

# TRANSFORMING PERSONALITY STRUCTURE AND HEALING SOUL WOUNDS: THE ESSENCE PROCESS AND THE ENNEAGRAM

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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this paper is to describe a process for transforming the fear contained in the deepest psychological wounds of the personality. These wounds manifest in *fundamentally* limited world views (which is what we believe personality to be) and *fundamentally* compulsive behavior that is driven by these world views and is often out of the conscious awareness of the person. We have found that after people have experienced this process, their world views expand, and they have more behavioral flexibility and choice. This process removes impediments to knowing that one is more than just one's personality structure and life experience. It leads to knowing that true identity includes a person's sense of individual and universal self-aware consciousness, experience of aliveness, and sense of personal (soul) mission and contribution to the world.

The best model that we (the authors) have found to describe the dynamics of personality structure is the Enneagram, a system seemingly derived from the Sufi spiritual tradition. On the surface, the Enneagram is a useful model for understanding people and can be used in a practical way for improving relationships in many contexts. More deeply, the Enneagram system links behavior and motivation with personality structure and Spirit (Essence) in describing 9 different personality types each driven by a central compulsion. We noticed that the compulsions that define each personality type on the Enneagram all share a structure highly reminiscent of the compulsions seen in people who have suffered loss or violence trauma (Swack a). Thus, we believe that a catastrophic trauma, or wound, set each person's Enneagram point. We hypothesized that the wound of personality is caused, unavoidably, by embodiment of Spirit in human form. Further exploration with the Essence Process confirms the usefulness of this idea as a model. Although people of different personality types experience this abrupt and shocking transition differently, they all react to it as they would to severe emotional trauma - with rationalization or avoidance, a constellation of limiting beliefs, and exaggerated negative emotions felt in the body.

The Enneagram suggests that we organize reality through one core lens which emanates from the wound and generates a person's sense of psychological (ego) identity. Thus, it includes the deepest pain (low aspect of the point) and the greatest gifts (high aspect of the point) of the personality.

The Enneagram personality types have been nicely summarized (Baron and Wagele) as follows<sup>1</sup>:

**No. 1: The Perfectionist.** Motivated by the need to live life the right way, improve yourself and others, and avoid anger.

**No. 2: The Helper.** Motivated by the need to be loved and appreciated, to express your positive feelings toward others, and to avoid being seen as needy.

**No. 3: The Achiever.** Motivated by the need to be productive, to achieve success, and to avoid failure.

**No. 4: The Romantic.** Motivated by the need to understand your feelings and to be understood, to search for the meaning of life, and to avoid being ordinary.

**No. 5: The Observer.** Motivated by the need to know everything and understand the universe, to be self-sufficient and left alone, and to avoid not having the answer or looking foolish.

**No. 6: The Questioner.** Motivated by the need to receive approval, to feel taken care of, and to avoid being seen as rebellious (or the counter-phobic 6 motivated by the need to rebel against all of the former).

**No. 7: The Adventurer.** Motivated by the need to be happy and plan fun things, to contribute to the world, and to avoid suffering and pain.

**No. 8: The Asserter.** Motivated by the need to be self-reliant and strong, to make an impact on the world, and to avoid being weak.

**No. 9: The Peacemaker.** Motivated by the need to keep the peace, merge with others, and to avoid conflict.

We present our original research describing the generic 4-part structure of the wound. We also describe the different ways in which people experience the same wound and how these differences in experience result in nine basic personality types or world views. In this paper we describe how knowledge of the Enneagram coupled with the Essence Process facilitates the healing of wounds of the personality and leads to psychological and spiritual transformation. While it is not necessary to know the Enneagram to do the Essence Process, it is extremely useful because it allows the facilitator to recognize when the client has actually accessed a core fear.

We began to design the Essence Process when one of the participants in AH's Enneagram group asked how people could use this system for spiritual transformation. AH knew that various teachers had said the way to Essence is through personality. To his knowledge, no one had described a process for accomplishing this. What came to him was the following three-step process: The first step to Essence is through the acceptance of all of who you are - including that which you most avoid. In order to integrate personality with Spirit (and thus to be and feel whole) you must include all aspects of the self, even parts the ego does not like and experiences as a traumatic wounding. Acceptance however, is not enough - there is more to reality than the personality - even when you accept all of it. Nonetheless, once you have accepted all of your personal/psychological reality, the doorway is opened to greater spiritual truths about unconditional love and feeling connected to all life. Thus the second step of this process involves an energetic expansion into the larger reality that exists beyond the limitations of the wounds perceptual filters. From this vantage point, you are able to view the wound in perspective. The last step of the process is the transformation and reintegration of the energy contained in the wound. When this is accomplished, all of the (former) wound energy serves to help a person maintain and manifest their life purpose in daily reality.<sup>2</sup>

