

The Coaching of Anticipation II: The Enneagram and Dynamics of Anticipation

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As we consider the Internal state that influences anticipation, the matter of personality will inevitably emerge. Personality plays a major role in determining the schema we apply to the world in which we act. As I have noted, the psychosocial template (and the somatic template) are important elements of the schema. While the schema (and personality) represents relatively stable components of the human psyche, the templates do shift constantly (or at least frequently) in our dynamic, mid-21st-century environment. While the polystatic process tends to focus on the shifting conditions of our internal and external world, it is important to acknowledge and seek a full understanding and appreciation of the role played by Personality in the psychology of anticipation.

There are many different models of personality types. Each of these comes with differing anticipations based on the specific personality (or character) being considered. I will illustrate how anticipatory psychology can be applied to personality types by focusing on one of the oldest and most respected models—this being the Enneagram. Our enneagram type leads us to differing anticipations. I offer a set of brief suggestions about the nine anticipations (both positive and negative) of the Enneagram (based on Helen Palmer's version of the Enneagram). At the extreme, each Enneagram type anticipates a large amount of something (positive) or the complete lack of this something (negative). What this something is differs for each type.

Enneagram One: The Perfectionist

Helen Palmer offers the following summary description of the background and current perspective and behavior of someone with a strong Enneagram One orientation (Palmer, 1991, p. 72):

Ones were good little girls and boys. They learned to behave properly, to take on responsibility, and, most of all, to be correct in the eyes of others. They remember being painfully criticized, and as a result they learned to monitor themselves severely in order to avoid making mistakes that would come other people's attention. They quite naturally assume that everyone shares their desire for self-betterment and are often disappointed by what they see as a lapse of moral character in others. The Perfectionist outlook is encapsulated in the image of Puritan ancestors. They were hard working, righteous, fiercely independent, and convinced that plain thinking and goodness would prevail over the shadow side of human nature.

If we explore the anticipatory reactions of Enneagram Ones, we find both positive and negative reactions. On the positive side, there is the prospect of living in an orderly world, or more immediately, the prospect of finding a room one is about to enter as being tidy or a relationship in which one is about to enter being highly predictable and constrained by social conventions or formal role. The Enneagram One is likely "light up" (a drop of dopamine in their bloodstream) when anticipating that the people with whom they are about to interact are responsible and to be trusted—they have "moral character." The "light up" is also likely to occur when anticipating that a highly structured, rule-based (even legal) system is available for interactions with another person.

While Emily Post's guidelines are no longer in vogue, one gains a sense that Enneagram One's would like Emily's etiquette to be back in force. There is a "proper" way to arrange the silverware, and a proper way to respond to a dinner invitation (even if it is sent by email or texted!). When an Enneagram One anticipates that things will be done "right" then they can "relax" (their parasympathetic system is softly engaged).

By severe contrast, the Enneagram One's sympathetic system kicks in violently when disorder and unpredictability are anticipated. The person with whom one is about to meet has been a "mess" in recent days and has acted in "strange" ways during previous meetings. More generally, the world that the Enneagram One anticipates joining in the morning after a bracing cup of tea is likely to be volatile and filled with ambiguity, turbulence, and contradiction. The prospect of entering this VUCA-Plus environment (Bergquist, 2025) fills the Enneagram One with dread.

This dread-filled anticipation can be self-fulfilling for the Enneagram One. They enter the VUCA-Plus world with a strong desire to slow things down, impose structure, and resist variation; these "ordering" actions will often produce "kick-back" leading to even greater volatility, ambiguity, and turbulence. Other people in their life don't want to be controlled, ordered about or forced to play certain roles prescribed by the Enneagram One. Counter forces will produce contradiction and even higher levels of anxiety and rigidity in the Enneagram One. Rules that are imposed are rules that are violated or at least indirectly "messed with." A vicious cycle is created, leading the Enneagram One to seek refuge after a day of turbulence (often retreating to a romantic comedy on the Cable channel or to a "safe" novel about the good old days of courtesy and character).

Enneagram Two: The Giver

The second Enneagram configuration is founded on a process of social give and take. Palmer (Palmer, 1991, p. 101) offer the following summary of Enneagram Two:

Twos move toward people, as if seeking an answer to the inner question Will I be liked? They have a marked need for affection and approval; they want to be loved, to be protected, and to feel important in other people's lives. These were children who learned love and security by meeting other people's needs. As one outgrowth of their search for approval, Twos develop an exquisite personal radar for the detection of moods and preferences. Givers say that they adapt their feelings to suit the concerns of others, and that by adapting, they are able to ensure their own popularity. They also report that if they are not getting the approval that they need that the adapting habit can become compulsive, to the point where they forget their own needs in a driven attempt to flatter others as a way of buying love.

In their anticipation of what is about to happen, Enneagram Twos are inclined to focus on interpersonal relationships. They anticipate how other people will react to the "gifts" being given to them by the Enneagram Two. This gift might be an invitation to the Enneagram Two's party or trip on their boat. It might instead be a favored book, recipe for Crème Brûlée, or a new silk scarf. The Enneagram Two could be offering the recipient a ride to their doctor's appointment, or an evening of babysitting so the recipient can attend the local theater with their new boyfriend.

Whatever the nature or size of the gift, the primary concern of the Enneagram Two will be directed toward the reaction of the gift's recipient. Will the recipient be grateful? Beholding? Resentful? Skeptical? Will the recipient try to hide away from the Enneagram Two, believing that there is a "hook"

embedded in the gift being given (there often is)? Will the recipient instead be seeking out the Enneagram Two, looking forward to receiving more gifts (or at least acknowledgement)? Even if there is a hook attached to the gift, the person who is hungry for attention and appreciation will stay attached to the Enneagram Two.

