

Temperaments

"Understanding what makes you tick by recognizing your strengths, weaknesses and tendencies will help you learn what type of temperament will best complement yours in a dating or marriage relationship.

To begin, make two lists of traits that stand out in your life, positive traits on one side and negative traits on the other. Then look at the following lists and match the traits on your list with the corresponding traits to get an idea of your primary temperament and its strengths and weaknesses. Be aware that you may exhibit one temperament in public and another in private or in one- on-one settings.

After you've identified your primary temperament, see if you can identify a second, less dominant one. If you're dating, have your boyfriend also complete this exercise (separately), and then come together and share the information you glean. When you understand each other's temperaments — and are able to communicate about them — you can minimize misunderstandings and surprises as you move forward in your relationship.

Sanguine

Strengths

- cheerful
- compassionate
- talkative, expressive
- enthusiastic
- charming
- inspirational
- friendly
- carefree

Weaknesses

- weak-willed
- undisciplined, unorganized
- restless (when inactive)
- impulsive
- arrogant
- loud
- rude
- exaggerative
- impatient with tasks

Relationship Notes About the Sanguine

They love to be around people and can feel restless and unhappy when they aren't.

On a date night a sanguine might often say: "Let's go out!"

Qualities you'll love: Are inspirational and have a zest for life; see the glass as half-full; rarely down or depressed

Tendencies that might be difficult to deal with in marriage: May carelessly spend money; often talk without thinking first; hate housework; easily bored and distracted; apologize sincerely but rarely change the behavior

Highest hurdles: Impetuous and impulsive; undisciplined

Heart cry of the sanguine: “Look at me, love me, touch me, applaud me!”

Greatest fear: Disapproval

Scripture to help balance fears: “In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons . . . to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves” (Ephesians 1:5-6).

Melancholy

Strengths

- strong-minded, intellectual
- gifted
- thirst for learning
- sensitive
- perfectionist
- idealistic

- faithful friend
- persistent, self- sacrificing

Weaknesses

- inflexible
- introverted, withdrawn
- self-centered
- critical
- moody
- negative
- rebel
- vengeful

Relationship Notes About the Melancholy

They love intimacy and can feel anxious and unhappy when forced to spend time with lots of people.

On a date night a melancholy might often say: "Let's stay in!"

Qualities you'll love: Very responsible, dependable and loyal; idealistic, smart

Tendencies that might be difficult to deal with in marriage: Can be too critical; have a high demand for full disclosure, order and reliability

Highest hurdles: Learning how to overcome negative thinking and talk; improving self-esteem and insecurity

Heart cry of the melancholy: “I just need some space!”

Greatest fears: Rejection, financial instability, failure

Scripture to help balance fears: “Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ” (Galatians 1:10).

Choleric

Strengths

- strong-willed
- inspirational
- fast-paced
- determined
- independent
- intuitive

- personable, outgoing
- disciplined, efficient
- task-oriented
- confident leader

Weaknesses

- sarcastic
- domineering
- inconsiderate
- cruel when angry
- self-reliant
- unemotional
- proud

Relationship Notes About the Choleric

They are very strong and opinionated but can be insensitive and uncaring.

On a date night a choleric might often say: "Let's do whatever's practical!"

Qualities you'll love: Charming, inspirational, driven, a high-achieving visionary

Tendencies that might be difficult to deal with in marriage: Tend to dominate every conversation with their viewpoints; hot-tempered; work so hard they often burn out or get ill; unemotional; always right

Highest hurdles: Hardheadedness and self-will

Heart cry of the choleric: "Of course I'm right!"

Greatest fear: Being useless

Scripture to help balance fears: "By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work" (Genesis 2:2).

Phlegmatic

Strengths

- stable
- flexible
- calm
- efficient
- perfectionist
- practical

- peacemaker
- good sense of humor

Weaknesses

- slow-paced
- self-righteous
- stubborn to change
- fearful
- indecisive
- low-energy
- self-protective
- unmotivated, uninspired

Relationship Notes About the Phlegmatic

They are very easygoing but can be hard to motivate and low on energy.

On a date night a phlegmatic might often say: "Let's do whatever's easiest!"

Qualities you'll love: Calm, even when expressing anger; flexible

Tendencies that might be difficult to deal with in marriage: Tend to be cheapskates; can be sarcastic and stubborn; hate to get out of bed in the morning; love naps; do everything slowly and methodically; are often couch potatoes

Highest hurdles: Lack of motivation and procrastination

Heart cry of the phlegmatic: “Can’t we just get along?”

Greatest fear: A disturbance of their peace

Scripture to help balance fears: “You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you” (Isaiah 26:3).

Supine

Strengths

- servant-spirit
- relationship-oriented
- loves tasks
- gentle
- dependable
- loyal
- diligent

Weaknesses

- harbors anger
- indecisive
- manipulative
- weak-willed
- lacks initiative
- insecure

Relationship Notes About the Supine

They love to serve and are outgoing only if they feel liked and “invited in” by others.

On a date night a supine might often say: “Let’s do whatever you want to do.”

Qualities you’ll love: Self-sacrificing; gentle and humble

Tendencies that might be difficult to deal with in marriage: Tend to be indecisive; send mixed messages; have difficulty with confrontation that causes them to internalize anger and expect you to be a mind reader regarding what’s wrong

Highest hurdles: Learning how to express anger and other needs; overcoming a weak will

Heart cry of the supine: “Why doesn’t anyone appreciate me?”

Greatest fear: That others think they’re worthless

Scripture to help balance fears: “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God” (1 Peter 2:9).

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