

HOW TO GET ALONG WITH OTHERS

(The Four Temperaments, Part 3)

INTRODUCTION

I hope you have already been enjoying some success in seeing God work in the area of your weaknesses. But as you may have realized, it not only helps us to evaluate ourselves, it can help us understand others. Once we have an understanding of ourselves through the study of the four personalities, we can open up a whole new world of positive human relationships. We can take the principles we've learned and apply them in practical directions.

I. RELATIONSHIP STRENGTHS

If you are in a position of leadership in the home, the church or the job, try to position people where they excel. Keep the following in mind:

A. Sanguines are best:

- in dealing with people enthusiastically
- in expressing thoughts with excitement
- in up-front positions of attention

B. Choleric are best:

- in jobs that require quick decisions
- in spots that need instant action and accomplishments
- in areas that demand strong control and authority

C. Melancholies are best:

- in attending to details and in deep thinking
- in keeping records, charts, and graphs
- in analyzing problems too difficult for others

D. Phlegmatics are best:

- in positions of mediation and unity
- in storms that need a calming hand
- in routines that might seem dull to others

II. RELATIONSHIP NEEDS

We have something to learn from each other. Don't ever feel that someone else is below you or to be looked down upon or despised. God wants us to learn from the strengths of others, and respond to the weaknesses in others. Don't try to make everyone into a duplicate of yourself. God created this variety. Respect them and help them. Here are some specific principles to keep in mind with each temperament.

A. Sanguine

1. **Recognize their difficulty in accomplishing tasks.**

Be realistic. They love new ideas and projects, but they have very poor follow-through. This weakness is especially difficult for Melancholies to understand, because they have such a need to finish what they start and think everyone should feel the same. Little Sanguine children need constant supervision to see that they do what they are assigned. They are easily distracted, but they really mean well, so don't give up. Don't do it yourself because that only encourages their weaknesses, and they'll soon learn if they do it poorly they won't be asked again.

Sanguine adults are just bigger children. If you are supervising them, you have to make the instructions clear, and then follow through until you can trust them to finish a project.

2. **Realize that they talk without thinking first.**

Melancholies can't understand that anyone would open their mouths without knowing what they were going to say. Sanguines open their mouths to find out what they are saying. They are not trying to be thoughtless, it just happens.

3. **Realize that they like variety and flexibility.**

Putting them in routine, dull jobs will not maximize their abilities. They like it when something new is always going on.

4. **Help them to keep from accepting more than they can do.**

Sanguines get over committed frequently because they are excited about anything new. They also have a hard time saying no. Help them analyze their available time and take on only what they can handle. However, be aware of the fact that they do need *some* outside activities. Don't force them to stop everything.

5. **Don't expect them to remember appointments or be on time.**

Even when they plan to be early something always happens. Even if they leave on time, they have to go back for what they forgot. If you have a Sanguine member in your family or on your team, or in your group, help them to set up a calendar with appointments and work on punctuality.

6. **Praise them for everything they accomplish.**

Because it is so difficult for them to stick to a project they need constant praise to keep them going. All temperaments need praise, but you'll need to put in double the effort for the Sanguine.

7. **Remember they are circumstantial people.**

More than any other temperament, Sanguines are controlled by their circumstances. Their emotions go up and down according to what is happening around them. When you realize how quickly their emotions change, you won't overreact to their hysteria.

8. **Accept that they make fun out of what would be embarrassing to others.**

Sanguines love to tell stories of their mistakes, so listen and don't try to tell them how they could have avoided the problem.

9. **Enjoy their child-likeness.**

They love fun. They love presents. Life is exciting. Use that trait to brighten up your own life.

10. **Remember:**

Sanguines are good at jobs that have direct contact with people, such as, recruiters, promoters, greeters, and motivators.



B. Choleric

1. *Recognize they are born leaders*

The first thing to understand in dealing with Choleric is that they are born leaders and their nature nudges them into control positions. They are not Phlegmatics who one day made a major decision to take over the world. They are not Melancholies who designed plans and determined to put them into aggressive action. They are not Sanguines who finally got down to business. They are people who were born with a desire to direct and a love for leadership. Once you understand their nature, full of positive traits, sometimes carried to extremes, you won't be surprised or hurt when they take charge.

Because Choleric are so strong, those dealing with them have to counter with similar strength. They don't mean to force their own way. They just quickly see the logical answer to situations and assume you want what's "right." Once you understand their thinking pattern you can stand firm, and they will respect you for this position. When you allow a Choleric to push you around, he will continue to do so.



2. *Insist on two-way communication.*

The controlling nature of the Choleric makes it difficult for others to assert any will in activities or plans. If you are married to a Choleric you need to insist on some two-way communication. Insist is a strong word, but it is needed in conversing with the Choleric, for he will scoff at your need to discuss matters and just give you answers. A suggestion for women with a Choleric husband is to hear him out, thank him for his message, and ask for three minutes to express your feelings. He will usually pay attention if you are clear and concise, and firm but friendly.

