

# **Ethics, Intellectual Property, and the Enneagram**

**By Ginger Lapid-Bogda, Ph.D.**

We have a serious dilemma in the Enneagram community regarding how we deal with intellectual property rights. Here's the dilemma: How can we write, teach, and disseminate information about the Enneagram while, at the same time, honoring the intellectual property rights of someone else?

From one perspective, all of us owe our basic knowledge of the Enneagram to early teachers such as Gurdjieff, Ichazo, and Naranjo. If this is true – and I believe it is – then all of us should cite at least one of these three individuals in our work. Although some people may not agree, a good case can be made that there would be no contemporary Enneagram without these three individuals. In addition, to not cite these individuals gives the erroneous impression that we made up the system ourselves.

In addition to the initial work of Gurdjieff, Icazo, and Naranjo, the insights and technologies of the next generation of Enneagram teachers and authors have also made enormous contributions – for example, Tom Condon, David Daniels, Theodorre Donson, Russ Hudson, Kathy Hurley, Helen Palmer, Don Riso, and Jerry Wagner, among others. How is their work cited when we do ours?

Adding complexity, there are now more and more teachers and authors who do excellent work with the system and develop new ways of understanding and using the Enneagram. And these individuals are all over the world. It is becoming increasingly difficult to know where an idea originated, and many ideas emerge simultaneously in multiple places.

Consequently, it is sometimes – but not always – challenging to know what material is actually original. What are the criteria for what should be cited as the work of the original writer (or creator), how should citations be worded, and should the work of someone else actually be used if he or she doesn't want it to be?

From another perspective, if we either can't or don't use the ideas of other Enneagram teachers, we run multiple risks. First, dissemination of the Enneagram will move far more slowly worldwide. One of us cannot create knowledge as well as all of us. Second, individual students and teachers of the Enneagram will be far more likely to generate their own concepts, which can have both beneficial and harmful results. New ideas based on a thorough understanding of the Enneagram help the Enneagram move forward. However, new ideas that distort the system because people don't know enough to do this or who attempt to differentiate themselves from others will – and some already have – damage the integrity and wider scale use of the system

because what they create does not really work. Third, Enneagram authors and teachers will fight about which idea is theirs, and we have seen this already. When we fight, we hurt the Enneagram as well as ourselves. I believe we will be far more successful in making the Enneagram available to the greatest number of people and with the highest quality when we move forward together. All of this becomes even more complex because we are in an international environment with Enneagram activity occurring across the globe.

So what is the answer to this complicated issue? I am going to suggest several actions we can take:

1. Ask the original author for permission and honor his or her response.
2. If the original author is not available, you can decide to not use the information, follow any guidelines offered in the written material, or use an overly thorough citation.
3. Honor basic guidelines related to translations.
4. Ask yourself this: *What would I want if this material were my original creation?*

These four items are covered in the remainder of this article.

### **Ask the original author for permission and honor his or her response.**

Most authors and concept developers in the Enneagram are still living and available through websites, e-mails, telephone, and letters. It takes time to make the effort, but these are appreciated. Someone may say no, but they are more likely to say yes and appreciate being asked. And if you don't know where an idea originated, try to track it down by contacting people who might know.

When in doubt about who created what knowledge and how to get in touch with these individuals, you can contact the International Enneagram Association office at [TheIEA@aol.com](mailto:TheIEA@aol.com) or go to the website, which has names and contact information of all IEA members ([internationalenneagram.org](http://internationalenneagram.org)).

### **If the original author is not available, you can decide to not use the information, follow any guidelines offered in the written material, or use an overly thorough citation.**

A good rule is *when in doubt, don't*. Here are some additional don'ts:

- Don't take off someone's copyright information.
- Don't add your copyright to something that belongs to someone else.

- Don't use your copyright when you have changed or adapted some of the content; this still belongs to the originator of the work.

A thorough citation includes the originator's full name and title and where this information can be found, given in enough detail so the person reading or hearing the information could locate the original source.

### **Honor basic guidelines related to translations.**

The issue of intellectual property becomes more complex in circumstances where original work is translated into another language. First, one must get written or verbal permission to translate someone else's work, and this must come directly from the author and/or the publisher if the material is from a book. Second, the translator is clearly not the author. Amazingly, there have been cases where someone translates a book, then removes the original author's name and claims the work for him or herself.

Finally, there is the issue of claiming credit for being a translator when you are not, or thinking you are the translator when you did some editing or if paid someone else to translate a work that is not your own. Because some of this is confusing, I contacted my literary agent who shared the following guidelines:

#### Translation versus editing

##### *Scenario 1: one person translates; the other person edits*

A translator is the person who takes the author's original words, then puts them in the new language. An editor does one or more of the following: (1) rearranges the translated material; (2) adds some words to make transitions between sections of the written material; (3) changes some words to make them more precise or to flow better; and/or (4) puts the translation into grammar or language that meets the publisher's specifications. The four items above are actually not translation; they are editing. In this scenario, the translator's name would be included in the book, usually as "translated by [person's name]" with no mention of the editor's name. Occasionally, the publisher mentions the editor's name, but this is variable and is negotiated with the publisher.

##### *Scenario 2: one person does most of the translation; the other person does some translation*

If the second person changes content multiple times that significantly changes the meaning of the original translation or the person contributes at least 30 percent of a

change in actual words to the original translation, then this person would be considered a second translator and the book would read “translated by [first person’s name] *with* [second person’s name].”

*Scenario 3: both individuals do equal amounts of translation*

If the second person translates 50 percent of the material (using the definition of translation described above), then the book would read “translated by [one person’s name] and [other person’s name].” The decision of whose name goes first is done alphabetically by last name.

From the publishing perspective, not honoring the resolution of the above scenarios would be considered both a very large ethical breach and a potential legal problem as well. When a book publisher is involved – in other words, the book is not self-published – the publisher usually has the copyright on the material, which puts the publisher in a precarious position if the above guidelines are not followed. If the material is self-published in any format, then the issue is between the original author, the translator or translators, and the person who does some editing.

**Ask yourself this: *What would I want if this material were my original creation?***

Your response to this question, if you give it very serious thought, will often lead you in the right direction. If you are someone who tends to not care very much about these kinds of issues or is extremely open about sharing your ideas, ask three other people you know who are very different from you, then take their thoughts into consideration. If you are someone who tends to be more cautious when others ask to use your ideas, consider contacting the author anyway. This person may honor your request.

Hopefully, some of the remarks in this article will stimulate more thinking about the issues. Many relationships have been hurt by not considering some of the implications of our behavior. And if we believe someone else has taken our ideas without permission, it is far more generous to bring this to the person’s attention in the spirit of inquiry rather than accusation. I was in this exact situation myself when I used an idea in an electronic newsletter I learned from a friend and colleague. When my colleague had shared the idea, it was presented as if it were from the teachings of Ichazo, and I assumed it was in the public domain. However, it was apparently a revision of an Ichazo concept that had been dramatically adapted by this person, but I was unaware of this. My colleague wrote me a highly accusatory e-mail that was very painful to

receive. I subsequently removed the idea from future electronic newsletters, but I doubt the relationship will be fully repaired. To me, this is a sad and unnecessary loss and a preventable one. I should have asked for more clarification. And my colleague should have toned down the e-mail. So I pass this hard lesson on.

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