What happens to the psyche and somatic template of the Enneagram Two when they are anticipating a positive relationship with another person, and what happens when a negative outcome is anticipated? The positive outcome may be a statement of gratitude by the recipient of the gift or receipt of a reciprocal gift. The warmth associated with this anticipation is equivalent to that felt by the gambler when entering a casino. The Enneagram Two plays out the scenario of gratitude and shared gift-giving. They have high expectations—which means that they can be easily disappointed with the actual outcome of the interaction. They feel ‘hurt’ (the stabbing feeling) or angry regarding the recipient’s “insensitivity” or “ingratitude.” There is often an escalation of gift-giving quantity and quality. The Enneagram Two tries to increase their own emotional “hit” by providing a bigger gift—and expecting a bigger gift in turn from the recipient (who might wonder if the escalation will ever end!).

In addition to the failure of a gift recipient to live up to Enneagram Two’s expectations, there is also the immediate anticipation of the upcoming interaction not going well. The “insensitive” and “ungrateful” recipient can be expected to continue operating in a cold manner. The Enneagram Two is either “required” by society, their job assignment, or the expectations of other people in their life, to act in a very “nice” manner to this &^*&%&^* person. The gift is given with a sneer, is almost thrown at the recipient, or is given only after several awkward minutes. This anger-filled or hesitant display is often interpreted negatively by the recipient. In a self-fulfilling manner, the recipient is indeed not terribly grateful about receiving the gift, nor are they particularly “warm” in their interactions with the Enneagram Two.

The recipient might react in several other ways when confronted by Enneagram Two. They might feel patronized (the gift being primarily given to establish dominance). Instead, they might feel “put upon” (expected to deliver their own gift in return). As someone who feels little control over their relationship with an Enneagram Two, the recipient might even feel resentful of the Enneagram Two’s “intrusion” into their life.

Yet, with all of these potential negative anticipations and outcomes, Enneagram Two offers an invaluable service in most societies. They provide splendid service as a Flight Attendant or waiter. They ensure as committed social workers, diligent caregivers in senior living facilities, and owners of halfway houses. The service being rendered is “priceless,” and the gift of care and compassion is to be honored.

Enneagram Three: The Performer

The third enneagram perspective is founded on achievement and fulfilled purpose—the hallmarks of successful life in most mid-21st-century societies. While most of us are pushed toward the successful accomplishment of many projects during our life, there is a specific Enneagram type that places these hallmarks at the top of their list. Helen Palmer (Palmer, 1991, p. 134) offers this summary description:

These were the children who were prized for their achievements. They remember coming home from school and being asked about how well they had done, rather than how they felt about their day. Performance and image were rewarded, rather than emotional connections or a deep involvement in other people's lives. Because they were loved for their achievements, they tend

to suspend their own emotions and focus their attention on earning the status that would guarantee them love. The idea was to work hard for recognition, to take on leadership roles, and to win. It was very important to avoid failure, because only winners were worthy of love. Threes . . . are high achievers who have identified with the American popular image of youth, energy, and a competitive life.

Anticipation is particularly important for the Enneagram Three. While I have proposed that anticipation is central to all polystatic processing, the awareness of this anticipation is often not fully present among many people. The Enneagram Threes, however, are fully aware. As Palmer notes, the Threes will often set aside their emotions (and other life priorities) when anticipating a rewarding accomplishment. More than is the case with the other eight Enneagram types, the Threes “live for tomorrow” and are guided by their anticipations (often found in a checklist of things to be accomplished).

When their anticipatory checklist includes many “do-able” tasks, the Enneagram Three is likely to “light up.” Their energy surges (a sympathetic response), and their somatic template is filled with positive bodily sensations (taut muscles, strong heartbeat, focused attention). Once again, something similar is occurring for the Enneagram Three and the gambler. They both find gratification in anticipating success. And this gratification is often greater than what occurs when success is finally achieved.

The Enneagram Three is more likely to feel relieved (than gratified) after accomplishing many important tasks. A stiff drink, a glass of wine, or quiet time spent in a comfortable chair are more likely to follow the completion of a to-do list than is a dance of joy or “whoop” of accomplishment. Soon, there is preparation for the next day (or week) when success can be anticipated. Dopamine “injections” are more likely to follow the planning for success than the achievement of success.

Then there is the matter of Negative anticipations. The Enneagram Three looks forward to failure rather than succeeding in efforts to complete a specific task. They may anticipate major barriers that get in the way of completing important tasks. Inadequate resources might be available, even though Enneagram Three is assigned responsibility for completing a specific project. Under conditions of overwhelming challenge and insufficient support, the Enneagram Three is likely to experience massive stress.

Their body is preparing for battle with a real or imagined Lion (Sapolsky, 2004). It is a battle that they know can’t be won. The “lion” is much too strong and fast. The weak and slow human can rarely fight or flight. Instead, like a rodent on the African Savanna, the human being must freeze in place and hope they will be ignored by the Lion. While rodents will cease the freeze after a few moments and shake off the accumulated adrenaline, we human beings are likely to remain frozen in place for an extended period of time; thereby doing major damage to body, mind and spirit.

This is particularly the case with Enneagram Threes. They not only produce many real and imagined lions in their identification of multiple tasks to be accomplished but also produce higher levels of adrenaline when confronting the lion than is the case with other folks who are less invested in successfully defeating the lion. Other Enneagram types tend to be more realistic when anticipating their ability to confront the lion with strength and knowledge. Unlike Tarzan, who could use brute force when attacked by a lion, most folks either avoid work that involves lions or find ways to cooperate with or “buy off” the lions in their life.

For the Enneagram Three, physiological and psychological “burnout” often follows repeated confrontations with lions and repeated attempts to freeze when being confronted by lions. Even when

the Enneagram Three is occasionally successful, like Tarzan, in defeating the lion, the anticipation of new battles and new defeats produces inappropriate, sustained, and destructive sympathetic responses in their bodies. Type A stress, high blood pressure, and heart attacks often accompany the Enneagram Three's anticipation of lions, especially if this anticipation is negative.

