ISTJ

One of the two ‘introverted sensing types’ (the other is the ISFJ). The ISTJ comprises 7.0 percent of the population, and is the fifth largest group. ISTJs are typically identified by their top two functions: Introverted Sensing and Extraverted Thinking. <br> Introverted Sensing (Si) focuses on subjective perception of sensory details, storing information in accordance with past experiences and using it for personal grounding. Si dominants seek a sense of internal familiarity, stability, and security, therefore, they are naturally attuned to consistency in sensory details, quick to notice discrepancies when doing mental comparisons, and attentive to anything that might produce physical discomfort/vulnerability. Attending carefully to concrete details allows them to build up a reliable base of knowledge for use in approaching new situations. However, this also means that they can feel easily disoriented when confronted with too much new or unfamiliar information, perhaps becoming anxious when they do not have enough time to sort through a barrage of incoming details. When a person does not know how to use Si appropriately, they tend to become too inflexible or risk averse, prone to getting too comfortable with stale rituals/routines or bad situations. Healthy Si dominants tend to be good at understanding procedures and building impressively detailed expertise through methodical and incremental learning, often admired for their patience, conscientiousness, and reliability. <br> Healthy Extraverted Thinking (Te) development should make ISTJs construct a good foundation of knowledge about the exact standards and rules of conduct that will produce efficient and successful goal completion in the world. ISTJs prefer to make categorical, definitive, and unambiguous decisions. However, if Te development falters during the teenage years, ISTJs can gradually become too inflexible in attitude or ineffectual in action.

ESTJ

One of the two ‘extraverted thinking types’ (the other is the ENTJ). The ESTJ comprises 15 percent of the population, and is the largest group. ESTJs are typically identified by their top two functions: Extraverted Thinking and Introverted Sensing. <br> Extraverted Thinking (Te) focuses on external structures, using objective systematic standards to evaluate success/failure in the world. Te dominants spot problems quickly and seek to remedy them immediately, always wanting to be as effective as possible when taking action, therefore, they are naturally attuned to the “rules of the game” that are guaranteed to win desirable and efficient results. Being structured in thought and organized in action allows them to approach situations with a sense of proficiency and confidence, adroitly removing obstacles and reaching goals in a straightforward and linear fashion. However, this also means that they tend to have difficulty with situations that are ambiguous or not easily structured/measured/quantified, perhaps quick to feel frustrated or impatient when encountering confusion, failure, incompetence, or weakness. When a person does not know how to use Te appropriately, they tend to be too controlling or amoral in believing that the end justifies the means, incapable of appreciating the process because of only valuing results, perhaps jumping to conclusions too quickly or too easily tempted into taking harmful shortcuts. Healthy Te dominants tend to be good at tasks that require management or leadership behaviors, able to organize well and streamline plans, often admired for their strength and endurance in overcoming setbacks. <br> Healthy Introverted Sensing (Si) development should make ESTJs attentive to details about the system that will help them manage situations or problems more effectively. ESTJs prefer to make decisions that secure physical comfort and well-being. However, if Si development falters during the teenage years, ESTJs can gradually become unable to prioritize well or too inflexible about enforcing rules/etiquette.

ISTP

One of the two ‘introverted thinking types’ (the other is the INTP). The ISTP comprises 4 percent of the population, and is the seventh least populated group. ISTPs are typically identified by their top two functions: Introverted Thinking and Extraverted Sensing.<br> Introverted Thinking (Ti) evaluates information according to precise cause-and-effect formulas, seeking coherence among beliefs, consistency in decision making, and accuracy in calculating probabilities. Ti dominants seek to construct a self-sufficient mental model of situations, therefore, they are naturally inclined to systematize information and critically excise any data that seems to them to be irrelevant, inaccurate, unreliable, false, contradictory, invalid, or emotionally biased. Being patient in skill building, accumulating technical/formulaic expertise, and analyzing and deconstructing systems allows them to navigate the world with independence, confidence, and competence. However, this also means that they tend to overvalue the notion of individual “intelligence” and undervalue other important aspects of life that they deem to be “irrational” or “irrelevant” to their interests. When a person does not know how to use Ti appropriately, they tend to be too reductive and unable to see the flaws in their own reasoning because of failing to understand other relevant perspectives, perhaps even excising human perspective altogether because it is defined as unuseful or detrimental to sound judgment. Healthy Ti dominants tend to be good at critical systems analysis and correcting their bad judgments as new evidence arises, able to come up with well-tailored solutions, and often admired for their measured and capable approach to problems.<br> Healthy Extraverted Sensing (Se) development should make ISTPs engage in more firsthand or hands-on experiences that will produce a more factual and adaptable mental model of the world. ISTPs prefer to make decisions in a flexible and practical manner. However, if Se development falters during the teenage years, ISTPs can gradually become too superficial in judgment or apathetic in action.

ESTP

One of the two ‘extraverted sensing types’ (the other is the ESFP). The ESTP comprises 6.5 percent of the population, and is the sixth largest group (along with the ISFJ). ESTPs are typically identified by their top two functions: Extraverted Sensing and Introverted Thinking. <br> Extraverted Sensing (Se) focuses on interesting environmental stimuli, responding quickly to sensory changes in the world. Se dominants seek a sense of engagement, pleasure, or excitement, therefore, they are naturally attuned to new opportunities for firsthand experiences that seem fun, intriguing, or exciting to them. Being spontaneous and quick to respond to change allows them to adapt fluidly and learn fast on the fly, easily putting negativity behind them to move on to new vistas. However, this also means that they may not take enough time to reflect on whether the experiences they pursue are meaningful for their long term development, perhaps becoming too impulsive or haphazard when decision making. When a person does not know how to use Se appropriately, they tend to develop an avoidant mindset because immediate escape is the easier path to take when faced with harsh difficulties or negative consequences. Healthy Se dominants tend to be good at taking advantage of shifting conditions and enjoy operating at peak “in the zone” mental and/or physical performance, often admired for their realness, resilience, or natural ease. <br> Healthy Introverted Thinking (Ti) development should make ESTPs patient in calculating the behavior that will help them avoid negative consequences. ESTPs prefer to make logical and objective decisions as quickly as possible. However, if Ti development falters during the teenage years, ESTPs can gradually become too careless in attitude or prone to repeating mistakes.

ISFJ

One of the two ‘introverted sensing types’ (the other is the ISTJ). The ISFJ comprises 6.5 percent of the population, and is the sixth largest group (along with ESTP). ISFJs are typically identified by their top two functions: Introverted Sensing and Extraverted Feeling. <br> Introverted Sensing (Si) focuses on subjective perception of sensory details, storing information in accordance with past experiences and using it for personal grounding. Si dominants seek a sense of internal familiarity, stability, and security, therefore, they are naturally attuned to consistency in sensory details, quick to notice discrepancies when doing mental comparisons, and attentive to anything that might produce physical discomfort/vulnerability. Attending carefully to concrete details allows them to build up a reliable base of knowledge for use in approaching new situations. However, this also means that they can feel easily disoriented when confronted with too much new or unfamiliar information, perhaps becoming anxious when they do not have enough time to sort through a barrage of incoming details. When a person does not know how to use Si appropriately, they tend to become too inflexible or risk averse, prone to getting too comfortable with stale rituals/routines or bad situations. Healthy Si dominants tend to be good at understanding procedures and building impressively detailed expertise through methodical and incremental learning, often admired for their patience, conscientiousness, and reliability. <br> Healthy Extraverted Feeling (Fe) development should make ISFJs establish a good foundation of knowledge about people and social norms/values that will produce a secure social support system. ISFJs prefer to make decisions that foster care, compassion, harmony, and cooperation. However, if Fe development falters during the teenage years, ISFJs can gradually become too fearful of relational intimacy or oversensitive to the influence of others.