## **THE EMBODIMENT TRAUMA**

### **Formation of Personality**

The embodiment trauma which we believe sets an individual's Enneagram point encodes as a type of loss trauma. The Enneagram "wound" could be considered a soul level wound, of which other examples exist in people who have been severely traumatized in their life. When people have soul level wounds (soul wound, identity wound), they confuse or mistake their traumatic view of themselves and the world as their true identity. From the traumatic point of view, the wound says "I am all that is true about you and the world," even though the individual suspects that there is more to reality than that.

Embodiment trauma has two major aspects that people react to and try to avoid. One is the belief that they are wrenched away from spirit form and its capabilities, and the other is the belief that the physical form has limitations which prevent a person from reentering that state of union. Each of the nine personality types has its own distinct description of the perceived limitation. (*Table 1*) The fundamental fear of all the types at an *existential* level is, "I am irrevocably alone because I have been cut off from the unity of Essence." The fundamental fear of all the types at the *psychological* level is, "If I surrender to the wound's reality, I will cease to exist". As one way of avoiding this fundamental psychological fear, the personality organizes around the *opposite* of the wounded belief and makes it fundamental. As Naranjo says, this is an obscuring of Essence (*Naranjo*). The classic example of this in Western culture (and typical of the Enneagram 5) is, "I think, therefore I am." In fact the logical order is reversed because "beingness" is more fundamental than thinking. Thus a more accurate statement would be "I am, therefore I think". Each personality type makes the same obscuring mistake. (*Table 1*)

Since the avoidance behavior is driven by reaction to a trauma, it looks like an addiction or a compulsion. These avoidances *can manifest in* literal addictions ie: food, sex, work, drugs, etc. They always manifest as compulsive behavior that is the counter-identity to the avoidance. (*Table 1*) Interestingly, when it's not driven by fear, each of these compulsions is a gift of the personality. When it is driven by fear, the person never gets to experience the gift itself because it's also being used to avoid something even more profound. In fact anything in life that contradicts the wounded perception of reality is rejected as a sham. For example, when a person with an Enneagram 1 personality does something good in the world, the wound says, "If others only knew how bad I really am, they would know that my goodness is a sham." Each point has its similar profoundly painful secret. Ironically, the more one avoids the wound, the more power it has.

Counterintuitively, by having the person go into it with acceptance, the wound has less power and the person experiences more behavioral flexibility. The Enneagram wound is the best doorway to the larger universe which includes and exceeds our perceptual filters. Everyone is born with their personality (ask any mother), and thus personality structure must be created before birth. We do not believe that this type of personality structure is due to genetics because personality types do not run in families. Moreover, we have known and treated a number of sets of identical twins, and in many cases each twin had a different Enneagram personality type. This information coupled with the responses we get during the Essence process support our hypothesis that embodiment trauma creates personality structure. Under normal circumstances, life experience influences personality but does not create it.

Very few people actually remember their embodiment, but almost everyone is aware of a painful compulsion in their personality. Thus, people attempt to explain this core pattern by ascribing it

to some life experience. In other words people believe that life experience creates their structure when in fact it is fundamentally the other way around. Attempts to treat these core patterns with advanced techniques that successfully heal emotional damage from life experience (Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Applied Kinesiology, and Thought Field Therapy) (Swack b.) resulted in limited success. The patterns would return, or disappear from one context only to appear in other contexts. Thus, it is clear that personality structure and emotional damage from life experience are organized differently within people.

The personality is a coherent pattern of a series of traits. All of these traits revolve around a core limitation and a compensatory response which is both connected with and independent of the limitation. While all personality aspects do revolve around a traumatic embodiment wound, they simultaneously have their own independent existence. Thus when people process the wound energy appropriately, they retain *and now experience* the gifts of their personality. Bad habits of the personality easily dissipate by themselves or with techniques for healing life experience (Swack b.) when the wound no longer generates the driving compulsion.

**The Embodiment Trauma occurs as follows:**

First we are spirit form, and then suddenly, we are embodied. This is a transition that is so extreme it is as if matter goes from a gas to solid state without passing liquid. Every embodied human being experiences this transition as a traumatic shock meaning that the reaction to it is exaggeratedly emotional and irrational. The shock is experienced by everyone in relatively the same way with slightly different wording unique to each of the 9 points.