Enneagram Four: The Tragic Romantic

If Enneagram Three might best be portrayed in a movie by a hard-hitting action filled story of Wall Street, the production of a new-fangled automobile, or the Horatio-Alger type life story of a person who rose from poverty to great wealth and success, the Enneagram Four movie is likely to involve deep tragedy and intense love, with a Bronte-like script shot on the moors of England. Helen Palmer (Palmer, 1991, p. 168) offers her own summary of this fourth type:

Fours remember abandonment in childhood, and as a result they suffer from a sense of deprivation and loss. Their inner situation is reflected in the literary prototype of the tragic romantic who, having attained recognition and material success, remains steadfastly focused upon the lost love, the unavailable love, a future love, and a picture of happiness that only love can bring. To understand this worldview, you need to project yourself into a state of mind where decisions are based as much upon the shifting chemistry of mood as upon the perception of actual facts; and where conversations are remembered as much for their feeling tone and innuendo as for whatever words were actually expressed. Depression is a frequent mood.

Anticipation for the Enneagram Four inevitably involves the sense that something of emotional importance is about to take place. The Enneagram Four must "brace themselves" for this impending encounter. This often means becoming highly vigilant (complete with a squirt of dopamine). The somatic template is "alive and well" with all senses being fully alert. The Enneagram Four can even smell better ("what perfume are you wearing?") and be highly sensitive to touch ("Your caress is amazing"). With this "bracing" comes a filtering system in full operation. Those things that are trivial get screened out in favor of those things that are deeply meaningful and moving.

I am reminded of a scene late in the Hollywood version of Lerner and Lowe's *Brigadoon*—a musical that is Enneagram Four-saturated. Gene Kelly is sitting at a bar, reminiscing about his loving encounter with Cyd Charisse in a mythic Scottish village. His fiancée is talking to him about their upcoming wedding and Gene's lack of attention to her. Gene doesn't hear her (and is inattentive as his fiancée observes). The bar is humming with many conversations, yet all that Gene can hear are the words and songs sung by himself and Cyd in *Brigadoon*. That which holds little emotional meaning simply receives very little attention. Anticipation is directed to that which is likely to hold great meaning.

For the Enneagram Four, positive anticipation requires two features. First, there must be engagement in a deeply emotional and personally insightful experience or relationship. *Brigadoon* will gain attention long before plans for a wedding (that never takes place). The second feature is the nature of this experience or relationship. It has to be pleasantly powerful. Cyd Charisse fills the bill. Gene's fiancée does not. For the Enneagram Four, the anticipation of a pleasant experience or relationship can also be tinted with a bit of remorse. This makes the experience or relationship much more meaningful. Cyd Charisse is enticing not only because of her beauty and grace (as a great dancer), but also because Gene can't be with her. That which is desirable but unavailable is most enticing for the Enneagram Four. I point again to the unrequited romances on the English moors.

What about the negative anticipation of an Enneagram Four? Pure hell awaits the Enneagram Four if they anticipate engaging for a sustained period of time in only superficial experiences and relationships, such as Gene Kelly anticipated with his fiancée. Hell for this person is an emotional wasteland where time passes by with few experiences or relationships of any meaning or importance taking place. The negative anticipation is likely to be compounded by a self-fulfilling prophecy. A superficial relationship is anticipated and, as a result, the Enneagram Four is inclined to invest very little in the relationship, thus making it truly superficial.

Gene Kelly is likely to have directed little meaningful attention to his fiancée if they were to marry. They would end up in the type of superficial marriage portrayed by Steven Sondheim (another champion of Enneagram Four) in many of his Broadway musicals (especially *Company* and *Follies*). Life in this wasteland for the Enneagram Four is likely to be associated with substance abuse, depression, and even the potential for suicide. While tragedy might only be imagined by the Enneagram Four, this state can be “tragically” realized if the Four anticipates only negative experiences or superficial relationships in their world.

Enneagram Five: The Observer

Some of us prefer to sit on a bench at the top of a nearby hill and watch the world go by below us. As Enneagram Fives, we take notes, make observations, produce theories, and formulate predictions about what is happening below and why it is happening. Most importantly, the Enneagram Fives believe that this observational stance enables them to do a better job of anticipating what is about to occur. Helen Palmer (Palmer, 1991, p. 204) provides her own summary description of the Enneagram Five:

The Observer's ego is like a castle, a high, impenetrable structure with tiny windows at the top. The occupant rarely leaves its walls, watching who comes to the door in secret, while avoiding being seen. Observers are very private people. They like to live in secluded places, away from emotional strain. They are often at home with the phone unplugged, and they watch the action from the edge of a crowd, making tentative effort to join. Fives felt intruded upon as children; the castle walls were breached and their privacy stolen. Their strategic defense is withdrawal, to minimize contact, to simplify their needs, to do whatever they can to protect the private space.

Private space is protected so that the Enneagram Five can not only predict what will be happening in their life but also control to some extent the appearance of unanticipated people and events. In many ways, the Enneagram Five is seeking to dwell in a closed system, where their “pet” theories and redundant predictions will always prove accurate. I suspect that the original theory of homeostasis was formulated by an Enneagram Five scientist/theorist. If Enneagram Threes view open systems as opportunities for advancement and success, Enneagram Fives are likely to perceive openness as a major threat.

Engaging Jean Piaget’s (Piaget, 1923/2001) model of learning, we could identify Enneagram Fives as assimilating learners. They “assimilate” incoming experiences within their existing frame of reference and set of theories. Even if the system is open, the Enneagram Five will treat it as closed and constrained without their own conceptual box. By contrast, the Enneagram Three is likely to be an accommodating learner. They adjust their own perceptions and anticipations based on what the incoming experiences are teaching them. The Enneagram Three dances to the shifting tune of their environment, while the Enneagram Five beats a steady rhythm on their conceptual drum that is immune to the incoming tune.

What then are the positive anticipations of the Enneagram Five? They look forward to engagement in an exciting, complex, and dynamic experience or relationship—provided it can be fit into their existing conceptual framework. One might refer to the “good day” spent by a psychoanalyst who is working with interesting patients for six hours—all of whom eventually confirm the analyst’s own theory about the human psyche. There is the excitement of someone who is challenging the existing theory, but who can be “assimilated” by making clever use of one’s existing framework as an Enneagram Five.

