

Profile of the ISTJ (Inspector / Duty Fulfiller)

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This document contains detailed information about the *ISTJ* Jung personality profile. The content references concepts already mentioned in the document called *Understanding your Personality Assessment Results*, which can be found on the [Digital Citizen](#) website. If you are reading this and do not understand some of the content, please refer to the referenced document.

This personality profile comes with the following analysis:

- Portraits (summaries)
- Traits, strengths and weaknesses
- Possible career paths
- Relationships (strengths, weaknesses, lovers, Parents, friends)
- Personal growth (success, happiness, problems, solutions, rules to live by)

The analyses here combine work done by Carl Jung, Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter, Isabel Briggs Myers, and David Keirsey. Myers & Briggs built their work on Jung's, and Keirsey expanded and revised some of their work. At times, the outcomes conflict in small ways, and they are noted. However, all their works are presented for you to embrace whichever appeals to you.

A read of the Keirsey Temperament documents, found on the [Digital Citizen](#) website, is highly recommended if you want to know more about a profile's tendencies beyond what is here. The document you want is the one with Preference letters found in the profile you want.

Words of Caution in Interpreting This Material

The biggest mistake I often see with the presentation of personality assessment results is that they are spoken of in absolute terms, when they should be discussed as majority tendencies.

You got a percentage score with each of your Jung type preferences (letter) if you took the test I supplied. That score is an indication of how strong you have those tendencies. A 75% score on Thinking, for example, means you rely on Thinking about 75% of the time to make decisions rather than Feelings. But it also means you use or value Feelings 25% of the time, rather than that you are a Thinking decision-maker all of the time. You have to keep these percentages in mind when interpreting this content as it may apply to you or someone else.

Do **NOT** compare your percentage scores with someone else's as if they were absolute. That is, if you had a 75% Thinking score, that does not mean you are more logical than someone with a 65% Thinking score. The best way I can think to illustrate this is with an analogy. Your percentage is like how you break up *your* "pie", where the whole is both Preferences (Thinking and Feeling here). Someone could have a 55% Thinking score & be more logical in their decision-making than you. That's because *their* "pie" might be bigger than yours. They may put more of, both, Thinking and Feeling, into their decision-making, or may be capable of more complex logical decision-making than you. They just don't rely on Thinking 75% of the time like you. That's all those percentages mean, so keep your % scores only for your own comparison.

While it may more convenient, less convoluted and more convincing to discuss your results in absolute terms, it is not true. People are complex and there's no way of "dumbing them down" to understand them. All that does is either create misunderstandings or skepticism in the results.

Use the Results as a Starting Point, Not an End Point

Jung's personality type results are generalized, so they can be used as prejudice if you use them as an end point to judge others. This is true if you use the results to judge individuals and condemn them to certain behaviours *all* of the time, when you know it is only true more times than not. It is also unfair to expect all people of a certain personality type to all behave the same way given a certain situation, as each has freedom to behave any way in any certain situations.

Humans are not preprogrammed machines. We do not behave with absolute consistency. We just have tendencies. We are creatures of habit, not logic. As a result, use the Jung personality type results as a starting point to understand each other, not an end point to condemn each other.

Portrait I – The Inspector

In the Keirsey Temperament version of the Jung personality type system, the *ISTJ* profile is known as the *Inspector*, though this is meant to be career advice. Here is Keirsey's description.

The one word that best describes Inspectors is super-dependable. Whether at home or at work, Inspectors are extraordinarily persevering and dutiful, particularly when it comes to keeping an eye on the people and products they are responsible for. In their quiet way, Inspectors see to it that rules are followed, laws are respected, and standards are upheld.

Inspectors (as much as 10 percent of the general population) are the true guardians of institutions. They are patient with their work and with the procedures within an institution, although not always with the unauthorized behavior of some people in that institution. Responsible to the core, Inspectors like it when people know their duties, follow the guidelines, and operate within the rules. For their part, Inspectors will see to it that goods are examined and schedules are kept, that resources will be up to standards and delivered when and where they are supposed to be. And they would prefer that everyone be this dependable. Inspectors can be hard-nosed about the need for following the rules in the workplace, and do not hesitate to report irregularities to the proper authorities. Because of this they are often misjudged as being hard-hearted, or as having ice in their veins, for people fail to see their good intentions and their vulnerability to criticism. Also, because Inspectors usually make their inspections without much flourish or fanfare, the dedication they bring to their work can go unnoticed and unappreciated.

While not as talkative as Supervisor *Guardians* (ESTJs), Inspectors are still highly sociable, and are likely to be involved in community service organizations, such as Sunday School, Little League, or Boy and Girl Scouting, that transmit traditional values to the young. Like all Guardians, Inspectors hold dear their family social ceremonies-weddings, birthdays, and anniversaries – although they tend to be shy if the occasion becomes too large or too public. Generally speaking, Inspectors are not comfortable with anything that gets too fancy. Their words tend to be plain and down-to-earth, not showy or high-flown. Their clothes are often simple and conservative rather than of the latest fashion. Their home and work environments are usually neat, orderly, and traditional, rather than trendy or ostentatious. As for personal property, they usually choose standard items over models loaded with features, and they often try to find classics and antiques – Inspectors prefer the old-fashioned to the newfangled every time.

Portrait II – The Duty Fulfiller

The *ISTJ* profile is often called the *Duty Fulfiller*. This is how the *ISTJ* profile is also often summarized.

As an *ISTJ*, your primary mode of living is focused internally, where you take things in via your five senses in a literal, concrete fashion. Your secondary mode is external, where you deal with things rationally and logically.

