

# TEMPERAMENT BLENDS

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

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Material in this paper has been adapted from:  
Tim LaHaye, *Transforming Your Temperament*. New York: Inspirational Press, 1991.

## Temperament Blends

**No one is a single personality type.** You are a unique mixture, being a blend of your dominant and secondary temperament. A few people have two prominent secondary temperaments, which makes them quite versatile in work and relationships. Below is a short review of the four temperaments.

**Lions (Choleric):** Strong, dominant, type-A, take-charge people. Lions do better when they tone down their strength and add love in dealing with people.

**Otters (Sanguine):** Fun-loving, people-oriented, relational. Otters help themselves when they learn organizational skills and follow through on what they have started.

**Golden Retrievers (Phlegmatic):** Nice, likable, laid back, easy going. Golden Retrievers thrive on security and must motivate themselves to live up to their potential.

**Beavers (Melancholy):** Very detailed, perfectionists, gifted. Beavers need to cheer up, work on their relational skills, and not give in to moodiness or depression.

### Extroverted Temperament Blends:

#### **Otter-Lion:**

The Otter-Lion is the most extroverted person of all, because both his temperaments are outgoing. The happy charisma of the Otter makes him an enthusiastic, relational salesman, while his Lion side gives him the will-power and persistence to be better organized and more productive. The Otter-Lion loves any people-oriented field if it provides enough excitement and variety.

Otter-Lions are very external people. They may talk too much and be opinionated. Sometimes their mouth gets them into trouble. When the life of the party, they are lovable. When insecure, they can rub people the wrong way. Their main problem is anger. Simon Peter, for example, spoke up first, was weak-willed in the Gospels, but was transformed after he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

#### **Otter-Beaver:**

These are emotional people who are subject to quick mood swings. They can go from laughter to tears in a few minutes. They are very merciful and moved to tears by the griefs of others. They are often good public speakers, actors, musicians, and do well in the fine arts. They are people-oriented from their Otter side and gifted, detailed workers from their Beaver side.

Negative thinking can drain them, and they can have problems with both anger and fear. They desire to be esteemed by others, and this drives them to perform. King David expressed elements of the Otter-Beaver. He was emotional, dramatic, colorful, and impulsive. He played the harp, sang, and wrote psalms. His life was flawed by a series of mistakes which he had to later straighten out.

### **Otter-Golden Retriever:**

These are the most likable of all people. The weaknesses of the Otter are balanced out by the easygoing, thoughtfulness of the Retriever. They are happy, carefree people who love to help others. The least outgoing of the Otter blends, they can be affected by their circumstances rather than motivating themselves to change them. They are pro-family, preserve their relationships over time, and go out of their way to never hurt anyone.

Their greatest weaknesses are in the areas of motivation and discipline. They have a casual attitude in life and love to socialize. They focus on the bright side of things and love to make others laugh. Apollos in the New Testament was a good man who encouraged and helped others by his preaching, but did not plant new churches except when he was with Paul.

### **Lion-Otter:**

The second strongest extroverts are the Lion-Otters. These individuals are extremely active, getting along well with others. They are naturals at promotion and sales. Lion-Otters are energetic motivators who excel at challenges with great drive and no fear. They are charming enough to be persuasive. People notice them when they walk in a room. As preachers, they combine practical teaching with administrative skills. Not always having a handle on the facts, they will bluff or ad lib as if they did. They are drawn to social sciences and rarely to the abstract.

Their weaknesses include the quick anger of the Otter with the long-lasting resentment of the Lion. They are prone to impatience with those less motivated than themselves and love to "tell it like it is." It's hard for Lion-Otters to stay focused on one thing for long, so they often motivate others to help them finish their projects. They are impulsive, have strong opinions, and are persistent like a bulldog in completing tasks. They have a tendency to manipulate and control people to accomplish their own goals. They can be workaholics whose families suffer. But when the Holy Spirit teaches them to love as Christ loved, they have the ability to change their family for the good. A good motto for the Lion-Otter is "Faith without works is dead."

### **Lion-Beaver:**

Lion-Beavers are capable and productive. They make excellent attorneys and business people. The upbeat, practical approach of the Lion overcomes the moody introspection of the Beaver. The Lion-Beaver has the advantage of being goal-driven with attention to the details. They are very complete leaders, who produce great results. They achieve highly in school, being methodical and decisive. Don't argue with a Lion-Beaver unless you know your stuff, for he will chew you to bits, being driven to win and in touch with the details. They are competitive and usually successful in whatever they do.

Lion-Beavers tend to be authoritarian leaders, which people either love or hate. They will work long and tirelessly for a cause. However, they are hard to live with, being perfectionistic and aggressive. The Apostle Paul was possibly a Lion-Beaver. Before being saved, he was driven and merciless, persecuting Christians. He had the self-consuming dedication of the Beaver and the action-oriented nature of the Lion. When transformed by the power of God, Paul was precise in his theology, practical in his application, and driven to plant new churches.