3. *Know they don't mean to hurt.*

Because Choleric spit out what they think instantly, without concern for someone else's feelings, they frequently hurt people. If we realize that the Choleric doesn't mean to hurt, that he just speaks straight out, we will more easily accept his quick comments and not be upset.

4. *Try to divide areas of responsibility.*

In order to keep out of trouble and not give up your own personality, you must discuss with the Choleric what areas of responsibility are for him and what ones you are to control. Usually he wants the most practical plan and is not afraid of work, but if the duties are not clear there will be a conflict.

5. *Realize they are not compassionate.*

Since the Choleric deals in reality and practicality, he is not apt to have compassion for the sick or weak. They tend to look the other way when there are emotional needs to be filled. They aren't mean or cruel; they just don't have a heart for those hurting. While the Choleric should aim to improve his feelings for people, you will deal better with him if you don't expect miracles.

6. *Realize that they are not comfortable when they are not in control.*

This is especially true at social events because they don't enjoy just making conversation and need to have a goal for being there. When possible give them some area of responsibility to carry out. It can actually be a help to you and will definitely make them more comfortable.

7. *Remember:*

Kostya Choleric makes a good leader, a good administrator or director, with some practice also makes a good coach. He is good in a job that requires him to interact with people in an organized way.

C. Melancholy

1. *Know that they are very sensitive and get hurt easily*



One of the greatest benefits of learning about the temperaments is the relief you feel when you can understand why another person reacts as he does. For Sanguines and Choleric who tend to say what's on their minds without thinking, it is so important to know that Melancholies are very sensitive and get hurt easily.

This same trait of sensitivity is a positive that gives Melancholies their rich, deep, emotional natures, but carried to an extreme these feelings cause them to be hurt easily. As soon as you know a person is of a melancholy temperament, watch your words and your volume and you will avoid having a dejected person on your hands. If you see a black cloud over them, apologize sincerely, and explain you have a tendency to speak too quickly without thinking.

2. *Realize they are programmed with a pessimistic attitude*

Until you understand Melancholies, you don't realize that they come prepackaged with a pessimistic view of life. This trait is positive, because they are able to look ahead and see the problems other temperaments don't notice, but carried to an extreme they never seem to have a happy moment.

3. *Learn to deal with depression*

This is especially important if you live with a Melancholy who has a tendency to depression. Watch for signs of depression. Realize that they need help. Don't try to jolly them up. Encourage them to express their feelings. Never tell them their problems are stupid.

We are going to take a few minutes to list nine commands that, if followed will cause our hearts to rejoice. If you are dealing with someone who is depressed these commands may be the source of victory for them. They are found in I Chron. 16:8-11, as well as Psalm 105:1-4.

- Give thanks unto the Lord
- Call upon His name
- Make known His deeds among the people
- Sing unto Him, sing psalms unto Him
- Talk of all His wondrous works
- Glory in His holy name
- Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord
- Seek the Lord and His strength
- Seek His face continually

4. *Compliment them sincerely and lovingly.*

Because Melancholies are insecure in the love of others, they look with question on the compliments they receive. The Sanguine is so eager for good words that he will take an insult and turn it into a complement, but the Melancholy often takes a compliment and turns it into an insult! Another reason for their doubt of a casual, uplifting word is they are analytical of everything and suspicious of people, especially happy people. They feel there must be an ulterior motive behind a complement, and yet they really want to be appreciated. This conflict makes it difficult for anyone to give a positive word to a Melancholy and have it received as it was intended. Knowing this should help you to give sincere, quiet, and loving compliments and to not be upset if the response is, "What did you really mean by that?"

5. *Accept that they like it quiet sometimes*

If you are a Sanguine, you may not know that Melancholies really like moments of silence. They enjoy staring into space, inhaling a fresh breeze, meditating in the moonlight.

6. *Try to keep a reasonable schedule*

The most important part of life to any Melancholy is his schedule. He needs to know where he is going, when, and why. Don't try to pull him into a haphazard style of life. He will be upset if things are not done according to schedule.

7. *Realize that neatness is a necessity*

The fastest way to put a Melancholy into a depression is to scatter things all over the house or office and never know where anything is. Even if you are Sanguine, try to establish a sense of order. Pick things up, put things back after you use them.

8. Help them not to become slaves to the family (a special note for men with Melancholy wives)

Because Melancholies are perfectionists, it is difficult for them to accept work not up to their standards. Consequently, Melancholy mothers tend to do all the work and become slaves to the family. Encourage your wife to train the children to be helpers and to lower *her* standards to be in keeping with *their* abilities.

9. Remember:

Mr. Melancholy likes to do work that requires detail. He makes a good accountant/bookkeeper, he is good at research, and can be very helpful in making detailed plans. If you need someone to make up the calendar for the next year, ask your melancholy.

D. Phlegmatic

1. Realize they need direct motivation

It is extremely difficult for the Choleric parent to understand a Phlegmatic child. Because the Choleric is so motivated and sees everything in the steps to a goal, he cannot comprehend that a child can have a low-level motivation, and yet not be stupid. He equates intelligence with thinking like he does, and may dampen the spirits of a Phlegmatic, turning him into a loser.