*ISTJ*s are quiet and reserved individuals who are interested in security and peaceful living. They have a strongly-felt internal sense of duty, which lends them a serious air and the motivation to follow through on tasks. Organized and methodical in their approach, they can generally succeed at any task which they undertake.

*ISTJ*s are very loyal, faithful & dependable. They place great importance on honesty & integrity. They are “good citizens” who can be depended on to do the right thing for their families and communities. While they generally take things very seriously, they also usually have an offbeat sense of humor and can be a lot of fun – especially at family or work-related gatherings.

*ISTJ*s tend to believe in laws and traditions, and expect the same from others. They’re not comfortable with breaking laws or going against the rules. If they are able to see a good reason for stepping outside of the established mode of doing things, the *ISTJ* will support that effort. However, *ISTJ*s more often tend to believe that things should be done according to procedures and plans. If an *ISTJ* has not developed their *iNtuitive* side sufficiently, they may become overly obsessed with structure, and insist on doing everything “by the book”.

The *ISTJ* is extremely dependable on following through with things which he or she has promised. For this reason, they sometimes get more and more work piled on them. Because the *ISTJ* has such a strong sense of duty, they may have a difficult time saying “no” when they are given more work than they can reasonably handle. For this reason, the *ISTJ* often works long hours, and may be unwittingly taken advantage of.

The *ISTJ* will work for long periods of time and put tremendous amounts of energy into doing any task which they see as important to fulfilling a goal. However, they will resist putting energy into things which don’t make sense to them, or for which they can’t see a practical application. They prefer to work alone, but work well in teams when the situation demands it. They like to be accountable for their actions, and enjoy being in positions of authority. The *ISTJ* has little use for theory or abstract thinking, unless the practical application is clear.

*ISTJ*s have tremendous respect for facts. They hold a tremendous store of facts within themselves, which they have gathered through their *Sensing* preference. They may have difficulty understanding a theory or idea which is different from their own perspective. However, if they are shown the importance or relevance of the idea to someone who they respect or care about, the idea becomes a fact, which the *ISTJ* will internalize and support. Once the *ISTJ* supports a cause or idea, he or she will stop at no lengths to ensure that they are doing their duty of giving support where support is needed.

The ISTJ is not naturally in tune with their own feelings and the feelings of others. They may have difficulty picking up on emotional needs immediately, as they are presented. Being perfectionists themselves, they have a tendency to take other people's efforts for granted, like they take their own efforts for granted. They need to remember to pat people on the back once in a while.

ISTJs are likely to be uncomfortable expressing affection and emotion to others. However, their strong sense of duty and the ability to see what needs to be done in any situation usually allows them to overcome their natural reservations, and they are usually quite supporting and caring individuals with the people that they love. Once the ISTJ realizes the emotional needs of those who are close to them, they put forth effort to meet those needs.

The ISTJ is extremely faithful and loyal. Traditional and family-minded, they will put forth great amounts of effort at making their homes and families running smoothly. They are responsible parents, taking their parenting roles seriously. They are usually good and generous providers to their families. They care deeply about those close to them, although they usually are not comfortable with expressing their love. The ISTJ is likely to express their affection through actions, rather than through words.

ISTJs have an excellent ability to take any task and define it, organize it, plan it, and implement it through to completion. They are very hard workers, who do not allow obstacles to get in the way of performing their duties. They do not usually give themselves enough credit for their achievements, seeing their accomplishments simply as the natural fulfillment of their obligations.

ISTJs usually have a great sense of space and function, and artistic appreciation. Their homes are likely to be tastefully furnished and immaculately maintained. They are acutely aware of their senses, and want to be in surroundings which fit their need for structure, order, and beauty.

Under stress, ISTJs may fall into "catastrophe mode", where they see nothing but all of the possibilities of what could go wrong. They will berate themselves for things which they should have done differently, or duties which they failed to perform. They will lose their ability to see things calmly and reasonably, and will depress themselves with their visions of doom.

In general, the ISTJ has a tremendous amount of potential. Capable, logical, reasonable, and effective individuals with a deeply driven desire to promote security and peaceful living, the ISTJ has what it takes to be highly effective at achieving their chosen goals – whatever they may be.

Jungian Preference Ordering

- **Dominant:** Introverted Sensing
- **Auxiliary:** Extraverted Thinking
- **Tertiary:** Introverted Feeling
- **Inferior:** Extraverted iNtuition

Famous Inspectors

- Warren Buffett
- Queen Elizabeth II
- Harry S. Truman
- John D. Rockefeller
- Queen Victoria
- James K. Polk
- Andrea Mitchell
- Roy Disney

- Thurgood Marshall

ISTJ Traits, Strengths and Weaknesses

Whether you're a young adult trying to find your place in the world, or a not-so-young adult trying to find out if you're moving along the right path, it's important to understand yourself and the personality traits which will impact your likeliness to succeed or fail at various careers. It's equally important to understand what is really important to you. When armed with an understanding of your strengths and weaknesses, and an awareness of what you truly value, you are in an excellent position to pick a career which you will find rewarding.