**The Embodiment Trauma consists of the following general structure:**

I. What happened to me? (fear, sadness, and grief)

- A. I re-member that in spirit form I was connected with the All (Loving, Wisdom, Life). In this (embodied) state I am isolated, separate, disconnected, and alone. I long to return to the spirit form and my connection to the Divine. Thus there is a feeling of grief/suffering for the perceived loss as well as a profound sense of loneliness.
- B. In the embodied, solid form, I am limited in my capabilities in comparison to those capabilities I had in spirit form. This perception of limitation forms the center of the wound that generates tremendous fear and reaction.

II. Why did this happen to me? (fear, guilt, anger, shame, frustrated joy, despair, and hopelessness) After any traumatic shock, people attempt to rationalize why this happened to them. The rationalizations for this wound take two forms:

- A. I did not purposely choose to embody. I was forced out of spirit form (sent into exile, rejected by God) because of some inherent defect in me or some terrible mistake I made (original sin). Furthermore, this defect or mistake is irrevocable and will prevent me from ever again achieving integration with the Divine. I am stuck in this state of misery forever (even after I die) and must live with the shame that it was all my fault.
- B. I *chose* to embody in order to grow spiritually and to make an important contribution to the world. My two motivations for doing so are: 1. If I cannot show up as the true me, it would be as if I had never existed *and* 2. I hope that this contribution will buy my redemption so that I can go home to oneness. Unfortunately, in this form I am too limited to be able to fulfill this purpose, the world is unable to use what I have to contribute, and I have no support from the Divine.

III. Where am I? (anger and frustration)

The perception of the world (as filtered through a trauma) is unpleasant. I am a limited person in a limited world (of misery, darkness, pain, evil, etc.).

IV. What is my perception of God? (fear and anger)

- A. There is no God, and this whole existence is meaningless.
- B. There is a God and It is a cruel, punishing, frightening entity. (Often archetypal images can be substituted for the Source of Life and Love ie: Mother/Father, or wife/husband.)

In summary, the structure of this wound closely resembles the structure of the wound incurred during a loss or violence trauma. It carries the same range of exaggerated and irrational “negative” emotions (fear, sadness, anger) and similar limiting beliefs (judgments leading to feelings of shame/guilt) (Swack a.). Specific examples of how different points compulsively avoid their sense of limitation and the common wordings of the central fears are listed in **Table I** on page 6.

**TABLE I**

<b>What You Do to Avoid Your Worst Fear</b>	<b>Sense of Limitation from the Core Wound</b>
<b>No. 1: The Perfectionist.</b> “I’m a nice and good person who will bring a vision of perfection to the world by combating the forces of evil.” <i>Therefore I am.</i>	“I can’t because I am bad (not perfect, evil) and weak.”
<b>No. 2: The Helper.</b> “I’m a generous pleasing person who will bring caring to the world by taking care of other people’s needs.” <i>Therefore I am.</i>	“I can’t do this because I’m needy, empty, dependent, and don’t exist (I’m on the periphery, I got lost).”
<b>No.3: The Achiever.</b> “I am an active, doing person who will build the world by performing creatively.” <i>Therefore I am.</i>	“I can’t do anything (I’m a failure/loser), I’m not creative.”
<b>No. 4: The Romantic.</b> “I am a special person who will bring beauty to the world by creating deep union.” <i>Therefore I am.</i>	“I can’t do this because I am defective/ordinary/wrong/weird.”
<b>No. 5: The Observer.</b> “I am a wise, thoughtful, and self sufficient person who will bring rationality to the world by combating emotional irrationality and teaching others to become self sufficient.” <i>Therefore I am.</i>	“I can’t do this because I am lacking energy.”
<b>No. 6: The Questioner.</b> “I am a doubting person who will keep myself and the world safe by warning about and eliminating danger.” <i>Therefore I am.</i>	“I can’t do this because I am unprotected/insecure/vulnerable.”
<b>No. 7: The Adventurer.</b> “I am an optimistic person who will make the world a better place and empower people by generating pleasant options.” <i>Therefore I am.</i>	“I can’t do it because I’m not enough.”
<b>No. 8: The Asserter.</b> “I am a powerful leader who will save the world from cruelty and injustice by protecting the weak and vulnerable.” <i>Therefore I am.</i>	“I can’t do it because I am powerless.”
<b>No. 9: The Peacemaker.</b> “I am a loving, purposeful person who will fill up the emptiness and make meaning in the world by making connections and taking responsibility.” <i>Therefore I am.</i>	“I can’t do it because there is a void where my heart should be, so I’m incapable of loving.”

