

The Type Reflection Guide

Understanding your Enneagram type is the foundation of everything. Because adolescents are best served when the adults around them understand themselves well.

This guide is not a test. It is a mirror. Use it to get honest about your patterns — what drives you, what happens when things get hard, and what the teenager in your life most needs from you specifically.

Not sure of your type yet? That is okay. Read across a few rows and notice what lands. Recognition — that quiet "oh, that's me" — is the beginning. For support going deeper, visit drlonnagordon.com.

YOUR TYPE	CORE MOTIVATION What drives you at your core	UNDER STRESS What happens before the Pause	WHAT TEENS NEED FROM YOU Your specific gift to a young person
1 THE REFORMER	To be good, right, and consistent. To improve what is broken and uphold what matters. Integrity is not just a value — it is an identity.	Standards become visible before words do. A tightened jaw, a careful pause, a tone that signals disappointment before anything is said. The teenager reads the reaction before they hear the response.	Your warmth arriving before your standard. When a teen feels your investment in them as a person — not just in their performance — they become available to everything you have to offer.
2 THE HELPER	To be loved and needed. To give generously and be seen as indispensable. Relationships are everything — and helpfulness is how love gets expressed.	Help arrives uninvited. Accurate perception of what someone needs — before they've chosen to share it — can feel like surveillance rather than care. Withdrawal when help is rejected.	The experience of being chosen, not managed. Waiting to be invited in — rather than arriving with the answer already in hand — gives teenagers something rare: the chance to ask for what they need.
3 THE ACHIEVER	To succeed and be admired. To accomplish, to excel, to be seen as capable and effective. Image and achievement are deeply intertwined.	The connection becomes about performance. Lighting up at accomplishments and going quieter in struggles sends a message teenagers notice — and file away carefully.	Presence in the failure. Slowing down to be there in the hard moment — not to fix it, not to reframe it, just to stay — builds the relationship nothing else can.
4 THE INDIVIDUALIST	To be authentic and understood. To find meaning in depth, beauty, and emotional truth. Ordinarity feels like a loss of self.	Meeting a teenager so fully in the depth of their pain that neither finds a way back up. Intensity can amplify rather than regulate.	Presence in the dark — and the light held toward the way out. You are gifted at staying in difficulty. The completion of that gift is leading them back toward the light.

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5 THE INVESTIGATOR	To understand and be competent. To observe, analyze, and master. Knowledge feels like the safest form of security.	Disappearing into processing at the exact moment presence is needed. Going quiet to think reads as disinterest or rejection to a teenager watching for signals.	Knowing they don't have to be fully figured out to be connected with. Narrating your presence — "I'm thinking about what you said" — keeps the door open while you do what you do best.
6 THE LOYALIST	To feel safe and supported. To be prepared, loyal, and certain. Anticipating what could go wrong feels like responsible love.	Anxiety becomes contagious. Scanning for risk in everything a teenager brings makes the hard thing bigger — and teaches them to withhold rather than share.	Your steadiness as security. Your consistent showing up — unchanged, unshaken — is exactly what a safe relationship feels like to an adolescent whose world is constantly shifting.
7 THE ENTHUSIAST	To be happy and fulfilled. To experience life fully, avoid pain, and keep possibility open. The pivot toward the positive is instinctive.	Redirecting before the hard thing is fully said. Reframing, silver-lining, moving — all before the teenager has felt heard in their difficulty.	<i>"Nothing you say is going to scare me. What you are experiencing is not too hard for me." Staying in the discomfort just one beat longer changes everything.</i>
8 THE CHALLENGER	To be strong and in control. To protect, to lead, to never be seen as weak. Power feels like safety.	Matching the teenager's energy — meeting intensity with intensity. When that happens, you are no longer the adult in the room. Never match energy. It closes every door.	The quiet Eight. Your calm in a charged moment is authority of the most lasting kind. A teenager who sees you stay steady trusts you with the truth.
9 THE PEACEMAKER	To have inner peace and harmony. To avoid conflict and keep things settled. Disruption — even necessary disruption — feels costly.	Accommodating past the point of honesty. Avoiding the conversation a teenager needs someone to name. Peace-keeping can leave young people without the structure or directness they need most.	Your presence and your voice — together. Your calming steadiness is a profound gift. So is your willingness to speak directly when it matters. Teenagers need both from you.

Want to go deeper?

This guide is a starting point. Understanding your type — and what it means specifically for the relationships in your life — is work worth doing with support.

Book a personal typing session with Dr. Lonna Gordon:

calendly.com/drlonnacoaches/typingsession

drlonnagordon.com

