

Enneagram Type Eight with Enneagram Type Nine

Why the Attraction?

- Eights and Nines are opposites in many ways yet, as instinctive types, they share some similarities. Both are down-to-earth, strong-willed and practical. They share an enjoyment of sensual pleasures and creature comforts as well as coziness and simplicity in their domestic environment. Both are big-hearted and like to create a safe haven for those near and dear to them.
- Eights are initially attracted to Nines because of their calmness, steadiness, generosity, stability and total acceptance of Eights. Nine's quiet, unassuming presence is mollifying to Eights. Eights enjoy being around Nines because they are comfortable to hang out with. Eights can have big egos and like people who admire them. Nines admire Eights. In fact, Nines tend to idealize Eights and all of their positive qualities. Eights like to take control and Nines like to go along with Eight's agenda (most of the time). Nines show Eights, by example, how "you catch more flies with honey than with vinegar." Wise Eights learn from Nines that the considerate approach works wonders. Eights also appreciate Nine's attention and affection.
- Nines are initially attracted to Eights because of their dynamic personality, leadership talent, self-confidence and self-assertiveness. Nines have a tendency to merge with their partner and live vicariously through him/her. Eight's intensity helps Nines feel more alive and they enjoy getting swept up by Eight's boisterous bravado. Nines like that Eights take the initiative because it frees them from the burden of indecision.

Some Shared Positive Traits

- Are down-to-earth, practical and live in the here and now
- Like earthy pleasures and creature comforts
- Seek coziness and simplicity in domestic surroundings
- Are instinctual and perceive things on a gut level
- Are kind and helpful to those near and dear to them
- Are unconditionally loyal, steadfast and supportive once trust is established
- Have great willpower, persistence and endurance
- Can communicate well on a nonverbal level
- Offer each other true friendship
- Both can be very caring, tender, romantic, generous and attentive to each other

Some Shared Negative Traits

- Can both get diverted from essential priorities (Eights through excessive behavior, Nines through getting side-tracked)
- Can lose awareness of what is really important to them (both are "self-forgetting" types. Eights lose themselves through excessive behavior and denial of vulnerability, Nines lose themselves by forgetting their own priorities and merging with others' points of view)
- Can be controlling (Eights by force and possessiveness, Nines by silent stubbornness and passive-aggressiveness)
- Both can be oppositional and stubborn

Differing Traits (and Potential Sources of Frustration or Balance)

- Provide the agenda (Eights) vs. Go along with agenda (Nines)
- Boisterous and Energetic (Eights) vs. Placid and Calm (Nines)
- Active, Fire, Yang (Eights) vs. Receptive, Water, Yin (Nines)
- Driven and Decisive (Eights) vs. Easy-going and Indecisive (Nines)
- Clear desires/wants (Eights) vs. Nebulous desires/wants (Nines)
- Larger-than-life, Intimidating (Eights) vs. Unassuming, Approachable (Nines)
- Self-confident (Eights) vs. Self-effacing (Nines)
- Take Hasty Action (Eights) vs. Procrastinate (Nines)
- Loud and Impatient (Eights) vs. Quiet and Patient (Nines)
- Commanding (Eights) vs. Accommodating (Nines)
- Outspoken and Frank (Eights) vs. Tactful and Discreet (Nines)

Potential Problems

- Eights can see Nines as too: conflict-avoidant, unclear on own priorities, indirect, indecisive, stubborn, oppositional, passive and “unalive,” evasive of confrontation, lacking in self-assertion, ambivalent, and overly accommodating.
- Nines can see Eights as too: intimidating, pushy, demanding, pressuring, overbearing, combative, confrontational, impulsive, insensitive, excessive, and uncompromising.
- While Eights appreciate being soothed by Nine’s calm, peaceful presence, they also like excitement, passion and intensity. Eights like to be in control too and can be bossy and pushy. Nines, on the other hand, prefer ease, comfort and stability with occasional passion and excitement. Unfortunately for Nines, Eights like to stir up trouble and provoke the Nine just to get some juices flowing and sparks flying. The problems start when Nines don’t respond the way Eights want them to. Eights want their energy met but Nines tend to withdraw, shut down and become unresponsive when they feel pressured, provoked, controlled or intimidated. Nines respond by not responding. They can even be passive-aggressive as a way to subtly get back at Eights. This makes Eights irate and even more belligerent. Nines respond by becoming stubbornly resistant and ice-cold. If Nines get anxious/fearful enough they may explode in anger themselves for self-protection.
- Eights can dismiss Nines opinions when they think they’re right about something. This can make Nines so mad because they resent being ignored, overlooked and dismissed.

Advice

For Eights

- If your Nine feels you are being too domineering s/he will energetically shut you out and become stubborn. If you can respect your Nines boundaries, be patient, curtail your desire to control and work with your Nine rather than against him/her you will have more success – and happiness.

For Nines

- Learn how to speak up for yourself when your Eight is mis-treating you rather than withdrawing in stubborn silence. Eights respect people who stand up for themselves and don’t respect those who don’t. So, learn to stand your ground against your Eight. Trying to avoid discomfort by withdrawing will only fuel Eights aggression (and fear of rejection).