## **MORE ABOUT THE GIFTS AND REACTIONS: THE CENTERS**

There is one wound with three general types of reaction to it and three variations on each of those reactions. This accounts for the nine different personality types. The first general reaction is that of the heart centered points in which people become energetically unbalanced by projecting their energy forward towards others (points 2, 3, and 4). In trying to avoid the pain of the wound and psychologically to feel that they exist, they project an image to others for approval. "See me as being important somehow (caretaking, successful, special) so that you won't see the truth (needy, failure, ordinary) and reject me." The irony is that the compulsion with image pulls them out of their heart center preventing them from truly being able to love.

The second general reaction is the head centered reaction in which people become uncentered by projecting their energy back (points 5, 6, and 7). These people have already come to the conclusion that none of their gifts are acceptable/will be accepted anywhere. In trying to avoid the pain of the wound and psychologically to protect their existence, they withdraw. "I think of myself as (knowledgeable and self-sufficient/secure protective/resourceful problem-solver) so that I won't see myself as (insufficient/insecure unprotected/not enough)". The irony is that the compulsion to withdraw fearfully pulls them out of their head center preventing them from truly being curious and wise.

The third general reaction is the gut centered reaction in which people become uncentered by projecting their energy up, standing above things (points 8, 9, and 1). These people have come to the conclusion that fully embodying would be too painful. I will be (powerful, loving, good) to avoid the vulnerability (weakness, disconnection, badness) I experience viscerally. Ironically, they then cannot be fully present because they are not fully here.

Living has three qualities/purposes: 1. (gut center) to develop capacity for presence, to be here fully now, as opposed to not being present. 2. (head center) to develop wisdom and curiosity as opposed to being fearful 3. (heart center) to develop the capacity for true unconditional love as opposed to feeling anxious. You are fully in your soul when you experience your mind, feelings, and senses with self-awareness, acceptance, and wonder. Personal mission unites the three centers of mind as vision, heart as emotion, and gut as action.

## **IF THE WOUND IS IRRATIONAL, WHAT IS TRUE?**

What is true is that all living beings are simultaneously individual and a part of all life. The feelings of 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 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 sacred 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.

## **METHOD**

### **Preparation Guidelines**

We convey to clients that this is a process in which they will experience and accept all of themselves, even the parts that they might have the most difficulty accepting. Once they have accepted the wound, and acknowledged how it runs through their life, then they can expand around and through the wound into the greater truth. When they have expanded to the ultimate state of Essence, they will discover that the wound is actually their greatest teacher, and its energy will spontaneously transform to better serve their soul. It is important for clients to stay in their body and remain aware of the sensations they experience throughout the whole process. Expansions are done kinesthetically, energetically, and three-dimensionally through the wound and throughout the infinite space. The expanded states of experience should be entered with receptivity and curiosity; they may well be novel.

### **Essence Process**

The way we have worded this process seems to be the most effective and generate the least confusion for our clients. The facilitator can do this process either methodically by going through all the questions or intuitively by following the flow from the client. It is important to track the major emotions and the world views that are associated with the feelings. Keep people focused in the sensations in their body because the body never lies.

## **PART I: MAPPING THE WOUND AND ACCEPTANCE**

**Step 1:** “What is your deepest or worst fear (about yourself)? What are you feeling?  
Where is it located in your body? What are the sensations that accompany it?”

*Ask that part by directly addressing the sensation/location i.e. tight chest, if that fear were true, is there anything more frightening than that to it?” “What is that part most ashamed to admit? If that were true, is there anything more shameful than that to it? (Continue until you get that part's worst fear and shame and then ask if there's anything else it wants to add.)*

**Step 2:** “Experience that fear and shame (or other emotion) fully on all levels and allow the sensations which have always been there just waiting for your attention.”

*If the client is really struggling against the feeling we remind them that they don't have to like it, but they need to acknowledge its existence. Sometimes the metaphor of embracing your child is useful. In this case you might say to the client, “Imagine that this is your child and all it wants from you is love and acceptance.”*

**Step 3:** If there are any reactions, they become the next part of the process and get interviewed and included as in **Step 1** above. If the reaction is an automatic reaction, bring it to the client's conscious attention by asking him/her to create the reaction that you have noticed and fully allow and acknowledge that reaction on all levels.

