

THE FOUR TEMPERAMENTS

There are four types of normal human beings. Each type, or temperament, I believe is designed to attend to at least one of four critical areas of need in a functioning human society.

The tasks that each temperament is designed to attend to are so disparate that significant differences in perceptions, priorities, values and meanings are required to attend to them. These automatically triggered differences are present at birth, identifiable at an early age, and do not change much across time. For instance, a naturally literal parent will not be able to get a natural possibilities oriented child to become more literal any more than a naturally feel response oriented parent will be able to get a natural thinking response oriented child to experience emotions more like a feeling oriented individual does.

The temperament that each child is born with may be the same as, or different from;

1. One or both, parents.
2. One or more siblings.
3. One or more extended family members.
4. A teacher, coach, employer, friend or therapist.

The nature of temperament driven differences is such that four individuals with different temperaments can perceive, process, prioritize and respond to the same reality in significantly different ways. Current models for making sense out of these differences treat them as matters of choice rather than of nature. Consequently, when these differences lead to a disagreement over who is right and who is not, each assumes that the other is choosing to differ when they are not. Never ending relationship threatening debates can ensue driven by natural differences that neither is aware exist.

How to Identify Your Own Core Temperament

Within your four-letter personality type code is a two-letter code that identifies your temperament-driven nature. The first letter of your temperament code is found on the Sensing-iNtuition dichotomy. That is the second column from the left on the questionnaire.

- If the first letter of your profile is S for Sensing, the second letter is found on the Judging-Perceiving dichotomy (the last, or fourth, column on the right). If your letter code on the Judging-Perceiving dichotomy is J for Judging, your temperament is SJ (SensingJudging). If your letter code is P for Perceiving, your temperament is SP (Sensing-Perceiving).

- If the first letter of your two letters temperament code is N for iNtuition, the second letter is found on the Thinking-Feeling dichotomy (third column from left). If your letter code is T for Thinking, your temperament is NT (iNtuitive-Thinking). If your letter is F for Feeling, your temperament is NF (iNtuitive-Feeling). *

If you have a 4-3 score on one or more of the dichotomies that determine core temperaments you may find that you have a temperament mix responding with one temperament driven set of priorities in one situation and from another temperament driven set of priorities in another. This is quite normal for individuals that have a temperament mix in their natural response orientation. **

The Four Temperaments

I. The iNtuition-Feeling (NF) Temperament¹

INtuition-Feeling (NF) oriented individuals are wired to facilitate harmony in the daily lives of other human beings. In order to attend to their area of responsibility nature designed them with certain characteristics and traits that differ significantly from the other three temperaments. NFs, for instance, do not have concrete boundaries to ground them in a sense of self separate from others. Their temperament combines the limitless possibilities of the iNtuitive process with the limitless possibilities of how others are, or might be, feeling.

Wired to facilitate harmony, NFs try to express their thoughts and feelings in a manner that does not cause disharmony without ever knowing for sure if they have succeeded. For an NF, a neutral response could be a mask for unspoken displeasure. This in part explains NFs elevated sensitivity to the tone of verbal and non-verbal communication. The end result is that NFs end up stuck in a world of possibilities without the means to experience a concrete sense about anything, including their own self. This challenge is unique to NFs who can find themselves on a never-ending journey in search of their true self. The insidious nature of their process is such that the moment an NF locks into a set experience of self separate from others they are most likely no longer connected to their self.

For NFs, however, combining iNtuition and Feeling is not an intellectual exercise; it is their life. They do not choose to be like this; they are designed this way. Moreover, the standards for authenticity and integrity, consideration, and kindness with which they are designed to experience and live by can simply not be met. No matter how well they do, they cannot escape being aware that they could have done better.

NFs have another characteristic that sets them apart from the other temperaments: guilt. The degree to which NFs experience feelings of guilt and self-blame when they

¹ Approximately 18% of the general population

upset or disappoint someone is unique to the iNtuitive-Feeling Temperament. It does not matter how reasonable or justified their actions are. If they sense someone is bothered by something they have said or done, or not said or not done, they automatically feel bad, like they have done something wrong. The psychic pain and distress that NFs can experience when they disrupt harmony in other people's lives is quite extraordinary. They can know in their head that they have not done anything wrong and still feel excruciatingly bad. No other temperament experiences feelings in this manner.²

Natural Response Orientations. The intensity of NFs' feelings of guilt and self-blame seem to be in direct proportion to the strength of their natural response orientation toward one pole or the other of each of Jung's four dichotomies. (*Extraversion-Introversion, Sensing-iNtuition, Thinking-Feeling and Judging-Perceiving*). I call this phenomenon 'The Guilt Factor.' The Natural response orientations in their apparent order of significance are the following:

1. **Feeling orientation:** An NF response oriented individual with a stronger natural Feeling response orientation will likely feel guilt and self-blame with greater intensity than an NF response oriented individual with a less pronounced natural Feeling response orientation.
2. **Extraverted orientation:** The stronger an extravert's extraverted nature is, the more likely they will require external affirmation to feel internally grounded. The natural stress inherent for an individual that combines the NF temperament with a strong Extraverted response process can, across time, lead to chronic *affirmation anxiety* driven pain in the neck and shoulders.
3. **Intuition orientation:** The stronger an NF's intuitive response orientation is, the greater their awareness will be of possible reactions that their actions may trigger in others. Individuals who combine a comprehensive awareness of possibilities (N) with a pronounced feeling response orientation (F) experience feelings of guilt and self-blame more out of proportion to objective reality than an individual with less pronounced response orientations on the iNtuitive and Feeling poles of those dichotomies. Individuals with significant Extraverted, iNtuitive and Feeling response orientations must deal with a nature driven pervasive stress in their neck and shoulders. From the moment they are born they must deal with an extraverted driven affirmation anxiety in conjunction with an NF

² I am an NF. It seems incomprehensible now, but until my early 30s, there were times when these feelings of guilt and self-blame were experienced at an 'I don't deserve to live' level of intensity. It did not matter if my actions were reasonable or not. I felt just as bad. This experience of emotions is hard to describe. Although the psychic distress was extreme, I was not suicidal. I still feel bad today if I upset or disappoint someone but not even close to the degree that I used to.

driven anticipatory dread of upsetting someone and feeling intolerable levels of guilt and self-blame.³

4. **Perceiving orientation:** Perceiving requires the freedom to respond in the moment as events unfold. The stronger an NF's natural Perceiving-response orientation, the stronger will be his or her need to respond in the moment, as the moment dictates. A problem arises, however, when individuals with a strong natural Perceiving-response orientation also have strong Extraversion, iNtuition, and Feeling response orientations. The combination of Extraversion driven affirmation anxiety with NF driven anticipatory dread and hyper vigilance can make it difficult to respond in the moment (*Perceiving Orientation*) without exacerbating the already tenuous guilt fear challenged ENF response balance.

