

RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD – Potential impact of your personality type

Type One:

- Sees God as having high expectations
- Spiritual life can be performance-/guilt-driven

What can help:

- Encourage dependence on God and his grace
- Encourage to see God as Father
- Contemplative approaches
- Expressing anger with God may be necessary at some point

Type Two:

- Lack of awareness / understanding of unconditional love
- Strong emphasis on 'service' – need to feel they are 'helping' God
- Looks for emotional closeness with God (and can feel angry when that doesn't happen)

What can help:

- Encourage to have clear boundaries
- Encourage to 'be' rather than to 'do'
- Encourage to recognise own needs and express them to God
- Understand God's grace and unconditional love
- Let God be God!

Type Three:

- Feel they need to earn God's love
- Cognitive faith
- Try to hide 'unacceptable' parts from God
- Attempt to 'fit in' with God

What can help:

- Contemplative / meditative approaches, to understand better how God sees them
- Connect with emotions
- Need to differentiate God from parental limitations / expectations

Type Four:

- Looking for deep emotional connection
- Feel 'different' from others – even from God

What can help:

- Seeing God as a safe and everlasting love can lead to a deeper connection with him
- Praying through creation – helps sense of connection
- Use imagination (e.g. contemplative approaches) to understand concept of Jesus coming alongside
- Understand the depth of relationship within the Trinity

Type Five:

- Difficulty trusting God
- Low self-esteem
- Fearful of close emotional experience of God

What can help:

- Encourage to come out of private world and trust God
- Help to see own value in God's eyes
- Encourage to see self as part of the wider reality

Type Six:

- Difficulty trusting God (is God good...?)
- Difficulty accepting unconditional love and grace
- Difficulty handing things over to God and 'letting go'
- Can see God as just another authority figure – can't imagine a dynamic, loving relationship

What can help:

- Exploring the security and trustworthiness of God in Scripture
- Human relationships of trust
- Support from others, including in prayer. Structured prayer can be helpful.

Type Seven:

- Struggles with taking suffering seriously / facing up to it
- Avoids addressing unanswered prayer / lack of healing
- Drawn towards charismatic / growing and thriving churches
- Can become disenchanted with God if needs not met

What can help:

- Use image of the cross to explore pain and suffering
- Spiritual disciplines
- Buddying / accountability groups. Active prayer (e.g. prayer walks)
- Encourage to see that all emotions are valid

Type Eight:

- Fear of turning over control to God
- Attempts to remain in control through using systems, e.g. a simplistic approach to Scripture
- The need to remain in control may motivate the Christian to enter Christian ministry or a church-based role. Can then become over-burdened.

What can help:

- Encourage to see that it is safe to be vulnerable before God (e.g. by focusing on God's goodness and unconditional love)
- Begin with structured prayer ('safe'), moving later towards more reflective/contemplative/listening approaches
- Encourage to bring own needs to God, not just the needs of other people / situations

Type Nine:

- Often avoids questions and doubts about God, in order to hold on to a sense of peace and harmony
- Good intercessors but find it difficult to pray for themselves
- May resent God for imposing more demands regarding what he/she should be or do, but be unable to articulate this
- May look to the church for advice/direction

What can help:

- Encourage to bring own needs to God
- Develop sense of identity / sense of self in Christ
- Prayer which focuses on self, and on *being* rather than *doing*