

EXPLORING *The Enneagram*

TYPE FIVE: THE OBSERVER

(AKA The Intellectual or The Investigator)

People with an Enneagram Five personality tend to be curious, independent, and observant in their behavior. They love to pursue knowledge and seek a deeper understanding of the world around them. They often prefer privacy and time alone to think, which may lead them to withdraw from others.

Basic Desire

The most basic desire of the Enneagram Type 5 is to feel helpful and competent. They express this by passionately pursuing knowledge and working to gain new skills and abilities. Fives often prioritize developing their own intellect over most other things in life. Thinkers often guard themselves by withdrawing from others, both emotionally and physically. This may make them feel safer, but can also lead to loneliness.

Basic Fear

People who identify as a Five may fear being useless or incompetent. Less healthy Fives may have a deeply rooted belief that they are less able to do things than other people and therefore seek to fully understand the world in order to have more of an advantage.

In summary, Enneagram Fives tend to...

- Seek knowledge and deeper understanding
- Prefer spending time by themselves
- Fear being useless and inadequate
- Guard themselves and their emotions
- Be curious about and observant in new environments

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

Every type has strengths and blind spots, and these are often amplified in professional settings where we often encounter a diverse group of people with vastly different backgrounds and value systems.

Strengths typically associated with Five include...

- Thinking through complex problems
- Observing the details of their environment
- Constantly learning and picking up new skills
- Ability to remain calm in a crisis
- Focusing completely on the task at hand

Weaknesses typically associated with Five include...

- Difficulty relating to the emotions of others
- Tendency to be perceived as condescending
- Disconnecting from their feelings
- Detaching or isolating themselves from other people

MOTIVATIONS

When people experience pain, stress, or dissatisfaction, it can usually be attributed to energy-draining activities. Therefore, it's important to know what kinds of activities energize each personality type and which activities drain them.

Fives tend to be motivated and energized by...

- Discovering something new about the world
- Alone time to think and reconnect with themselves
- Learning a new skill or technique
- Feeling valued, able, and appreciated

Fives tend to be stressed and drained by...

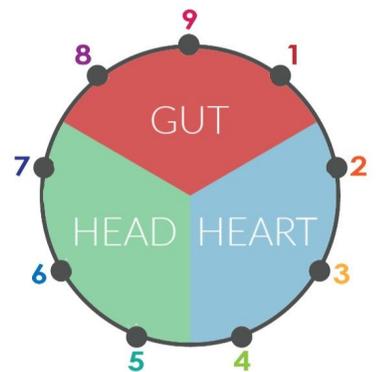
- Large groups of unfamiliar people
- Emotional expressions and situations
- Being required to meet other people's needs
- Overstimulation or lack of peace

FIVE'S CORE EXPERIENCE: FEAR

Head types (types 5, 6, 7) like to have a good idea of what to expect before entering a new situation. They like to think but may be slow to act and plan but may not implement.

The most common emotion for the mind center is fear, and those who have primary access to this center tend to overanalyze. Types Five, Six, and Seven are all within this center, but have different ways of coping with their fear.

Fives react to their fear by withdrawing and retreating into their mind. They reduce their personal needs and do as much as they can to prepare and master something in order to feel safe. They tend to observe, rather than anticipate, in order to better understand their surroundings and analyze the situation.

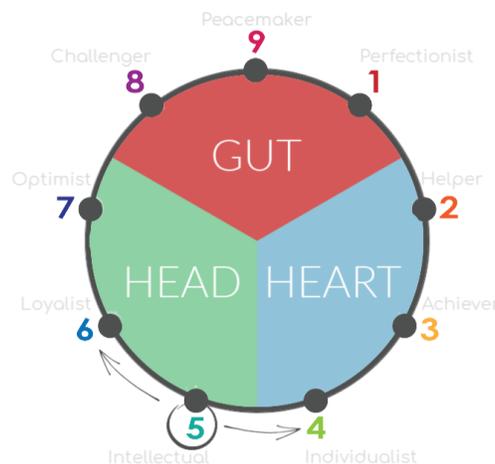


OKAY, I'M A FIVE. NOW WHAT?

There are several factors that determine what *kind* of Five you are. The first is your...

Wing

The wings for Five are Four and Six.



Five with a Four wing (5w4)

People with 5w4 personality tend to identify mostly with type Five (The Observer), but also share traits with type Four (The Individualist). They are curious, creative, and reserved in their behavior. They prefer to be alone to reflect and recharge. They tend to be more emotional and self-expressive than other fives.

Five with a Six wing (5w6)

People with an enneagram 5w6 personality usually identify the most with type Five (The Observer), but also share traits with type Six (The Loyalist). They tend to be practical, independent, and logical in their behavior. They are much more cooperative than other five types and have a passion for using their knowledge to solve real-world problems.