Negative anticipations arise if the patients being seen never seem to “behave themselves” (confirm the analyst’s theory). An Enneagram Five also faces a negative anticipation if they are expecting to engage in nothing but mundane, “everyday” experiences or relationships. While the Enneagram Four fears an emotional wasteland, the Enneagram Five fears living and working in a cognitive wasteland. They would hate doing behavioral therapy and focusing on the homework habits of teenagers. Better a tortured composer or painter seeking to rediscover their creative “juices”. Whether sitting behind a coach on which a patient lies or observing the activities of a community from a safe spot on the hill, the Enneagram Five wants “excitement” – but on their own terms and in the safety of their therapy office or on a safe hilltop.

Enneagram Six: The Trooper

The Enneagram Six lives in a world that seems to be filled with threats. The negative anticipations for them tend to outnumber the positive anticipations. Yet, the Enneagram Six keeps moving forward and is someone you want on your side. Helen Palmer provides this summary portrait of the Six (Palmer, 1991, p. 237):

Sixes lost faith in authorities when they were young. They remember being afraid of those who had power over them, of being unable to act on their own behalf. Those memories have carried over into adult life as a suspiciousness of other people's motives; Sixes try to ease this insecurity by either seeking a strong protector or by going against authority in the Devil's Advocate stand. There is both the wish to find a leader, to give one's loyalty to a protective organization, such as the church, or the company, or the university, and an equal mistrust of authoritarian hierarchy. The dutiful posture and the Devil's Advocate stance both stem from the suspicion of authority. Because they are afraid to act on their own behalf, Sixes have problems with follow-through. Thinking replaces doing because attention shifts from the impulse to act on a good idea, to an intense questioning of that idea from the point of view of those who might disagree.

A former colleague of mine, who is something of an expert on the Enneagram, not only declares himself to be an Enneagram Six, but also reveals that he worked for several years in a US federal agency that is in the business of security and espionage—and is filled with Enneagram Sixes! What better enterprise for the Enneagram Six than spending everyday finding verification for the basic assumption that our world is filled with danger and deceit.

There are some positive anticipations in the psyche of an Enneagram Six. They are likely to glow a bit when they can anticipate receiving access to valid information about what is really going on in a potentially threatening setting. I suspect that my colleague and his security-oriented collaborators found that their whole body (somatic template) felt energized when they picked up a top-secret report that revealed the “truth” about some clandestine operation. I further suspect that my colleague and his Enneagram Six co-workers were often torn apart when reading this report. On the one hand, they

wanted to believe that this report is accurate and that they can trust and be loyal to the leaders who authorized and prepared this report. As Helen Palmer noted, Sixes wish to find a leader they can respect, trust, and follow. On the other hand, as Helen Palmer noted, the Sixes approach this report with an inherent distrust in authority and a firmly held belief in the inevitable corruption of power.

Here is where the negative anticipation kicks in. The Enneagram Six's fight/flight reactions will kick in when they believe that they are being denied access to valid information. They also find their body churning when they worry about being unaware of what is actually going on in a potentially threatening setting. As Helen Palmer observes, Enneagram Sixes has problems with follow-through. I would suggest that this absence of action is a sign of freeze—the option available to human beings who are too weak to fight their foe and too slow to get away from the impending threat. In this state of freeze, the Enneagram Six may, as Helen Palmer suggests, be all-thought and no-action. Alternatively, they may appear to be thinking but are actually churning with the adrenaline that accompanies freeze. With no action in the face of a threat comes the body-destroying impact of sustained stress. While Enneagram Three is inclined to burnout because of the number of real threats they face in this ambitious life, the Enneagram Six is inclined to burnout because of their inability to successfully confront the imagined or real threats that they face in their work and life.

Enneagram Seven: The Epicure

As we enter the world of Enneagram Seven, the vista is filled with hope, promise, vision, and an enjoyment of the “lush life.” All of this requires a fair amount of redirected and distorted anticipation of reality. Helen Palmer (Palmer, 1991, pp. 275-276) has this to say, in summary, about the Sixes. She begins by grouping together three of the Enneagram types:

Points Five, Six, and Seven, grouped on the left side of the Enneagram, represent three different strategies for dealing with childhood fear. Sixes, at the core fear point, overprepare by vigilantly scanning the environment, and Fives withdraw from whatever makes them afraid. Sevens, looking not at all concerned, move toward people in an attempt to charm and disarm with pleasantries. Faced with a frightening early life, Seven children diffused their fear by escaping into the limitless possibilities of imagination. Sevens do not broadcast anxiety. They do not look afraid. They tend to be lighthearted and sunny, often addicted to planning and play. . . . This is the point of Peter Pan, of the Puer (and Puella) Aeternus, the eternal child. This also is the point of Narcissus, the youth who fell in love with the image of his own face reflected in a pool.

It is not surprising that Helen Palmer references several mythic and literary figures when describing the world of the Enneagram Seven. I would add another image, inspired by the work of Michael Goldberg, who has written about both the Enneagram (Goldberg, 1999) and Homer's *Odyssey* (Goldberg, 2006). I would suggest that the Enneagram Seven aligns with the world of the lotus eaters to be found in the *Odyssey* (and other romantic tales). Eating the intoxicating leaves of the Lotus plant, the inhabitants of a mythic Mediterranean island find no purpose in life other than to savor the dream-like life they are leading. As Epicureans, the Sixes seek out and enjoy many things in their life – food, music, art, drama, or sightseeing.

Singing about their home away from the island, yet finding no desire to return to this home, the Lotus Eaters exemplify the Enneagram Seven's ambivalent attitude about remaining where they are and seeking an alternative future. I am reminded of the Tarot card representing the charioteer. One remains

on the chariot (home) while racing forward in flight or combat. A similar image can be found in the snail's slow travel while carrying its "home" on its back (the snail's shell). Each of these images conveys something about the Enneagram's own journey through a lifetime. The Six is always on the move, dreaming of a future that is never attained. Yet the Enneagram Six is always carrying their "home" with them and insisting that they never want to leave this "home."

