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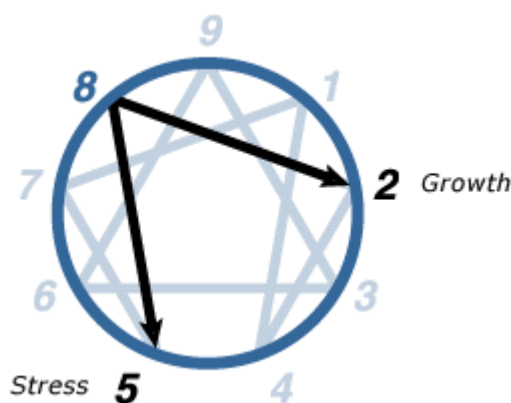
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Sample Extended Enneagram Type Description

Access to all 9 extended Enneagram type descriptions is provided to purchasers of our [online Enneagram test](#).

Personality Type EIGHT: The Challenger

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



Generally, Eights are strong, assertive, resourceful, independent, determined, action-oriented, pragmatic, competitive, straight-talking, shrewd, and insistent.

Eights get into conflicts by being blunt, willful, domineering, forceful, defiant, confrontational, bad-tempered, rageful, cynical, and vengeful.

At their best, Eights are honorable, heroic, empowering, generous, gentle, constructive, initiating, decisive, and inspiring.

Excerpt from *Type Eight ITAR* (5:22 minutes)



Recognizing Eights

Type Eight exemplifies the desire to be independent and to take care of oneself. Eights are assertive and passionate about life, meeting it head on with self-confidence and strength. They have learned to stand up for themselves and have a resourceful, "can-do" attitude. They are determined to be self-reliant and free to pursue their own destiny. Thus, Eights are natural leaders: honorable, authoritative, and decisive, with a solid, commanding presence. They take initiative and make things happen, protecting and providing for the people in their lives while empowering others to stand on their own. They embody solidity and courage, using their

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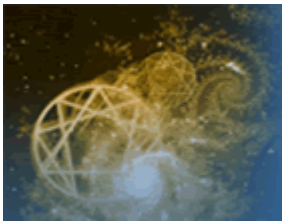
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talents and vision to construct a better world for everyone depending on the range of the influence.

Most of all, Eights are people of vision and action. They can take what looks like a useless, broken-down shell of a building and turn it into a beautiful home or office or hospital. Likewise, they see possibilities in people, and they like to offer incentives and challenges to bring out people's strengths. Eights agree with the saying "Give a person a fish and they eat for a day. But teach them how to fish, and they can feed themselves for life." Eights know this is true because they have often taught themselves "how to fish." They are self-starters and enjoy constructive activity—building up themselves, others, and their world.

Eights occasionally take on big challenges to see if they can pull off the impossible or turn a hopeless cause into a great success. But they generally do not do so unless they are fairly sure that the odds are on their side and that they will have the resources to pull off a "long shot" and make it look easy. Others look to them in times of crisis because they know that Eights are willing to make tough decisions and to take the heat if things go wrong.

Honor is also important to Eights because their word is their bond. When they say "You have my word on this," they mean it. Eights want to be *respected*, and healthy Eights also extend respect to others, affirming the dignity of whomever they encounter. They react strongly when they see someone being taken advantage of or treated in a demeaning or degrading manner. They will step in and stop a fight to protect the weak or disadvantaged or to "even the score" for those who they feel have been wronged. Similarly, Eights would not hesitate to give up their seat on the train to an old or sick person, but they would have to be dragged away bodily if anyone tried to make them give it up without their consent.

Nothing much about Eights is half-hearted. They have powerful feelings and drives and often have a major impact on the people around them—for good or for ill. Eights are more intense and direct than most, and they expect others to meet these qualities as well. Indirectness of any kind drives them crazy, and they will keep pushing and raising their energy level until they feel that others have sufficiently responded to them.

Many Eights have some kind of a dream for themselves and their "inner circle," and being the practical-minded people that they are, this often involves money-making projects, business ventures, philanthropy, and the like. They may start and run their own business or set someone else up in a situation or simply play the state lottery on a regular basis. Not all Eights have a lot of money, but most are looking for some kind of "big break" that would give them the independence, respect, and sense of power that they typically want. They can also be highly competitive, enjoying the challenges and risks of their own enterprises. They are hard-working and pragmatic—"rugged individualists," and wheeler-dealers who are always thinking of a new angle and constantly have a new project underway.