ESFJ

One of the two ‘extraverted feeling types’ (the other is the ENFJ). The ESFJ comprises 14 percent of the population, and is the second largest group. ESFJs are typically identified by their top two functions: Extraverted Feeling and Introverted Sensing. <br> Extraverted Feeling (Fe) focuses on social organization, using objective collective values to evaluate one’s position in the world. Fe dominants seek to build harmonious relationship and reduce interpersonal conflict, therefore, they are naturally attuned to the needs and feelings of others, trying to use that information to navigate social situations successfully. Establishing a good social network allows them to feel emotionally supported, appreciated for their contributions, and confident upon achieving acceptance. However, this also means that they tend to be too easily influenced by social factors, perhaps becoming overdependent on external sources for self-esteem or moral direction, sometimes feeling tempted to sacrifice too much for the sake of social approval or “the greater good”. When a person does not know how to use Fe appropriately, they tend to be insecure and have difficulty separating the self from others, frequently feeling torn between preserving independence versus honoring social roles/responsibilities. Healthy Fe dominants tend to be good at addressing relationship/social issues and promoting a sense of unity/belonging, often admired for their social grace, helpful attitude, or willingness to provide moral/emotional support to others. <br> Healthy Introverted Sensing (Si) development should make ESFJs attentive to details about people and social values that will help them manage social situations more effectively. ESFJs prefer to make decisions that secure physical comfort and well-being. However, if Si development falters during the teenage years, ESFJs can gradually become unable to prioritize well or too flexible about enforcing rules/etiquette.

ISFP

One of the two ‘introverted feeling’ types (the INFP is the other). The ISFP comprises 5.5 percent of the population, and is the 7th most populated MBTI type. ISFPs are typically identified by their top two functions: Introverted Feeling and Extraverted Sensing. <br> Introverted Feeling (Fi) evaluates information through individual identity, using instinctive feeling-based values to draw strict moral boundaries for clear decision making. Fi dominants seek inner harmony, therefore, they strive to maintain congruency between their feelings, values, and actions, often quick to judge what is “good”/“bad” and wanting to relieve any suffering they encounter. Successfully establishing congruency allows them to express their personal identity authentically (oftentimes through artistic pursuits) and to stand up for their beliefs even in the face of opposition; thus, when at their best, they can often be counted upon to protect the integrity of individuals in order to allow everyone the freedom to be themselves. However, this also means that they tend to have difficulty acting against their strong feelings and opinions, perhaps unable to accomplish tasks or integrate well with the environment because of being held back by an overly individualistic mindset. When a person does not know how to use Fi appropriately, their attitude about life becomes unstable as their judgment or motivation tends to waver any time their feelings waver, prone to being too subjective in how they evaluate (moral) worth. Healthy Fi dominants tend to be good at defending moral causes and protecting individual rights and freedoms, often admired for their unconventionality, sincerity, and integrity.<br> Healthy Extraverted Sensing (Se) development should make ISFPs engage in more firsthand or hands-on experiences that will produce a more objective and easygoing attitude. ISFPs prefer to make decisions in a flexible and practical manner. However, if Se development falters during the teenage years, ISFPs can gradually become too superficial in judgment or apathetic in action.

ESFP

One of the two ‘extraverted sensing types’ (the other is the ESTP). The ESFP comprises 9.5 percent of the population, and is the third largest group. ESFPs are typically identified by their top two functions: Extraverted Sensing and Introverted Feeling. <br> Extraverted Sensing (Se) focuses on interesting environmental stimuli, responding quickly to sensory changes in the world. Se dominants seek a sense of engagement, pleasure, or excitement, therefore, they are naturally attuned to new opportunities for firsthand experiences that seem fun, intriguing, or exciting to them. Being spontaneous and quick to respond to change allows them to adapt fluidly and learn fast on the fly, easily putting negativity behind them to move on to new vistas. However, this also means that they may not take enough time to reflect on whether the experiences they pursue are meaningful for their long term development, perhaps becoming too impulsive or haphazard when decision making. When a person does not know how to use Se appropriately, they tend to develop an avoidant mindset because immediate escape is the easier path to take when faced with harsh difficulties or negative consequences. Healthy Se dominants tend to be good at taking advantage of shifting conditions and enjoy operating at peak “in the zone” mental and/or physical performance, often admired for their realness, resilience, or natural ease. <br> Healthy Introverted Feeling (Fi) development should make ESFPs ethical in setting boundaries that will help them avoid unhealthy or destructive behavior. ESFPs prefer to make decisions according to their personal values or what they are passionate about. However, if Fi development falters during the teenage years, ESFPs can gradually become too out of touch with themselves or irresponsible in action.

INTJ

One of the two ‘introverted intuitives’ (the INFJ is the other). The INTJ comprises 2.5 percent of the population, and ranks 15th out of the 16 types in terms of size. INTJs are typically identified by their top two functions: Introverted Intuition and Extraverted Thinking. <br> Introverted Intuition (Ni) processes contextual/conceptual information about how things are interrelated in hopes of being able to envision what is to come. Ni dominants seek a sense of personal direction, purpose, and deeper meaning in life, therefore, they are naturally attuned to “seeing through” to the fundamental root, essence, importance, or significance of things as a means to understand “the one true meaning” of events. Reflecting on complexities and implications as well as gathering multiple interpretations allows them to feel confident about how events will unfold and act accordingly. However, this process of conceptualizing means that they can easily become mentally disconnected from the world, perhaps too extreme in idealization or feeling at a loss when they can’t find a clear path to travel. When a person does not know how to use Ni appropriately, their perception of the world becomes distorted as they extract the wrong meaning from what they observe, unwittingly operating on false assumptions or problematic ideas about “truth” or “perfection”, even getting completely detached from reality when they only trust in their own murky impressions. Healthy Ni dominants tend to be good at interpreting possible meanings, implications, or complications, often admired for their insight, foresight, or wisdom when at their best. (Ni relies heavily on subconscious information processing, and its desire for certainty/closure tends to result in confusion of perception and reality, therefore, many NJs tend to be unaware of Ni activities until they learn about it.) <br> Healthy Exraverted Thinking (Te) development should make INTJs construct a deeper understanding about the exact standards and rules of conduct that will produce efficient and successful goal completion in the world. INTJs prefer to make categorical, definitive, and unambiguous decisions. However, if Te development falters during the teenage years, INTJs can gradually become too inflexible in attitude or ineffectual in action.

ENTJ

One of the two ‘extraverted thinking types’ (ESTJ is the other). The ENTJ comprises 3.5 percent of the population, and is tied for the 3rd least populated place (with the INFP, INTP, and ENFJ). ENTJs are typically identified by their top two functions: Extraverted Thinking and Introverted Intuition.<br>Extraverted Thinking (Te) focuses on external structures, using objective systematic standards to evaluate success/failure in the world. Te dominants spot problems quickly and seek to remedy them immediately, always wanting to be as effective as possible when taking action, therefore, they are naturally attuned to the “rules of the game” that are guaranteed to win desirable and efficient results. Being structured in thought and organized in action allows them to approach situations with a sense of proficiency and confidence, adroitly removing obstacles and reaching goals in a straightforward and linear fashion. However, this also means that they tend to have difficulty with situations that are ambiguous or not easily structured/measured/quantified, perhaps quick to feel frustrated or impatient when encountering confusion, failure, incompetence, or weakness. When a person does not know how to use Te appropriately, they tend to be too controlling or amoral in believing that the end justifies the means, incapable of appreciating the process because of only valuing results, perhaps jumping to conclusions too quickly or too easily tempted into taking harmful shortcuts. Healthy Te dominants tend to be good at tasks that require management or leadership behaviors, able to organize well and streamline plans, often admired for their strength and endurance in overcoming setbacks.<br>Healthy Introverted Intuition (Ni) development should make ENTJs reflective and learn ideas that will help them set and achieve ambitious life goals. ENTJs prefer to make decisive decisions that lead them directly towards long term ideals. However, if Ni development falters during the teenage years, ENTJs can gradually become unable to find meaningful purpose or too extreme in pursuing their goals.

