

Field Report: Enneagram-Informed Relationship Coaching and Agreement Documentation Interventions

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Practicum Site: Private Practice of Daniel, Relationship Coach & Counselor, Enneagram Specialist

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1 Introduction

This field report documents my observations and limited co-facilitation experience during a 12-week practicum with Daniel, a relationship coach and counselor who specializes in Enneagram personality typing. Daniel’s primary intervention model involves working with couples (or occasionally other dyads such as business partners or adult parent-child pairs) who are experiencing significant conflict or “disagreement.” Rather than focusing on emotional processing alone, his approach deliberately moves the pair out of reactive disagreement into structured, concrete areas of agreement. He then guides them to co-create and document mutually acceptable commitments.

The goal is to reduce ambiguity, rebuild trust through clarity, and give couples a tangible “living document” they can reference and revise. Enneagram typing serves as the foundational lens for increasing self-awareness and empathy before negotiation begins. Sessions are delivered in three modalities: 10% in-person, 80% via secure video platform, and 10% by phone (usually for brief check-ins or follow-up). This hybrid model allows flexibility for clients with busy schedules, travel, or geographic distance.

My role was primarily observational (shadowing and note-taking) with occasional co-facilitation tasks such as scribing agreements in real time or summarizing Enneagram insights. This report summarizes the practice context, intervention structure, representative session observations, theoretical linkages, evaluation of effectiveness, personal reflections, and recommendations.

2 Practice Context

Daniel operates a solo private practice serving primarily heterosexual and same-sex couples aged 28–55. Clients are typically referred by therapists, mediators, or word-of-mouth when traditional talk therapy has stalled in conflict loops. Intake includes a brief social questionnaire he calls a “Casting Interview,” in which he goes through the nine types of the Enneagram embodying the child, teenager, and adult versions of each to compel the patient to signal alignment and familiarity individually. Very occasionally he offers this in a group setting; it should be noted that the results showed similar effectiveness in a group as individually, in surfacing centers of discomfort and conflict before the first session. Screening excludes active domestic violence, untreated substance dependence, or severe mental illness; those cases are referred out.

Groups are not used; all work is dyadic. The average course of coaching is intended to be 6–12 sessions; however, I have witnessed many patients signaling they want to continue sessions indefinitely. Fees are private-pay. Documentation produced during sessions is stored securely in a shared client portal that both partners can access and edit with Daniel’s guidance.

3 Description of the Core Intervention

Daniel’s model blends three elements:

Enneagram Assessment & Education (Sessions 1–2)

Daniel does a Casting Interview and each patient receives their three gravities, representing the three sections of the Enneagram (head, heart, gut). This opens the door to stress/security points and relationship “dance” dynamics. Daniel uses this non-pathologizing framework to normalize conflict (e.g., “Your Type 3 and her Type 9 are wired to handle success and harmony differently”).

Disagreement De-escalation & Mapping (Sessions 2–4)

Structured listening identifies specific flashpoints. Daniel actively interrupts blame cycles and redirects to observable behaviors and clues to otherwise hidden motivations.

Agreement Documentation (Sessions 4–end)

The couple co-creates a written “Relationship Agreement” document organized into sections such as Communication Protocols, Decision-Making, Emotional Needs, Household/Financial Roles, Conflict Repair, and Future Review Dates. Language must be specific, measurable, and positive (“We will each pause for 20 minutes when either person says ‘I need space’” rather than “Stop yelling”). Daniel acts as neutral scribe and mediator until both parties verbally and (often) digitally sign the living document.

Modalities adapt naturally:

- **In-person (10%):** Whiteboard or large shared tablet for real-time drafting; stronger non-verbal cues.
- **Video (80%):** Screen-sharing of the live document, with an emphasis on getting the couple into the same physical room, but with breakout rooms for individual reflection available when tension spikes.
- **Phone (10%):** Used for 15-minute “agreement check-ins” or crisis de-escalation without visual distraction.

