The ENNEAGRAM of BELONGING
A Compassionate Journey of Self-Acceptance

CHRISTOPHER L. HEUERTZ
PRAISE FOR
THE ENNEAGRAM OF BELONGING

Understanding the fears that keep us small and embarking on the lifelong journey of belonging to ourselves and to each other is a sacred adventure. I’m grateful for Chris’s willingness to clear a path and walk alongside us in love and compassion.

– Brené Brown, PhD, LMSW, research professor and author of Braving the Wilderness

The Enneagram of Belonging is truly a pathway to radical self-compassion. As you dive into this book, you will begin the process of life-change that leads to accepting ourselves, loving others, and finding the connection we crave.

– Father Richard Rohr, OFM, author of Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life

Chris Heuertz and the Enneagram both helped me get to a place of thriving after a period of struggle. In The Enneagram of Belonging you will appreciate the wisdom revealed, as Chris guides you to radical self-acceptance and helps you break free from the lies that are holding you back. Get ready to love the whole of who you are.

– Kirsten Powers, CNN senior political analyst, USA Today columnist, and host of the How to Do You podcast

Chris Heuertz has a way of painting pictures with words, and these portraits guide you to a beautiful story. In this book, you will find insight that is as informative as it is applicable, filled with depth, and steps for the lifelong journey home.

– Morgan Harper Nichols, writer, artist, and musician
In *The Enneagram of Belonging*, Chris Heuertz summarizes and reinterprets the Enneagram of Personality to highlight a path to developing more self-compassion through self-understanding and self-acceptance. His strength as an author is in the way he serves as both a guide and companion on the spiritual quest.

– Beatrice Chestnut, PhD, author of *The Complete Enneagram: 27 Paths to Greater Self-Knowledge* and *The 9 Types of Leadership: Mastering the Art of People in the 21st Century Workplace*

Chris is more than an expert in the world of the Enneagram. He has lived and breathed its wisdom for decades. Here, in an approachable way, he draws us into deeper realms of personal association and application by shining fresh light on this ancient understanding of human behavior.

– Kyle Korver, NBA veteran

Heuertz is the most compassionate, fresh, and thoughtful voice in the Enneagram. A true luminary. *The Enneagram of Belonging*, his finest work to date, so beautifully reminds us that the Enneagram, at its very best, is a map to better loving ourselves and others. What a gift.

– Ryan O’Neal, Sleeping At Last

Chris has lived with the teachings and traditional language of the Enneagram long enough to integrate and embody its insights, and he has found creative new ways to explain them to newcomers and to those familiar with the system. *The Enneagram of Belonging* is essential reading!

– Russ Hudson, coauthor of *The Wisdom of the Enneagram*
In his earlier bestselling *The Sacred Enneagram*, Chris showed us that the Enneagram is not just a map of personality but a map of the archetypes of soul. In *The Enneagram of Belonging*, Chris reveals his gifts not just as a mapmaker but as a soul-archaeologist. If you long to more deeply belong—first and foremost to yourself—you will want to grab a figurative shovel and let Chris compassionately companion you as you dig up the buried parts of your True Self.

– Nhiên Vương, JD, MDiv, founder of Evolving Enneagram

I have found the Enneagram a helpful tool in enabling me to better understand not only my own strengths and weaknesses but those of others’ as well. Chris Heuertz’s new book invites us to use the Enneagram to grow in compassion for our own complicated selves and, therefore, love ourselves more and allow God to encounter us in our limitless complexity.

– James Martin, SJ, author of *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything* and *Becoming Who You Are*

*The Enneagram of Belonging* is a book that was everything I didn’t know I needed to accept myself wholly and to “live into my own goodness.” Chris’s voice comes through as a dear friend, chatting over coffee and guiding me through my own walls, uncovering places I needed to see to better hope for the best in myself and those around me.

– Sally Kang, musician in Run River North

In *The Enneagram of Belonging* Chris Heuertz has successfully distilled the essence, research, and finding of all schools of the Enneagram into a highly readable and balanced book. Bravo! If I had to name one book that offers a most complete and thorough portrait on the subject of the Enneagram of Personality, I would choose this one.

– Jack Labanauskas, editor and publisher of *Enneagram Monthly*
OTHER BOOKS BY
CHRISTOPHER L. HEUERTZ

Simple Spirituality:
Learning to See God in a Broken World

Friendship at the Margins:
Discovering Mutuality in Service and Mission

Unexpected Gifts:
Discovering the Way of Community

The Sacred Enneagram:
Finding Your Unique Path to Spiritual Growth

The Sacred Enneagram Workbook:
Mapping Your Unique Path to Spiritual Growth

The Enneagram of Belonging Workbook:
Mapping Your Unique Path to Self-Acceptance
To the EnneaCurious, may you continue wading through the murky waters of this tradition to bring forth its mysteries.
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Foreword by Brené Brown


For years people would leave comments on my blog or on social media asking, guessing, or assigning my Enneagram type. Sometimes they’d ask me at book signings, and, on two occasions, people actually shouted out the question from their seats in the audience at a lecture: Brené! What are you on the Enneagram?