INTP

One of the two ‘introverted thinking types’ (the other is the ISTP). The INTP comprises 3.5 percent of the population, and is tied for the third least populated place (with the INFP, ENFJ, and ENTJ). INTPs are typically identified by their top two functions: Introverted Thinking and Extraverted Intuition.<br>Introverted Thinking (Ti) evaluates information according to precise cause-and-effect formulas, seeking coherence among beliefs, consistency in decision making, and accuracy in calculating probabilities. Ti dominants seek to construct a self-sufficient mental model of situations, therefore, they are naturally inclined to systematize information and critically excise any data that seems to them to be irrelevant, inaccurate, unreliable, false, contradictory, invalid, or emotionally biased. Being patient in skill building, accumulating technical/formulaic expertise, and analyzing and deconstructing systems allows them to navigate the world with independence, confidence, and competence. However, this also means that they tend to overvalue the notion of individual “intelligence” and undervalue other important aspects of life that they deem to be “irrational” or “irrelevant” to their interests. When a person does not know how to use Ti appropriately, they tend to be too reductive and unable to see the flaws in their own reasoning because of failing to understand other relevant perspectives, perhaps even excising human perspective altogether because it is defined as unuseful or detrimental to sound judgment. Healthy Ti dominants tend to be good at critical systems analysis and correcting their bad judgments as new evidence arises, able to come up with well-tailored solutions, and often admired for their measured and capable approach to problems.<br>Healthy Extraverted Intuition (Ne) development should make INTPs visualize more possibilities that will produce an optimistic and well-rounded mental model of the world. INTPs prefer to explore many conceptual possibilities and tend to show patience in decision making. However, if Ne development falters during the teenage years, INTPs can gradually become too unrealistic in judgment or impractical in action.

ENTP

One of the two ‘extraverted intuitives’ (the ENFP is the other). The ENTP comprises 4.5 percent of the population, and is both the 8th least populated and 9th most populated group. ENTPs are typically identified by their top two functions: Extraverted Intuition and Introverted Thinking.<br>Extraverted Intuition (Ne) focuses on discovering new abstract possibilities in the world, looking through physical objects to visualize the potential that they possess. Ne dominants seek a sense of continuous inspiration, therefore, they are naturally attuned to good ideas, prone to having a head full of thoughts and willing to go wherever ideas take them. Wanting to connect with the best of people or the world allows them to live life with a sense of hope and freedom, feeling eager to actualize potential for progress or improvement. However, this also means that they can be easily distracted by any random idea that grabs their attention, which might lead to them failing to carry out tasks through to completion or frequently suffering “greener pasture syndrome” in not valuing the progress that they have already made. When a person does not know how to use Ne appropriately, they tend to waste time being unfocused in chasing immediate mental stimulation, unable to achieve the tangible progress that they desire in life due to being impatient, disorderly, or careless with details. Healthy Ne dominants tend to be good at visualizing and catalyzing new trends for positive change, often admired for their creativity or optimism.<br>Healthy Introverted Thinking (Ti) development should make ENTPs patient in calculating the behavior that will help them successfully realize the positive possibilities they visualize. ENTPs prefer to make logical and objective decisions as quickly as possible. However, if Ti development falters during the teenage years, ENTPs can gradually become too careless in attitude or prone to repeating mistakes.

INFJ

One of the two ‘introverted intuitives’ (the INTJ is the other). The INFJ comprises two percent of the population, and is the least populated group. INFJs are typically identified by their top two functions: Introverted Intuition and Extraverted Feeling. <br> Introverted Intuition (Ni) processes contextual/conceptual information about how things are interrelated in hopes of being able to envision what is to come. Ni dominants seek a sense of personal direction, purpose, and deeper meaning in life, therefore, they are naturally attuned to “seeing through” to the fundamental root, essence, importance, or significance of things as a means to understand “the one true meaning” of events. Reflecting on complexities and implications as well as gathering multiple interpretations allows them to feel confident about how events will unfold and act accordingly. However, this process of conceptualizing means that they can easily become mentally disconnected from the world, perhaps too extreme in idealization or feeling at a loss when they can’t find a clear path to travel. When a person does not know how to use Ni appropriately, their perception of the world becomes distorted as they extract the wrong meaning from what they observe, unwittingly operating on false assumptions or problematic ideas about “truth” or “perfection”, even getting completely detached from reality when they only trust in their own murky impressions. Healthy Ni dominants tend to be good at interpreting possible meanings, implications, or complications, often admired for their insight, foresight, or wisdom when at their best. (Ni relies heavily on subconscious information processing, and its desire for certainty/closure tends to result in confusion of perception and reality, therefore, many NJs tend to be unaware of Ni activities until they learn about it.)<br>Healthy Extraverted Feeling (Fe) development should make INFJs establish a deeper understanding about people and human motivation that will produce a fulfilling social support system. INFJs prefer to make decisions that foster care, compassion, harmony, and cooperation. However, if Fe development falters during the teenage years, INFJs can gradually become too fearful of relational intimacy or oversensitive to the influence of others.\

ENFJ

One of the two ‘extraverted feeling types’ (the other is the ESFJ). The ENFJ comprises 4 percent of the population, and is the seventh least populated group. ENFJs are typically identified by their top two functions: Extraverted Feeling and Introverted Intuition.<br>Extraverted Feeling (Fe) focuses on social organization, using objective collective values to evaluate one’s position in the world. Fe dominants seek to build harmonious relationship and reduce interpersonal conflict, therefore, they are naturally attuned to the needs and feelings of others, trying to use that information to navigate social situations successfully. Establishing a good social network allows them to feel emotionally supported, appreciated for their contributions, and confident upon achieving acceptance. However, this also means that they tend to be too easily influenced by social factors, perhaps becoming overdependent on external sources for self-esteem or moral direction, sometimes feeling tempted to sacrifice too much for the sake of social approval or “the greater good”. When a person does not know how to use Fe appropriately, they tend to be insecure and have difficulty separating the self from others, frequently feeling torn between preserving independence versus honoring social roles/responsibilities. Healthy Fe dominants tend to be good at addressing relationship/social issues and promoting a sense of unity/belonging, often admired for their social grace, helpful attitude, or willingness to provide moral/emotional support to others.<br>Healthy Introverted Intuition (Ni) development should make ENFJs reflective and learn ideas that will help them improve relationships or society at large. ENFJs prefer to make decisive decisions that lead them directly towards long term ideals. However, if Ni development falters during the teenage years, ENFJs can gradually become unable to find meaningful purpose or too extreme in pursuing their goals.

INFP

One of the two ‘introverted feeling’ types (the ISFP is the other). The INFP comprises 3.5 percent of the population, and ties the INTP, ENFJ, and ENTJ for the third 'least populated’ spot amongst the 16. INFPs are typically identified by their top two functions: Introverted Feeling and Extraverted Intuition.<br>Introverted Feeling (Fi) evaluates information through individual identity, using instinctive feeling-based values to draw strict moral boundaries for clear decision making. Fi dominants seek inner harmony, therefore, they strive to maintain congruency between their feelings, values, and actions, often quick to judge what is “good”/“bad” and wanting to relieve any suffering they encounter. Successfully establishing congruency allows them to express their personal identity authentically (oftentimes through artistic pursuits) and to stand up for their beliefs even in the face of opposition; thus, when at their best, they can often be counted upon to protect the integrity of individuals in order to allow everyone the freedom to be themselves. However, this also means that they tend to have difficulty acting against their strong feelings and opinions, perhaps unable to accomplish tasks or integrate well with the environment because of being held back by an overly individualistic mindset. When a person does not know how to use Fi appropriately, their attitude about life becomes unstable as their judgment or motivation tends to waver any time their feelings waver, prone to being too subjective in how they evaluate (moral) worth. Healthy Fi dominants tend to be good at defending moral causes and protecting individual rights and freedoms, often admired for their unconventionality, sincerity, and integrity.<br>Healthy Extraverted Intuition (Ne) development should make INFPs visualize more possibilities that will produce an optimistic and well-rounded attitude about life’s potential. INFPs prefer to explore many conceptual possibilities and tend to show patience in decision making. However, if Ne development falters during the teenage years, INFPs can gradually become too unrealistic in judgment or impractical in action.