According to this Guilt Factor model, the NF personality with the greatest susceptibility for feeling intense levels of guilt and blame when they upset or disappoint someone is an ENFP (approximately 5% of the population). Profile data collected by the author over the last nine years supports these findings. While approximately 5% of the general population is ENFPs, 22% of my individual clients during this period were ENFPs, more than twice the number of any other of the four NF personality types.

Although their intensity level may vary according to the Guilt Factor equation, all NFs tend to experience a depth of guilt, blame, and responsibility that goes beyond that experienced by the other three temperaments when something they say or do upsets or disappoints someone. For NFs, this visceral response is not an option. I suspect that nature designed NFs with an elevated susceptibility to feelings of guilt and blame to assure that they attended to their role assignment in a functioning human society; facilitating harmony in the lives of other human beings. NFs' awareness of this responsibility is not passive. In one way or another, NFs are wired to monitor human beings' emotional states and are quick to step in and provide support whenever necessary. Their sense of meaning and purpose in life is fulfilled through these roles. NFs are like firefighters, conditioned to respond when an emotional fire breaks out. If friends are upset with each other, it is an NF that often steps in to help bring harmony back to their relationship. This response is not an option. NFs' actions are not altruistic. Healthy selfishness is involved. When disharmony is present, NFs experience it viscerally. This internal disruption will usually not ease up in an NF's psyche until they have done what they can to fix the situation. An NF may not want to get involved, may truly know that a situation is not their problem to solve and still experience an intolerable level of guilt and self-blame if they know they *could* have done something to help and did not.

³ Choice is not an option here. Individuals so wired are, by necessity, hyper vigilant to cues from others driven by a fear of making a mistake, of upsetting someone and setting off an intolerable level of self-blame.

This sense of personal responsibility for how other people are feeling is pervasive. The question NFs must always deal with is "Will I feel worse about myself if I;

1. Set a reasonable limit with someone who will most likely get upset about it, or
2. If I do not set a limit with them to avoid feeling guilty and bad and settle for feeling resentment toward them for asking in the first place?

The levels of guilt that most NFs are susceptible to feeling is such that most choose the resentment option.

The Guilt Factor. The Guilt Factor is a constant companion in the daily lives of iNtuitive-Feelers, affecting what they say and do in most situations. A few examples include;

- Enjoying an activity of their choice when they know one or more participants would prefer to do something else. It does not matter if it is their turn or that a majority of those present have chosen what they want to do. Without direct assurance from those who are disappointed with their choice, they may have difficulty enjoying the activity they have chosen.

Observing my very NF wife and her very good NF friend decide what they are going to do can be quite an experience. It usually starts with one asking, "Do you want to go to _____ with me?" If there is even the slightest hint of hesitation, that idea is no longer an option because the initiator would no longer be able to enjoy the experience, knowing her friend would rather go somewhere else. No amount of reassurance (*usually part of the process*) will deter the initiator from abandoning her preference. This 'hot potato' process can go on until one or the other finally says, "Oh, *#@% it, I have given you enough chances to do what you want to do and can now tolerate getting to do what I want to do without feeling too guilty about it. However, if you dare try to make me feel guilty, I will kill you!"

- NFs are often unable to feel happy when in the presence of someone who is not. This can be a major problem when an NF is in an ongoing relationship with someone who is usually critical or unhappy. This struggle can be perversely pervasive. If a friend has a very good relationship with his or her mother, an NF can find themselves feeling guilty and bad that they do not have a better relationship with her own mother.⁴
- NFs often want validation from their significant other before they purchase something out of the ordinary but economically within bounds. This 'check in' process has a practical function. If they buy what they want to buy and feel their partner disapproves, they may feel guilty and bad and not be able

⁴ There was a time when I had difficulty beating a friend at tennis if my success was upsetting them. A particularly upsetting guilt-driven collapse in this setting drove me to seek counseling!

to enjoy their purchase. In a situation like this, NFs are not really asking for an opinion. They feel what they want is reasonable and expect their partner to agree with them. When an NF does not get the 'Green Light' response they require they may get upset, accusing their partner of ruining their chance of enjoying what they had intended to buy.

In the early years of my marriage, I wanted to travel in Europe before we started having children. My wife was not opposed; she would go, but was not enthusiastic about it. Being an NF, I no longer felt free to go and enjoy the experience and accused her of ruining my dream trip. Looking back my reaction seems pretty ridiculous, but at the time, I was really upset.

- Another manifestation of The Guilt Factor is an automatically triggered 'assumption of guilt' response. NFs will often apologize the moment they sense a mistake has been made. This reaction is immediate, before they even know if they have actually done anything wrong. My NF clients frequently apologize when they realize I have run over time, as if they are responsible for my poor time management. I have played tennis for over 40 years now, and even today, when warming up with opponents, I apologize anytime I hit a ball where they cannot reach. No one I play with or against does this. Hitting errors during warm ups is natural and normal. For many years I have told myself to stop apologizing, but myself does it anyway.
- NFs can have great difficulty with proportional responsibility. If they do not tell the truth once in a while they can feel like they are just as bad as a significant other that is, , a pathological liar.
- NFs are naturally conflict-averse. Consequently, when they are pressured by an uncomfortably direct, intrusive, or judgmental individual, they can find themselves in a Guilt-Factor-driven dilemma. Knowing that a truthful answer will trigger a response that will cause them to feel intolerably bad about themselves, an NF may resort to not telling the truth in an effort to escape condemnation. They will still feel bad, but not as bad as they would have if they told the truth and had to deal with the response they feared they would get.
- The Guilt Factor phenomenon plays a major role in the frequency that NFs find themselves in a relationship with someone who turns out to have a narcissistic personality. NFs automatically feel guilt and blame out of proportion to objective reality when conflicts arise. Narcissists project blame. When problems arise it is always the other person's fault. The ensuing dynamic is quite insidious and can take a heavy toll on an NF's emotional well-being. The narcissistic individual naturally projects blame while the NF individual naturally attempts to point out, without success, why he or she is

not at fault. After repeated efforts to elicit a reasonable acknowledgement, NFs usually reach a point where they are ready to leave the relationship. Narcissistic individuals automatically sense when this is happening and turn on the charm that attracted the NF to them in the first place until the NF relents at which point the narcissistic partner goes back to projecting blame again. The greater the NF's determination to leave relationship is, the more extreme and desperate the narcissistic's behavior becomes. This push-pull dynamic can make it very difficult for an NF to end the relationship.

