

INFJ

Introverted iNtuitive Feeling Judging

INFJs are distinguished by both their complexity of character and the unusual range and depth of their talents. Strongly humanitarian in outlook, INFJs tend to be idealists, and because of their J preference for closure and completion, they are generally "doers" as well as dreamers. This rare combination of vision and practicality often results in INFJs taking a disproportionate amount of responsibility in the various causes to which so many of them seem to be drawn.

INFJs are deeply concerned about their relations with individuals as well as the state of humanity at large. They are, in fact, sometimes mistaken for extroverts because they appear so outgoing and are so genuinely interested in people -- a product of the Feeling function they most readily show to the

world.

On the

ADVERTISEMENT



Download PDF

To View PDF, Download Here

OPEN



contrary, INFJs are true introverts, who can only be emotionally intimate and fulfilled with a chosen few from among their long-term friends, family, or obvious "soul mates." While instinctively courting the personal and organizational demands continually made upon them by others, at intervals INFJs will suddenly withdraw into themselves, sometimes shutting out even their intimates. This apparent paradox is a necessary escape valve for them, providing both time to rebuild their depleted resources and a filter to prevent the emotional overload to which they are so susceptible as inherent "givers." As a pattern of behavior, it is perhaps the most confusing aspect of the enigmatic INFJ character to outsiders, and hence the most often misunderstood -- particularly by those who have little experience with this rare type.

Due in part to the unique perspective produced by this alternation between detachment and involvement in the lives of the people around them, INFJs may well have the clearest insights of all the types into the motivations of others, for good and for evil. The most important contributing factor to this uncanny gift, however, are the empathic abilities often found in Fs, which seem to be especially heightened in the INFJ type (possibly by the dominance of the introverted N function).

This empathy can serve as a classic example of the two-edged nature of certain INFJ talents, as it can be strong enough to cause discomfort or pain in negative or stressful situations. More explicit inner conflicts are also not uncommon in INFJs; it is possible to speculate that the causes for some of these may lie in the specific combinations of preferences which define this complex type. For instance, there can sometimes be a "tug-of-war" between NF vision and idealism and the J practicality that urges compromise for the sake of achieving the highest priority goals. And the I and J combination, while perhaps enhancing self-awareness, may make it difficult for INFJs to articulate their deepest and most convoluted feelings.

Usually self-expression comes more easily to INFJs on paper, as they tend to have strong writing skills. Since in addition they often possess a strong personal charisma, INFJs are generally well-suited to the "inspirational" professions such as teaching (especially in higher education) and

religious leadership. Psychology and counseling are other obvious choices, but overall, INFJs can be exceptionally difficult to pigeonhole by their career paths. Perhaps the best example of this occurs in the technical fields. Many INFJs perceive themselves at a disadvantage when dealing with the mystique and formality of "hard logic", and in academic terms this may cause a tendency to gravitate towards the liberal arts rather than the sciences. However, the significant minority of INFJs who do pursue studies and careers in the latter areas tend to be as successful as their T counterparts, as it is *iNtuition* -- the dominant function for the INFJ type -- which governs the ability to understand abstract theory and implement it creatively.

In their own way, INFJs are just as much "systems builders" as are INTJs; the difference lies in that most INFJ "systems" are founded on human beings and human values, rather than information and technology. Their systems may for these reasons be conceptually "blurrier" than analogous NT ones, harder to measure in strict numerical terms, and easier to take for granted -- yet it is these same underlying reasons which make the resulting contributions to society so vital and profound.

Beneath the quiet exterior, INFJs hold deep convictions about the weightier matters of life. Those who are activists - INFJs gravitate toward such a role - are there for the cause, not for personal glory or political power.

INFJs are champions of the oppressed and downtrodden. They often are found in the wake of an emergency, rescuing those who are in acute distress. INFJs may fantasize about getting revenge on those who victimize the defenseless. The concept of 'poetic justice' is appealing to the INFJ.

"There's something rotten in Denmark." Accurately suspicious about others' motives, INFJs are not easily led. These are the people that you can rarely fool any of the time. Though affable and sympathetic to most, INFJs are selective about their friends. Such a friendship is a symbiotic bond that transcends mere words.

INFJs have a knack for fluency in language and facility in communication. In addition, nonverbal sensitivity enables the INFJ to know and be known by others intimately.

Writing, counseling, public service and even politics are areas where INFJs frequently find their niche.

(INFJ stands for Introvert, iNtuitive, Feeling, Judging and represents individual's preferences in four dimensions characterising personality type, according to Jung's and Briggs Myers' theories of personality type.)



Your Type Preferences

Introvert(38%) iNtuitive(12%) Feeling(19%) Judging(22%)

ADVERTISEMENT



Download PDF

To View PDF, Download Here

OPEN



Functional Analysis Of The INFJ

Based on Jung's framework of cognitive functions

Introverted iNtuition

Introverted intuitives, INFJs enjoy a greater clarity of perception of inner, unconscious processes than all but their INTJ cousins. Just as SP types commune with the object and "live in the here and now" of the physical world, INFJs readily grasp the hidden psychological stimuli behind the more observable dynamics of behavior and affect. Their amazing ability to deduce the inner workings of the mind, will and emotions of others gives INFJs their reputation as prophets and seers. Unlike the confining, routinizing nature of introverted sensing, introverted intuition frees this type to act insightfully and spontaneously as unique solutions arise on an event by event basis.

Extraverted Feeling

Extraverted feeling, the auxiliary deciding function, expresses a range of emotion and opinions of, for and about people. INFJs, like many other FJ types, find themselves caught between the desire to express their wealth of feelings and moral conclusions about the actions and attitudes of others, and the awareness of the consequences of unbridled candor. Some vent the attending emotions in private, to trusted allies. Such confidants are chosen with care, for INFJs are well aware of the treachery that can reside in the hearts of mortals. This particular combination of introverted intuition and extraverted feeling provides INFJs with the raw material from which perceptive counselors are shaped.

Introverted Thinking

The INFJ's thinking is introverted, turned toward the subject. Perhaps it is when the INFJ's thinking function is operative that they are most aloof. A comrade might surmise that such detachment signals a disillusionment, that she has also been found lacking by the sardonic eye of this one who plumbs the depths of the human spirit. Experience suggests that such distancing is merely an indication that the seer is hard at work and focusing energy into this less efficient tertiary function.

Extraverted Sensing

INFJs are twice blessed with clarity of vision, both internal and external. Just as they possess inner vision which is drawn to the forms of the unconscious, they also have external sensing perception which readily takes hold of worldly objects. Sensing, however, is the weakest of the INFJ's arsenal and the most vulnerable. INFJs, like their fellow intuitives, may be so absorbed in intuitive perceiving that they become oblivious to physical reality. The INFJ under stress may fall prey to various forms of immediate gratification. Awareness of extraverted sensing is probably the source of the "SP wannabe" side of INFJs. Many yearn to live spontaneously; it's not uncommon for INFJ actors to take on an SP (often ESTP) role.

(by Joe Butt and Marina Margaret Heiss - published under license)