet reality with preconceptions/false affirmations, the phrase that appears at Point One of the EOL. With their sense of how things ought to be acting as a compass, Ones pit themselves against and try to change what they encounter both inwardly and outwardly. Nothing is ever quite right, and so they are never satisfied. Feeling responsible for fixing what they perceive as bad, they end up feeling frustrated and resentful.
- ✓ **Twos** divide people into those they consider superior and those they consider inferior, the elite and the peons, the special ones and the hoi polloi. This is her lie, false valuation. Her idealization of those she considers special is her highest form of flattery.
- ✓ This is another area that makes inner work very slippery for a **Three**. They very often do not know where the truth leaves off and the lie begins. The biggest deception is a self-deception about her inner reality, and hence self-deception occupies Point Three on the EOL. It is sometimes difficult for Threes to separate out what they think they ought to feel, think, or believe, and what is actually the case for them. The identification with their role or function may be so complete that there is no internal space for any disparities.
- ✓ Here we see again the **Four's** pitting of herself against impossible inner pictures of how she ought to be, as well as an often-concomitant sense of inability to achieve what she believes she ought to be able to. The attitude of envy is implicit in this—desiring what one does not have and trying to be what one is not. For this reason, simulation, posturing and projecting the desired appearance, is at Point Four on the EOL.
- ✓ Part of a **Five's** hiding is her dissembling—primarily concealing her inner thoughts, feelings, and wishes under a cloak of indifference. Because of this, dissimulation—trying to appear not as one is—is at Point Five on the EOL. A Five's dissembling keeps her from making waves and helps her avoid confrontations, but it also reinforces her disconnection from others.

- ✓ The phobic **Six**'s need to follow blindly something or someone whom he perceives as greater than himself and to whom he can subordinate himself, and the counterphobic Six's need to rebel against or become the authority are reflected in the word idealization at Point Six on the EOL. In all these relationships to authority, we see the projection of the qualities of a Six's real strength—Essence—onto such a figure. Someone or something needs to be held up and seen as ideal, strong, and powerful; and someone else needs to be smaller than, be afraid of, and serve this ideal. This is a Six's central object relation, regardless of which side of it he identifies with.
- ✓ The **Seven**'s orientation is toward a future that exists primarily in his imagination, a utopia in which all of his wishes will be fulfilled. Envisioning and imagining what is possible replace facing and being in the present. His lie, then, his way of not facing reality, is false imagination on the EOL. Reality never conforms to his plan or his imagined sense of what fulfillment looks like, and so he is always disappointed.
- ✓ **Eights** are predisposed to give everything a more sinister spin. For this reason, on the EOL, which describes the veils through which each type sees reality, the phrase prejudice/false denial occupies Point Eight. His biggest denial is of the optimistic, the upbeat, the hopeful side of things, and it is his primary defense mechanism. He is driven by a profound distrust of others and of life itself, convinced that he must fight to wrest anything good out of the world. It is as though he were afraid of being duped by believing anything positive, and so better to see everything from its darkest side than risk being disappointed and let down by reality again. Like Sixes, he lives in an animalistic Darwinian world in which only the fittest survive, but unlike Sixes he identifies with the strong.
- ✓ It is often difficult for **Nines** to discriminate what values they personally hold, following instead the line of least resistance in conforming to those of their culture or subculture. This is why consideration/mechanical conformity appears at Point Nine of the EOL. A nine's lie is in considering others and not herself and mechanically conforming to the prevailing currents.