

*She Said/She Said Podcast With Laura Cox Kaplan*

*Episode 278: Understanding the enneagram as a tool for goal setting with Beth McCord*

Laura Cox Kaplan ([00:07](#)):

Building influence is a learned skill. It's an investment that you can make in yourself. Having more influence can hold the keys to helping you achieve your dreams and to having the life and the impact that you hope to have. I'm your host, Laura Cox Kaplan. I'm delighted that you're here and that you're making this important investment of time in yourself.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([00:35](#)):

Hey, friend. Welcome to episode 278. If she said, she said podcast, I'm really glad you're here. So, today we're diving into a topic that I have wanted to talk about for some time. Um, a close friend of mine introduced me to this concept of the Enneagram, and I've been really fascinated by it ever since. So, to break it down and really help us understand what the Enneagram is and how it can be valuable, especially as it relates to maybe things like goal setting, it is still January. And if you're anything like me, you've set those big goals. But maybe in the back of your mind, you <laugh> you also worry about, well, what happens in February and even March? And will those goals seem like a distant memory? So I was curious to, to really dive into how the Enneagram in particular can be helpful here.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([01:32](#)):

My guest today is one of the foremost experts on the Enneagram. She is an author, a coach, a teacher, a public speaker. Her name is Beth McCord. She's written several books on the topic and her latest book, which focuses on how the Enneagram can be a helpful tool for moms in particular. That book is coming out this summer. So we're gonna talk about that. We're gonna break down what the Enneagram is. We're gonna talk about the nine different dimensions. I happen to be an enneagram three by the way. Beth is a nine. You will probably hear elements of the personality traits that we talk about that you will identify with. So, um, buckle up friend, maybe grab a pen. We cover a lot of material in this episode. Um, at the end though, I would love for you to share with me your thoughts on the Enneagram.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([02:27](#)):

Have you used it as a tool for yourself? How has it worked for you? Um, what do you think about all this? I'd really, really love to hear. And if you enjoyed this episode, be sure to rate it. Um, it's really helpful when folks leave a rating. So if you're so inclined and you have an extra second after you've had a chance to listen, go on. Give me five stars. Tell me what you liked or what aspects of the conversation resonated with most with you. I would really love to hear, for now though, here is my conversation, episode 278 with the fabulous Beth McCord. Beth, welcome to She Said. She said,

Beth McCord ([03:09](#)):

Thanks. I'm so glad to be here.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([03:11](#)):

Well, I'm so happy to have you. I have been looking so forward to this conversation and really been thinking about the Enneagram for a really long time now, at least, you know, two or three, maybe four years. So let's start from that standpoint and have you really level set both for me and for my audience. What is the Enneagram <laugh>?

Beth McCord ([03:33](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. It's kind of a weird word. You know, when it first popped up for people, now it's been around since the seventies, but really kind of became a kind of a hot trend around 2016, uh, when a book came out called *The Road Back to You*, and people really like got interested in it. Um, but the word Enneagram is like, what is this thing? And Ennea just means nine in Greek and Diagram, or at gram is just meeting a diagram, um, or a drawing. So it's really a nine pointed geometric figure. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And with our logo at your Enneagram coach, we put a dot on each of, um, you know, kind of the, the angles of that. Kinda like a nine pointed star, if you will. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And each of those dots represents a personality type, a main type. Now, you know, there's, people can get confused, like, how do I find my type?

Beth McCord ([04:24](#)):

You know? Right. And I think we're used to a lot of personality things out there to look at our behaviors. But the Enneagram is so fascinating because it gets to the why you think, feel, and behave. Like what is the motivations behind all that's happening? And that can be super powerful. So when you're trying to find your main type, you really wanna look at the core motivations, like the core fear, the core desire, the core weakness, and the core longing. And those four aspects will really help you to know why you get tripped up in the way you do, why you excel in the way you do. 'cause these are the things that are really motivating you in positive and negative ways. And that's the thing about the Enneagram, is it's like a non-judgmental friend. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. It's just gonna tell you like it is. And sometimes that can be hard to swallow 'cause it's gonna point out not just the great things about you, but not the great things about you as well. <laugh>.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([05:21](#)):

Yeah. You know, it, it, it strikes me as, as I was going through this and taking the quiz, which I would recommend folks do, if you have a curiosity about this, go to Beth's website and, and take the quiz for yourself. Um, but it struck me that oftentimes our greatest strengths can also at times be our greatest weaknesses.

Beth McCord ([05:41](#)):

Yep. Yep. Absolutely.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([05:43](#)):

Let's dig into this a little bit more and talk about, um, maybe some of those examples of how strengths really can also be weaknesses.

