

Shadow Work in Relationships

Why Discuss Shadows?

- There are so many shadows we can bring into relationships, most often stemming from trauma situations from the past. Often, in our defenses, we try to fight these shadows by keeping difficulties away or down. In our past this has been quite functional and got us to survival, or at least the present time. However, often our shadows create further darkness, especially when we could choose more safe and social solutions.
- Using the Enneagram type shadows I've listed below as a starting point, notice whether you've been struggling with any of these issues. Add to the list if there are other shadows you've been hiding in also.

Shadows Across Enneagram Types in Relationships

Type 1 - the shadow of admitting they struggle w/rage and envy of other couples

Type 2 - the shadow of the fact that when not healthy, they give to get and that they must be humble

Type 3 - the shadow of fear of judgment/shame so they lie instead of dealing with issues

Type 4 - the shadow of indulging fantasy and envy other couples

Type 5 - the shadow of having deep anxiety and control issues in marriage

Type 6 - the shadow of raging anger, heightened energy, and possessiveness when anxious

Type 7 - the shadow of fear of spousal anger and running from the fear of emotion with overdoing

Type 8 - the shadow of controlling their spouse, dominating, and not seeing any other possibility

Type 9 - the shadow of going stubborn and passively controlling marriage

Reflection Questions

What are some other shadows you're unintentionally or intentionally hiding in sometimes instead of marriage (ex: busyness instead of intimacy, withdrawing into interests, or avoiding having healthy conflict)?

What, if any self-fulfilling prophecies are you experiencing as you give into these shadows (ex: it is causing the distance from my person/my people)?

What will it take for you to step into faith versus fear (ex: stillness, silence, solitude, journaling, prayer, lament, gratitude, Bible study, a combo of some of this)?

Who are some couples in media, culture, history, your community or otherwise that have found their glow even through shadows that inspire you? What does their relationship remind you to do when you're in the shadows?

Enneagram and Marriage:

E + M Worksheet: Shadow Work in Relationships

