

# The Body-Mind Connection

By Andrea Isaacs

Long before the Enneagram was an established personality typology system, it was common knowledge that there was a connection between body and mind. Thousands of years ago, the Chinese developed Chi Kung, a movement meditation practice that energized the meridians of the body, while the Indians came up with yoga, the science of aligning one's posture to maximize the body's energy flow. Countless bodily and spiritual practices were established from these two systems alone, all based on the premise of a body-mind-spirit connection.

The ancient premise of body-mind-spirit connection surely still applies today, and can apply to movement and personality as revealed by the Enneagram.

Using Enneagram vocabulary, let's assume we're trying to break the pattern of a fixation. Chances are, we've tried such things as telling ourselves not to "do" it anymore, to "be" different... we've tried "observing and letting go" of the unwanted behavior, "replacing" it with healthier ones, or moving somehow in the direction of integration, etc. Does it work? Some say yes, others are less optimistic. Our minds, after all, have stubborn defense mechanisms that have hardened over a long time and protect our fixations. If the usual remedies did not bring encouraging results, it may be time to try a new angle.

You can pick up a three-legged stool by grabbing any one of its legs. Imagine that you are a three-legged stool. Your mind is one leg, your body another, and your spirit is the third. If you desire to change your position, it wouldn't matter very much by which leg you lift yourself up—the other two will follow. If the leg of your "mind" has learned to become evasive, why not get a hold of yourself by the leg of your body? That's EnneaMotion.

For example, let's say you are angry, annoyed at being angry, and yet unable to snap out of it. You want to "let go of it" but you continue to clench your fists, clamp down your jaw, tighten the muscles across your chest, you're stomping about with a heavy and crass directness, on the verge of running into things and people around you. Such physical manifestations of emotional states are common, but we are normally unaware of them. By moving with intention, we can potentially generate alternative emotional states. Insight about the connections between emotional states, behavioral patterns and fixations can result, as well as a technique for how to mindfully change them, at least temporarily.

The trick is to break down your behaviors to individual movement components, rendering them "recognizable" and thus manageable. Our fixations are at the roots of our behaviors, our movement is the most concrete and obvious expression of our behavior—therefore most easily recognized and altered.

EnneaMotion can be used on a "case-by-case" basis limiting ourselves to breaking an insidious trap we can't shake off, or we can elevate it to a daily practice and design a set of movements suited to our type and special requirements.

The Enneagram gives us the tools to recognize and classify our fixations, and EnneaMotion can become a powerful and practical tool in doing something about them.

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