Beth McCord ([05:54](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. So, um, I am an Enneagram type nine, the peaceful Accommodator. Uh, my core fear is the fear of conflict, tension of any kind, being overlooked, shut out. And in any kind of discord with others, I, my desire is to have interability and peace of mind. But kind of in order to get to that place, I have a core weakness of sloth. Now, this isn't a physical laziness, this is an internal slothfulness. And not knowing myself, my passions, desires, um, skills, talents, all of those things. And it's like, why? Well, because if I focus on myself and what I want, then that might cause conflict and tension with others.

Hmm. And I may not be able to go along to get along. So the strategy of the nine is to always create peace and harmony. And so we usually fall asleep to ourselves in order to focus on others.

Beth McCord ([06:54](#)):

Interesting. But that in itself isn't good. Um, and so, but my core longing is to hear your presence matters. Well, in some ways, how can your presence fully matter, even though it does, how can it fully matter? Or you sense it if you're constantly hiding yourself from you and from others? So I've had to learn, oh, it's really important for me to wake up to myself that though peace and harmony are wonderful attribute. There's that saying is, um, if you avoid conflict, you create conflict. Hmm. And so my very weakness of avoiding conflict is actually creating the very thing I don't want, which is conflict. So by actually waking up to my desires, my wants, um, my giftings, which still bless others, and actually moving forward and asserting myself in that way, though, it feels scary. Like, oh, is this gonna like upset someone? But by doing that, I actually create less conflict and more harmony and more authenticity.

Beth McCord ([07:58](#)):

So it kind of feels the opposite of how we kind of thought when we were growing up. But I think a lot of us know that things that we used when we were growing up don't really work anymore in our adulthood. Not that they worked really well when we were little. Right. That's just all we knew, you know? Yeah. Um, and so that's where the Enneagram could be really powerful 'cause it's gonna let you know why you're doing that thing. Um, so for me, it shows why I kind of hide myself at times, or why I think my presence doesn't matter, but ultimately the path to growth. And there's a saying by, um, Joseph Campbell, the cave you fear to enter holds the treasure you seek. Hmm. So, my cave that I feared to enter was living out my calling, my dreams, my desires, figuring that out because I feared that it could stir up conflict or tension or people would disagree. When in actuality, by doing that, I've created this incredible company that's really helped so many people. Now, that is something I never dreamed of, but I'm so thankful that I had friends and other people kind of encouraged me to keep going on that path. That felt so scary to me because the treasure was really on the other side of that weakness that I had.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([09:12](#)):

Yeah, I love that. I, I love that aspect of your story. Um, and I'd love for you to talk a little bit more about how you built the company, but, but before we, before we get to that question, although it would've been a nice sort of continuation, but I, I, I wanna backtrack just a bit. Yeah. And I'd love for you, because we are still in the month of January, a lot of people, myself included, have set some big goals for things that we wanna accomplish. Maybe talk about how the Enneagram can be a really helpful tool in helping you both set goals and prioritize and also achieve them.

Beth McCord ([09:49](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. So each of the nine Enneagram types, you know, like we said, they're gonna have things that really trip them up. And, um, but it's gonna be very different. That's what's so amazing about the Enneagram, because, you know, when you listen to a person talk about setting goals or, um, how to achieve the next thing, and this upcoming year, it's usually a general statement, a general teaching for everyone to listen to. And there are probably some overarching principles that are good for everyone. But when you take the Enneagram and you nuance it for each of the nine types, it really, um, explodes in the, in the amount of growth that can happen. Hmm. So let me take, um, a type one for instance. So a

type one is the, um, the principled reformer. They fear being bad and wrong and making mistakes and being in, uh, IRR or incorruptible, but they desire to be good and do what's right.

Beth McCord ([10:50](#)):

So you can imagine they have this internal message that says it is not okay to make mistakes. So if they live by that principle, then every time they set, set out to have a new accomplishment for the new year, they are going to really go all in because it's the right thing to do. Well, that can actually be a hindrance because, you know, well, if I can't do it perfectly, then I'm not gonna do it at all, which is what some people will say. Or they will strive and strive and strive and constantly put themselves down because they're not being perfect in whatever, um, whatever level of perfection they think or the world says they should be at. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And so they can actually be hindered by these internal thoughts that kind of plague each of the types. Now, the type two is a little bit different than the nurturing supporter, and they're wanting to help and take care of others so that others will see how they're taking care of and be appreciative the care.

