Enactive, Affective, and Cognitive Dimensions in Human Cognition

Mapping Contemporary Cognitive Science to Enneagram Centers and the 3D Trialectic Model

Introduction

Human cognition is not a monolithic process but a constellation of interdependent dimensions. Contemporary cognitive science often distinguishes **enactive**, **affective**, and **cognitive** components of the mind, each emphasizing different aspects of how we know and interact with the world. These three dimensions closely parallel the classic **three centers of intelligence** in the Enneagram system: the moving/instinctual (body) center, the feeling/emotional (heart) center, and the thinking/mental (head) center. In this report, I will:

- Define the **enactive**, **affective**, and **cognitive** dimensions as understood in current cognitive science and psychology, drawing on key theorists (Francisco Varela, Shaun Gallagher, Antonio Damasio, etc.).
- Map each dimension isomorphically to its counterpart in the Enneagram's centers of intelligence (Enactive ↔ Moving/Instinctual (Body), Affective ↔ Feeling/Emotional (Heart), Cognitive ↔ Thinking/Mental (Head)).
- Discuss how this mapping aligns with the **3D-Enneagram trialectic model**, which introduces dual levels for each center and a triadic (trialectical) interaction of forces. We will explore the "I/Me" polarity (the **"I" vs "Me"** of selfhood), **self-processes** and **ego-fixations**, and how the Enneagram symbolically embodies personality trates.

Throughout, I draw from foundational work in cognitive science and psychology (Varela's enactivism, Damasio's affective neuroscience, classical cognitive theory) alongside Enneagram scholars and related thinkers (G.I. Gurdjieff, Oscar Ichazo, D.W. Winnicott, Merleau-Ponty, B. van der Kolk) to provide an integrative perspective.

The Enactive Dimension (Embodied Action and Perception)

Definition: The enactive dimension of cognition refers to the idea that mind emerges through **embodied action** and **dynamic interaction** with the environment. The term "enaction" was introduced by Varela, Thompson, and Rosch in 1991 to redefine cognition as *"embodied action," i.e. the 'bringing forth' of meaning through organismic*

activity conditioned by a history of organism-environment interactions. In other words, **cognition is not something that happens only in the head; it is woven through the body's sensorimotor engagement with the world**. The enactive approach holds that we cannot understand mental processes without reference to the situated, physical interactions of a living being with its surroundings. Philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a precursor of embodied cognitive science, captured this succinctly: *"The body is our general medium for having a world."* Our perception and understanding of reality are grounded in bodily capabilities – we **know** not just by abstract reasoning, but through doing and sensing. Shaun Gallagher and other 4E cognition theorists (Embodied, Embedded, Enactive, Extended) stress that cognition involves the whole organism: *"cognition is not just in the head – it involves the body and the situation of the body in the environment"*. Thus, *enactive cognition* highlights skills, habits, and immediate coping: how we move, react, and learn by **actively exploring** the world. Even high-level thought has roots in bodily experience; many cognitive scientists argue that abstract concepts are grounded in metaphors of physical action and perception.

Enneagram Moving/Instinctual Center: This enactive dimension corresponds directly to the Enneagram's **Moving or Instinctual Center** (often called the **Gut** or **Body center**). In Enneagram theory (originating from Gurdjieff's teachings), the moving/instinctual center is associated with **kinesthetic intelligence, survival instincts, and bodily sensations/"gut feelings."** Just as enactive cognition emphasizes action and sensation, the Body Center is about "sensate awareness and gut-level knowing", leading with movement and physical presence. People whose personalities are centered in the Moving/Instinctual Center (Enneagram types 8, 9, 1) tend to process experience through **doing and sensing** first, focusing on issues of **groundedness, control, security, and taking correct action**.