The anticipations of the Enneagram Six can be just as complex and filled with ambivalence as the home they don't want to leave—and always leave. Positive anticipations center on the realization of a dream and living in a world of rich opportunities and pleasures. Yet, positive anticipations also center on remaining just where they are right now. A bit of intoxication enables the Enneagram Seven to feel "fine" with where they are right now. What then do the Seven's want? Something new or their current situation? Is their positive anticipation filled with this ambivalence? Yes.

What about the negative anticipations? Enneagram Sevens dread feelings associated with the failed realization of their dream. They fear a life sustained in a world that is bleak and filled with despair. The lotus leaves enable the Enneagram Seven to buffer some of this fear. Their somatic template is saturated with dopamine or some numbing chemicals. This template is required because at some level, the Enneagram Seven is fully aware of their fated dreams. They constantly seek to escape from this negative anticipation by always dreaming of a desired future (that is never realized). Or they are lingering at a sumptuous feast of food, song, escapist drama, or recall of travel to an exotic land.

Enneagram Eight: The Boss

The focus of an Enneagram Eight is on control. They wish to "take charge" of their relationships with other people and the environment in which they operate. Helen Palmer (Palmer, 1991, p. 306) offers the following vivid portrayal of the Enneagram Eight:

Eights describe a combative childhood, where the strong were respected and the weak were not. Expecting to be disadvantaged, Eights learned to protect themselves, becoming exquisitely sensitized to the negative intentions of others. Eights see themselves as protectors. They see themselves as shielding friends and innocents by placing them behind their own protective bodies while continuing to struggle against unjust odds. Rather than being cowed by conflict, Eights find their identity as enforcers of justice, taking great pride in their willingness to defend the weak. Love is more often expressed through protection than through demonstrations of tender feelings. Commitment means taking the beloved under the wing and making the way safe. The central issue is control. Who has the power and will that person be fair? The preferred position is to take charge, to one's own power over the situation, and to maintain control over other strong contenders.

I can return to one of the central characters in Homer's *Odyssey* to provide an even more dramatic portrait of the Eight. I refer specifically to the Cyclops. This is a powerful, single-minded (one-eyed) combatant. He uses force to influence (and compel) the behavior of other people. As Palmer noted, the Enneagram can also be our protectorate. In the game of American football, there is a large (and often fast) member of the offensive team who typically plays the position of Guard (right next to the Center). This "Pulling Guard" often races out ahead of the running back, blocking anyone on the defensive team wishing to tackle the running back. In life away from football, we often look for a "pulling guard" in our own life. This is a person who is defending us against those who wish us harm or wish to block our

progress on some project. As a pulling Guard, the Enneagram Eight can be welcomed in our life, though they can also be unwelcome if they are serving as our “bossy” supervisor or as our demanding parent.

One might immediately assume that the Enneagram Eight is not afraid of anything. Like Cyclops, isn't this person lashing out without fear at anyone entering their cave without being invited in? Actually, the search for control and domination is based on a profound fear that one is lost without control and dominance. As Helen Palmer notes, it is all about being strong rather than weak. One has to have the power if they are to accurately anticipate what is about to occur in their “cave.” Positive anticipation is to be found when the Eight has full authority to exert control in a specific setting or, better yet, in a broad setting (“If I were king!”). Negative anticipation arises when the Enneagram Eight is forced to comply with a set of orders delivered by someone else. Hell exists in an organizational setting where the Enneagram Eight has been given significant responsibility for performing a task, yet has been granted little authority to perform the task successfully.

The Cyclopan Eight finds that they also receive little help from anyone else while expressing their anger and frustration. Other people tend to avoid their cave when they are thrashing about. As we find with the other Enneagram types, the Eight's aggressive behavior fulfills their expectation that other people are often indifferent to the Eight's welfare (“it's dog-eat-dog”). The self-fulfilling prophecy can also take the form of realized fear that, without control, one is lost—for the Enneagram Eight is often looking for a new job if they are not in charge. They have to find another cave and look (often in vain) for a setting where they have full control.

Enneagram Nine: The Mediator

Our mid-21st-century world is desperately in need of Enneagram Nines. These are the folks who bring people together from opposite sides of the road. They mediate, moderate and sometimes mollify. Helen Palmer (Palmer, 1991, p. 345) offers the following portrait of this ninth Enneagram type:

Nines are the children who felt overlooked when they were young. They remember that their point of view was seldom heard and that other people's needs were more important than their own. Eventually Nines fell asleep, in the sense that their attention turned from real wishes and they became preoccupied with small comforts and substitutes for love. Realizing that their own priorities were likely to be discounted, they learned to numb themselves, to divert their energy from priorities, and to forget themselves. When a personal priority does develop, it can be easily sidetracked. Errands can become as pressing as an important deadline. . . The closer a Nine get to having the time and energy available for a priority, the more attention can get diverted into secondary pursuits.

Yes, the Nines are often overlooked. I often find that Enneagram Nines are a middle child and in this role are not only neglected but also serve as the buffer between their older and younger siblings. With this early upbringing, the Niners are, as Helen Palmer suggests, inclined to subordinate their own needs and wishes to those of other people. The Nines also learn how to mediate between their older and younger siblings. Their experience and acquired skills in mediation can come in quite handy when they are grown adults.

I take specific pleasure in mentioning that one of my heroes, Dag Hammarskjöld, is often identified as an Enneagram Nine. An often-overlooked diplomat (though posthumous recipient of the Noble Prize) Hammarskjöld served as Secretary General of the United Nations. Often identified as the diplomat who

“built the UN”, Hammarskjöld brought together widely diverse (and often contentious) perspectives and interests among the initial UN members. Hammarskjöld was the quintessential mediator and moderator.

In shifting our attention to the Enneagram Nine’s anticipations, I would suggest that the Nine’s positive anticipations would be associated with their presence in a setting where it is possible to bring multiple parties together on behalf of a viable resolution. Much as Dag Hammarskjöld, George Mitchel and Jimmy Carter were often appointed as “peacemakers” later in their life, so the Enneagram Nine is likely to “light up” when receiving an invitation to assist a peace-making process—even though they may later regret this invitation given the grinding work of coming to a peaceful resolution.

