

Introduction

In this document, I will explain the 3 main instincts in the enneagram which, combined with the type's passion, produce the instinctual subtypes. A common misconception in the community is that the instincts themselves either don't mean anything for the core type or that the subtypes aren't connected to the core and that the subtypes aren't tied to the actual definitions of the instincts. Both of these are incorrect, as instincts do affect the core type and the subtype still ties to the instinct. Some authors don't fully explain how the passion twists in every subtype, Chestnut being an example of this.

For example, let's take Chestnut's SX3, she focuses on them "uplifting important others" which has no basis and is simply not the point of that type, the point of the SX3s is that they find worth through the sexual instinct in being sexually attractive and desired by others, yet her description of the type has a completely different outlook on them.

These descriptions were originally meant to be only used in my 3 part video series, however since people liked them so much, I decided to put them in their own separate document, so without talking much more, let's define the instincts and see how they form in the subtypes.

- Mel

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The Three Instincts

Conservation Instinct (Now: Self-Preservation Instinct – SP)

The Conservation Instinct derives from the digestive system, and is responsible for conserving our bodies and maintaining physical satisfaction. From this instinct comes the Historical Ego, which remembers states of being and what needs to be done to get food. It is our sense of everyday activities like walking, sleeping, cooking, shopping, etc. It continuously, but subconsciously, asks the question "How am I?" It is concerned with the physical state of the body and the sensory sentiments around it. It uses Analogical reasoning, which assess how things have been and how they will continue to be over time. It seems to have a great attention to detail and is very concerned with what it thinks of its environment.

Relation Instinct (Now: Sexual Instinct – SX)

The Relation Instinct derives from the circulatory system, and is responsible for how we interact with other people and who we are as individuals. From this instinct comes the Image Ego, which seeks to develop a self-image that conforms to the society around it. This ego will constantly ask "Who am I with?" and expresses concern with how we are perceived and how we perceive others; it is a people-oriented ego. This ego is responsible for our relationships with friends, family, co-workers, and the organisations under whom we work. This ego uses Analytical reasoning, deducing what the other person is, who they are, what they are thinking and what they are seeing.

Adaptation Instinct (Now: Social Instinct – SO)

The Adaptation Instinct comes from the nervous system, and is responsible for thoughts, actions, and working. It is the intellectual centre that wants to know and do. From this instinct derives large ideological and societal ideas and constructs. From this instinct comes the Practical Ego, which wants to get things done, but it cannot do this because of the other two instincts are getting in the way. This ego continuously asks "Where am I?" It wants to adapt to its environment; it wants the know-how for surviving. It uses Empathetic reasoning to deduce theoretical scenarios of what we would do if we were put in situations so that we may prepare ourselves for when theory becomes reality.

Enneatype 1

SP1 – How Anger acts in the Self-Preservation

In the E1, the passion of Anger combines with the SP instinct turns the anger against oneself. The Anger of the SP1 is then transformed into worrying about not being perfect. They feel as if they have to be perfect to survive. This 1 is the most perfectionistic, as well as the 1 that hides their anger the most, often you will find this subtype turning their anger outward into warmth, he does not want to let his anger show through. They can feel dirty or that they have a lot to improve in themselves, which gives them an excess of extra pressure. However it is also not uncommon to see these people being extremely critical, both to themselves and to the outer world.

SX1 – How Anger acts in the Sexual

Interestingly this subtype is the one that changed the most throughout the history of the system, at first the SX instinct with the Anger of a 1 would produce a highly jealous character which was afraid that someone more perfect would come along to steal their partner, but Naranjo and his students would change this subtype into what it is today, which in my opinion fits the type way better. So, what is the SX1? Well, when Anger comes into contact with the relations instinct it produces a character which merges it's ideals of perfection and projects them onto another, correcting and forcing others to conform to their standards, here anger is expressed the most freely in the three subtypes of the 1, as they feel it's their duty to reform others and make them more "perfect", a common social role of this subtype is that of a coach, the kind you pay to scream at you to get better.

