

Introducing the Sanguine

These notes are taken from 'Understanding Yourself' by John Sparkes, a temperament manual which is written from the perspective of what a child needs as they are growing up. It is available as an [ebook](#) via Amazon.

1. The big front

Perhaps the most well-known Sanguine is the apostle Peter. An appearance of strength and bravado covered an inability to 'deliver the goods' until his Master taught him the meaning of real strength. The Sanguine child will need to encounter this strength in his parents. His ability to 'throw his weight around' will need to be met with firm enforcement of understood standards. This child will try to talk, bully, charm, or even scream his way around these guidelines. Manipulation is learnt at an early age!

2. Beneath the surface

The Sanguine has a very likeable personality. He is able to socialise and is often the life and soul of the party. Others covet this ability to 'make friends' and engage in enthusiastic conversation. However, if he can be honest with himself he will find certain fears within:

- a. He knows his weakness and is afraid of his superficiality.
- b. He is a big 'softy' at heart and will do anything to avoid facing emotional pain

This fear of a lack of depth and a determination to avoid emotional pain means that he will have difficulty facing uncomfortable truths and will constantly 'shift the goalposts'. He has to be on top and has great difficulty being told anything.

3. Defensiveness

Part of his defence is to either collapse in self-pity (sometimes tears) or fight. It is easier to take either of these routes rather than being still and listening. If he were to stop and discuss the issue he knows he might have to face the painful truth! He usually has his own phrase or method of terminating the conversation. This defensiveness (usually helped by an able mind) is a cover, but, sadly, prevents the Sanguine from having the depth built in to his life that he knows he needs. He often uses ceaseless activity as a means of avoiding reality and therefore finds it difficult to form deep relationships.

4. Physical people

Emotions are often expressed physically and Sanguines tend to be physical people. They usually excel in sport and drama. When negative emotions are experienced, they look for physical fulfilment as comfort for those emotions and are capable of becoming vulnerable to alcohol, drugs and even food addictions.

5. Must be at the centre

The need to 'be at the centre' and therefore in control is perhaps the outstanding weakness of this temperament. This can result in bullying - both verbal and physical. Jealousy can arise over the most trivial of issues and the ensuing anger and resentment can cause endless problems. If the Sanguine perceives that he is unable to occupy centre stage he will draw attention to himself 'by sitting on the edge' and sulking.

6. Naturally 'on top'

As the Sanguine is active and outgoing he will tend to take over in situations. He needs to be on top and finds it difficult to take orders and not give them. Quite unwittingly he can make others feel inadequate and inferior. This need to be on top also means he will pull down anyone who he senses could be better than him.

Meeting the needs of the Sanguine

7. Extravagant love

This child will be extravagant in showing love and warmth. Give plenty of affection.

8. Physical activity

Physical activity and fun are natural to this child. If he is to be helped to handle his emotions, it is essential that there is a healthy outlet for his energy. Fun in the family, with plenty of physical contact (fathers!), as well as involvement in more organised activities makes for satisfied children. Boredom, fed by restlessness, can soon lead to trouble at home, school or work.

9. Restlessness

This physical expression of emotions can also result in a restlessness that means that little of substance is learned or achieved. He needs to be taught to be still, apply himself, concentrate and stick at what he is doing. Do not let him drift from one thing to another. Help him to not only start but also complete projects - and clear up! Insist that he is disciplined in his approach to schoolwork, projects at home and to any of his responsibilities. His laziness and restlessness means that there is a real danger that he may never reach his potential in life.

10. Discipline

Discipline will need to be firm. Watch for manipulation, lies (including quick-thinking after-thoughts!), temper tantrums, and bossiness. This child will need to be 'hedged in' so that he can learn to constantly face the truth. Failure to do so will mean that he will expect to get his own way, will develop sophisticated techniques to get it and will be increasingly unaware of the effects of his attitude and behaviour on others. His desire to be 'on top' will mean that he will always come up with an answer and will be prepared to argue even if the original point under discussion is completely lost.

11. Aware of others

Within the family he must be made aware of the feelings of others and the effect he has on them and learn to take his place as part of the family. He must not be allowed to dominate, with his noise and bossiness. Jealousy, sulking and bullying are out! It is within the family that he has the opportunity to learn to work with others. He will find it difficult to stand 'shoulder to shoulder' with someone – he has to either be two steps in front or behind.

12. Teach values

The Sanguine's superficiality, laziness, weakness and tendency to express himself physically can lead to the forming of unhealthy relationships, low moral standards, crudeness, an undisciplined life-style, untidiness, inability to face pain and unwise use of time and money.

His natural warmth, compassion and enthusiasm can be misdirected - sometimes with painful results. He will need to be taught values.

Summary of the Sanguine

1. This temperament has a natural loveliness.
2. His compassion and fun, with his ability to quickly put others at ease, make for attractive personalities.
3. He has enormous potential and promise.
4. However, firm parental teaching and discipline - and then self-discipline - is essential if the natural weaknesses are not to spoil, and perhaps destroy, the Sanguine.
5. Someone has to be bigger and stronger to help him know limits of behaviour and attitude.
6. Right and wrong need to be firmly established.
7. His need to be in the centre has to be turned into an ability to work in harmony with others.
8. All Sanguines can take encouragement from the apostle Peter - remembered both for his failure and success!