Finally, a little over a year ago, I researched which Enneagram instrument looked the most official, paid twelve bucks, and took the test online. I called a friend to tell her that the results said I was a type One. She said, “That’s bullshit. You’re the ‘Patron Saint’ of Enneagram type Twos! Google it if you don’t believe me.”

Sure enough. I googled it, and it turns out there’s a beautiful portrait of me as the patron saint. Funny enough, the Google search also provided a list of required readings by type. Turns out the #1 required book for type One is *The Gifts of Imperfection*. Written by yours truly.

I played around online for a few days—sometimes seeing myself in the caricatures and memes and laughing. Sometimes rolling my eyes and dismissing the ones that felt reductive or belittling. I thought it was fun, but as a social scientist and researcher, I mostly dismissed it.

Several months later, a good friend recommended that I read
Chris's book, *The Sacred Enneagram*. I can tell you exactly where I was sitting—in a rocking chair facing the runway at the Knoxville, Tennessee, airport—and what I was wearing—jeans, a black shirt, and clogs—when I started reading that book. The moment is frozen in time.

Like most people, I skipped to the middle, where the book was divided by types, and started reading about myself. I couldn’t breathe. I was overwhelmed with an emotional maelstrom of vulnerability, grief, and maybe even a weird, shame-y feeling of being found out. As soon as I finished reading about my type, I went back to the beginning and read it from the first page to the last. Two days later, I was on a beach in México with my family, and my daughter, who was a sophomore in college at the time, and I took turns reading it to each other. We read. We cried. We laughed. We hugged. Then we read more.

When Chris asked me to write the foreword for this book, I said yes without hesitation. Here’s why: The Enneagram—and Chris’s work specifically—has changed how I understand myself and the people around me. It has brought me closer to myself and my true Essence, and it’s brought me closer to God, who dwells fully within that Essence—alongside my imperfections and vulnerabilities.

What I respect most is that Chris’s work is unapologetically complex and nuanced. It’s fierce and tender, and, when taken seriously, demands real spiritual contemplation. To strip the Enneagram of spiritual contemplation, to ignore its rich history and diverse provenance, is to deny its power and our own.

Understanding the fears that keep us small and embarking on the lifelong journey of belonging to ourselves and to each other is a sacred adventure. I’m grateful for Chris’s willingness to clear a path and walk alongside us in love and compassion.
Introduction

A Compassionate Guidebook for Belonging

This is a book about dragons. Dragons that deliver messages, dragons that protect treasures, and dragons that need to be slain.

While working on this book I’ve had to face my own dragons. It has not been an easy journey but one well worth it. And I imagine if you’re searching for the courage to welcome and face your own dragons, then a little volume like this serves as the perfect guide.

I’ve faced these dragons during late nights and early mornings; at writing retreats in Berlin, México City, and Santa Fe; and while being warmed by more pots of Ethiopian pour-over coffee than I would want to count. I’ve encountered these dragons during battle after battle of wills with my sweet dog Basil, as if he were trying to Jedi-Mind-Trick me into a walk to the park where he likes to chase bunnies instead of letting me slug away at my own inner work in peace. Facing these dragons has been one of the most enthralling inner journeys I’ve undertaken. It’s also been one of the most demanding.

In being introduced and reintroduced to the dragons, I’ve become a reluctant Enneagram mapmaker, charting the unexplored interior landscape of my ego. And my ego hasn’t made this easy. It’s taken (as it always has) more from me than I’d consciously or willingly
surrender. Like all egos do, mine has superimposed itself on my sense of self like a disproportionately large rendering of Greenland on a flat, 2-D map. My ego has presented itself as much heftier than it actually is; an oversized projection of what it wants me to believe it has become—and subsequently who I’ve become.

So, what’s the source of all this tension?

If I’m honest, it’s been a journey in learning to like myself. And that’s the punchline here: if there’s any part of ourselves that we can’t or won’t make room for—if any part doesn’t belong—then the truth is, no part fully belongs.

This should sound like good news, especially for those of us familiar with the Enneagram. But awareness of our type is not enough to change everything. True and sustainable transformation requires an honest relationship with ourselves that is rooted in deep compassion. And compassion then leads the way to the belonging we crave most.

