

TYPOLOGIES OF LIFE STYLE

I. The "GETTER":

Feels entitled to receive and finds it difficult to "do." His thought is always "What's in it for me?" He may be charming but he is usually a passive, dependent individual who is not self-reliant. His outlook on life is pessimistic and he often feels that life is unfair to him. He is usually gregarious but he may exploit and manipulate others by putting them into his service. He may use temper, charm, shyness or intimidation as methods of operation. Sometimes he retreats into depression. Some cover up their basic pessimism by a super optimism to assure themselves that "all is fine" or "my luck is bound to change."

Some parents want to do everything for their children and give the child the impression that love is contingent upon receiving gifts. Thus, "everyday is Christmas" or something is wrong. The child learns at an early age to put others into his service and does not learn to solve his own problems. He may be encouraged to give back information but not to think for himself.

II. The "DRIVER" or "GO-GETTER":

Is an active, aggressive, forceful individual who always wants to be first, be on top, be better than others or be the center. He has to win and when he doesn't he claims he was cheated. He must have his own way and power is important in all his relationships although he also feels he would like to please everyone. He believes it is important to be "a real man" or "a real woman." His overambition is counter-phobic for underneath he fears he is "nothing."

Many were oldest children who struggled to maintain their superior position. Others may have been the youngest who learned to gain center stage, or a second child with an "Avis Complex" (who "had to try harder"). They usually come from highly competitive families.

III. The "CONTROLLER":

Either wants to control life or ensure that life will not control him. He approaches life with a hesitating attitude since his goal is that of perfection and he constantly tests himself and life. He needs guidelines for everything so routines, schedules, order and rules appeal to him. He is overconscientious, punctual, and concerned with cleanliness, neatness and correct dress. He is afraid of his feelings and favors intellectualization. He deprives himself of spontaneity, dislikes surprises and finds it difficult to relax and have fun. He may have good superficial relationships but finds it difficult to develop close relationships with people. He often depreciates others, thereby exalting himself. He may develop passive methods of controlling others, using tears ("water power"), weakness, shyness and charm.

In childhood, there were probably high standards, stress on rewards and punishment, competition, on being more perfect than he was, and he was probably admonished to "control yourself." Although discipline was probably strict, the parents did things for him unduly. He learned to cover up his true feelings, developed rituals and kept life at a distance.

IV. The "PERSON WHO NEEDS TO BE RIGHT":

Is an overambitious perfectionist with excessively high standards. He cannot tolerate ambiguity and needs guidelines for everything. He has trouble making up his mind and may ask for advice to an extreme degree. He is usually in a state of turmoil although he tries to "go by the book." Right and wrong are the all-important issues; if he doesn't know what is right, he doesn't act. He is overwhelmed by the importance of the reactions of other people. He scrupulously avoids error but if caught in error, he rationalizes that others are more wrong than he.

He usually comes from a home with excessive discipline and where high moral standards, what is right and wrong, success and intellectual correctness were stressed. Power struggles may have occurred between his parents, with each criticising and depreciating the other. This taught him how important it is not to err.

V. The "PERSON WHO MUST BE SUPERIOR":

Feels inferior unless he is in a superior position. He strives for significance but has a basic feeling of insignificance. He must be the leader and is upset if his authority is challenged. Then he tries to "get even." He has little feeling for others although he uses them as stepping stones for himself. He is vain and frequently rude and arrogant, although he may maintain a demeanor of politeness that is not genuine. He denies his true feelings, may act "tough" and is defensive. Some have to be master of everything and others emphasize keeping themselves under control and being above reproach. He may achieve the record for the number of days of underground burial. He won't enter a life arena unless he can be the "center" or "best." If he can't be first or best, he may settle for last or worst.

Situations which fostered this attitude include a pampered child who had others do things for him, parents in a conflict so that he got the idea that power is important, ridicule by parents or other children, keen competition from siblings with the feeling he must always stay ahead, extreme punishment and exposure to inaccurate values (such as "men have to be tough").

VI. The "PERSON WHO NEEDS TO BE LIKED" or "THE PLEASER":

Evaluations of others are the yardsticks of his worth. He depends on the approval of others and is uncomfortable without constant praise. He is extremely sensitive to criticism. Because he is dependent on what is expected of him, he cannot be sincere. He cannot be a strong leader or an efficient boss or be effective in a catastrophe because he might be criticised.

Probably worked for rewards as a child. When a child is not given a chance to evaluate for himself but to depend on the evaluation of others, he may seek constant approval. He asks for approval before doing anything. (This is frequently regarded as desirable behavior). Parents with high moral standards may make a child who depends upon their approval feel guilty because of his unworthy thoughts. Many parents stress the importance of being liked. They may fear that they might lose the child's love if they discipline him.

