

Personality & Learning Styles

PARENTING MATTERS
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c. April 2017

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PERSONALITY

The combination of characteristics or qualities that form an individual's distinctive character.
Values, attitudes, personal memories, social relationships, habits and skills

- **I**ntrovert: charges batteries by spending time alone, observant until very comfortable in a situation, makes deep friendships over time, feels that questions invade privacy, shares information after careful consideration, keeps things “in”, needs down time after school, may be quite social, but it drains the batteries, often (not always) internally motivated
- **E**xtrovert: charges batteries by spending time with others, enters new situations relatively readily, has lots of friends and acquaintances, will “throw out” ideas to see what sticks, vents, often noisy and talkative, needs action after school, social, often (but not always) responds to external rewards

DESCRIPTORS (a few)

• Confident	Caring	Quiet	Self-oriented
• shy	Positive	Silly	Jealous
• boisterous	Outgoing	Serious	Blames others
• Energetic	Sneaky	Determined	Insecure
• anxious	Worrier	Easily Frustrated	Procrastinator
• nervous	Carefree	Organized	Collector
• brash	Competitive	Messy	Discarder
• Creative	Practical	Moody	Hot-tempered
• Dramatic	Steady	Reliable	Slow-burner

Influences on Personality

- Birth Order and Siblings
- Combination of Characteristics
- Parenting and Family Circumstance : Level of acceptance and appreciation of who each child is.
- Situations: Peer group, social vs. academic vs. athletic vs. artistic, comfort level,
- Age: siblings differentiate themselves early on, then often grow more alike as they stop competing for parental attention.
- Health or Learning Issues

LEARNING STYLES

- Learning Styles are subsets of personality and are intertwined in various ways
- Multiple Intelligences tried to capture this so teachers and parents could help their children.
- Learning styles affect how children take in new information, how they organize it and how they rise to the challenges of school, sports, etc.
- You can influence learning styles (carefully), but I don't think you can change them.
- You can help children understand their styles so they accept themselves and develop more confidence

OVERVIEW OF LEARNING STYLES

• INTAKE PREFERENCE

- VISUAL LEARNERS: Benefit from charts and pictures, tend to be “pilers”, may be artistic, may need to take notes
- AUDITORY LEARNERS: Benefit from hearing things and often subvocalizing when reading, may be musical, may need to reduce visual input. Taping lectures for review helps older students.
- KINESTHETIC: body action helps cement new learning, thinking may be better when moving around (running, shooting baskets, etc.), note taking helps
- Most of us are a combination of the above and of any other styles you have encountered
- PARTS TO WHOLE: start with the pieces and build to the whole concept
- WHOLE TO PARTS: need to see the big picture first and understand the context, then able to fit all the pieces into the puzzle

MOTIVATION

- **INTERNAL**: Motivated by what pleases them, not necessarily by what pleases others, set own goals and honor their own achievements, can be difficult to find their “triggers”. Competitive with self. may not value the trophy unless goals were aligned with their own.
- **EXTERNAL**: rewarded by externals such as praise from a teacher or parent, like stickers and other rewards, can be competitive with others, generally easier to find what makes them tick. May have trouble if the teacher or coach “doesn’t like them.”
- Goal-oriented - focus on the finished product or end result, often impatient with a process they don’t see as necessary
- Process-oriented: focus on the doing, often can have trouble finishing things

Processing

- CONCRETE: needs to connect with real things and examples
- ABSTRACT: Sees the world conceptually
- RANDOM: deals with ideas in a variety of ways, likes “webbing” of new material
- LINEAR-SEQUENTIAL: take things in order, please number the pages
- KINESTHETIC: movement enables assimilation and organization of ideas
- FACTUAL: likes non-fiction material, wants to know things, can miss the big picture
- RELATIONAL: it’s all about the people, tend to like fiction, learn from stories
- INFORMATION GATHERER: keeps bringing in new information, afraid to miss something, can look like a procrastinator, may appear (or be) indecisive
- OKAY, GOT IT, LET’S MOVE ON: When they have the info they need, they move on it, can be impulsive

PRODUCING

- **PLANNER:** needs to have lots of lead time, may make lists and outlines, likes calendars and schedules, looks more organized than others but may not be, gets unnerved by last-minute assignments or a change in deadline, probably doesn't like surprises.....** Make sure there is substance behind the planning!!
- **PROCRASTINATOR:** looks like nothing is happening, diddles around, asks for materials at the eleventh hour, may stay up late "working," appears easily distracted. None of this may be true. Thrives on the adrenaline rush..... Make sure the dawdling doesn't signal a lack of understanding of the assignment.

WHAT'S A PARENT TO DO??

- Help your children understand their own personalities and styles
- Respect your child's personality and learning style, especially if it is different from your own!! Nothing will undermine confidence faster than needing to be changed in some way.
- All of us can learn outside our comfort zones when required, but we may need to begin with our strengths and build from there.
- Do not bail your child out by doing the heavy-lifting. We all need to figure out what works and what the consequences are for our choices.
- Help your child accept the personalities and styles of others so they can draw on other people at school and in life. Teams need all types!!

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