

X-RAY SELFIE

(communication with connection)

Eliana Mattar



The deeper you dive into
yourself, the more open and
aware you become to connect
with others in a healthy and
meaningful way.

Pedro Calabrez

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Taking a photo of ourselves with our cell phones has become so common in our daily lives that the word that comes from the English “self” has already been included in the Portuguese dictionary (selfie).

The word self means character, qualities that distinguish us - constitution, nature, personality, the union of our emotions, thoughts and behaviors.

Different from what we show the world with our selfies, which are taken so often that seem hollow, here I talk about our gaze that photographs like an X-ray.

I describe some tested tools in the field of behavioral science that enable us to understand what is inside of us at any moment in our lives.

I'll explain the concept of real and fake selfies, their benefits and disadvantages. I'll describe some advantages of self-perception, personal insights, and focus on personal development.

I'll bring elements to reflect on our pasts, whether recent or not.

In the Childhood section, I describe patterns of behavior that appear as spontaneous and automatic defenses when we are young. Through repetition, these patterns can become habits in adult life.

I'll also explain some behaviors of caregivers and parents and how they affect the child. I'll describe the temperaments and ways of acting catalogued.

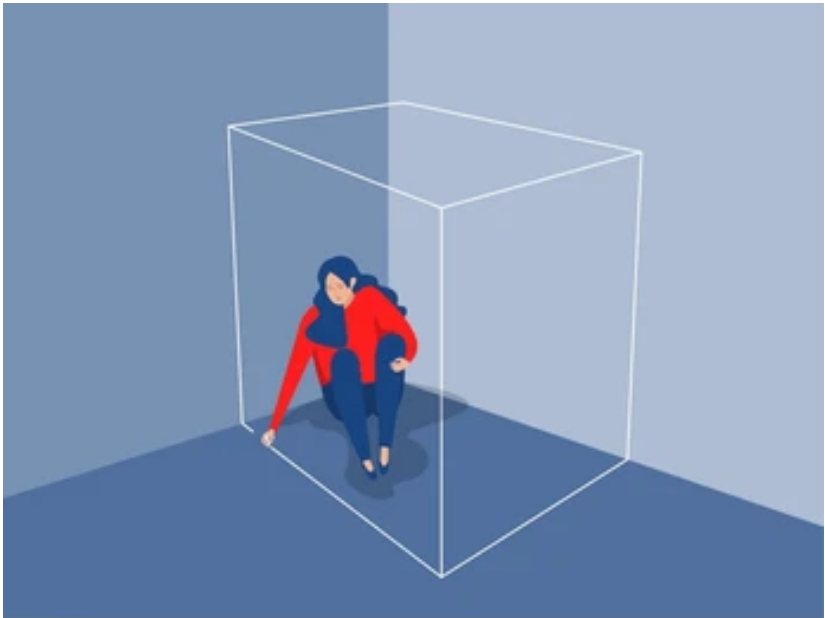
Through personality types, according to the most accepted classification among experts in behavioral psychology, you can identify your main tendencies and corresponding strengths and weaknesses.

I provide links in [Appendixes I and II](#) for testing the mentioned behavior patterns. This eBook aims to bring to our consciousness the link between communication with connection and self-knowledge.

REAL SELFIE AND FAKE SELFIE



Since we are not an island surrounded by nothing, the sooner we awaken curiosity about human beings, the more we will be aware of what comes from us and from others. Whether it is words or facial expressions when we are interacting.



Self-ignorance is usually an obstacle to the flow of our existence, to enjoying new experiences.

Knowing about ourselves, understanding what our skills and abilities are, gives us a sense of being whole, makes life easier, regardless of our age.

Attention and courage are necessary to capture what is going well and not so well within us, and, above all, to ask the difficult question from time to time:

Who am I?

Before answering this question, however, it is worth clarifying that our external selfie, the one we send to the world, is neither good nor bad. It does neither harm nor good.