Seems simple enough. But as we’ve learned, our fragmented self fights against our truest, purest self (what I will refer to as our Essence) to make this experience of belonging seem impossible.

Accepting our Essence as the truest, purest core of ourselves allows us to remember what Howard Thurman remarked at his Baccalaureate address at Spelman College on May 4, 1980: “There is something in every one of you that waits and listens for the sound of the genuine in yourself. It is the only true guide you will ever have. And if you cannot hear it, you will all of your life spend your days on the ends of strings that somebody else pulls.”

This sound of the genuine within us is the melody of our Essence, affirming our soul’s created reason for being. You can’t get much truer than that.

Thankfully we have a teaching like the Enneagram to unscramble all these crossed wires and find a pathway back to the core of who we are, the most beautiful aspects of our self that many of us
have forgotten. And once we can embrace the wholeness of who we are, a portal for compassion opens up—for ourselves and for others.

So that's the journey in this book. What you hold in your hand is a compassionate guidebook for belonging.

We'll start with a simple stroll through the very basics of the Enneagram, a kind of throwback to the original building blocks of the Enneagram of Personality. However, this probably shouldn't be the first Enneagram book you read. Before diving in, it would be helpful for you to know your type, and it would be important to have a grasp on the key components of type structure.

Even though I know better, I still read the comments from the reviews of my last book, *The Sacred Enneagram*. So, to help manage your expectations, let me make the implicit explicit.

- First, there is not an Enneagram type test in this book. The Enneagram is not “a test” and many of the tests are actually unhelpful.
- Second, I have not organized the content so that you can simply turn to the chapter on your type. Why? Because the system is much more complex than that, plus you deserve better than isolated type descriptions that don't honor their connection to the whole.
- Finally, there are spiritual undertones to this book, but I have written it with accessible interspiritual language hoping that no matter what outlook or tradition you subscribe to, you will find something of value here.

Together, we will explore what it means to let our whole self belong. We'll review the first four Enneagons—Holy Ideas, Fixations, Virtues, and Passions—that Óscar Ichazo initially introduced in the deserts of Chile back in 1969, and that make up the key components
of the Enneagram of Personality as most know it. I’ll offer fresh language and a rejuvenated approach to incorporating the gifts of these original Enneagons as we learn to make peace with the whole of ourselves. We’ll also dip our toes into the deep end of the conversations happening around the Instincts and Subtypes, attempting to harmonize some of the disparate and contradictory ideas out there.

Through this deep dive into The Enneagram of Belonging, you will recover the parts of yourself you once thought couldn’t possibly be essential aspects of the whole. Like a diamond with rough edges and hairline fractures, you’ll realize how even seemingly unattractive parts of yourself make you not only who you are, but are crucial to the unique beauty that is you.

Before we get much further, let me remind us, we all have a shadow—the part of ourselves hidden from awareness. This is a great place for dragons to hang out but a pretty poor strategy for belonging. So, let’s examine what happens when we dare to bring it all into view, encounter honestly the whole of who we are, and thereby remember who we are. This journey to belonging requires all of you—your body, heart, and head. What was once a fragmented and disconnected expression of you now beckons you toward alignment. This is a journey toward wholeness. It’s a challenging sojourn for sure. It requires great fortitude, for it will cost you everything you think you are. But engaging undaunted risks will be rewarded with meaning and realization like you’ve never known.

It’s also important to remember that belonging is about integration: bringing our body, heart, and mind into alignment with our unshakeable belovedness, and realizing that all the complexities of ourselves belong. You see, when we abandon parts of ourselves in an effort to make a break from our desired identity, we further our own fragmentation. What if we discovered it all belonged? That we could actually learn from the scrappiest, most broken, and deepest
wounded parts of ourselves, alongside the most beautiful, perfect, and strongest aspects of ourselves? What if all of who we are is a gift, intended for our whole belonging and becoming? What if we came to believe that we aren’t fundamentally flawed, bad people hoping to be good, but good people hoping to be better—wanting to accept ourselves for who we’ve always been?

Because the truth is, if we can’t self-observe, then we can’t self-correct. We are doing ourselves great harm by rejecting and refusing to learn from the parts of ourselves we dislike the most—even the parts we perceive are flawed. It all belongs.

Tragically, life is painful. We suffer. We suffer even more when we reject parts of our true identity and when we refuse to love and practice compassion toward the whole of who we are. But we can stop the cycle of suffering when we come home to ourselves. And we come home to our Essence by bringing our body, heart, and mind into alignment with all-encompassing love. The Enneagram of Belonging is for the lifelong sojourner willing to engage the idea that the process of becoming the person we’re made to be demands that we must first learn how to authentically belong.