Beth McCord ([11:51](#)):

So they really want people to see what they're doing, to be appreciative. And that's where they kind of feel this love. But if they're constantly focusing on helping others, they're then forgetting and negating themselves, which only will exhaust them because all they're doing is giving to others and they're not replenishing themselves. So, again, they could be, it could be, it could look like they're doing some great things by helping others, but at what expense. And so when we take these, um, principles of what's good and how to grow personally, if we really dissect it down to each of the nine Enneagram types, so much more growth can happen. 'cause you're like, oh, I totally do that. I thought it was kind of a good thing, but now I can see what you're saying. Yeah. Like, if I'm a type two and I like exhausted myself, and then I'm gonna get irritable and I'm gonna create the same problems that I was not looking for. And so this really helps each individual to understand themselves on a more nuanced level.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([12:50](#)):

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Interesting. Very interesting. I think I identify most, as best I can tell, without some proper coaching <laugh>, and just going through the quiz myself, where I can sort of see myself on different, you know, from aspects of all nine dimensions, but, but more probably a three mm-Hmm. <affirmative> than anything else. And when I asked my friend, my friend who actually introduced me to the Enneagram, when I asked her, she's like, absolutely, you're a three <laugh> <laugh>. Yeah. So I'm not sure if that's <laugh>.

Beth McCord ([13:20](#)):

Yeah. So threes are the admirable achievers. They fear being, uh, a failure. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> being exposed, um, not having worth and valued not being efficient, um, not accomplishing the goals that they've set for themselves. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> what they desire is to be admired, to be respected, to, uh, be successful and to accomplish the things that they've set out for them. Um, and so does that kind of ring true for you?

Laura Cox Kaplan ([13:48](#)):

Absolutely. Absolutely. Yeah. But, but it, but it sounds selfish. You know, when I hear someone say that, I'm like, oh, yeah, yes, I can, I completely can identify with all of that at the same time. Like, I hope it's about serving others and doing something that's been a that's, that's beneficial for people. Yeah.

Whether it's the person listening today or whether it's the guest that I'm talking to and, and helping to promote her platform. And so I think, you know, when I, when I, when I read it, I'm like, Ooh, yeah, you really sound so selfish.

Beth McCord ([14:18](#)):

Well, here's the thing. Usually when you find your type uhhuh, it feels that way.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([14:23](#)):

<laugh> initially. That's good to know.

Beth McCord ([14:25](#)):

So if you, if you're reading a type and you're like, oh, that kind of felt like someone punched me in the gut. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, you know, um, you probably found your type. But that's what's so interesting about the Enneagram. Like I said, it's a non-judgmental front. It's just gonna lay it out there for you. Now, often it shows you where you're at your best, your healthiest. But as humans, we don't usually sit in that space. We usually gravitate towards our weaknesses and kind of hone in on that. And then we shame ourselves and it becomes a whole cycle. But if we're willing to be curious about the whole spectrum, our health to our unhealth Mm-Hmm. And everything in between and be gracious to ourself like we would extend to someone else, you're gonna see so much more growth happen because you are gonna become your own coach, your own leader, where you're gonna be like, yeah, you know what, there are parts of me that are unhealthy or less healthy or struggle Mm-Hmm.

Beth McCord ([15:22](#)):

But it's not the whole of me. But those very things that are weaknesses are also my strengths. And those things truly bless people. So really the goal of the Enneagram, think of it as your internal GPS, your main type is your current location, and then you have a healthiest destination. So mm-Hmm. <affirmative> me as a nine. I have a healthiest destination that looks, that brings out the trueness and all that. I have all the, the best qualities of me in that direction. Um, and for three, you have a different trajectory. It's kind of like, I'm in Nashville, so it'd be like I'm trying to head to Chicago, but if I started to go head off to New York, that that's not the right path, you know? But let's say your direction is New York, you know, but you head to Chicago, that's not the right. So what is your best path?

Beth McCord ([16:09](#)):

Right? And that's what the Enneagram is gonna help unfold. But then the Enneagram shows you when you veer off course. So what is it like as a type three that, yeah. You know, maybe your heart's intention was to be good and authentic and caring for others, but then you start to veer off and it becomes more self-focused in a way that is less maybe beneficial for others and more self-consumed about your own success and being admired. Well, we could do a couple things with that. We could, again, shame ourselves, put ourselves down, or we can take that as an aha moment. And what I mean by that is I teach people to use the Enneagram as a rumble strip on the highway. Hmm. You know, when you're driving

down, you know, and you're not, let's say, paying attention or you're sleeping at the wheel, you're texting, hopefully you're not, but you start to veer off and that rumble strip wakes you up.