Less healthy Eights can become extremely controlling, self-important, confrontational, and highly territorial. They may respond to others by swaggering and being willful, bluffing and "throwing their weight around" in various ways. Average Eights are full of bluster and bravado to get people to fall in line with their plans, desires, and although if they encounter resistance, they will try to control and dominate people more openly and aggressively. Whether they are running a multinational corporation or a family of two, they want it understood that they are firmly and clearly in charge.

In brief, Eights want to be self-reliant, to prove their strength and independence, to be important in their world, to have an impact on their environment, to have the unquestioned loyalty of their inner circle, and to stay in control of their situation. **Eights do not want** to feel weak or vulnerable, to feel out of control, to be dependent on others, to have their decisions or authority questioned, to lose others' backing, or to be surprised by others' unexpected actions.

Their Hidden Side

Eights present a tough, independent image to the world, but under their bravado and layers of armor, there is vulnerability and fear. Eights are affected by the reactions of those closest to them far more than they want to let on. They often expect that others will dislike or reject them, and so they are profoundly touched, even sentimental, when they feel that someone they care about truly understands them and loves them. Eights may learn to harden themselves against wanting or expecting tenderness, but they are never entirely successful. No matter how tough, even belligerent, they may become, their desire for nurturance and connection can never be put entirely out of consciousness.

Relationship Issues

Eights are often sought out as partners because they appear so confident, capable, and strong. Others are reassured by their solidity and feel that the Eight will offer protection and stability in the relationship. (When Eights are healthy, this is true.) Eights also exude a great deal of charisma—they have tremendous instinctual energy and many people feel attracted to their intensity. However, other people may be frightened by the same qualities in Eights, and when Eights assert their energy too forcefully, they often create problems in their relationships. Some of their main trouble spots include the following:

- Becoming self-absorbed and uninterested in others' feelings or problems due to feeling overwhelmed by their own feelings.
- Overreacting to perceived rejection by withdrawing or losing their temper.
- Pushing others to get a more "genuine" response.
- Becoming remote and emotionally unavailable when troubled.
- Becoming possessive and jealous of the partner.
- Seeing the other as an inferior to be shaped and directed; not respecting the partner as an equal.
- Acting out difficult psychological issues in rages, binges, or acts of revenge.

To learn more about the compatibility issues of Type Eight and their interactions with other types, click below on the Enneagram type of the other person in the relationship. This will open in a new window.

Type 8 The Challenger and type:

[1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#) [7](#) [8](#) [9](#)

The Passion: Lust

Eights want to feel intensely alive: they love the sense of immediacy they get from being engaged with life fully. They do not have much patience with lukewarm responses or half-hearted actions from others. But this desire to be vital and alive can easily deteriorate into a need to constantly *push against* the world—and especially other people. Eights get into the habit of exerting themselves and their influence, increasing the intensity of situations so that they will feel more real and alive. They become like a person aggressively trying to push a door open that opens inwardly. Unfortunately,

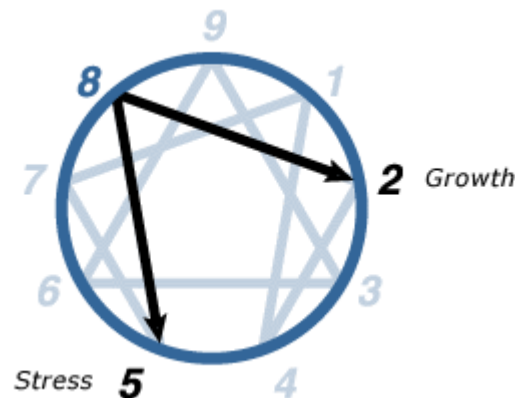
this approach to life often overwhelms other people who then avoid the Eight, and it can lead to severe stress and even physical breakdown for the Eight herself.

At Their Best

Healthy Eights combine their natural strength and energy with measured, insightful, decision-making, and a greater willingness to be emotionally open and available to others. They make loyal friends and will make any sacrifice necessary for the well-being of their loved ones. They feel no need to test their wills against others: they are so secure and grounded in themselves that there is no need to constantly assert themselves much less to control anyone else. Thus, they have greater inner peace themselves and can therefore be enormous sources of support and strength for others. Seeing that they can be a powerful source of blessings in others' lives fills Eights with a deep sense of fulfillment and a kind of benevolent pride in their ability to have a positive impact on the world and on others.

