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# Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® Stress Management Report

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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 reported when you responded to the MBTI items.

### Reported Type: ISFJ

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.

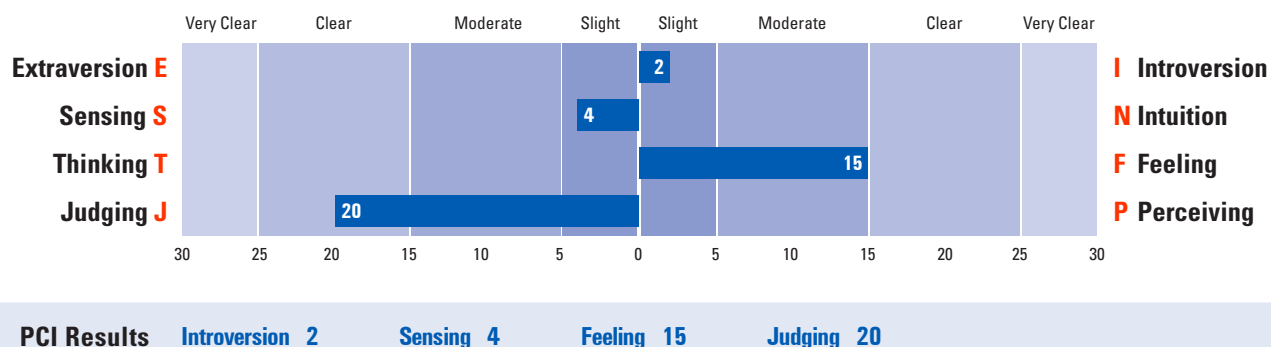
**P**

#### Perceiving

People who prefer Perceiving tend to like a flexible and spontaneous approach to life and want to keep their options open.

The following bar graph shows how consistently you chose one side of each preference pair over its opposite when completing the MBTI instrument. The longer the bar, the more clearly you reported your preference. The shorter the bar, the less clearly you reported your preference.

### Clarity of Reported Preferences: ISFJ



Results on any self-assessment tool can be influenced by many factors, so it is possible that your natural preferences were not accurately identified when you responded to the MBTI items. If the information in this report does not fit you well, your type professional can help you determine which type fits you best.



## Your Natural Personality Characteristics

The parts of your personality type, ISFJ—Introversion, Sensing, Feeling, and Judging—combine and work together to describe people as shown in the chart below.

### What ISFJs Are Usually Like

- Caring and concerned about family members and others close to them
- Attentive to details in their own and others' lives
- Respectful of and likely to value traditional attitudes and behaviors
- Committed to living up to their own high standards of behavior, expect others to do so as well
- Devoted to ensuring others' comfort and well-being, using their practical, hands-on knowledge to create warm, welcoming environments
- Likely to find it hard to accept attitudes and behaviors that seem too different or extreme
- Likely to be uncomfortable with uncertainty and what is not known

ISFJs tend to decide when, where, and how to focus their energy by considering their strongly held values and working to ensure that those values are enacted in the world. They often focus on the well-being, comfort, and behavior of family, friends, community members, and social institutions, and they can work hard to improve these areas and to point out what they believe to be inappropriate or unacceptable. The impressions they leave with others are shown below.

### How Others Describe ISFJs

- Responsible, conscientious, and reliable
- Warm, kind, and devoted to others' well-being
- Willing to do more than their fair share of what needs to be done
- Likely to put others' needs ahead of their own
- Helpful in practical ways, attentive to details
- Quiet and unassuming

## 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 ISFJ, you may become increasingly fixated on tasks, insist on doing everything yourself, and be unable to discriminate between relevant and irrelevant data. 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 ISFJ combines Extraversion, Intuition, Thinking, and Perceiving—the exact opposite of your natural, comfortable type. When this happens, you are likely to show the reactions listed below.

### Signs of Stress in ISFJs

- Catastrophizing, imagining dire outcomes, especially for themselves and those they care about
- Becoming uncharacteristically forgetful and inefficient about everyday responsibilities
- Feeling overwhelmed and unable to cope
- Feeling hopeless, depressed
- Feeling irritable, tense, anxious
- Being harshly critical, mean, blunt, aggressive, sarcastic
- Making impulsive decisions, reversing them later

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

### What Your Opposite Type Is Usually Like

- Energetic and enthusiastic
- Self-confident and self-promoting
- Outspoken and forthright about their views
- Likely to greatly enjoy demonstrating their ingenuity
- Focused on the future and able to readily forecast future events and trends
- Innovative and creative
- Able to argue both sides of an issue with equal enthusiasm

You can probably see that it would be hard to detect the mature, well-developed, effective qualities of a natural ENTP 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 ISFJ, 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.

### ISFJ Stressors

- Dealing with rapidly changing situations or unexpected events
- Receiving last-minute changes and unrealistic requests
- Coping with disorganization
- Feeling overwhelmed by responsibilities
- Being taken advantage of or taken for granted
- Dealing with domineering, angry, critical, or uncooperative people
- Being around conflict, lack of harmony, people not cooperating

### Stress-Related Cautions for ISFJs

ISFJs are most comfortable when they can achieve closure, as it is not natural for them to respond flexibly to change. This and their strong desire to fulfill all of their many responsibilities lead them to be very hard on themselves, often believing that they are not living up to their own high standards.

Of the sixteen types, ISFJs are highest on a measure that reflects realistic acceptance of their limits and of what is possible in situations, highest on a measure of applying themselves to whatever tasks need to be done, and highest in valuing harmonious relations among people. They are also highest of all the types in reporting stress about health issues, caring for aging parents, and balancing work and home responsibilities.



## 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 ISFJ, 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 ISFJs to Manage Stress

- Leave the situation
- Distance yourself from others and from ongoing demands
- Prioritize tasks
- Break tasks down into manageable pieces
- Finish the task at hand or just accomplish something
- Ask for help with tasks
- Analyze and evaluate a worst-case scenario or get someone to help you do that

As an ISFJ, 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 ISFJs to Respond to Stress

- Allow yourself to imagine even more unlikely and extreme negative outcomes
- Doggedly continue to do what you are doing even though it is not working
- Go without rest and sleep
- Beat yourself up for not managing well
- Refuse to ask for help or accept help when offered



## 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

- Stay calm and controlled even when you seem frazzled
- Listen to you, be understanding and empathetic
- Validate your concerns
- Offer specific, tangible help
- Help you prioritize or see alternative ways of handling things
- Leave you alone so you can think

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 ISFJ, 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

- Add to your workload; ask you for details about anything
- Reject or dismiss your concerns and worries
- Be patronizing
- Tell you what you should do
- Make small talk or chit-chat
- Insist that you calm down





## **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 ISFJ, you are likely to learn the following:**

- You don't need to take on the entire burden of what needs to be done
- Worrying is part of who you are, so others are probably better judges of whether something is worth worrying about
- You can temper your worrying by verbalizing your fears to trusted family members and friends
- If you practice staying open to possibilities and alternatives at least some of the time, it will help you be more selective about your concerns
- You've thought and felt this way before and things turned out better than you imagined
- It's a good idea to ask for help early on rather than wait until you're overwrought and emotional
- It is unwise to make permanent decisions or take irrevocable actions when you are in a highly stressed state

