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Desperately Seeking Perfection

By John Boe

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A working understanding of temperament styles (personality types) will have a profound impact on the way you perceive yourself and will greatly enhance all of your relationships. If you are a salesperson, this information will significantly increase your sales effectiveness by enabling you to build trust and rapport quickly with your prospects and customers. Business owners and managers find this knowledge invaluable. It can improve the way you supervise your employees and allow you to recruit more effectively. As a parent, it can dramatically improve the way you relate to your children. If you are single, it can provide you insight into selecting a compatible mate.

My temperament training system gives you the tools and knowledge to recognize a person's primary temperament style through observation. Each primary temperament style exhibits a body language preference and has distinctive physical features and characteristics that are not related to gender, race, or age. This is a significant breakthrough in the study of temperament understanding because it is a practical system that can be used with everyone you meet. My temperament training program allows you to put this information to use in your day-to-day encounters from the boardroom to the kitchen table.

Hippocrates, the father of medicine, has been credited with originating the basic theory of temperament styles twenty-four hundred years ago. Hippocrates believed that we are born with a combination of four genetic influences that he called humors; Choleric (Worker), Sanguine (Talker), Phlegmatic (Watcher), and Melancholy (Thinker). He observed that these four styles have a direct influence on our physiology, character traits and outlook on life. While we are each born with a primary temperament, our personality is comprised of all four styles. The order, in which these four styles appear in your individual profile, creates the degree of influence they have on your thinking. For example, you might have the Thinker as your primary temperament style and the Talker as your secondary with the Watcher and the Worker as your third and fourth influence. There are six combinations for each of the four primary temperament styles, which when combined, create a total of twenty-four individual temperament profiles. This article showcases the Melancholy/Thinker primary temperament style.

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The Thinker temperament style is the C, or Competent, in the D.I.S.C. temperament profiling system. Thinkers are introverted, private and shy by nature. They are logical and excellent problem solvers. Thinkers have an engineer's mentality, strong analytical skills and a need to appear competent. They fear making a mistake or having their work criticized. Thinkers are loyal, conscientious and show restraint in their day-to-day work. They are introspective, aloof, pessimistic and moody. Overcast weather conditions will aggravate their mood by harmonizing with their melancholy nature. Thinkers project their emotion internally, rather than externally like the extroverted Worker or Talker. The sensitive Thinker is traditional, romantic, and enjoys diverse interests such as; acting, art, astronomy, cooking or grilling, dancing, horseback riding, music, nature, photography, poetry, reading, singing, science, and sports. Thinkers like quality products and pride themselves on doing competent research before making a decision. They are not impulsive buyers. In fact, they are the most difficult temperament to sell to because of their frugal and skeptical nature. It would be extremely rare for a Thinker to purchase something without having to first, "think it over."

Thinkers have a compelling need for organization and order. They require time alone to plan and organize their activities and will normally work from a list. Thinkers love task accomplishment so much that they will add an already completed item to their list, just for the personal satisfaction of crossing it off. The ineffective management of time is one of the greatest stress factors for the efficient Thinker. They are good at planning their time, but have a tendency to pack too much into their day. Their unrealistic expectations and drive for perfection can cause stress and feelings of inadequacy. They frequently experience feelings of guilt when they fail to accomplish all they had planned to do. They are researchers by nature and become overwhelmed and bogged down in details and information, resulting in "paralysis through analysis." Their desire for perfection coupled with their need to avoid mistakes results in procrastination, which frequently leads to stress, anxiety, panic and depression.

Of the four primary temperament styles, the Thinker is the most susceptible to stress and depression. Under pressure their tendency is to become sarcastic, withdraw, worry excessively and want to quit. Their stress often manifests as migraine headaches and/or tension in the jaw, neck, shoulder and back. It is common for them to either grind their teeth or have TMJ. In his book, *The Mindbody Prescription*, Dr. John E. Sarno, "The Back Doctor" accurately describes the relationship between the Thinker's drive for perfection and stress:

"Virtually every patient I have seen in the course of my experience with pain syndromes has been to a greater or lesser degree perfectionistic. Patients who deny it then go on to describe how they are very fussy about neatness, cleanliness and other aspects of their lives. If they do not admit to being perfectionistic, they acknowledge that they are highly responsible, conscientious, concerned and prone to worry. They are usually ambitious, hard driving and self-critical; they set high standards of performance and behavior for themselves... I found that 88 percent of my pain patients had a history of minor gastrointestinal maladies such as heartburn, pre-ulcer symptoms, hiatus hernia, colitis, spastic colon, irritable bowel syndrome and other tension-induced reactions like tension headache, migraine headache, eczema and frequent urination. Although not all practitioners agree that these disorders are related to psychological or emotional phenomena, my clinical experience as a family physician and my own personal medical history made me quite comfortable with that conclusion... It was, therefore, logical to hypothesize that these back muscle pains might fall into the same group of emotionally induced physical disorders. When I put the idea to the test, by telling patients that I thought their pain

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was the result of "tension," I was astonished to observe that those who accepted the diagnosis got better. Those who rejected it remained unchanged."

The Thinker's self-discipline and sense of order may cause them to be routine and possibly ritualistic in their activities. This can result in compulsive behavior such as eating disorders or "cleaning fetishes." If taken to the extreme, these tendencies become obsessive-compulsive behaviors. Tony Randall, a Thinker, exemplifies this compulsiveness and exaggerates his own temperament by portraying the perfectionistic Felix in the TV sitcom, *The Odd Couple*. Thinkers are both health and appearance conscious and routinely exercise to the extreme. Because they strive for perfection, Thinkers are also susceptible to both anorexia and bulimia. Karen Carpenter and Princess Diana both battled this challenge. Thinkers can be difficult and demanding to please and rarely meet their own high standards. They are often their own worst critics. They will often berate themselves with guilt and blame for their perceived shortcomings. This critical outlook frequently manifests as negative self-talk. While self-criticism is necessary for personal growth, taken to the extreme, it becomes unhealthy and can lead to depression. Abe Lincoln, a Thinker, was plagued throughout his lifetime with bouts of depression. He was fond of saying, "man is about as happy as he makes his mind up to be."

Physical Features:

Thinkers will have a slightly darker cast and a more serious demeanor than the other three primary temperament styles. This darker cast is due to what Hippocrates labeled the "melancholy influence" in this style. This is the "dark" referred to in the phrase, "tall dark and handsome." Thinkers have identifiable wrinkles on their forehead and between their eyebrows. Ask a Thinker a question or give them a problem to solve and watch these furrow lines appear. The majority of Thinkers have long eyelashes and many have protruding ears like Abraham Lincoln, Prince Charles and Ross Perot. It has been my observation that everyone with a cleft chin is a Thinker, although not every Thinker will have a cleft chin. The most perfectionistic of the six Thinker primary profiles is the Thinker/Watcher/Worker/Talker profile, AKA the Perfectionist. This profile, the Perfectionist, is easy to spot because of the distinctively thin shape to their head and chest. A good example of this Perfectionist profile is David Hyde Pierce who plays Dr. Niles Crane on the popular sitcom, *Frasier*. Other well known Perfectionists are: Jennifer Aniston, Johnny Carson, Kevin Costner, Celine Dion, Abe Lincoln and Tony Randall.

Body Language:

The most common body language tendency for the Thinker is to place their hand around their mouth, cheek or chin. This is a comfortable and natural posture when they are thinking or analyzing. Perhaps this is why Rodin created his sculpture masterpiece, "The Thinker," with the chin resting on the fist. When an individual talks while their hand is covering their mouth, or talks through their fingers, it sends the signal that they do not believe in what they are saying. When a Thinker is in the process of making a decision, they will stroke their chin. Another important gesture for the Thinker is critical judgment. Placing a thumb under the chin with the index finger resting along the cheek forms this negative gesture. Thinkers have a tendency to rub or scratch their nose frequently. Body language experts tell us that when a person does not like the subject being discussed, tiny nerve endings in the nose cause it to itch. There are several ways people scratch their nose. Women will often scratch their nose with

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their little finger so they don't smudge their makeup. Many Thinkers use their thumb and index finger in a pinching gesture. Perhaps the most frequently used nose scratching gesture is what I call the violin method. This is when a person takes their index finger and rubs it vigorously back and forth under their nose as if they were playing a violin. When one peers over the top of their eyeglasses it denotes "judgment and scrutiny." Judge Judy exemplifies this negative gesture as she glares over her half glasses in an attempt to intimidate others in her courtroom. The most dismissive body language gesture used by the Thinker is "rolling their eyes" in a condescending manner.

