

TYPE EIGHT



Eights pursue the truth and justice, like to keep situations under control, want to make important things happen, and try to hide their vulnerability.

Four Questions

If you answer Yes to three or four of these questions, your likely Enneagram is type Eight.

1. Do you think that bigger is better, both in thought and action, as long as it is also strategic?
2. Are you a direct and assertive person who can intimidate people even when this may not be your intention?
3. Do you trust your 'gut' responses in almost everything you decide or do?
4. Do you have a bold exterior and have a difficult time both experiencing and showing others when you feel vulnerable?

Strengths | direct | strategic | protective | big action oriented

Development areas | controlling | demanding | disdain weakness | intimidating

Eights search for control and justice and avoid feeling vulnerable or weak. Symbolized by the mountain, Eights are solid and often immovable, strong, and difficult to penetrate.

Assertive, bold, and confident, Eights are highly independent, with a tendency to both protect and control people and events around them and a deep commitment to truth, justice, and equity or fairness. Most Eights are excessive in some way, particularly when they feel anxious or vulnerable. Because they strongly prefer to not show this side of themselves to others, perceiving such feelings as signaling weakness, Eights mask their tender side by engaging in excessiveness in a variety of forms: over-work, too much or too little exercise, erratic or unhealthy eating, and other forms of over-consumption, such as incessant shopping or the purchasing of items – often expensive ones – that they don't really need.

Eights want to get their needs and desires met, want to make big things happen quickly, much akin to moving mountains, and most have a big presence even when they are saying little. Eights can also appear somewhat different from one another. Some Eights are quiet with a low threshold for frustration and an ability to survive and gain control in almost any situation; other Eights are social rebels and protective of others to an extreme; and some Eights are highly emotional, extraordinarily passionate, and enjoy being more center stage.

The Eight's interpersonal style is assertive, and they use voice modulation and non-verbal behavior for effect and impact. For example, they may use a strident voice, direct eye contact, and move closer to others as a way to take charge or make their point, or they may use a softer voice tone, warm eye contact, and a smile to appear gracious, hospitable, or non-threatening.



While we can all highly value truth-telling and pursue justice, want to make big things happen, and have issues with not appearing weak, for Eights, the search for control and justice and the avoidance of vulnerability is their primary, persistent, and driving motivation.

Core development areas

- Being forthcoming about your deep vulnerabilities
- Allowing others to exercise autonomy and control
- Being receptive and responsive to input from others rather than moving to immediate, unilateral action

Three great development ideas

Take care of yourself physically.

Get enough sleep on a regular basis, eat healthfully and in moderation, and exercise regularly. The more you take care of yourself physically, instead of wearing yourself down to the point of exhaustion, the less emotionally reactive you will be.

Slow down your impulse to take action.

Each time you feel the impulse to take action — for example, giving an opinion, suggesting or demanding that someone else do something, or in any way mobilizing forward action — stop yourself and think: What is going on inside me that makes me want to move forward so quickly? What will happen if I don't take action right now?

Share your feelings of vulnerability.

How many times have you allowed yourself to feel sad or to cry in the last year? How many times have you become angry? It is likely that you have been angry far more often than sad. Can you identify areas of vulnerability that your anger may be masking? Even if your anger has been the result of another person being treated poorly or someone not stepping up to perform a task for which they are responsible, can you identify an area of your own vulnerability that this is activating?