

# God Created You

## *A Guide to Temperament Therapy*

by Dr. Rick Martin





# **God Created You**

## ***A Guide to Temperament Therapy***

**by Dr. Rick Martin**

Jesus Is Lord Ministries  
P.O. Box 21  
Charlotte, MI 48813

<http://www.jesuslordministries.com>

[jilm@ia4u.net](mailto:jilm@ia4u.net)

**Copyright Donald R. Martin 2004**

**ISBN Number 0-9726996-2-7**

This book is published for the author by Author-  
me.com.

Cook Communication  
P. O. Box 451  
Dundee, IL 60118

Copyright 2004 Donald R. Martin  
All rights reserved.

## **Acknowledgments**

Love, appreciation and thanks go especially to my wife, Barbara, for all her help, patience, encouragement, and energy that she has put – not only into this book – but into my life and our ministry. I am a better person because I am married to her. Thanks also to my daughters, Melissa and Jamie, for their contributions to this book.



Dr. Donald R. "Rick" Martin is a Licensed Clinical Pastoral Counselor - Advanced Certified with the National Christian Counselors Association. He has a Ph.D. in Clinical Christian Counseling and a Doctor of Divinity degree. Rick is an ordained minister with Calvary Ministries International. He has been in the ministry since 1974, as a pastor, evangelist, Teen Challenge Director, Prison Chaplain for the State of Michigan D.O.C. and Pastoral Counselor.

In 1993 Rick became acquainted with Temperament Theology and the National Christian Counselors Association. Intrigued with Temperament Therapy as a Bible based, Christ-centered therapeutic counseling disciple that provided actual answers and help for people in need of Christian/Pastoral counseling, Rick went on to finish his Ph.D. Seeing the need for professional Christian counseling in the Charlotte, Michigan area where he was a pastor at the time, he left the pastorate and in 1997 open Jesus Is Lord Ministries where he has been devoting his full time to providing professional Christian counseling using Temperament Therapy. He also provides Temperament seminars for churches, businesses and other organizations.

He is married to a wonderful wife, Barbara. They have 5 children, all grown and gone, 9 grandkids, 2 dogs, and 1 cat.

I would like to thank Drs. Richard and Phyllis Arno for the time and energy they have put into the research that has resulted in the National Christian Counselors Association and the Sarasota Academy of Christian Counseling. Temperament Therapy has become a vital tool for Christian counselors, pastors and lay people as they reach out to help people in the area of Pastoral and Biblical and Christian counseling. I would also like to thank the Arnos for permission to use statements and concepts in this book from their written works *Created in God's Image* and *Creation Therapy*. The Temperament Analysis Profile (T.A.P.) Report referred to in this book has been renamed the Arno Profile System, in honor of their accomplishments in the area of Temperament.

Dr. Phyllis J. Arno is the Executive Vice-President of The National Christian Counselors Association. She was a legal secretary for a private attorney for over 20 years before beginning full-time employment with the N.C.C.A. She was responsible for conducting research and the development of the Arno Profile System which is N.C.C.A.'s temperament identification inventory. In addition, Dr. Arno is the co-author of several textbooks. She also serves as the Executive Vice-President of The National Board of Christian Clinical Therapists, The National Conservative Christian Church and the Sarasota Academy of Christian Counseling.

Dr. Richard G. Arno is the President and Founder of the National Christian Counselors Association. He served as the Director of Counseling for C.B.N.'s *700 Club* for six years prior to conducting his research for Temperament Theory and Therapy. He was elected to *Who's Who in Leading American Executives* in 1991 and has been awarded several honorary doctorates and citations such as the Eagles Award and Good Shepherd Award. In addition to serving as the President of the N.C.C.A., Dr. Arno is also the President of the National Board of Christian Clinical Therapists and serves as the Resident Bishop of The National Conservative Christian Church. He also serves as the President of the Sarasota Academy of Christian Counseling.

I would also like to recommend N.C.C.A. and S.A.C.C. to anyone who desires more information about Temperament Therapy or who would want additional information about becoming a Temperament Therapist. They offer excellent training materials for professional counselors, pastors and laypersons in Christian counseling and Temperament Therapy.