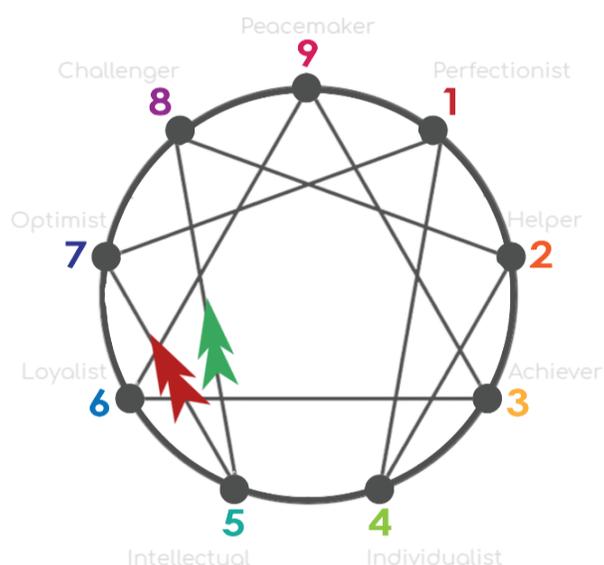
Growth & Stress Points

Growth and Stress points show us how each type behaves under different conditions -- this is why it's helpful to remember that your Enneagram type describes your motivations, not your behavior.

Type Five has a line with a red arrow connecting to Seven and another line with a green arrow connecting it to Eight.

Seven is the Stress Point. When tired from being hyper-focused, Fives seek out sources of excitement and stimulation in the external world.

Eight is the Growth Point. In safe situations, Fives feel comfortable enough to reveal their pushy, aggressive side. Growth toward this integration point allows Fives to move from being abstract and intellectual to grounded and embodied.



Living & Working With Five

If you're not a Five but work or live with somebody who is, here are some tips:

Communication | Allow them plenty of personal space and time to think; avoid being overly emotional and express thoughts clearly and logically.

Meetings | Meetings should be productive and worthwhile; ask fives for insight or observations.

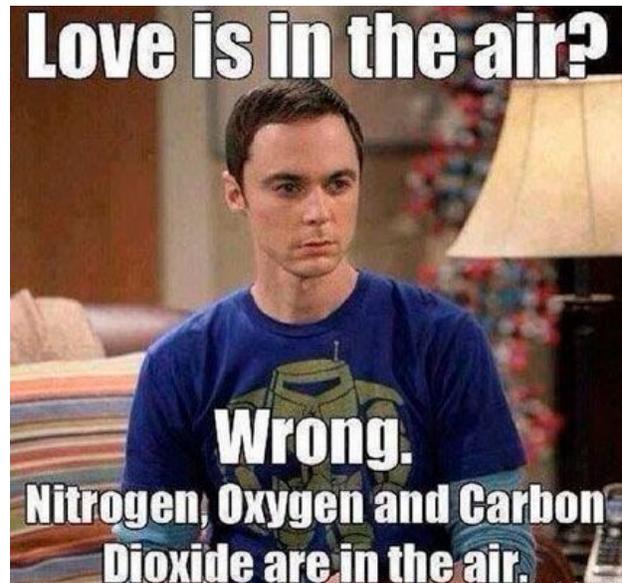
Texts & Emails | Skip small-talk; be direct and clear in your communication.

Giving Critical Feedback | Be honest about growth areas and offer constructive criticism.

Conflict | Explain the situation logically and encourage fives to consider both sides; work together to find a compromise.

For Your Health...

- **Learn to notice when your thinking and speculating takes you out of the immediacy of your experience.** Your mental capacities can be an extraordinary gift, but only can also be a trap when you use them to retreat from contact with yourself and others. Stay connected with your physicality.
- You tend to be extremely intense and so high-strung that you find it difficult to relax and unwind. **Learn to calm down in a healthy way, without drugs or alcohol.** Exercising or using biofeedback techniques will help channel



some of your tremendous nervous energy. Meditation, jogging, yoga, and dancing are especially helpful for your type.

- You see many possibilities but often do not know how to choose among them or judge which is more or less important. A sense of perspective can be missing, and with it the ability to make accurate assessments. When this happens, it can be helpful to **get the advice of someone whose judgment you trust** while you are gaining perspective on your situation. Doing this can also help you trust someone else, a difficulty for your type.
- Notice when you are getting intensely involved in projects that do not necessarily support your self-esteem, confidence, or life situation. It is possible to follow many different fascinating subjects, games, and pastimes, but they can become huge distractions from what you know you really need to do. **Decisive action will bring more confidence than learning more facts or acquiring more unrelated skills.**
- Fives tend to find it difficult to trust people, to open up to them emotionally, or to make themselves accessible in various ways. Their awareness of potential problems in relationships may tend to create a self-fulfilling prophecy. It is important to remember that **having conflicts with others is not unusual and that the healthy thing is to work them out rather than reject attachments with people by withdrawing into isolation.** Having one or two intimate friends whom you trust enough to have conflicts with will enrich your life greatly.