

TEMPERAMENT WISDOM

**Understanding and Accepting Your Own
and Others' Temperaments**

Improving Relationships with Others

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Temperament Blends

No one is a single personality type. You are a unique mixture. Everyone has a dominant temperament and a secondary temp. Some have two prominent secondary temps. Who you are is a blend of your dominant temperament and your secondary temperament(s). Below is a short review of the four temperaments.

Lions: strong, dominant, type-A personalities, take-charge people. Lions need to tone down their strengths and add love in dealing with people.

Otters: fun-loving, people-oriented, relational. Otters need to get themselves organized and work on following through with what started.

Golden Retrievers: nice, likable, laid back, easy going. Golden Retrievers need to motivate themselves.

Beavers: very detailed, perfectionists, gifted. Beavers need to cheer themselves up, work on their thought life, remain thankful, not be moody and depressed.

Extroverted Temperament Blends:

Otter-Lion:

Strongest extrovert of all, because two temperaments making him up are extroverted. Happy charisma of the Otter makes him people-oriented, enthusiastic, a salesman type, while the Lion side gives him the will-power and character traits to make a more organized and productive person than a pure Otter. Loves any people-oriented field if it provides variety, activity, and excitement.

Weaknesses are apparent because he is such an external person. May talk too much, be very opinionated. No one has more mouth trouble. If the life of the party, he is lovable. If insecure, can be obnoxious. Leading emotional problem will be anger. Simon Peter: spoke up before the others, egotistical, weak-willed, and carnal in the Gospels. Remarkably transformed in Acts, after he was filled with the Spirit.

Otter-Beaver:

Highly emotional people who fluctuate drastically. Laugh one moment and in tears the next. Very merciful, moved to tears by griefs of others. Often good public speakers, actors, musicians, and do well in the fine arts. People-oriented from the Otter and good, detailed workers from the Beaver.

Negative thinking can drain them. Will have a problem with both anger and fear. Being admired by others is important to them so they are driven to consistent performances. King David an example. Very likable man, colorful, dramatic, emotional, weak-willed. Played harp, sang, wrote psalms, made decisions on impulse. He fouled his life up by a series of mistakes before straightening it out.

Otter-Golden Retriever:

Easiest person to like. Weaknesses of the extroverted Otter are balanced by the easygoing graciousness of the Retriever. Extremely happy people whose humor and carefree spirit make them lighthearted entertainers. They love to help people and are good at sales of all kinds. Least outgoing of all the Otters blends, and are often affected by their circumstances rather than being self-motivated. Very pro-family and keep the love of their children. Would never purposely hurt anyone.

Greatest weaknesses are lack of motivation and lack of discipline. Would rather socialize than work, and tend to take life too casually. Rarely get upset over anything and find the bright side of things. Delights in making others laugh. Apollos in NT: a skilled orator, stirred and helped others by his teaching and preaching, but did not found new works.

Lion-Otter:

Second strongest extrovert. Given over completely to activity. A natural promoter and salesman, with enough charisma to get along well with others. The best motivator of people and one who thrives on a challenge, almost fearless and exhibits boundless energy. Two speeds: wide open and stop. A courtroom attorney, fund-raiser, always noticed wherever he goes, a preacher who combines practical Bible teaching and church administration. As a teacher he is drawn to social sciences, and rarely to math, science, or the abstract.

Weaknesses: chiefly hostility. Has the quick anger of the Otter (without the forgiveness) with long-burning resentment of the Lion. He gets ulcers and gives them to others. Impatient with those less motivated than himself, he prides himself on being brutally frank. Hard for him to concentrate on one thing for very long, so gets others to help him finish what he has started. Opinionated, impetuous, inclined to doggedly finish projects even if he shouldn't have started them. Will manipulate or walk over people to accomplish his goals. Can be workaholics, and neglect their families. When he comprehends the importance of giving love and approval to his family, he can change his whole household. James: "faith without works is dead," weakness of the power of the tongue.

