



Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® Stress Management Report

Developed by Naomi L. Quenk

Report prepared for
JANE SAMPLE
February 1, 2011

Interpreted by
SC
Sample Company



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Introduction

This report uses your results on the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*® (MBTI®) assessment to describe how you are likely to experience and react to stress. It also suggests ways you can manage stress successfully. The MBTI instrument, developed by Isabel Briggs Myers and Katharine Cook Briggs based on Carl Jung's theory of psychological types, has been used for more than 60 years to help people understand their unique personality. For more than 20 years, it has been used to identify and describe the natural stress reactions of the sixteen types.

The personality types described by Myers and Briggs result from natural, healthy differences in the way people's minds work and the way they view themselves and the world. These same natural differences can be observed when people of each of the sixteen types experience and react to stress.

This Report Can Help You

- **Recognize that the ways you behave, react to others, and generally look at life when you are experiencing stress are different than when you are *not* experiencing stress**
- **Become aware of circumstances or events that are likely to trigger your stress reactions**
- **Identify the most and least effective ways for you to deal with stress and your stress reactions**
- **Identify the most and least helpful ways for others to respond to your stress reactions**
- **Learn from your stress experiences and reactions so you can modify them rather than be controlled by them**

Some people are concerned that their stressed, out-of-character behavior indicates that something is seriously wrong with them. If this is true for you, be assured that this report will allay any such fears you may have. Your stress reactions are predictable, natural, and healthy for your personality type, and they are temporary and manageable.

How Your MBTI® Stress Management Report Is Organized

- **Summary of Your MBTI® Results**
- **Your Natural Personality Characteristics**
- **Your Stressed Personality Characteristics**
- **How Your Stressed Personality Is Triggered**
- **Handling Your Stress Reactions**
- **How Others Can Support You When You Are Stressed**
- **Learning from Your Stress Reactions**



Summary of Your MBTI® Results

The MBTI instrument identifies two opposite ways in which people focus their attention, take in information, make decisions, and deal with the outer world. Individuals use all eight of these opposites at least some of the time, but they tend to prefer one element in each pair over the other and to feel most comfortable and energized when they use their preferences. Your four preferences combine and work together to form your natural personality type. The pairs of opposite preferences are shown below, as is the type you have identified as your best-fit type.

Verified Type: ENFP				
Where you focus your attention	E	Extraversion People who prefer Extraversion tend to focus on the outer world of people and activity.	I	Introversion People who prefer Introversion tend to focus on the inner world of ideas and impressions.
The way you take in information	S	Sensing People who prefer Sensing tend to take in information through the five senses and focus on the here and now.	N	Intuition People who prefer Intuition tend to take in information from patterns and the big picture and focus on future possibilities.
The way you make decisions	T	Thinking People who prefer Thinking tend to make decisions based primarily on logic and on objective analysis of cause and effect.	F	Feeling People who prefer Feeling tend to make decisions based primarily on values and on subjective consideration of person-centered concerns.
How you deal with the outer world	J	Judging People who prefer Judging tend to like a planned and organized approach to life and want to have things settled.	P	Perceiving People who prefer Perceiving tend to like a flexible and spontaneous approach to life and want to keep their options open.

The rest of this report is based on the verified type you provided. All of the information about your personality and your way of experiencing, reacting to, and managing your stress therefore reflects your verified type and not your reported type.



Your Natural Personality Characteristics

The parts of your personality type, ENFP—Extraversion, Intuition, Feeling, and Perceiving—combine and work together to describe people as shown in the chart below.

What ENFPs Are Usually Like

- Excited by the many possibilities in the outside world
- Comfortable trying out new things
- Optimistic about what the future holds
- Energized by change, complexity, new experiences, and new places
- Likely to seek out and find like-minded individuals
- Easily bored by details, routine, and repetitive tasks
- Turned off by structured environments with many rules and procedures

ENFPs tend to decide when, where, and how to focus their energy by consulting their inner values in order to choose which of their many ideas and inspirations are worth pursuing. Their inner values often focus on improving the lives of people, organizations, the environment, and the world in general. The impressions they leave with others are shown below.