More generally, the Enneagram Nine likes finding themselves in a setting where one can appreciate multiple perspectives and values regarding a specific stress-filled issue. They are the ultimate “relativists” who can appreciate both sides of an argument. When serving in an active “peace-making” role, they also embrace what William Perry (1970) identifies as “commitment in relativism”—meaning that they see both sides of the issue but are committed to finding a resolution rather than just appreciating both sides.

A strong set of negative anticipations is to be found in the Enneagram Nine’s psyche. The fear of being overlooked and taken for granted tops the list—though the Enneagram Nine might not admit to this fear (or even be fully aware of its lingering presence). The self-fulfilling prophecy reenters the picture. Not wanting to be rejected for inserting their own needs and perspectives into the mediation process, the Enneagram Nine will often withhold their own needs and perspectives, thus fulfilling their fear of being overlooked.

Negative anticipation is also found in the Enneagram Nine’s psyche when they find themselves in a setting where there is no possibility of successful resolution. Having a record of successful negotiations in previous settings, the Enneagram Nine, as mediator, is expected to be successful and may even be held responsible for the resolution of a long-standing conflict. One wonders about Hammarskjöld’s own mental and emotional state when finding little success in leading a UN mediation of conflict in the Congo. What was on his mind when his plane crashed in a mysterious manner while flying to the Congo?

There is one other way in which negative anticipations are likely to plague an Enneagram Nine and throw their somatic template out of kilter. The Enneagram Nine fears being bypassed as a “peacemaker.” What if they are no longer invited in? What if they find themselves in a setting where we are one of the contentious parties? Hammarskjöld found himself in contention against the constitutionally elected government of Lumumba. He took a stand (“commitment in relativism”), but this commitment got him in trouble. Beginning in childhood, the Enneagram Nine is tiptoeing between firmness and weakness, between concern for resolution and concern for upholding one’s own values and sense of justice. As Kermit the Frog declared, “It’s not easy bein’ Green.” It’s also not easy being an Enneagram Nine.

Three Sets of Three Clustered Anticipations

Each of the nine Enneagram types is distinctive, as we can see from the unique descriptions of each Type offered by Helen Palmer. However, there are important ways in which each Type clusters with two of the other types regarding their perspective on the world—and way(s) in which they anticipate what is about to happen in their world. The following are three different sets of clusters offered by Helen Palmer, and two other noted Enneagram experts and authors—Don Riso and Russ Hudson (2003).

Instincts, Feelings, and Thoughts

One of the alternative models of Enneagram types is offered by Riso and Hudson (Riso and Hudson, 2003). For these two Enneagram specialists, “each type has a particular way of coping with the dominant emotional theme of its Triad.” (Riso and Hudson, 2003, p. 68)

Riso and Hudson (2003, p. 68) begin with a triad consisting of the Enneagram Eights, Nines, and Ones. Their triad is called “instinctive”:

In the Instinctive Triad, Eights act out their anger and instinctual energies. . . .Others can clearly see that Eights are angry because they give themselves permission to assert their anger, vitality, and instinctual energy directly and physically. Nines deny their anger and instinctual energies as if to say, "What anger? I am not a person who gets angry." Nines are the type most out of touch with their anger and instinctual energies, often feeling threatened by them. . . .Ones attempt to control or repress their anger and instinctual energy. They feel that they must stay in control of themselves, especially of their angry feelings and instinctual impulses at all times. They would like to direct these energies according to the dictates of their highly developed inner critic (superego), the source of their strictures on themselves and others.

If we turn our attention to the matter of anticipation, we might propose that Enneagram Eights are inclined to anticipate that the anger is justified and that it is acceptable to express this anger. The world is a threatening place, and the Eights believe they have sufficient resources (power) to successfully display anger. By contrast, the Enneagram Nines anticipate that the setting in which they are operating is one in which anger is totally unacceptable. As moderators, they are in the business of helping to manage (and perhaps suppress) any expression of anger. They should themselves epitomize restraint. Could Jesus be the ideal for Enneagram Nines to emulate?

Finally, we find that Enneagram Ones anticipate an orderly world of their own creation where the display of anger would be “distasteful” and “unbecoming” of someone living in a world of “decency” and “civility.” If Anger should appear in one’s psyche, it should be repressed. A bit of freeze is preferred to fight and even flight would be “unmannerly.” So, for an Enneagram One, it is a matter of serving other people in a proper manner, regardless of your feelings about them. If you can’t be polite, then be quiet—for one should never anticipate that an angry gesture is called for in an orderly world.

Riso and Hudson (Riso and Hudson, 2003, p. 69) identified the second Enneagram triad as based in the domain of Feelings. It includes the Enneagram Twos, Threes, and Fours:

In the Feeling Triad, Twos attempt to compensate for their underlying shame by getting other people to like them and to want them in their lives. They also want to convince themselves that they are good and loving by focusing on their positive feelings for others while repressing their negative feelings, such as resentment at not being appreciated enough. As long as Twos can get positive emotional responses from others, they feel wanted and thus have value. Threes try to deny their shame and are potentially the most out of touch with underlying feelings of inadequacy. Threes learn to cope with shame by trying to become what they believe a valuable, successful person is like. . . . Fours attempt to avoid their underlying shame by focusing on how unique and special their particular talents, feelings, and personal characteristics are. Fours focus on their individuality and creativity as a way of dealing with their shameful feelings, although Fours are the type most likely to succumb to feelings of inadequacy.

The keyword offered by Riso and Hudson is Shame. As we are about to see, the feeling of Shame is central to another of the Enneagram triads. Shame is addressed by Twos through their application of an appeasement strategy. Give people what they want, and they will like you. You need not feel ashamed of yourself if everyone thinks “you are grand.” However, for the Enneagram Twos, the anticipation of being likely (positive) or not being liked (negative) can be grating on the heart and one’s sense of self-importance. An Enneagram Two’s highly demanding psychosocial template is accompanied by feelings of resentment and dependency.