VII. The "PERSON WHO NEEDS TO BE 'GOOD'":

Is a self-righteous person who looks down on others by pointing out their weaknesses. He may advertise his own goodness

expect anything from him and he does not expect anything from himself. His goal is to avoid demands and pressures and he tries to get others to leave him alone. Through his default he indentures others. He avoids responsibility and is threatened by success because he fears that then others will expect more from him. He may be likeable and pleasant but he usually has trouble in an aggressive society. He was probably an underachiever at school, had particular difficulty in mathematics. He is likely to have difficulty handling money.

His parents may have tried very hard to train him properly but they probably had excessive demands for him to get high grades, be good, not fight, not lie, etc. He may have been clumsy and awkward and when responsibility was given to him he would avoid it or fail. He may have come from a famous family and, because he was not outstanding, felt he was a failure. Probably he had a high-achieving sibling.

XII. The "PERSON WHO CRAVES EXCITEMENT":

He revels in commotion, feels rules are restrictive and ordinary life and routines are dull. He finds fun in breaking rules and flirting with danger, often "bites off more than he can chew," leaves everything till the last moment, makes "messes," does things he should not do. He confuses others and becomes confused himself. He may feel that he is someone special but there is considerable pessimism in his outlook on life. He is often attracted to inappropriate persons and girls frequently use sex to stir up excitement or they fall in love with a married man. Some find excitement through fears, masturbation, etc. not involving others.

Some homes have lots of excitement and lack of order. Sometimes the parents fight and the children learn various ways to stir up a commotion to attract attention or to distract it. Frequently the youngest child does not want to be left out and finds he can have excitement defending himself.

XIII. The "AGINNER":

He opposes everything and knows only what he is against. He does not stand for anything. He may be actively against or he may behave passively, circumventing the demands of others. He is an extreme pessimist.

As a child, he was probably "mother deaf" and did not participate in life nor make decisions in a constructive way. He probably lacked creativity and spontaneity and was not trained in active problem-solving. Probably he used goals of passive or active power or violent passivity.

XIV. The "ONE WHO AVOIDS FEELINGS":

He feels that reason can solve all problems, prizes rationality of man and the intellectual process: he "talks a good game." He fears his own spontaneity lest he might move in a way that he had not preplanned.

In some homes that are "puritanical" feelings are suspect. In others parents dictate to their children what are the "proper" feelings for them to have. Sometimes a child observes how siblings who express their feelings openly get into trouble and he avoids this.

and seek approval as a reinforcement that he is indeed good, but the approval of others is not sufficient because he himself must feel he is good. His own feelings are more important than the opinions of others. He uses his own standards to determine what "good" is and these may be even higher than God's (God can forgive but he cannot). Frequently the wife of an alcoholic is a woman who needs to be "good."

Goodness is usually in contrast to someone else. When one child in the family is naughty, another child (usually the one next older or younger) is a "model" child. The goodness of the one provokes the other to be "bad." One who needs to be "good" and becomes discouraged may become extremely "bad."

VIII. The "VICTIM":

Sometimes called the "schlimazel" is the one who always gets the dirty end of the stick. He is a disaster-chaser and is accident prone. He sees life as abusive and full of suffering and tragedy. Although suffering is his goal, he is completely oblivious that it is he who provokes his own downfall. He may actually be a courageous person but he sees himself as always losing out and he seeks pity. He is pessimistic about life and constantly complains about what is happening to him.

He probably had some unhappiness early in life and got some satisfaction, attention and glory from the pity he received when people felt sorry for him.

IX. The "MARTYR":

While the "victim" merely dies, the "martyr" dies for a cause. The martyr has more arrogance than the victim; the martyr feels that he is good and has value. His goal is to suffer and thus ennoble himself and elevate himself above others. He is highly critical, self-righteous and has high moral standards. He may complain bitterly or be cheerful, playing to his own audience but feeling sorry for himself. He is an "injustice collector." Some martyrs advertise their suffering; others endure and suffer silently.

X. The "BABY":

Finds his place through charm, cuteness and the exploitation of others. He feels small, weak, helpless and unable to take care of himself. His goal is to get others to serve him. He may ask questions, seek help, try to be the center of attention and he expects special privileges. He is dependent on others and wants to be loved or pitied. His voice may remain high pitched and childlike and he may continue to talk "baby talk."

Usually he was the youngest in the family constellation and was not expected to do things for himself. He gave up putting forth effort but developed his charm through shyness, weakness and friendliness in a passive way and thus gained undue attention.

This trait is highly acceptable in women, particularly for the "southern belle," but it is also found in men.

XI. The "INADEQUATE PERSON":

Has an "Inferiority Complex." Feels he is small and weak, that life is difficult and full of trouble, or dull and unrewarding. Since he feels he cannot do anything, others should not