How Others Describe ENFPs

- Innovative and original
- Friendly, warm, sociable
- Enthusiastic, catching others up in their interests
- Intense and sincere
- Excited and exciting to be around
- Sometimes overwhelming

What Happens When You Experience Stress

Stress drains your energy, causing you to lose confidence in your tried-and-true ways of behaving and solving problems. At first you may try harder and harder to do what usually works for you, which may lead you to exaggerate your natural personality type. As an ENFP, you may become increasingly frenetic, talkative, and distracted, using little or no judgment to help you decide which of your intuitions are good ones. As you continue to lose your connection to your natural, comfortable personality, you may instinctively, without any awareness, adopt a completely different approach, using the very opposite of your usual type preferences. When this happens, you may be described as being “in the grip” of your most inexperienced, childish, negative side. The following pages show how this works for you.



Your Stressed Personality Characteristics

Just as you tend to be most comfortable and energized when you use the four preferences that combine and work together to form your natural personality type, so you are likely to feel uncomfortable, awkward, and unmotivated when you use your four opposite, less experienced, *nonpreferences*. Your four nonpreferences combine and work together to produce the characteristics of your stressed personality type, which for an ENFP combines Introversion, Sensing, Thinking, and Judging—the exact opposite of your natural, comfortable type. When this happens, you are likely to show the reactions listed below.

Signs of Stress in ENFPs

- Obsessing about irrelevant details and facts
- Focusing excessively on their body, imagining that they have some dire illness
- Being irritable, snappish, impatient
- Feeling depressed, hopeless; withdrawing
- Failing to see any possibilities beyond their current, dismal reality
- Being pessimistic and incapable of seeing the big picture
- Engaging in inflexible, rigid thinking

Many of these characteristics are exaggerations and distortions of the qualities that describe a mature, well-functioning person of your opposite type, ISTJ. A well-developed, effective ISTJ is described below.

What Your Opposite Type Is Usually Like

- Oriented to gathering facts and details and using them when they need them
- Committed to truth and accuracy
- Organized, methodical, and practical
- Focused on past and present realities
- Reliable and conscientious
- Careful not to speculate about the future or the unknown
- Distrustful, even disparaging, of ungrounded ideas and sloppy procedures

You can probably see that it would be hard to detect the mature, well-developed, effective qualities of a natural ISTJ from the behavior of your stressed, in-the-grip personality.



How Your Stressed Personality Is Triggered

Although there are life conditions that everyone finds to be stressful, the stress responses of some types can be triggered by events and circumstances that a different type may experience as desirable and energizing. As an ENFP, you probably find one or more of the following to be upsetting or objectionable enough to cause your out-of-character, in-the-grip personality to emerge.

ENFP Stressors

- Having to follow rules, procedures, routines
- Being unable to pursue your ideas and interests
- Working within a highly structured, rigid, detail-oriented environment
- Being required to do something that violates your values
- Feeling distrusted, disrespected, ignored, not recognized
- Receiving criticism about yourself or what you have created
- Finding that you are unable to fulfill the multiple demands you have taken on yourself

Stress-Related Cautions for ENFPs

Of the sixteen types, ENFPs have the most difficulty recognizing when their enthusiasm for their multiple projects and activities has turned into overwhelming stress. They may neglect to eat, sleep, and take care of other basic needs, and they may realize what is happening only when they become ill and are forced to stop or slow down. In comparison to the other types, they also more often report that they become physically ill in response to stress.

ENFPs are most likely of all the types to leave a job where they cannot express their individuality, where they must conform to others' expectations, and where they feel stifled or unappreciated. When they are able, ENFPs may start their own business or become an independent consultant.



