



Essence and the Enneagram: Rediscovering Who We Really Are Part II

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Introduction

In the first paper, we described the Core Fears of the nine points of view, and then we described a simple psychospiritual practice (Essence Process) for transforming these fears. In this paper, we will briefly review the existential presuppositions that are the foundation of the Essence Process. Then we will apply this practice to Centers – our fundamental ways of experiencing the world, to Subtypes – our deepest instinctual drives, and lastly, to the emptiness of Essence which is nothingness and Unity Consciousness.

Overview and Review

The Embodiment Identity Pattern is something we all experience. It is intrinsic to the human condition.

Balancing the Embodiment Identity Pattern using the Essence Process (which we presented in the last paper) facilitates our rediscovery and experience of our essential Self, by helping us identify and transform our Core Fears and all the ways we compensate for (obscure, try to avoid) these fears. In other words, to experience who we truly are, Essence, we need to face and willingly allow, with courage and love, what we believe to be the most difficult truths about ourselves.

What It Is

In Essence we are free-flowing energy, the Infinite, which is Unity Consciousness. This is the state of our awareness in Spirit form before embodiment.

The process of embodiment is, in part, experienced as traumatic to a soul that previously felt totally free and infinite. In the illusion of duality, we now identify with our finite physical form, a form we experience as “limited.” From the perspective of duality and limited finite form, fear of death can exist and escalate to an existential terror of non-existence.

What our limited form calls “non-existence” and spends all of its time and energy trying to avoid, is, in fact, the infinite Unity Consciousness which is Essence. We have called our True Self “non-existence” rather than its true name, “Essence.” This mistake is the root of all our difficulties.

In an effort to avoid the existential anxiety of non-existence, we choose to take on an identity, believing that *if we have an identity, we must exist, and we must matter*. To put it differently, we choose to protect ourselves by covering over our truest, most beloved self with an obscuring identity because part of us believes if we were this truest self we would be annihilated – cease to exist. As is the case with all such choices, it is made while we are traumatized, and so the part of us that makes the seemingly best choice at that time is no longer available to us. Therefore, we come to believe that we are the choice, the limited identity, even when we know it profoundly limits us.

This limited identity is filtered through our traumatic experience of embodiment. As with all traumas, this results in reversed beliefs, fear of experiencing feelings, and boundary problems, which, when combined, result in negative ways of experiencing ourselves and all life. All of these limited negative identities are obscuring identities that cover over the True Self we wrongly believe is “non-existence.”

The fears that arise in the process of embodiment we refer to as **Core Fears**, what we are most afraid or ashamed to admit about ourselves. They are our most fundamental negative limited identities that protect us from this existential anxiety of non-existence. By becoming aware of, allowing and accepting our Core Fears and all the ways we compensate for them, we can transform them and open the doorway to who we truly are, our Essence.

Core Fears and the Enneagram – An Overview

The model we have found to be most efficient and elegant for identifying, understanding and transforming our Core Fears is the Enneagram.

The basic organizing principle of this model is that nine personality points of view are arranged in three triads, the thinking (5,6,7), feeling (2,3,4) and sensing (8,9,1) triads that correspond to the Centers of perceptions (head, heart and belly) through which we experience the world. The nine types are further characterized

by subtype or their most fundamental instinctual drive to either survive, connect or to belong.

The Enneagram, as we know, is a system that helps us understand both our own and one another's core motivations, and our ways of relating in the world, each with its own gifts, natural limitations and blind spots. It helps us understand and appreciate our differences, move to a place of receptivity versus reactivity and open to the depths of gifts that flow through us individually and collectively. Emotional maturity significantly increases our access to our gifts and strengths, while more limited emotional development tends to increase reactivity and produce destructive rather than constructive behaviors. Emotional maturity is developed by being able to allow our fears on four levels as opposed to compulsively compensating for them.