High-functioning Eights are truly heroic, mastering themselves and their passions. They are big-hearted, merciful, and forbearing, carrying others with their strength. Courageous and strong, but also gentle and humble—willing to put themselves in jeopardy for the sake of justice and fairness. Very high-functioning Eights have the vision, compassion, and heart to be a tremendous influence for good in the world.

Personality Dynamics & Variations



An explanation of the Directions of Integration (Security) and Disintegration (Stress) can be found [here](#), which opens in a new window.

Under Stress (Eight Goes to Average Five)

Eights usually respond to stress by taking problems and challenges head on. They are bold and assertive in pushing for control and for accomplishing their vision, whatever it might be. But this approach can leave them feeling beleaguered and overwhelmed. When stress levels get too high, Eights may suddenly switch tactics and go into periods of retreat or even isolation, like average Fives. They pull back from the front lines to assess their situation, to strategize, and to see how they can regain control. They may become strangely quiet, secretive, and isolated as they privately explore ways to deal with their problems. Under longer periods of stress, they may also develop a cold, cynical attitude about themselves, other people, and life in general, in the manner of less healthy Fives.

Security (Eight Goes to Average Two)

Eights will sometimes turn toward people they trust to be reassured about the other person's need for them. They have an emotional, even sentimental

side that they show only to people with whom they feel safe. They may appear tough and independent in public while privately doting on key people in their lives or, if they lack these, then on their pets. They may also attempt to get intimates to acknowledge their help and support or may want people to depend more completely on them, like average Twos. Hidden feelings of rejection can cause them to seek ways to hold on to those few people they feel close to, including manipulation and undermining the other. Like average Twos, they also become unwilling to acknowledge their real needs or feelings of hurt with people on whom they depend.

Integration (Eight Goes to Healthy Two)

As Eights begin to recognize their powerful emotional armoring and see how much it isolates them unnecessarily, they naturally become more emotionally expressive and generous, like high-functioning Twos. Underneath their drive for self-protection and independence, Eights have big hearts and generous impulses. Once they feel secure enough to let down their guards, they discover how much they care about people and how much they want to support others. In short, they want to be a source of good in the world and to express their love—and at Two, they do so. Since they remain Eights, their love is expressed in palpable ways that actually help and support people. It is a love free of sentiment, clinging, or hidden agenda, and through it, Eights find the sense of empowerment and dignity that they have been seeking.

The Instincts In Brief

An explanation of the three Instincts can be found [here](#), which opens in a new window.

Self-Preservation Eights: The Survivor (Ichazo's "Satisfactory Survival")

Self-Preservation Eights most live out the Eights' need for independence through the accumulation of power, position, and, sometimes, material wealth. That is not to say that all Self-Pres Eights are wealthy—most are not—but that this Variant seeks to have and to control whatever resources they can in order to maintain their independence and dominance. Thus, these Eights make shrewd business people and politicians and are extremely practical, approaching life with a tough-minded pragmatism they see as being simply "realistic." Often private people, their home is very important to them. Whether man or woman, the Self-Pres Eight rules the roost and is likely to control resources within the household. Positively, they are often excellent providers and have a way of landing on their feet no matter what life throws at them. Trouble spots include difficulty empathizing with the needs of others, especially if they perceive others as weak or ineffectual. Self-Pres Eights most typify the shrewd, pragmatic, wheeler-dealer aspect of this personality type. .

Sexual Eights: Taking Charge (Ichazo's "Possessiveness")

Sexual Eights are charismatic and emotionally intense: they seem to "smolder." These Eights seek intensity through relationship, and the ups and downs of their lives are often seen in terms of relationship. The Sexual Eight wants to "imprint" their significant other, to leave their mark. Whether they are dealing with love interests or are engaged in other activities, they enjoy the thrill of intense stimulation and can become addicted to adrenaline rushes. They often adore the people they are in love with, but they can develop problems from thinking of the other as a child that they want to shape and develop. Much of this comes from wanting the partner to be strong enough so that the Sexual Eight can relax and surrender themselves. Thus, they may provoke their loved ones in the effort to test their strength or to build it up. Similarly, they like to be challenged by the other, but this can deteriorate into a struggle for dominance in the relationship. They may

resort to arguments or verbal sparring as a way of stimulating intensity in the relationship. Sexual Eights can also feel as though they "own" their intimate partner—that they have a right to satisfaction whenever they need it.