- NFs with strong Natural response orientations for Extraversion, iNtuition, and Feeling (ENF) may have great difficulty receiving even the slightest criticism without feeling severely judged. On an intensity-of-criticism scale with 1 being very mild and 10 being blatantly abusive, a comment expressed toward an NF with an intended intensity level of 1 can be experienced by an NF at a 6 or 7 level triggering a 6 or 7 level response that will usually confuse, unsettle or upset the level 1 intended commenter who will now respond at a 4 or 5 level that will be experienced and responded to at a 9 or 10 level. A calm, pleasant evening can, within a few seconds, can suddenly turn into an intense angst laden argument. Partners of ENFs with this level of sensitivity do not feel they can bring up issues of concern without being verbally and sometimes physically abused. This is a challenging problem to deal with because an explanation to NFs regarding the natural and normal causes for their levels of sensitivity and reactivity does not decrease these levels. However, NT, STJ, and STP partners of ENFs with this level of sensitivity have often found the The Guilt Factor explanation helpful in making sense out of their partners' extreme sensitivity. This logical explanation has helped many accept and be more sensitive and accommodating in this area of their relationship.
- NF's are vulnerable to feeling that there is something wrong with them, that they are too emotional. Many are told during their growing up years that they are too sensitive, that they take things too personally. However, this sensitivity is a natural and normal component of an NF's design. Choice is not an option. They have no way to get rid of their nature and, to date, parents do not have the information required to help their NF children better understand and accept their natural sensitivity. Being told they are too sensitive is just one more reason for NFs to feel guilty and bad. Friends and family can feel they are dealing with an emotional time bomb when they bring up anything that might be taken as criticism. All things considered, it is no wonder that NFs can feel they have "emotional problems." Without a logic-based explanation to go to, NFs usually defend themselves from others' judgments with some variation of "the higher road" reasoning, resorting to comments such as, "at least I have feelings and care" or emotionally intense or explosive responses about others lack of sensitivity or caring.
- Many, if not most, NFs are aware of how sensitive they are to being judged, and how unreasonably bad they can feel about themselves if they upset or

disappoint someone. Anyone who suggests that NFs are choosing to suffer like this has no idea what they are talking about. NFs do not choose their wiring; nature does. This elevated feelings sensitivity is a temperament-driven 'occupational hazard,' and it wears on them. All things considered it is not wonder that NFs, who make up less than 20% of the general population make up over 50% of my individual clients practice_and that at least one has been present in 75% of the couples clients I have seen since 2000.

- An additional factor that may contribute to NFs feeling there is something wrong with them may be found in the temperament driven perceptual frame of reference of founders of contemporary theories of personality; Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung. Both were iNtuitive-Thinkers (NTs). NFs' automatically triggered sensitivity and reactivity was out of proportion to an NTs perception of a rational human and therefore assumed to be an indication of emotional instability.⁵ I work with more ENFPs than any other temperament driven personality type. I shudder to think how many ENFPs have gone to NT oriented analysts and psychotherapists over the last 100 years seeking help with their ENF driven anticipatory dread and affirmation anxiety only to have their worst fears regarding being emotionally unstable confirmed. The classic psychoanalytic model would be particularly traumatic. The paucity of responses and the form in which these responses are framed and communicated could cause an emotional meltdown in an ENFP that might fit the psychoanalytic definition for hysteria, when , the therapeutic process was the real crazy making culprit in the scenario.
- The Guilt Factor phenomenon can create problems for NFs when they are in a parenting role. The natural and normal boundary-testing behaviors of children require parents to set limits and enforce consequences. When NF parents have to set limits that upset their child they worry that they may in some way be harming their child and feel guilty and bad. Their heads can tell them that the limit is reasonable and necessary for raising a healthy child but, the moment their child gets upset The Guilt Factor sets in and can undermine their resolve. Perceiving oriented NFs are particularly vulnerable to abandoning a rule or a consequence to avoid triggering a reaction that causes them to fear they are damaging their child.
- Sometimes an NF parent with an NT or SJ spouse will let their spouse take over consequence enforcement role. Such partners do not have to deal with the challenges inherent to The Guilt Factor and can set and enforce agreed upon behavior boundaries that so undue NFs. This practical role assignment

⁵ Over the last seven years, my NT clients in couples counseling with NF partners have consistently viewed their NFs' emotional outbursts' as indications of emotional instability, and their NF partners have consistently viewed their NT mates' inability to understand them as an indication of just how insensitive and uncaring they are!

strategy however may not work too well. The NF parent may experience their NT or SJ partner's emotionally neutral manner of communication in the face of their child's emotional reaction as being insensitivity or uncaring and fear they are allowing their partner to damage their child. Such reactions do not make sense to most SJ and NT partners. They do not feel they are being unkind. They are simply enforcing the limits as agreed in an emotionally neutral manner, a natural manner of responding for most NTs and SJs. NF parents, however, must deal with their temperament driven global sense of responsibility for the emotional health of their child. If an NF's spouse is doing something the NF fears is damaging their child, the NF will automatically blame himself or herself for letting it happen. This apprehension causes many NF parents to reclaim the unnatural role of enforcer, and blaming their partner's perceived insensitivity in the limit setting role as the reason for their decision.

- Psychology's interpretation of response orientations on the Thinking – Feeling Dichotomy.

A significant contributor to NFs' trust issues with NTs and STJs as co-parents can be found in the explanations provided by psychology for the Thinking - Feeling dichotomy. Conventional psychology is based on the assumption that human behavior is learned, a question of choice. Value-biased scales of measurement are used that claim behavior at one end of each scale, or dichotomy, is healthier than behavior at its opposite end.⁶ Psychology's personality assessment scale that is comparable to the MBTI's® Thinking Feeling dichotomy is called "The Agreeableness Scale." On this scale Feeling response oriented behavior is viewed as agreeable and Thinking response oriented behavior is viewed as disagreeable. According to this model Feeling response oriented individuals value getting along with others, whereas Thinking response oriented individuals do not. Feelings oriented are willing to prioritize the collective wants of the group over their own, whereas Thinking oriented individuals are not. Feeling oriented have an optimistic view of human nature and prioritize how people will, or might, feel when deciding on a course of action, while Thinking oriented are pessimistic, suspicious of human motives, and prioritize self-interest over the interests of others. Conventional psychology considers these differences to be matters of choice rather than of nature providing professional credence for NF's naturally distorted perception of their Thinking oriented partner's naturally objective, emotionally neutral responses as harmful to their children.

To date no research study has been done that supports this interpretation of individual differences in human behavior on the Agreeableness (*Thinking-feeling*) scale. Nothing in my personal or professional experience supports this line of thinking. I spent 19 years at the California Institute of Technology surrounded by

⁶ I say "claim" in this statement because no such connection has ever been proven to be valid.

NTs. Very few were “suspicious or antagonistic.” The vast majority has been friendly and many have proven to be quite generous with their time and expertise in the interest of being helpful to others. It is true that what is said or done must make logical sense and they will automatically question statements and actions that do not. They are hard wired to respond in this manner. However they are rarely unpleasant or disrespectful in their manner of questioning a statement or action that does not make sense to them.