For the Enneagram Threes, anticipation of fruitful enterprise serves as a salve against painful feelings of inadequacy and shame. As a Three, we feel good about ourselves at the end of a hard day of successful work. We can even get addicted to the dopamine we inject in ourself at the end of this productive day as we anticipate another day of success. Like the gambler, we get a “hit” from the anticipation of success even more than from the actual success.

Finally, the Enneagram Fours possess an even larger palette of fantasized anticipation than the Threes. They can anticipate imagined positive falling in love or producing a work of great beauty (dipping a bit into their adjacent Enneagram Three proclivity). There are also the haunting anticipations associated with being abandoned by someone who is loved or falling into a state of despair following a futile effort to create something of great beauty. One need only pick up a Brontë novel or read the autobiography of a despairing artist to acquire an appreciation of the Enneagram Four’s sense of both ecstasy and shame.

The final three Enneagram types (Five, Six, and Seven) constitute Riso and Hudson’s (Riso and Hudson, 2003, pp. 69-70) third triad. This triad is embedded in Thought.

In the thinking Triad, Fives have anxiety about the outer world and about their capacity to cope with it. Thus, they cope with their fear by withdrawing from the world. . . Fives hope that eventually, as they understand reality on their own terms, they will be able to rejoin the world and participate in it, but they never feel they know enough to participate with total confidence. . . . Sixes are the most anxious type and the most out of touch with their own sense of inner knowing and confidence. Unlike Fives, Sixes have trouble trusting their own minds, so they are constantly looking outside themselves for something to make them feel sure of themselves. . . . [N]o matter how many security structures they create, Sixes still feel doubtful and anxious. . . Sixes may also respond to their anxiety by impulsively confronting it - defying their fear in the effort to be free of it. Sevens have anxiety about their inner world. There are feelings of pain, loss, deprivation, and the general anxiety that Sevens would like to avoid as much as possible. To cope with these feelings, Sevens keep their minds occupied with exciting possibilities and options - as long as they have something stimulating to anticipate, Sevens feel that they can distract themselves from their fears. . . . Thus, Sevens can be found staying on the go, pursuing one experience after another, and keeping themselves entertained and engaged with their many ideas and activities.

As repeatedly noted by Riso and Hudson, this thinking triad is dominated by a countering force and feeling—this being anxiety. All three Enneagram types anticipate something happening that is malevolent, strong, and active (fulfilling all three semantic differential criteria). Fives try to evade this pit of anxiety by remaining aloof and “thoughtful” about the world in which they dwell. They try to remain a far distance from the pit. For the Sixes, the pit is nearby. They fully acknowledge and even appreciate the breadth and depth of the pit of anxiety. They may even venture into the pit by choosing to take a job

involving security, violence, or subterfuge. The critical anticipation of the Enneagram Six concerns the motivations and degree of loyalty to be found among those who venture into the pit of anxiety with them. Those who lead them into the pit are particularly subject to scrutiny: can we anticipate that their actions will be trustworthy?

Finally, there are the Enneagram Sevens. Like the Fives and Sixes, they are fully aware of the pit of anxiety and recognize that this pit ultimately is to be found residing inside their own head and heart. The Sevens anticipate that they themselves might not be capable of living with this anxiety. Like the antelope on the African Savannah, the Sevens try to escape from their lion (anxiety); they do so by distracting themselves with the anticipation of realized dreams. Like the antelope, they race away from their lion by anticipating locating in distant lands where there are no lions and no pits of anxiety. A new home awaits the wandering Seven, which offers a respite from overwhelming anxiety.

Fear, Shame, and Anger

As Helen Palmer noted concerning Enneagram Seven, the nine Enneagram types tend to cluster in several threes that relate to interpersonal feeling and the anticipation of specific types of interpersonal relationships. These feelings are Fear, Anger, and Shame. A psychosocial template that is saturated with feelings of fear will look quite different from one saturated with anger or shame. Baselines that focus on the state of fear in one's psyche will produce anticipations that differ significantly from baselines primarily concerned with anger or shame. Interpersonal relationships that are dominated by concerns regarding the experience and expression of anger look quite different from relationships in which fear or shame are of primary concern.

Palmer suggested that Enneagram Types Five, Six, and Seven are oriented toward (and anticipate) the emotion of Fear. People in this triad feel fear of being harmed. So, they struggle with taking balanced action, trusting others, and emotional vulnerability. This triad is also known as the head triad. The head triad makes decisions from their head and logic. Emotions are most repressed in this triad. The somatic template is alive and well—but is being ignored or bypassed by the Enneagram types in this triad. Only anger is included to leak out of the fortified somatic template. One finds that the psychosocial template is being constructed and continually revised based on one's cognition, rather than one's affect (feelings). As a result, the somatic and psychosocial templates are not always in alignment—producing physiological states (somatic template) that are not compatible with psychological states (psychosocial template). We are feeling “fully in control” yet are perspiring and jiggling our feet. We are “feeling fine,” yet are “obsessed” regarding the details in a project we are about to launch.

Many Enneagram experts suggest that Types Eight, Nine, and One are oriented toward (and anticipate) the emotion of Anger. People in this triad react with anger, whether it's repressed or expressed, to avoid being harmed. The anger triad struggles with processing emotions, expressing their need for vulnerable connection, and recognizing frustration. This triad is also known as the gut triad. Those Enneagram types associated with the gut triad make decisions from their instincts and gut. The somatic template is in charge, and the psychosocial template takes orders from this somatic source. This sometimes means that we are nervous in a situation that we anticipate is very safe. WE feel anger, yet nothing is happening in this situation that should justify this anger. Our behavior doesn't make much sense: we avoid or leave a situation that we anticipate will ultimately be a source of gratification for us. Something is “wrong.” We feel compelled to “step outside.”