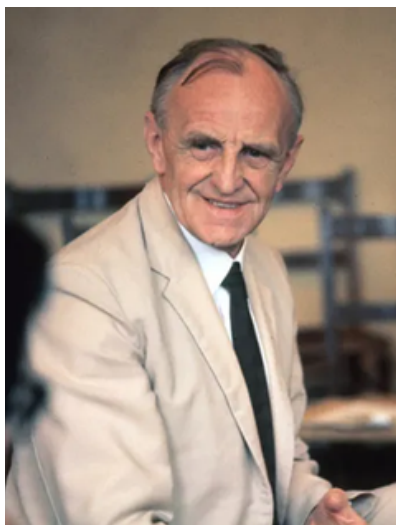
It's not about diagnosing, but rather about being aware that what goes outward is linked to the reality of the existence of our X-ray selfie. Without this awareness, we get lost.

Doing this - knowing, accepting, modifying, if necessary for our integrity, and sharing our deepest self with our loved ones - is a form of self-care and mental health that positively affects our interpersonal communication, whether for speaking or listening.

Those who listen to themselves, listen to others better.

The theory of real selfie and fake selfie was developed by the English psychoanalyst, pediatrician and author of several books, Donald Winnicott.

The real selfie represents the authentic and spontaneous person in their feelings, desires, verbal and body expressions.



Spontaneity manifests itself in natural gestures and in the feeling of being alive. This selfie is connected to creativity, vitality, a sense of inner reality, and a lower degree of emotional dependence.

It arises in us, in our environment, during the first years of life. It has to do with the way in which caregivers are sensitive to allowing, validating, and encouraging the child to express their spontaneity, explore their emotions and needs freely.



The fake selfie, on the other hand, arises as an involuntary reaction of the child to hide their true feelings and be accepted or avoid rejection.

When it becomes a habit, it can lead a person to please others more than to have an authentic expression of themselves.

When the fake selfie becomes dominant, dictating most of a person's behaviors, thoughts, and feelings, the individual may feel disconnected from their real emotions, struggle with their authenticity, and experience an inner emptiness that is dangerous to their sanity, even if they have apparent social success. We become a hollow.

Self-awareness and therapy in severe cases can help us reconnect with our real selfie.

The psychoanalyst warns that a fake healthy selfie can be functional, contributing to the social interaction necessary for human beings, as long as it does not compromise our internal authenticity.

Our real selfie is not for everyone.

Because for a healthy identity, we must experience our real selfie first and then build our fake selfie to live in society, according to the author of the theory.

The real selfie is selfish, creative, wild, free, sweet, envious, nasty, kind, but always sincere.

It appears more in adulthood with relationships. A good partnership is one in which the partner, for a certain period of time, allows us to be ourselves when we were a five-year-old child.*

The fake selfie is especially necessary at work. Without masks, our identity as workers is blown away. It's a good thing we have this resource.**

* Post from 21/02/2025 on the portal "theschooloflifelondon"

** Idem *

THE ADVANTAGE OF KNOWING ABOUT OURSELVES



We learn to brush our teeth, take a shower, eat at least three times a day, among other daily hygiene habits, thus avoiding illness due to lack of cleanliness.

To avoid getting hurt in accidents and falls, for example, our caregivers teach us from an early age to protect our bodies from dangers so that we can **grow up healthy** and reach adulthood.

We grew up.

Healthy?





It seems that we treat our body as if it were just the facade of a building without any internal structure. It is common to separate behaviors, feelings, thoughts, temperaments and personality from the physical body.

Science has shown that this is not quite the case, these aspects of our humanity are not flying around.

It is not always easy to see our inner selves - what we feel, how we act and react to everyday events.

Until recently, the topic of self-knowledge was uncommon, perhaps only the object of study of a restricted group of specialists in behavioral psychology.

Teaching people to be aware of who we are, depending on the environment, is almost like an act of courage, especially if it is the parents we are teaching.

Yes, courage to provide to the other person a way to help them understand their emotions, reflect on their behavior, know how to **say no and hear a no**, know their nature, accepting and respecting it, among other aids that these skills bring.

Since every human being is unique, avoiding comparisons is a good way to go. Being aware of the distractions that push us outside of ourselves helps us look within.

A person who knows themselves tends to be confident, even creative, unafraid to be themselves, almost a revolutionary in a system that wants to subdue us as if we were robots.