Core Fears are a reaction to Embodiment Trauma and these Core Fears can best be understood through this model. It teaches us that who we are is limited negative identities on four different levels:

Four Levels of Enneagram	Accompanying Limited Negative Identity
1. Nine Personalities - Fundamental Point of View	I am 1) bad; 2) unworthy 3) failure; 4) defective; 5) insufficient; 6) nobody; 7) unfulfillable; 8) impotent; 9) unlovable.
2. Three Centers - Fundamental Way of Perceiving the World	Belly Center - I am no heart Head Center – I am no body Heart Center – I am no head
3. Three Subtypes – Fundamental Instinctual Drive	Self Preserving - I am insecure Sexual – I am disconnected Social – I will never belong
4. Non-existence/Essence	I don't matter/exist.

While the anxiety of non-existence plays out on all four levels of the Enneagram, each level is nested in the preceding one: Personality is nested in Center; Sub-type is more foundational than either Personality or Center, and non-existence of the separate self is fundamental to Personality, Center, and Subtype.

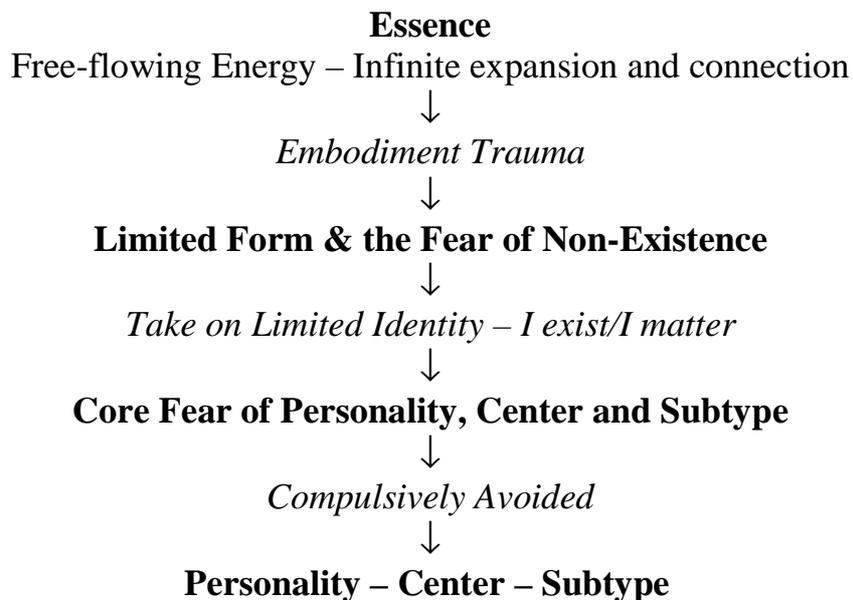
While these limited negative identities of Personality, Center and Sub-type are less terrifying than the existential anxiety of non-existence, they too constitute

Core Fears that most of us spend our lives compulsively avoiding. It is the compulsive avoidance of our limited negative identity (our Core Fear) that gives rise to the obscuring, counterbalancing, compulsive, limited positive identities of our Personality, Centers, Sub-types and existence.

Fortunately for our soul's evolution, our Core Fears, which we experience as emptiness, have the quality of a black hole that keeps trying to suck us into it. We can never truly get away from it. When we choose to let go and go into the black hole, we discover that our anxiety was misplaced; we discover Essence.

Figure 12-1

Embodiment Trauma – Core Fear Movement from Essence to Limited Identities to Core Fear and Personality



The Four Levels of Working

When working with Embodiment Identity Patterns we will work with one or more of the four levels – Personality, Center, Subtype and/or Non-existence/Essence. In the previous paper we described the Core Fears of the Nine Points of personality. In the following pages we will discuss the levels of Center, Subtype and Existence in greater detail.

The Level of Centers

Three Centers

The Enneagram model is based on the observation that people experience the world in three significant ways, through *feeling, thinking and sensing* and that these three ways correspond to three Centers that mediate our experiences – *the Heart for feeling, the Head for thinking, and the Belly for sensing*. While people use all three centers, each Enneagram type prefers to predominantly use one of them for perceiving and responding to life.

Each of us has a core fear of our associated center. The core fear of the Heart Center is *I am no head/I can't think and discern*, of the Head Center is *I am no body/I can't sense and do*, and of the Belly Center is *I am no heart/I can't feel and desire*.

Just like at the level of personality, each center covers over and binds the anxiety of their Core Fear with an obscuring identity.