Handling Your Stress Reactions

Just as each type's stress reactions are triggered by different circumstances and events, so each type typically finds particular ways of handling stress to be quite effective and other ways to be ineffective or to make matters worse.

As an ENFP, when you are overwhelmed by stress you may find that using one or more of the following suggestions will help you return to your natural, comfortable type.

Best Ways for ENFPs to Manage Stress

- Attend to physical needs—resting, sleeping, eating properly
- Change your environment, especially get outdoors
- Engage in physical exercise
- Get involved in a creative activity
- Prioritize, then delegate some tasks to others
- Pause before saying “yes,” and force yourself to say “no” at least some of the time
- Share your negative thoughts and feelings with someone who won't minimize them or try to talk you out of them

As an ENFP, you may find that one or more of the following behaviors hinder your efforts to return to your natural, comfortable type and may even make things worse for you.

Worst Ways for ENFPs to Respond to Stress

- Work harder, faster, or longer
- Flit back and forth between possible solutions
- Agree or disagree with others vehemently and indiscriminately
- Withdraw, rejecting others' offers to help
- Spend a great deal of time alone ruminating



How Others Can Support You When You Are Stressed

People often assume that what helps them when they are stressed will work for everyone. Those who care about you, even when they know you well, may try to alleviate your stress by treating you the way they would like to be treated when they are experiencing stress. Sometimes this approach works—a friend, family member, or colleague may say or do just the right thing to help you get out of your stressed state. But at other times this approach fails—what’s right for one type may well be wrong and unhelpful for another.

You might therefore consider sharing the following list with people close to you, since others can best help you modify your stress and return to your natural, comfortable type through one or more of the suggestions below.

How Others Can Be Most Helpful

- Encourage and help you to take a break from the stress-inducing situation, even if only briefly
- Suggest and join you in a different activity and change of scene, such as a long walk, movie, sport, or weekend away
- Listen quietly and without comment to your worries and concerns
- Communicate that they take your perspective seriously, regardless of its unreality or inappropriateness
- If possible, offer tangible help to relieve you of whatever is overwhelming you
- Encourage you to seek professional help if your stressed state persists for a long time

Some of the ways in which people may respond to someone else’s stress behavior are likely to be inappropriate for all or most types. Other responses are especially ineffective or detrimental for a particular type. As an ENFP, you may find one or more of the following approaches that others sometimes use to be unwelcome or even to hinder your return to your natural, comfortable type. You may wish to share the following information, as well as the preceding “helpful” list, with those close to you.

How Others Can Make Things Worse

- Express disbelief at the way you are behaving and feeling
- Repeatedly ask, “What’s wrong?”
- Patronize you or minimize your concerns
- Remind you of your typical optimistic, energetic perspective
- Treat your reactions as a joke, while you are being deadly serious about your situation



Learning from Your Stress Reactions

Stress is an inevitable, even necessary, part of life. Moderate stress can be energizing and motivating, presenting you with new experiences and challenges, as well as opportunities to do what you already do well with greater skill and enjoyment. Excessive stress can elicit the undesirable, puzzling, in-the-grip reactions typical of your particular personality type, as described in this report. However, you now know that what you find stressful and the ways you react to stress are natural for your type. You may not always be able to control or avoid the stresses in your life and work, but you can learn to deal with them, modify them, and grow from them.

As an ENFP, you are likely to learn the following:

- To pay at least some attention to details, such as financial records and deadlines
- It is very important to include quiet, reflective time in your daily life
- To acknowledge and respect your physical limitations—before rather than after you become ill
- Given your tendency to take on too much, it's a good idea to periodically review your commitments and say “no” to new requests, at least for a while
- To do a reality check with people who know you well and have seen you overdo and overcommit
- When you find yourself becoming picky and critical about details, arguing about facts, or worrying about minor physical symptoms, it's time to seriously examine just how stressed you really are—and change things as soon as possible
- It is unwise to make permanent decisions or take irreversible actions when you are experiencing a great deal of stress