Thinker Traits:

Organized – Loyal – Diplomatic – Thoughtful – Honest – Detailed

Moody – Pessimistic – Critical – Cheap – Sensitive – Private

Thinker Behaviors:

1. Appears thoughtful and serious.
2. Gives accurate and exact information.
3. Follows instructions exactly.
4. Preplans important conversations.
5. Likes to follow the rules. Runs things by the book.
6. Speaks slowly and carefully.
7. Becomes angry over errors or poor quality.

How Thinkers Can Improve:

1. Loosen up a bit; don't be so formal and structured.
2. Don't analyze things to death.
3. Don't correct others publicly.
4. Don't stress and worry so much.
5. Try not to be so private and secretive.
6. Do things out of sequence when possible.
7. Avoid trying for perfection.

The following well known people all have the Thinker as their primary temperament style: Alan Alda, Julie Andrews, Fred Astaire, Lucille Ball, Kevin Beacon, Usama Bin Laden, Jack Benny, Holle Berry, David Bowie, Matthew Broderick, Tom Brokaw, Pierce Brosnan, Ted Bundy, Carol Burnett, George H. W. Bush, George W. Bush, Nicholas Cage, Karen Carpenter, Jim Carrey, Prince Charles, David Copperfield, Courtney Cox, Tom Cruise, Billy Crystal, Jamie Lee Curtis, Princess Diana, Michael Douglas, Clint Eastwood, Henry Fonda, Jane Fonda, Peter Fonda, Harrison Ford, Jody Foster, Michael J. Fox, Jeff Foxworthy, Mel Gibson, Louis Gossett Jr., Cary Grant, Wayne Gretsky, Arsenio Hall, Tom Hanks, George Harrison, Florence Henderson, Audrey Hepburn, Ron Howard, Howard Hughes, Helen Hunt, Michael Jackson, Michael Jordon, John F. Kennedy, John F. Kennedy Jr., Matt Lauer, Bruce Lee, Jack Lemmon, David Letterman, Charles Lindberg, Susan Lucci, Reba McEntire, Steve McQueen, Demi Moore, Eddie Murphy, Leonard Nimoy, Sean Penn, Ross Perot, Luke Perry, Regis

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Philbin, David Hyde Pierce, Lionel Richie, Joan Rivers, Julia Roberts, Meg Ryan, Jerry Seinfeld, Judge Judy Sheindlin, Will Smith, Steven Spielberg, Howard Stern, Jimmy Stewart, Martha Stewart, John Stossel, Denzel Washington, and Tiger Woods.

John Boe, based in Monterey, CA, is recognized as one of the nation's top sales trainers and motivational speakers. He helps companies recruit, train and motivate quality people. John is a leading authority on body language and temperament styles. To view his online Video Demo or to have John Boe speak at your next event, visit www.johnboe.com or call (831) 375-3668.

Is it right to long for perfection?

By ajaypats

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Perfection is achieved, not when there is nothing more to add, but when there is nothing left to take away. Aim for success, not perfection. Never give up your right to be wrong, because then you will lose the ability to learn new things and move forward with your life. Assert your right to make a few mistakes. If people can't accept your imperfections, that's their fault. Remember that fear always lurks behind perfectionism. Confronting your fears and allowing yourself the right to be human can, paradoxically, make you a far happier and more productive person. Have patience with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections but instantly set about remedying them – every day begin the task anew.

Things will never be perfect. Sometimes they will never even be close. Yet that is no reason to hide away from life, no reason to curse your predicament. On the contrary, it is every reason to rise up and go forth with renewed determination.

If you wait for conditions to be perfect, you won't ever get much done. If you refuse to go ahead unless you can be guaranteed of a sure thing, you'll never get very far.

It's great to aim toward perfection, yet to arrive at perfection you must cross through a lot of imperfection. To get everything just right, you must be willing to deal with things going wrong. Take this day, this moment, with all its flaws, and make the very most of it. Rather than complaining about what you don't have or where you'd rather be, make full use of where you are, of what you do have.

Aim toward perfection while also accepting the reality of what is. And excellence will surely result

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