Heart Center

Center	Points	Experiences World Through	Core Fear	Obscuring Identity	Core Emotional Issue
Heart	2,3,4	Feeling	I am no head	I feel/desire therefore I am	Despair

Lost in *image*, *Heart Centers* care how people perceive and relate to them.

Core Fear: *I despair that I will ever be loved for who I am and so, in trying to get other to like me, I lose connection with my head and my capacity to think and discern.*

Let us explore these fears in more depth. If I, as a heart center person, am stuck in my fixation of creating an image so I can gain approval and be liked, I lose my capacity to be discerning. I may know how to succeed, take care of your need, to be special. I do not know wisdom.

I use the feeling I receive from being liked as a way of trying to bind the anxiety that I associate with longing and with the shame of my fear about myself that I am no head – that there is a black hole where my head center was to be.

Therefore, I can never truly experience feeling.

Head Center

Center	Points	Experiences World Through	Core Fear	Obscuring Identity	Core Emotional Issue

		Through			Issue
Head	5,6,7	Thinking	I am no body.	I think/discern, therefore I am	Fear

Lost in *paranoia*, Head Centers “think” things through as a way to preempt their *fear* in a world they experience as dangerous. Core Fear: *When I am afraid there is danger, I lose my connection with my body and my capacity to sense and act.*

If I as a head center person am stuck in my fixation of experiencing the world as dangerous, I lose my capacity to act. I may know how to be somebody, to be fulfilled, to be self-sufficient. I do not know presence.

I use thinking of how to avoid danger as a way of trying to bind the anxiety I associate with fear and the shame of there being a black hole where my belly center was to be. Therefore, I can never truly experience thinking.

Belly Center

Center	Points	Experiences World Through	Core Fear	Obscuring Identity	Core Emotional Issue
Belly	8,9,1	Sensing	I am no heart.	I sense/act, therefore I am	Anger

Lost in *self-forgetting*, Belly Centers take action in the world from a gut sense, sensing *anger* because they feel they were forgotten. They perceive that no one asks them how they felt, what they desired.

Core Fear: *When I forget myself, I lose my heart and my capacity to access what I feel and desire.*

If I, as a belly center person, am stuck in my fixation of forgetting myself, I do not know my true heart’s desire. I may merge with who and what you are, know how to be powerful and in control, know what is right and what is wrong. I do not know my deepest passion.

I use sensing and acting in the world as a way of trying to bind the anxiety I experience with the overwhelm of not knowing my heart’s desire and sensing a black hole where my heart center was to be. Therefore, I can never experiencing sensing and acting.

Within each triad, each point handles their core emotional issues in a different way. One point is out of touch with their core emotional issue (3,6,9), one

internalizes their core emotional issue (1,4,5) and one externalizes their core emotional issue (2,7,8). We will discuss this in greater length in our next paper.

The Level of Subtypes

Three Subtypes

Subtypes are our most fundamental drives – to survive, to connect and to belong. While they are intrinsically part of the human condition, they also have a compulsive quality in that they protect us from a core fear – basic insecurity, disconnection and unbelongingness. While each of us has all of these fears, nonetheless one predominates. Our *need* to be secure, our *need* to connect, our *need* to belong binds our anxiety around the Core Fears of the Instinctual Drive by externalizing the problem so we can bring our attention outside of ourselves as opposed to within.

Subtypes – Core Fears

<i>Subtype</i>	<i>Core Fear</i> <i>I am:</i>	<i>Obscuring Identity</i> <i>I am:</i>
Sexual	Disconnection	Connection
Social	Unbelongingness	Belonging/Participation
Self-preservation	Insecure/Dependent	Secure and Autonomous

There are two ways to recognize Subtypes:

1. Imagine you are at a party. Notice where your primary focus is. You:
 - Sexual*
 - Look for someone with whom you want to connect. Enter into a “meaningful” experience with them, often to the exclusion of others
 - Social*
 - Make yourself part of the group; always scan the group; act inclusive; interrupt your conversation with one person to be sure the person who joins you isn’t left out
 - Self-preserving*
 - Look where to find the food, something to drink, a place to sit or stand; how to make yourself feel safe and comfortable, take your and others physical needs into account

2. Following energy as a way of knowing
 - Sexual – energy lasers forward and out through the eyes connecting with

the particular

Social – energy goes up and diffuse participating with the whole

Self preserving – energy goes back and in securing its own needs through incorporation. Own can include significant others.