SO1 – How Anger acts in the Social

Ironic thing that happens when you mix the Anger of the E1 with the instinct of adaptation, you get a character whose main characteristic is non-adaptability. These people have difficulty of going along with social customs and behavior, as they believe their stance is superior than that of the public and expect others to match their perfect standards, they project their perfection onto the social sphere. Rather than going with the flow of what is happening, they try to impose what they think should be happening, they have rigid ideas about how both they and others should behave socially. Anger here is half-hidden, it doesn't turn into warmth like in the SP1 or is "explosive" like that of the SX1, here it morphs into coldness, a cooler stance that expects you to follow it, the anger only leaks when their ideals are not conformed to.

Enneatype 2

SP2 – How Pride acts in the Self-Preservation

When Pride leaks in the sphere of conservation, it comes in touch with the anxiety for survival, so they feel like they need to take control of others so in turn they survive off love others would give to them, a drive to get ahead of everyone. Pride takes form as a hidden sense of entitlement and privilege, that others should take care of them and that they deserve the love. Because of this, they develop a (often childish) facade of being self-sacrificial, acting as if they're thinking of others first and putting them ahead of themselves while in reality it's just a way of ensuring love and survival. In short, they tend to feel like a martyr and think that the other is in debt for services rendered.

SX2 – How Pride acts in the Sexual

Combining the Proudful passion with the instinct of relations we get the sexual 2. Passion of Pride manifests here in an extreme sensitivity about being desired or not, and sometimes as a Pride in the number of sexual conquests one has made. This subtype is the most intense of the 2S, they are obsessed with the desire to be wanted, believing that love is overcoming resistance. They have a superficial personality, they're also seductive and sexually provocative, almost always intoxicated by love. They constantly move between seduction and aggressiveness, they are generous, indulgent and flatterers but can also be heavily impulsive when their pride is hurt and the love they expect is not given back.

SO2 – How Pride acts in the Social

Once the social instinct meets the Pride of a 2, it transforms said pride into someone who is often referred to as a social climber. Pride here takes form as feeling worthwhile when achieving a position they are after. They are the coldest and most intellectual 2, as to go out and conquer you need to know how to use your mind, for this reason they like to be seen as people of reference. Because of this, their seduction comes from the intellectual, they are also very efficient in working with people, being great with networking and interacting in the social sphere. Often a social 2 lacks a figure to look up to, and because of this they want to become that figure, going from a lonely child to a parent of everyone. They are also counter-dependent, meaning rather than being dependent on others and acting the way the other wants them to, they are the ones to push others into playing the court for them, though often there is a person in the SO2s life who they are dependent upon, whether they can admit it consciously or not. They treat themselves as above others and this can manifest as both selfishness for status or a saviour complex.

Enneatype 3

SP3 – How Vanity acts in the Self-Preservation

Once Vanity meets the SP instinct, the SP3 is born. Here it forms as a need for survival through security, money and a reliable position in the world. And how does the SP3 achieve this? By being capable, efficient and someone to rely on. Putting on an image of humility allures people to be dependent on them. They are also the 3 most aware of their vanity and the ones that try to hide it through an image of competency, however they are just ironically deceiving themselves by doing this, thinking that they'll ensure security they lack through recognition. People of this subtype tend to be workaholics, and there is also an anxiety for failure present.

SX3 – How Vanity acts in the Sexual

When Vanity meets the sexual instinct it manifests as a deceiving of oneself that love is the answer, that they must shape themselves into their beloved's ideal to be loved, and ultimately that they are that image. People of this subtype find worth through the sexual instinct in being sexually attractive and desired by others, so they emphasize their physical characteristics. They are competitive with others about being seen as the most attractive, and being successful is measured by being desired, stressing the characteristics one would find attractive.

SO3 – How Vanity works in the Social

Vanity in the sphere of adaptation makes the individual desire a good public image. They do whatever they need to do to keep up their prestigious image, as their biggest lie is the image of who they are. Social 3s are seduced by the images of the world and feel as if they have to replicate what society values themselves, their need for status and recognition fuels them as it lets them forget their lack of self worth. Their focus is on how they are seen, and they will change their image to fit the values of a particular social group in order to be seen in a good light. Their image cannot be stained, everything must stay admirable. They know how to climb the social ladder, know when to speak up, when to stay quiet, when to act, when to stay still. They are the 3 whose vanity is the most obvious to others, yet ironically, the least obvious to themselves. In short, while the SP3 wants recognition for their productivity, SX3 for their attractiveness, the SO3 wants it for their achievements and status.

