

Enneagram Seven, The Enthusiast

By Viki Markham

Type Seven is the outgoing type of the Fear Triad. In the childhood of the Seven, there was some sort of emotional neglect, usually by their mother, not necessarily intentional. The Seven became self sufficient in getting what they needed before they were emotionally capable of doing so. This causes an anxiety driven personality looking out for themselves because they don't believe anyone else will. Many Sevens are not aware of the anxiety that drives them, seeing their own attitude as positive and useful.

The problem is that they live in the future, never resting or appreciating what they have. They avoid the unpleasant things in life, focusing on getting what they want, on the next interesting thing in front of them. Their fear of not having what they need, causes them sometimes to grab the first available item that looks decent to them, especially if they don't feel they have the time to choose. If they are unable to explore all the choices, whether choosing food, a relationship, or a house, they don't take the time to see if it is the right one. They fill up their schedule with many things to do, causing them to change scheduling often, fearing that they will not be satisfied. Other people are often hurt by the Seven's focus on the next experience rather than on relationship.

They rationalize their behavior to themselves and other people, they can reframe anything to sound positive, being very charming. They avoid conflict rather than meet it. Picture Mohammed Ali dancing, weaving and ducking, with a smile on his face, never taking a punch. That is the confident attitude of a Seven. The problem is that life will eventually deal a punch. The disappointment when a Seven realizes that their childhood strategy is not foolproof, is profound. It can lead to greater awareness if the Seven pays attention.

On the positive side, Sevens are visionaries, idealists, able to see and imagine the big picture and they inspire others. They never give up when motivated, being positive and able to see all the options. They are a jack-of-all-trades. They are lively, fun, and full of energy.

The Mental fixation for the Seven is Planning, obsessing about the future, not trusting things to work out. This evolves into the Essence quality of Work, when they realize the value of a job done thoroughly and follow through on commitments. The Emotional fixation is Gluttony, not craving for quantity, but for many interesting experiences to fill their void. This evolves into the Essence quality of Sobriety, appreciating the moment and the ordinary, not needing the drug of anticipation.

A Seven grows by being willing to endure anxiety or disappointment, to see through it, to gain a sense of trust that the world is a place where they can get what they need without being driven. This can be done through meditation, by simply letting the anxiety arise and sitting with it, not having to take any action, which can be excruciating at first for the Seven. If they continue, they begin to see the value and beauty of the "small" things in life. They become present to what is actually already there for them that they did not see when they were rushing to take what they thought they needed. This can also be done

with other people, e.g. by admitting their mistakes, by taking a 'punch' sometimes instead of avoiding, by not changing their schedule constantly, and by sticking to commitments. Eventually the Seven can calm down, move more slowly, take time to smell the roses, and stop avoiding life.

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