Beth McCord ([16:58](#)):

Now, if you're not paying attention at all, you might not even notice the rumble strip. Right. You might just kind of maybe be totally asleep. Well, you're gonna crash. Now, the goal is to understand your personality structure from the healthy to the unhealthy, so that when you hit that rumble strip, so let's say for you, you recognize, oh, you know what? I really wanna do what's best for everyone, but I'm starting to recognize I'm getting a little self-focused and pushing my way. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Um, then that can be your rumble strip. It could be a point where you're like, okay, yeah, that's, that's part of me, but it's not all of me. And I can take this moment and I can choose to either continue in this trajectory, or I can choose a healthier path. And the Enneagram is gonna show you what that healthier path is.

Beth McCord ([17:43](#)):

Now it's not that it's easy, but you have, um, you have ownership of own life. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, you can decide which direction you are gonna go in. And maybe you need a coach to help you, maybe a friend, um, a mentor, someone that can come alongside you and say, yeah, I see your best qualities and I'm gonna champion you all the way there. And that's really where the Enneagram can shine. So if you're feeling, um, you know, sad or, um, upset with yourself because your type does A, B, and C, that's normal. But it's not the whole of you. There's so much more.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([18:19](#)):

Yeah. I love that. I mean, that's, that's so incredibly helpful. One, one thing that I am curious about, how, how you talk about how you explain is the role of your story, right? I mean, your, your story and your experience, your life experiences impact and inform the particular Enneagram that you become, right? Yeah. But how do you keep from getting stuck in a particular narrative or a mindset that maybe is not your healthiest mindset in spite of the fact that that's kind of the direction that your story has taken? Does that make sense?

Beth McCord ([18:58](#)):

Oh yeah. Absolutely. So the story that the nine has, the, the overarching narrative is, which is me, Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> is my presence. Doesn't matter, my voice doesn't matter. I should focus on everyone else. And I definitely shouldn't assert myself. So that's the lens through which I see the world. Okay? That's how I take in information and interpret information. Um, and that it's my job to create harmony and peace and mediate by overlooking myself and focusing on others. So when I was a little girl, and that's the lens I've had since birth. 'cause that's how I was created. I saw my brother who was a severe stutterer, and my parents, you know, trying to help him. Well, I couldn't add more to it, right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Like, I couldn't be more disruptive because that would be, you know, that wouldn't create harmony and peace. So I needed to be as easygoing and, uh, uh, accommodating to my family as possible to keep the peace, or at least to keep it as, as much as we could.

Beth McCord ([20:09](#)):

And so I learned those survival skills from a very young age. What worked for me from the lens that I had. Now as I've gotten older, um, the narrative of don't assert yourself was very loud. And so when I would have certain gifts and talents, I would basically shove them aside and then just go about living out whatever role people wanted me to live. And I was pretty great at those roles. A mom, a wife, a pastor's wife, um, mentor, you name it, I did great. But it wasn't all of me. It wasn't who I was meant to be, but I never really thought my presence matter, that I could contribute until I had a wake up moment. Now, I had been studying the Enneagram at this point for like 15 years. Oh, wow. And that's how much how ingrained these false narratives are within us.

Beth McCord ([21:03](#)):

They are constant. They're, they're humming in the background, whether really loud or small, kind of just depends. And the more we allow it to be loud and we think it's true, the more it's gonna derail us and the more we awaken to it, and we actually see it and own it, but welcome it, not in a shaming way, but we welcome it. We're able to then navigate our heart. So at this one moment in my life, I had actually been kind of like the Wizard of Oz where I put my husband out in front of everyone. Like, oh, he's the Enneagram person. This was like way back. But I was like, they're not gonna wanna listen to me. He's a pastor. They're gonna wanna listen to him. So I'll be, you know, the Wizard of Oz behind the curtain pulling the strings and telling him what to do and say, well, then when people kind of went to him, I felt jealous.

Beth McCord ([21:50](#)):

Like, wait, I'm the one that knows the Enneagram <laugh>. Well, what I was doing is I was teaching, I was training people to overlook me. That I was training people to think that my presence didn't matter because it didn't matter to me. So what I was learning is what I permit, I promote, and I had a decision to make. Am I gonna continue in that path, which I could. It's what I've been doing all my life. It's what I knew. Or I could enter the cave I feared to find the treasure that I seek, which is not only knowing that my own presence and voice matters, but that it has a ripple effect in the lives of others. Hmm. Now, so I started your Enneagram coach out of this passion moment that I had this wake up call moment, um, when I realized all of this, and I chose the path, you know, to enter that cave.

