

A

*new*

# UNDERSTANDING

Identifying our own personality type and that of those around us can create understanding and harmony in our relationships. Claire Hall shows us how.

Our entire lives are made up of a multitude of relationships, from partners and family, to social and professional connections, with each contributing to an extensive network in which we identify ourselves.

It will come as no surprise to learn that we all think differently, and yet why is it we constantly expect others to act, think and feel the same as we do? As a society we have been brought up to treat others as we wish to be treated ourselves. This creates an assumption that everyone wants to be treated as we do. Often this is not the case. For example, a recent client was complaining that her husband refuses to try new things. This disagreement symbolised their inherent personalities – my client loves variety and change while her husband craves stability and consistency. It is more authentic if we start treating others as they themselves wish to be treated. But how can we know what our partner, parents, siblings, children or work colleagues prefer?

## Personality Profiles

Naming different personality traits originates from the Greek doctor Hippocrates – considered

the father of modern western medicine – who labelled them Sanguine, Phlegmatic, Choleric and Melancholy. Today, there are hundreds of different tools used to measure key personality and behavioural traits, such as Myers Briggs, DISC, the Learning Styles Indicator (LSI), Kolbe and MyProfile to name a few. Essentially the key characteristics of each of the personality groups are fundamentally similar.

Knowledge is power and if we are able to have a clear understanding of which personality type we are dealing with at any given moment, the possibility of conflict turns into an opportunity for support and a deepening of our relationships. For example, understanding why your mother never listens or why your best friend struggles to say no to her boss, can potentially turn a frustrating situation into a positive experience.

The behavioural profiling tool I use in my coaching practice, MyProfile, defines the four key profiles as Driver, Promoter, Administrator and Supporter. Personality profiling is an opportunity to gain greater insight into one's unique ability to apply their strengths and potentially compensate for any weakness. It also provides a framework to better understand and accept the numerous

interacting personalities throughout your relationships. When we start to understand why people behave the way they do, we gain greater clarity of our own behavioural patterns. We start to build confidence in our communication as we become more open, effective and comfortable with adapting to other profiles.

Here is a snapshot of the MyProfile assessment. First, put yourself into an environment for which you would like to understand yourself and others better. For example, picture yourself either in a work environment, at a family gathering, or at home with your partner. Different relationship scenarios can yield different results. Tick the boxes below that most relate to you:

### DRIVER

- Like to solve problems and get quick results.
- Tend to question the rules.
- Like direct answers, variety and independence.
- Like being in charge of your life.
- Know what you want and you go after it.
- Like to test yourself with new challenges.

### PROMOTER

- Get enthusiastic about things.
- Don't like dealing with little details.

- Like to persuade others and talk people into things.
- Tend to be open and talk about thoughts and feelings.
- Like to work with people rather than alone.
- Enjoy telling stories and entertaining people.

### ADMINISTRATOR

- Like to meet high personal standards.
- Tend to think a lot about things before deciding.
- Like to have clear rules and assignments.
- Enjoy figuring things out.
- Don't like it when people question your work.
- Like working with people who are organised and good at doing their job.

### SUPPORTER

- Like to have things organised and to have things stay the same.
- Tend to be patient and a good listener.
- Like to participate in a group rather than lead, and like listening.
- Like being with people who get along.
- Enjoy helping people.
- Can be counted on to get the job done.

Your majority of ticked boxes will reveal your key profile. Most people have two to three prevailing styles. Compare your score to the more detailed analysis of the profiles in the table. Do you recognise yourself?

Now consider the profiles of those around you. What type of person do you tend to attract? Can you see the habits of your friends or family in one particular profile? What differences can you make to enhance your relationship? Does your job allow you to exercise your strengths?

As an example, I am a Promoter and love to dream up new ideas and talk about them. My husband on the other hand is a Driver and needs to know the exact details and criteria of my plan (which of course I don't know at first). Together we are a dynamic team, providing he remembers to send lots of recognition my way and I in turn add deadlines and structure to my ideas.

Having a bad day or feeling stressed can drive you into your profile weaknesses. You may have less consideration and tolerance for others and will need to be mindful of this in your relationships. In any relationship it is both party's responsibility to adapt to one another's profile.