Let's explore these fears more deeply...

Sexual Subtype

If I am a person who is a sexual subtype, I may believe I know the experience of connection, yet I never truly experience it because I compulsively need to connect in order to compensate for my deepest instinctual anxiety and the shame associated with it – the fear that I am disconnected within.

Social Subtype

If I am a social subtype I may believe I know the experience of belonging, yet I never truly experience it because I compulsively need to belong in order to compensate for my deepest instinctual anxiety and the shame associated with it – the fear that I am inherently unable to belong, that I am ostracized.

Self-preserving Subtype

If I am a self-preserving subtype I may believe I know the experience of security, yet I never truly experience it because I compulsively need to be secure in order to compensate for my deepest instinctual anxiety and the shame associated with it – the fear that I am fundamentally insecure.

Compensations and the Subtype Words

In the Enneagram model each personality can be further divided into three sub personalities based on these subtypes: the sexual, social and self preserving versions of that type. There is one word called the subtype word (there are 27 such words total, one for each of the three subtypes for each of the nine points of views) which describes the most automatic behavior that that version of the personality uses to focus their attention outside of themselves thereby binding the inner anxiety (not having to feel) associated with the core fears of the personality, center and/or subtype.

Example: a Perfectionist might be Sexual, Social or Self-preserving. The key way a Sexual Perfectionist avoids the internal anxiety of its Core Fears is through *zealousness (jealousy)*, the Social Perfectionist through *non-adaptability*, and the Self-preserving Perfectionist through *anxiety*.

Subtypes Words for the 9 Personality Types

Personality Type	Sexual	Social	Self Preserving
1. Perfectionist	Zealous (Jealousy)	Non-adaptability	Anxiety
2. Giver	Seduction	Ambition	Privilege
3. Performer	Masculine/Feminine	Prestige	Security
4. Romantic	Competition/Hate	Shame	Reckless/Dauntless
5. Observer	Confidences	Totems	Castle
6. Loyal Skeptic	Strength/Beauty	Duty	Warmth
7. Epicure	Fascination	Sacrifice	Family
8. Boss	Possession/Surrender	Friendship	Satisfactory Survival
9. Mediator	Union	Participation	Appetite

Compensations to Avoid Core Fears

In an effort to compensate for our Core Fears on any of the levels presented above, we compulsively bind the anxiety associated with them in any of four key ways:

1. Arrogances – Things we tell ourselves, about ourselves.
2. Use other people – Get other people to tell us positive things about ourselves *or* associate with them to avoid our fear.
3. Avoidances – Ways we numb and preoccupy ourselves with other things. Includes and is not limited to: activities, addictions, diseases, fantasies/mythic stories.
4. *Subtype words – 27 most Automatic compulsive behaviors of avoiding the inner experience of our Core Fears related to Personality, Center and Subtype.

Let's explore the subtype words and how we use them to compensate for all levels of fears. Sexual four: I gave the example in the last paper of how a sexual four could use competition/hate to compensate for an inner sense of ordinariness and defectiveness. Let's look at how competition/hate can bind all the levels of fear. If I compete with my rival and hate those that leave me, I don't have to experience my own ordinariness and defectiveness, I don't have to experience my losing my head and losing my capacity for being discerning, I don't have to experience my own inner sense of disconnection, and ultimately, I don't have to experience my

deepest fear - that I don't matter. While I perceive that I have fears, they are all externalized, all outside of me.

The Level of the Existential Anxiety of Not Mattering and Non-existence

We have already formulated that we begin as free-flowing universal energy. What would lead us to the perception of being limited and anxious and ashamed about the perceived limitation? What is true is that all living beings are simultaneously individual and a part of all life. The feelings of limitation, disconnection and separateness are an *illusion* caused by the trauma of embodiment. Thus, when people finish the Essence Process, they become conscious that they are alive as an individual in their body and as a part of an infinite life force that connects all things.

The questions then arise:

1. Why was a duality between spirit and solid form created in the first place?
2. Does the embodiment process need to be traumatic?
3. If the infinite were everything, then how would it know about itself?