Lion-Beaver:

Extremely industrious and capable person. Probably the best business person. The optimism and practicality of the Lion overcome the moodiness of the Beaver. Both goal-oriented yet detailed. Does well in school, has quick, analytical mind, and yet decisive. Becomes a thorough leader, doing an extraordinary job. Don't debate with unless sure of your facts, for he will chew you to bits, being verbally aggressive and in touch with the details. Extremely competitive and forceful. A serious researcher, he is usually successful whatever he does. General George Patton was probably a Lion-Beaver.

Weaknesses: tends to be a dictator. Inspires both respect and hate. A natural-born crusader whose work habits are irregular and long. May have difficulty with family relationships. Has the hard-to-please tendency of the Lion and the perfectionism of the Beaver. The Apostle Paul was probably a Lion-Beaver. Before he was saved, hostile and cruel, persecuting and jailing Christians. Had the self-sacrificing nature of the Beaver and the driving nature of the Lion. Transformed by the power of God.

Lion-Golden Retriever:

Most subdued of all the extrovert temperaments. Happy blend of the quick, active, and hot with the calm, cool, and unexcited. Not as quick to rush into things. Very organized and combines planning with hard work. People enjoy working for him, for he knows where he is going but is not unduly severe with people. Usually good husbands and fathers and excellent administrators.

Though doesn't have the quick temper of some, he may harbor resentment and bitterness. No one can be more bullheadedly stubborn than the Lion-Retriever. Difficult for him to change his mind once committed. Acknowledging mistakes is not easy for him. More apt to make it up to those he has wronged, than to face up to his mistake. Titus may have been a L-GR. Paul depended on him to faithfully teach the Word of God and administer the churches in Crete.

Introverted Temperament Blends:

Beaver-Otter:

A very gifted person, a musician who can steal the heart of the audience. As an artist, can draw or paint beautifully and sell their work, if they're in the right mood. Make great scholars and probably the best classroom teachers—both exacting and good communicators.

An emotional person: interesting mood swings. Can be extremely happy, or if things go wrong, he can drop into a real pity party. Feels everything deeply, but can be critical and hard on others. Tend to be rigid, won't cooperate unless things go his way, idealistic and impractical. Often fearful and insecure with a poor self-image. Many prophets were Beaver-Otters, John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah. Tremendous capacity to commune with God, self-sacrificing, enough charisma to attract a following, legalistic in their teachings, a flair for the dramatic, and willing to die for their principles.

Beaver-Lion:

Mood swings of Beaver stabilized by Lion's strong will and determination. Nothing this person cannot do. Both a perfectionist and a driver. Strong leadership abilities. Many orchestra leaders are Beaver-Lion.

Extremely difficult to please, rarely satisfying even themselves. Their mood follows their thought process. Altho don't stay depressed as long as other Beaver blends, can fall into it more quickly. Can become a nitpicker who drives others up the wall. Desperately needs to walk in the love of God. Moses was probably a Beaver-Lion.

Beaver-Golden Retriever:

Some of the world's greatest scholars have been B-R. Not nearly as prone to hostility as the two other blends, and usually get along well with others. Combine the analytical perfectionism of the Beaver with the organized efficiency of the Retriever. Good-natured humanitarians who prefer quiet, solitary environment for study and research to the endless activity of the extroverts. Usually excellent spellers and good mathematicians. Most of the world's significant inventions and medical discoveries have been made by B-R's.

Easily become discouraged and develop negative thinking. Though ordinarily quiet, capable of inner anger and hostility. Vulnerable to fear, anxiety and a negative self-image. John the Apostle: very sensitive, close to Jesus, yet became so angry at one point he wanted to call fire down from heaven on people. He alone stood at the foot of the cross and was entrusted with care of Mary, the Lord's mother.

Golden Retriever-Otter:

Easiest of the 12 blends to get along with over time. Congenial, happy, cooperative, thoughtful, people-oriented, diplomatic, dependable, fun-loving, humorous. Never abrasive. A favorite with children and adults.

