

## **Type 8: The Challenger, Protector, Maverick, Entrepreneur, Provider, Leader, Rock**

The Powerful, Dominating Type: Self-Confident, Decisive, Willful, and Confrontational

**What is the Enneagram?** The Enneagram is a dynamic psycho spiritual symbol that creates a map for personal and spiritual growth. It draws on many different systems of knowledge including psychology, cosmology, and symbology. It is a highly accurate typology that describes nine distinct personality styles. It helps us to “wake up” to ourselves by revealing the habitual patterns and blind spots that limit our growth and transformation.

It is based on 3 centers of intelligence and each type has one center that is dominant:

- The head center – thinking, analyzing, planning, imagination. Types 5,6,7
- The heart center – feeling, connecting, relating, emotional intelligence. Types 2,3,4
- The body center – their knowing comes from a gut sense and experience life through the senses. Types, 1, 8 and 9.

Each style or type exhibits traits that are on a continuum of being resourceful or less-resourceful. Most people have a mix of these traits.

If you identify with many **less-resourceful scores**:

- You may have answered how you were over long periods of your life instead of how you are now. (This is actually the best way to assess your type. We tend to overwork our style in our teen and emerging adult years.)
- You may be someone who is very critical of themselves.
- You may be in a stressful time in your life.

**8s At their Best:** self- mastering, they use their strength to improve others’ lives, becoming heroic, magnanimous, and inspiring. When in contact with and grounded in the body and open heart, they are a force for good and kindness in the world.

- You are assertive with the energy and confidence to meet and overcome obstacles.
- You are decisive, quickly responding to problems with appropriate solutions
- You are visionary, seeing new possibilities
- You inspire and energize others to act with confidence and courage
- You are courageous, protecting others who are in the underdog position. I can challenge those in positions of power when I think they are acting unjustly.
- You are generous with a big and gentle heart.
- With a focus on the well-being of others, you transcend your need to be in control.

### **When the Personality Has Its Grip on You**

Protective, resourceful, straight-talking, and decisive, but can also be ego-centric and domineering. Eights feel they must control their environment, especially people, sometimes becoming confrontational and intimidating. Eights typically have problems with their tempers and with allowing themselves to be vulnerable.

- You think of yourself as self-sufficient, not needing anyone.
- You can be direct and say it like it is but can offend others.
- Eights don't like compromise and usually exert control and influence on events.
- 8s can be confrontational and intimidating, overwhelming others with the force of your intense energy and anger.

**Key Motivations:** to be self-reliant, to prove their strength and resist weakness, to be important in their world, to protect self and others from injustice, to dominate the environment, and to stay in control of their situation.

*"Holding onto anger is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die." - Buddha.*

**Basic Fear:** Of being harmed or controlled by others

**Basic Desire:** To protect themselves (to be in control of their own life and destiny)

**Enneagram Eight with a Seven-Wing: "The Maverick"**

- Engage with others in enjoyable ways. Soften your approach by making an effort to be playful or use humor when you communicate. 7 calls us to be innovative and expansive – adding curiosity to your situations.

**Enneagram Eight with a Nine-Wing: "The Bear"**

- Adding 9 energy by truly listening to others. Balance your usual confidence in your own perspective with a sincere effort to consider other viewpoints. Take in what others say and be willing to shift your plans or POV. Become more empathetic by paying attention to what others want and would benefit from. Make an effort to be more diplomatic and understanding when you communicate to avoid conflicts. 9 energy is peaceful which is a call to the 8 to relax, connect with nature or meditate.

**Path to Waking up from your Pattern:** The first stage is to observe yourself consciously and objectively; simply noticing or witnessing predictable patterns without judgment.

**Find Balance by Dancing with the Shadow**

*"Vulnerability is not winning or losing; it's having the courage to show up and be seen when we have no control over the outcome". Brene Brown*

The shadow or blind spot for the 8 is vulnerability. By acknowledging your softer emotions and weak points, you can learn that integrating sensitivity leads to wholeness, more joy and peace.

- Challenge yourself to take the risk to open up more to those you trust.
- Focus on the good things about people you meet. Stop finding things to oppose or judge in others and be open to what relationships have to offer you.
- Connect with your body and the exhaustion that results from having to push yourself and be strong and competent all the time. Self-care and renewal is really important.
- Experiment with going with the flow.