One of the surprises I found when introducing natural response orientation profiling to my work with couples has been the adaptive flexibility of NTs when given a logical explanation for an NT partner or child’s Guilt Factor driven emotional sensitivities. Once given an explanation that makes sense to them most are able to be more careful in the manner with which they express a difference in perception or priority.

An additional challenge for NFs is equally applicable to the other three temperaments. NFs assume that others can or do experience feelings the way they do. With this assumption of choice in place NFs believe that individuals who are not feeling the same as they do are either choosing to feel differently or have some form of empathy deficit limiting their access to normal human feelings.

Summary remarks on iNtuition-Feeling.

Nature designed NFs to find meaning and purpose through helping roles that facilitate harmony in the lives of other human beings. These roles are activated by a visceral awareness of how others are or might be feeling and locked in place by feelings of guilt and self blame that get triggered if they try to avoid helping in a situation where they know they could help. No other temperament is designed to perceive, prioritize and respond in this manner.

Psychologists still view NFs’ automatic response behaviors as a matter of choice. David Keirsey sums up this perception when he states, “Idealists (*NFs*) are sure that friendly cooperation is the best way for people to achieve their goals. Conflict and confrontation upset them because they seem to put up angry barriers between people.”⁷ While his observation of the NF’s natural focus on facilitating harmony is accurate Keirsey, an NT, has no way to understand the impact of The Guilt Factor on NFs manner of connecting with others.⁸

The impact of Guilt Factor driven stress and anxiety can lead to chronic stress related physical and mental health challenges. Stress related headaches as well as

⁷ “About 4 Temperaments,” *Keirsey.com*, n.d, retrieved September 5, 2009, from <http://www.keirsey.com/handler.aspx?s=keirsey&f=fourtemps&tab=3&c=overview>

⁸ Detailed information for the four temperament specific personality profiles (ENFJ, ENFP, INFP, and INFJ) are found in Chapter Four.

chronic tension in the neck and shoulders are common for NFs. NFs that do not factor in down time away from naturally stressful careers run the risk of burnout. Yoga, meditation, calming music, and down-time in general can help counter these natural vulnerabilities.

Without realizing it, many NFs become 'stress junkies.' They focus on stress-inducing circumstances of one kind or another in the media or in their personal lives. These events then become central to what they choose to talk about with others. NFs that are unable to separate from this manner of coping with life events run the risk of physical and emotional burnout.

II. iNtuition-Thinking (NT) Temperament⁹

While iNtuitive-Feelers (NFs) are attending to issues of harmony in the daily lives of human beings iNtuitive-Thinkers (NTs) are making sure that there is a logical consistency in the way human beings are moving forward.

In order to attend to their area of responsibility in a functioning human society nature designed NTs to process information in terms of the logical consequences of a choice or action. Whether a problem is theoretical and abstract or practical and applied, NTs focus on the structure involved to;

- Determine how it works
- Identify areas that do not make logical sense, and when areas for improvement are found,
- Find a more efficient way to proceed.

The natural operating premise of all NTs is 'what is said or done must make logical sense or it is invalid.' The innately disparate tasks that NTs and NFs are designed to attend to require distinctly different experiential dynamics. NTs' natural purpose and function requires that they be able to think and act in a logical and impartial manner. They would not be able to do this if they were susceptible to the feelings of guilt and blame inherent to the NF's purpose and function. Thus the natural emotional neutrality that usually prevails in an NTs psyche.

Characteristics and Traits common to NTs

- A natural ability to assess cause and affect objectively that translates into sensibility and stability in both their professional and personal lives.
- NTs are able to set and consistently enforce appropriate rules of conduct with their children. They are usually able to remain objectively neutral when their children get upset, a response that often has a calming effect on the children

⁹ Approximately 15% of the general population

- In crisis situations, NTs are usually able to 'keep their wits about them,' objectively assessing what needs to be done and following it through.
- Most NTs are objectively direct, honest, and well-intentioned.

Natural Relationship Challenges for NTs

- NTs can be impatient with individuals whose thoughts and wishes are not in sync with their own plan of action. ENTJs and ENTPs are particularly challenged in this regard. Their manner of dismissing thoughts and ideas they find impractical or irrelevant to the task at hand can unintentionally trigger feelings of resentment and hostility.
- Although INTJs and INTPs may not express what they are thinking or feeling, they also automatically dismiss ideas that do not make sense to them and can, in a nonverbal way, leave the impression (*sometimes quite accurate!*) that they do not care what others are thinking or feeling.
- NTs, in general, and INTs, in particular, may have difficulty in social situations governed by societal 'shoulds' behaviors that do not make logical sense to them.
- NTs' natural emotional neutrality does not provide them with a frame of reference for making sense out of the emotional reactions of feeling response oriented individuals.
- NTs' sense of self is intricately connected to being competent, and they can be deeply hurt when their competence is questioned or ridiculed.
- NT's sense of self is connected to being successful; consequently, they can become depressed and ineffective when they do not succeed.

NTs' requirement that what is said and done make logical sense is the common denominator in their genetic makeup. Some are introspective, like Carl Jung and Robert Pirsig, seeking to understand the underlying principles of human existence. Others are extraverted like Sigmund Freud and Steve Jobs, found in leadership roles identifying illogical or inefficient procedures while developing and implementing more effective alternatives. Regardless of their natural focus and priority all are designed to solve problems that are amenable to critical analysis in the world of human beings. It is with this purpose in mind that NTs are born naturally analytical, objective, and emotionally contained.

Summary remarks on iNtuition -Thinking.

It is unfortunate that the emotional neutrality so necessary for NTs to attend to their areas of responsibility in a functioning human society is interpreted in such a negative and inaccurate light by conventional theories of psychology. Considering that NTs developed the theories of personality utilized by psychologists today it is hard to understand how individuals with this natural response process came to be labeled as disagreeable, self-centered and indifferent to the thoughts and feelings of

those that perceive and prioritize in a different manner. This description of NTs is extraordinarily inaccurate. I spent 19 years at the California Institute of Technology surrounded by NTs. I coached them, I taught them, and some are among my closest friends today. I have seen, first hand, the depth to which they can care and be concerned about other human beings. Their natural emotional neutrality, a necessary state of mind for attending to their area of responsibility in a functioning human society is not an indication of a lack of caring and concern. It is an essential aspect of their role function, an objective frame of reference that allows them to effectively address areas of human behavior that are amenable to critical analysis.