Weaknesses: Lack of motivation of the R and the lack of discipline of an O. Often quits school, passes up good opportunities, and avoids anything that takes too much effort. Fear and insecurity hold back. Often selfishly avoids involvement. Need to let God motivate them. Timothy: gentle, good-natured, dependable and steady but timid and fearful. Under Paul's strong motivation, he grew into a mighty man of God.

Golden Retriever-Lion:

Most active of all Retrievers. Easy to get along with and may become an excellent group leader. May become a good counselor with a gentle spirit people trust.

Lack of motivation and fear, can be stubborn and unyielding. Doesn't blow up but refuses to cooperate. Not a fighter by nature, often lets inner anger reflect itself in silence. Often immerses his mind in TV. Abraham: afraid to leave Ur, denied his wife for fear of being killed, yet grew mightily in faith.

Golden Retriever-Beaver:

The most gracious, gentle, and quiet. Rarely angry or hostile. Never embarrasses himself, always does the right thing. Tends to have spiritual gifts of mercy and help, and is neat and organized in his work. Responds well to the needs of others.

Tends to be passive and may neglect discipline of the children. Fear, negativism, criticism, and lack of self-image. Tend not to get involved. Barnabas was probably a Retriever-Beaver.

Your Temperament Does Not Limit You:

Understanding our temperament does not limit us or fence us in to having to act a certain way. We should not use our temperament as an excuse not to change. As we give the Holy Spirit permission to come into our lives and work at bringing forth the fruit of the Spirit, He enables us to become well-rounded and well-balanced. All of us have natural strengths and abilities, but the Holy Spirit will teach us how to become stronger in those areas in which we are weak. Galatians 5:22-23.

CONFLICTS BETWEEN TEMPERAMENTS

Many times our conflicts with others are a direct result of differences in our motivated behaviors. Shown below are some typical areas where conflicts occur between various personalities. Review the combinations below and then analyze your inclination to misunderstand those who are different from you. Give special attention to the matchup between you and your spouse.

Lion personality conflicts with:

Lions. Conflict occurs over control. Turf wars can result unless there are clearly defined territorial lines of authority and respect for one another.

Otters. Lions are turned off by too much talk and not enough results.

Golden Retrievers. Lions don't understand why the Golden Retrievers aren't more aggressive.

Beavers. Lions conflict with people who try to slow him or her down with technicalities or excessive caution.

Otter personality conflicts with:

Lions. Otters can get offended when the Lion doesn't ask for an opinion on important decisions.

Otters. The Otter can be jealous of someone else having the center of attention (another Otter).

Golden Retrievers. The Otter gets along pretty well but does see the Golden Retriever as being too sensitive and slow.

Beavers. Since the Otter is naturally optimistic, there is a high potential for conflict with the more practical but sometimes pessimistic attitude of the Beaver.

Golden Retriever personality conflicts with:

Lions. The Golden Retriever often doesn't say anything but builds up resentment toward "steamroller" Lion personalities, who are viewed as being self-centered and insensitive.

Otters. The Golden Retriever eventually becomes impatient and worn out with the Otter who overextends with too much talking and verbal aggression.

Golden Retrievers. The Golden Retriever usually enjoys being together with other Golden Retrievers because they are not a threat; however, they do have difficulty making joint decisions (neither wants to impose on the other).

Beavers. Generally not a bad match, but the Golden Retriever can sometimes feel judged by the Beaver.

Beaver personality conflicts with:

Lion. The Beaver sometimes sees the Lion as having a know-it-all attitude. Also, the Beaver is concerned when he or she sees a Lion initiating plans without considering the necessary details or following established procedures.

Otter. Because they are nearly opposites, the Beaver notices and is easily turned off to many Otter tendencies, including disorganization, inaccuracies, exaggeration, and a show-off attitude.

Golden Retriever. The Beaver often sees himself or herself as more productive and more disciplined than his or her Golden Retriever counterpart.

Beaver. Like the Lion with Lion, the Beaver tends to have turf wars over who is in control and who is correct.

The Bible offers the best advice concerning relationships and how we are to react to each other. Ephesians, chapter 4, is especially encouraging in this area. No matter our temperament or who we are dealing with, Christ has called us to love one another and put others above ourselves. This is not a natural behavior but the fruit of a Spirit-controlled personality.