ENFP

One of the two ‘extraverted intuitives’ (the ENTP is the other). The ENFP comprises 7.5 percent of the population, and is the fourth most populated group. ENFPs are typically identified by their top two functions: Extraverted Intuition and Introverted Feeling.<br>Extraverted Intuition (Ne) focuses on discovering new abstract possibilities in the world, looking through physical objects to visualize the potential that they possess. Ne dominants seek a sense of continuous inspiration, therefore, they are naturally attuned to good ideas, prone to having a head full of thoughts and willing to go wherever ideas take them. Wanting to connect with the best of people or the world allows them to live life with a sense of hope and freedom, feeling eager to actualize potential for progress or improvement. However, this also means that they can be easily distracted by any random idea that grabs their attention, which might lead to them failing to carry out tasks through to completion or frequently suffering “greener pasture syndrome” in not valuing the progress that they have already made. When a person does not know how to use Ne appropriately, they tend to waste time being unfocused in chasing immediate mental stimulation, unable to achieve the tangible progress that they desire in life due to being impatient, disorderly, or careless with details. Healthy Ne dominants tend to be good at visualizing and catalyzing new trends for positive change, often admired for their creativity or optimism.<br>Healthy Introverted Feeling (Fi) development should make ENFPs ethical in setting boundaries that will help them successfully realize the positive possibilities they visualize. ENFPs prefer to make decisions according to their personal values or what they are passionate about. However, if Fi development falters during the teenage years, ENFPs can gradually become too out of touch with themselves or irresponsible in action.

**Enneagram**

One

We have named personality type One **The Reformer** because Ones have a “sense of mission” that leads them to want to improve the world in various ways, using whatever degree of influence they have. They strive to overcome adversity—particularly moral adversity—so that the human spirit can shine through and make a difference. They strive after “higher values,” even at the cost of great personal sacrifice. <br>

History is full of Ones who have left comfortable lives to do something extraordinary because they felt that something higher was calling them. During the Second World War, Raoul Wallenburg left a comfortable middle-class life to work for the protection of thousands of European Jews from invading Nazis. In India, Gandhi left behind his wife and family and life as a successful lawyer to become an itinerant advocate of Indian independence and non-violent social changes. Joan of Arc left her village in France to restore the throne to the Dauphin and to expel the English from the country. The idealism of each of these Ones has inspired millions. <br>

Ones are people of practical action—they wish to be *useful* in the best sense of the word. On some level of consciousness, they feel that they “have a mission” to fulfill in life, if only to try their best to reduce the disorder they see in their environment. <br>

Although Ones have a strong sense of purpose, they also typically feel that they have to justify their actions to themselves, and often to others as well. This orientation causes Ones to spend a lot of time thinking about the consequences of their actions, as well as about how to keep from acting contrary to their convictions. Because of this, Ones often persuade themselves that they are “head” types, rationalists who proceed only on logic and objective truth. But, the real picture is somewhat different: *Ones are actually activists who are searching for an acceptable rationale for what they feel they must do*. They are people of instinct and passion who use convictions and judgments to control and direct themselves and their actions. <br>

In the effort to stay true to their principles, Ones resist being affected by their instinctual drives, consciously not giving in to them or expressing them too freely. The result is a personality type that has problems with repression, resistance, and aggression. They are usually seen by others as highly self- controlled, even rigid, although this is not how Ones experience themselves. It seems to them that they are sitting on a cauldron of passions and desires, and they had better “keep the lid on” lest they and everyone else around them regret it. <br>

Cassandra is a therapist in private practice who recalls the difficulty this caused her in her youth: “I remember in high school getting feedback that I had no feelings. Inside, I felt my feelings intensely and yet I just couldn’t let them out as intensely as I felt them. Even now, if I have a conflict with a friend and need to address an issue, I rehearse ahead of time how to express clearly what I want, need, and observe, and yet not be harsh or blaming in my anger which is often scathing.”<br>Ones believe that being strict with themselves (and eventually becoming “perfect”) will justify them in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. But by attempting to create their own brand of perfection, they often create their own personal hell. Instead of agreeing with the statement in Genesis that God saw what He had created, “and it was good,” Ones intensely feel that “It wasn’t—there obviously have been some mistakes here!” This orientation makes it difficult for them to trust their inner guidance—indeed, to trust life—so Ones come to rely heavily on their superego, a learned voice from their childhood, to guide them toward “the greater good” which they so passionately seek. When Ones have gotten completely entranced in their personality, there is little distinction between them and this severe, unforgiving voice. Separating from it and seeing its genuine strengths and limitations is what growth for Ones is about.

Two

We have named personality type Two The Helper because people of this type are either the most genuinely helpful to other people or, when they are less healthy they are the most highly invested in seeing themselves as helpful. Being generous and going out of their way for others makes Twos feel that theirs is the richest, most meaningful way to live. The love and concern they feel—and the genuine good they do—warms their hearts and makes them feel worthwhile. Twos are most interested in what they feel to be the “really, really good” things in life—love, closeness, sharing, family, and friendship.<br>

Louise is a minister who shares the joy she finds in being a Two: “I cannot imagine being another type and I would not want to be another type. I like being involved in peoples’ lives. I like feeling compassionate, caring, nurturing. I like cooking and homemaking. I like having the confidence that anyone can tell me anything about themselves and I will be able to love them….I am really proud of myself and love myself for being able to be with people where they are. I really can, and do, love people, pets, and things. And I am a great cook!”<br>

When Twos are healthy and in balance, they really are loving, helpful, generous, and considerate. People are drawn to them like bees to honey. Healthy Twos warm others in the glow of their hearts. They enliven others with their appreciation and attention, helping people to see positive qualities in themselves that they had not previously recognized. In short, healthy Twos are the embodiment of “the good parent” that everyone wishes they had: someone who sees them as they are, understands them with immense compassion, helps and encourages with infinite patience, and is always willing to lend a hand—while knowing precisely how and when to let go. Healthy Twos open our hearts because theirs are already so open and they show us the way to be more deeply and richly human.<br>

Louise continues: “All of my jobs revolved around helping people. I was a teacher who wanted to be sensitive to children and help them get off to a good start. I was a religious education director in a number of parishes. I thought that if people learned about the spiritual life, they’d be happier…The most important part of my life is my spiritual life. I was in a religious community for ten years. I married a former priest, and we both have our spirituality as the basis of our life together.”<br>

However, Twos’ inner development may be limited by their “shadow side”—pride, self-deception, the tendency to become over-involved in the lives of others, and the tendency to manipulate others to get their own emotional needs met. Transformational work entails going into dark places in ourselves, and this very much goes against the grain of the Two’s personality structure, which prefers to see itself in only the most positive, glowing terms.<br>

Perhaps the biggest obstacle facing Twos, Threes, and Fours in their inner work is having to face their underlying Center fear of worthlessness. Beneath the surface, all three types fear that they are without value in themselves, and so they must be or do something extraordinary in order to win love and acceptance from others. In the average to unhealthy Levels, Twos present a false image of being completely generous and unselfish and of not wanting any kind of pay-off for themselves, when in fact, they can have enormous expectations and unacknowledged emotional needs.<br>

Average to unhealthy Twos seek validation of their worth by obeying their superego’s demands to sacrifice themselves for others. They believe they must always put others first and be loving and unselfish if they want to get love. The problem is that “putting others first” makes Twos secretly angry and resentful, feelings they work hard to repress or deny. Nevertheless, they eventually erupt in various ways, disrupting Twos’ relationships and revealing the inauthenticity of many of the average to unhealthy Two’s claims about themselves and the depth of their “love.”<br>

But in the healthy range, the picture is completely different. My own (Don's) maternal grandmother was an archetypal Two. During World War II, she was “Moms” to what seemed like half of Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi, feeding the boys, allowing her home to be used as a “home away from home,” giving advice and consolation to anyone lonely or fearful about going to war. Although she and her husband were not wealthy and had two teenage children of their own, she cooked extra meals for the servicemen, put them up at night, and saw to it that their uniforms had all of their buttons and were well pressed. She lived until her 80’s, remembering those years as the happiest and most fulfilling of her life—probably because her healthy Two capacities were so fully and richly engaged.