Beth McCord ([22:37](#)):

But that those same messages, they're on a record player cycle on loop. And they're there all the time. Like I said, sometimes they're softer, sometimes they're louder. But I have to choose, am I going to show up for myself and coach myself? So what I usually do is they're always there. Like, even when I do like Instagram posts, I'm like, who, who cares what I'm gonna say? You know? And then people are like, no, we really do care what you have to say. And I'm like, really? You know, it's like this daily thing. But yeah, I have to choose to get behind myself and lovingly push and say, no, your presence and voice matters. Even if it's just a one person. Or even if it's just to acknowledge to yourself, get out there and do the next right thing. Now that's my story as a type nine.

Beth McCord ([23:20](#)):

And when I usually talk to type nines, they're like, oh my gosh, I totally get it. That is so me. But that's the nine's perspective. A type eight does not have that perspective. Their perspective is, I need plow a path for myself, and I'm not gonna let anyone control me or get in my way. Um, I can't trust anyone. 'cause at

any moment they might betray me, they might blindside me, they might harm me or those that I love, and that that's just not gonna happen. So I've gotta be authentic and real and just plow this path. Now that can get them, you know, far in the sense of like, yeah, they're gonna like go for it in this like a snowplow, they're gonna plow a path. But what's better, what's more healthy for the type eight is to recognize, yes, you were created to plow a path, but like a snowplow, it's to plow a path for others to then go behind you so that they could find their own journey.

Beth McCord ([24:14](#)):

Hmm. And that's what eights are so good at. But when they're not in that healthy perspective, and they are suspicious that others are gonna betray them or blindside them or control them, then they're kind of plowing without seeing the people in front of them and saying, Hey, get behind me. I got you. They're just plowing. And so that can create harm in their relationships. And when there's discord and harm? And then these obstacles, they're like, what's going on? I just guess I have to plow even harder. Well, that doesn't help. So as you can see, each of the nine types are gonna have their own interpretive lens that they see the world through their own false narratives that they think are true. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. But it's only when we understand our type explore it. Um, I suggest having a coach walk you through it, and then you're like, oh, now I know what the rumble strips are. Now I know how to awaken to them. And so I can choose which way I'm gonna go. Am I gonna still head in that trajectory and fall into that ditch? Or am I gonna take a moment to coach myself back into a healthy place? So it's so powerful. The biggest thing is awareness. Welcoming yourself into that awareness, not shaming yourself, and then receiving what's true and moving forward in that new direction.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([25:29](#)):

Yeah. That is so incredibly helpful. Maybe, um, talk a little bit about how the Enneagram does or doesn't work in tandem with other kinds of personality tests. Is it completely sort of self-contained, or do you find it to be complimentary to other things like whether it's Myers-Briggs or, I mean, there's all sorts of personality tests at, at this point, but maybe how you see these things interrelate Oh, and, and maybe as useful tools.

Beth McCord ([25:56](#)):

They totally interrelate. And I think all of those tools are extremely beneficial, but they're very different. Mm. And I think that's beautiful. You know, we're a very complex, uh, human beings, right? We're not just simple. And that's one reason why I love the Enneagram, because it's not that you're just one main type. You actually use all nine types to varying degrees. One just reigns supreme. Hmm. And so there's a lot of complexity to the Enneagram. Um, my gifting and skillset is to make it easy to understand and easily accessible into your everyday life for growth. But it is a complex system. Um, but think of the Enneagram as the foundational piece into understanding yourself. And then you can build everything off of there. So the reason why we use that as a foundation is because it is why you do what you do. It's why you think, feel, and behave.

Beth McCord ([26:49](#)):

So when you get down to the why, everything else starts to make sense. So for instance, um, strength finders, well, I have strengths of harmony. Well, that makes sense, right? I have a strength in discipline. Well, I have a one wing. The type one is right next to the nine, and that influences my type nine to

different degrees. And the one, once things done right, let's follow, you know, the correct path. Well, that brings a lot of discipline into it. So it starts to go, Hmm, that makes sense. You know why? That's a strength of mine. And so these different personality tests are going to compliment, help inform, but they're also different enough that they're informing you on something, um, that expands more of who you are than just one said thing. And I love that because when you go into Sherman Williams, you don't just say, Hey, give me the blue color.