Ephesians 4:1–3 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all *lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

HOW TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH OTHER TEMPERAMENTS

One of the most difficult challenges in any family is to have effective communications. By recognizing that each temperament is operating from a different perspective, you can tailor your communications accordingly. The following tips will help you to improve your communication with others and help you to understand yourself better.

WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH A(N)...

LION, answer the WHAT question.

When talking with a Lion discuss the bottom line first. Don't begin by elaborating on all the details or you will lose their attention. Summarize first, and THEN provide explanations, details, and concerns if they request them. Since they are not naturally good listeners, it often is helpful to put your thoughts on paper, giving the problems, options, and actions recommended.

OTTER, answer the WHO question.

Personal testimonies and endorsements usually are effective because Otter personalities are motivated to relate to others, especially to those who are recognized and prestigious. Persuade them by relating "who" is involved and "who" thinks it's a good idea. Also show them how the project will be fun and exciting. Give them the big picture, but remind them often of the details, or they will forget.

GOLDEN RETRIEVER, answer the HOW question.

Golden Retrievers naturally think of the practical details of any project and want to know the specifics of how things will be done and how it will affect them. Prepare them in advance for changes. Use voice tones and body language that communicate a gentle and non-controversial approach.

BEAVER, answer the WHY question.

Since they are naturally logical, organized, and accurate, Beavers tend to resist changes unless they understand the reasons why. Provide the rationale for changes, decisions, or actions through well-researched details, facts, and data. They are motivated by logic, not by feelings and emotions.

HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY DISAGREE WITH OTHER TEMPERAMENTS

Frequently, good communications are enhanced by our ability to interact with people who see situations differently from the way we do. Comprehending God-given differences in temperaments is an important first step toward conflict resolution at home.

LIONS:

FIND THE LARGER GOAL you can agree on first; then propose a plan that will expedite reaching the goal. Lions are highly committed to reaching their goals, but the particular methodology is secondary. EXAMPLE: "I agree that we need to get out of debt. Look at these adjustments to our monthly budget that will result in being debt-free!"

OTTERS:

POSTPONE AN IMMEDIATE DECISION if possible. Otters are highly committed to their ideas but, with the passing of time, frequently lose their emotional attachment. Delaying the decision for a day or two may open the door for them to accept other new ideas. EXAMPLE: "That IS a great idea. I never would have thought of that. Let me think and pray about it for a day or two. Okay?"

GOLDEN RETRIEVERS:

PROVIDE A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE of how your plan has worked in other settings. Take a team approach and offer reassurance of your relationship. Disagreement with Golden Retrievers likely may be interpreted as a personal rejection. Assurances of being "in this together" enable them to relax and accommodate something new and different. EXAMPLE: "Remember the last time you changed jobs? It was scary at first, but soon you discovered a whole group of new friends. And you can always count on me."

BEAVERS:

Carefully DOCUMENT YOUR POSITION with facts and data that have been well researched, and offer proof. Then ask them to consider the case. Try not to back Beavers into a corner but, instead, give them time to think about the evidence and appeal to their logic. Avoid public embarrassments and corrections with these individuals who already are striving for exceptional quality and precision. EXAMPLE: "These are our fast food receipts for the last four months. Add them up, and see if you don't think we're eating out too much."

TEMPERAMENTS AND MONEY

Each Temperament brings particular strengths and weaknesses to the task of money management. These strengths are noted below, followed by a summary of typical pitfalls that occur when differing temperaments marry each other.

Lions: Thrifty shoppers: go to the store, buy what they want, and go home. Because they like challenges, see the big picture, and set goals, lions are well equipped to provide direction to a family's long-range financial planning. They handle current sacrifice well in order to achieve long-term goals. Weaknesses: become too controlling, use money to wield power, greed. may overlook or minimize current family needs, may make decisions without including spouse's perspective. Among the strongest money managers, due to task orientation and tough-mindedness.