4 Representative Session Observations

4.1 Session Example 1 – In-Person (Session 5 of 8)

Couple: “Alex” (Enneagram Type 8, Challenger) and “Jordan” (Enneagram Type 2, Helper), married 7 years, presenting with recurring fights about parenting and intimacy.

The 90-minute session opened with a 10-minute check-in. Daniel reminded them of their types: Alex’s drive for control under stress and Jordan’s tendency to over-give then resent. He then displayed the draft agreement document on the large monitor. The couple negotiated bedtime

routines for their children. Tension rose when Alex said, “You always undermine me.” Daniel interrupted gently: “Let’s translate that into a specific request both of you can agree on.” After 35 minutes of guided back-and-forth, they settled on: “Each evening at 7:30 p.m. we will use a two-sentence ‘hand-off script’ stating the child’s needs and one positive note.” Both partners read the clause aloud and initialed it on the shared tablet. Visible relief appeared; Jordan commented, “Seeing it written down makes it feel real and fair.” The session closed with each person stating one appreciation.

4.2 Session Example 2 – Video (Session 3 of 7)

Couple: “Taylor” (Type 6, Loyalist) and “Casey” (Type 4, Individualist), engaged, conflict around finances and future planning.

Conducted via Zoom. Daniel screen-shared a blank agreement template. After a brief Enneagram reminder (Taylor’s anxiety under stress vs. Casey’s identity concerns), the pair identified their biggest disagreement: joint vs. separate bank accounts. Using the “future-self” visualization exercise, Daniel had them describe what success looked like in five years. Real-time collaborative editing in the shared doc produced a hybrid system: “We maintain one joint account for household bills with automatic 50/50 contributions; each keeps a separate ‘autonomy’ account of up to \$X per month with no questions asked.” Taylor noted the written boundaries reduced their fear of being “trapped.” The session ended 10 minutes early because clarity had been reached; Daniel scheduled a phone check-in for the following week.

4.3 Phone Example – Brief Follow-up

A 15-minute call confirmed that the previous week’s agreement on “no devices at dinner” was being followed and required only minor wording tweaks.

5 Theoretical Analysis and Evaluation

Daniel’s approach aligns with several established frameworks while adding a distinctive documentation emphasis:

Enneagram Theory (Riso & Hudson)

Provides a compassionate, non-blaming map of motivation that reduces defensiveness and supports empathy. This presents as a key to Yalom’s “universality” and “catharsis” factors even in dyadic work.

Behavioral Couples Therapy & Gottman Method

The focus on specific, observable behaviors and repair rituals mirrors Gottman’s “Four Horsemen” antidotes.

Narrative and Solution-Focused Elements

Documenting agreements externalizes the conflict and creates a preferred “story” the couple can author together.

Observed effectiveness indicators included: rapid de-escalation once language was written down, increased accountability (clients reported referring back to the document between sessions), and

higher session-to-session continuity than purely verbal therapy. Challenges noted: occasional resistance to “contractual” language (especially from more romantic or avoidant types) and the need for cultural sensitivity when English is not the first language.

6 Personal Reflections

Shadowing Daniel has sharpened my appreciation for structure in emotionally charged work. Watching couples shift from tearful or angry storytelling to collaborative editing was powerful; the tangible document seemed to anchor hope. I also became aware of my own countertransference — feeling anxious when disagreement escalated — yet Daniel’s calm, type-informed reframing modeled excellent regulation. Ethical considerations around power (ensuring both voices are equally weighted in the final document) and confidentiality (secure digital storage) were handled transparently.

7 Recommendations and Conclusion

Recommendations for Daniel’s practice:

- Create a client-facing Enneagram + Agreement Workbook as a take-home tool.
- Offer optional 3-month follow-up “maintenance” video sessions to review and amend the living document.
- Consider anonymous outcome surveys measuring pre/post agreement adherence and relationship satisfaction.

Overall, this practicum illustrated how Enneagram-informed coaching combined with concrete documentation can transform vague conflict into clear, actionable commitments. Daniel’s hybrid delivery model makes high-quality support accessible without sacrificing depth. I am grateful for the opportunity and intend to integrate elements of this structured agreement approach into my future counseling work.