# Table of Contents

<b>I. WHY PEOPLE DO PEOPLE THINGS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II. WHAT IS TEMPERAMENT?.....</b>	<b>7</b>
INCLUSION .....	12
CONTROL .....	14
AFFECTION .....	16
TEMPERAMENT TYPES .....	18
<b>III. THE SANGUINE TEMPERAMENT .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Sanguine Inclusion Strengths .....	25
Sanguine Inclusion Weaknesses .....	29
Sanguine Control Strengths & Weaknesses .....	36
Sanguine Affection Strengths .....	42
Sanguine Affection Weaknesses .....	46
What Sanguines Can Do To Live In The Temperament Strengths .....	51
<b>IV. THE MELANCHOLY TEMPERAMENT .....</b>	<b>65</b>
Melancholy Inclusion Strengths .....	67
Melancholy Inclusion Weaknesses .....	71
Melancholy Control Strengths .....	81
Melancholy Control Weaknesses .....	87
Melancholy Affection Strengths .....	93
Melancholy Affection Weaknesses .....	100
What Melancholies Can Do To Live In The Temperament Strengths .....	104
<b>V. THE PHLEGMATIC TEMPERAMENT .....</b>	<b>122</b>
Phlegmatic Inclusion Strengths .....	123
Phlegmatic Inclusion Weaknesses .....	126
Phlegmatic Control Strengths .....	129
Phlegmatic Control Weaknesses .....	131
Phlegmatic Affection Strengths .....	135
Phlegmatic Affection Weaknesses .....	137
What Phlegmatics Can Do To Live In The Temperament Strengths .....	138



<b>VI. THE SUPINE TEMPERAMENT .....</b>	<b>146</b>
Supine Inclusion Strengths .....	147
Supine Inclusion Weaknesses .....	149
Supine Control Strengths .....	153
Supine Control Weaknesses .....	156
Supine Affection Strengths .....	162
Supine Affection Weaknesses .....	166
What Supines Can Do To Live In The Temperament	
Strengths .....	169
<b>VII. THE CHOLERIC TEMPERAMENT .....</b>	<b>177</b>
Choleric Inclusion Strengths .....	179
Choleric Inclusion Weaknesses .....	181
Choleric Control Strengths .....	186
Choleric Control Weaknesses .....	189
Choleric Affection Strengths .....	192
Choleric Affection Weaknesses .....	195
What Choleric Can Do To Live In The Temperament	
Strengths .....	198
<b>VIII. DEALING WITH ANGER.....</b>	<b>209</b>
<b>IX. CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>217</b>



## CHAPTER ONE

# Why People Do People Things

Ever wonder why people do what people do?

Boy meets Girl. They date. They like one another. They fall in love. They get married. After a period of time, they have a child. As this child grows up, he seems to be the perfect child. He is not rebellious by nature. He is obedient and respectful. They teach him to say “yes sir” and “no ma’am”, “please” and “thank you.” He does well in school. He does his homework without being yelled at and turns it in on time.

This child is not a troublemaker. He does not hang out with the wrong crowd. He adheres to the morality and ethics of his parents and his environment while growing up. Even during his teenage years, he does not get involved with gangs, drugs, partying, alcohol, smoking or sex. Once he is old enough to drive, he does not drive wildly or recklessly. He does not get tickets or in wrecks. He graciously runs errands for his parents.

He is the one all the parents wish their daughters were dating. He attends church with his parents without argument. The teachers rave over him at parent/teacher conferences. Parents tell their children, “Why can’t you be more like him?” He seems to be the prime example of great parenting all the years he is living at home. His parents are proud of him. Everyone who knows him thinks he is the model child.

Then this young man graduates from high school (with honors of course) and goes off to college. Suddenly a whole new lifestyle emerges. Reports begin to float home about him partying at college. Smoking and alcohol are becoming the normal part of his daily life. When his parents have the opportunity to question him about his newly found behavior, they find he is lying. There may even be rumors of experimentation with drugs.

Before long, this young man has moved in with his girlfriend and is openly involved in all the activities he previously stood against, and even promised his parents he would never be involved in. The parents are devastated. “Where did we go wrong?” they ask themselves. “How could he become like this? How could he do this to us?” Friends of the family are shocked at his behavior. The people who were a bit jealous

## God Created You

of his behavior all those years developed a gleeful, “I told you it would not last” type of attitude.