Three

We have named personality type Three The Achiever because when they are healthy, Threes really can and do achieve great things in the world. They are the "stars" of human nature, and people often look up to them because of their graciousness and personal accomplishments. Healthy Threes know how good it feels to develop themselves and contribute their abilities to the world, and also enjoy motivating others to greater personal achievements than others thought they were capable of. They are usually well regarded and popular among their peers, the type of person who is frequently voted “class president" or “home coming queen” because people feel they want to be associated with this kind of person who acts as a stand-in for them. Healthy Threes embody the best in a culture, and others are able to see their hopes and dreams mirrored in them.<br>

Threes are often successful and well liked because, of all the types, they most believe in themselves and in developing their talents and capacities. Threes act as living “role models” and paragons because of their extraordinary embodiment of socially valued qualities. Healthy Threes know that they are worth the effort it takes to be “the best that they can be.” Their success at doing so inspires others to invest in their own self-development.<br>

Threes want to make sure their lives are a success, however that is defined by their family, their culture, and their social sphere. In some families, success means having a lot of money, a grand house, a new, expensive car, and other status symbols. Others value ideas, and success to them means distinguishing oneself in academic or scientific worlds. Success in other circles might mean becoming famous as an actor, or model, or writer, or as a public figure of some kind, perhaps as a politician. A religious family might encourage a child to become a minister, priest, or rabbi since these professions have status in their community and in the eyes of the family. No matter how success is defined, Threes will try to become somebody noteworthy in their family and their community. They will not be a “nobody.”<br>

To this end, Threes learn to perform in ways that will garner them praise and positive attention. As children, they learned to recognize the activities that were valued by their parents or peers, and put their energies into excelling in those activities. Threes also learned how to cultivate and develop whatever about them is attractive or potentially impressive. <br>

Eve is a successful business-woman: “My mother trained me to perform. I was about three when I performed my first solo in front of the church congregation. I got a lot of positive strokes for that and went on to perform in front of audiences throughout high school, either through music or debate. To this day, something mystical happens to me when I get in front of an audience. I ‘turn it on.’ I am called on frequently as a public speaker and some of my professional colleagues say that they hate following me on the program because I am such a hard act to follow!”<br>

Everyone needs attention, encouragement, and the affirmation of their value in order to thrive, and Threes are the type which most exemplifies this universal human need. Threes want success not so much for the things that success will buy (like Sevens), or for the power and feeling of independence that it will bring (like Eights). They want success because they are afraid of disappearing into a chasm of emptiness and worthlessness: without the increased attention and feeling of accomplishment which success usually brings, Threes fear that they are nobody and have no value.<br>

The problem is that, in the headlong rush to achieve whatever they believe will make them more valuable, Threes can become so alienated from themselves that they no longer know what they truly want, or what their real feelings or interests are. In this state, they are easy prey to self–deception, deceit, and falseness of all kinds. Thus, the deeper problem is that their search for a way to be of value increasingly takes them further away from their own Essential Self with its core of real value. From their earliest years, as Threes become dependent on receiving attention from others and in pursuing the values that others reward, they gradually lose touch with themselves. Step by step, their own inner core, their “heart’s desire,” is left behind until they no longer recognize it.<br>

Thus, while they are the primary type in the Feeling Center, Threes, interestingly, are not known as “feeling” people; rather, they are people of action and achievement. It is as if they “put their feelings in a box” so that they can get ahead with what they want to achieve. Threes have come to believe that emotions get in the way of their performance, so they substitute thinking and practical action for feelings.<br>

Jarvis is a well-educated and accomplished business professional; he sees that this pattern developed in him at an early age: “I had no conscious awareness of this at the time, but when I was a child, I wasn’t allowed to have my feelings at all. They counted for nothing in the framework of my stepfather’s concept of what it took to be successful. I developed the habit of denying my feelings and instead focused on performing and getting good marks in school.”<br>

Threes report that when they realize to what extent they have adapted their lives to the expectations of others, the question arises, “Well, then, what do I want?” They often simply did not know; it was not a question that had ever come up before. Thus, the fundamental dilemma of Threes is that they have not been allowed to be who they really are and to manifest their own authentic qualities. At a young age, they got the message that they were not allowed to have feelings and be themselves: they must, in effect, be someone else to be accepted. To some degree, all of the personality types have been sent the same message, but because of their particular background and makeup, Threes not only heard it, they began to live by it. The attention they received by performing in a certain way was their oxygen, and they needed it to breathe. Unfortunately, it came at a high price.<br>

Marie, a skilled therapist describes the contradiction—and the pressure—of this orientation: “For most of my life, people always noticed when I was involved in any kind of activity, and they have usually looked to me for some sort of direction. This has been a two-edged sword because while I wanted to be noticed and approved, the burden was that I had to be perfect—and that was tough.”

Four

We have named this type The Individualist because Fours maintain their identity by seeing themselves as fundamentally different from others. Fours feel that they are unlike other human beings, and consequently, that no one can understand them or love them adequately. They often see themselves as uniquely talented, possessing special, one-of-a-kind gifts, but also as uniquely disadvantaged or flawed. More than any other type, Fours are acutely aware of and focused on their personal differences and deficiencies.<br>

Healthy Fours are honest with themselves: they own all of their feelings and can look at their motives, contradictions, and emotional conflicts without denying or whitewashing them. They may not necessarily like what they discover, but they do not try to rationalize their states, nor do they try to hide them from themselves or others. They are not afraid to see themselves “warts and all.” Healthy Fours are willing to reveal highly personal and potentially shameful things about themselves because they are determined to understand the truth of their experience—so that they can discover who they are and come to terms with their emotional history. This ability also enables Fours to endure suffering with a quiet strength. Their familiarity with their own darker nature makes it easier for them to process painful experiences that might overwhelm other types.<br>

Nevertheless, Fours often report that they feel they are missing something in themselves, although they may have difficulty identifying exactly what that “something” is. Is it will power? Social ease? Self-confidence? Emotional tranquility?—all of which they see in others, seemingly in abundance. Given time and sufficient perspective, Fours generally recognize that they are unsure about aspects of their self-image—their personality or ego-structure itself. They feel that they lack a clear and stable identity, particularly a social persona that they feel comfortable with.<br>

While it is true that Fours often feel different from others, they do not really want to be alone. They may feel socially awkward or self-conscious, but they deeply wish to connect with people who understand them and their feelings. The “romantics” of the Enneagram, they long for someone to come into their lives and appreciate the secret self that they have privately nurtured and hidden from the world. If, over time, such validation remains out of reach, Fours begin to build their identity around how unlike everyone else they are. The outsider therefore comforts herself by becoming an insistent individualist: everything must be done on her own, in her own way, on her own terms. Fours’ mantra becomes “I am myself. Nobody understands me. I am different and special,” while they secretly wish they could enjoy the easiness and confidence that others seem to enjoy.<br>

Fours typically have problems with a negative self-image and chronically low self-esteem. They attempt to compensate for this by cultivating a Fantasy Self—an idealized self-image which is built up primarily in their imaginations. A Four we know shared with us that he spent most of his spare time listening to classical music while fantasizing about being a great concert pianist—à la Vladimir Horowitz. Unfortunately, his commitment to practicing fell far short of his fantasized self-image, and he was often embarrassed when people asked him to play for them. His actual abilities, while not poor, became sources of shame.<br>

In the course of their lives, Fours may try several different identities on for size, basing them on styles, preferences, or qualities they find attractive in others. But underneath the surface, they still feel uncertain about who they really are. The problem is that they base their identity largely on their feelings. When Fours look inward they see a kaleidoscopic, ever-shifting pattern of emotional reactions. Indeed, Fours accurately perceive a truth about human nature—that it is dynamic and ever changing. But because they want to create a stable, reliable identity from their emotions, they attempt to cultivate only certain feelings while rejecting others. Some feelings are seen as “me,” while others are “not me.” By attempting to hold on to specific moods and express others, Fours believe that they are being true to themselves.<br>

