

## Phlegmatic Melancholic

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. Treat them as individuals

Both temperaments have to be looked at separately. As both are introvert it would be easy to see them as merging into each other. Each strength and weakness of each temperament needs to be understood.

### 2. Involved Phlegmatic?

Has this person chosen to get involved in life? The Phlegmatic can act as a doorway into the Melancholic so in a 'switched off' or detached Phlegmatic it will be more difficult to see the sensitive, creative Melancholic.

### 3. Not looking?

A Phlegmatic Melancholic can use his Phlegmatic to avoid looking at the Melancholic. If he does not like what he sees within the Melancholic and feels unable to process his thoughts and feelings he will live in the Phlegmatic. As a result he will not know himself nor will he let anyone get near the Melancholic. If this is the case then he will most likely be living in the unreality that the Phlegmatic is capable of creating as part of his escape from what he feels he cannot cope with. He may well present a pleasing and acceptable image but it is a far cry from what is going on inside.

### 4. Selective involvement

The presence of the Phlegmatic means there will often be selective involvement. What has he chosen to get involved in? What does that tell us about him? What are the resultant frustrations within him because of what he has not got involved in? When he has chosen to not get involved what has he done with his Melancholic creative potential? He is the introvert of the introverts. He might switch off as a Phlegmatic but all his creative potential is still there. He will create but it will be an introverted creativity and it is likely that those instincts will be distorted. Whether it is in the area of sex, art, music or even making home the potential is there for distorted creativity. If he becomes grossly self-absorbed his surroundings can deteriorate into total chaos. As part of his healing, as a Melancholic, he will need to express his creativity and, as a Phlegmatic to share his time, possessions and himself. It will be important to express the feelings and thoughts of both the Melancholic and Phlegmatic. If he can be encouraged to be involved in every aspect of relationships the potential is there for fascinating and creative interaction.