III. The Sensing-Judging (SJ) Temperament¹⁰

While NFs are monitoring how people are treating each other, and NTs are making sure that what is said and done makes logical sense, Sensing-Judging (SJs) oriented individuals are making sure that human beings are following the time-honored traditions and rules of conduct within their society. SJ children are easy to recognize. They are the ones who want to know what the rules of behavior are for each of the roles they fill, they faithfully adhere to those rules, and they do what they can to get others to do the same. Nature designed SJs this way with a particular purpose in mind: to provide human beings with a social structure so that they can function together in societies. An SJ's persona can be summed up in two words: duty and responsibility. An SJ's very sense of self is connected to following the rules, honoring the traditions of society, and, if extraverted, making sure that others do the same.

As with the other temperaments, nature makes sure that SJs attend to their area of responsibility by setting off internal alarm bells when someone has behaved in an unacceptable manner. This inner turmoil is similar to the agitation triggered in an NF when emotional conflicts arise without the attendant disproportionate experience of guilt and self blame. For SJs the focus is on how others are behaving. There are rules and those who do not abide by them are acting in a disrespectful manner and an SJ will not usually be able to internally resettle until behavioral harmony has been restored to the situation.¹¹ SJs, in general, are not wired to consider exceptions to a rule. Their logic is quite basic: if one starts making exceptions to a rule, where does one stop? Whereas cutting corners is a common human foible, it is no wonder that SJs tend to be skeptical and do not consider a job done until it is *done*, and done *correctly*. It is not uncommon for SJs, as time goes by, to feel disenchanting, even bitter, that their efforts had so little impact on making people act responsibly. *(As an INFP with ADD, I operate more like an SP ignoring*

¹⁰ Approximately 45% of the population

¹¹ Although ISFJs are SJs, they are usually uncomfortable with conflict and may choose to lead by example with all but their own children who will be closely monitored regarding how they are behaving.

rules that do not make sense in addressing a task at hand, a freewheeling approach to standard rules of behavior that caused no end of grief for my very ESTJ mother!)

For SJs, acceptable behavior has a much deeper meaning than simple respect for rules. SJs believe that membership in a community, a society or a nation is a privilege, something to be earned by being a good citizen. For SJs, good citizenship goes beyond voting, paying taxes, and being punctual, honest, and dependable. In addition, good citizenship goes beyond getting good grades, knowing where to place a salad fork, remembering birthdays, or sending thank you notes in a timely manner. Good citizenship includes actively supporting the traditional institutions and organizations that contribute to the viability of the community on a local, state, or national level.

My mother is an ESTJ. She raised her three children mostly as a single parent. The youngest of three, I was in my own Introverted la-la land during those years. I was clueless as to what she was doing except, of course, in situations where, had she known what I was doing, she might intervene and thwart my plans.

A conversation I had with her (when she was 95!) concretized this SJ sense of responsibility. While supervising the three of us during our adolescent years, doing what she could to make sure we were conducting ourselves in an appropriate SJ manner,¹² she was also very involved in the community around her. She was a girl scout leader, served on various committees at her church, was actively involved with the Parent-Teacher Association, and went door-to-door, meeting with and creating an up-to-date index file for every registered member of the wrong political party (*meaning not mine*) in our city. While doing all this she also found time to study for and simultaneously pass the state exams for being a real estate agent and broker.

I had been a single parent with one child for 6 years and had barely been able to function beyond attending to the basics for my daughter and I at home so I was amazed. I asked her how and why she did so much, and she said, "I did what I thought a responsible parent and member of the community should be doing." This is in the wiring. It is genetic. Choice is not an option. The temperament you are born with is the one that dictates what you perceive, prioritize, value and believe. It defines how you automatically participate within your society. It is not your self but rather the engine that drives it.¹³

Characteristics and Traits of SJs

- Are ethical, responsible and dependable. If an SJ commits to a project, he or she will usually complete it. It does not matter if the project requires a great

¹² a frame of reference that only fit for my SJ sister

¹³ An individual self is far too complex to be captured by general information on traits and characteristics drawn from an individual's temperament driven type profile.

deal more time and effort than expected. A commitment is a commitment, and an SJ will usually honor it.

- Tend to manage time well and usually have a clear sense of what the job requires. This quality allows them to organize effectively the tasks they feel will be needed to complete a project.
- Tend to be modest, traditional, conventional, and thrifty. They do not like to gamble. Prefer to deal with and rely on what is known to be rather than on what is possible. Comments like “Don’t worry about it” and “Things will work out somehow” do not reassure an SJ.
- Once they understand what needs to be done, extraverted SJs in particular, are quick to identify efficient ways to complete, providing directorial leadership until the task is completed
- SJs trust experience. A method that has consistently been effective will not be abandoned for one that has yet to pass the tests of time. Skeptical is a good word for their natural caution in this regard.
- At home and at work, SJs automatically assume responsibility for the tangible needs of others and, with little fanfare, ‘take care of business.’

SJ Relationship Challenges.

SJs and NFs are the most naturally judgmental of the four temperaments. Each automatically reacts when someone violates their temperament driven sense of what is acceptable in tone or action. For SJs the following hold true;

- Have difficulty accommodating attitudes, beliefs and priorities that do not fit within standard societal norms. That which is not done correctly is incorrect.
- The stronger an SJ’s natural Sensing and Judging response orientations are, the greater their difficulty will be in accommodating unconventional behaviors.
- For SJs, caring about someone or being cared about by someone are connected more to how one is acting or behaving. While NFs are affected by the tone of communication and NTs by the logic of communication, SJs are affected by how individuals behave toward each other, if they are or are not adhering to time honored rules of conduct. For SJs it is a matter of consideration or respect. For instance, SJs do not forget birthdays. They think about or find out what the persona would like, buy it before their birthday and give it to them on their birthday. If an NF forgot or were late in delivering a present they would feel guilt, feel bad about their self. If an SJ forgets they feel disgusted with their self. They just did something totally unacceptable. Conversely, when a friend forgets an SJs birthday, SJs feels hurt, rejected, and uncared for. This friend may have been 10-10 in remembering their birthday over the last 10 years and most SJs will still feel deeply hurt and uncared for. From their own temperament driven perception of priorities you never forget a friend’s birthday. They would never want a friend to feel like they did not care so they would never forget. Wired to experience human actions in this manner, they cannot but feel hurt and rejected if a friend ever forgets

their own birthday. As with NFs and NTs this response is not a matter of choice but of nature. SJs are designed to honor and enforce the societal structural norms required for human beings to effectively live and work together in groups.