Our journey together will begin in the head where we’ll find fresh language and clarification for the Enneagram’s Holy Ideas—the tradition’s most convoluted and most misunderstood teaching. We’ll learn that the Holy Idea is the first truth we tell ourselves when the mind is centered in its true self. We’ll discover that the Fixations are the lies our mind attaches to which keep us distanced from our Holy Idea or divine mind. Simultaneously, we’ll learn how to hold our Fixation with compassion, and why this even needs to belong.

From there we’ll make passage into our heart, where we’ll remember that our Virtue is simply the unconditioned fruit of a centered heart that is present to love. Here we’ll include the unexpected gift of our Passions, our type’s pattern of emotional suffering. We’ll realize
that our Passion, which has sometimes been framed as sin, is in truth how our heart suffers disconnect from Essence.

Finally, we'll travel perhaps to the most unchartered territory of the body and explore the impact our unobserved and unconditioned Instincts make on our whole sense of self. Here, we will let our lack of self-awareness shift to mindful self-observation.

So, pour yourself a fresh cup of hot coffee and let's get ready to meet some dragons.
PART I

GOING DEEPER

into the

ENNEAGRAM OF PERSONALITY
I was at a hip little farm-to-table spot in Minneapolis, just having finished facilitating an Enneagram workshop. The team that helped host the event had set up the reservation for this lovely meal, and the dinner conversation we shared complemented the spread fabulously.

One of the people who had tirelessly led the efforts in pulling off the successful event happened to be the head children’s minister at a fairly large suburban church. A young parent herself, she told one of the funniest stories I’d heard in a long time.

Apparently, her five-year-old daughter Janae had recently determined that she was an atheist.

As you can imagine, her mother, tasked with spiritual formation for hundreds of other children, rightly expressed concern. Wanting to figure out how this early existential restlessness had emerged, this distressed mother attempted to investigate the “why” behind Janae’s decision.

It turns out, one fine morning at church, a Sunday school teacher told a classroom full of little kids, “God will give you whatever you ask for in prayer.” Seems no-nonsense enough for most religious people who understand prayer as a transactional exchange of human
requests and divine responses. And so, little Janae took this adult's word to heart and later that night as she lay in bed she asked God to show her a dragon.

Pretty awesome prayer actually.

Over the course of the next several days Janae eagerly awaited the arrival of her dragon, but to no avail. And so, she quite sensibly determined God must not be real.

I love this story so much because, in a sense, it's all of our stories. Why? This girl's prayer was a plea for courage. And courage is always the first step in the journey of belonging.

BELONGING TAKES COURAGE

For whatever reason, every one of us feels in some way that we don't belong. Perhaps we hold on to memories of failures and regrets, or maybe the experiences of disappointments or unmet expectations. It might be the doubts and fears we wrestle with, or simply the guilt or shame that plagues our notions of who we think we are.
Show Me a Dragon

These fragmented aspects of self are introduced in the constant replayed scripts that circle through our thought lives—“Why am I always so worried?” or “I overdid it again . . .” or “I wish I could keep my emotions under control.” They appear in the familiar mental commentary that fill in all the quiet spaces of our hearts and minds. They also surface when we are confronted with what we understand to be the “worst” features of our Enneagram type or personality structure, that we’d rather ignore or skip over, if we’re being honest.

Conversely, these fragments of our identity may be the best, truest, or most innocent parts of who we are. At their most authentic and vulnerable, these splintered aspects of self have so much to say to us about who we really are. Yet too often we are quick to push them away—out of anger, shame, fear, or otherwise—rather than listen to them and learn from them. This may especially be true for those of us who were socialized in more conservative religious traditions where we were taught that our souls are fundamentally sinful and in urgent need of a redeemer—as if there’s nothing intrinsically good, true, and beautiful hardwired to our Essence. Sadly, there are amazing parts of ourselves we sometimes have difficulty accepting. But learning to own the fabulous parts of self is also part of this journey because, after all, it’s not bragging if it’s true. We have to learn to live into all our goodness.

Whatever these fragments of our identity might be, we’ve cut ourselves off from them—the bad and the good. Then these fragments haunt or control us; fundamentally they end up becoming the forgotten parts of self. And in losing awareness of them, in a sense they become little monsters, or even dragons, that we don’t want to see.

Sure, we know these forgotten fragments of self are still there. In fact, most of us spend quite a bit of egoic energy running from

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1. The “ego” is one’s identity construct rooted in our sense of awareness (or lack thereof) that vacillates between our conscious sense of self and the subconscious influences