

1.1

TEMPERAMENTS

You can improve your relationships
once you better understand
yourself and others.

TEMPERAMENTS

In this lesson you will:

- Learn the differences between temperament and personality
- Discover how to identify your own temperament and the temperament of others
- Recognize strengths and weaknesses in each temperament type
- Find ways to improve your relationships and reduce conflict

TEMPERAMENTS

Who am I? Who are You?

None of us were meant to live alone and be isolated. We were designed for relationship. Whether our relationships are a source of joy and comfort, or cause us pain and stress is largely up to us. We can all learn the skills for healthier, happier and more satisfying relationships. Our ability to learn relationship skills will be enhanced by understanding the difference between temperament and personality, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of our own temperament. The following story of Taylor and Jamie illustrates the impact of temperament and personality on relationships.

The Story of Taylor and Jamie

Taylor and Jamie met through their friends who thought they would get along. Taylor was immediately impressed by Jamie's calm and peaceful nature. She was the kind of person who was easy to be around. Jamie liked that Taylor was confident and accomplished. They got married and everything felt perfect for a while, but soon Taylor noticed Jamie seemed lazy and unmotivated. Jamie, on the other hand, became annoyed by Taylor's demands and bossiness. The qualities that brought them together now seemed like annoying weaknesses. Their relationship followed the pattern of "opposites attract, then attack." At first they appreciated one another, and then they became more frustrated with each other and both wondered . . .

“What’s wrong with you? Why can’t you be more like me?”

This kind of situation happens frequently in relationships because we are more comfortable in our own style. At first, we appreciate the differences in others, but eventually we start wishing they were more like us. We may even try to change the other person. We might point out what we think are their "flaws," criticize or nag them, or make them feel ashamed, hoping they will change. But it doesn't work. Each of us has a motivational style that many people believe is given at birth. These traits are known as our temperament. When we understand these traits and how they affect us and our approach to life, we can learn to manage them. More importantly, when we understand ourselves and the other person, we have a better chance of bringing out the best in both of us instead of the worst.

What is the Difference Between Temperament and Personality?

Temperament and personality are often used interchangeably, as if they are the same thing. **Temperament** refers to the traits you are born with and, for the most part, it is not something you change. These traits are natural to you and they influence how you see the world and what motivates you. While you can develop traits from other temperaments - it's good to have a balance- generally you feel most comfortable with your own type.

On the other hand, personality refers to your consistent behavior - how you generally are. Your behavior, which is an expression of your character, can change. The natural sequence looks like this:

Belief -Attitude -Behavior -Character

What you believe about your experiences will affect your thoughts and attitudes. Your thoughts, attitudes, and feelings will, in turn, affect how you behave. When your responses to situations happen over and over again, it creates your character or personality. All of that can change by being willing to examine what you believe about your circumstances and the people involved, and reconsider your conclusions. Our perceptions aren't always accurate and what we believe may not always be true. Our behavior will reflect that. Being curious and getting more information can affect your attitude, your emotions and can change your behavior. Although temperament has an impact on your personality; your experiences, good or bad, and your values affect your personality and create the potential for change.

A Closer Look at Temperament

Over 2000 years ago, there was a Greek doctor named Hippocrates who is known as the Father of Medicine. He noticed people had certain traits he put into 4 categories. He saw that people usually had one main motivational style and another secondary style. Since people were a mix of two styles, this was called "temperament," which means "to mix" in

Latin. After that, many tests were made to help people understand themselves better. Some of these tests are DISC, Myers-Briggs, Kiersey-Bates, and others. The results of these tests usually divide people into the same four groups. Some groups are identified by letters, while others use numbers or colors.

In the 90's, Larry Bilotta changed the original names of Hippocrates temperament types into more modernized terms and described them as countries. Just like people from different countries have different languages and cultures, each of these "countries" - Control, Fun, Perfect, and Peace - has its own language and ways of doing things. Based on those terms, Bilotta developed his own temperament test called the Flag Page. Each person will have a favorite preferred country and a secondary country so let's dive in and get to know these countries. See if you can identify yourself in any of these descriptions - both the strengths and the weaknesses.

