

# How the Enneagram Can Take Your Marriage Where God Wants It to Go

“If you’ve been married longer than a honeymoon, you quickly realize that what you thought was a ballroom dance becomes Twister.”

So says pastor and counselor Jeff McCord, who with his wife, Beth, known as “Your Enneagram Coach,” coauthored a new book, *Becoming Us: Using the Enneagram to Create A Thriving Gospel-Centered Marriage*. The McCords first came to the Enneagram (a personality typing tool), they say, because of their own experiences with marital conflict.

As with many couples, things started to get difficult around the six-to-seven-year mark, while the McCords were expecting their second child. “We were lost,” Jeff says on the *Hope for Your Marriage* podcast series on Charisma News. “I was in my second year of seminary and wondering, *Is my marriage going to be a disaster?*”

During that time, someone introduced the McCords to a book on the Christian perspective of the Enneagram, a tool that, Beth says, really opened up her thinking about their relationship. Understanding her personality type (Enneagram 9), she says, “Helped me to understand why we were struggling. Whenever we were having some struggles, I would want to think positive about it and not really address it or maybe shut down and withdraw completely.” And understanding Jeff’s type (Enneagram 6) helped too.

“All of those things that I was doing to try to navigate around complex issues were only stoking the fire more for him, because for him, abandonment is one of his greatest fears,” Beth explains. “So whenever I didn’t engage with a situation

that he felt like needed to be addressed, he felt like I was abandoning him, like this was the beginning of the end of our marriage, while I was never thinking in that direction.”

Understanding the different ways they viewed their relationship and their struggles, Beth says, helped them to have compassion, empathy and more understanding for each other. Even today, the couple continues to rely on the Enneagram to help them navigate the challenges marriage brings. “We tell people it’s like an internal GPS, where here’s a current location, your main Enneagram type,” she adds. “And then here’s your destination, which is being more like Christ. And each type has their own path. ... We need to focus on Christ and surrender to Him in a very unique, specific way. And if we don’t, our mind and our heart can wander off so much that we fall into those same common pitfalls time and time again.

“So we encourage people to use the Enneagram like a rumble strip on the highway that alerts us like, ‘Hey, if you keep thinking this way, or behaving this way and interacting this way, you’re going to land into that same common pitfall,’” says Beth.

To hear more about how the gospel-centered Enneagram can transform you and your marriage, listen to this podcast. For the McCord’s free assessment that will help you discern your own Enneagram type, [click here](#). The McCords are also offering their Discovering You course at a 50% discount for Charisma readers; get it here [ydiscovering-you](#) and use coupon code **CHARISMA**. {eo}