- Relationships between SJs and NFs can be particularly problematic. Each temperament is designed to be sensitive, out of proportion to objective reality, when their temperament driven rules for engagement have been violated. When an SJ expresses hurt feelings to an NF, those feelings get expressed in the form of a criticism regarding what they feel the NF did or did not do. NFs have a naturally elevated vulnerability to feeling guilty and bad when they hurt or disappoint someone and may simply feel very bad about them or get upset with the SJ for causing them to feel so bad about themselves. Neither response makes much sense to SJs. It is not a question of guilt but rather of respect, of being treated right. When an NF gets upset with an SJ for criticizing their actions, for causing them to feel so guilty and bad, the SJ automatically experiences this response as an escalation of unacceptable behavior and gets even more upset, a response that automatically triggers an even more upset reaction from the NF for continuing to cause them to feel awful about them. This natural and normal temperament driven potential for relationship volatility is most pronounced when the SJ and NF are extraverts and the SJ is thinking response oriented.¹⁴
- Raising children with temperaments that differ from theirs can be problematic for SJ parents. SJs are wired to teach and enforce right and proper behavior. Exceptions are not part of the deal. These automatically triggered perceptions and priorities do not provide SJ parents with the tools necessary to communicate these rules in a way that unintentionally reject the logic driven nature of an NT child, the in the moment utilitarian nature of an SP child or the elevated sensitivity to feeling guilty and bad nature of an NF child. For an SJ a behavior is either right or it is not; period. This natural, automatic response by SJ parents can, without intention or awareness lead to a relationship disconnect with a child who naturally responds from a different temperament driven set of perceptions, priorities, values and meanings.¹⁵

¹⁴ My mother, who lived to be almost 99 and was cognitively alert to the end was an ESTJ and I am an INFP, opposites on all four dichotomies, she with an SJ temperament and I with an NF temperament. We were stuck in a temperament driven impasse from the time of my middle childhood heavily defended against the unintentional hurts we inflicted on each other by simply responding to each other from the sensitivities inherent to the SJ and NF temperaments. It was not until my mother was 93 and my discoveries in the area of differences in temperament became a central focus of our conversations that we came to understand and love each other. This was a most unexpected and cherished relationship healing gift that simply would not have occurred without an understanding of natural challenges inherent to differences in temperaments.

¹⁵ This challenge is not unique to SJ parents. It holds true for all parents. Without information on naturally occurring differences in human behavior and saddled with an erroneous assumption of choice in responding, all parents dealing with children whose temperament differs from their own are faced with this child raising dilemma. When you factor in the rarity of families with all members having the same temperament it is a wonder that any child grows up feeling a solid sense of self worth.

- SJs and SPs are designed to attend to two distinctly different areas of need in a functioning human society: SJs operate by plan, organizing events with the intent of minimizing the unexpected occurring. SPs are wired to respond in the moment as events play out. This in the moment responsiveness is ideally suited to optimal responses when the unexpected occurs. Without information for making sense out of this natural difference SJs are viewed as organized, responsible and conscientious and SPs appear to be the opposite. The end result is that behavior sensitive SJs tend to be particularly judgmental and critical of SPs.
- SJs require a clear sense of what is expected of them and can freeze and become ineffective when required to perform in situations where the expectations for a task are ambiguous.

Summary remarks on Sensing-Judging.

While NFs are addressing the feelings based needs of human beings and NTs are making sure that humans proceed in a manner that makes logical sense, SJs are monitoring how they behave that they are adhering to the standard norms of behavior that make living together in social units possible. Choice is not an option. Like each of the other temperaments, SJs have been designed by nature to fill a particular need in a functioning human society. An SJ's sense of self is connected to following the rules, honoring the traditions of society, and making sure that others do the same. SJs are, literally and figuratively, society's 'behavior cops.'

Whereas conflicted feelings invade NFs' psyches and often will not leave until the source of tension has been relieved, and NTs psyches are disrupted by logical incongruities that will be disruptive until they find a logical solution, SJs psyches are disrupted when people are not behaving correctly. Choice is not an option and extraverted SJs in particular will not be able to resettle until appropriate behavior has returned to the mix

IV. The Sensing-Perceiving (SP) Temperament

While SJs are addressing human beings need for structure and predictability, SPs are addressing their need for optimum responses to immediate sensory experience. The common denominator for SPs that distinguishes them from the other three temperaments is their need for the freedom to respond, or create, in the moment, without reference to others. This independence of mind is innate, a derivative of nature's design, and an essential requirement for the purpose and function they are programmed to attend to.

This innate ability can reach extraordinary levels of specificity. I once observed Tom Dowd, the brilliant SP sound technician, who worked with Eric Clapton, Ray Charles, John Coltrane, Diana Ross and so many other great singers and musicians, doing a recording session with Aretha Franklin backed by a 25-member orchestra. The song being recorded at the moment was Respect. At a particularly loud moment in the song Dowd stopped the recording process went over to a musician in the string section, asked him to pluck a particular string that proved to be slightly out of tune, had the musician pluck the string until the sound was right, return to his booth and start the song over again. The discrepancy in sound was so slight that even the musician involved was unaware. General George S. Patton, another SP, is considered one of history's greatest field commanders due to the speed and ingenuity of his in the moment adjustments to the unexpected during the heat of battle. SP basketball stars Ervin 'Magic' Johnson and Michael Jordan were at their best at 'crunch time' in the closing seconds of a tightly contested game. Their creative adaptations in those defining moments that determine the outcome of a close contest were often extraordinary.

This manner of perceiving, processing and responding transcends the temperament driven limitations of the other three temperaments. An SPs response may factor in how others will feel, or behave, or understand the logic involved, or it may not. What matters is response efficiency, a spontaneous identification of the most effective in the moment approach to obtaining the outcome they hope to achieve.

An SP may, with good intention, commit on Monday to a get together with friends that Friday evening. However if, at the last moment, an opportunity to do something they would rather do comes up, they might do that instead without letting their friends know of their change of plans. The decision to not inform their friends might be due to;

- A temperament driven assumption that their friends will not, or should not, be bothered by their change of plan since it would not bother them if someone did that with them or
- A practical decision based on an awareness that they would get grief from an SJ or NF friend and not want to have to deal with it.

This does not mean, however, that SPs are not good team players. They are usually loyal to their friends and loved ones, good-natured, tolerant, and tend to treat everyone, regardless of status, on an equal basis

Characteristics and traits unique to SPs

- Are the most egalitarian of all temperaments. They are usually non-judgmental treating everyone as equals, regardless of status.
- Are utilitarian in their adherence to society's behavioral 'shoulds.' This does not mean they are dishonest or immoral, as they are usually true to their own