Anyone who knows themselves suffers some kind of social risk, says Bete P. Rodrigues*, Brazilian educator and trainer in Positive Discipline.

In many places, she says, especially schools and companies, thinking and acting differently can lead to bullying, prejudice and even dismissal, because being creative means thinking “outside the box”, innovating, reinventing yourself and this, in some contexts, is a reason for criticism.

However, the education system seems to have realized that having well-developed socio-emotional skills, for both teachers and students, favors learning.

In today's job market, technical training without those skills is no longer enough to keep our jobs and maintain the collaboration of employees in our companies.

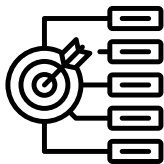
Self-knowledge in digital emotional intelligence is a requirement to escape "algorithmization" (paying attention only to what social networks show us).

Studies show that this training makes a difference in improving experience in this technological era. Knowing how to ask questions to artificial intelligence to obtain credible answers puts us in a favorable position when facing information challenges.

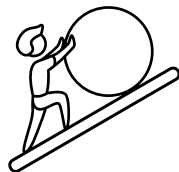
People who learn and maintain their self-perception throughout their lives find it easy, for example, to:



Manage their
emotions



Set Goals



Endure
difficulties better



Adapt behaviors
according to
personal values



Control impulses
and reactions



Resolve conflicts

Regular periodic self-assessment through questions we ask ourselves is a good tool:

- ☒ Do I feel like a loved person?
- ☒ Why don't I feel like a loved person?
- ☒ How can I resolve this feeling of not being a loved person?
- ☒ Talk to someone I trust? Ask for help?
- ☒ Do I judge and criticize myself often?
- ☒ Do I care what people think of me?
- ☒ What am I afraid of?
- ☒ How do I face fear?
- ☒ How do I react when I hear criticism?
- ☒ Do I often feel guilt and shame?
- ☒ Do/did my caregivers communicate with me patiently and clearly?
- ☒ How was my spontaneous childlike side received by my caregivers?

Through the continuous process of personal expansion, we become less manipulable and less likely to be swept away, without knowing where to go.

Emotional dependence decreases, as does the importance we give to what others think and expect of us.

Internal confrontations are often disturbing and escaping through distraction (overwork, alcohol, sex, arrogance, irony, etc.) is a dangerous path that can lead us to become alienated from ourselves and others.

This movement of personal development should be encouraged by parents, if they are prepared to do so.

It is worth remembering that behavioral and relational ignorance can be generational, passing from father to son.

It should also be included in the school curriculum.

Learning through trial and error brings suffering and physical, emotional and mental disabilities.

This X-Ray Selfie is our treasured compass and helps us not to lose ourselves and be authentic with those we love. Without it, our communication with our most significant relationships is cold and bureaucratic and, worse, disconnected. ([See Appendix 4](#)).

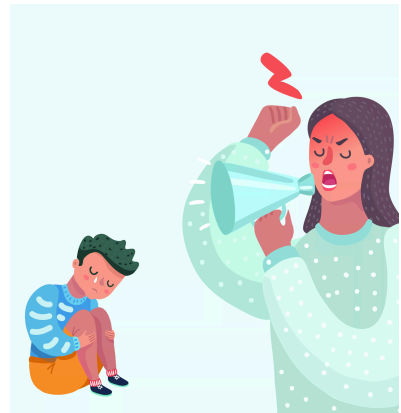
CHILDHOOD



A basic understanding of the nature of our caregivers and how they behaved towards us is necessary to understand this phase of our lives. This is a relationship that is inscribed in our memories and in our bodies and, often, we do not even notice it.

US author and educator Jane Nelsen* explains how parental behavior can affect children.

Parents, in general, even the most loving and well-intentioned ones, across generations, have been unaware of the impact of their behavior and even their personality on their children.



*Therapist and creator of the Positive Discipline method

There are no schools to teach us how to be parents. Furthermore, the daily financial, social, family and other demands for the maintenance and protection of children take up a lot of parents' energy. They need to be made aware of the importance of their own and their children's mental health in order to change this scenario.