One of the biggest challenges Fours face is learning to let go of feelings from the past; they tend to nurse wounds and hold onto negative feelings about those who have hurt them. Indeed, Fours can become so attached to longing and disappointment that they are unable to recognize the many treasures in their lives.<br>

Leigh is a working mother who has struggled with these difficult feelings for many years: “I collapse when I am out in the world. I have had a trail of relationship disasters. I have hated my sister’s goodness—and hated goodness in general. I went years without joy in my life, just pretending to smile because real smiles would not come to me. I have had a constant longing for whatever I cannot have. My longings can never become fulfilled because I now realize that I am attached to ‘the longing’ and not to any specific end result.”<br>

There is a Sufi story that relates to this about an old dog that had been badly abused and was near starvation. One day, the dog found a bone, carried it to a safe spot, and started gnawing away. The dog was so hungry that it chewed on the bone for a long time and got every last bit of nourishment that it could out of it. After some time, a kind old man noticed the dog and its pathetic scrap and began quietly setting food out for it. But the poor hound was so attached to its bone that it refused to let go of it and soon starved to death.<br>

Fours are in the same predicament. As long as they believe that there is something fundamentally wrong with them, they cannot allow themselves to experience or enjoy their many good qualities. To acknowledge their good qualities would be to lose their sense of identity (as a suffering victim) and to be without a relatively consistent personal identity (their Basic Fear). Fours grow by learning to see that much of their story is not true—or at least it is not true any more. The old feelings begin to fall away once they stop telling themselves their old tale: it is irrelevant to who they are right now.

Five

We have named personality type Five *The Investigator* because, more than any other type, Fives want to find out why things are the way they are. They want to understand how the world works, whether it is the cosmos, the microscopic world, the animal, vegetable, or mineral kingdoms—or the inner world of their imaginations. They are always searching, asking questions, and delving into things in depth. They do not accept received opinions and doctrines, feeling a strong need to test the truth of most assumptions for themselves.<br>

John, a graphic artist, describes this approach to life: “Being a Five means always needing to learn, to take in information about the world. A day without learning is like a day without ‘sunshine.’ As a Five, I want to have an understanding of life. I like having a theoretical explanation about why things happen as they do. This understanding makes me feel in charge and in control. I most often learn from a distance as an observer and not a participant. Sometimes, it seems that understanding life is as good as living it. It is a difficult journey to learn that life must be lived and not just studied.”<br>

Behind Fives’ relentless pursuit of knowledge are deep insecurities about their ability to function successfully in the world. *Fives feel that they do not have an ability to do things as well as others*. But rather than engage directly with activities that might bolster their confidence, Fives “take a step back” into their minds where they feel more capable. Their belief is that from the safety of their minds they will eventually figure out how to do things—and one day rejoin the world.<br>

Fives spend a lot of time observing and contemplating—listening to the sounds of wind or of a synthesizer, or taking notes on the activities in an anthill in their back yard. As they immerse themselves in their observations, they begin to internalize their knowledge and gain a feeling of self-confidence. They can then go out and play a piece on the synthesizer or tell people what they know about ants. They may also stumble across exciting new information or make new creative combinations (playing a piece of music based on recordings of wind and water). When they get verification of their observations and hypotheses, or see that others understand their work, it is a confirmation of their competency, and this fulfills their Basic Desire. (“You know what you are talking about.”)<br>

Knowledge, understanding, and insight are thus highly valued by Fives, because their identity is built around “having ideas” and being someone who has something unusual and insightful to say. For this reason, Fives are not interested in exploring what is already familiar and well-established; rather, their attention is drawn to the unusual, the overlooked, the secret, the occult, the bizarre, the fantastic, the “unthinkable.” Investigating "unknown territory"—knowing something that others do not know, or creating something that no one has ever experienced—allows Fives to have a niche for themselves that no one else occupies. They believe that developing this niche is the best way that they can attain independence and confidence.<br>

Thus, for their own security and self-esteem, Fives need to have at least one area in which they have a degree of expertise that will allow them to feel capable and connected with the world. Fives think, “I am going to find something that I can do really well, and then I will be able to meet the challenges of life. But I can’t have other things distracting me or getting in the way.” They therefore develop an intense focus on whatever they can master and feel secure about. It may be the world of mathematics, or the world of rock and roll, or classical music, or car mechanics, or horror and science fiction, or a world entirely created in their imagination. Not all Fives are scholars or Ph.Ds. But, depending on their intelligence and the resources available to them, they focus intensely on mastering something that has captured their interest.<br>

For better or worse, the areas that Fives explore do not depend on social validation; indeed, if others agree with their ideas too readily, Fives tend to fear that their ideas might be too conventional. History is full of famous Fives who overturned accepted ways of understanding or doing things (Darwin, Einstein, Nietzsche). Many more Fives, however, have become lost in the byzantine complexities of their own thought processes, becoming merely eccentric and socially isolated.<br>

The intense focus of Fives can thus lead to remarkable discoveries and innovations, but when the personality is more fixated, it can also create self-defeating problems. This is because their focus of attention unwittingly serves to distract them from their most pressing practical problems. Whatever the sources of their anxieties may be—relationships, lack of physical strength, inability to gain employment, and so forth—average Fives tend not to deal with these issues. Rather, they find something else to do that will make them feel more competent. The irony is that no matter what degree of mastery they develop in their area of expertise, this cannot solve their more basic insecurities about functioning in the world. For example, as a marine biologist, a Five could learn everything there is to know about a type of shellfish, but if her fear is that she is never going to be able to run her own household adequately, she will not have solved her underlying anxiety.<br>

Dealing directly with physical matters can feel extremely daunting for Fives. Henry is a life scientist working in a major medical research lab: “Since I was a child, I have shied away from sports and strenuous physical activity whenever possible. I was never able to climb the ropes in gym class, stopped participating in sports as soon as it was feasible, and the smell of a gymnasium still makes me uncomfortable. At the same time, I have always had a very active mental life. I learned to read at the age of three, and in school I was always one of the smartest kids in academic subjects.”<br>

Thus, much of their time gets spent "collecting" and developing ideas and skills they believe will make them feel confident and prepared. They want to retain everything that they have learned and “carry it around in their heads.” The problem is that while they are engrossed in this process, they are not interacting with others or even increasing many other practical and social skills. They devote more and more time to collecting and attending to their collections, less to anything related to their real needs.<br>

Thus, the challenge to Fives is to understand that they can pursue whatever questions or problems spark their imaginations *and* maintain relationships, take proper care of themselves, and do all of the things that are the hallmarks of a healthy life.

Six

We have named personality type Six The Loyalist because, of all the personality types, Sixes are the most loyal to their friends and to their beliefs. They will “go down with the ship” and hang on to relationships of all kinds far longer than most other types. Sixes are also loyal to ideas, systems, and beliefs—even to the belief that all ideas or authorities should be questioned or defied. Indeed, not all Sixes go along with the “status quo”: their beliefs may be rebellious and anti-authoritarian, even revolutionary. In any case, they will typically fight for their beliefs more fiercely than they will fight for themselves, and they will defend their community or family more tenaciously than they will defend themselves.<br>

The reason Sixes are so loyal to others is that they do not want to be abandoned and left without support—their Basic Fear. Thus, the central issue for type Six is a failure of self-confidence. Sixes come to believe that they do not possess the internal resources to handle life’s challenges and vagaries alone, and so increasingly rely on structures, allies, beliefs, and supports outside themselves for guidance to survive. If suitable structures do not exist, they will help create and maintain them.<br>

Sixes are the primary type in the Thinking Center, meaning that they have the most trouble contacting their own inner guidance. As a result, they do not have confidence in their own minds and judgments. This does not mean that they do not think. On the contrary, they think—and worry—a lot! They also tend to fear making important decisions, although at the same time, they resist having anyone else make decisions for them. They want to avoid being controlled, but are also afraid of taking responsibility in a way that might put them “in the line of fire.” (The old Japanese adage that says, “The blade of grass that grows too high gets chopped off” relates to this idea.)<br>