Phlegmatics are the most enjoyable, easygoing people there are, but they need positive motivation. They need parents or mates who encourage them and help them set goals. When we understand the Phlegmatic temperament, we know they need direct motivation, and whether it's with a child, a mate, a co-worker, or an employee, we can uplift, encourage, and lead, instead of looking down, judging, and wiping out their incentive.

2. Help them set goals and make rewards

Phlegmatics are able to set goals, but their nature keeps them from wanting to—if they can avoid thinking that far ahead. As you learn to live and work with Phlegmatics, you will realize how much they will accomplish if you have first taken the time to help them set goals and have explained the value of attainment.

3. Don't expect enthusiasm

Sanguines and Choleric want others to respond with enthusiasm to whatever they mention, and when Phlegmatics don't appear interested, the others get hurt or upset. Once we all understand that the Phlegmatic nature is not excitable, we can more easily accept the fact that those with that temperament don't jump for joy over new ideas.

4. Realize that putting things off is their form of quiet control

Since Phlegmatics usually feel overwhelmed by their Choleric mates and friends, they use procrastination as their tool of defense. In a quiet way they make their own will known. Learn to recognize this sign.

5. Force them to make decisions

Phlegmatics are capable of making decisions, but they often take the path of least resistance by letting others choose what to do and where to do it. Since they tend to avoid anything that would lead to controversy, they prefer not to rock the boat. In a social relationship this middle-of-the-road approach is inoffensive—in fact it's often welcome. In a living situation however it is important that the Phlegmatic make at least some of the decisions.

In a husband-wife situation or a team situation, the Phlegmatic must be forced to at least enter into the discussions and help solve issues. If you are a strongly opinionated person, you must give the Phlegmatic areas to control and keep your hands off. Often the reason the Phlegmatic won't decide is that they know the other person will do it his way anyway. To foster decisiveness you must give the other person the reins and then live with the consequences. To do this is very difficult for the Choleric because he can see what's going wrong instantly and will want to jump in and correct the situation. If he does this several times, the Phlegmatic will give up and withdraw from any leadership.

6. Don't heap all the blame on them

Because Phlegmatics are so quiet and accept the status quo, they are easy targets for those bolder temperaments who want to dump their guilt on someone else. Often the Choleric will make a hasty



decision, the results are disastrous and he will heap the blame on the available Phlegmatic. Check yourself in this area and see if you make the fault fall on others.

Even though Phlegmatics may accept what's put upon them, this tactic lowers their self-esteem, causes them to withdraw from relationships with you, and leads them away from any future responsibilities.

7. **Encourage them to accept responsibilities**

Sanguines have to stay away from accepting too many responsibilities because they overextend themselves, and Choleric have to keep from running everything they get their hands on. Phlegmatics, however, avoid being in charge of anything, even though they have administrative ability and get along well with everyone. Because of their gifts of conciliatory leadership, they should be encouraged to accept responsibilities. They make excellent executives and yet they tend to turn down promotions because they have been made to feel inadequate by others.

Don't accept their first no, but continue to show them the confidence you have in their abilities to lead. What better chairman, president, or king could you have than one who is easy to get along with, one who doesn't make hasty decisions, and one who can effectively mediate personality problems?

8. **Remember:**

Phlegmatics have great potential as leaders. Phlegmatics make good directors and coaches. They are also good counselors.

CONCLUSION

We have learned that God did not make us all alike. Each one of us is unique. Paul tells us that we should examine ourselves and find out what gifts God has given us, what weaknesses He wishes us to overcome with our willingness and His power. Paul compares us to a body where Christ is the head and we are the members.

God made each one of us different, so we could function in our own role. He made some of us to be feet—to move, to administer, to accomplish like the Choleric. He made some of us to be minds—to think deeply, to feel, to write, like the Melancholy. He made some of us to be hands—to serve, to smooth, to soothe, like the Phlegmatic. He made some of us to be mouths—to talk, to teach, to encourage, like the Sanguine.

“God has set the members, every one of them in the body, as it has pleased him.” (I Cor. 12:18)

We need each temperament for the total function of the body. Each part should do its work to unify the action and produce harmonious results. And Christ must be the Head. He is the One who gives unity. He is the One who helps us function efficiently and compassionately. He is the One who gives us the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to live up to the potential He has created in each one of us. Don't worry, you'll never be able to do it alone. But you don't have to.

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by **New Life for Churches**. You have the privilege *upon completion of your practical assignment* to use this lecture with others.

Practical assignment

Completed

- Take time to meditate on those whom you spend time with every day, at work and at home. Choose a minimum of five people. Try to discern what their predominant temperament is. Most people have a predominant temperament and then some characteristics of at least one of the other temperaments.
- Make a list of these people, writing down their predominant temperament beside their names. Then write at least three practical things you can do for each person to improve your relationship with them. Choose things that will encourage them and show respect for their temperament. Feel free to use the lecture for ideas.

- Throughout the next month focus on these people and your relationship with them. Learn to appreciate their temperament qualities and realize how God is using each one of us in a special way.