Bringing awareness to this can contribute to improving a dysfunctional family environment and its consequent mental and emotional issues.

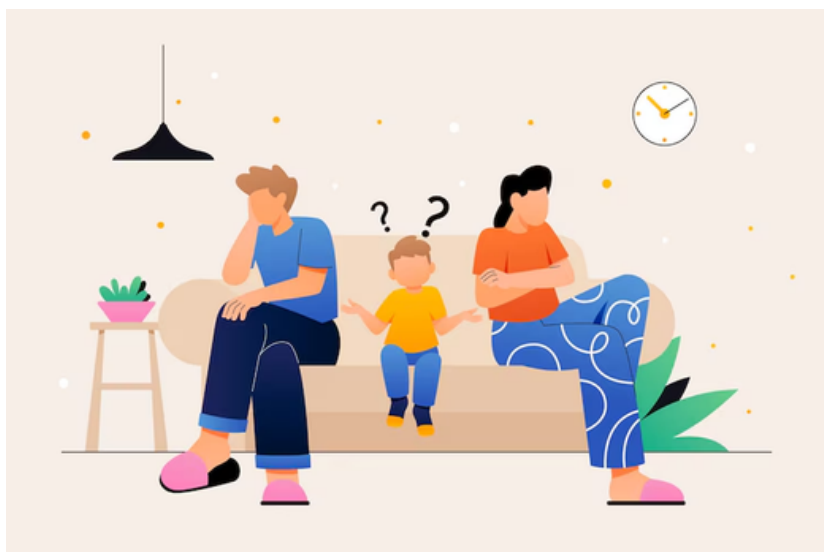
Thus, the creator of the Positive Discipline method demonstrates how adults, for example, with a controlling profile of themselves, situations and others, involuntarily awaken revolt, resistance and frustration.

If, on the other hand, feeling superior is the caregiver's focus, doing everything with excellence, being right and valuing competence, this can generate in others a feeling of guilt and internal conflict for not being able to reach such a standard, leading to lying to avoid judgment.

In turn, adults who are mostly friendly, kind, and who please everyone without thinking too much about themselves may be pleasing to children at first, but children may later complain about this behavior, becoming annoyed with the insecurity shown by their parents.

Adults who believe in the easy way out, who seek to maintain a comfortable environment, can produce boredom, impatience, and irritation in others, creating spoiled and demanding children.

When father and mother have different behavioral tendencies, both can manifest themselves in the child, confusing him/her.



A recent article on the method of non-violent communication and children** points out that abuse experienced at this stage can leave marks such as depression, generalized anxiety, post-traumatic disorders, and damage to the nervous system, which therefore remains constantly on alert for danger/stress, weakening the individual in adult life.

The author of the article states that many physical illnesses, including autoimmune diseases, can be traced back to traumas stored in the unconscious. In addition to weakening cognitive and social development, they affect the student's life and their future relationships.

* Nonviolent Communication and Child Abuse: Healing, Justice, and Practical Steps for Transformation , Alan Rafael Seid, CNVC Certified Trainer, 2025. PuddleDancer Press

CHILD SURVIVAL PATTERN THEORY



According to this theory, every child spontaneously develops defense strategies to deal with situations that are challenging to them. It is an involuntary and natural behavior, regardless of whether their family environment is functional or dysfunctional.

You may recognize yourself in some of them.

The most used and constantly repeated strategy becomes a habit and a pattern of behavior in the future.

We have a pattern that stands out, or two.

Although habits seem to sustain our sense of being an individual, because they are patterns of defense, even survival, they distance us from who we really are, from our authenticity.

These patterns shape a false self, supported by defenses. Like a protective armor, it affects our perceptions, experiences, identities, beliefs, worldview, values etc.

There are 5 patterns:

Escape/breakout pattern

Limits contact and energy from others, leaves situations or is present in body and absent in soul, fear of invasion.

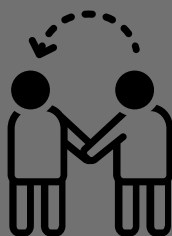


Strengths: creativity, joy, sensitivity

Typical parents/caregivers: scared or angry, not stable enough

Dependent pattern

Expects others to fulfill their needs, compensates by fulfilling the needs of others, fear of abandonment and rejection.