*Optional step: The facilitator can sometimes speed up the elicitation process by directly interviewing the parts of the wound that have not yet spoken (see wound structure outline above). Use questions such as “is there a part of this wound that feels anger, despair, sadness, noble but frustrated, etc.” If there is still a part of the wound that has not spoken, you might ask a leading question such as “what is the wound's uncensored opinion of a supposedly loving being that could do this to you?” “Is there another motivation for the noble part that wants to manifest its gifts in the world besides true generosity of spirit?”*

## **PART II: EXPANSION INTO THE INFINITE SPACE**

**Step 4:** “As you are fully experiencing the beliefs, the images, the emotions and the sensations, when you are ready, peel it back (like a curtain) or peel it off all the way around you. What does this energetic look like? Describe it to me. Notice that beyond this there is an infinite space without boundary or dimension. When you are ready, expand throughout all that there is including wound and space. Expand fully, energetically, and three-dimensionally, spherically, in all directions into this space so that you totally become the space.”

*(Wait for the expansion.) Tell me what you are experiencing and feeling.” (“Describe the state of being.”)*

**Step 5:** If there is any more emotional discomfort in this state, go back to **Step 1**.

*If there is not any emotional discomfort, ask the client's deepest wisdom “Is there any remaining untransformed wound or wound-related energy?” If there is, locate it, interview, and do another expansion.*

## **PART III: ESSENCE AND ENERGETIC TRANSFORMATION OF THE WOUND**

**Step 6:** Expand until the being is at Essence.

*You know that they are in their Spirit Essence when they feel whole, joyous, connected with the Divine and all life, and the light around them is white or clear and bright. A further test is to ask them to peel back and expand beyond that layer. If they are at core they experience more of the same state.*

**Step 7:** Ask the person if this state of Essence is actually familiar to them. Suggest to them that they have found their true self.

*They usually say this state is actually familiar to them, but that they have trouble staying in it. “Would you like to manifest and maintain this state of being in the world on a daily basis? Naturally, the person says yes!*

**Step 8:** While the client remains in Essence, the facilitator repeats the Essence qualities that the client is experiencing.

*For example “While you are experiencing this feeling of (oneness, lightness, joy, freedom, etc.) imagine the thing that you called ( the wound, or specify i.e. “I’m not enough”) as solid energy outside of you. (The facilitator has just created a boundary to enable the client to stay in the Essence space while addressing the wound). “Can you see it? What does it look like? Have it turn to you or face you in any way that's meaningful to you so that you can communicate with it. Be*

*receptive to whatever it communicates and ask: “What is your greatest hope for me?” “If that were true, is there any greater hope than that?” Continue until you reach its greatest hope. Then ask, “What do you want me to learn about why I’m here in this lifetime?”*

**Step 9:** Instruct the client to have the wounded part gaze upon their radiant Essence.

*Say to the wound, “Notice how in Essence (or at core, or in my deepest truth) I already am (or can do) your greatest hope for me, and I understand the learning about why I’m here.”*

**Step 10:** When the wound gets the message, say: “Would you like to transform yourself in such a way that you become one of my greatest allies in helping me to manifest and maintain this state of being in the world?”

*Naturally, this part would be delighted to do so. Instruct the client to “Shine your radiant Essence upon the wound and allow it to spontaneously transform. It may dissolve or transform into something beautiful. If it does the latter, dialog with it again. When it is fully transformed, integrate it back in to your whole being wherever it can serve you most effectively.” Ask the person if there is anything specific that the person needs to do in daily life to maintain this state of consciousness.*

## **FINALE**

If, in the state of Essence, the client can't find the wound, it has probably already transformed. Ask the client if they now feel confident that they can be their true selves in the world now, and if they can feel the energy of the wound supporting them to do so. Once all wound energy is transformed, the client often says, “I’m here now, I’m alive now, and that is the point.” “There are no goals, there is no fear, just be.”

When the process is finished, the client is still in Essence, but without the fears that they came in with. Welcome them to the world. Ask if there's anything else that they have learned about how to be in the world, their purpose, etc. Future pace them by asking them to review likely events in the future from this state of being and notice the differences in their natural response.

## **NOTES TO THE FACILITATOR**

### ***How does the process flow?***

Some people complete this process in one or two sessions, and some people take longer. Trust the client to be the expert and know how long they should experience any given aspect or level of emotion. The slow part of the process is the ability to accept all aspects of the wound. Some clients will only be able to go so far because of their pain tolerance levels. When they have gotten as far as they can go, peel and expand. (Try to do at least one peeling and expansion during the first session.) The expanded state may enable them to go deeper into their fear. Some clients will be more able to access the wound because they come in already triggered by some life experience, or they are already aware that they have been dealing with this problem in other ways.<sup>3</sup> If they can hold this state, they will experience the process more deeply.

### ***Content statements are really about process.***

A common question we are asked about this process by the facilitators is, “What do I do when the client says, I’m stuck, or I can't do this, or its' hopeless?” It is important to understand that such seeming content statements about the process are in reality part of the process itself. This is just

the next level of fear. With this in mind, a facilitator might say, “Wonderful. You're fully in state. Just experience this fear fully and with acceptance, and then continue with the process.”

