

## Holding an Enlightened Vision

Picture a Chinese Finger Trap. When you put a finger in each end of the woven tube, if you try to pull your fingers out, they get caught tighter. The only way out of the finger trap is to push in.

I mentioned this to an Enneagram discussion group, wondering if it might be politically incorrect to use the traditional name “Chinese Finger Trap.” A Seven – without even taking a breath – cried, “Let’s call them oriental digital weavings.” That’s part of the charm of Sevens, and one reason they often make superlative teachers: they’re very quick to use positive reframing.

But let’s go a little deeper into the instructive nature of this reframing. When you think of the puzzle as a “trap” your worldview is already geared toward escape. Logic tells you that to escape you must move away from the stuck place. But if logic prevailed, none of us would have any more problems: “OK, now that I know my pattern, I’ll just quit doing it.” Not!

When you approach the puzzle as a weaving that has certain characteristics, you are more likely to notice how it works, to see that the weaving pulls tighter in one direction and looser in the other. Then all you’re likely to say is, “Isn’t that interesting, how that pattern works? If I move in this way, then I’m released.”

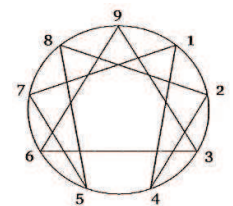
In Appendix 2 you’ll find a summary of the vision and four key patterns for each Enneagram style. As you review these, keep the **oriental digital weaving** in mind:

- One moves from seeing only what’s wrong to developing nuance and options.
- Two moves from losing self to giving without strings.
- Three moves from succeeding at any price to being inner-directed and communal.
- Four moves from being moody and unable to get past melancholy to being effective in the external world.
- Five moves from being reserved and reserving to integrating action and thinking.

1. Rapport
2. **Vision**
3. Presuppositions
4. Self-observation
5. Possibility language
6. Solution focus
7. Both/and thinking
8. Honor resistance
9. Right-brain tactics
10. Fieldwork
11. Process observations

*When you think of the puzzle as a “trap” your worldview is geared toward escape.*

*When you pay attention to its characteristics you see how it works.*



- Six moves from being suspicious of others and doubting self to trusting self and others.
- Seven moves from being scattered and unreliable to being realistically enthusiastic and visionary.
- Eight moves from war mentality and seeking power to being compassionate and just.
- Nine moves from being immobile and indecisive to being focused and initiating.

You can't force transformation. It's a process that will occur naturally as clients heighten their self-awareness, let go of judgment, and experience their patterns in ways that break them free of automatic and habitual responses. What you can do is invite and reinforce aspects of the vision for each. You will often find evidence of this desired state even in early stages, sometimes in the first session. If it doesn't occur naturally I encourage you to invite it so you can provide reinforcement.

*You can't force transformation but you can reinforce change while it's happening.*

Transforming Sixes, for example, move from suspecting others and doubting self to trusting self and others. What if you're in the first meeting with a Six who says he needs help deciding whether to leave his girlfriend or marry her, then asks what you think he should do? This is evidence of the entranced Six's tendency toward self-doubt.

*Holding an enlightened vision will guide your response.*

Holding an enlightened vision of the Six ("trusting self") will guide your response. If you offered a suggestion, you'd be reinforcing his dependence on authority and he probably wouldn't follow your advice anyway ("suspicious of others"). You want to help him find his inner authority.

*Presume with confidence that clients will do what you ask.*

Perhaps you encourage him to breathe deeply and fully into his abdomen and ask, "Now, from your power center, what do you know is the best course for you to take?" Because you have presumed with confidence that he has an answer for himself, he will most likely answer with confidence. When he does, you reinforce the desired behavior by presuming it will continue, saying something like this: "The more you move inward and check for your own deepest best interest, the more you'll trust yourself."

*Reinforce the desired behavior and speak as if it will continue.*