Enneatype 4

SP4 – How Envy acts in the Self-Preservation

The Envy of the E4 when combined with this instinct leads to conservational envy. This kind of envy makes them harder to notice as 4s, the envy turned against oneself leads them to conserve their own suffering, to believe that they can endure and handle much more, they feel the need to protect their own dream of the future. Because of this, it is not uncommon for the SP4 to be very stoic, as they are used to swallowing pain. They have learned to tolerate pain and not dwell in it. Because of the SP need for survival, they demand a lot from themselves and have a passion for effort.

SX4 – How Envy acts in the Sexual

The Envy of the SX4 is closest to the most literal meaning of the word. When Envy comes into contact with this instinct it produces a character competes with others in an attempt to gain approval or recognition. They then make others suffer as an unconscious way of trying to rid themselves of painful feelings of deficiency. They are the kind of people who'd rather be hated for who they are than be loved for someone who they are not. They stick out from other 4s due to their harsh and aggressive attitude, often described as shameless and feeling a strong rejection by the world as their inferiority gets replaced by aggression. Often they have a underlying hatred for their rivals and their rivals are the ones they personally feel is worth striving for.

SO4 – How Envy works in the Social

The social instinct combined with the type 4 gives us a character which is mainly characterized by shame. This subtype feels distress for not living up to social ideals, they compare themselves to others around them and find themselves lacking. This constant feeling of shame weirdly manifests as in an attachment to suffering, often these people are shy and end up lamenting and blaming themselves. They don't feel like they're enough and they feel like they've done something wrong, often taking the role of the victim and focusing on their own inferiority. However, it is important to note that people of this type often prefer to "swallow their poison" instead of lashing out on others, contrasting them with the SX4. They are constantly searching for love in the world they feel like they'll never find which leads them into a constant state of suffering and often being at the mercy of the other.

Enneatype 5

SP5 – How Avarice acts in the Self-Preservation

The Self-Preservation twists the Avarice of a 5 into a greed for survival, a greed for refuge from the outside world. They want to endure survival by finding a safe place from which they can withdraw and observe the world. They are very sensitive when it comes to their privacy and personal space. Their greed can also make them stockpile on resources, as they never feel like they're ready to go out in the world to survive. They are also obsessed with not wasting time and conserving their energy, but they ironically often internalize their anger, leading to them not being able to stand up for themselves and develop a hyper-adaptability to outside demands, as they don't want to waste any energy on conflict.

SX5 – How Avarice acts in the Sexual

As the instinct of relations leaks into the passion of Avarice, it gives a highly conflicting character, it is a greed for one-on-one relationships. This character wanders life as a withdrawn and distrustful person, withholding itself from social interaction in fear of being hurt. Yet, they idealize the idea of trust, they need someone to feel safe with, a refuge. Due to lack of love growing up they become some type of hopeless romantic. Because of their distrusting nature, they hold back of their affection for fear of being rejected, only once a deep bond is created that they can let their guard down and truly show the real them, and then a very vibrant side is released. When finally becoming transparent, they expect for nothing more than for the figure they are becoming intimate with to reveal all of themselves as well, as trust is what matters the most.

SO5 – How Avarice works in the Social

Combining the social instinct with the passion of avarice manifests as holding on to whatever the individual considers gives him his social standing. Often this person will have a hero to live up to, someone looked at as a intellectual. The SO5 has a greed for social recognition, though, due to the nature of the 5, they are highly avoidant of people they consider unworthy. They are very conscious of social hierarchies, and because of this this subtype is insanely picky with who they associate with, they consider ordinary life and people as boring, as they search for a higher meaning and higher understanding. Wanting to be a totem of knowledge for others, this subtype is heavily intellectual and oriented towards collecting knowledge. This subtype also rationalizes their own feelings the most, constantly separating them from their thoughts and suppressing them, seeing them as not important. They're also the most arrogant and cold 5, though they are also the least transparent 5, as they want to maintain their image of knowledge, always hiding a part of themselves.

