

Sanguine 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. Which one?

The potential for fun, talent, communication and creativity is enormous - and so is the potential to live in a muddle.

This person has little difficulty relating to others - when he chooses to do so! He can be the life and soul of the party - or a real misery! A warm, creative personality but the moods can swing and undermine so much that is so good. The real danger is that the Sanguine Melancholic slips so easily into the Melancholic resulting in a neglected Melancholic. The result is that the Melancholic weaknesses are not dealt with and are allowed to do their destructive work. Depression, indulgence of negative emotions, self-hatred, can all go on under cover of the attractive outgoing personality. Those closest to him cannot understand the switch that takes place when he relates to those he wants to impress and to those who one would have thought were his nearest and dearest.

A pendulum effect can be set up in which he moves through from the Melancholic to the Sanguine, experiencing emotions from depression through to elation. This manic depressive condition seems to happen involuntarily but actually can be prevented by a proper understanding of the Melancholic.

2. Physical results

This temperament mix is most prone to the problems that come from trying to meet emotional needs in a physical way. Where issues within the Melancholic temperament are not resolved in a constructive and healthy way, the Sanguine will attempt to meet them physically. This can range from using drink as an escape, emotional eating, through to serious addictions or swings between starvation and bingeing with food.

3. Being strong

As a child he needs to learn to be strong. When he collapses stand him on his feet and make him go back and face the issue. He needs to confront the effects of his self-pity - and frustration! A cuddle of acceptance is in place when an issue is faced but do not let that become a substitute for going back and putting things right. Taking short cuts in childhood in the discipline process teaches him to use his considerable skills to get his own way in adult life.

4. Being true

He must be taught to be in touch with, and true to, the qualities of the Melancholic. Lack of confidence and unwillingness for confrontation can blunt his straightforwardness and therefore his effectiveness. This can lead to inner turmoil as he violates his own value system. The values of the Sanguine and Melancholic are very different!

5. Flawed foundation

Perhaps more than any other temperament blend this one has the ability to build a life, relationships or a career only to find that the indiscipline of the Sanguine and the inability to get to grips with the Melancholic lead to the eventual downfall of all he has worked for. The Sanguine Melancholic can be multi-talented and full of potential. It is vital that such gift and quality is under girded by strong values, discipline and objectivity.

6. A closer look

So far we have taken a broad look at the Sanguine Melancholic. If both temperaments are going to fully co-operate with each other and function together we need to take a closer look. It will be helpful to view the two temperaments separately and to understand how they interact. We will do this by seeing how they view each other and what each needs to do in order for the Sanguine Melancholic to live at peace with himself.

7. How does the Sanguine view the Melancholic?

The Sanguine stays on the surface. He has no desire to be still and go deep - he is afraid to. The Melancholic, on the other hand, cannot switch feelings off at will so picks up all that is happening around him. It picks up on the reality of life. This causes the Melancholic to feel like a ball and chain around his feet, a burden to bear, something that drags him down. The Sanguine wants to keep moving outwards. The Melancholic, with its depth and natural negativity, feels like a downward pull. He will feel it to be a hindrance, something that prevents him attaining what he wanted to, something that forces him to consider a side of life he would rather bounce away from. So the Sanguine will be impatient, frustrated with, and dismissive towards, the Melancholic. And the way we treat our introvert temperament is the way we treat those nearest to us. So his wife, children and friends become something that gets in the way, that pulls him down and stops him from living how he wants to live. And family and friends feel exactly that – in the way, a source of frustration, dismissed.

The Sanguine can feel sorry for himself for having to have to put up with his Melancholic; to have to drag this handicap around with him all his life becomes something over which we are all expected to sympathise. If he does not feel the necessary sympathy and attention to be forthcoming he has his own way of trying to gain it. By his behaviour and attitude he says in effect to people 'If you knew what it was like to have to drag this around with you all day every day then you would feel sorry for me. And just in case you have no idea of what it is like I will give you a taste of it myself and then perhaps you will feel sorry for me.'

8. How does the Melancholic feel about this?

Clearly the naturally negative view that the Melancholic has of himself will be reinforced by the attitude of the Sanguine towards him. The Melancholic will feel itself to be the reason for failure to achieve and to get on in life. The Melancholic has the ability to withdraw, turn in on itself and indulge its own emotions. In some instances, it can entirely disconnect from the Sanguine and the person loses touch with their emotions. The Sanguine becomes a hostile front covering a Melancholic in retreat with depression and confused emotions. The Sanguine and Melancholic then become polarised so that he can be one thing in a certain situation and something completely different in another.

9. What can we do to resolve the conflict?

a. Sanguine

The Sanguine has to always be on top. So that is how it will treat the Melancholic. The Sanguine must stop and look at what it is doing to the Melancholic within, bearing in mind that failure to do so leads to destruction of relationships.

b. Melancholic

The Melancholic has to stop listening to the Sanguine, which will tell him of lost opportunities, and how restrictive he is. He must begin to value who he is. The Melancholic must take responsibility for himself. This is the hardest step for a Melancholic to take because he knows instinctively that once he has accepted that he is totally responsible then there is nowhere to hide. He is accountable.

The Melancholic has to reach a point where he ceases to blame his past, his parents, lost opportunities and who he is and to take total responsibility for who and what he is at this point in time and for all that he will be in the future. Where there is a failure to take that responsibility the strength of the Melancholic is diverted through its weaknesses – into criticism, moodiness and isolation. Coupled with the Sanguine need to be on top this can become a powerfully destructive mix that not only destroys the Sanguine Melancholic himself but also harms those who try and get close. It becomes impossible to sustain meaningful relationships.

When the Melancholic is taking full responsibility for who he is then the Sanguine becomes the attractive channel through which all the constructive creativity of the Melancholic is channelled – for the good of all concerned.