Gurdjieff described the moving/instinctual center as one of the fundamental "minds" in a human being, equal in importance to the emotional and intellectual centers. It governs our **life force, vitality, and survival impulses**. Notably, this center's predominant emotion is said to be **anger (or gut-level aggression)** when distorted, reflecting the instinctive response to obstacles. Modern psychology and neuroscience affirm the importance of this embodied instinctual awareness: e.g. Bessel van der Kolk's trauma research shows that the body "keeps the score" of stress and trauma, as visceral sensations and gut feelings signal emotional danger. Traumatized individuals often disconnect from these bodily signals ("numbing awareness of what is played out inside") in an attempt to cope – a vivid example of what happens when the enactive instinctual center is suppressed or dysregulated. Overall, aligning the enactive dimension with the moving center highlights that our bodily engagement with the world – from fight-or-flight reactions to grounding routines – is a core aspect of cognition and personality.

The Affective Dimension (Emotional Feeling and Value)

Definition: The affective dimension encompasses the realm of **emotion, feeling, and subjective affect** – how we sense value, meaning, and significance through our emotions. Neuroscientist Antonio Damasio famously emphasized that *"We are not thinking machines that feel; we are **feeling** machines that think."* In cognitive science, this marks a shift from viewing **emotions** as mere by-products to recognizing them as **integral to cognition and decision-making**. Damasio's somatic marker hypothesis proposes that emotional processes guide (or bias) behavior and decision-making at every turn. In other words, feelings (via bodily signals like heart rate, hormone surges, "gut" sensations) help us evaluate options and risks, often unconsciously, enabling quicker and sometimes wiser choices than pure logic alone could achieve. Affective neuroscience (e.g. Jaak Panksepp's work) has identified primal emotion circuits (for fear, care, play, rage, etc.) in subcortical brain regions, indicating that emotion is deeply embedded in our neural architecture from early evolution. Psychology of emotion (appraisal theories, etc.) further shows that our perceptions are colored by emotional appraisal of what is **good or bad for us**. Thus, the affective dimension represents **the felt sense of experience** – encompassing not only discrete emotions (joy, anger, fear, sorrow) but also moods, motivations, and the general energetic tone of consciousness (e.g. calm versus anxious). Crucially, affect provides the **value judgments** that pure data lack; it is what imbues our experiences with urgency or importance. Modern cognitive frameworks increasingly integrate affect – for instance, distinguishing **"hot cognition"** (thinking influenced by emotion and reward) from **"cold cognition"** (abstract, emotionless processing). Even in ostensibly logical reasoning, emotional biases and attachments play a role. In sum, the affective component of mind addresses **how we feel and care**, and how those feelings direct thought and action.

Enneagram Feeling/Heart Center: This affective dimension aligns with the Enneagram's **Heart or Feeling Center**. The Heart Center (types 2, 3, 4 in the Enneagram) is characterized by **emotional intelligence, empathy, and the drive for connection and recognition**. Individuals dominant in this center perceive the world "through the heart," meaning they attune keenly to **relationships, interpersonal feedback, and self-image**. Their focus tends to be on obtaining love, approval, and a sense of personal significance. In Enneagram theory, the core psychological theme of the heart triad is **shame or worthiness**: these types are very conscious of how they are seen by others, crafting an image to feel valued and avoid shame. (For example, Type 3 "The Achiever" will shape-shift to appear successful and worthy of admiration, reflecting a deep affective need for validation.) Developmentally, this ties to the fact that our sense of self is first mirrored by caregivers. When we are a little baby we don't have the capacity of self-reflection; we can only figure out who we are through others' eyes. If an infant's emotional needs for mirroring and attunement aren't met, they feel a **deep sense of deficiency, shame, and emptiness**, which heart-center personalities then try to

remedy by seeking attention and affirmation. This echoes the insights of psychologist D.W. Winnicott, who noted *"there is no such thing as a baby, [there is] a baby and someone"* – meaning the infant's self (the "I") is co-created through the emotional gaze of the mother (the "someone"). Winnicott warned that if a mother projects her own fears or desires onto the child instead of seeing the child's authentic being, *"the child would remain without a mirror, and for the rest of his life would be seeking this mirror in vain."*.