A full personality assessment will of course provide greater detail and clarity and regardless of which assessment you are, it is always best to enrol the expertise of a trained professional to truly gain the insight and knowledge available in the report.

It is a worthwhile investment to understand and accept the variety of relationships you have created in your life. Conflict is normally the result of miscommunication and silent assumptions. Both are unnecessary if you are willing to invest in the future of your relationship. Remember, treat others as *they* would like to be treated. **em**

.....

**Claire Hall** is a highly respected life coach and founder of Authentic Empowerment. Her practice encompasses coaching for individuals, groups and teams. For more information call (02) 9953 4036 or visit [www.authenticempowerment.com.au](http://www.authenticempowerment.com.au)

.....

**Characteristics:** Likes to solve problems; questions the rules; fast-paced; seeks control; needs to be busy; direct in communication; likes freedom and autonomy; risk-taker.

**Strengths:** 'Do it now' attitude; achieves results and outcomes; decisive; detail-focused; assertive and competitive.

**Possible weaknesses:** Impatient; argumentative; poor listener; pushy or harsh.

**Areas for improvement:** Developing patience; listening skills; acknowledge others' feelings, attitudes and advice; verbalise thought processes; more relaxed image; let others keep up.

**How to communicate with this profile:** Support their ideas or goals; keep to the facts with less social chatter; avoid 'right/wrong' debates; present alternative views with succinct supporting information.

**Most important:** Be efficient and competent.

**DRIVER**

**Characteristics:** Likes to be recognised; friendly, talkative; needs variety and flexibility; spontaneous; seeks involvement in teams; bit of a dreamer; quick-paced; jumps from one activity to the next.

**Strengths:** Creative and innovative; natural leader, people-focused; communicative; big-picture thinker; enthusiastic and persuasive.

**Possible weaknesses:** Fears rejection, wants to be liked; impulsive; disorganised and lacks attention to detail; superficial or manipulative.

**Areas for improvement:** Self-discipline to follow through with tasks; control time and emotions; develop a more objective mindset; more logical approach; allocate time for checking, organising.

**How to communicate with this profile:** Allow time for verbalising their thoughts, feelings and ideas; assist with following up on detail; provide enthusiastic verbal recognition; use informal open-ended discussions in social environments; share stories.

**Most important:** Be interested in them.

**PROMOTER**

**Characteristics:** Cautious and accurate, hates risk; analytical; slower pace; likes routine; respects rules and procedures; likes to get things 'right' or perfect; values order and quality; hates mess and disorder.

**Strengths:** Objective and critical thinker; not swayed by emotion, the voice of reason; identifies any lack of logic or flawed reasoning; observant and perceptive; highly efficient and organised.

**Possible weaknesses:** Perfectionist, needs to be right; can be overly reliant on information; overly critical of self and others; resists change and slow to act.

**Areas for improvement:** More tolerant of self and others; openly shows concern and appreciation of others; timely decision-making; able to adapt to change and disorganisation; consider data as guidelines instead of the law.

**How to communicate with this profile:** Accept their need to be 'right' and discomfort with mistakes; use matter-of-fact statements rather than emotional expressions; list the pros and cons of any plan; give factual evidence.

**Most important:** Be thorough and well prepared.

**ADMINISTRATOR**

**Characteristics:** Seeks harmony; avoids confrontation; wants everyone to get along; likes to be involved with people; slow to take action or make decisions; seeks security and belonging; likes close personal relationships; highly sensitive and empathic

**Strengths:** Dependable and steady; friendly; the peacekeeper; sincere; great supporters and listeners.

**Possible weaknesses:** Goal setting and self-direction; passive or submissive, struggle to say 'no'; overly modest and sensitive; indecisive

**Areas for improvement:** Saying 'no' and delegating; communicating what you really feel and think; self-belief; openness to embrace change; set goals and directions.

**How to communicate with this profile:** Ensure they feel supported by showing interest in their opinions; assume they may take your words personally; guarantee any changes will be met with the minimum of risks; keep conversations informal and if there is a disagreement, discuss their emotions.

**Most important:** Be warm and sincere.

**SUPPORTER**