

Introduction to Temperament Blends

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. Putting it all together

We have looked at the individual temperaments and tried to understand their strengths and weaknesses. Bearing in mind that each of us has two or three temperaments we can put them together and see the whole person.

It is helpful to remember that with a temperament mix the separate temperaments do not lose their identity. It follows then that each temperament must be treated as a 'whole' temperament. In other words, even if someone is 80% Choleric and 20% Melancholic the 20% is still a 'whole' temperament and each of its strengths and weaknesses need to be fully explored.

2. Percentages of mix

The percentage of each temperament present influences how we respond to life and it is important to try and work this out in trying to gain an understanding of ourselves. The way that we respond to life and the way that the temperaments interact together will be determined by the percentage mix, our circumstances (especially in early life) and the choices we make.

3. The place of extrovert and introvert

The extrovert temperaments (Choleric and Sanguine) enable us to set goals, move out, organise, achieve and extend our circle of friends.

The introvert temperaments (Melancholic and Phlegmatic) help us to feel deeply, to reflect, to empathise and make measured judgements.

4. All that we need

When God made us he gave us each of our temperaments for a reason. He knew what we would need in order to fulfil our 'life's mission' and to be able to build and hold the relationships that are so central to life. If we set ourselves to understand how our temperaments interact together then we will be in a position to give ourselves fully in our relationships. We can live lives of depth and significance - not of bored superficiality.

5. The neglected introvert

When an extrovert temperament is predominant a child tends to live in that temperament, to the neglect of whichever introvert temperament he might have. A whole area of a child's make-up can be missed, leaving him feeling insecure and confused. The neglected temperament is undeveloped. Contact with others is by the extrovert temperament. There is an inability to give himself to others. In adulthood, it is often the challenges and responsibilities of life (e.g. work, marriage, and children) which expose the lack of development of the introvert temperament. Serious problems can arise which are not readily understood - e.g. in a marriage where the initial attraction was the extrovert temperament.

6. The unprocessed introvert

Each of us needs to know what we are feeling and thinking - and why. This enables us to make sense of who we are and what is happening to us. When the child is not sufficiently in touch with his introvert and is therefore unable to process thoughts and emotions at the right depth in an ongoing way then the tendency is to 'escape' into the extrovert. This leads to an exaggeration of the outgoing temperament. He will try to escape from what he cannot cope with by driving hard into his 'outgoingness'. When he knows 'things are not right within' the extrovert temperament can become part of his defence and it has to be breached before anyone can get near him.

7. The paralysing introvert

A child with an unprocessed Melancholic temperament as his introvert will find that the Melancholic will act as brakes on an outgoing temperament that is trying to take him forward in life. This 'brakes on' effect creates friction and pressure within that eventually produces an immobilising fatigue.

8. The collapsed introvert

A child with an unprocessed Phlegmatic is likely to collapse when external pressure reaches a certain point and defences are breached.

9. Opposite emotions

Rightly understanding our temperament mix helps us to understand why we can feel opposite emotions at the same time. It also explains why sometimes we can be indecisive – sure of ourselves one minute but then faced with a set of emotions that make us question a decision we took so confidently.

10. 'Split personality'

As most of us are aware of having at least two temperaments there will be times when we feel like two different people within one personality. According to how secure we are this will lead to various degrees of 'split personality'. If a person is deeply insecure this can create serious psychological needs.

11. Plan of approach

It is important for each of us to learn to live in our introvert temperament. The 'engine room' has to be right first. If the extrovert temperament is being used as a defence that has to be breached before we can discover who we are in our introvert temperament. Once we are comfortable with who we are, then the introvert is expressed through, and catches up with, the extrovert temperament. We can then live and communicate as whole people.

If we have the two introvert temperaments, then the Phlegmatic is the one that is used as a defence. If we have the two extrovert temperaments, then they tend to lock together to form a defence from the emotions that go with those temperaments.