ISTJs generally have the following traits:

- Value tradition, security, and peaceful living
- Will work long and hard to fulfill duties
- Can be depended on to follow through on tasks
- Loyal and faithful
- Stable, practical and down-to-earth
- Family-minded
- Dislike doing things which don't make sense to them
- Dislike abstract theory, unless they see the practical application
- Natural leaders
- Prefer to work alone, but work well in teams when necessary
- Extremely observant, they take in facts via their senses and store them internally
- Vast, rich inner store of facts which they rely on to understand problems which they encounter in their lives
- Profound respect for facts and concrete information
- Make decisions objectively, applying logic and rational thinking
- Dislike change, unless they are shown it's benefit in a concrete way
- Have strong opinions about the way things should be done
- Appreciate structured, orderly environments
- Have very high standards for their own behavior and the behavior of others
- Not naturally in-tune with other people's feelings
- Able to accomplish almost anything if they put their minds to it
- Community minded "good citizens"

ISTJs have one character trait which puts them at a definite advantage in terms of career success – Perseverance. An ISTJ can do almost anything that they have decided to do. However, there

are areas in which they will function more happily and naturally. An ISTJ will do best in a career in which they can use their excellent organizational skills and their powers of concentration to create order and structure. ISTJs seem to fit extremely well into the Management and Executive layer of the corporate business world.

Career Suggestions for the ISTJ

Research has shown that many of the different Personality Types tend to have distinct preferences in their choice of careers. We have incorporated observations of each type's character traits which affect career choice along with some suggestions for possible directions. We have also included lists of actual careers which the various types have chosen in their lives.

This material is provided for your reference, and is intended to be an informational guide. It does not comprise a complete analysis of ideal careers for individuals & does not guarantee success or failure at any occupation. As we know, individuals vary greatly. However, we highly encourage personal self-knowledge & research in your quest to live up to your fullest, and for this reason we provide you with this information. For a complete & personal evaluation of career possibilities, you should speak with a career guidance counselor.

- Business Executives, Administrators and Managers
- Accountants and Financial Officers
- Police and Detectives
- Judges
- Lawyers
- Medical Doctors / Dentists
- Computer Programmers, Systems Analysts, and Computer Specialists
- Military Leaders

Personality and Relationships

"And above all, have fervent love for one another: for love shall cover the multitude of sins."

– Peter 4:8

Most of us are probably allured by the attractive notion that effortless relationships exist. Whether it be happily-ever-after marriages, or friendships which last forever, or parent/child bonds which supersede the need to understand each other, we'd all like to believe that our most intimate relationships are unconditional, and strong enough to withstand whatever may come. However, at some point in our lives most of us need to face the fact that relationships require effort to keep them strong and positive, and that even wonderful, strong relationships can be destroyed by neglect.

Whether you're looking to improve a love relationship, familial relationships, friendships, or employer/employee relationships, understanding your own personality type and the personality

type of the other person involved in the relationship will bring a new dynamic to the situation, which will allow better understanding and communication. Although the different types of relationships have very different characteristics and specific needs, there are two basic areas which seem to be critical in all relationships: *Expectations and Communication*. What do we expect from ourselves and the other person involved in the relationship? How do we communicate these expectations, and our feelings and opinions to the person in the relationship? How does our personality type affect our expectations and methods of communication? Does our personality type affect who we are romantically attracted to? How does it affect who our friends are, and who we work with best? These are the questions which we address following.

****Disclaimer****

Please note that we are not prescribing an absolute solution to your relationship problems, nor stating that there's any guarantee of improved odds with particular type pairings. Statistics show that individuals who are most happy within their marriages are those who have the highest levels of inner peace & those who have the most optimistic outlook on life in general. We do not address people's emotional standing here when discussing relationship issues, which is another important aspect of relationship dynamics.

Opposites Attract

That old concept and expression "opposites attract" has been batted around for centuries. And in fact, it's very true when it comes to love relationships. Through our research, we have noted that people are usually attracted to their opposite on the Extraversion/Introversion and Judging/Perceiving scales. We are naturally attracted to individuals who are different from ourselves – and therefore somewhat exciting. But it's not just the exciting differences which attract us to our opposites, it is also a natural quest for completion. We naturally are drawn towards individuals who have strengths which we are missing. When two opposites function as a couple, they become a more well-rounded, functioning unit. There is also the theory that our natural attraction to our opposites is a subconscious way of forcing us to deal with the weaker aspects of our own nature. While we are highly attracted to our opposites, two opposites involved in an intimate relationship have significant issues and communication barriers to overcome. So in a sense, our attraction to the opposite personality can be seen as our subconscious minds driving us towards becoming a more complete individual, by causing us to face the areas in life which are most difficult to us.

The same cannot be said for other kinds of relationships. When it comes to work colleagues, or friends, we are not especially interested in dealing with people who are very unlike ourselves. We are most comfortable with those who have similar interests and perspectives, and we do not show a lot of motivation or patience for dealing with our opposites.

Birds of a Feather Flock Together

Although we are attracted to people who are very different from us in the way we deal with the world, we are most attracted to others who have a similar focus in their lives. Couples who have the same dominant function in their personalities seems to have the longest and happiest relationships. So, for example, an individual whose dominant function is Introverted Sensing (ISTJ) or

ISFJ) seems to be naturally drawn towards partners with a dominant function of Extraverted Sensing (ESTP or ESFP).

We have also noticed that Sensors seem to communicate best with other Sensors, and that iNtuitives seem to communicate best with other iNtuitives. There seems to be a more equal partnership formed with people who communicate on the same level, although there are many successful relationships between Sensors and iNtuitives. Two individuals of any type who are well-developed & balanced can communicate effectively and make a relationship work, but most will communicate best with people who share their same information gathering preference.

With that in mind, it shouldn't come as any surprise to learn that research regarding Personality Type and Relationships shows a definite pattern which indicates that successful mates often share the same dominant function, and the same letter preference ("S" or "N") for their information gathering function. Of course, that does not mean that people with different preferences cannot have a happy, successful marriage, it simply indicates that people frequently settle down with individuals who are on their same "wave-length".