Welcome to Control Country

People from Control Country love to be in charge and take the lead. They want to accomplish tasks and goals. They are good at being leaders, taking action, setting goals, and being confident and independent. Sometimes, they focus so much on their goals that they don't think about how they treat others. They might interrupt others or talk too much without listening. They can also be abrupt and intense. Even though they seem like they don't need anything, they actually need to

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be appreciated. If they don't feel appreciated, they can become sad. They might try to find appreciation from others if they don't get it from the people closest to them.



When they are at their best, they can be born leaders, quick to take action and set goals, having confidence and being bold and independent. If people from Control Country don't feel appreciated, they can act bossy, impatient, angered, demanding, and like they know everything.

Let's Visit Fun Country

People from Fun Country love to smile and laugh. They can find humor in almost anything and even laugh at themselves. They like to get noticed and receive attention, but they mostly just love to have fun. They'll have an embarrassing moment and share it with anybody because it's a funny story, while other temperaments wouldn't want to reveal their embarrassment to other people. They love adventure and they enjoy being around people. They're usually very friendly and very faithful.

People may see them as unstable because fun country people can have extreme emotions. But overall, if you value and respect them for who they are, and give them the attention that they need, they

will be inspiring, optimistic, sincere and the life of the party. When their need to be noticed, understood and validated is not met, they can be at their worst - irresponsible, impulsive; getting easily distracted and talking too much.



On to Perfect Country

What's most important for people from Perfect Country is "getting it right." They are good at paying attention to details and they want things to be perfect and exact. They like things to be organized and structured, and sometimes they use a lot of words to say very little.

People often mistake them for being from Control Country, which can upset a Perfect Country person. They don't want to control things - they just want things to be done a certain way. They want to make sure things are done "correctly."

They have a desire to make things better and as perfect as possible, even when it comes to people. If a Perfect Country person loves you, they are going to want to improve you. They might point out things that you can do better or call attention to some of your flaws. For the person on the receiving end, it can feel like they're being criticized when the intent of the Perfect Country person is actually caring.



Because others may think a Perfect Country person is being critical or mean, they may respond in kind by being mean back or treating the Perfect Country person roughly. However, Perfect Country is the most creative and sensitive personality type. They are the people that can get deeply hurt and have a hard time letting go of those hurts. Forgiving others can be difficult for them because their hearts are so open and sensitive. They take things to heart, and when they get hurt too much, they start thinking that they will never be good enough.

They often are very self-sacrificing and faithful friends. When people from Perfect Country feel understood and valued, they are creative, organized, thoughtful, idealistic, loyal, determined, and caring. When they are at their worst or misunderstood, they can set standards way too high, spend too much time planning, become moody and sad remembering the bad things, and feel unsure of themselves. One of the challenges unique to people from Perfect Country is a tendency to turn their desire for perfection onto themselves when they are wounded and have a lot of hurt. They become “damaged perfect” with unrealistic expectations for themselves that can be self-abusive.

Final Stop: Peace Country

People from Peace Country just want everyone to get along so that they can have a peaceful life without conflicts. They are relaxed and calm, and they are okay with having moments of silence in conversations. Peace Country people also like to cooperate and follow the rules, which can sometimes make them get pushed around by people from other countries. Control Country people want them to be more productive, Fun Country people want them to be more excited about life, and Perfect Country people want to show them how to be better.

People in Peace Country will go along with things as long as they are not pushed too far. If they feel insulted or not respected for who they are, they will back away.

Peace Country people understand the idea of working smarter, not harder because they like to be efficient and use as little energy as possible to get things done. They can surprise people with a witty sense of humor but they can also use that same humor to be cutting and sarcastic to other people.

Peace Country people are usually calm and easy to get along with, but it can be difficult for them to achieve peace because they try to avoid conflict at all costs. Sometimes, people need to resolve conflicts in order to find peace, and this can be challenging for Peace Country people.

When they are at their best, they are

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good listeners, patient, funny, capable, patient, and easygoing. However, if they are not respected, they can become unmotivated, stubborn, fearful, shy, worried, and indecisive.