This vividly illustrates the affective **drive for mirroring and recognition** that defines the Heart Center: we come to know and value ourselves by the reflection (or lack thereof) we find in others' responses. In cognitive science terms, the heart center corresponds to the affective core of cognition – our emotions and the **"feeling of what happens"** (to borrow Damasio's phrase) that makes experience personal. Whether one looks at a client in therapy or a subject in a lab, emotional meaning is what propels narratives, self-concepts, and motivations. Thus, mapping the affective dimension to the Feeling Center highlights that **cognition is fundamentally emotional**: our hearts inform our minds about what matters most.

The Cognitive Dimension (Conceptual Thought and Analysis)

Definition: The cognitive dimension, in the narrow sense, refers to the domain of **thought, reasoning, and information processing**. In classical cognitive science (the mid-20th-century "cognitive revolution"), the mind was likened to a computer – an information processor that encodes, transforms, stores, and retrieves data. A famous early definition by Ulric Neisser (1967) describes **cognition** as *"those processes by which the sensory input is **transformed, reduced, elaborated, stored, recovered, and used**."* In plain terms, this covers all the mental operations from perception through memory, language, problem-solving, and conscious reasoning. The cognitive dimension thus includes **attention**, **memory**, **perception**, **language**, **concept formation**, **planning**, and **decision-making** – the prototypical "mental functions" studied in psychology. It deals in **symbols and representations**: for example, forming an internal model of the world, manipulating concepts, running simulations in one's head, and applying logical rules. Early information-processing models treated these functions largely as abstract computations on representations (often ignoring embodiment or emotion).

However, contemporary cognitive science has evolved to incorporate much more context: we now understand that "cold" cognition is continually influenced by "hot" affect and embodied context. In **neurocognitive frameworks**, specific brain networks (e.g. prefrontal cortex circuits, default mode network, etc.) are associated with various cognitive tasks, and theories like the **Global Workspace Theory** and **Predictive Processing** have emerged to explain how the brain integrates information to produce

conscious thought. But even these advanced frameworks preserve the essence of the cognitive dimension: the **capacity for abstract, flexible, and goal-directed thinking**. It is the part of our mind that creates stories, calculations, hypotheses, and plans. As one might say, if the enactive "knows **how**" (procedural know-how) and the affective "knows **what** (what matters)", the cognitive "knows **that**" – it handles explicit knowledge, reasons about possibilities, and attempts to impose order and explanation on experience.

Enneagram Thinking/Head Center: The cognitive dimension maps onto the Enneagram's **Head or Thinking Center** (types 5, 6, 7). This center is all about the life of the mind: **ideas, beliefs, and the need for understanding and certainty**. Thinking-center types lead with their intellect; they perceive reality primarily through the lens of **mental models, analysis, and future projections**. They excel in rational deliberation and often take refuge in thinking to cope with anxiety. In Enneagram theory, the primary affect associated with the head triad is **fear** (especially anxiety about uncertainty). Thus, these types are preoccupied with securing a sense of inner guidance or security through knowledge or planning.

For example, Type 5 ("The Investigator") copes by accumulating knowledge and detaching emotionally, trying to master reality cognitively to feel safe; Type 6 ("The Loyal Skeptic") mentally rehearses potential threats and seeks trustworthy guidance to allay anxiety; Type 7 ("The Enthusiast") generates optimistic plans and options to avoid the fear of pain or deprivation.

All these strategies show how the thinking mind attempts to create safety through understanding or imagining future outcomes. As cognitive science confirms, our **capacity to simulate "what-if" scenarios (a cognitive feat) is a double-edged sword – it allows ingenuity and planning, but also can produce worry, rumination, and bias.** Indeed, cognitive psychologists study phenomena like **cognitive biases** and **anxious thought loops** which resonate with the Head Center's challenges. One key point in both Enneagram and psychology is that **thinking can become dissociated from feeling and doing** – an overactive head can ignore the wisdom of the heart and gut. Gurdjieff taught that the intellectual center is just one "brain" among three, and over-reliance on it leads to imbalance. In therapy and self-development, individuals often must learn to integrate thinking with feeling and sensing, rather than using thought to suppress or rationalize emotions. The Enneagram head types illustrate different ways the cognitive faculty can dominate personality, for better or worse. In sum, aligning the cognitive dimension with the Thinking Center underscores the central role of mental models and information processing in behavior. It is our inner analyst, strategist, and storyteller – enormously powerful, yet incomplete without the grounding of the body and the value-context of emotion.