Social Eights: Gusto and Camaraderie (Ichazo's "Friendship")

Social Eights like to "live large," and as the name suggests, engage fully in the world. Friendship and loyalty are top values for them, and they are willing to make great sacrifices for the people and causes they care about. At the same time, they expect that others they have bonded with will be similarly loyal to them. (In this regard, they can resemble Sixes, although their energy is bigger and more direct than that of Sixes.) Often, Social Eights will gather a group of friends around them while unofficially acting as the chairperson of the group—the "king" or "queen." They enjoy conversation about sports, politics, rock music, or the latest events on their favorite soap opera—any subject in which they can boldly state opinions and get into debates about. Social Eights enjoy the banter and energy of a disagreement about such matters, and they are often surprised to learn that others can be hurt or overwhelmed by the force of their opinions. At such times, they may try to "tone themselves down," but they usually find this an uncomfortable compromise. More often, they seek out friends who they perceive as strong and independent, people who can take a bit of roughhousing and who will not be overwhelmed by them. Less healthy Social Eights have problems with making promises to people that they cannot always fulfil. Conning others, and exaggerating situations can become part of the picture.

The Levels of Development

An explanation of the nine Levels of Development can be found [here](#), which opens in a new window.

Below is the complete Levels of Development diagram for Type Eight. The levels range from most healthy, Level 1, to least healthy, Level 9. To understand these charts, start with the Basic Fear, at the top right of the chart. This fear gives rise to the Basic Desire, which is the Desire at the second level of health, the Level of Psychological Capacity.

The Desire of each level gives rise to the internal Attitudes (the A-Terms) of each level, which create the external Behaviors (the B-Terms). Over time, due to internal conflicts, these behaviors and attitudes create another layer of Fear at that level.

Each new Fear generates yet another desire at the next lower level, which gives rise to a new set of attitudes and behaviors, creating a spiral structure in which a person becomes increasingly enmeshed in self-destructive reactions and increasingly terrifying fears. The process of growth is to become aware of each of the cluster of attitudes and behaviors as they occur, bringing conscious awareness into the moment. As we do this, the underlying fears and desires also begin to emerge into consciousness, and the person begins to shift up the levels.

For more about this process see [Wisdom of the Enneagram](#), and [Personality Types](#).

PERSONALITY TYPE EIGHT: ***The Challenger***

Parental Orientation: Rejection with the Nurturing-figure

B-TERMS	A-TERMS	DESIRES	FEARS
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THE HEALTHY LEVELS:

1. Level of Liberation

Heroic
inspiring
truly strong
courageous
selfless
gentle

Self-Surrendering
compassionate
merciful
forgiving
magnanimous
faithful
innocent

Self-Actualization:

↳ Lets go of their identification with a particular self-image, that they must always be in control of their environment

Basic Fear:

Of being harmed or controlled by others

2. Level of Psychological Capacity

Strong
assertive
direct
resourceful
action oriented
tenacious
robust
realistic

Self-Reliant
independent
strong willed
self-determining
resolute
impassioned
vigorous
"can do" attitude

Basic Desire:

↳ To protect themselves, to be in control of their own life and destiny

Secondary Fears:

Of becoming weak or vulnerable — of losing their strength and independence

3. Level of Social Value

Leading
providing
constructive
challenging
championing
protective
have vision
tough
decisions
empowering

Self-Confident
self-mastering
honorable
authoritative
decisive
initiating
strategic
seeking justice

Secondary Desires:

↳ To prove their strength through action or achievement

That they do not have enough resources at their disposal to carry out their role as leader/ provider

THE AVERAGE LEVELS:

4. Level of Imbalance

Enterprising
hardworking
risk-taking
straight-talking
business-like
rugged
"street smart"
intense
preparing

Pragmatic
competitive
seeking advantage
shrewd position
"no nonsense"
self-interested
driven
pumped up
uncertain

Social Role: *The Rock*

↳ To acquire the resources they need

That others do not respect them or take them seriously

5. Level of Interpersonal Control

Dominating
controlling
boastful/
bossy

Willful
expansive
self-important
swaggering

↳ To assert their centrality and importance (to be in control)

Of losing control of their environment
others are not

blunt	proud		backing them up)
bluffing	insistent		
big promises	territorial		
demand	ego-centric		
loyalty	<i>preoccupied</i>		
"dare-devils"			
<i>secretive</i>			