- Do more to create peace rather than a fight. Even if you consciously believe you or others were wronged, relax the resistance, and try to find some common ground.
- Stop overprotecting people in your life and let them develop their own strengths.
- Use humor when in a power struggle.
- Hit the pause button more often prior to reacting or taking action. Let your anger settle before saying or doing something in a conflict.
- Question your conclusions about situations. Have you considered all sides and gotten all the information needed to discern the best course of action?
- Practice regulating your nervous system so you can dial down the hypervigilance which will lead to less defense mechanisms.
- Get in touch with your powerful energy through yoga, tai chi, or other mindful movement practices.
- Take time to take care of your emotions. Feeling the softer emotions or sadness and hurt that can be behind anger for example.
- Practice self-compassion when faced with difficult emotions.
- Explore your child-self and embrace unfelt and unprocessed emotions from the past. This helps you get in touch with the virtue of 8: innocence. Through this work you develop the greatest strength of all – to embrace your sensitivity and vulnerability. This leads to a simpler, warmer, more relaxed, lighter approach to life.

### **Arrows for Growth**

2 – Embody Type 2's ability to pay more attention to other people's feelings and allow yourself to become softer, gentler, kinder and more approachable. Deepen connections with others by making sure you listen more and share more of what you are feeling. This will lead to more empathetic responses.

5 – Integrate Type 5s ability to think before taking action. Go inward to balance your energy and protect that time you need to be alone and recharge. Do research and consult expert sources before you make decisions.

### **Summary: Self-Care to Embrace your true self:**

- Slow down and take in the joy and beauty of the present moment.
- Allow yourself to rest and recharge. Practice grounding into the body and the earth.
- Enjoy the innocence and playfulness of pets, children, art, and nature.
- Practice grounded presence and centering your energy in the body center so you can relax the need for hypervigilance.

- Own your impact on others and contemplate how to be a positive influence - “peaceful warrior”.
- Let go of the past so you can approach new situations with openness to new experiences and self-growth.
- Calibrate your energy – being aware to balance your output and input. Practice relaxing your energy, not pushing, trying or holding on so tightly.
- Open your heart to yourself and others – compassion for self and others.

### **Meditations and Intentions for Type 8**

Breathing in...I acknowledge this moment.

Breathing out...I let go of the past, an hour ago, a day ago, a year ago, a decade ago.

Bring in...I enter this moment.

Breathing out...I let go of the future, a day from now, a year from now, a decade from now.

Breathing in...I receive the fullness of this moment.

Breathing out...I have everything I need to be here, now.

Loving Protector, (Spiritual being, ancestor, guide, etc)

Watch my back as I wade into the waters of waiting for, I do not trust easily. Empty me of my need to assert myself, empty me of my need to blame others when things don't go my way. Soften the walls surrounding my heart, the rigid boundaries, my strong opinions. Embrace me as I wait, so that I may know the richness in stillness and open my heart to the affection of others. May I be present in my waiting without judgement and without fear, knowing that you abide with me always. Ground me in your gentle and loving presence that I may be gentle and loving with myself and others. Remind me each day that we are all one and that in our unity we find hope.

- May I practice beginner's mind, the innocence of coming freshly to each situation.
- May I be content with what is, in the present moment.
- May I experience the power and true mastery in non-action and no blame.
- May I embody gentleness and compassion.
- May I be receptive to the truth in all beings.

**Basic Essential Practice:** From a grounded, receptive, openhearted, and non-judgmental stance, notice your big energy and the urge to act on injustices and impulse all fueled by your driving exuberant energy of the life force. This stems from your core belief that to be loved, valued, and secure you must be strong and resolute in a world where the powerful will take advantage of you and others. Notice the rising big energy and come back to your breath and resist immediate action. Can you then both notice and realize that this urge to act – based only on your versions of the truth and what constitutes protection from vulnerability – actually costs you your receptivity and softer emotions? Keep collecting and containing this active exuberant energy in your body’s gravitational center in your belly as though it is a warm and receptive holding tank. Allow yourself to soften, realizing that the vulnerability of being impacted and affected represents strength, not weakness. Then let yourself act with the force or energy befitting the situation. Remind yourself to notice your impact on others and to really hear their truths. And remind yourself to notice how others respond when you allow yourself to moderate your impact, allow yourself to get receptive, and allow in your softer side.

#### **References:**

More on 8s and levels of development: <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-8/>

<https://drdaviddaniels.com/growth-for-type-8/>

The Enneagram Guide to Waking Up: Find your Path, Face Your Shadow, Discover Your True Self. By Beatrice Chestnut, PhD and Uranio Paes, MM

The Wisdom of the Enneagram by Done Riso and Russ Hudson

Deep Coaching; Using the Enneagram as a Catalyst for Profound Change by Roxanne Howe-Murphy, EdD