The Enneagram Two, Three, and Four cluster is oriented toward (and anticipates) the emotion of Shame. Individuals in this triad often feel unworthy of love, leading to image-consciousness and fear of judgment. This triad is also known as the heart triad. The heart triad makes decisions from their heart and emotions. Emotions are strongest felt in this triad. While these emotions can include respect, appreciation, success, and love, they also can include shame, sadness, and regret. A psyche battle may ensue between these positive feelings and the negative ones. All too often, the battle is won by the negative feelings. Behavior scientists have found that the avoidance of regret is stronger than the realization of success. We are much more concerned with somehow letting a great opportunity pass us by than we are anticipating the celebration of success.

Shame is an even stronger emotion. It will often dominate the somatic template and strongly influence the psychosocial template. First, it should be noted that shame is much more intimate than regret—or guilt. Unlike Regret, which concerns behavior we did or didn't take, or Guilt, which is about our behavior and reactions to our behavior, Shame is about who we are. It is about permanent disconnection from other people. Shame is formed early in life, when we feel unwanted or unloved by significant others. One might feel Guilty about being dishonest with a friend or feel regret not telling a friend that we are sorry for our dishonesty.

However, even more deeply, we feel shame about being the kind of person who is inevitably dishonest with someone we care about. Shame concerns our essence. We feel embarrassed when we assume that we look bad in someone else's eyes. Conversely, we feel ashamed because we think we are bad. We appear naked with all of our inherent badness showing through. There is an old adage that declares: "Which of us wouldn't leave town if told that everything about us is about to be revealed?" Some of us might stick around; however, the Enneagram Twos, Threes, and Fours will go online to book a ticket out of town on a bus, train, or Uber that quickly takes them far away.

There is another important, compelling aspect of Shame. This is not only one of the most deeply felt emotions, shame is also physically painful. Neuropsychologists have found that shame impacts our body as if we have just been stabbed in the gut. This certainly is not a somatic experience that we wish to inflict on ourselves. Hence, Enneagram Twos, Threes, and Fours are particularly motivated to address anticipated shame by appeasing, achieving or fantasizing in a manner that blocks or diminishes this shame before it consumes our full heartfelt (and head-felt) attention.

Moving Toward, Against, and Away from Other People

Building on distinctions drawn by the noted psychoanalyst, Karen Horney, Riso and Hudson (2003, p. 187) identify three clusters related to three specific anticipations about interpersonal relationships.

A second, and usually more useful, way to analyze your scores is to add them according to what we call the "Horneyan Groups." In *Personality Types* we noted that the psychiatrist Karen Horney's aggressive types, or those who "move against people," correspond to the Enneagram assertive types Three, Seven, and Eight. Her compliant types, or those who "move toward people," correspond to the Enneagram dutiful types One, Two, and Six; and her withdrawn types, or those who "move away from people," correspond to withdrawn types Four, Five, and Nine.

The three Horney-based clusters closely relate to the three-fold cluster of interpersonal feelings. When feelings of anger are dominant, a movement against other people is prevalent. The movement away from other people prevails when feelings of fear are dominant. The movement toward other people is manifest in an interesting way when feelings of shame are prominent. Specifically, the anticipation of another person being the source of or at least associated with our fear will lead us to move away from them. We “fear” that the other person or group of people is stronger, quicker, and more active than we are. So, we had best stay away from them. The polarization that is tragically common in our present society is aligned with this dominance of a fear factor. One might ask if Enneagram Fours, Fives, and Nines are particularly adaptive in mid-21st-century societies, given the predominance of assertive and dominating leadership styles (Enneagram Eights?). It might be good “survival” tactics to go deep inside one’s psyche (Fours), or remain outside the fray (Fives), or spend time trying to buffer the blow of the assertive “bullies” (Nines).

When we consider the internal world in which an anger-based psychosocial template “rules the roost,” then it is to be expected that the Enneagram Three, Seven, and Eight see their external world as one in which assertive behavior is appropriate. We need to push against other people if we want to get anything done (Threes), if we want to realize our dreams (Sevens), or if we want to be sure that we are in charge and have control of things (Eights). Our mid-21st-century world might be conducive to these motives given the threat inherent in conditions of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, turbulence, and contradiction (VUCA-Plus) (Bergquist, 2025). Thus, those who are responsible for addressing VUCA-Plus challenges might be included to “push against other people,” while those who are impacted by these aggressive leaders might be included to “move away from other people [and the aggressive people in particular].”

As I have mentioned, the relationship between the feeling of shame and the predilection to “move toward other people” is interesting and a bit nuanced. When we feel shame regarding our own behavior or the indictment of our behavior offered by other people, it might be tempting initially to move away from other people and go into hiding. Yet, shame is a feeling that often can only be assuaged by understanding, appreciation, support, and (yes) loving relationships with other important people in our life.

When we anticipate love expressed by other people, then there is a renewed (or new) possibility that we can begin to love or at least forgive ourselves. We are told that what we did is “alright” or “understandable” given the circumstances. This appreciation articulated by another person enables us to reframe, re-interpret, and re-appraise our own actions. Our psychosocial template is not filled with acceptance, appreciation, and support. We can “go bravely into our new world” without a sense of personal shame and worthlessness. This appreciative psychosocial template might be even more appropriate than a template that leads us to retreat in a mid-21st-century world that is filled with VUCA-Plus challenges (Bergquist, 2025).

Conclusions

It is time to move on to the matter of coaching perspectives and practices regarding anticipation, given the important distinctions to be drawn between the nine Enneagram types and the clusters of types, as well as the fundamental processes of polystasis that I introduced in the first essay in this series. It is time, in other words, to fulfill the promise inherent in the title of these essays: what does the “coaching of anticipation” mean?

If we live in the immediate future, through our anticipations, then it would seem that professional coaching could be of great value in helping to clarify anticipations and, in some instances, assist in modifying anticipations. In the third essay in this series, I consider some of the coaching perspectives and practices that could prove valuable in this regard. I explore both coaching that occurs at a deep emotional level and coaching that focuses on cognition and behavior. I invite you to join me in this exploration.

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