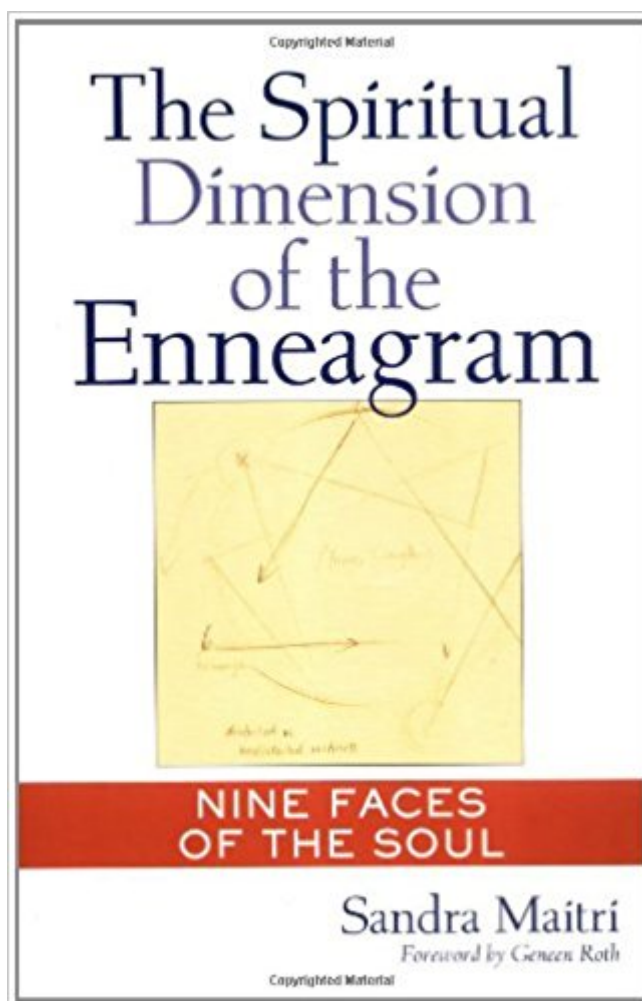


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# The Spiritual Dimension Of The Enneagram: Nine Faces Of The Soul



## Synopsis

A groundbreaking exploration of the spiritual dimension of working with the enneagram by one of its earliest students and teachers in America. Here is one of the first books to explore in an authentic and comprehensive way the original spiritual dimension of the enneagram. Among the most knowledgeable teachers of the enneagram in America, Sandra Maitri shows how the enneagram not only reveals our personalities, but illuminates a basic essence within each of us. She shows how traversing the inner territory particular to our ennea-type can bring us profound fulfillment and meaning, as well as authentic spiritual development.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Possesses a depth and completeness that I find missing in the existing enneagram literature." --A. H. Almaas, author of *Essence and Facets of Unity*

Sandra Maitri was a member of the first group of students to whom the Chilean psychiatrist Claudio Naranjo presented the enneagram system in the U.S. almost three decades ago. Throughout her many years of studying and teaching it, Maitri has preserved the legacy of this original transmission. In addition to her work with Naranjo, she has studied with various Eastern and Western spiritual and psychological teachers, including A.H. Almaas, founder of the contemporary spiritual path, the Diamond Approach. As one of the principal and supervising teachers of the Diamond Approach, she teaches the enneagram as part of the larger work of personal transformation, working with hundreds of students each year in the U.S. and Europe. She lives in Marin County, California.

