



The 5 Basic Personality Tendencies

Where do You Fall on the 5 Tendencies?

INSTRUCTIONS: Rate yourself on the following 5 Basic Personality Tendencies. Try to reflect on how you have generally thought, felt, and behaved over the past few years. The goal is to get a measure of your personality, not your current state of mind. If you feel unsure, ask a few people who know you well where they would rate you. This is only meant to give you a general idea as to where you likely fall and is not a diagnostic test.

Bear in mind that not every descriptor within each of the 5 Basic Personality Tendencies will describe you well. They are provided to give you a general idea of what sub-traits tend to make up the overall dimension. Read all the descriptors and then decide where you think you fall on each Basic Personality Tendency. Keep in mind, there are no “good” or “bad” profiles.

Put a check mark in one, and only one, of the six boxes for each of the 5 Basic Personality Tendency descriptions:

Extremely High Very High High

Low Very Low Extremely Low

Susceptibility to Negative Emotions & Stress

I tend to be:

Extremely High Very High High

- Worried, anxious, nervous, or tense a lot
- Easily stressed
- Annoyed and irritable often
- Discontent or moody
- Pessimistic
- Easily panicked when stressed
- Often motivated by fear and the threat of losing something (e.g., money, health, relationships)

OR

I tend to be:

Low Very Low Extremely Low

- Rarely worried
- Calm almost all the time
- Patient and even-tempered
- Content
- Rarely stressed by difficult situations

Extraversion/External Stimulation Tolerance

I tend to be:

Extremely High Very High High

- Extraverted/outgoing/social
- More interested in doing things with people than alone
- High energy
- Attracted to excitement/stimulation from people or situations
- Easy and quick to feel positive emotions
- Enthusiastic

OR

I tend to be:

Low Very Low Extremely Low

- Detached
- Reserved and serious
- Most comfortable and interested in working alone
- Even paced
- Avoidant of too much excitement/stimulation from people or situations
- Slow to experience and show lots of positive emotions
- Less enthusiastic

Openness to Change/New Experiences

I tend to be:

Extremely High Very High High

- Creative
- Artistic or very interested in the arts
- Imaginative
- Curious and interested in new and diverse subjects or people
- Highly attuned to and valuing emotions and gut feelings
- Willing to experiment and try new and exotic things
- Intrigued by and open to different points of view

OR

I tend to be:

Low Very Low Extremely Low

- Down-to-earth
- Practical
- More interested in logic than gut feelings and emotions
- Focused on a narrower or more predictable range of interests
- Traditional
- Conservative in my perspectives
- Clear with what I believe is right and wrong

Agreeableness

I tend to be:

Extremely High Very High High

- Quite trusting
- Open and revealing with my thoughts and feelings
- Highly concerned with helping others
- More interested in cooperation over competition
- Lenient towards others' shortcomings
- Deferring to others
- Modest
- Highly sympathetic and easily moved by others' pleas

OR

I tend to be:

Low Very Low Extremely Low

- More skeptical and not easily duped
- Guarded with what I share with others
- Focused on my problems and goals
- Self-protective
- Competitive
- Vocal about what I disagree with
- Proud and not afraid to let others know
- Tough-minded and objective

Motivation/Self-Control

I tend to be:

Extremely High Very High High

- Self-controlled
- Disciplined
- Competent
- Goal-oriented
- Ambitious and driven
- Detail oriented
- Organized and planful
- Efficient
- Deliberate (take a lot of time to make decisions)

OR

I tend to be:

Low Very Low Extremely Low

- Unsure of my abilities
- Inefficient
- Turned off by schedules
- Disorganized
- Undisciplined
- Low in ambition and drive
- Avoidant of big and ambitious goals
- Very spontaneous (make decisions without too much thought)

***These descriptions are primarily based on the work of Costa & McCrae¹.*

¹ See Robert McCrae, Ph.D., & Paul Costa, Ph.D. Personality in Adulthood: A Five-Factor Perspective (2nd Edition): <http://goo.gl/XjCtLQ>