- code of ethics. It is just that they are designed by nature to ignore conventional responses that do not make sense when applied to the situation at hand.¹⁶ For instance, if an SP an SJ and an NF are at the end of three long checkout lines and they simultaneously notice that another checker has arrived to open a fourth checkout line you will likely observe three disparate temperament driven responses at play.
- The right behavior driven SJ will stay in their line, expecting others to do the same and allow those who have waited longest first choice to the new line.
 - The harmony and fairness oriented NF will stay in their line to allow those who have waited longest to go first to the new line and to avoid upsetting others in the line who have waited longer causing them to feel guilty and bad
 - The in the moment oriented SP will immediately switch to the new checkout line. From their perspective an opportunity available to all has materialized and if they do not seize the opportunity someone else will. .
- SPs typically require variety in their lives or they can become bored and restless.
 - An SPs version of extraversion is often expressed more through action rather than words. Tennis professional Andre Agassi is a good example of this form of extraversion.
 - SPs do not like to deal with problems they cannot immediately solve. Nature designed them to focus on immediate sensory data. This is not a choice. It is a manifestation of their nature. Talking about problems requires them to not be in the moment, but rather to talk about moments passed. But in a literal sense they can't. To focus on and address moments passed would require them to separate from their in the moment orientation and to do so they would no longer be their self. This unique challenge is why SPs do not like to focus on problems that cannot be immediately resolved.
 - SPs usually show up for counseling only at times when their in the moment problem solving efforts have failed and they are feeling overwhelmed and ineffective in dealing with the issue at hand. Once they feel able to function again they usually stop coming in. Once their ability to utilize their in the moment problem solving skills returns, conventional methods for psychological healing are no longer of use. Most psychotherapist do not understand the nature of SPs and apply interpretations and judgments based temperament driven perceptions and priorities that are both inaccurate and detrimental to the mental health of SPs.¹⁷

¹⁶ This aspect of an SP's nature can appear to be an indication of a narcissistic personality disorder. However, normal SPs have an ethical foundation that is not present in personality disorders.

¹⁷ Most SP clients I have had over the years have stopped coming in the moment the crisis that brought them in had eased a bit. Since SPs are typically very likeable people, it was quite jarring when they would, before we had barely gotten started on the healing journey¹⁷, drop out of the process. That they would not want to gain insight into the repetitious self-defeating process they were struggling with made no sense to me until I came to understand the very different nature of

- SP's natural response orientation can create difficulties when they have to address relationship problems that have not been amenable to immediate resolution. Issues of this nature will be avoided as long as possible. This response process is a practical adaptation for addressing a situation they are not designed to deal with. SPs sense of self is grounded in immediate sensory awareness. When an issue of mid to long standing can no longer be avoided SPs are caught in a diabolical double bind. Their experience of a sense of self separate from others is grounded in their temperament driven perceptual frame of reference centered on immediate sensory experience. Addressing unresolved issues requires them to separate from their present focused sense of self to discuss and justify past actions. As with the other three temperaments, SPs do not choose to have an in the moment response orientation nor do they have an option to change their response orientation, even if they wanted to. Asking an SP to justify and explain past actions is tantamount to asking them to stop being their self in order to explain their self. Beyond a certain point it cannot be done.¹⁸ Ask most SPs why they said or did something and they will either;
 - have an in the moment explanation/justification that makes perfect sense to them regardless of the big picture unreasonableness that response carries from another's perspective
 - or, if the behaviors in question are associated with past experiences, be unable to separate from their natural immediate sensory awareness orientation enough to even attempt an explanation..

Considering the SPs natural connection to immediate sensory information, it is not surprising that they have little or no interest in making sense out of their own or other's motivations. To do so would take them out of the moment and, by so doing, separate them from their natural and normal experiential sense of self separate from others. In this sense they are truly non-judgmental and egalitarian

- As wives and husbands SPs may be consistently inconsistent. Living in the moment, they may choose to attend to role responsibilities with a significant other or go off and do what they want to do for themselves separate from others without feeling a need to justify or explain. One SP client, whose

their design. The issues that SPs brought in to work on were problems they could no longer ignore because they were disrupting their ability to respond effectively in the moment as the moment dictated which, for an SP, would mean not being themselves. From an SP's perceptual frame of reference, once their ability to respond in the moment was restored our work was done. Insight into why they were in a self-defeating relationship, or as to why they have always ended up in self-defeating relationships is not part of the deal for SPs. They are designed to rely on in the moment ingenuity and problem solving skills to experience a sense of self. Once their ability to respond effectively in the moment was restored, their need for counseling assistance was over. Once I understood that this is the natural and normal usefulness of the psychotherapy process for an SP client; that I had not failed in some way to effectively convey the meaning and purpose of the psychotherapy process to them and that they were not in denial, intentionally avoiding addressing the issues they really needed to work on, I was able to help them make sense out of why they proceed the way they do and provide a permission to close up the process with my support rather than just not show up or call, cancel and not reschedule.

¹⁸ This rule of thumb applies equally to NFs, NTs and SJs.

generosity of spirit in words and in actions far exceeded my own, described a trip to the mall to get a birthday present for her niece: "I was heading for the children's department and saw an amazingly beautiful cashmere sweater on sale that I just had to have, went in and bought it and went home, forgetting to purchase the present I had intended for my niece!" Her niece still got her birthday present. It was just a few days late. The natural response from an SJ or NF in her niece's life would be to judge her harshly for being unacceptably selfish. However, this very same SP rents a truck every year a few weeks before Christmas and goes around collecting food and clothing from her rich friends in the horse world, goods she then takes to the downtown Los Angeles homeless shelter where she personally hands them out to those in need. Another noticeably generous and kind SP client commented, "I like to give presents but at times when I feel like it and not when someone tells me I should.

This statement is quite consistent with SPs' nature. SPs must be free to respond in the moment, as the moment dictates, and not to how someone tells them they should respond. This would be tantamount to telling an SJ to be different and not send their friend a present on their birthday for a change, to send it a week late, or telling an NF to not care how others feel for a change. It can't be done without abandoning their nature given sense of self.

- SPs natural independence of mind does not mean they are antisocial. Most SPs adhere to standard traditional conventions of their culture. It is just that their psyches are not assaulted with feelings of guilt or self-disgust if they forget a birthday, or do not show up for a party they committed to. Their attention simply got distracted by something else. They mean no harm.¹⁹
- SP women can have great difficulty when in the role of a mother. The traditional SJ/NF driven perception of how a nurturing mother should be can cause an SP mother to stifle their natural need for moments of freedom to focus on what they want for themselves separate from spouse and child. I have worked with a number of SP mothers over the years that have arrived for help in a state of depression, feeling disconnected from their self, their spouse and their child and not knowing why. Invariably they were trying to adhere to the mothering 'shoulds' espoused by NF or SJ friends, spouse, parent and/or parent in laws. They had stifled their natural sense of self driven need to find time to focus on their self separate from others to conform to the expectations of others and, in so doing had, without awareness, abandoned their self separate from others to such a degree that they did feel connected to anything but unhappiness and depression. Once these mothers understood what was happening they added 'time for me' time to their daily routine. They might get someone to watch their child while

¹⁹ It is ironic, considering the grief that SPs often have to endure, that they are, by far, the most generous of all types. It is just that their generosity is driven by in the moment motivations.

they went out to lunch with friends or, If on a tight budget, they may skip a scheduled hair cut to get their nails done or, in the spur of the moment, bring home some ice cream just for themselves and no one else. Once these SP mothers found out that such behavior was natural and normal for an SP mother, that it did make them a selfish and unhealthy mother for their children, they stopped trying to be an SJ or an NF mother, allowed themselves these spontaneous acts of healthy SP selfishness and, as a result, were much happier, feeling more connected to their self, their spouse and their child.