6. Level of Overcompensation

Intimidating	Confrontational	◀ To pressure others to do what they want, to make others fall in line with their agenda	That others are turning against them
combative	defiant		
threatening	"chip on shoulder"		
unreasonable	bad tempered		
forceful/	contempt for		
aggressive	weakness		
undermining	cynical		
pushing limits	lustful		
oppressive	repressing hurt		
<i>provocative</i>	<i>extreme</i>		

THE UNHEALTHY LEVELS:

7. Level of Violation

Dictatorial	Ruthless	◀ To survive, to protect themselves and stay in control at any cost	Of retaliation
"outlaw"	feel betrayed		
violent,	antisocial		
brutal	predatory		
treacherous	immoral		
untruthful	vengeful		
scheming	hardening heart		
harsh	<i>cutting off</i>		
<i>reclusive</i>			

8. Level of Delusion & Compulsion

Terrorizing	Megalomaniacal	◀ To be invincible, unassailable, invulnerable (without fear)	That their resources cannot hold out any longer
rapacious	over-reaching		
raging	unrestrained		
devastating	feel omnipotent		
over-	no boundaries		
extended	<i>phobic</i>		
<i>projecting</i>			

9. Level of Pathological Destructiveness

Destructive	Sociopathic	◀ To destroy every-thing rather than be forced to submit or surrender	Basic Fear comes true: they are harmed and/ or controlled by others
murderous	inhuman		
monstrous	cruel		
barbarous	remorseless		
ruinous	exploding rage		
attacking	<i>inner chaos</i>		
thrashing			
<i>psychotic</i>			

Personal Growth Recommendations for Type Eights

Eights grow by recognizing that the world is not a battleground to be approached as a gigantic test of wills. They do not have to see life as a "survival of the fittest," a titanic struggle that they must be constantly engaged in. They grow by recognizing that it is their attempt to defy the

world and to force everything to bend to their will that is at the root of their problems. They realize that any real strength entails vulnerability and openness. They also learn that allowing more openness enables others to get closer to them and to support them in tangible ways. Eights grow by recognizing that more can be accomplished through cooperation and partnership than they can do by themselves or by constantly struggling to impose their will on others.

- It goes against the grain, but act with self-restraint. You show true power when you forbear from asserting your will with others, even when you could. Your real power lies in your ability to inspire and uplift people. You are at your best when you take charge and help everyone through a crisis. Few will take advantage of you when you are caring, and you will do more to secure the loyalty and devotion of others by showing the greatness of your heart than you ever could by displays of raw power.
- It is difficult for Eights, but learn to yield to others, at least occasionally. Often, little is really at stake, and you can allow others to have their way without fear of sacrificing your power, or your real needs. The desire to dominate everyone all the time is a sign that your ego is beginning to inflate—a danger signal that more serious conflicts with others are inevitable.
- Remember that the world is not against you. Many people in your life care about you and look up to you, but when you are in your fixation, you do not make this easy for them. Let in the affection that is available. Doing this will not make you weak, but will confirm the strength and support in yourself and your life. Also remember that by believing that others are against you and reacting against them, you tend to alienate them and confirm your own fears. Take stock of the people who truly are on your side, and let them know how important they are to you.
- Eights typically want to be self-reliant and depend on no one. But, ironically, they depend on many people. For example, you may think that you are not dependent on your employees because they depend on you for their jobs. You could dismiss them at any time and hire other workers. Everyone is expendable in your little kingdom—except you. But the fact is that you are dependent on others to do their jobs too, especially if your business concerns grow beyond what you can manage alone. But if you alienate everyone associated with you, you will eventually be forced to employ the most obsequious and untrustworthy operatives. When you do, you will have reason to question their loyalty and to fear losing your position. The fact is that whether in your business world or your domestic life, yourself-sufficiency is largely an illusion.
- Eights typically overvalue power. Having power, whether through wealth, position, or simple brute force, allows them to do whatever they want, to feel important, to be feared and obeyed. But those who are attracted to you because of your power do not love you for yourself, nor do you love or respect them. While this may be the Faustian bargain you have made, you will nevertheless have to pay the price that whatever power you accumulated will inevitably be at a cost you, physically and emotionally.

See also [Personality Types](#), 218-45, and [Understanding the Enneagram](#), 72-76 and 252-54.

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