Each of these temperament styles has its own strengths and weaknesses. Understanding them enables us to be better at speaking the other person's language and working with them. This improves our relationships and reduces conflict.

Resolving Conflicts

If we don't try to understand where somebody is coming from, conflicts can easily start. Consider the example of a fight between Taylor and Jamie that happens every weekend when they are not working.

On the surface, it appears they are fighting because Jamie doesn't help out enough around the house. Jamie is from Peace Country. She's thinking, "I've worked all week; I just wanna chill. Just gonna watch some TV and relax." Taylor, on the other hand, is from Control Country.

Taylor's thinking, "It's the weekend; we've worked all week at our jobs and now it's time to get some projects done. Let's get some things done at home."

Do you see how this can become a constant fight? Taylor's perspective is, "I'm doing everything around here. Jamie is so lazy not pitching in. This is really unfair." This leads to feelings of anger and rejection.

Jamie is looking at Taylor and thinking, "Can't you just chill out? Why do we always have to be working? Can't we just relax once in a while?" To solve the fight, they each need to understand their own temperament and respect the differences between their motivational styles. For example, Taylor (Control Country) could acknowledge liking to get things done and recognize that's not the only way. Seeing from Jamie's viewpoint, Taylor could go to Jamie and say, "You know, I understand that you work hard and you want some time off on the weekends just to relax, and I get that. I love that about you - that you're a calm and peaceful person. But I'm also feeling like I'm carrying the weight of getting everything done so let's compromise. Let's work half the day and take the other half to relax."

Jamie could understand Taylor, as a Control Country person, really needs to be appreciated. Jamie could go to Taylor and say, "I really appreciate all the things that you do around here. You work so hard and keep things going for us but sometimes it's too much for me. Projects and working all the time is a lot and I need some time to relax. How about we divide the weekend? Maybe work one day or the mornings, and then relax the rest of the time." Letting your approach be guided by an understanding of how each other is wired and accepting those

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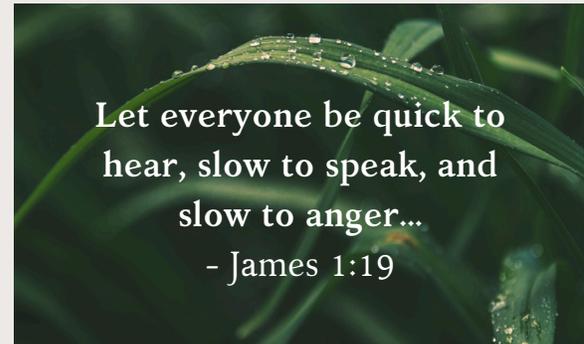
differences will reduce conflict. You will be able to get along better and enjoy the other person so much more.

A good way to handle any fight is to first stop and try to see things from the other person's point of view. Really listen and try to understand what might be going on underneath. Second, acknowledge what the other person is saying; validate their feelings. This doesn't mean you agree, but it means you can understand why they might think that way. When the other person feels understood, they are going to be more open to hearing your side and how you view things.

Practicing the Languages

It's important to know what motivates other people so we can relate to them better. Let's be honest: We all like our own ways of doing things and can sometimes judge others who are different from us. Understanding and appreciating our differences will make for happier and

person will work to develop the strengths from all of the types and not make excuses like, "This is just how I am." At our core, what we all want is to be fully known, loved, and accepted.







To be loved but not known is comforting
but superficial.

To be known and not loved is our greatest fear.
But to be fully known and truly loved is, well,
a lot like being loved by God.

— *TIMOTHY KELLER* —

DISCUSSION OR REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Which two temperament types best describe you?
2. What “country” traits do you recognize in people you know?
3. What traits from each country do you most appreciate and what traits are more difficult for you?
4. Will understanding temperament differences change the way you treat others?
5. What do people tend to misunderstand about you?
6. Are there areas of your personality you would like to change? What beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors would need to be different?
7. What experiences can you identify that have influenced your beliefs, attitudes or feelings, and your behavior?
8. If you want to convince some friends to take a trip with you, depending on what temperament style they have, what words would you use?