ISTJs in Relationships

The ISTJ's word is gold, and they honor their commitments faithfully. They believe that to do otherwise would be nothing less than a breach of honor and trustworthiness. Consequently, they take their vows very seriously, and once they have said "I do", that means they are bound to the relationship til "death do us apart" or otherwise. ISTJs are driven to fulfill their responsibilities and duties, and will do so with tireless effort. They will do their best to meet the obligations presented by the different relationship roles which they play during their lives, i.e. spouse, parent, offspring, *etc.* They may have difficulty showing warmth, but they frequently feel it in abundance & most develop the ability to show it through sheer effort. If nothing else, the ISTJ holds the gold medal of all the personality types for Effort. They will put forth tremendous amounts of effort to accomplish goals which are important to them. If healthy relationships are among these goals, you can bet the ISTJ will do everything that they can to foster & maintain healthy relationships.

Relationship Strengths

- Honor their commitments
- Take their relationship roles very seriously
- Usually able to communicate what's on their minds with precision
- Good listeners
- Extremely good (albeit conservative) with money
- Able to take constructive criticism well
- Able to tolerate conflict situations without emotional upheaval
- Able to dole out punishment or criticism when called for

Relationship Weaknesses

- Tendency to believe that they're always right

- Tendency to get involved in “win-lose” conversations
- Not naturally in-tune with what others are feeling
- Their value for structure may seem rigid to others
- Not likely to give enough praise or affirmation to their loved ones

ISTJ Natural Partners (in love and in life)

Before you read this section, I would like to put in a word of caution *not* to take this section too seriously. Take it for what it’s worth, a statistical likelihood.

All that means is that given some large sampling of pairs of various personality types, the natural partners are the ones which get along best most frequently. However, for any given pair, too many factors in life influence how a relationship develops for naturally matching personalities to be the determining factor. It’s a possible edge, enough to use as the core for love partner matching on love matching sites like *chemistry.com* or *e-harmony*, but not enough to be used along as those sites also take into account other life factors like personal interests, jobs and such.

Natural partners listed here are for life, in general, although some of the text is written for love partners rather than just two people’s ability to get along together well.

Although two well-developed individuals of any type can enjoy a healthy relationship, the *ISTJ’s natural partner* is the *ESFP*, or the *ESTP*. See their profiles on the [Digital Citizen](#) website. The ISTJ’s dominant function of Introverted Sensing is best matched with a partner whose personality is dominated by Extraverted Sensing.

You may be interested in understanding how we came to the conclusion that certain types are ideal for each other. Our type pairing is a result of combining observation, research, and understanding of Jungian psychological type. Observation and research of married couples shows that there is a definite trend in types that are attracted to each other, and in type combinations that have the longest lasting relationships. Our understanding of psychological type helps to see that these types typically have the same dominant function, but with a different attitude.

In Jungian terms, “functions” refer to the four core traits: iNtuition (N), Sensing (S), Feeling (F), and Thinking (T). The term “attitude” refers to the direction of the function, *i.e.* Introverted (I) or Extraverted (E).

So, for example, a person with a personality type of ISFP has a dominant function of Introverted Feeling. More specifically, Feeling in the dominant function, and its attitude (or direction) is Introverted. A person with this personality type is likely to be most attracted to, and fit best with, a person that has Extraverted Feeling dominating their personality. Extraverted Feeling dominates the personality types ESFJ and ENFJ. We therefore determine that the ISFP’s natural partner is the ESFJ or the ENFJ.

Our natural attraction to people who share our dominant function, but who use it in a different direction works very well for us. We not only flip-flop the Introverted or Extraverted trait, but we

also flip-flop the Judging or Perceiving trait. In this way, the partner that we choose for ourselves will have a very different approach to dealing with the world. If we are laid-back and indecisive, our partner will be structured and decisive. If we are reserved, our partner will be outgoing. For all of our apparent differences, we will share a common vision of what's truly important in life.

For people whose personality types are dominated by Decision Making functions, (*i.e.* Thinking or Feeling), their ideal partners will include both Sensing and iNtuitive types. Many people have problems communicating effectively with people who do not share their same preference for Information Gathering. So, if you have a very strong preference for Sensing or iNtuition, you will need to give the personality type with the same preference a higher value as a likely natural partner. For example, an ISFP who strongly prefers Sensing will work best with an ESFJ, rather than an ENFJ.

Although we believe firmly that this model works very well to help in finding and maintaining healthy relationships, it is important to remember that it's just a tool. We offer guidelines to help you understand the kinds of things that you value in a relationship, rather than guidelines that you need to follow strictly. Two well-developed individuals of any type can make a relationship work, and work is a key concept here! There is no such thing as an effortless relationship. Don't use this model as an excuse to dump your relationship.

ISTJs as Lovers

"To love means to open ourselves to the negative as well as the positive – to grief, sorrow, and disappointment as well as to joy, fulfillment, and an intensity of consciousness we did not know was possible before."

– Rollo May

ISTJs are committed, loyal partners, who will put forth tremendous amounts of effort into making their relationships work. Once they have made a commitment to a relationship, they will stick with it until the end. They gladly accept their duty towards fulfilling their role in the relationship. ISTJs are generally willing and able to do anything which they have defined as a goal. So, if maintaining a good relationship is important to the ISTJ, they are likely to have a good relationship. If they have not added this goal to their internal "list" of duties, they are likely to approach the relationship in their "natural" state, which is extremely practical, traditional, and structured.