Why? Is it the rotten college atmosphere of permissiveness? Were his parents too strict bringing him up? Was he simply pretending to be a wonderful child all those years? Is his “true” self now coming out? Why is this happening? Temperament.

Boy meets Girl. They fall in love. They are married. After a period of time, they have several children. The oldest boy is a “strong-willed” child. He is always challenging authority – at home, at school, with the pastor and even with God. He is always dominating his brother and sister. They have to do everything his way. Play what he wants to play when he wants to play. The whole universe has to run by his rules. This is not limited to those younger than he is. He is always telling teachers, his parents, and adults what he is going to do and not do or what they should be doing and not doing. When people do not adhere to his rules and ideas, he is angry and threatening and even violent. Wherever he goes, it is like a little tornado of trouble blowing through. Life is far more peaceful when he is not around!

His parents are constantly thinking, “What are we going to do with this kid?” Talking with him does not work. Reasoning with him does not work. Every kind of intelligent discussion ends in arguments. Discipline and punishment only bring about limited results – and never long lasting behavioral changes. He will not listen!

They do not have any of these problems with his younger sister. The worst punishment she received from the crib to adulthood was a stern lecture – and the problem never came up again. It is like she anticipated what her parents expected out of her and lived accordingly. Ask her to do a chore, and it was done without argument or any sign of contempt. To get the oldest boy to do any task involved a fight, an argument or at the very least body language of disgust. His younger sister would go out of her way to be helpful. Many times she did not even have to be told, she saw what needed to be done and went ahead and did it.

The oldest boy never did anything except to greatly benefit himself and no one could remember when he took the initiative to do an act of kindness for anyone else. His ways, his rules, his ideas, everyone else

## I. Why People Do People Things

serving him seemed to be his number one rule in life. The little Pharaoh – his rules did not even apply to himself, only when they benefited him.

The middle boy was unlike either his brother or sister. He seemed to do what was expected of him, for the most part. There were no out-in-the-open acts of defiance or rebellion, not like the oldest boy. Momentary “kid’s stuff” from time to time. An occasional chore left undone or forgotten. An infrequent “I’m not going to do that”, which the parents relegated to being around his older brother too much. The second son looked like a pretty good kid. His parents did not have to punish him much. A lecture or light, short-term disciplinary action was all the parents ever had to do to straighten out poor behavior. Or thus it seemed.

Behind the scenes, when the parents were not looking, it was a different story. This second son was consistently involved in behavior strongly disapproved of by his parents. But they never, or seldom, knew of it. He was great at participating in activities he knew were wrong, but by such means as to rarely get caught. It was years after he was grown and out on his own before his parents heard the stories of his youth. He set his own rules and lived by them, but without the open rebellion or defiance of his older brother.

How could these children come up in the same environment, from the same gene pool (there were probably people who wondered if they did, maybe even their own parents) and end up being drastically different? Is there any help available for parents to know what their children are like and methods of instruction and discipline to help them turn out to be decent human beings? The answer to both questions is: Temperament.

What causes a person to be the “bum magnet?” A young girl begins the journey from childhood to adulthood. (This is not limited to females. Many a male can be put in a group of people they do not know, and in 10 minutes they will automatically pick out and become friends with the worst of the lot). She begins noticing boys. Boys begin noticing her. She starts having boyfriends. Her first one is a bad choice. He treats her poorly. She hangs on to him too long, but finally they break up. The parents are relieved! The next boyfriend – jeez, another bad choice. Again she is being treated poorly, maybe even abusively. Finally, they break up. Mom and Dad keep trying to help her make better choices. But then comes the third boyfriend, a carbon copy of the first two.

## God Created You

Somewhere along the line, she ends up marrying one of these boys. After marriage, the relationship deteriorates. Now he is more uncaring, more insensitive, and more abusive. After several years, and usually a child or two, the marriage ends in divorce. Everyone who knows her, her parents, family and friends, is hoping she has learned by now. However, the next boyfriend and the next husband end up as a carbon copy of the former ones. Her life has been a series of bad relationships.

How come she cannot find the right guy? How come she does not recognize a poor relationship until it is too late? Is there a reason she is prone to picking the same kinds of men to have these abusive relationships with? Yes, temperament.