PRACTICE, ROLE PLAY, OR MORE TO CONSIDER

1. Think of a situation where people with differing temperaments need to work together (a job, project, etc.).
In what ways might each one be helpful and contribute?
What could be some potential challenges?

2. Think about a conflict you have had with someone. Discuss or act out how the conflict might have gone if you had used some of the skills presented, such as:
 - First listen and listen more, instead of trying to get the other person to hear your point of view
 - Look for other hidden hurts or misunderstandings that may be fueling the conflict
 - Try to understand the other person's viewpoint
 - Validate them - even if you don't necessarily agree
 - Express your viewpoint or needs

WHAT IS YOUR TEMPERAMENT TYPE COMBINATION?

Below are columns with descriptive words. Decide if that word describes you and put a scoring number by it. Be completely honest and don't answer how you **want** to be. Think about what comes naturally to you. Even though some words are flattering and some are unflattering - be as honest as you can.

Cross out or put a 0 by words that are **not at all like me** or **usually not like me**.
 3 = **That is usually me** 4 = **That is mostly me** 5 = **That is definitely me**

Column 1

- Determined
- Goal-oriented
- Decisive
- Outgoing
- Domineering
- Competitive
- Likes to get the job done
- Strong-willed
- Persuasive
- Outspoken
- Practical
- Bossy
- Resourceful
- Bold
- Leader
- Hot-tempered
- Self-confident
- Workaholic
- Daring
- Adventurous
- Domineering
- Productive
- Persevering
- Self-sufficient
- Insensitive
- Quick to act
- TOTAL**

Column 2

- Funny
- Emotional
- Impulsive
- Outgoing
- Spontaneous
- Talkative
- Forgetful
- Popular
- Disorganized
- Lives in the present
- Has difficulty with appointments
- Impractical
- Easily angered
- Cheerful
- Undisciplined
- Friendly/sociable
- Interrupts others
- Compassionate
- Easily discouraged
- Likes to play / have fun
- Restless
- Sincere
- Weak-willed
- Extroverted
- Very positive
- Inspirational
- TOTAL**

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Column 3

- Idealist
- Deep-feeling
- Pessimistic
- Loner
- Self-sacrificing
- Introspective
- Planner
- Perfectionist
- Analytical
- Faithful
- Suspicious
- Scheduled
- Creative
- Orderly
- Moody
- Detailed
- Gifted
- Considerate
- Hard to please
- Sensitive
- Indecisive
- Insecure
- Has high standards
- Critical
- Persistent
- Caring
- TOTAL**

Column 4

- Adaptable
- Easygoing
- Selfish
- Efficient
- Spectator of life
- Calm
- Unenthusiastic
- Good listener
- Worrier
- Patient
- Competent
- Consistent
- Lazy
- Teases others
- Content
- Stubborn
- Non-aggressive
- Has regular daily habits
- Indecisive
- Stingy
- Witty / dry humor
- Pleasant
- Shy
- Negative
- Submissive
- Resists change
- TOTAL**

Add up each column. The column with the highest score is your primary temperament and the column with the next highest score is your secondary temperament. Everyone is a blend of the temperaments, but people usually have two that are most like themselves.

Read on to learn more about each pair.

WHICH “COUNTRY” AM I FROM?

Column 1 - Control Country

Column 3 - Perfect Country

Column 2 - Fun Country

Column 4 - Peace Country

Temperament combinations and descriptions:

Control - Fun: These people love to stay active. They are productive and purposeful. They are also good at selling things and promoting them. Control-Fun people can motivate others and they enjoy a challenge. Sometimes they seem fearless. They can make even the toughest people like them and they are very good at talking to others. People always notice them when they are around. They are good at leading and getting things done, and other people like to follow them.

Sometimes they can be mean and have a quick temper. They often ask other people to finish something they started because they have a hard time focusing on one thing for a long time. They can also use or take advantage of other people to achieve their goals.

Control - Perfect: This combination makes for leaders you can count on to do a great job. They are very focused on their goals, hardworking, and capable. They can be competitive and forceful in what they do. They often succeed in any kind of business they try. They have a quick and smart mind, are great at researching, and can make decisions easily.