Comparative Overview of the Three Dimensions and Centers

To summarize the correspondences between cognitive science dimensions and Enneagram centers, the table below outlines each pairing and its key characteristics:

Cognitive Science Dimension	**Key Features (Science Perspective)**	**Enneagram Center (Traditional Name)**	**Key Features (Enneagram Perspective)**
Enactive (Embodied)	Cognition as **embodied action** – perception-action loops through **sensorimotor engagement** with environment; intelligence expressed in skills, habits, and bodily know-how. Emphasizes **contextual, real-time interaction** rather than abstract representation.	**Moving/Instinctual Center** (Body/Gut)	Intelligence of the **body** – visceral instincts, gut reactions, and action-oriented processing. Focus on **grounding, survival, "right action,"** and bodily presence. When distorted, gives rise to anger or issues of control and autonomy.
Affective (Emotional)	Cognition as **feeling** – emotions and moods imbue information with value and drive decision-making. Involves limbic and body-state signals (somatic markers) that **guide behavior** toward what is meaningful or away from danger. Integrates empathy, motivation, and subjective experience of significance.	**Feeling/Emotional Center** (Heart)	Intelligence of the **heart** – awareness of **relationships, emotions, and identity**. Focus on **connection, approval, intimacy, and self-worth**. Core concerns about value/shame drive image-conscious behavior. Provides empathy and emotional attunement in personality.
Cognitive (Conceptual)	Cognition as **thinking** – mental representation and reasoning. Encompasses conscious thought, analysis,	**Thinking/Mental Center** (Head)	Intelligence of the **mind** – rational analysis, pattern-spotting, planning, and imagining possibilities. Focus on

Cognitive Science Dimension	Key Features (Science Perspective)	Enneagram Center (Traditional Name)	Key Features (Enneagram Perspective)
	memory, planning, and problem-solving. Operates through **symbolic processing** ("inner speech," logic, imagination). Historically likened to a computer manipulating symbols. Underlies language, math, abstract reasoning.		**security, guidance, and understanding** to manage fear of the unknown. Can manifest as overthinking or strategic planning; provides logic and foresight in personality.

(Table: The enactive, affective, and cognitive dimensions in cognitive science, and their isomorphic counterparts in the Enneagram's three centers of intelligence.)

Each person has all three dimensions/centers operative in their psyche – ideally in balance. Yet individuals (and personality types) often **favor one center**, develop one-sidedly, or experience internal conflict between them. For instance, a scientist might lean on the cognitive/head center at the expense of emotional attunement, or a caregiver might emphasize affective/heart intelligence over instinctual self-care. The Enneagram teachings historically encourage integrating head, heart, and body for wholeness. Gurdjieff taught that *"the truth can be approached only if all the parts that make up a human being – the thought, the feeling, and the body – are touched with the same force, each in the appropriate way."* In psychological terms, this means personal growth involves engaging our full embodied mind: **enactive presence, emotional presence, and intellectual clarity** unified.

The 3D-Enneagram and the Trialectic Model of Consciousness

Having established the mapping between the enactive/affective/cognitive dimensions and the Enneagram's three centers, we now turn to a more complex integration: the **3D-Enneagram trialectic model** as described. This model adds nuance by considering **each center at two levels** and introducing a *trialectic* interplay (a dynamic of three elements) within the self. In simple terms, the 3D-Enneagram posits that for **each of the three centers (moving, feeling, thinking), there is a split between a "concrete" aspect and a "symbolic" aspect**. These two aspects form a fundamental polarity

labeled *"I/Me"pole* – which correspond to **"I" vs "Me,"** or the personal vs the socialized self. Let us unpack this step by step:

- **Dual Levels of Cognition:** each of the three centers of cognition – moving, thinking, and feeling – is at every moment split into two parts; each center has two different logical levels. One level more instinktive cognition embodied in here and now, and the other level is symbolic cognition, that coment on first level. The first level refers to immediate, first-order experience and action (***what I****, as an organism, directly feel/think/do*).