Beth McCord ([27:42](#)):

I'm gonna paint my room blue <laugh>. Like, there's billions of blue colors. Right? Right. You have to nuance it. Well, that's how we are. Like, uh, the type threes in our Enneagram logo, we use it as a green color. Just that's just how what we chose. Um, but if I just said pick a green, like, well, you are a different green than the next type three and the next type three, like, you're your own person with your own story and the different nuances of what your Myers-Briggs is and your strength finders and your disc. Now there might be some overlaying similarities, uh, but you're still gonna be uniquely you, which I think is truly beautiful. And it's true to the human experience.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([28:21](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. So, Beth, I know you have a new book that's gonna be coming out, and I know a lot of folks that are listening will be super interested because it's about Enneagram and motherhood. You wanna give us a little preview? I know the book's not coming out until the summer. Um, but maybe give us a little preview on why. 'cause that actually was one of my questions before I even realized that you were working on this book and getting ready to put it out there, is how does this relate to our kids? And how early is too early to kind of introduce this concept to them or to try to maybe help them find their Enneagram type?

Beth McCord ([28:58](#)):

Yeah, great question. Yeah. So the book is called Enneagram for Moms. And then actually you can pre-order it even now on Amazon. Oh, good. Probably all the places, but yeah.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([29:06](#)):

But we will, we'll include a link in the show notes for this episode, episode 278, where folks can pre-order the book.

Beth McCord ([29:14](#)):

Yeah, that'd be awesome. Um, so Enneagram for moms, um, when I, so I started learning the Enneagram when I was 26 years old, and my kids were one and three. Oh, wow. And if someone could just give me an instruction manual, I would be so grateful. Like, how do I raise this kid and this kid? 'cause they're different, you know? Right. Well, the Enneagram, you cannot type someone. They have to find their own type. It's why you do what you do. And I don't know why you do what you do. Um, Laura, so for instance, um, all nine types could want to have a perfectly clean home. Well, they're gonna want it for different reasons. The why the ones want it because it's perfect. It's the right thing to do. The twos, it's a warm hug for the person that comes in. The threes are like, yeah, but what are people gonna think when they come in?

Beth McCord ([30:05](#)):

I kind of look, you know, put together and successful. And the type fours are like, yeah, but I have to create this beautiful atmosphere that reflects who I am and my unique style. And the fives are like, well, I want a home that's practical and I can get to my resources quickly. And the six is like, well, what about all of the worst case scenarios? Like, if I don't clean, then there could be bacteria, or people could trip over things and what, what if this and that? Right? And then the type sevens are like, well, I like a clean home because I don't want it to keep me from the next fun thing. And the aises are like, well, I wanna clean home because it's not gonna control me. I'm gonna control it. And the nines are like, Ugh, I just wanna clean home so I can chill and relax.

Beth McCord ([30:46](#)):

<laugh>, <laugh>. So we can all look like we're doing the same thing outwardly, but inwardly, there's a why behind it that's different. And same with our kids. We might see our kids doing something and we could go, oh, see, they're a such and such type, but you really can't know. And trust me, I tried with my kids 'cause I started this when they were little and they actually ended up a little bit different than what I thought. So interesting. The best time to really, and you can kind of talk about it when they're younger, but for most kids, it's when they're in their teenage years that they're starting to fully understand themselves and be able to nuance themselves. If they're an old soul, they can kind of start a little earlier. If they are a late bloomer and they could care less about the internal world, they're gonna have to wait a while.

Beth McCord ([31:33](#)):

Um, so what the book is really about is how to help you navigate your own heart as a mom when you get bombarded with all the things that are happening, because we get spun out all the time. We get overwhelmed, irritable, et cetera, et cetera. Why what's going on under the hood? And when we can understand that doesn't mean like, uh, oh, all of a sudden I'm gonna be perfect. I'm gonna be this amazing mom. It's more that we're real, we're honest, we're authentic, and we can say to our kids, you know what? This is where I'm at. Um, I'll tell you. Can I tell you one quick story? Yeah, please. Okay. So raising my kids, um, you know, with the Enneagram all these years, you know, we would talk about it on and off, but they didn't find their types until about 14 or 15 years old.

Beth McCord ([32:17](#)):

And, um, and so, but from then on they were pretty curious. But of course they're also like, mom, like enough, you know, so I had to kind of just use it sparingly, but, but with intentionality. So they knew me well enough. They knew that I had a common, uh, record player message, a false message in my head that said, your presence doesn't matter. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, you should be overlooked. So what would really ignite my nuclear button inside me as a mom is if I thought they were not listening, overlooking me, disrespecting me, like that would just send me kind of through the roof, whether I showed it or not. Well, they were, um, let's see, it was the summer. They were like late teenagers. They were home. They were in the living room playing games. And I came down from working and the kitchen was a disaster. And I knew I didn't create it. So I said, Hey guys, I'm glad you're having fun playing games together. That's awesome. But hey, can you clean up the kitchen? I'm gonna go back upstairs and work and, you know, maybe you can get it down before I come downstairs. I'm like, yeah, sure, mom. So I go upstairs, I work about four hours later, come back down and yeah, you know, it, the kitchen was still a

disaster. <laugh>. And they're still playing games. Like they haven't moved <laugh>, but they're having a great time. Never,

Laura Cox Kaplan ([33:28](#)):

Never happens at my house, Beth. Right.