***The process has no goals and the facilitator can't save the client.***

The compulsion in the wound is to return home and be forgiven by the Source of life and love. In order to supersede the compulsion of the wound, the facilitator must recognize that any attachment to achieving a goal, or getting somewhere, or being saved are parts of the wound that must be explicitly acknowledged and held with acceptance, and folded into the process. The process is not about getting from here to there because attachment to any outcome inherently triggers the fears in the wound.

***Recognize typical avoidance reactions that are part of the wound.***

Denial is a common avoidance mechanism, particularly for 8's, 9's, and 1's. They will encounter a part of the wound and immediately argue that it's not true. Expansion in only one direction i.e. toward the light and away from or around the wound is a common avoidance mechanism, particularly in 4's. Remind clients to expand in all directions including below and behind and through the wound. Bouncing into the head for intellectual chatter is a common avoidance mechanism, especially for 7's. Spacing out or getting sleepy is a common avoidance mechanism, especially for 9's. When *any* point does any of the above or any other persistent reaction, ask them to *create* (as a choice) the reaction (that they think is just something that happens automatically.) Emphasize that the reaction is part of the process and needs to be addressed and peeled like any other part of the wound. If the person is really trapped in the resistance, ask them to amplify the reaction consciously as much as they can.

The results of completing this process are subtle yet profound. People report feeling less compelled or anxious or reactive in situations that always bothered them before. Furthermore, they can more easily release old habits that were previously generated by the wound and more easily develop new habits that were not possible for them before. For example, in our experience, people who are Enneagram 2's now feel that they exist inside themselves. Thus, they can now learn to first check within for opinions or feelings, instead of compulsively checking without. Generally symptoms are easier to clear once they don't have the wound to drive them.

## **DISCUSSION**

The wound story is a universal human story that shows up repeatedly in sacred and non-sacred literature. For example, the Bible's Garden of Eden story may be viewed as an archetypal projection of the wound story. In this story, mankind is living in Paradise and is unselfconscious. Man sins, the beginning of self consciousness, and then is rejected by God for his sins. Man becomes aware of containing both good and evil *fears* that it is the evil in him that keeps him out of the garden. Man splits good and evil and denies the evil aspect of personality in order to get back into the garden. As long as Man continues to do this, human beings are trapped in a world of hardship and struggle. Ironically, humanity's first step to *getting back in is* to accept the evil part. When human beings are able to accept all of themselves, they are able to return to Eden with their self-consciousness intact.

In the Essence Process, we have created a sine wave-like transformational process in which the being starts at some point in life, descends into the deepest aspect of their embodiment wound, ascends to the highest quality of Spirit and then re-grounds as an integrated body/spirit being in the world. Metaphorically, it is like going with equanimity into a black hole whose gravitational pull one has been fighting one's whole life, and expanding through it into a multidimensional universe much greater than the original one. In so doing, this process facilitates the absorption

and integration of the most profound shadow material including the existential fear of nonexistence or death, the psychological fear of basic sin, and any other trauma that mimics these. Thus, the Essence Process is a way of transforming the energy of trauma in this wound thereby integrating personality, soul, and Essence/Spirit so that they are in alignment. In the process of transformation people disengage the compulsive struggle generated by the wound, learn who they really are, and why they are really here.

How is this process healing? It is an energetic process. When one brings the higher, free-flowing energy and information of Essence to the lower, dense vibrational energy of personality wound, the block transforms and integrates with the higher energy.

In designing the Essence Process, AH was influenced by several traditions. Teachers such as Helen Palmer (*The Enneagram*) and Claudio Naranjo (*Enneatype Structure*) put forth the notion that the way to Essence is through the personality. AH started with that notion, but had never found a good technology for actually doing this. Dick Olney, in his humanistic psychology work, taught true self-acceptance. Brugh Joy taught the most about the core shadow and grounding the core shadow in the unconditional love of the heart center. Thus the Essence process begins with an acceptance practice. Michael White's narrative therapy in which the client externalizes the problem in order to be able to work with it influenced the peeling step. The Buddhist monk, Thich Nhat Hanh, taught that we must accept the self and that the SELF is greater than our identification with our personality. Thus, the second step of the Essence process is the peel and expansion throughout all that is. Assagioli with psychosynthesis, and Stone and Winkelman with voice dialogue (*Embracing Ourselves*, Stone and Winkelman) influenced the ending dialogue with the wound. Stephen Wolinsky's work on Quantum Psychology influenced the idea that when the process is over, the wound energy transforms, essentially dissolving.