God created each of us uniquely special. While we think everyone else is basically the same – like us – the truth of the matter is we are all uniquely different. We think differently about the same subjects. We respond differently to the same circumstances. What causes one person stress gives peace and tranquility to someone else. There are people who love to be around people, even forsaking tasks and duties. Sundry people are task-oriented, not desiring many close relationships and not necessarily interested in a lot of socialization. There are people who are goal-oriented to the extreme – they use and abuse people to obtain their objectives.

Temperament is what makes us uniquely different, uniquely special. Temperament is our God-given, inborn nature; who we are on the inside. Temperament determines if we are relationship-oriented or task-oriented or goal-oriented. Temperament determines if quiet alone time gives us peace and tranquility or causes us stress and frustration. It is temperament driving us to be with people, or pushing us away from people.

Take two children, conceived with different temperaments, born to the same parents and raised in the same environment. Both have been bad and are sent to their separate bedrooms for an hour of punishment. No TV, no radio, no talking on the phone, and no making noise is the parent's plan – go contemplate your behavior. To the one child, this is almost an answer to prayer. This child has been known to go his room often without being punished to play alone. He considers being by himself peaceful and relaxing. This is hardly punishment for him. Punishment for this child would be to force him to go to a party,

## I. Why People Do People Things

to be around people for a long period of time with the understanding he was to have fun.

However, to the other child being grounded to her room is bordering on torture. She does not even make it to her room without an emotional outburst. Excuses and proofs of innocence begin to freely flow in a loud verbal display. When her excuses do not work, promises of never doing it again and “I’m sorry” come forth in abundance. All this before she has made it up the stairs. For the next hour, the parents have to ignore noise, questions, “Mom, can I talk to you for a minute?” and weird sounds coming from the room. What is the difference? Each child’s temperament – their God-given, inborn nature – who they are on the inside.

As we begin to understand temperament, we begin to understand how we can interact with the people around us and our environment and our world with less stress, less anxiety, less problems. Understanding temperament allows us to enjoy a happier life, at work, at home and at play. Temperament gives us answers to perplexing parenting questions, to complex personal questions, and to frustrating life-in-general questions. I am convinced temperament holds the answers to every relationship problem. Have you ever wondered what you could do before your kids drive you crazy? Or wondered why your job stresses you out? Or wondered why your spouse is angry all the time? Or wondered why you are easily motivated by guilt? Temperament holds the key to these questions and more.

Temperament can help you better understand yourself and identify your individual needs. When your temperament needs are not being met, it will cause stress and anxiety. When your temperament needs are being met in ungodly ways, it will cause stress and anxiety and additional problems. Additional symptoms of not getting temperament needs met in healthy and godly ways include: depression, dissatisfaction, loneliness, fear, frustration, anger, marriage and family problems, poor work performance, exhaustion and inter/intra personal conflicts. Do any of these problems sound familiar? Then understanding temperament will benefit you and those around you. Understanding temperament will help you to be less stressed and less anxious. It will also help you to enjoy a happier life. But first, we need a better understanding of what temperament is.





## CHAPTER TWO

# WHAT IS TEMPERAMENT?

*For you created my inmost being [temperament]; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. (Psalm 139:13, 14)*

Temperament is the God-given, inborn nature of each person determining how he or she interacts and reacts with people, circumstances, environments, situations, and the world. Temperament is who we are on the inside, what the Bible calls “the inner man” (or woman, God is not talking gender here). In their book, *Created In God's Image*, Richard G. Arno, Ph.D. and Phyllis J. Arno, Ph.D. state “*temperament is how people interact with their environment and the world around them. Temperament pinpoints our perception of ourselves and the people who love us. It is also the determining factor in how well we handle the stresses and pressures of life.*” A person's temperament is determined at conception and remains consistent throughout life. Although behavior can greatly change over the years, the person's temperament remains the same. Certain people enjoy being around people, the more the merrier. To be away from people for long periods of time causes them stress. There are people who are stressed when forced to be around large groups of people. This is determined by temperament.