Weaknesses can include a tendency to act bossy. This type is the most determined and their quick thinking and sarcasm can really hurt others. They may have irregular and long work habits. They can hold onto anger and unfriendliness and may have trouble getting along with others. As a parent, this type can be very strict and hard to make happy.

Control - Peace: This type of person is quick and active, but also calm and cool. They take their time and don't rush into things. People like working for them because they are organized and know where they are going. They can help others use their skills without making them feel used. They rarely offend others. They are often great administrators in any job.

However, they have weaknesses too. They tend to hold onto resentment and bitterness. They may say mean things disguised as jokes, so it's hard to tell if they are making fun of someone or not. They can be very stubborn and once they make up their mind, it's hard to change it.

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They also have a hard time admitting their mistakes. Sometimes, their worrying side stops them from taking risks and reaching their full potential.

Fun - Control: This type of temperament is very outgoing. They are happy, like being around people, and are enthusiastic. They are also organized and get things done. This type of person will do well in jobs that involve working with people, as long as the job is exciting, has variety, and involves activity. They have leadership skills that make people enjoy working for them.

People with a Fun-Control temperament are often talkative and have strong opinions. They say what they think without knowing all the facts, which can sometimes get them into trouble. They are the fun and popular person at parties, but when they feel threatened, they can become insecure and annoying. Other weaknesses include getting angry easily and trying to find reasons to justify their actions.

Fun - Perfect: This type of person experiences a wide range of emotions. They can go from laughing one moment to crying the next. They genuinely feel the happiness and sadness of others. They are good with people and can make a positive impact on their lives. They can succeed in many different fields, especially public speaking, acting, music, and fine arts. They are dreamers, but they need to be careful not to let negative thoughts stop them from reaching their full potential.

One weakness of Fun-Perfect people is that they tend to be fearful and get angry easily. They can be hard on themselves if they don't meet their high standards. They want others to admire them, which motivates them to keep doing well, but it can also make them feel insecure and afraid. They need to be careful about criticizing others, as it can push people away. They also struggle internally as their two sides compete against each other.

Fun - Peace: These people are very easy to get along with and are very lovable. They are generally happy, have a good sense of humor, and are carefree. They rarely get upset and always see the positive side of things. Fun-Peace people love to tell jokes and stories. They enjoy helping others and are great at sales. They are naturally family-oriented and are loved by their children and others. They would never intentionally hurt someone.

The weaknesses of Fun-Peace people are that they lack motivation and discipline. They would rather socialize than work. They also tend to not take serious situations seriously and make jokes about them.

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Perfect - Control: This combination of temperaments combines the mood swings of the "Perfect" side with the determination and self-will of the "Control" side. People with this temperament have strong leadership skills and strive for perfection in everything they do. They are capable of excelling in any job and can efficiently run their own business.

However, Perfect-Control individuals need to be careful not to let negativity affect them. Although they don't stay in a negative or depressed mood for long, they can easily slip into one and become difficult to be around. Their mood is influenced by their thoughts. They can be hard to please and rarely feel satisfied themselves. They may exhibit behaviors such as self-persecution, hostility, nit-picking, and criticism. They are known for getting angry and verbally criticizing others for their failures or mistakes.

Perfect - Fun: This combination often produces individuals who are gifted and capable. They may have an inclination towards music or art and are usually good students. They can also make excellent teachers. The Perfect side of their temperament allows them to notice small details, while the Fun side makes them great communicators. They are very emotional and have a deep capacity to connect with God. They are willing to sacrifice themselves to help others.

However, if they feel hurt or misunderstood, they can become unreasonably critical of themselves and others. The Perfect-Fun combination is the most conflicted of all the types, as the two sides don't always blend well. When the Fun side dominates, the Perfect side wants to tone it down, and vice versa. They struggle to cooperate if they don't believe something is right and can be too idealistic and impractical.

Perfect - Peace: These individuals are often great scholars and hard workers. They get along well with others and have a kind and caring nature. They prefer a quiet and solitary life. They excel in analytical thinking and strive for perfection in an organized manner. Their families love them for their discipline and dedication.