### **Lion-Golden Retriever:**

This is the most subdued and unpredictable of all the extrovert temperaments. They are blends of the aggressive Lion and the laid-back Golden Retriever. They are velvet Lions, not always showing the Lion inside, but you can identify them by how well they lead and keep people on task. Lion-Golden Retrievers are hard-working and organized. They tend to handle employees well, not being harsh with them. Lion-Golden retrievers are good family people and managers.

Not as quick to anger as some temperaments, they may hold offenses and be quite stubborn. They dislike changing course and have a hard time admitting mistakes.

### **Introverted Temperament Blends:**

#### **Beaver-Otter:**

Beaver-Otters are gifted individuals. They combine the artistry of the Beaver with the outgoing charisma of the Otter. The outgoingness of the Otter covers up the moodiness of the Beaver. They can be wonderful communicators, artists, or even entertainers, being precise, gifted, and detailed in their craft as well as engaging with people. Beaver-Otters make excellent classroom teachers, being both detailed and good communicators.

Beaver-Otters have mood swings. They can be extremely happy when things go well and down in the dumps when they do not. They are very sensitive individuals, tend to feel things deeply, and may be hard on others. They tend to be inflexible and have a hard time working with others unless things go their way. They often have unrealistic expectations and are impractical. They love to spend time with God but may be legalistic.

#### **Beaver-Lion:**

The Beaver-Lion is an entirely competent person, having the perfectionistic tendencies of the Beaver as well as the driving leadership of the Lion. These individuals are so talented they tend to build their own companies. The moodiness of the Beaver is compensated for by the self-motivating determination of the Lion.

The Beaver-Lion is a difficult temperament, having a tendency to overanalyze as well as harbor hostility for real or imagined wrongs. The perfectionistic Beaver easily finds flaws in others' work, and the Lion has no problem pointing these things out. They are difficult to please, rarely satisfying even themselves. Their mood is derived from their thinking, and although they don't stay depressed as long as other Beaver blends, they can fall into it more quickly. Sometimes they can be so picky that they drive others up the wall. Beaver-lions need to experience the love of God. It's possible that Moses was a Beaver-Lion.

#### **Beaver-Golden Retriever:**

Beaver-Golden Retrievers are often scholarly and have contributed much to the discoveries and inventions of the world. They combine the Beaver's perfectionism with the steady efficiency of the Golden Retriever. Being more easy-going than the previous Beaver blends, they maintain their analytical and detailed nature. They work well alone in quiet environments, preferring research and study to other forms of entertainment. They are, however, prone to discouragement, negative thinking, fear, resentment, and poor self-image.

**Golden Retriever-Otter:**

This is the easiest person to get along with of the twelve blends. He is happy, thoughtful, helpful, a people person who likes fun, is dependable, and may be humorous. They are not hurtful and become “favorite” people.

Golden Retriever-Otters tend to be unmotivated and lack discipline. Sometimes they quit doing worthwhile things such as school, pass up good opportunities, and avoid things that require a lot of effort. Fear and insecurity hold them back. They often fail to get involved but do much better when God motivates them. Timothy might be a good example. He was 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:**

This is the greatest doer of all the Retrievers. Because he is easy-going and a good listener, he tends to be an excellent group leader. Retriever-Otters also make good counselors because they have a gentle spirit people trust.

He exhibits the retriever’s general lack of motivation and fear with the lion’s stubbornness and refusal to give in or compromise. He may not be one to explode but won’t cooperate either. Since he is not naturally aggressive, he may go silent when angry and immerse himself in TV. Abraham is a good example. He needed God’s reassurance to leave Ur, was afraid of being killed for his wife, yet grew mightily in faith and his relationship with God.

**Golden Retriever-Beaver:**

This is a gentle, kind, and quiet person that is infrequently angry. He tends to do the right thing and not create messes. This person is helpful and merciful as well as organized and neat in his work. He responds well to others needs when he allows himself to be involved and help.

Retriever-Beavers are often passive and may not be good disciplinarians. They suffer from negativism, fear, criticism of others, and lack of a good self-image. Their tendency is not to get involved. Barnabas was probably a Retriever-Beaver.

**Your Temperament Does Not Limit You:**

Understanding our temperament does not limit us to acting a certain way. We should not use our temperament as an excuse not to change: “Well, this is just the way God made me.” As we give the Holy Spirit permission to come into our lives and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit, He enables us to become well-rounded and well-balanced. All of us have natural strengths and abilities which He empowers, but the Holy Spirit also teaches us how to be stronger in those areas in which we are weak. Galatians 5:22-23.

## For Further Study

Now that you are aware of your basic temperament, your relationship skills will profit greatly by further study. I highly recommend the following book:

Larry Burkett with Michael Taylor, *Money Before Marriage*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996.

In addition to preparing engaged couples for marriage, Larry Burkett and Michael Taylor have included in their book an excellent, condensed section on temperament differences. It reveals the conflicts between the temperaments, how to communicate effectively, how to successfully disagree, and how each temperament handles money. Additionally, they show how to apply an understanding of the temperaments to raising children, eating habits, driving, study, and communication.

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