When studying people, temperament is obvious even from birth. Look into any nursery of any hospital and notice how differently newborn babies behave. If *tabula rasa* (people are born as blank slates) were correct, then all babies would behave identically. However, those of us who have children know each baby is unique. Particular babies coo sweetly, sleep long hours and only cry when wet or hungry. There are babies who will cuddle and laugh for any adult who holds them. A few babies will only allow Mom or Dad to comfort them. My oldest son was up every two hours (for the first two years, it seemed like) demanding time and energy and attention. Thank God he was the first child. The rest seemed much easier during the infant years (and they

## God Created You

were!). My father said when I was born, I came out of the delivery room on my stomach, raised up on my arms and screaming mad at the world; which happens to coincide with my temperament perfectly, I am what the textbooks call “the angry temperament”.

The differences in this human nature (temperament) have been studied for millennia. The early Greek historian, **Hippocrates** (460-370 BC) was the first to bring to light (in writing, anyway) the theory of temperament, even though he may have been building on the thoughts of **Impedocles** (495-435 BC). Many feel the study of temperaments may go back even further, to **Solomon**, the writer of the Biblical book of Proverbs. In my view, Solomon connected temperament types with specific species of animals. His statements about the sloth, for example, line up with a unique temperament. In the 1980's this type of association of human nature (what we call temperament) and different animal species became popular again. In any case, people have been trying to understand the differences in people for a long time.

Only in recent decades has the time and energy been put into the research providing the accurate, scientific information we now have regarding temperament. The National Christian Counselors Association, in the early 1980s, conducted seven years of research involving 5,000 people in regards to temperament. It is now possible, through the use of the Temperament Analysis Profile Report, to determine a person's temperament and their temperament needs accurately and scientifically. When a person's temperament needs are being met by healthy and godly means, stress, anxiety and the problems related to stress and anxiety are greatly reduced.

A large percentage of a person's problems are related to stress and anxiety. Medical science is now advocating nearly 80% of physical medical problems are stress related. From my own Christian counseling practice, I would estimate an even higher percentage of relationship problems are stress related. Would anyone care to guess what percentage of mental health problems are stress related? The Temperament Analysis Profile (T.A.P.) Report accurately and scientifically identifies a person's temperament and temperament needs, thus providing invaluable information for reducing stress and anxiety. The Temperament Analysis Profile (T.A.P.) Report is proven to be at least 94% accurate when the questionnaire is answered honestly.

## II. What Is Temperament?

This God-given, inborn nature, which we call temperament, is an intricate part of our lives. Temperament is not behavior, although our temperament does make us prone to certain behaviors. Temperament can be overridden. A person's temperament may indicate he is prone to be a homebody, yet he is out partying every night (but not without a lot of stress and anxiety). Someone else's temperament may reveal she does not like a lot of control, yet everyone in the household views this person as controlling. Thus everyone's stress levels are high. Temperament also reveals who is prone to suicide or who would be prone to inflict violent behavior. The closer a person's behavior is to their temperament, the less stress and anxiety the person experiences. The bigger the gap between temperament and behavior, the more stress and anxiety and related problems are evident in the person's life.

Each temperament type has strengths and weaknesses. When a person is living in the strengths of his temperament, his behavior will be different from his behavior when he is living in the weaknesses. People who are relationship-oriented by temperament experience less stress and anxiety when around people. When they are not around people, their stress and anxiety goes up. Therefore, they are naturally prone to be socializing, even to the point of neglecting responsibilities and household chores. Relationship-oriented temperaments get restless easily. They talk about being bored, like being bored is bad. They are looking for opportunities to be where groups of people are interacting.

One of this temperament's weaknesses is a fairly high degree of a fear of rejection. They usually compensate for this fear of rejection by being around more and more people. It is like their subconscious is saying, "If this person, or this group, does not like me, those over there will." They tend to be social butterflies, always going here and there, meeting new people and making new friends.

I was counseling with one young man with this type of temperament who was behaving as a homebody. He was a teenager, still in high school who never wanted to go places and be with people. He did not participate in many school activities. He did not have a whole bunch of friends. This young man was stressed! His stress came out in poor behavior with his parents, at school, and with his siblings. Arguing, fighting, disobeying home rules and school rules had become the norm with him. Even though his parents and I attempted to get

## God Created You

him more socially involved, which I knew would decrease his stress and thus reduce the problems this stress was causing him and those around him, he mostly refused.

It was confusing. Until this young man, I had not encountered a person of one temperament type who looked exactly like a different temperament type in his behavior. Most relationship-oriented people are quick to be around people once the opportunity is provided. This young man was choosing to remain at home instead of being around people. Soon it became evident as to why.