ISTJs do not feel threatened by constructive criticism or conflict situations. When faced with criticism, the ISTJ is likely to believe that their point of view is correct. They have a tremendous amount of respect for Facts, and base their opinions on known facts and logic. Consequently, they have a hard time seeing the viability of viewpoints which don't match their own. When the ISTJ gets involved in a disagreement over a point, they usually begin to attempt to recruit the other person over to their own point of view, fully believing that they are right, and that the other individual simply needs to understand the facts of the situation. In such situations, the ISTJ may or may not be right, but their confidence in their own rightness can shake the confidence of others involved. This habit can quickly turn conversations into "win-lose" situations, and

can present a special problem in intimate relationships. While they may inadvertently shake the confidence of their colleagues with their “I’m right” approach, the same behavior may cause serious issues within their intimate relationships. The ISTJ’s constant assertion of “rightness” may send a message to their mates that they do not value their opinions. If the ISTJ has a mate with a strong Feeling preference, they may inadvertently wreak havoc with their self-esteem, since Feeling individuals are extremely sensitive to conflict and criticism, and are especially vulnerable in their intimate relationships.

Since ISTJs make decisions using the Thinking function (rather than Feeling), they are not naturally likely to consider their mates feelings and emotions in daily living. This may be a problem if their mates have the Feeling preference, since Feeling individuals usually expect a lot of positive affirmation, which the ISTJ does not naturally communicate to them. The ISTJ needs to remember that others may need to hear that they are loved and valued, even if the ISTJ doesn’t need to hear this him/herself.

ISTJs are generally very capable and efficient at most things which they endeavor. Consequently, their mates are likely to hold a good amount of respect for them. Daily concerns are likely to be well-provided for by the ISTJ. If other concerns, such as emotional needs, are pointed out to the ISTJ as important issues for their mates, the ISTJ will rise to the occasion and add the task of addressing these needs to the internal “list” of duties. Since the ISTJ is so willing to work hard at issues, and so tireless at performing tasks which they feel should be done, the ISTJ generally makes a wonderful, caring mate who is willing and able to promote a healthy, lasting relationship which is also a partnership.

Sexual Tendencies

Sexually, the ISTJ is likely to approach intimacy from a physical perspective, rather than as a means of expressing love and affection. They usually have a problem expressing their deepest feelings, even though they may be very strongly felt. They will expect sex on a relatively scheduled basis, and are likely to honor traditions regarding gender role-playing. Male ISTJs will assert their perspective on their partners, while female ISTJs will tend to follow along with what their male counterparts want (although they will be uncomfortable with anything extremely out of the traditional norm).

ISTJs as Parents

*“You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth...
Let your bending in the archer’s hand be for gladness;
For even as He loves the arrow that flies,
so He loves also the bow that is stable.”*

– Kahlil Gibran

ISTJs are faithful and devoted parents who can be counted on to put forth their very best efforts towards raising their children in positive, comfortable, secure homes, and to promote their

growth in such a way that they will become secure adults who know their place in life within our society. Such is the greatest goal of an ISTJ parent toward their child.

Along the path towards this goal, the ISTJ expects that their children honor their traditional familial roles. As parents, they demand respect and authority from their children. They willingly accept their parental role of provider and guardian. Once the ISTJ becomes a parent, it becomes a “given” that they will perform all of the duties associated with parenthood, and they will do so without grudge or burden. However, they expect that their children give them their due respect in return, and will have little patience with disrespectful behavior.

When it comes to giving punishment or discipline, the ISTJ will be able to do so when necessary without too much internal trauma. They see it as their duty to teach their children when they’ve done wrong, and so will administer the punishment in the name of the greater cause of doing their duty towards their children. Not to imply that the ISTJ will enjoy disciplining their children, they simply will put their duties before their personal feelings.

The ISTJ is likely to have a problem giving a lot of positive affirmation and support to their children. Having very high expectations for their own behavior and the behavior of others, the ISTJ often forgets to give praise when praise is due. All children need positive support as they find their place in the world, and this is especially true for children with the Feeling preference, who benefit tremendously from positive affirmation, and suffer (sometimes tremendously) in its void. The ISTJ who recognizes sensitivity in their child should take special care to give them positive support and affirmation.

The ISTJ will create a consistent, secure environment for their children, with definite roles and boundaries. Although this may at times create division between the parent and child (especially during rebellious adolescence), it will generally promote the child’s growth into a secure adult. ISTJ parents will be remembered and honored by their children for being good people who always tried their best, and for putting the needs of their children above their own.

ISTJs as Friends

Although friendships do not rank highest in the ISTJ’s list of important relationships (whose duties and obligation to the Family rank above all else), they do have value these relationships and put effort into enhancing and maintaining them. The ISTJ is likely to choose to be around people who have similar interests and perspectives to their own, and are likely to not have much patience with people who are very different from themselves.

Although their usual mode of being is very serious-minded, ISTJs like to have fun and let loose. They like being with Extraverts who are optimistic and fun-minded, although the E’s enthusiasm may eventually get on the ISTJ’s nerves. ISTJs can get along with most other types, but they especially form solid connections with other Sensing Judgers. The ISTJ’s respect for laws and traditions may make them unable to relate well to Sensing Perceiving types, although they admire their carefree ability to live for the moment. And conversely, the Sensing Perceiving types may see the ISTJ’s need for structure as too conservative or scheduled for their tastes.

ISTJs seem to get along well with iNtuitives, although they cannot really relate to some of the iNtuitives' perspectives.

Personal Growth

Perhaps the most important realization that an individual can make in their quest for personal growth is that there is no single formula that defines the path to personal success. We all have different goals and priorities, which means that different activities and attitudes will make us feel good about ourselves. We also have different natural strengths and weaknesses that are a part of our inherent personality type. How then, as individuals, can we feel successful in our lives?