Beth McCord ([33:30](#)):

<laugh>. Well, right inside me, I have this, these competing thoughts and feelings on one side, especially as the type nine. I'm like, they're connecting. They're enjoying each other. This is beautiful. Don't ruin the moment. But then the other part of me is like, but I asked them to do it and they overlooked me. My, see, my voice doesn't matter. Nobody cares what I have to say. Like, that's what goes on. Yeah. But that was my rumblestrip moment. That was my moment to go, okay, hold on. You don't need to, you know, get all upset and blow this all up. You can be curious. You can enter the moment, you can speak to the reality that they, they're doing a great job is in like, getting along and all those things, but that you're hurt and why you're hurt. So I shared that all with them, and it was so incredible.

Beth McCord ([34:15](#)):

It's like, just, just know that when you are parenting your kids and you're teaching them it, it does matter. It, you may not see it all the time, but it's gonna show up every once in a while. So they came in and they're like, oh mom, I'm so sorry. You're totally right. I know that you probably feel that we're kind of in a, in a way saying that your presence doesn't matter, your voice doesn't matter. But that's not what we're trying to say by playing and forgetting. Like, I, we get it. We know that's probably what you feel. We're sorry, um, we'll get to it right away. We were just having fun and got caught up in, in the day. And I'm like, part of me is like, wait, like I don't think I can get upset anymore. 'cause they, like they said they were sorry, you know?

Beth McCord ([34:57](#)):

So it's kinda like, okay, wait, what do I do now in this moment? Now of course, this is just one moment. There's lots of other moments that didn't go well, but there's that one moment you're like, it's getting through to them. Like they're right. They're being empathetic to me. They're understanding my point of view. They know what triggers me versus what would trigger them, and they're entering my world and my space and they're asking for forgiveness. But why that happened was because my husband and I have spent years trying to learn ourselves and to apologize to our kids when we show up in ways that are not helpful, that we own our stuff. And by knowing ourselves well, we can own our stuff, our own our stuff. And to move in a healthier trajectory, our kids need us to be real and authentic. They need us. They need to see that we're working on ourselves, that we're sorry when we do make mistakes. Um, but that it doesn't end there. That we're growing, we're getting help. Um, and so that's really what the Enneagram, uh, for mom's book is mainly focusing on, is how to be your most authentic and the best version of yourself, even though it's really hard to do.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([36:03](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. I love that. I can't wait for the book. It strikes me too, as you're talking about this, just the, the benefit of being able to work through conflicts, whether it's with your children, your spouse,

your work colleagues, your friends, your family who, whomever Yeah. That there's great value in understanding this aspect and maybe sort of putting you in a position of taking a bigger pause when you find yourself in those moments. Maybe talk for a second about kind of how this relates to conflict resolution and you as a nine in particular. I know this resonates deeply for you, but it does, it does for me too.

Beth McCord ([36:44](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. Usually. And the why the Ingram can be so powerful, like I said, you know, you're wearing a lens, you're seeing the world through your specific lens, but there's nine different lenses. So think of nine different colored lenses. Now. We are all seeing the same trees and circumstances, but how we interpret it and react to it is very different. And so if we realize that, then what would bother me isn't the same, that's gonna bother my husband or my son or my daughter. And by understanding where they're coming from, my, by me taking off my lens for a second and putting their lens on it allows me to have compassion and empathy. It helps me to say I'm sorry for the things that maybe seem not really a big deal to me, but really mean a big deal for them. So an example when my husband and I start to dance, you know, kind of conflict, um, tension rises and as a nine, that just feels like, uh, anaphylactic reaction.

Beth McCord ([37:47](#)):

Like, I cannot do this and so I just want to shut down or run away or something. Well, that seems natural and normal and understandable from my viewpoint. But what I didn't know for years that anytime I would shut down, even, even if I'm still in the presence with him, but I would emotionally start to shut down or disconnect from him. It only said one thing to him that this was the beginning of the end of our relationship because he's a type six and type six is fear abandonment. They fear being alone, targeted. Um, they want security guidance and support. And nothing about shutting down says anything of that sort. So I didn't realize that by me doing my natural bent was greatly affecting him in a way that I would never want him to feel that way. Like, no, that <laugh> that is not what I'm trying to communicate.