Strengths: loving, welcoming, caring

Typical parents/caregivers: sick, absent, needy

Adaptive pattern

Hides his “self”, adjusting to the expectations of others, fear of criticism and disapproval.



Strengths: fixed positioning, resistance

Typical parents/caregivers: invasive, dominant, authoritarian

Aggressive pattern

Seeks power, denying needs, dominates and controls others, creates distance, fear of weakness, domination and betrayal.



Strengths: great energy, charisma and desires

Typical parents/caregivers: one seductive, one authoritarian

Rigid standard

Controls experiences, the “self” contained by being socially appropriate, fear of chaos and vulnerability



Strengths: order, form, structure

Typical parents/caregivers: everything is a rule

OUR PERSONALITY



The origins of our personality are genetic inheritance, family influences and the environment in which we live, experiences we have and how we react to them, and education.

Hence the great diversity of human beings.

Understanding our main behavioral tendency in certain phases and sectors of our life is an attitude of self-care. It helps us to move more fluidly between our most significant relationships and those with the greatest emotional impact on us, and to face our challenges with a lower degree of conflict and a greater possibility of resolution.

Personality is considered the behavioral pattern that stands out the most in a person. It includes conduct, emotions, learning etc. It manifests itself in areas such as family, relationships, health, love, work, education etc.

The biological basis of personality is temperament.

It is reflected in emotional expressions such as affection, attention, activity.

The types I will explain later are: **sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric, melancholic.**

To better observe our patterns and adjust what is necessary for our inner balance, it is useful to be aware of emotions and what their functions and effects on us are.

You will find more information about emotions on my website*.

Our personality traits can change according to significant life events such as marriage, birth of a child, divorce, death of a loved one etc.



* <https://www.elianamattar.com/en/reconhecendo-as-emoções>

Temperament

Still used today, the historical classification of temperaments comes from ancient Greece and is based on the fluids in our body (blood, phlegm - mucus - from the respiratory system, yellow bile - produced by the liver, black bile - thought to be produced by the stomach and spleen).

The blood type

Tends to have a preference for emotions, directed toward the senses - sight, touch, hearing, smell, taste - intense but short-lived excitement.



Strengths: enthusiasm, optimism, companionable person

Weakness: impulsiveness, dedication to pleasure, futility

The phlegmatic type

Tends to observe more than act, to have little initiative, has humor and is able to adapt to situations easily.



Strengths: calm, humor, patience

Weakness: indifference, mockery, indecision

The choleric type

Tends to action and to have radical willpower, maximum self-confidence, be practical, have a reduced sense of compassion and friendship.



Strengths: leadership, courage, organization

Weakness: stubbornness, intolerance, impatience

The melancholic type

Tends more towards the psychological side, of intellect and feeling, acts slowly and reflectively, is analytical, tends not to look for and not to need friends.



Strengths: reflection, loyalty, self-confidence

Weak Point: melancholy, discouragement, depression

The 5 Personality Traits Model

Known as the **BIG 5** typology, it groups together the types most frequently observed in behavioral research. We all have traits of the five types that vary in intensity, from more to less.

You may recognize yourself in some of them.

They are: **openness, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness, neuroticism.**

Openness

Ability to try new things, take risks, imaginative, creative and curious person.



Negative points: extreme impulsiveness, can take a lot of risk with disastrous consequences.

Conscientiousness

Conscience, responsibility, discipline, competence and order.



Negative points: excessive concern, rigidity, self-demanding

Extroversion

Association, action, leadership, animation, focus on opportunity



Negative points: difficulty with introspection and dealing with emotions.

Agreableness

Kindness, harmony in interpersonal relationships, conveys trust.



Negative points: thinks more about others than about himself, easily manipulated, low self-esteem.

Neuroticism

Anxiety, vulnerability, considers negative aspects, warning system for danger.



Negative points: insecurity, depression, excessive negative thinking, permanent discouragement.

It is worth noting that for this typology, introversion is not an isolated aspect. Introversion is a low degree of extroversion. Introverted people, although sociable, prefer, for example, to renew their energy by being alone and quiet, unlike more extroverted people.