  The symbolic level is a higher-order representation linked to cultural or collective meaning (**how *Me***, as a social entity, is perceived or expected to act, incorporating symbols like language, norms, and roles). The symbolic counterpart of cognition is a projection of an omnipoetic third-order system – society – onto an allopoietic cognitive system – a human being. In plainer terms, our society or collective mind projects symbolic structures onto the individual's cognition. As Gurdjieff already observed, until we become aware of the influence of the Me-pole on the I-pole, we operate like little automatons.

  For example: in the thinking center, *concrete* cognition might be my direct logical problem-solving, whereas *symbolic* cognition might be the internalized belief systems or ideologies I've absorbed from my culture (symbols, language, mental paradigms not invented by me but learned). In the feeling center, concrete affect might be raw emotion (say, a child's spontaneous joy or fear), while symbolic affect is emotion shaped by social context (feeling "ashamed" because one's society or family instilled certain self-images – essentially, feelings about one's feelings). In the moving/instinctive center on I-pole would be raw instinct (bodily impulses, survival reactions), while symbolic might be things like culturally patterned behaviors or rituals (how we "carry ourselves," learned body language, or socially conditioned habits of action). This two-level structure means each center has an inner duality: a personal, immediate side and a collective, representational side.

- **The I–Me Polarity:** In my terminology "I/Me" corresponds to this duality, with **"I"** (the self as subjective agent) and **"Me"** (the self as object or as seen by others). In social psychology, George H. Mead made the same distinction: *"the 'me' is the socialized aspect of the person, and the 'I' is the active aspect of the person."* We can think of *I* as the part of self that experiences and acts in the moment ("the doer"), and *Me* as the internalized image of oneself constructed from social feedback ("the observer of me" or self-concept). Both are essential poles of the self. The 3D-Enneagram model embeds the I vs Me polarity in each center. For instance, in the feeling (heart) center, there is the *I* of one's authentic feelings and the *Me* of one's reflected image or persona. In the thinking (head) center, there is

the *I* of one's independent curiosity or reasoning and the *Me* of introjected thoughts (the voices of parents, authorities, cultural narratives in one's head). In the instinctive (gut) center, there is the *I* of one's raw survival instinct and the *Me* of socially trained self-control or learned instinctual responses (for example, suppressing an instinct because "people are watching" is Me overriding I). **This "I/Me" (Jaz/Mene) polarity is the trialectical polarity** the user references – "trialectical" because it doesn't stop at a duality. It introduces a **third element**: the interaction or mediation between I and Me.

- **The Self-Process (Ego) as Mediator:** Between the I and the Me stands what I call the **self-process**, which somevhat corresponds to the **ego or personality** that negotiates between our organismic needs and our adopted social identity. In the 3D model, the **self-process is a self-reflective loop** that tries to resolve the tensions between the I-pole and the Me-pole. We might view it as the mind's "manager" or problem-solver that attempts to satisfy both the subjective cravings of the I (e.g. "I want to do this now") and the demands or ideals of the Me (e.g. "I must behave in such-and-such acceptable way"). Crucially, self-process is congruent with the character as used by Naranjo or ego as used by Oscar Ichazo in the sense that it is neurotic by definition. In other words, the ego (or character) is this process of continually mediating between one's primal impulses and one's internalized self-image. It's "neurotic" because the compromises it makes are **misaligned solutions** – the ego might repress genuine needs or distort reality to maintain a consistent self-image, resulting in furthering inner conflict. We can use a vivid allegory of a prisoner who doesn't realize the key to escape is inside his cell: the self-process/ego traps us in repetitive loops, blind to the fact that the way out is to dissolve the false duality. But until awakening occurs, the ego keeps spinning its wheels, generating the patterns we recognize as personality traits.