Other people have developed core transformational processes. The processes developed by the Andreases and by Martin Lowenthal are different from our process in that they attempt to reach Essence through positive intentions or hopes rather than through core fears. Almass's work on Essence seems theoretically compatible with our work, although his experiential *process* is designed to be a practice that takes many years. The process that is most similar to ours is that of Wolinsky (*The Tao of Chaos*). Wolinsky's process differs from ours in that:

1. He uses chaos theory rather than acceptance practice as the primal departure point for his process.
2. He seems to describe Essence as a place of no qualities, just infinite emptiness rather than an experience of energetic aliveness.
3. The nature of the dialogues with wound is different in the two methods.
4. The nature of the ending dialogue seems somewhat different as we specifically integrate the transformed energy in the service of the being's daily life.
5. Finally, we have mapped the structure of the wound and linked it to trauma and its healing.

## **CONCLUSION**

If people are going to create all of who they are they have to be free to do so. Free will is the choice between living a destined or fated life. Destiny is manifesting one's personal mission with vitality and having acceptance of wherever that takes you. Fate is living one's particular life with resistance.

The Enneagram wound rigidities a person's ability to function optimally in the service of his/her soul and of the collective field. The Essence Process enables each part of the collective to live a free life thereby contributing fully. One can only imagine a world in which all human beings

experience transformation of this wound and manifest the gifts they bring in the service of everyone.

## CASE EXAMPLES

### **EXAMPLE ENNEAGRAM 1**

Life recreates wound. Therefore, many clients will tell the Enneagram story using examples from their life experience and substituting “mother” or other archetypal figures as a representation of the source of life and love. This example is from a client with little to no spiritual training. This client was having difficulty with a boss who was critical over trivial things.

**Facilitator:** What is your worst fear and what are you most ashamed to admit? Where is it located?

**Client:** face/torso- fear of having failed -”I’m not good enough - I won’t be loved, I’d die and that would be hell.” Embarrassed - I’ve done some kind of deviant behavior; *I’m a bad person*. My goodness and perfectionist strivings are a facade. That’s why I need a lot of positive reinforcement - people valuing me.

I want to create an environment where my employees can flourish. I don’t even get angry when I should. There are times when I should express my anger and I seem to have a disconnect from that emotion. That’s what probably makes me sick.

Expressing my anger would prove that I don’t have my act together. Expressing myself would lower me to the level of other people. So, anger festers inside of me.

I live with somebody who doesn’t like to be angry; just wants me to be happy all the time, can’t deal with conflict and walks out of the room or changes the subject.”

**Facilitator:** Is there a part of you that feels sadness or longing?

**Client:** heart - “Mother is not the mother I wanted her to be. I get no feedback on the love letters I send from my heart to my mother. The tough part longs to be mothered. I remember when I was waited on and listened to by my grandparents. Nobody cares about me unless they’re in crisis and need something. I long to be mothered and listened to by my family. I don’t have a sister I can give a card to and say ‘you’re my best friend’. I’m already a mother to people who work for me. I was always the leader and captain of the teams. Always top dog, but a team player.

**Facilitator:** Is there a noble part that feels that it wants to do something important in the world?

**Client:** Noble part - protect people from negative outside forces that would prevent these people from maximizing their ability to enjoy life and excel. “I want them to like being here. I also want them to like me so that I won’t be alone.” up-right and outside of body- part that says “Let’s get rid of the wound.” Its worst fear is that I’m not perfect. The world is an evil place, and I’m a part of that evil. It’s futile.

**Facilitator:** How did you get here and who did this to you?

**Client:** “Mother cut me off emotionally for pushing her buttons. I’m being punished for this. I’m such a terror. I’m uncontrollable and unmanageable. I expressed myself. It must have been such a relief for her to send me off to school. I expressed my anger violently. I was really selfish and self-centered, and I sucked people’s energy. They cut me off. I was relentlessly demanding - I wasn’t going to give up because I was right. Anger - “When I was right, it was selfish. Punishment was restricting, confining, and took away my freedom.”

**Facilitator:** How does the angry part feel about being punished, and where is it located?

**Client:** left side of face. “Mother hurt me. She’s incapable of appropriate communication. She’s incompetent; she can’t even control her own imperfections. She’s big time imperfect. She’s part of the problem and so is Dad for not sharing discipline and leaving all the work to Mom while he checks out (he *really* showed his anger). I’ve been punished and cut off emotionally. This is great - right where I want to be (sarcastic). This situation is not perfect. Get me outta here.” fear - “I’m afraid that I’m gonna be stuck with this all my life. I have the whole world on my shoulders, but I can’t carry it because there’s too much evil; the people in the world aren’t helping. I can’t control myself, and I have no support from my family.”