There is also no classification of shyness. This aspect is considered to be the sum of neuroticism plus introversion in high degrees.

For a summary assessment of your main traits, see the questionnaire in [Appendix 1](#).

Other ways of being

Narcissism is a state of the individual that can be considered either a personality trait or a cultural condition.

While the first has a high degree of selfishness, little or no empathy for others, an exaggerated focus on appearance and material goods that demonstrate high social status, the cultural condition has to do with values that reflect greater narcissism and self-admiration.

There is also an aspect of narcissism considered as a personality disorder and classified as a mental disorder.

It affects those who are extroverted, sociable and exhibitionists as well as the most introverted, depressed and vulnerable, whether they are people with extremely high or low self-esteem.

Another profile of people became the object of study at the end of the last century: **highly sensitive people - HSP.**

Researcher and psychologist Elaine N. Aron, through data collection, catalogued this profile based on her own personality.

Scientific studies at the time considered **introverts** to be unsociable, leading the researcher to doubt whether introversion and sensitivity were not being mistakenly equated.



Some of the characteristics of this trait are:

- ☑ Pay attention to the subtleties around you
- ☑ The person is affected by the mood of other people
- ☑ Has a rich and complex inner life
- ☑ Gets upset when she has too much to do in too little time
- ☑ Feels discomfort with loud noise
- ☑ Tries to avoid violent movies or TV shows
- ☑ Gets agitated in an unpleasant way when many things are happening around him
- ☑ Parents and teachers seem to consider the person as sensitive or shy when they are young



According to the researcher, **20% to 30%** of the world's population has this trait. For her, this profile is neither better nor worse than the others. Just different.

In her 1997 book “Highly Sensitive People,” she explains how people with this personality can deal with **excessive emotional stimuli** and use their sensitivity to their advantage. She provides a simple questionnaire for the reader to assess whether they are highly sensitive people, or at least if they have a high probability of being one.

The questionnaire contains questions that assess different characteristics associated with HSP, such as emotional sensitivity, sensory reactivity, empathy, among others. For example, how do we respond with our feelings to these questions:

- ☒ Do I appear to be a person who is attentive to the subtleties around me?
- ☒ Do I tend to be very sensitive to pain?
- ☒ Do I have a rich and complex inner life?
- ☒ Do I get upset when I have too much to do in too little time?
- ☒ Do I get agitated in an unpleasant way when a lot of things are happening around me?

What seems common to others, such as loud music or crowds, can be overstimulating and therefore stressful for HSPs.



Because this profile is almost unknown in our fast-paced society, says researcher Elaine N. Aron, the need for more alone time is seen by those without this trait as shyness, weakness, fear and antisocial behavior.

When trying to adapt to the way others act, hyper-agitation and suffering can be the consequences for this profile.

They tend to be visionaries, artists, inventors, more scrupulous, cautious and wise individuals.

The disadvantage of HSPs, according to the psychologist, is the intense levels of stimulation. What is very exciting for most people can leave a HSP exhausted.

Being a HSP is not the same as being neurotic, because in neurotic people anxiety is constant for no apparent reason.

Ilse Send, a Danish therapist and author who explores ways to deal with sensitivity in everyday life, says that approximately one in five people is highly sensitive.

Understand that these people's **nervous systems** will be more tuned than others. The person is probably more perceptive to noise, other people's temperaments, disorganization, and the unpredictable will have a significant impact on them.

