

Title: **Adaptive Practice in Conversation with the Enneagram**

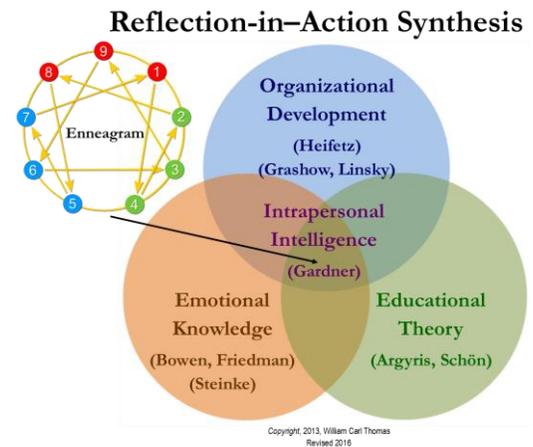
Design: 90-minute presentation

Presenter: The Rev. Dr. William Carl Thomas

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Description:

A Rector or Senior Pastor (Ordained Leader) who is self-aware of his or her own anxiety is better able to guide a congregation through the anxiety of transition and set the stage for transformation. This workshop expands Dr. Thomas's Reflection-in-Action Synthesis (RiAS) by presenting in a parallel format the similarities of Heifetz' Adaptive Practice concepts with the teaching from various schools of Enneagram thought. The nine Enneagram Type biographies provide a rich resource and useful understanding of one's own condition. Thomas' Anxiety Response Chart (ARC) offers the practitioner a scale of behavior that articulates how basic awareness of one's Enneagram type provides insight into how one behaves when at one's best to one's worst. The ARC is a situational narrative tool that blends the emotional/intellect scale of Bowen/Friedman System Theory within a framework using the balcony perspective model developed as an aspect of Heifetz's Adaptive Practice. The Enneagram Profile offers another approach to interpreting one's behavior (and level of anxiety) against the frame found in McLean's triune brain (Reptilian, Mammalian, or Neocortex).



You will gain an introduction to the Enneagram and will learn a practice that charts a situation and response from the reflection initiated in a written narrative. Over time, this self-reflection practice will become a real-time technique that assists the practitioner manage his or her differentiation of self as well as recognize the impact the system's anxiety has on the practitioner. Healthy self-knowledge builds the systemic health so necessary to a successful interim ministry.

Knowledge of your Enneagram Profile is not necessary to learn how to use the Anxiety Response Chart. The workshop will be enriched, however, if persons with knowledge of the Enneagram Profile help create a true group learning experience.

Format:

**Part A:** A lecture supported by a PowerPoint presentation provides general information along with handouts that provide key points and rationale concerning the inclusion of the resources noted above.

**Part B:** A practicum follows using narratives (brief case studies) drawn from input offered by participants.

Outcomes:

1. The Ordained Leader will become familiar with the Enneagram (primarily from the school of practices presented by Riso/Hudson, Rohr/Ebert and Howell)
  - a. These schools of Enneagram practice support a demonstrable technique for identifying and dealing with personal and corporate anxiety, namely adaptive

- practice,<sup>1</sup> as the Ordained Leader engages the changes that occur when transformation is the intended outcome.
2. The Ordained Leader will learn how to use the Anxiety Response Chart (ARC)
    - a. For personal self-reflection.
    - b. As a supervisory tool (useful for either paid staff or volunteers)
    - c. As an explanatory/interpretive tool for congregational and/or judicatory leadership.
  3. The Ordained Leader will have a practical appreciation of what it means to be
    - a. *Non-Anxious Presence* (from Friedman and Steinke) defined as the capacity to exhibit calm behavior through self-management and self-awareness to the uncomfortable feelings or memories that prompt harmful reactivity.

#### Unique Features:

This workshop expands Thomas' Doctor of Ministry thesis from the personal self-study with the integration of the general knowledge found with the nine biographies that are the outcomes of one's Enneagram Profile. This workshop offers Thomas the opportunity to share with his own growth as he continues to live within the discipline of this thesis with this statement: "I lead by giving space through an adaptive practice that embraces deep listening."

#### Credentials/Previous Experience with Topic:

- A. Doctor of Ministry thesis entitled *Intrapersonal Intelligence Mediated By Self-Reflective Adaptive Practice That Manages Anxiety: Learning To Lead By Giving Space*
  - a. The Reflection in Action Synthesis (RiAS) is original academic work by the author.
- B. Offered a basic version of some of the concepts found in this thesis during a workshop at the 2014 Interim Ministry Annual Conference.
- C. Offered this workshop during the 2016 Interim Ministry Annual Conference.
- D. Linked his doctoral self-reflection techniques to the work articulated by Desert Father Evagrius of Pontus in a parish based presentation on March 26, 2014 entitled *Reflection in Action Practices that Influence the response to the Anxiety expressed in the Eight Deadly Thoughts*.
  - a. The schools of Enneagram knowledge and application found in the presentation on conversation with Adaptive Practice acknowledge the historic tie between the Eight Deadly Thoughts and the Enneagram.

#### Biography

The Rev. Dr. William Carl Thomas is an Episcopal Priest with 27 years ordained leadership experience. He has served in three settled parishes as rector, and is currently the Priest-in-Charge of parish that experienced the trauma of the involuntary removal of their rector by the diocesan bishop. Prior to his May, 2015 start at Christ Church, Middletown NJ, Thomas served for 18 months as the Interim Rector of Christ Church, New Bern, North Carolina (a large multi-staff church with "many moving parts"). Thomas holds a Doctor of Ministry degree from the Virginia Theological Seminary.

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<sup>1</sup> Heifetz, Ronald, Alexander Grashow and Marty Linsky. [The Practice of Adaptive Leadership](#). Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2009. [Review at Amazon.com](#)