Sixes are always aware of their anxieties and are always looking for ways to construct “social security” bulwarks against them. If Sixes feel that they have sufficient back up, they can move forward with some degree of confidence. But if that crumbles, they become anxious and self-doubting, reawakening their Basic Fear. (“I’m on my own! What am I going to do now?”) A good question for Sixes might therefore be: “When will I know that I have enough security?” Or, to get right to the heart of it, “What is security?” Without Essential inner guidance and the deep sense of support that it brings, Sixes are constantly struggling to find firm ground.<br>

Sixes attempt to build a network of trust over a background of unsteadiness and fear. They are often filled with a nameless anxiety and then try to find or create reasons why. Wanting to feel that there is something solid and clear-cut in their lives, they can become attached to explanations or positions that seem to explain their situation. Because “belief” (trust, faith, convictions, positions) is difficult for Sixes to achieve, and because it is so important to their sense of stability, once they establish a trustworthy belief, they do not easily question it, nor do they want others to do so. The same is true for individuals in a Six’s life: once Sixes feel they can trust someone, they go to great lengths to maintain connections with the person who acts as a sounding board, a mentor, or a regulator for the Six’s emotional reactions and behavior. They therefore do everything in their power to keep their affiliations going. (“If I don’t trust myself, then I have to find something in this world I can trust.”)<br>

Although intelligent and accomplished, Connie still has to wrestle with the self-doubt of her type: “As my anxiety has come under control, so has my need to ‘check out’ everything with my friends. I used to have to get the nod of approval from several hundred (just joking!) ‘authorities.’ About nearly every decision would involve a council of my friends. I usually would do this one on one: ‘What do you think, Mary?’ ‘If I do this, then that might happen.’ Please make up my mind for me!’…Recently, I’ve narrowed my authorities to just one or two trusted friends, and on occasion, I’ve actually made up my own mind!“<br>

Until they can get in touch with their own inner guidance, Sixes are like a ping-pong ball that is constantly shuttling back and forth between whatever influence is hitting the hardest in any given moment. Because of this reactivity, no matter what we say about Sixes, the opposite is often also as true. They are both strong and weak, fearful and courageous, trusting and distrusting, defenders and provokers, sweet and sour, aggressive and passive, bullies and weaklings, on the defensive and on the offensive, thinkers and doers, group people and soloists, believers and doubters, cooperative and obstructionistic, tender and mean, generous and petty—and on and on. It is the contradictory picture that is the characteristic “fingerprint” of Sixes, the fact that they are a bundle of opposites.<br>

The biggest problem for Sixes is that they try to build safety in the environment without resolving their own emotional insecurities. When they learn to face their anxieties, however, Sixes understand that although the world is always changing and is, by nature uncertain, they can be serene and courageous in any circumstance. And they can attain the greatest gift of all, a sense of peace with themselves despite the uncertainties of life.

Seven

We have named this personality type The Enthusiast because Sevens are enthusiastic about almost everything that catches their attention. They approach life with curiosity, optimism, and a sense of adventure, like “kids in a candy store” who look at the world in wide-eyed, rapt anticipation of all the good things they are about to experience. They are bold and vivacious, pursuing what they want in life with a cheerful determination. They have a quality best described by the Yiddish word “chutzpah”—a kind of brash “nerviness.”<br>

Although Sevens are in the Thinking Center, this is not immediately apparent because they tend to be extremely practical and engaged in a multitude of projects at any given time. Their thinking is anticipatory: they foresee events and generate ideas “on the fly,” favoring activities that stimulate their minds—which in turn generate more things to do and think about. Sevens are not necessarily intellectual or studious by any standard definition, although they are often intelligent and can be widely read and highly verbal. Their minds move rapidly from one idea to the next, making Sevens gifted at brainstorming and synthesizing information. Sevens are exhilarated by the rush of ideas and by the pleasure of being spontaneous, preferring broad overviews and the excitement of the initial stages of the creative process to probing a single topic in depth.<br>

Devon, a successful business woman, shares with us some of the inner workings of her Seven mindset: “I am definitely a list person. It’s not really for memory since I have a great memory. It’s more for down-loading information so that my mind won’t spin on it. For example, I was at a concert where the tickets were hard to get and very expensive. I couldn’t sit through it. My mind was torturing me with the things I needed to do. Finally, I had to get up and leave. This was very upsetting to the person I went with and I missed a good show.”<br>

Sevens are frequently endowed with quick, agile minds, and can be exceptionally fast learners. This is true both of their ability to absorb information (language, facts, and procedures) and their ability to learn new manual skills—they tend to have excellent mind-body coordination, and manual dexterity (typewriting, piano playing, tennis). All of this can combine to make a Seven into the quintessential "Renaissance person."<br>

Ironically, Sevens' wide-ranging curiosity and ability to learn quickly can also create problems for them. Because they are able to pick up many different skills with relative ease, it becomes more difficult for them to decide what to do with themselves. As a result, they also do not always value their abilities as they would if they had to struggle to gain them. When Sevens are more balanced however, their versatility, curiosity, and ability to learn can lead them to extraordinary achievement.<br>

The root of their problem is common to all of the types of the Thinking Center: they are out of touch with the inner guidance and support of their Essential nature. As with Fives and Sixes, this creates a deep anxiety in Sevens. They do not feel that they know what to do or how to make choices that will be beneficial to themselves and others. Sevens cope with this anxiety in two ways. First, they try to keep their minds busy all of the time. As long as Sevens can keep their minds occupied, especially with projects and positive ideas for the future, they can, to some extent, keep anxiety and negative feelings out of conscious awareness. Likewise, since their thinking is stimulated by activity, Sevens are compelled to stay on the go, moving from one experience to the next, searching for more stimulation. This is not to say that Sevens are "spinning their wheels." They generally enjoy being practical and getting things done.<br>

Frances, a successful business consultant, sounds more energetic than is humanly possible—and yet, she is a typical Seven: “I am highly, highly productive. At the office, I am joyful and my mind is running at its best. I might create several marketing campaigns for a client, work on the outline for an upcoming seminar, talk out a difficult problem with a client on the telephone, close two deals, make a project list, dictate a few letters and look up to see that it’s 9:30 a.m. and my assistant is coming in to start our work for the day.”<br>

Second, Sevens cope with the loss of Essential guidance by using the “trial and error” method: they try everything to make sure they know what is best. On a very deep level, Sevens do not feel that they can find what they really want in life. They therefore tend to try everything—and ultimately may even resort to anything as a substitute for what they are really looking for. (“If I can’t have what will really satisfy me, I’ll enjoy myself anyway. I’ll have all kinds of experiences—that way I will not feel bad about not getting what I really want.”)<br>

We can see this in action even in the most trivial areas of their daily lives. Unable to decide whether he wants vanilla, chocolate, or strawberry ice cream, a Seven will want all three flavors—just to be sure that he does not miss out on the “right” choice. Having two weeks for a vacation and a desire to visit Europe brings a similar quandary. Which countries and cities to visit? Which sites to see? The Seven’s way of dealing with this will be to cram as many different countries, cities, and attractions into his vacation as possible. While they are scrambling after exciting experiences, the real object of their heart’s desire (their personal Rosebud, as it were) may be so deeply buried in their unconscious that they are never really aware of precisely what it is.<br>

Furthermore, as Sevens speed up their pursuit of whatever seems to offer freedom and satisfaction, they tend to make worse choices, and they are less able to be satisfied because everything is experienced indirectly, through the dense filter of their fast-paced mental activity. The result is that Sevens end up anxious, frustrated, and enraged, with fewer resources available to them physically, emotionally, or financially. They may end up ruining their health, their relationships, and their finances in their search for happiness.<br>

Gertrude is busy establishing her career and family now, but she looks back at how this tendency contributed to her getting a rough start in life: “There wasn’t anything to do at home or in the tiny Southern town I grew up in. I was dying to get out of it and go someplace more exciting. When I was 16, I started dating, and before long I got pregnant, but the father didn’t want to marry me—which was okay since I didn’t want to marry him, either. It wasn’t too long before I found somebody else, and we got married, and I got to move to a larger city. But it didn’t really work out the way I wanted because after I had the baby, we broke up and I had to move back home. I stayed there for a year or two to get my feet on the ground. When things were looking bleak, I married someone else. I’m 19 now and I guess I’ve done a lot already.”<br>

On the positive side, however, Sevens are extremely optimistic people—exuberant and upbeat. They are endowed with abundant vitality and a desire to fully participate in their lives each day. They are naturally cheerful and good humored, not taking themselves too seriously, or anything else for that matter. As we have seen, the Basic Desire of Sevens is to be satisfied, happy, and fulfilled, and when they are balanced within themselves, their joy and enthusiasm for life naturally affect everyone around them. They remind us of the pure pleasure of existence—the greatest gift of all.