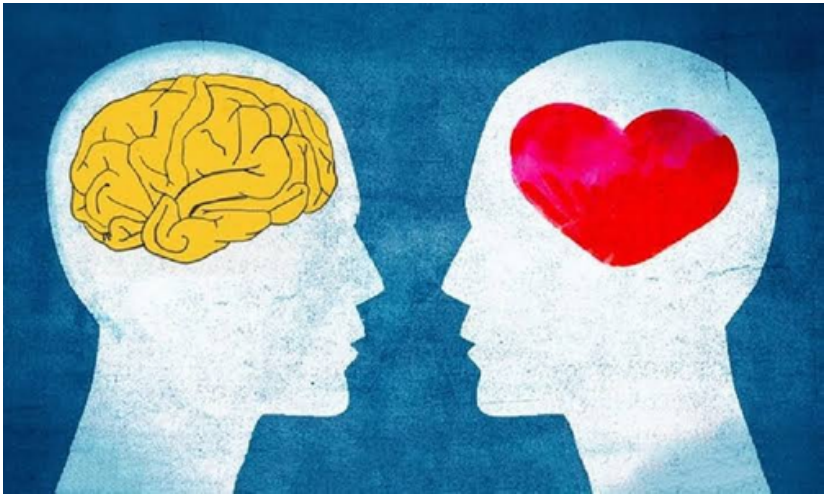
She also draws attention to the need to differentiate **shyness, anxiety and depression from HSP**. According to the therapist, these emotional states are treatable while the personality trait can be adjusted to improve relationships.

HOW WE ORIENT OURSELVES IN THE WORLD ACCORDING TO THE AREAS OF OUR LIFE



The famous Swiss psychiatrist Jung describes individuals according to two main characteristics - extroversion and introversion - to facilitate our own understanding of ourselves. He also teaches us about the different ways we perceive things.

We evaluate what happens around us through thought and feeling.



Jung's study developed years later into the well-accepted classification by Katherine Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers.

The authors developed 16 pairs of preferences and behaviors that reflect different aspects of our personality and make it easier for each individual to act in life.

So, we have the ones I already mentioned:

- **(E)** extroversion, **(I)** introversion;
- Whether we capture information with sensation **(S)** or with intuition **(N)**;
- Whether we conclude using thinking **(T)** or feeling **(F)**;
- And whether we experience the external world by judging **(J)** or perceiving **(P)**.

The **MBIT** (Myers Briggs Indicator Type) system, as it became known, is based on opposites:

- Extrovert / introvert,
- Sensation (trust in the senses) / intuition (acceptance of the abstract)

- Thought (reason) / feeling (emotion),
- Judgment (logic, organization) / perception (flexibility)

The 16 groups are:

ISTJ, ISFJ, INFJ, INTJ, ISTP, ISFP, INFP, INTP, ESTP, ESFP, ENFP, ENTP, ESTJ, ESFJ, ENFJ, ENTJ.

In Appendix 2, you will find information on where to take the test in Portuguese and the official website of the MBIT system, in English, for further information on the 16 types.

See the description of each of the 16 behavior pairs in Appendix 3.

The Enneagram

It is a self-knowledge tool that classifies personalities into nine main types, known as “eneatypes”.

It is represented by a circular geometric figure with nine points, which includes a circle, a triangle and a six-pointed figure, symbolizing continuous and evolutionary processes.

The system proposes that each personality type has its own motivations, challenges and paths for growth, helping with personal and professional development.

Although it has ancient roots, the modern Enneagram was developed by thinkers such as Oscar Ichazo and Claudio Naranjo. It is considered by many to be a pseudoscientific technique, as it lacks rigorous scientific evidence.

The nine Enneagram personality types are:

Perfectionist (Type 1): Disciplined, motivated by correctness, and prone to anger.

Helpful (Type 2): Friendly, seductive, motivated by the desire to be liked and with a tendency toward pride.

Successful (Type 3): Competitive, motivated by success, and prone to greed.

Individualist (Type 4): Romantic, identity-driven, and prone to envy.

Observer (Type 5): Thinker, motivated by knowledge and with a tendency towards greed.

Questioner (Type 6): Intuitive, security-driven, and fear-prone.

Dreamer (Type 7): Impulsive, fun-motivated, and prone to gluttony.

Confrontational (Type 8): Leader, motivated by justice and prone to lust.

Pacifist (Type 9): Preservationist, motivated by harmony and with a tendency toward indolence.

FINAL NOTE

The ability to communicate with connection is linked to the ability to be self-aware, to accept our difficulties without guilt or shame.

We all have deficiencies even though many try to hide them.

The other, because he/she is different from us, interprets what he/she hears from us with his/her particular resources - personality profile, behavior and decision-making, culture, level of education etc. Communication skills rely less on speaking and more on the competence developed through listening practice.