- **Ego-Fixations and Passions:** Each Enneagram type can be understood as a distinctive **fixation of the self-process** – essentially, a particular strategy of balancing I and Me-pole that becomes habitual. Ichazo identified nine ego-fixations (one per Enneagram point), each a mental preoccupation or cognitive distortion, paired with a core passion (emotional motivation). For example, Type 1's fixation is Perfectionism (a mental clinging to how *things should* be) and passion is Resentment (if things are not as should be); Type 2's fixation is Flattery (a mental strategy of pleasing) and passion is Pride; etc. Fixations are the mind's way of rationalizing its emotional passion. In the trialectic model terms, an ego-fixation is a **recurring "solution" the self-process uses to handle the I-Me conflict**. If the I's instinctual impulse and the Me's social ideals pull apart, the ego finds a way to tie them into a stable knot – albeit one that limits the person's freedom. As Claudio Naranjo (another Enneagram pioneer) described, *character*

is like a **"knot or loop"** that forms in early development, entangling our organismic self-regulation with internalized beliefs. For instance, a child of type 3 learns "I am only lovable when successful" – the *I*'s need for love gets bound to the *Me*'s concept of success; the ego then fixates on achieving to reconcile that. Such a fixated loop tends to be self-perpetuating (hence "character structure"). The 3D model suggests these loops arise because the fundamental **self-preservation instinct was split into two parts – individual vs social** (the origin of I vs Me). That primordial division in our nature forces each center to split and the ego to develop compensations. The *ego-fixation* is thus the mind's biased perspective (a **cognitive bias** or distortion) that justifies the ego's strategy, while the *passion* is the emotional fuel driving it. Together, they form the personality's core imbalance.

- **Trialectic Dynamics – Law of Three:** The term **"trialectic"** implies a three-way systemic interaction, rather than a simple dualistic conflict. In the context of consciousness, we can interpret the three forces at play as: (1) the individual's direct impetus (the **I** or personal force, analogous to what Gurdjieff would call the "active force"), (2) the pressures or template of the collective/society (the **Me** or socialized force, analogous to "passive/receptive force"), and (3) the **self-process/ego** which acts as a **reconciling or balancing force** (albeit imperfectly). Gurdjieff's metaphysical **Law of Three** states that every phenomenon arises from the interaction of an active, passive, and neutralizing force. We can see a parallel here: the ego's role is a neutralizing mediation between self and society. When balanced and healthy, this could yield creative, adaptive behavior (a truly **trialectic harmony**). But when the ego identifications are rigid (fixated), the result is a *static or caotic personality pattern*. The **3D Enneagram model** visually represents this dynamic with a geometric metaphor: *"a dynamic structure of two opposite and oppositely rotating triangular pyramids."* Imagine two tetrahedra spinning in opposite directions and interpenetrating – this forms a shape akin to a three-dimensional Star of David or double pyramid. One pyramid might represent the triad of centers at the concrete level (let's call it **TFM** for Thinking-Feeling-Moving), and the other the triad at the symbolic level (**t f m** in lowercase). As they rotate relative to each other, different alignments occur – these correspond to the Enneagram's points and the classic lines of integration/disintegration (growth and stress) between types. In effect, the model *geometrically* encodes how shifts in one center or one level impact the others. The interlocking movement produces the familiar **Enneagram diagram** (with its circle, inner triangles and hexagonal connections) when projected into 2D. This is an elegant **symbolic embodiment of consciousness**: the Enneagram symbol itself, with its **nine points and connecting lines, is a map of the dynamic balancing act of the three centers and two levels of self**. Each of the nine personality types can be seen as a

specific orientation of these "pyramids" – a particular way the centers align or misalign under the influence of the ego's trialectic balancing. The 3, 6, 9 points, for example, are often seen as the core triad (each leading one center), and in the 3D model they correspond to the situations where one pyramid is rotated 360° relative to the other (maximal misalignment or alignment). The Enneagram's rich geometry is not arbitrary – it's a symbolic depiction of how human consciousness integrates three modes of being and how it can become unbalanced.

- **Self, Personality, and Essence:** In many Enneagram and psychological frameworks, there is an implicit goal to **realign the I and Me** and transcend the ego-fixation. We can relate this to Winnicott's notion of the **True Self versus False Self**. Acording to Winnecot False Self corresponds to an extreme identification with the *Me* (living just as the image or role, cut off from spontaneous authenticity) – essentially an ego construct that lacks vitality. The True Self is closer to the *I*, the alive core that can express itself freely when not constrained by defensive ideals.

