

Personality Typing – I'm on the Cusp: ENTP & ENFP

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The happenstance of my genetics landed me with a neuropsychological composition that has been both challenging and wonderful. The challenges were due to my having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and two comorbidities: major depressive disorder, and general anxiety disorder. Thankfully, I have responded well to medications, which I started taking in my mid-thirties.

The wonderful upside of my wacky brain composition was manifest via a high IQ, an abstract creative mindset, musical skills, and most importantly, an insatiable curiosity about natural science – from the nano, sub-atomic level to the vastness of space and wonders of distant galaxies. In essence, I never get bored. There's always something that perks my interest as soon as I sit at my computer.

One of the pleasant side effects of ADHD is that I am a consummate researcher. That is, if I keep it under control. I have a very strong tendency to dive down the rabbit hole researching my latest *de jour* topic of interest. When I say rabbit hole, I mean digging far deeper than is necessary. For example, I became interested in cancer genomics. It was a deep dive operation that lasted roughly five months. When I finally quit digging (for a while), I did a tally and found I had scanned the abstracts for more than 3,000 medical research articles and downloaded more than 800 files. Talk about overkill!

So, what is it in my neuropsychological makeup that spins me off like this? *Inquiring minds want to know!*

I went back and looked at some psychological test results from years ago. I recalled reading several articles that showed a propensity of folks with ADHD being linked to specific personality types.

When I was working as a systems engineer with Northrop-Grumman, the company implemented corporate-wide testing of employees as part of a new job performance evaluation. One of the tests we took was the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), which was developed by Katharine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers in 1922. They based their personality typing on Psychiatrist/Psychoanalyst Carl Jung's book *Personality Types*.

According to many psychologists, there are 16 distinct personality types, consisting of four opposite preference pairs: Extraversion (E) vs. Introversion (I), Sensing (S) vs. Intuition (N), Thinking (T) vs. Feeling (F), and Judging (J) vs. Perceiving (P). While most people have very clearly defined personality types, **I scored the exact same level for both Thinking and Feeling.** I am both an ENTP and ENFP.

I did a quick Bing search and found that people that exhibit N and P personality types are more likely to have ADHD. As an aside, my wife JoAnn, scored as an ISTJ. As it turns out, we were/are a great pair.

When I first read the test results and saw that I was on the cusp of ENTP/ENFP, I thought to myself, *Go figure!* I have often found myself scoring in the fringes. However, I did some research and found that both types have the same traits and behaviors. So, there's little distinction between the Thinking and Feeling subcategories of EN_P groups.



upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1f/MyersBriggsTypes.png

The following two lists are from the article, *Is it ADHD or Creative Personality Type?* by Ariane Benefit, MS.Ed. She is an Agile Living Coach and learning facilitator. I was amazed when I read her lists and realized that I had ALL of the traits in both lists. I have never been

COMMON ADD TRAIT DESCRIPTIONS INCLUDE:

- High energy and restless / Hyperactivity
- Impulsivity
- Takes on, starts too many projects
- Loses interest easily
- High impatience
- May fail to follow through, forget appointments
- Tendency to hyperfocus and not be able to easily break out of it
- Tendency to see everything at once, to think “globally” and see many possibilities at once, making it difficult to make certain kinds of decisions
- Higher than average tolerance for chaos and change
- Often exhibit high risk-taking, high stimulation seeking behavior
- Often hyper-reactive and sensitive – Strong reactions to thoughts, noise, people talking, everything in their environment – may notice everything, or tend to shut down and become inattentive to everything, or a combination of both
- Tend to criticize themselves constantly
- Tend to always be scanning or hunting – looking around for anything that might be new or different, or out of place, looking to make connections, to see patterns, may not even be aware of this. So they seem not to be listening when actually they are trying to take everything in,

though sometimes they really aren't listening because they can't focus on just one thing that is coming in through their senses

- Highly intuitive thinking
- Inconsistency of attention, mood

ENTP / ENFP TRAITS

- Unusually Enthusiastic, [high energy and high enthusiasm is VERY characteristic of ADD)
- "Apt to express interest in everything" [this makes it very difficult to focus and make choices about how to use your time]
- Characteristically have an eye out for a better way [leads to constantly changing and not sticking to systems you create to organize yourself]
- Always on the lookout for new projects, new activities, new procedures [a clear link to all those unfinished projects ADD is famous for]
- Always seem to be several jumps ahead [Another hallmark of ADD brains that process informationally globally and often see patterns before others do. Many famous inventors and scientists who made significant discoveries are thought to have had ADD]

The list is stunning, for example, Alexander Graham Bell, Leonardo da Vinci, Sir Issac Newton, Louis Pasteur, Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, Benjamin Franklin, Galileo and many more.

- Prefers to "improvise" rather than create a detailed plan [Could look like impulsivity, being unprepared, etc.] (I now think of this as being "born to agilize" :)
- Tends to proceed into action without necessary preparation
- Can succeed in a variety of occupations as long as the job "does not involve humdrum routine" 5/7
- In a routine job "they become restless. If a project in which they are engaged is no longer challenging, they tend to lose interest and fail to follow through – often to the discomfort of colleagues"
- "Orderliness in the routines of daily living is not apt to inspire them."
- "Not likely to be interested in the routines of daily maintenance"
- "Life with ENTPs is likely to be a daring adventure: this could lead families into physical and economic danger" [The book actually says this...could easily come out of a book on ADD]
- "Apt to react with delight at having an opportunity to improvise a solution to a crisis"
- "Likely to be inconsistent with their attention"
- "May show undependable, fickle characteristics, and be easily discouraged"
- "Always berating themselves for being so conscious of self"
- "Can become bored rather quickly with situations and people, and resist repeating experiences"
- "Enjoy the process of creating "but not interested in follow-through"
- "Can have difficulty picking up on the ideas and projects initiated by others"
- "Extravagant generosity punctuated with periods of frugality"

- “Somewhat unpredictable” “Characteristic in their pursuit of novelty”
- “Outstanding intuitive powers”

I ran Ariane’s list of 22 ENTP/ENFP traits by my wife and she agreed with my assessment. **I have all 22. Yikes!** Talk about being predictable.

BTW, I must admit I really liked having these characteristics in common with the list of notable inventors.