I found out he thought nobody (people he did not already know) would like him and everybody wanted to physically hurt him. The first few years of his childhood had been filled with abuse. He was eventually taken from his parents, in foster homes until around age 9, when this family adopted him. His temperament weakness, the fear of rejection, had concluded nobody liked him and everyone wanted to hurt him. This fear of rejection, a weakness for this temperament, kept him from getting his temperament needs for socialization met – he became a homebody to protect himself from being hurt. His behavior was greatly diverse from an average teenage young man with the same temperament; who would be prone to go to every people-related event – ballgames, dances, and high school activities – even to the point of neglecting chores and homework.

Yet, for a different type of temperament, this behavior would be natural. To not want to be around groups or people, or to selectively want to be around people is natural for task-oriented temperaments. Without knowing about temperaments and the strengths and weaknesses, what makes us tick individually, the root of the problems this young man was experiencing would never have been known, dealt with and corrected. Without the accuracy of the T.A.P. Report, guessing at this young man's temperament would have drawn a wrong conclusion, and thus we would have never gotten to the correct place to deal with his problems. Once we got past this fear of physical abuse and this young man was involved in more social interaction, it was amazing how the additional problems (seemingly unrelated, but connected from a temperament point of view) were corrected.

Temperament is like the grain in wood. The grain in each piece of wood is unique. Sometimes there is a subtle difference between wood

## II. What Is Temperament?

pieces. In other pieces there is a huge difference. There are knots and flaws in common lumber. Expensive lumber has fewer flaws. A person can make the grain in the finished wooden product unnoticeable, but it is still there. The grain can be painted and covered over until it cannot be seen, but it is there. Or, it can be sanded and polished until it is beautiful. In the hands of a woodworking expert, even what might be considered flawed wood can be turned into wooden masterpieces.

This is true in our lives as well. Each of us is uniquely different. Each of us has temperament strengths and weaknesses. We can attempt to cover over our weaknesses. We can live in denial. We can attempt to be someone else. We can try to hide what we see as weaknesses. Or we can allow the Master, Jesus, to work with us and polish us and turn our weaknesses into strengths. It is said of the faith heroes in Hebrews chapter 11, *“out of weakness were made strong.”* God wants to do this for each one of us, take our weaknesses – and what we view as our weaknesses – and turn them into our strengths.

For example, a couple of the temperaments have a hard time becoming emotionally attached. They are emotionally guarded and have a hard time sharing their emotions. Now, there are people who would consider being emotionally guarded a weakness. When it comes to family and close friends, it sure can be. With family and close friends, these temperaments do need to learn to express their deep tender feelings. However, in the counseling business, being emotionally detached is a great strength. There are even courses available to teach people how to stay emotionally detached – a natural trait of these temperaments. People with these temperaments do not have to labor at not taking the clients’ problems home at night. They can stay objective when dealing with people who are experiencing emotional problems. I would also think staying emotionally detached would be important in being a hostage negotiator, where people’s physical lives are in the balance.

What we might view as a weakness can be in reality a strength, depending upon our circumstances, the people around us and what we do. We are going to look at the temperament types and their strengths and weaknesses. Learning how to be the person God created us to be (living in the strengths of our unique, individual temperament) will result in healthier relationships at home, at work, and at play. It will mean less stress and anxiety and the problems stemming from stress and anxiety.

## God Created You

In short, getting your temperament needs met by healthy, godly means will result in a happier, more enjoyable life.

Before we get to the five temperament types – Sanguine, Melancholy, Phlegmatic, Supine and Choleric – and their strengths and weaknesses, we need to look at the three temperament areas of interpersonal needs: Inclusion, Control and Affection. The reason the Temperament Analysis Profile Report is remarkably accurate is 1) it was researched long and hard, and 2) it reveals what the person's temperament and temperament needs are the areas of Inclusion, Control and Affection. These three areas govern our behavior in relationships and the environment around us. We interact differently with people we know socially than we do with family or with close personal relationships or coworkers. The T.A.P. Report reveals a person's temperament, and thus how they tend to interact, in the Inclusion, Control and Affection areas.