Summary remarks on Sensing-Perceiving

In the fields of the fine arts, entertainment, government, business and the military, SPs are most noticeable when an awareness of and responsiveness to momentary sensory experience is of value. The immediacy of their responses can seem impulsive, undisciplined, and even immature to non-SPs (especially NFs and SJs). However this is usually not the case. They are simply acutely aware of immediate sensory data and wired to respond with optimum practical efficiency to accomplish their moment driven goal.

The original thinking and independence of mind that nature provides them with can trigger natural and normal response that are at odds with traditional societal norms for acceptable behavior. SPs have no choice in this regard. They are wired to think and act 'outside the box' in certain situations as the moment dictates rather than to what is considered usual and customary. I used to watch with fascination as SP basketball player Michael Jordan did his thing in the waning seconds of a critical game with five multi-millionaire professional athletes doing everything they could to stop him. No matter what they did, he almost always found a way to clear a space to shoot and score.

This freedom to express does not mean that SPs are by nature, defiant, uncooperative or disruptive because they usually are not. Their need for autonomy is situational, not general. Although some may be mercurial by nature, they are usually loyal to friends and loved ones and are loving and supportive of their spouse and children.²⁰ Their natural response in certain situations is just different from those of other temperaments. NFs are automatically responsive to the tone of communication, SJs are automatically responsive to the appropriateness of behavior, NTs are automatically responsive to the logic of a comment or action, and SPs are automatically responsive to what makes sense to them with regards to the dictates of the moment. ISFPs may be very gentle and indirect about it, and ESTPs may be dynamically direct about it, but all SPs are designed to embrace autonomy

²⁰ I do not know the frequency of relationship unfaithfulness in the adult lives of human beings. I also have no idea if there is a correlation between temperaments and frequency of occurrence so I do not have a frame of reference for addressing this issue in this book.

and a freedom to respond in the moment and to resist efforts to force them to comply to criterion that do not fit their sense of what that moments dictates for them.

Society's basic institutions, including most venues of public and private education, adhere to conventional rules of behavior that praise conformity and discourage independence of mind. Most parents, teachers, coaches, and employers adhere to these rules and expect others to do the same. When SP children naturally and normally respond in a manner that is contrary to conventional norms they are often told they are being inconsiderate, uncooperative, lazy, or irresponsible. The tension, conflict, and self-doubt that some SPs must deal with while growing up, simply by being their natural and normal selves, can take a heavy toll on them. It is hoped that a greater understanding of natural differences in core temperaments will help change for the better the way SPs are perceived.

Temperament Chapter Conclusion

Natural differences in temperament driven perceptions and priorities are pervasively present in human interactions. Situations that trigger these differences are almost unlimited. One example has four friends, each with a different temperament, walking down a block looking for the restaurant they are going to eat at. Halfway down that block one of them realizes that the restaurant is directly across the street from them. The extraverted SP member of the group looks both ways, sees the way is clear and immediately begins to cross the street urging his friends to follow. The extraverted SJ member of the group automatically reprimands their SP friend for doing something illegal and unsafe and urges the others to follow him to the corner in order to use the pedestrian crosswalk. The NF friend notices that there is no traffic coming in either direction. If he was only with his SP friend he might go ahead and cross with him. However, it is clear that his SJ friend would be upset if he did that and 'The Guilt Factor' takes over. Going down to the corner with their SJ friend is more tolerable than having to deal with the feelings of guilt and badness that would get triggered by his SJ friend's disapproval if he chose to cross over with his SP friend. The NT member of the group based his decision on the logic of the situation. Since there were no cars coming in either direction and the chance of a police officer materializing at that moment to give him a ticket was remote, he chose to cross the street with his SP friend. When they reconnected at the restaurant the extraverted SJ member of the group tried to get his SP and NT friend to understand why what they chose to do was wrong while the SP and NT tried to get their SJ friend to understand why this particular situation ought to be considered an exception to the rule. This discord unsettled the NF who tried to change the subject to something they could all agree about and thereby bring harmony back to the group. Since natural differences in perceptions and priorities were at play no change in perspective was possible They were eventually able to let go of their never ending irresolvable debate over who was right and who

was not but, since natural differences were at play, no change in perspective occurred.

Although human beings are aware that these differences in perspectives exist, they continue to believe they are matters of choice rather than of nature. Thus the never ending debates, driven by a perception that others could understand and change if they really wanted to. SJs feel everyone should be following the rules, and those who are not warrant corrective comments. NTs feel people should make logical sense and, if they do not, their opinions are not valid. NFs feel people should be sensitive to how others may or will feel when they say or do something. Comments and behaviors that do not include this consideration are simply unkind, are not nice. SPs believe people should 'seize the moment' when opportunity knocks. The most equalitarian of the four temperaments, they do not understand why SJs and NFs are so judgmental toward them.

This misperception of intent and comprehension is pervasive. Individuals, couples, and family members end up having to defend and justify their right to be who they naturally and normally are. Protective walls are built by necessity with true understanding of natural differences left out of the equation.

This is exactly what happened between my mother and me. We are polar opposites on each dichotomy and opposites on the two most naturally judgmental of the four temperaments. I am an INFP, an NF driven idealist focused on understanding human relationships, whereas my mother is an ESTJ, an SJ driven realist, expressive and blunt in making sure that people's actions are correct and proper. In many ways, she was a very good mother. However, I am an NF, with very different perceptions, priorities and sensitivities. Her blunt fact based criticisms of my actions (*usually warranted!*) left me feeling awful about myself and upset with her for causing me to feel so bad. Consequently, from childhood on I had maintained an emotional distance from her. Our ages were 61 and 92 when I began taking her to my chiropractor for her aches and pains. Now, my mother was no average 90+-year-old. She remained, to the day that she died, a week short of her 99th birthday, a highly intelligent, alert and ridiculously knowledgeable individual. Our trips to and from my chiropractor were filled with discussions on temperament, personality, and why this critical information is yet little understood in my profession. We talked about how our natural differences in perceptions and priorities had kept us apart. She wished she had this information when she was raising her children. She had no idea her manner of communicating was so jarring. An NF's experience of feelings of guilt made no sense to her. "I never intended to trigger guilt," she once said, "I just wanted you to do it right." My mother began working on her manner of communicating. She would practice with someone and ask me how she did. I had the humbling feeling that my mom, in her 90s, was more capable of change and growth than I was. I grew to love and cherish her. This would never have happened without an understanding of natural and normal temperament driven differences in human behavior.