I am a big fan of this book and find that it compliments the work of Riso and Hudson, Helen Palmer and others. The book has a lot of depth! The insights that Sandra Maitri illuminates regarding each ennea-type are expressed beautifully although not always in the most sensitive manner. A can see where a lot of people would have resistance to this book because it unmask the shadow side of the personality. However, this is precisely what the Enneagram is concerned with. Basically, it's about the different ways one can be an ego in the world and when you look deeply, this isn't very pretty to look at. I admire her for not sugar-coating what each type is about. The first time I read about my type, I laughed and at other times felt like crying. Maitri does not take as scientific an approach as Riso and Hudson. However, this does not mean there is not a lot of value here. Shakespeare did not take a scientific approach to love, but he certainly had a lot of insight into it and there is much to be learned about life by reading his plays. Similarly, one can learn a lot about the various ennea-types, ennea-type dynamics and how all of this might be related to spirituality. A lot of the knowledge contained in this book comes out of the work of Ichazo, Naranjo and A. H. Almaas. I have read Almaas' book on the Enneagram and I actually think that Maitri does a better job of presenting the types than he did. While I think she is appropriately introspective and interpretive, I don't find she is so speculative as to lose credibility with a less esoteric audience. In short, this book combines psychology and spirituality in a plausible integration that has stood the test of time with respect to an empirically developed model. I think this is part of the value that Maitri offers. Riso and Hudson looked at the Enneagram more clinically and developmentally. They scratched the surface of the spiritual dimension, but Maitri expands on it. This isn't a treatise on Physics, it's a soulful look at the Enneagram. Personally, I find this book to be very useful. While it is difficult to admit, I think she nailed my type and I have found what she wrote about the dynamics of other types to be true. In fact, I have taken Enneagram assessment classes and talked about her ideas with different types and they seem to agree. While a lot of people are triggered by what they read in her book, at the same time they seem to recognize the validity of it. She says a lot of the same things Helen Palmer, Riso and Hudson and others have said, but she takes it further and deeper in some ways. This makes her book a unique and valuable contribution, especially for people who have already read the other author's books. Even if you are not someone who believes in the validity of the Enneagram, this is a thought provoking read. It will cause you to deeply inquire into your own personality dynamics and those of the people around you. If you are looking for a good general book to get started in exploring the Enneagram, then I recommend the *Wisdom of the Enneagram* by Riso and Hudson. This is a very well-balanced introduction to Enneagram theory and how you can

use it for your own personal growth. These authors take a more mainstream approach and have done much work to validate the Enneagram model clinically. At the same time, they honor the spiritual dimension of it without diving into the spiritual specifics in great depth. If I were only going to own two Enneagram books, the *Wisdom of the Enneagram* and the *Spiritual Dimension of the Enneagram* would be my two "must haves." The former book leans in the direction of psychology and the latter goes deeper into spirit where Riso and Hudson stop. On the other hand, Riso and Hudson have other books that go deeper into the various psychological levels of the Enneagram model and map them back to DSM type classifications of psychological disorders. Again... the books are complimentary, they offer depth, but Riso and Hudson do it more from within a psychological framework. Maitri tries to go beyond this by exploring the spiritual dynamics that give rise to the psychological propensities of the various types.

At times lofty and idealistic, *The Spiritual Dimension of the Enneagram* is a useful tool to better understand one another, progress towards our own growth. As a writer, I also found it exceptionally useful for character framework and psychology.

I belong to a contemplative book club, and this book is our current selection. I had never heard of the Enneagram, and I am not sure I totally buy the concept. However, it is an interesting read. The most important message to me so far is to work toward operating without the ego or personality which is created by all the stories people tell us about who we are, and our individual reactions to those stories. That part I do buy.

Maitri's book explains the basics well and details the characteristics of the nine personality types, but she goes further. She deftly describes the problem of personality, and shows how it can be overcome in a way that is challenging and engaging.

I read this book a few years ago and it hit me like a bolt of lightning. Firstly, it was the process of discovering myself and then relating the 'essence' of this book to the world we live in. This book helped me link the modern day concept of the 'enneagram' with the mythological characters present in Ancient civilisations. For example: Isis is a classic number 8 (female). I could write down a whole host of parallels but I would encourage readers to go through their own journey and enjoy the process of discovery. This book is my most popular gift item now, handed over freely to friends, acquaintances and anyone interested in discovering themselves. Sandra, sometimes I wonder if

you really understand what a powerful book you have given the world. Thank you!

Too complicated. Points out the problem, not the solution.

Of all the enneagram books I've read, this is easily the best. Whereas most other books just treat the enneagram as a psychological typology, this one is grounded in a fundamental level, the level of the spirit or essence. It allows us to recognize and trace our dysfunctional personality patterns (fixations) to their Source, and shows us ways to truly see them and transparentize them to find our spiritual essence. An invaluable tool for the serious cultivator of the Way!

A good resource for those who want to go beyond the shallow "box" of type. It gets tedious in its attempt to drag forward ancient and culturally encapsulated Freudian psychology. Ignoring that, it is thought provoking. This book is worth reading...and re-reading...and worth studying. The author has knowledge and insight to share about the wisdom of the Enneagram.

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