**peeled:** It looks like yellow-green amorphous glowing slime.

**expanded:** “I feel like I'm in outer space, like stars; I've always wanted to be an astronaut.”

**expanded again:** “Now I'm feeling connected. It's like being in an embryo with thumb in mouth and feels embryonic, connected to everything that's in that world. All that world is me; I'm part of something that's enormous.”

**Facilitator:** Is there any remaining untransformed wound or wound-related energy?

**Client:** no remaining wound noticed

**Facilitator:** What was the greatest hope of the energy-that-was-wound?

**Client:** hope- peace, love, loving myself, joy, pleasure, fun. Reason for being here is to experience life. I feel this way right now, but I'm afraid that I won't be able to maintain this state.

**peeled and expanded** through that fear. Wound transformed and its energy finished integrating.

**Client:** “I felt this enormous energy rush in through my head all the way inside my body (like a genie in a bottle). I'm all here in my body.”

## EXAMPLE ENNEAGRAM 2

This is an example of the Essence Process done with a person who is very spiritually aware and was having trouble with angry feelings towards an ex-spouse.

**Facilitator:** What is your worst fear and what are you most ashamed to admit? Where is it located?

**Client:** Whole trunk- fear of being alone and separate, feels crumbled, “I wouldn't exist, I don't exist, but God does.”

(rage - feels impotent. angry - I had a fight with Source to be an individual. It *obliterated* me. resistance to sadness - afraid that if I stopped crying I would become invisible. Sadness - in this embodied form it is impossible to reconcile with Source - there is no connection to Source because *I've been obliterated*.)

I wanted to be embodied to experience individuality, the energy of the earth and to play joyfully with my soulmates. I found a makeshift, imperfect, test ground. Feels the pain of a largely joyless world.

**peeled:** The wound is alive but vibrates at a lower energy than myself. It looks like silly putty.

**expanded:** “I don't feel consolidated in my body. I'm afraid that I will be obliterated again.”

**peeled:** It looks like pink silly putty with a chartreuse piece.

**expanded:** I'm feeling like an organized human being. I'm located inside my body. Songworld is sunshine, lollipops, and roses.

**Facilitator:** “Is there any remaining untransformed wound energy within this being?”

**Client:** throat- shame and guilt - fear of what I'm going to say that will hurt my friends and cause me to be left alone. “I feel guilty that I deserved to be obliterated for speaking the truth and hurting Source and all who were Source.”

**peeled:** It looks like a sea sponge.

**expanded:** pineal -feels shame that I have been functionless and acting in bits and pieces. gall bladder- My mission is to build bridges between the plant and animal kingdoms and man. I'm ashamed that I couldn't experience life in the fullest from the molecular to the planetary level.

**peeled:** It looks like a crystallized gall stone.

**expanded:** awareness in head and shoulder - I tried to get rid of the wound. pain in my nerves - All the pain I had in my life throughout my body was there so I could *feel*.

**Facilitator:** Is there any remaining untransformed wound or wound related energy? (no). Is the wound energy fully integrated into this being in a way that serves her highest purpose? (yes)

What is the greatest hope of the energy-that-was-wound for you?

**client:** “The greatest hope is that I can really feel, to live, to die, to be real, and I know that I can do that now.” (while stroking the skin of the hands), “You don't know what it feels like to be truly able to feel your body.”

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## **FOOTNOTES**

1 Different authors of Enneagram books may use different names to describe the personality types, but the numbering system and personality characteristics remain the same.

2 Some of our clients who have had spiritual experiences through meditation or drugs ask "Why can't I maintain the state of bliss?" Deeper exploration of this issue reveals that some clients had not fully integrated their spiritual and psychological aspects. In other cases, meditation or drugs were used in part as an escape from the stresses and wounds of life.

3 *Occasionally life experience damage must be treated before a client can do the Essence Process.* One example of this may be people who are 2's who have histories of persecution i.e. years of continuous and personal tormenting. The persecution trauma often must be healed before Essence work will be successful. Another example may be people who are 4's and who have absorbed a lot of hostility in this lifetime or people who are 1's who have been subjected to a great deal of criticism.

Other general patterns that may need to be healed first include a person's phobic reaction to experiencing certain of his/her own emotions, and complex patterns which we call Deathwish, and Wounded Holy One. One way the facilitator can determine if life experience needs to be healed first is by muscle testing. NLP or Systematic Applied Kinesiology techniques can be used here.