Paying attention to others is easier if we have an idea of how they work and stop being self-centered. Being different from us is not necessarily the same as being an opponent.

To get to know others and interact meaningfully, we need to get to know ourselves first.

Knowing who we are does not happen by chance, as we have seen. And to make this constant process of self-knowledge even more difficult, because we are dynamic and continually changing, we depend on our intention and decision to explore and evaluate our way of being.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1

www.elianamattar.com/teste-personalidade

APPENDIX 2

www.16personalities.com/br

Other tests:

www.enneagramtest.net

www.The5personalitypatterns.com

APPENDIX 3

Characteristics of the 16 types:

ISTJ - calm, serious, practical, responsible

ISFJ - calm, friendly, responsible, conscientious

INFJ - seeks meaning and connection in ideas, relationships and material possessions, committed to their values and the common good

INTJ - original mind and focused on implementing their ideas. Skeptical and independent. High standard of competence

ISTP - tolerant and flexible, quick to solve problems, use of logical principles, value of efficiency

ISFP - calm, friendly, sensitive and kind, loyalty and commitment to your important relationships

INFP - idealistic, loyalty to their values to people considered important, curious, seeks to understand others

INTP - seeks to develop logical explanations for what interests him, theoretical and abstract, greater interest in ideas than social interactions

ESTP - flexible and tolerant, practical, seeks immediate results, spontaneous, learns best by doing

ESFP - open, friendly, welcoming, adaptable to new people and environments

ENFP - confident in their abilities, imaginative and enthusiastic, quick to make connections

ENTP - quick, resourceful, alert, authentic, high sense of observation, gets bored with routine

ESTJ - practical, realistic, decisive, careful with routine, methodical in their patterns

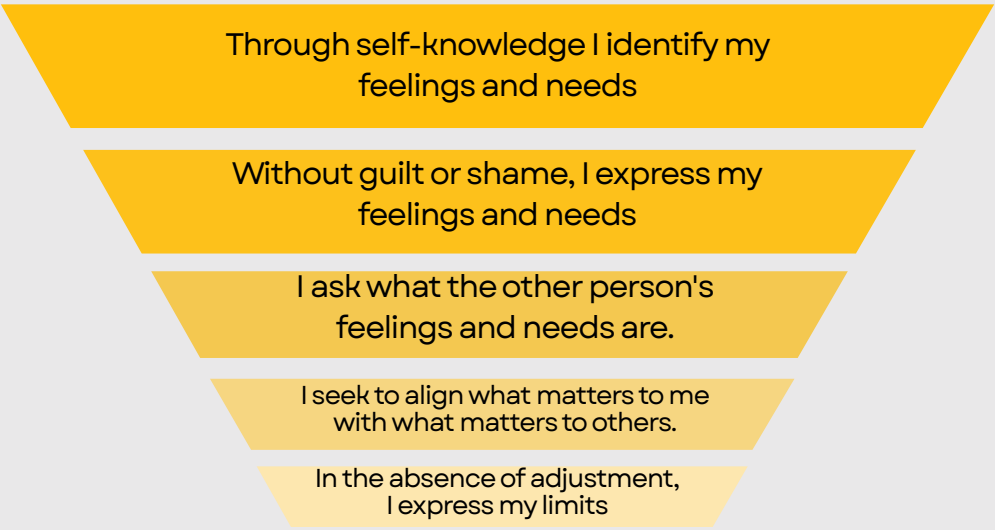
ESFJ - warm, conscientious, cooperative, seeks harmony and wants to be appreciated

ENFJ - warm, empathetic, responsive and responsible, sociable, leadership profile

ENTJ - frank, decisive, easy to lead, quick to detect inefficiency, enjoys reading and expanding knowledge

APPENDIX 4

COMMUNICATION WITH CONNECTION



Through self-knowledge I identify my
feelings and needs

Without guilt or shame, I express my
feelings and needs

I ask what the other person's
feelings and needs are.

I seek to align what matters to me
with what matters to others.

In the absence of adjustment,
I express my limits

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[WEBSITE](#)

INSTAGRAM