Eight

We have named personality type Eight The Challenger because, of all the types, Eights enjoy taking on challenges themselves as well as giving others opportunities that challenge them to exceed themselves in some way. Eights are charismatic and have the physical and psychological capacities to persuade others to follow them into all kinds of endeavors—from starting a company, to rebuilding a city, to running a household, to waging war, to making peace.<br>

Eights have enormous willpower and vitality, and they feel most alive when they are exercising these capacities in the world. They use their abundant energy to effect changes in their environment—to “leave their mark" on it—but also to keep the environment, and especially other people, from hurting them and those they care about. At an early age, Eights understand that this requires strength, will, persistence, and endurance—qualities that they develop in themselves and which they look for in others.<br>

Thayer is a stockbroker who has worked intensively on understanding her type Eight personality. She recounts a childhood incident in which she could clearly see the development of this pattern: “Much of my tenacity and toughness comes from my Dad. He always told me not to ‘let anybody push you around.’ It was not okay to cry. I learned to master my weaker side early on. At the tender age of eight, a huge horse ran away with me. When an adult caught the horse, I resolutely dismounted without a tear. I could tell my father was proud.”<br>

Eights do not want to be controlled or to allow others to have power over them (their Basic Fear), whether the power is psychological, sexual, social, or financial. Much of their behavior is involved with making sure that they retain and increase whatever power they have for as long as possible. An Eight may be a general or a gardener, a small businessman or a mogul, the mother of a family or the superior of a religious community. No matter: being “in charge” and leaving their imprint on their sphere is uniquely characteristic of them.<br>

Eights are the true “rugged individualists” of the Enneagram. More than any other type, they stand alone. They want to be independent, and resist being indebted to anyone. They often refuse to “give in” to social convention, and they can defy fear, shame, and concern about the consequences of their actions. Although they are usually aware of what people think of them, they do not let the opinions of others sway them. They go about their business with a steely determination that can be awe inspiring, even intimidating to others.<br>

Although, to some extent, Eights fear physical harm, far more important is their fear of being disempowered or controlled in some way. Eights are extraordinarily tough and can absorb a great deal of physical punishment without complaint—a double-edged blessing since they often take their health and stamina for granted and overlook the health and well-being of others as well. Yet they are desperately afraid of being hurt emotionally and will use their physical strength to protect their feelings and keep others at a safe emotional distance. Beneath the tough façade is vulnerability, although it has been covered over by layer of emotional armor.<br>

Thus, Eights are often extremely industrious, but at the price of losing emotional contact with many of the people in their lives. Those close to them may become increasingly dissatisfied with this state of affairs, which confounds Eights. (“I don't understand what my family is complaining about. I bust my hump to provide for them. Why are they disappointed with me?”)<br>

When this happens, Eights feel misunderstood and may distance themselves further. In fact, beneath their imposing exterior, Eights often feel hurt and rejected, although this is something they seldom talk about because they have trouble admitting their vulnerability to themselves, let alone to anyone else. Because they fear that they will be rejected (divorced, humiliated, criticized, fired, or harmed in some way), Eights attempt to defend themselves by rejecting others first. The result is that average Eights become blocked in their ability to connect with people or to love since love gives the other power over them, reawakening their Basic Fear.<br>

The more Eights build up their egos in order to protect themselves, the more sensitive they become to any real or imaginary slight to their self-respect, authority, or preeminence. The more they attempt to make themselves impervious to hurt or pain (whether physical or emotional), the more they “shut down” emotionally to become hardened and rock-like.<br>

When Eights are emotionally healthy, however, they have a resourceful, “can-do” attitude as well as a steady inner drive. They take the initiative and make things happen with a great passion for life. They are honorable and authoritative—natural leaders who have a solid, commanding presence. Their groundedness gives them abundant “common sense” as well as the ability to be decisive. Eights are willing to “take the heat,” knowing that any decision cannot please everyone. But as much as possible, they want to look after the interests of the people in their charge without playing favorites. They use their talents and fortitude to construct a better world for everyone in their lives.

Nine

We have called personality type Nine The Peacemaker because no type is more devoted to the quest for internal and external peace for themselves and others. They are typically “spiritual seekers” who have a great yearning for connection with the cosmos, as well as with other people. They work to maintain their peace of mind just as they work to establish peace and harmony in their world. The issues encountered in the Nine are fundamental to all psychological and spiritual work—being awake versus falling asleep to our true nature; presence versus entrancement, openness versus blockage, tension versus relaxation, peace versus pain, union versus separation.<br>

Ironically, for a type so oriented to the spiritual world, Nine is the center of the Instinctive Center, and is the type that is potentially most grounded in the physical world and in their own bodies. The contradiction is resolved when we realize that Nines are either in touch with their instinctive qualities and have tremendous elemental power and personal magnetism, or they are cut off from their instinctual strengths and can be disengaged and remote, even lightweight.<br>

To compensate for being out of touch with their instinctual energies, Nines also retreat into their minds and their emotional fantasies. (This is why Nines can sometimes misidentify themselves as Fives and Sevens, “head types,” or as Twos and Fours, “feeling types.”) Furthermore, when their instinctive energies are out of balance, Nines use these very energies against themselves, damming up their own power so that everything in their psyches becomes static and inert. When their energy is not used, it stagnates like a spring-fed lake that becomes so full that its own weight dams up the springs that feed it. When Nines are in balance with their Instinctive Center and its energy, however, they are like a great river, carrying everything along with it effortlessly.<br>

We have sometimes called the Nine the crown of the Enneagram because it is at the top of the symbol and because it seems to include the whole of it. Nines can have the strength of Eights, the sense of fun and adventure of Sevens, the dutifulness of Sixes, the intellectualism of Fives, the creativity of Fours, the attractiveness of Threes, the generosity of Twos, and the idealism of Ones. However, what they generally do not have is a sense of really inhabiting themselves—a strong sense of their own identity.<br>

Ironically, therefore, the only type the Nine is not like is the Nine itself. Being a separate self, an individual who must assert herself against others, is terrifying to Nines. They would rather melt into someone else or quietly follow their idyllic daydreams.<br>

Red, a nationally known business consultant, comments on this tendency: “I am aware of focusing on other people, wondering what they are like, how and where they live, etc. In a relationship with others, I often give up my own agenda in favor of the other person’s. I have to be on guard about giving in to other’s demands and discounting my own legitimate needs.”<br>

Nines demonstrate the universal temptation to ignore the disturbing aspects of life and to seek some degree of peace and comfort by “numbing out.” They respond to pain and suffering by attempting to live in a state of premature peacefulness, whether it is in a state of false spiritual attainment, or in more gross denial. More than any other type, Nines demonstrate the tendency to run away from the paradoxes and tensions of life by attempting to transcend them or by seeking to find simple and painless solutions to their problems.<br>

To emphasize the pleasant in life is not a bad thing, of course—it is simply a limited and limiting approach to life. If Nines see the silver lining in every cloud as a way of protecting themselves from the cold and rain, other types have their distorting viewpoints, too. For example, Fours focus on their own woundedness and victimization, Ones on what is wrong with how things are, and so forth. By contrast, Nines tend to focus on the “bright side of life” so that their peace of mind will not be shaken. But rather than deny the dark side of life, what Nines must understand is that all of the perspectives presented by the other types are true, too. Nines must resist the urge to escape into “premature Buddhahood” or the “white light” of the Divine and away from the mundane world. They must remember that “the only way out is through.”