Beth McCord ([38:38](#)):

I'm just overwhelmed and, and I don't want conflict. But once I, once he made it aware to me that this dynamic was going on, I'm now able to say, 'cause I can get overwhelmed and I can feel it starting to come on wanting to shut down. I can say, Hey, I need some time to really process before we keep talking or, or nuancing this discussion. Can you give me 15 minutes to just step away to kind of calm my internal world down, process some thoughts, and then come back to this conversation like, I'm for you, I'm for us, but I need my own space for a second. Now it's not that he loves that. Like he would rather work it out right then that feels truer to who he is. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. But because he can put on my lens and he understands what I'm going through, he feels more confident like, oh, she's for me, she's for us.

Beth McCord ([39:28](#)):

She's coming back now. He did say once Beth, sometimes you don't come back to the conversation <laugh>. And I'm like, fair enough, fair enough. I'll note that. You know? Um, but so by him saying that, I was like, okay, if I ask for this, I do need to come back and engage again. And so that's really helped our dance, so to speak, become a much smoother dance. It it all, all, all nine Enneagram types, whether you're with the same type or different types, you're gonna run into things that create conflict or tension.

'cause we misunderstand each other's, but instead of assuming incorrectly, we call it sic suicide. Instead of assuming incorrectly, which can begin to hurt and destroy relationships, take a pause, be curious, put on their lens and just even think, well why would they, how could they be thinking of this different? Be curious, open-minded. And it will help you to engage in that relationship in a whole new way. It'll give you great compassion and empathy to come alongside them versus at them. And that's how the Enneagram can be just so, so powerful.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([40:32](#)):

Yeah. I would think too that it can be a little dangerous to try to um, identify or peg a person as a particular type without them having gone through the exercise themselves. Is that absolutely

Beth McCord ([40:48](#)):

Sort of true or you should not type other people <laugh>. Now, of course, we all have inklings Mm-Hmm. We're, we're curious. We see patterns. But again, like I said, with that, you know, perfectly clean home, you might see certain behaviors outwardly, but it can be very different on the inside. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Uh, for instance, my daughter, I thought, oh, she's probably a nine, maybe a two. 'cause she's so much like me. Well, she was like me 'cause as a two, she was trying to, um, be connected with me as a little girl. Hmm. But when she got older, twos can be pretty fiery and she doesn't mind conflict if, you know there's something that needs to happen or get done. And so as she became a teenager and on, it was like, oh yeah, you're not me. You were just of molding with me as a young girl.

Beth McCord ([41:35](#)):

Um, and then another example would be my husband. He's a type six. And people think, oh, they are fearful all the time. Well, there's a, a type that looks fearful and there's a type that goes counter to their fear. They're like, go headlong into it. Well, that's my husband. So he actually looks more like a type eight. Um, and so you can mistype people in your own mind and then treat them a certain way, which isn't true to who they are and can affect your relationship. So it's best to let the person, uh, discover themselves, type themselves. Um, but you can ask a lot of curious questions. You can say, Hey, you know, what's your greatest fear? Whatever, you know, like you can encourage them to find their type, but ultimately they have to be the ones to do it.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([42:16](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Oh, Beth, what a great conversation and what a great way to kick off the new year with you and with the Enneagram. How can folks learn a little bit more about you and your business? Where can they find you? How can they work with you? Share your, yeah, share your details if

Beth McCord ([42:32](#)):

You would. Yeah. So everything is@youenneagramcoach.com. Um, that's also my handle on Instagram, um, and Facebook. We have a path that you can start with taking the free assessment in the upper right hand corner. And that's a great place to start. We've got some online coaching courses that I help you explore your type, um, and even one that help you discover your type. Um, those are great places to start. Um, some people are like, I wanna go deeper. I want it more customized to me. Well, we have certified coaches. I've trained over 2,500, uh, coaches around the world, and you can find an excellent

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certified coach@myenneagramcoach.com. And that's just another great place to find resources. And then for those out there that are the Enneagram enthusiasts and they're like, I wanna be a coach, we actually train coaches. And it's one of my favorite things to do because then I know they're gonna get out in the world and help more and more people. So that's one of, uh, our favorite things to do is train coaches.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([43:28](#)):

Yeah, that's awesome. Beth, thank you so much. I really appreciate it. This has been great.

Beth McCord ([43:32](#)):

Yeah, thanks for having me. This was fun.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([43:35](#)):

Hey friend, what did you think about this? What do you think about the Enneagram? Did you recognize your personality type in what Beth and I talked about today? I would love to hear, send me some feedback on the episode and let me know, um, how all of this resonated with you. Um, in the meantime, have a great rest of your week and I'll talk to you again next time. And remember she said, she said podcast is a weekly production of she said, she said, media take care.