Instead of attempting to figure out if a person is of a Sanguine temperament in general, the T.A.P. Report reveals the person's temperament in the area of social interaction and in the area of close personal friends and in the area of control issues. The areas of Inclusion, Control and Affection are distinguishable and measurable, yet they are interwoven throughout the human behavior. In a nutshell, Inclusion determines who is in or who is out of the relationship; Control determines who maintains the power and makes decisions for the relationship; and Affection determines how emotionally close or distant the relationship.

## **INCLUSION**

### **SOCIAL ORIENTATION AND INTELLECTUAL ENERGIES**

The temperament area of Inclusion is how we think and act in establishing and maintaining social or surface relationships. These types of relationships include social gatherings and functions and the people who come in and out of our daily lives. Co-workers, business acquaintances, neighbors, most of the people at church, etc., usually fit into this area of Inclusion.

Specific temperaments want a lot of social interaction and/or want a lot of people to approach them for socialization. Different

## II. What Is Temperament?

temperaments desire minimal association, approach few people for it, and do not want to be approached. There are those who desire a lot of socialization but do not initiate interaction. They wait to be invited and feel left out if not personally approached. Let us not forget those people who are highly selective with whom they socialize.

For an example of how temperament in Inclusion differs from person to person, look at the annual Christmas Party at work. Around December the plans are announced for the annual work Christmas Party. Immediately people are excited about the chance to party with all their fellow coworkers. They enjoy the opportunity to get together socially (it is even better if the spouses and significant others are invited) and let their hair down and get to know everyone and have fun. It never crosses their minds people in their department are brought to instant dread, even though the moaning and groaning can be easily heard.

For people with specific temperaments, the thought of having to attend a social function begins the wheels in their brains turning out excuses why they cannot make it this year. If the Christmas Party is mandatory, the dread is ever increasing. The closer the time comes, the ornerier and more negative these people get, and not only about the upcoming Christmas Party. Their growing negative attitude affects home, work and play. Is it not amazing how many people, who said they would be there, are sick the night of the party and could not make it?

This reaction is not limited to the workplace. It is seen all the time in the church. Pastors are confused why people will not stay for the potluck dinner after church but go out to eat at a local restaurant before going home – even after a great sermon on the need for Christian fellowship and individual duty to fellow Christians. Our temperament in Inclusion determines how we think and act in relationship to social functions and association.

The area of Inclusion is not limited to the social arena. It also determines the intellectual energies of the person. Is this person a thinker? Do they act on the feeling of the moment? Are they creative? Are they artistic? Do they consider what their words or actions will result in? How impulsive are they? Do they analyze every little detail? Over analyze? The area of Inclusion also determines whether a person is relationship, task or goal-oriented. These and more, which will be

## God Created You

covered later, are determined by the person's temperament in the area of Inclusion.

### **CONTROL**

#### **THE WILLINGNESS TO MAKE DECISIONS & TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY**

The temperament area of Control is how a person thinks and acts in establishing and maintaining a satisfactory relationship with people in respect to control and power. The temperament area of Control determines how much control and power a person desires over people, how much control and power a person desires over him/herself, and if the person is desiring to share control and power with people. Control is the need for dominance within the interpersonal relationship. Control determines who makes the decisions, has the power, calls the shots, is the head of the house in the relationship (whether it is a social or a close personal relationship) and to what degree this control and power is shared in the relationship.

We all know controlling people. Not only will they not accept any control over their own lives and behaviors, they expect to maintain control over every interpersonal relationship – whether superficial or intimate. Most dictators would fall into this category. They want to make up the rules and then inflict those rules on everyone under their influence. They wish they had influence over everyone in the world. Of course, they rationalize it by “Well, it is for their (the people's) own well-being.” However, it seldom is for the people's benefit. Besides, controlling people usually resort to poor behavioral patterns to maintain control.

I wish becoming a Christian automatically fixed these extreme control issues, but it does not. In the Bible itself, in the Book of 3<sup>rd</sup> John, it speaks of Diotrephes who would not accept the Apostle John's authority, because Diotrephes loved to be first among the church. He even put people out of the church who did not go along with his teachings and rules. Talk about the ultimate power trip: control in the Name of God! I have known many like Diotrephes in my lifetime.