  The trialectic model on the other hand suggests that in a healthy state, the symbolic (Me) level and concrete (I) level of each center would be synchronized and mutually supportive, rather than split or one overcoming the other. One's thoughts would align with one's felt sense and one's actions – **integrity** between head, heart, and gut as some might say. In spiritual terms, some Enneagram teachings speak of developing one's "essence" or higher self or soul once the fixations (false solutions) are relaxed.

  Higher qualities or archetypes when freed from ego distortion (e.g. the Holy Ideas and Virtues in Ichazo's system): the geometry of the 3D Enneagram, with its **rotating thetraedrons**, symbolically encodes both the problem (the split and resulting rigid patterns) and the solution (the re-integration through conscious alignment). In practice, therapeutic and growth work aimed at the Enneagram's guidance often involve **strengthening the weaker center, lowering the dominance of the hyper-developed center, and questioning the fixed beliefs (fixations) one holds**. For example, a very head-centered person (Type 5 or 6) might need to get back into their body and feelings to find balance, whereas a very heart-centric person (Type 2 or 4) might need to build intellectual discernment or personal autonomy (gut) to support their emotional sensitivity.

Conclusion

In summary, the enactive, affective, and cognitive dimensions provide a threefold framework for understanding the human mind that corresponds closely with the Enneagram's three centers of intelligence (moving, feeling, thinking). This correspondence is not a loose analogy but a deep structural isomorphism: both cognitive science and the Enneagram tradition recognize that **embodied action,**

emotional feeling, and conceptual thought are irreducible aspects of human psychology, each with its own primacy and each needing integration. Mapping these onto each other enriches both perspectives – it brings scientific rigor to the Enneagram's spiritual psychology and a humanistic, holistic flavor to cognitive science models.

Furthermore, the **3D-Enneagram trialectic model** extends this mapping by showing that each center itself contains a duality (personal vs social, "I" vs "Me"), and it is the mediation of these dualities by the self-process (ego) that produces the nine differentiated personality patterns described by the Enneagram. The notion of a trialectic emphasizes that our consciousness is formed in a dialogue between self, other, and the dynamic process between them. The Enneagram symbol, especially in its three-dimensional form of two interlocked thetraedrons, can be seen as a mandala of the self – a symbolic embodiment of consciousness that encodes the active, passive, and neutral forces within. Each point on the Enneagram is a window into a particular balance (or imbalance) of enactive instinct, affective mood, and cognitive schema, all shaped further by the "I and Me" polarity.

By drawing on thinkers like Varela and Gallagher, we acknowledged that *knowing is doing* (enaction); through Damasio and affective science, that knowing is also feeling. The Enneagram and trialectic model invite us to add: **knowing oneself** requires understanding how these three modes of intelligence interact within us and how our very self is both an agent and an image – a subject and an object. The Enneagram's enduring appeal in psychology and spirituality is that it maps these internal dynamics in a pragmatic way: it identifies our dominant center and typical ego-fixation, giving us a starting point to grow by engaging the centers we neglect and questioning the stories we live by. Meanwhile, cognitive science's strength is in providing empirical insight and mechanisms – for example, showing how practices like mindfulness (enactive-attentional training), therapy (affective processing in relationship), and reappraisal (cognitive reframing) can literally rewire the brain towards better integration.

Ultimately, both perspectives converge on the idea that human consciousness is an embodied, feeling, and thinking process, one that is inherently triadic. By recognizing the enactive, affective, and cognitive dimensions within ourselves – and their reflection in the Enneagram's body, heart, and head centers – we can appreciate the full spectrum of what it means to be human. And by understanding the trialectic dance of I-pole, Me-pole, and the mediating self-process, we gain a profound model of why we suffer in neurotic loops and how we might transcend them. Just as the Enneagram's symbol is a unity of nine points within a circle, the aim is to bring our fragmented parts into a unity of being: grounded in the body, open in the heart, and clear in the mind, such that we can evolve into our true awakend self which can manifest through the whole.