However, this combination is susceptible to anxiety, fear, and negative self-image. Because they are conscientious and agreeable, they can be easily influenced by others to take on commitments that drain their energy and creativity. If they get caught up in these pressures, they may lose sight of their own well-being. If someone focuses too much on helping others, they might forget about their own family. Even though they are usually calm and peaceful, they can sometimes seek revenge.

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Peace - Control: This type of temperament is the most active among all the Peace Country combinations, but they are not overly energetic. They could become skilled counselors because they are good listeners, they don't interrupt, and they are interested in people. Although they don't usually offer their help to others, they act very professionally when people come to their organized space. Their advice is usually practical and helpful, and they make people feel comfortable and safe with their gentle manner.

Their weaknesses are not very obvious, but they become apparent in their lack of motivation and tendency to be afraid. This type can be very stubborn and inflexible. Instead of getting angry at others, they choose not to cooperate. This type is at risk of becoming more self-indulgent and passive, which can lead to a boring life for themselves and their families.

Peace - Fun: This group of people is very easy to get along with. They are happy, cooperative, thoughtful, and like being around others. They are also dependable, like to have fun, and have a good sense of humor. This type of person rarely acts in a mean or aggressive way. They usually feel satisfied with their families, love their spouse and children, and enjoy a calm and peaceful life.

The weaknesses of Peace-Fun people may not be obvious unless you live with them. They can struggle with discipline and not reach their full potential. They might pass up opportunities or give up on things that require "too much effort". This type of person can become afraid, insecure, and shy. They might put up a wall to protect themselves and avoid getting involved in activities that demand a lot from them.

Peace - Perfect: These are calm, kind, and polite individuals who rarely, if ever, become angry or unfriendly. They are reliable and do not cause embarrassment for themselves or others. They behave appropriately and dress modestly. They are usually tidy and organized in their work and are generally nice and helpful. They can handle pressure well, but they need external motivation to do so (they are usually not motivated from within).

Peace-Perfect people avoid getting too involved in anything. They are not motivated from within and resist taking on more responsibility than they believe they can handle. They can become afraid, selfish, and have a negative view of themselves. As parents, they may lack the discipline needed to teach and prepare their children for life.

REFERENCES

Larry Bilotta is an author and speaker, specializing in relationships and marriages. He developed the Flag Page temperament test.
<https://larrybilotta.com> <https://youcansavethismarriage.com/>

Mark Gungor developed his "Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage" seminar in the early 2000s. His innovative program challenged traditional approaches to relationship counseling by incorporating humor and lightheartedness into discussions about serious topics.
<https://markgungor.com>

Timothy LaHaye graduated with a Doctor of Ministry degree and a Doctor of Literature degree. He served a congregation in Minneapolis until 1956, then became the pastor of the Scott Memorial Baptist Church in El Cajon, California for 25 years. He wrote over 50 non-fiction books and co-authored 25 fiction books on subjects such as family life, temperaments, and Bible prophecy. He died days after he had a stroke on July 25, 2016, at the age of 90.

Christ-Centered Corner

Encouragement From a Christian Perspective

Christians believe God made each person special and unique. Ephesians 2:10 says, “For we are His workmanship (a work of art), created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” God also gave us specific traits that affect how we act and get along with others.

Psalm 139: 13 - 14: “For Thou didst form my inward parts; Thou didst weave me in my mother’s womb. I will give thanks to Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Thy works.”

The Bible talks about human nature and how His people should try to act. We should grow in qualities of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23) These traits are gifts from God.

We should understand and use our temperament traits to help others and please God. Some traits are easier or harder to show, depending on your temperament. We all have weaknesses, and God wants us to allow the Holy Spirit to change us to become more like Christ. In Romans 12:2 it says, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

When we accept Jesus Christ’s sacrifice for us and become a Christian, that doesn’t mean we behave perfectly, though some people think we should. We still have struggles and people mature at different speeds. Some Christians represent Jesus very badly by the way they act. The important thing is to keep growing and allow yourself to be changed.

We also learn from the Bible to be humble and have empathy. We need to learn how to understand and get along with people who have different temperament styles. Instead of judging or trying to change someone, focus on accepting, appreciating, and understanding the different ways God made people.