Understand What's Important to You

Each personality type has a different idea of what it means to be successful. Self-knowledge is one common goal that will help everyone achieve personal success. So many people are hung up on somebody else's idea of what it means to be successful, and they are unaware of what is truly important to them. This is completely normal. We all have important role-models and influencers in our lives who may have basic values that are quite different from our own. If this is the case, it's important to recognize that the discrepancy between what we have been taught is truly important and what we personally believe to be truly important is due to a difference in perspective. If we spend our time and effort trying to meet somebody else's idea of success, and ignore or belittle any conflicting messages from our own psyche, then we will find ourselves exhausted and unhappy. Realizing what is truly important to us is a major step towards achieving personal success.

Recognize Your Weaknesses Without Hiding Behind Them

While improving our self-knowledge and realizing our true goals can be very liberating, we should not discard the rules of the society in which we live. We must recognize that other people's value systems are no less important than our own. And we must recognize and accept that we live in a society in which certain personality types and behaviors are more suited towards particular tasks. This is the second key that will open the door towards personal growth.

For example, there are situations in which it is more appropriate & effective to show compassion and caring (Feeling), rather than impersonal logic (Thinking). Likewise, there are situations that call for using impersonal logic to make a decision, in which the more subjective viewpoint of the Feeling function is inappropriate and ineffective. Persons with a preference for Feeling will have a natural advantage over Thinkers in situations that require compassion and awareness of other's emotions. Conversely, persons with a preference for Thinking will have a natural advantage over Feelers in situations that require the ability to make a decision based on impersonal data.

As we learn about our personality type and the types of others, we are empowered with an understanding of why people react differently in different situations. When put into the context of Psychological Type, we can better accept and understand people's behaviors that are different from ours. These insights are extremely useful and powerful to us as individuals. However, if we are concerned with growing as individuals, we must take care not to use personality type as an excuse for our inappropriate behavior. While it's powerful and useful to notice that another person's inappropriate behavior may be due to their personality type, we cannot use the same reasoning on ourselves. We should recognize that our personality type has weaknesses, but we must use that knowledge to conquer those weaknesses rather than to excuse poor behavior. We cannot be responsible for other people's behavior, but we can control our own.

Accordingly, if we notice that someone seems to be unable to make an impersonal decision that is isolated from human perspective, we should say to ourselves, "Ah ha, here is a Feeler. This person does not use Thinking well, and that is why they're behaving this way." Yet when we as Feelers are presented with a situation that requires an impersonal approach, we should NOT say to ourselves "I am a Feeler, and can't be expected to make decisions based purely on impersonal facts & logic." This kind of rationalization for behavior is certainly an easy way out of a situation, but it enforces the weakness, making it weaker and weaker still.

Strive for Balance

Most of the weaknesses associated with any given personality type are a result of that type's dominant function overtaking the personality to the extent that the other functions become slaves to the dominant function. Although it is natural for every personality to be ruled by its dominant function, it becomes a problem when the supporting functions are not allowed to develop fully on their own because they are too busy "serving the master". In such cases, a personality can become quite imbalanced.

A situation in which the dominant function of a personality completely overshadows the other personality functions is analogous to a kingdom ruled by an overbearing king who requires absolute servitude. Imagine such a king sitting down to dinner in his castle. He keeps all of his servants running about to bring him dinner, and requires that they serve him fully (disregarding their own needs) until he is completely sated. His Foreign Minister, expected at an important affair at a neighboring kingdom, finds himself pouring ale. His Minister of Domestic Affairs, rather than addressing the issue of a failing economy, slices roast turkey. His staff grabs food for themselves here and there, but never get what they really need or want, and are consequently unsatisfied, malnourished, and underdeveloped. The issues that the staff should be taking care of are left undone, because they never finish their primary task of serving the king. The king's immediate needs are being met, and so he is tolerably happy, but he is an ineffective king. As far as he knows, everything and everybody exists simply to serve him. He has no concept of Success beyond his daily needs. Since he cannot see beyond his own needs, the entire kingdom suffers.

Likewise, a personality that has developed with a goal of serving the dominant function above all other considerations often results in a person who is imbalanced. In severe cases, weaknesses associated with the given type are often quite apparent to others and overshadow the individual's natural strengths. Such a drastic imbalance is not common, and may be the result of continuous

and extreme stress. Most people will experience times in their lives during which they are stressed to the point of serious imbalance. People who experience this constantly have issues that need to be dealt with, and should seek help.

Much more commonly, we see individuals who exhibit both the strengths and weaknesses of their type. It is natural and healthy that each personality type is ruled by a dominant function, and that the other functions support the ruling function. We don't seek to change anyone's natural self, or to achieve a perfect balance amongst a personality's functions. By definition, a kingdom needs a king in order to exist, and a personality needs a dominant function. However, a kingdom with a well-developed and effective king (the dominant function), who has well-trained and educated advisors (the supporting functions), will thrive more than the kingdom ruled by a neglectful king who is supported by inexperienced advisors.

As we can see, Balance and Success are relative terms. They have different meaning for each personality type, but one statement is true for all types: Balance is the key to Success.

Opening the Door

So how do we go about realizing what's truly important to us? How do we recognize our weaknesses, and learn not to hide behind them? How do we become balanced? How do we open that magical door that will show us the way to personal growth and success?

There is no quickie scheme that will make you a successful person. Psychological Type is a powerful aid in our quest for excellence, but it is not the actual solution. It is a model that will help you to expand your understanding of human nature. An improved understanding of yourself and others will help you to find, follow or expand your path. An awareness and acceptance of the fact that one personality function may be more effective than another function in a given situation will help you to understand the relevance of personal growth to your life.

