

Existential Fear in each of the Ennea-types and Subtypes

Quote from

The Enneagram of Passions and Virtues

Sandra Maitri

Pages 154-155

[Gary's notes set off in braces and italicized]

Our technology has proliferated exponentially since the so-called Age of Enlightenment in the eighteenth century, leading to the industrialization of the nineteenth and globalization of the twentieth centuries. This double-edged sword has given us the power to not only radically improve our quality of life but has also at this point become a threat to our very existence. As we move into the twenty-first century, we stand on the edge of being able to live in space and colonize other planets, as well as to decimate the ecological balance and the environment on this one. We have the power, in the form of atomic and hydrogen bombs, weapons of mass destruction, and biological warfare to destroy ourselves many times over. Improvements in medicine and diet are allowing us to live far longer than our ancestors could dream of, and while this has made sixty the new thirty in some people's minds, overpopulation is one of the biggest threats to the survival of our species.

Hand in hand with this technological explosion has come the receding in our consciousness of the *centrality of the numinous* [the spiritual], of a transcendent reality many refer to as God or the Divine. In counterpoint to the ascent of scientific knowledge in the eighteenth century, religious authority declined as the arbiter of what is real. The Church and so God slowly lost their central place in our understanding of reality, and science's mechanistic understanding of life as well as [science's mechanistic understanding] of ourselves led to an increasing **soullessness**. Industrialization led to individuals becoming only specks in the masses of humanity, and **modern and postmodern life**, with all of its sophistication and physical comforts, has become **increasingly bereft of a sense of profundity and significance**.

Ample grounds, indeed, for a new, improved postmodern version of **survival anxiety**. The existential philosophers of the early twentieth century – Heidegger, Camus, and Sartre, to name a few – made the German word *Angst* part of our vocabulary, signifying the fear and dread that characterize the modern psyche. Civilization has allowed us an ease of life unknown in ancient times, yet are we any less afraid? **All of our increased stability and security has not diminished to any significant degree the amount of anxiety experienced by most people.** Fear, then, the passion of Point Six [of the Enneagram] far from being eradicated, has only had a face lift. *[We may no longer feel fearful of evil spirits or punishing gods or of hell but rather fearful of life itself and its ultimate annihilation in death.]*

While fear is the central emotional atmosphere of Ennea-type Sixes, as we are seeing, you don't have to be a Six to be afraid. Fear is one of the underpinnings of postmodern life, and as long **as we are identified with our personality structure, we live in fear.** We will further explore this point later. Many people who study the enneagram erroneously decide that they are Sixes because of the degree of fear, anxiety, worry, distrust, and doubt that they live with, but each of the nine types has its own kind of fear, and **all nine [Ennea-types] can be seen as different responses to survival anxiety.** This is because **whenever we [erroneously think we] are disconnected from our inner ground – the ground of Being – we are insecure.** [Almaas' book *Facets of Unity* is based on the premise that all of the Ennea-types arise in reaction to the loss of contact with Being in early childhood, particularly with the dimension of being in which we experience unconditional love and holding, supporting a sense of trust and security in the soul. This dimension is referred to in the various traditions as that of cosmic or divine love, in which the universe is experienced as beneficent [*Pathwork would say benign*] and loving. **Each of the types, then, is based on a lack of basic trust in life, the world, and reality in general.**] This is a natural law. What determines our type, from the perspective highlighted at Point Six of the enneagram – that of fear – is **the question of what we are afraid of.**

Ennea-type **Nines** are afraid of *creating conflict by making themselves or their needs too obvious.*

Ennea-type **Ones** are afraid that there is *something fundamentally wrong with them* or that *who they are is not enough or good enough.*

Ennea-type **Twos** are afraid of *rejection, being needy, and of not being loved.*

Ennea-type **Threes** are afraid of *failure.*

Ennea-type **Fours** are afraid of *being abandoned, or their sadness, and of feeling lost.*

Ennea-type **Fives** are afraid of *entanglements* and of *losing what they have.*

Ennea-type **Sevens** are afraid of *boredom, of grunt work, and of being exposed as a charlatan.*

Ennea-type **Eights** are afraid of *being weak and not being in charge or on top of things.*

Ennea-type **Sixes** on the other hand are *simply afraid of everything and everyone to one degree or another and fear itself in a nameless, faceless way is the driving force of their psyche.*

Likewise, the **life arena around which our fear is based** is that associated with our **instinctual subtype.** While the root of all fear is our instinct for self-

preservation, the two other instincts used in the map of the enneagram refract out of that fundamental instinct in the same way that all the Ennea-types can be seen as refractions of the principle of sleep or ignorance at Point Nine [*of the enneagram*]. This means that those of us in whom the social subtype predominates feel that we will not survive unless we are part of the group, while those of the sexual subtype believe deep down that our survival is assured only through intimate relationship.

Self-preservation subtype: Our fear primarily revolves around concerns about *livelihood and sustenance. Worries and insecurity about our physical safety, income, our home environment, food, and the health of our body* are forefront for those of this subtype.

Social subtype: Our fear has to do with our *social standing, our degree of prestige, our sense of belonging, and of having friends. Feeling socially insecure, afraid of being left out, and needing status* dominate for those of this subtype.

Sexual subtype: Our fear has to do with *whether or not we are loved by a special someone and whether or not we are sexually attractive to others. Concerns about closeness, intimacy, pleasure, and sexuality itself* dominate for those of this subtype.

Glossary

Angst: a feeling of dread, anxiety, or anguish.

Charlatan: a person who pretends or claims to have more knowledge or skill than he or she possesses; quack.

Existentialism: *Philosophy* . a philosophical attitude associated especially with Heidegger, Jaspers, Marcel, and Sartre, and opposed to rationalism and empiricism, that stresses the individual's unique position as a self-determining agent responsible for the authenticity of his or her choices.

Numinous: spiritual or supernatural