Enneatype 6

SP6 – How Fear acts in the Self-Preservation

The E6s Fear combined with the anxiety for survival of the SP instincts leads the SP6 to be anxious of everyone, and believe that the best way to avoid said anxiety is through warmth. Because they see others as a threat to their survival, they will try to befriend others and align themselves with them to ensure others won't lash out against them. Fear here takes place as a constant submission in order to gain protection. They also have difficulty in looking at things as black and white, as they can see multiple shades of gray in between everything.

SX6 – How Fear acts in the Sexual

Sexual instinct combined with the passion of Fear gives a character with underlying attitude of self-doubt regarding their sexual attractiveness and their desirability or a self-doubt regarding their own strength. They can then end up exaggerating their strength or beauty, since they are afraid they must learn to protect themselves or be desired. Because of this, this character is often counterphobic, meaning they go against their fear. Though, they could also be compared to a barking dog, they bark a lot but rarely bite. Intimidation is a common tactic of the SX6 in order to be left alone and suppress their fear. The questioning of “who am I with?” of the sx instinct here manifests as them knowing when to let their guard down and when to keep it up, to react and keep their guard up if someone is an enemy or let it down if it is someone they trust.

SO6 – How Fear works in the Social

The adaptation instinct when coming into contact with the fearful passion of the 6 produces a character whose fear transforms into the need to obey laws for acceptance. They attempt to resolve their social insecurity and avoid their fear by adapting to a belief, a group, a leader or a personal moral code, these are the laws they choose to obey. These people, then, become highly dutiful, loyal and devoted. These 6s also have a focus on productivity, efficiency and precision. While the SP6 is never sure, the SO6 can end up being too sure, if there is a clear procedure and guideline to follow, it can calm them down. They are also very afraid of bending what they believe in, they aren't flexible with their beliefs. However, they don't blindly follow ideologies, they first doubt it until they are sure in it. On the other side of the spectrum, it is not uncommon for a SO6 to put trust in a system, only to be disappointed by it and end up developing their own set of rules to follow which they feel is truly just.

Enneatype 7

SP7 – How Gluttony acts in the Self-Preservation

The Gluttony in the SP7 is the closest to the literal definition of it. The passion of Gluttony twists as a hunger for tastes of anything that seems to promise survival, this can be ideas, plans, theories, experiences, and because of this they make alliances and create opportunities to gain advantage, banding together and taking care of others who they feel an affinity or connection with. They are alert to any possibility that will ensure survival and satisfaction, hence the need to band with others who have similar interests. Their love for pleasure causes them to be the most impulsive and physical of the 7s, often impulsively going after what they want and often getting it.

SX7 – How Gluttony acts in the Sexual

Gluttony when it merges with the instinct of relations gives us the SX7. This character is constantly living in the world of possibilities, and because of their instinct they tend to merge with whatever ideas, plans, or people they come into contact with. Their focus shifts towards an attempt to live in an extraordinary state of exaltation, it is an idealization filled with hope and possibility, they are suggestible in the sense of being easily swayed and impacted. They have a need for distraction, a need for a constant state of euphoria, which is why they constantly and obsessively change their plans and decisions, being impulsive with their minds, they can't stand in the same situation for long. They express Gluttony through a need to imagine something better than ordinary reality.

SO7 – How Gluttony works in the Social

Social Gluttony manifests as a hunger for this sense of social ease and for all of the things that they believe will give it to them, predetermining their social activities. Their plans often turn to planning futures in which they finally get what they lack, gaining a sense of belonging, social acceptance, and social standing. A common misconception is that this type is truly selfless and sacrifices themselves for others, which isn't necessarily true. While the theme of sacrifice is common in the SO7, this doesn't come from a background of true selflessness, but rather out of narcissism that they themselves are already better than the rest and therefore have to spread goodness to others, often wanting to be seen as a kind of saint. This requires a lot of enthusiasm, idealism and social skill, but behind all of these traits lies many selfish compensations, those often being appreciation, recognition, good image, reduction of conflicts, creating debts for others to repay. All of this is achieved by manipulating through enthusiasm.