Carl Jung identified a process of personal growth that he called individuation, which is essentially the conscious realization of your true self, beyond the Ego that is presented by your conscious self. Our efforts to help people develop themselves is essentially the effort to help them to realize that their personal perspectives and conscious ideas are only a small part of who they are, and that the more they try to develop and defend this superficial "self", the further they get away from their true Self. This realization helps a psyche in many concrete ways, and is also a positive step towards promoting a psyche that is open to the process of individuation. For the purposes of making this realization accessible to the general public, our writings are mostly void of complex theoretical discussion.

ISTJ Personal Growth

What does Success Mean to You?

People with the ISTJ personality type are serious, methodical, analytical, and hard-working. They store knowledge gained from their experiences, and use this knowledge to tackle new problems and ideas. They will work a problem through to its identified conclusion. They work towards defined goals; their analytical objectivity gives them the tendency to make goal-oriented decisions that are not waylaid by the concerns of individuals. They're uncomfortable with ideas that are completely new to them, or that are totally theoretical in nature. Since they have no direct experience with the new concept, they have no tools for knowing how to deal with it or what to think about it. They need to get the framework for a new concept before they're able to deal with it. An experienced ISTJ is usually a very capable person, and makes an excellent manager. ISTJs have great value for the "tried and true" approach, and are reluctant to adopt new systems until direct experience proves the validity of the new system. They internalize and value the rules and structure of the society in which they live, and disapprove of behaviors that go against these rules. ISTJs highly value the cornerstone institutions of society such as Family, Work, and Church. Their hard-working, dedicated nature is especially well-suited for holding up such institutions. An ISTJ's feeling of success depends upon being able to use their experience for the benefit of an institution, and also upon the level of structure and lack of chaos in their life, and in the health and welfare of their family or other social structure.

Allowing Your Strengths to Flourish

As an ISTJ, you have gifts that are specific to your personality type that aren't natural strengths for other types. By recognizing your special gifts and encouraging their growth and development, you will more readily see your place in the world, and be more content with your role.

Nearly all ISTJs will recognize the following characteristics in themselves. They should embrace and nourish these strengths:

- Their desire to execute known systems against concrete facts makes them happy to chunk through large amounts of routine work.
- With their respect for rules and order, they value honesty and integrity and seek to live with these ideals.
- An ISTJ has a "stick to it" attitude. They're not afraid of hard work, and will put forth a great deal of effort towards something that they are interested in. This persistence will help the ISTJ to achieve any identified goal.
- The ISTJ's value for social structure makes them more interested in being social than is true for many Introverts.

ISTJs who have developed their Extraverted Thinking will complement their interest in their inner world of concrete data with an interest in the welfare of the rest of the world, especially with regards to upholding social systems and traditions. These ISTJs enjoy these very special gifts:

- They will move beyond an expectation that others should follow rules into a dedication and willingness to work hard to uphold standards themselves.
- They show a dedication to maintaining personal relationships that lends them a respect for individual differences.

- They will use their inner store of facts for the benefit of an institution or society in general, rather than to satisfy their own interests.
- The more they develop their Extraverted Thinking, the better they will become at strategizing. They will be able to brainstorm multiple possible solutions to problems.
- ISTJs are often uncomfortable with decisions based on values rather than on objective criteria, but the more they develop their Extraverted Thinking, the more likely they will be able to use Introverted Feeling as a positive force rather than strictly a negative one. This will allow them to understand value judgment based on personal perspective rather than social obligation.

Potential Problem Areas

With any gift of strength, there is an associated weakness. Without “bad”, there would be no “good”. Without “difficult”, there would be no “easy”. We value our strengths, but we often curse and ignore our weaknesses. To grow as a person and get what we want out of life, we must not only capitalize upon our strengths, but also face our weaknesses and deal with them. That means taking a hard look at our personality type’s potential problem areas.

Most of the weaker characteristics that are found in ISTJs are due to their dominant Introverted Sensing function controlling the personality to the point that all other functions are being used to defend Sensing demands, rather than for their more balanced purposes. In such cases, an ISTJ may show some or all of the following weaknesses in varying degrees:

- Excessive love of food and drink
- Lack of interest in other people, or in relating to them
- Occasional inappropriate emotional displays
- General selfish “look after oneself” tendencies
- Uses judgment to dismiss others’ opinions & perspectives, before really understanding them
- May judge others rather than themselves
- May look at external ideas and people with the primary purpose of finding fault
- May become slave to their routine and “by the book” ways of doing things, to the point that any deviation is completely unacceptable
- May have difficulty communicating their thoughts and feelings to anyone

Explanation of Problems

Nearly all of the problematic characteristics described above can be attributed in various degrees to the common ISTJ problem of Introverted Sensing overtaking the ISTJ’s personality to the point that all other functions become slaves to Introverted Sensing. A more “whole” personality needs to have a good balance between its dominant and auxiliary functions. For an ISTJ, the dominant Introverted Sensing needs to be well-supported by the auxiliary Extraverted Thinking function.

If Extraverted Thinking exists only to support the desires of Introverted Sensing, than neither function is being used to its potential.

Introverted Sensing is a personality function that constantly gathers data and stores it in a sort of informational database to be accessed at will in the future. As the dominant player in a personality, it has the effect of constantly bombarding the psyche with facts to store. As something new is perceived, it is added to the vast warehouse of Introverted Sensing data. Introverted Sensing does not in itself analyze this data for meaning or connection – it just takes it in as information. In order to sort through and make use of this information, a judging function must be applied. It is the judging function that does the analysis and ordering of the data.