Otters: See shopping as a social event. Drawn by colorful packaging and advertising. Because of their optimism, Otters bring creative thinking, initiative and lofty possibilities into the family's financial picture. Weaknesses include changing plans mid-stream too much, not liking the discipline of a budget, impulsive spending, pride, and using money to acquire prestige, recognition, approval, and social status. Otters often struggle with financial stability because of these weaknesses and need to balance themselves with a Lion or Beaver when possible.

Golden Retrievers: Shopping for GR is sometimes a chore because he procrastinates as long as possible and may experience difficulty making decisions about major purchases. GR women frequently enjoy shopping. They take longer, shop slower, and may be indecisive, and can be quite frugal. GR's excel at compassion and are good at responding to human needs with financial resources. Their desire to help and please others may lead to financial struggles and ongoing debt. Weaknesses: slow to adapt to new financial challenges, failing to plan for the long-term future, procrastinating with financial decisions, signing security out of obligation to others (co-signing), and difficulty telling salespeople "No." GR's are likely to struggle with financial soundness, too prone to being empathetic, giving, and relational.

Beavers: Beavers really shop. Compare prices and insist on quality. They have a hard time making up their minds, try item on 2 or 3 times, may leave the store a time or two, and then come back and buy it. Have no trouble pointing out an error at the cash register or returning defective merchandise. Because they are analytical, organized, and detailed, Beavers excel at keeping financial records. The challenge of balancing the checkbook to the penny every month is entertaining for a Beaver. Financial planning and analysis are natural to them. Weaknesses include indecision brought on by too much analysis, being too inflexible, pride in their self-sufficiency, and too rigid in sticking to the budget in the face of unplanned family financial needs. Beavers tend to be the most financially sound of the four temperaments, the least impulsive, and the least often in debt.

TEMPERAMENTS AND CHILDREN, EATING, DRIVING, STUDY, COMMUNICATION

Temperaments and Motivating Your Children:

Lion children can be appropriately challenged and pushed. Give them the big picture and help them set goals.

Otter children need to see how this is fun and how everybody is doing it. Remind them they'll be left out if don't get moving. They need encouragement in following through and paying attention to the details.

Golden Retrievers need gentle help in motivating themselves. They thrive on support and reassurance. Alleviate their fears.

Beavers are motivated by praise, love, and encouragement. Do not embarrass them publicly; they're already trying too hard.

Temperament and Eating Habits:

Otters eat everything in sight. They so enjoy talking that they never look at the menu till the waitress arrives. Lions seldom vary their menu from day to day. Beavers are picky eaters. Can take them a long time to decide what to order. Retrievers are the most deliberate, usually the last ones through eating. That why they don't gain weight.

Temperament and Driving:

Otters are erratic drivers and vary their speed. They look you in the face when they're driving. Lions are daring (no fear), always in a rush, and driving fast between appointments. Beavers never leave home without preparing for the trip. They study the map and know the best route. Being legalists, they rarely speed. GR's are slowest drivers of all. Rarely change lanes and are indecisive.

Temperaments and Study Habits:

Beavers are good students who enjoy learning. They have inquisitive minds with good retention of a multitude of details. They are good spellers with good concentration. GR's can be good students if they don't procrastinate. They work best under pressure although they claim they don't like it. The have orderly minds. Lions like people-oriented subjects such as history, geography, practical facts, statistics and studies, and true stuff such as the Discovery channel. They have difficulty concentrating if their mind goes off on a tangent about one of their goals or projects. Otters are often restless and undisciplined. They have a short interest span and are easily distracted, such as by the telephone. They would rather talk than study.

Temperaments and Communication Habits:

Lions speak freely, but are more deliberate than Otters. They are debaters and arguers.

Otters are intuitive speakers, colorful, expressive, use exaggeration, and love to tell stories and be the center of attention. Retrievers are quiet, seldom debate, and rarely thrust

themselves into conversations unless asked. Beavers don't start talking until they have thought out exactly what they want to say. They don't like to interrupt, but once they get started they go on until they have unloaded their entire message.