Enneatype 8

SP8 – How Lust acts in the Self-Preservation

The SP8 has a drive for the type of life one deserves, their combination of lust with the SP instinct leads them to focus on getting what they need for survival. They are fixated on what they believe will bring them satisfaction of their needs, and they gobble up what they think they need, often at the expense of filling their real needs. The drive for satisfaction leaves little room to figure out what it is that they really require. Their insecurity about survival manifests in dominating and controlling behaviour, often getting the title of the least expressive and the most armed of the three Eight subtypes.

SX8 – How Lust acts in the Sexual

In this subtype Lust combines with the sexual instinct which gives a character that believes they have a right to their mate. It is often seen in this type that they are overtly domineering, rebellious and attention seeking, but this is an attempt to cover up their insecurity about being loved and desired. These people see relationships as conquests and want to hold power in said relationships. There is a polarity present in the sexual 8, on one side of the spectrum we have the sexual 8 who has a need to feel powerful through dominating the whole environment and wanting to hold the power in relationships as they try to get power over things and people, on the other side we have the sexual 8 who surrenders to a partner they see as worthy, trying to make a passionate appearance of surrendering while still, very much, wanting to stay in control.

SO8 – How Lust works in the Social

When lust meets the social instinct, it manifests as passionate and possessive nature of bonds with others, attempting to keep those they consider weaker happy. However, this isn't a necessarily sweet character, the SO8 often feels as if it's tasked to be the protector of the weak, they also idealize the idea of trust and friendship and once that bond is broken they might not ever forgive and turn to aggression. They are often compared to a person standing up to a higher force to protect those below. Some SO8s can also get lost in this idea of revenge that they forget that those who they are protecting are, in fact, people, and because of that can end up using those "below" as justification for their outbursts. They are also hypocritical in a sense that while they claim to go against conflict, they can produce more of it. In short, this subtype sees themselves as a protector or a buddy, using that as justification for their actions.

Enneatype 9

SP9 – How Sloth acts in the Self-Preservation

Satisfying one's own hungers is the driving force of the conservation subtype of the E9. Laziness here manifests ironically, it is a substitution of nonessential satisfactions for those that he really needs. Often you can see an E9 immersing themselves in activities just to narcotize, activities such as eating, sleeping, playing games, sports, reading etc. Because of their sloth, they lose spirituality and a touch with their inner self, which can lead them acting irrationally, without clear defined actions other than just chasing physical stimulation. In short, this type has a duality between forgetting themselves through activities and a drive to ensure the most basic survival.

SX9 – How Sloth acts in the Sexual

Sloth of the 9 when combined with the sexual instinct gives us the sexual 9 character, a character which has a need for the love of another for one's own identity. The sexual Sloth here loses its instinctive character and becomes an ability to perceive the need of the other. Their own pleasure can be experienced if it is at the service of the loved person's pleasure, with a feeling of abnegation where the self has no space. These people tend to merge easily with others, losing touch with themselves in the process. Total merging with another is seen by sexual nines to be what they need to be whole. The other becomes the reference, the compass to detect needs or thoughts.

SO9 – How Sloth works in the Social

Social sloth can be simply described as the need to be in the group. Sloth here manifests as a constant merging with the group, emulating socially acceptable forms of behavior and communication in hopes of gaining acceptance, making superficial contact with others. They lack a sense of ease in social situations, because of their sensitivity to whether they are really welcome or not. Often they replace bonds by acting as if the group values and wants, or values of anyone else, are their own, often accepting these social norms without questioning them. This can manifest as a compulsive doing for others. By postponing their own needs and doing what is expected of them they make their psychological inertia stronger, making it harder for them to come in touch with themselves and know who they truly are. Everything being said, SO9s tend towards modesty and discretion and will do whatever as long as the group is in harmony.