It may be that we embody because an infinite living-energy field (the Divine Life Force Energy) is not necessarily sentient or self-aware. It may need an embodied form with its experience of the senses to be aware. It is possible that the shock of embodiment creates that necessary perception of individuality, limitation, and separateness. This shock also causes the painful misconception that none of us (humans) are here in our true form. The complete truth may well be that spirit form and embodied form yearn for each other and connect in a union of both universal and particular. We believe that spirituality is this cultivation of each person's sense of connection with the total life force energy in the universe, a sense of being home and belonging in the largest context.

The Essence Process to Balance Embodiment Identity Patterns

The path to experiencing Essence, our True Self, is through our deepest wounds, our Core Fears, the things we are most afraid or ashamed to admit about ourselves. In allowing and accepting these qualities we work so hard to avoid, we find

that this wound, Core Fear, is our greatest teacher and our pathway home.

How to Balance

1. Find the Core Fear – what the client is most afraid or ashamed to admit about him/herself.
2. If necessary, find associated negative emotions or beliefs.
3. Find compensations for the Core Fear.
4. Experience Core Fear, associated negative emotions, beliefs, compensations in body.
5. Peel body sensations and have client experience them outside the body and describe them.
6. Invite client to notice self and the peeled energy in Infinite space, then at the speed of Light, expand infinitely in every direction. Become the Infinite.
7. Invite client to enjoy being the Infinite, Essence who they truly are . . .
8. Reintegrate the transformed energy. Recreate and dialogue with transformed Core Fear/body sensations. Invite client to notice that their greatest fear is actually their greatest teacher.
9. Invite client to fully experience, enjoy and remember Essence, the True Self.

Core Fears Chart

Personality – Core Fears

Personality Type	Limited Negative View (Core Fear)	Counterbalancing Positive View
	<i>I am:</i>	<i>I am:</i>
1. Perfectionist	Bad	Good
2. Giver	Unworthy of existing	Worthy of existing
3. Performer	Failure	Success
4. Romantic	Ordinary/Defective	Special
5. Observer	Insufficiency	Self-sufficient
6. Loyal Skeptic	Nobody	Somebody
7. Epicure	Unfulfillability	Fulfilled
8. Boss	Powerlessness/Controlled	Powerful/In control
9. Mediator	Chaos/Unloveability	Peace/Love

Center - Core Fears

Center	Points	Experiences World Through	Core Fear	Obscuring Identity	Core Emotional Issue
Heart	2,3,4	Feeling	I am no head.	I feel/desire therefore I am.	Despair

When I am concerned with the approval of others, I lose my capacity to think and be discerning.

Head	5,6,7	Thinking	I am no body.	I think/ discern, therefore I am.	Fear
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When I am afraid there is danger, I lose my capacity to sense and act.

Belly	8,9,1	Sensing	I am no heart.	I sense/act, therefore I am.	Anger
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When I forget myself, I lose my capacity to access what I feel and desire.

SubType – Core Fears

SubType	Core Fear	Obscuring Identity
	<i>I am:</i>	<i>I am:</i>
Sexual	Disconnection	Connection
Social	Unbelongingness	Belonging/Participation
Self-preservation	Insecure/Dependent	Secure and Autonomous

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Conclusion

In doing Essence work, I have found that the deeper I go, the more foundational my work feels. I have come to know my sense of ordinariness and “there is something wrong with me” very well. By now, it is almost like visiting with an old friend and going for a walk with him. Being aware, allowing and accepting it keeps bringing me to a deeper place. It has been a little hard to hold with an open hand how I lose my head and make oblivious decisions because I want the approval of others. Even this, however, now comes mostly with equanimity and my choices seem more balanced. My fear of inner disconnection brings me to a place of profound anxiety and shame like I am an empty husk that can only feel connected when I am connected with you. As I have deepened into this fear, truly being alone has become infinitely less terrifying. I have had glimpses of not matter and non-existing. As I have fully allowed this, I have touched the deepest level of the one-ness of all life. This has reconfirmed the most profound experiences of being one with Source that I have experienced through grace.

Thank you for embarking on the second leg of our journey. In our next paper, we will explore the energetics of relationships and the automatic ways we lose and then can rediscover ourself.