When Introverted Sensing is too dominant, or Extraverted Thinking is not developed sufficiently, we see the ISTJ using Extraverted Thinking to order the individual's world in such a way that Introverted Sensing can reign without interference. This may include dismissing the importance of relationships, or pushing away anything that threatens the ISTJ's highly introverted way of life. In this manner, Extraverted Thinking is used against the external world, rather than against the ISTJ's internal data. It is a defensive shield, rather than a useful filter.

The better, more "whole" use of Extraverted Thinking for the ISTJ would be to use it to order and evaluate its own rich store of data, and therefore generate useful solutions to problems and efficient systems. Like all types, most ISTJs will show some signs of this kind of weakness. This does not mean that they're hopelessly flawed. The real problems occur when an ISTJ personality has become so imbalanced that its owner is extremely selfish & unable to consider the importance or validity of anyone else's perspective.

Solutions

To grow as an individual, the ISTJ needs to focus on applying their judgment against information that they have gathered, rather than against single facts or ideas coming from others. Before judging, put all new data into the context of existing facts. Working with all of the facts at your disposal will greatly improve your ability to judge effectively, and will reduce the likelihood that you will become offensively reactionary and isolationist.

An ISTJ who is concerned with personal growth will pay close attention to the subject of their judgments, and their motivations for making judgments. Are they judging something external to themselves, or are they judging something within the context of their stored knowledge? Is the motivation for judging something to be able to understand its usefulness in the world, or to dismiss it? Too often, an ISTJ will judge something without properly understanding it, and with the intention of dismissing it. Seek first to understand, then to judge.

Living Happily

People of all personality types sometimes experience problems dealing with specific aspects of civilization and human interaction. For the ISTJ, problems are generally associated with being unable to tolerate behaviors that go outside perceived norms, and with not putting forth effort

to meet others' emotional needs. These problems stem from building up the importance of the ISTJ's inner world and diminishing the importance of the external world. ISTJs who recognize that their knowledge and experience can be enriched by the synergy of other people's knowledge and experience will find that they can be committed to their internal worlds and still have satisfying relationships with others. The key to accomplishing this is development of their highest extraverted function, Extraverted Thinking.

An ISTJ who uses Extraverted Thinking to find fault externally rather than internally may become so strongly opinionated that they form rigid and unreasonable expectations of others. Their hyper-vigilant judgments about the rationality and competence of others may be a very effective way of keeping themselves at an emotional distance from others. This will preserve the sanctity of the ISTJ's inner world and lifestyle, but will reduce a lot of valuable input, arrest the development of their social character, and stagnate the development of the ISTJ's rich store of experiential data. In extreme cases the ISTJ may find him or herself quite alone and lonely.

More commonly, the ISTJ will run into trouble when they try to order and structure the outer world, rather than their inner world. Trying to structure people into a predefined, acceptable system is problematic. The personality types who value the unique individual will be offended by the apparent lack of respect for their person, and people with personality types who follow social values will want to be honoring their own system, rather than being forced to follow yours. Many people experience being controlled or manipulated as a form of suppression, and resist it. Eventually, they may harbor serious resentment against the suppressor.

Specific suggestions:

- Take care to listen to someone's idea entirely before you pass judgment on it. Ask questions if necessary. Do whatever it takes to make sure that you understand the idea. Try not to begin judging anything until you understand the details.
- Try to identify the personality type of everyone you encounter frequently in your life. Remember that iNtuitives often have a wandering style of expression. Try to exhibit tolerance for this.
- Before you begin talking to another person, pause for a moment and look at that person. Take in that person's attitude and feelings at that moment. Be aware of the person with whom you are speaking.

Ten Rules to Live By to Achieve Success

1. **Feed Your Strengths!** Do things that allow your excellent organizational and logical abilities to flourish. Explore the worlds of business management, accounting, and medicine.
2. **Face Your Weaknesses!** See your weaknesses for what they are, and seek to overcome them. Especially, strive to use your judgment against your internal store of knowledge, rather than as a means of disregarding other people's ideas.
3. **Talk Through Your Thoughts.** You need to step through your vast amount of information in order to put things into perspective. Give yourself appropriate time to do this, and take

advantage of discussing ideas with others. Some find that externalizing your thoughts is a valuable exercise, as is expressing your ideas clearly in writing.

4. **Take in Everything.** Don't dismiss ideas prematurely because you don't respect the person generating the ideas, or because you think you already know it all. After all, everybody has something to offer, and nobody knows everything. As Steven Covey says, "Seek first to understand, and then to be understood."
5. **Quench Your Desire to Control Others.** Remember that most people do not want to be controlled. Again, turn your controlling tendencies inwardly rather than outwardly. You can only really control yourself.
6. **Be Aware of Others.** Take time to notice where others are coming from. What is their personality type? How are they currently feeling?
7. **Be Accountable for Yourself.** Don't blame the problems in your life on other people. Look inwardly for solutions.
8. **Be Gentle in Your Expectations,** and judge yourself at least as harshly as you judge others.
9. **Assume the Best.** Don't distress yourself and others by dwelling on the dark side of everything. Just as there is a positive charge for every negative charge, there is a light side to every dark side. Remember that positive situations are created by positive attitudes, and vice versa. Expect the best, and the best will come forward.
10. **There is Nothing to Fear but Fear Itself.** Sometimes it's necessary to take a risk to initiate change. Don't be afraid to do so when that time comes. In most cases, the obstacles and burdens standing in the way of your goal are not really there – they just exist in your perspective. Change your perspective – change your life.

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