On the opposite extreme are the people who constantly send out vibes (speech, body language, etc.) indicating they want everyone else



## II. What Is Temperament?

to take control. They will not make decisions. They will not set boundaries. They allow themselves to be used and abused. I have had more than one person with this temperament ask me, “Am I wearing a sign saying ‘Please Abuse Me?’” The temperament area of Control determines where we tend to be on this scale of power and control. Thank God, most of us are not at either extreme.

Temperament is neither good nor bad, it is simply how God created us. I am asked all the time in my Temperament Seminars, “What is the best temperament?” The best temperament is the temperament God has given you, as long as you are living in the strengths of your temperament. Whether we are living in the strengths or weaknesses of our temperament will translate into acceptable or poor behavior. Being a controlling person is not bad, depending upon how the person is getting this need met and what it is doing to people. Being a tyrant is not healthy. Motivating people by love, acceptance and in godly ways is healthy.

Saul of Tarsus, later the Apostle Paul, was considerably controlling. As Saul of Tarsus, persecuting Christians in the name of God, his behavior was not good – but it brought him much achievement in his social standing. Controlling people have a high need of recognition and achievement. As the Apostle Paul, these same controlling traits were used in positive ways, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, and Paul took the Gospel message to two continents. The Apostle Paul was not less controlling than Saul of Tarsus. Paul not only controlled the people directly involved in his ministry, he wrote letters telling the churches throughout the world how they should behave. Thank God he did. These letters make up the majority of our New Testament. Once his temperament and behavior were brought under the authority of the Lord Jesus, Paul accomplished great feats for God and His Kingdom.

Control and power are not the only factors in the temperament area of Control. The area of Control determines how well a person makes decisions. There are individuals who would make reasonable decisions (and do when forced to) but are insecure in their ability to do so. They cannot endure the thought of a decision gone wrong, therefore they appear to be indecisive. Different people make decisions only after analyzing the information to death. And yet someone else is able to make quick intuitive decisions. The area of Control also determines

## God Created You

how well a person carries out responsibilities, whether he or she is dependent or independent, and his or her strength of will.

### **AFFECTION**

#### **DEEP PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND THE DESIRE TO EXPRESS AND RECEIVE LOVE AND APPROVAL.**

The temperament area of Affection is how we think and act to establish and maintain a satisfactory relationship in regard to love and affection. We deal with deep personal relationships from the temperament area of Affection. The area of Affection is unique within the temperament since it can only occur one person to one person. In the areas of Inclusion and Control, a group of people can be combined to be associated with or controlled as one. However, in the area of Affection, the relationship can only be one to one. The intimacy of the temperament need is only achieved by a close, personal, emotional feeling between two people. To become emotionally close to someone, there is an element of confiding innermost desires, anxieties and feelings. A strong emotional tie is usually accomplished by a unique relationship regarding the sharing of these feelings.

The area of Affection determines how many deep personal relationships a person desires. The area of Affection within the temperament determines how a person goes about drawing another into a deep personal relationship, or excluding people from such a relationship. The area of Affection also determines how a person hangs onto a deep personal relationship and his or her behaviors regarding the relationship. One specific temperament is “best friends” with everyone. If they happen to know your name – and this is not a prerequisite – you are their best friend. They will tell you everything about them and expect the same from you. They borrow without asking. You are their best friend and a best friend does not have to ask a best friend.

As a pastor, there was someone in every church who considered me his best friend. Not because of a mutual bond and friendship, but because I was the pastor. (I am of the temperament having, and needing, few close personal relationships. Only after jumping through 10,000 hoops can a person prove his worthiness to make the list – that is, if the

## II. What Is Temperament?

list is not already filled). These people always seemed to expect special privileges. They attempted to monopolize my time. They called on the phone at weird hours at my home. One of them even walked into my home one day uninvited, without knocking because we were “best friends” (he only did that once!). When materials came up missing, I always knew where to go look; my best friend had borrowed it without asking (again).

The temperament area of Affection determines how we share emotions. A few people are emotionally open. They will share every detail about themselves, even intimate stories about themselves and family members. Different temperaments are emotionally guarded. To get any feelings out of them is like pulling teeth. They feel emotions expressed in times passed do not need to be reemphasized. “I told you when I married you 13 years ago I loved you. If it ever changes, I will send you a memo.” The temperament area of Affection also determines with whom we share our emotions and by what manner. Certain temperaments are touchy-feely and verbal with emotions. Different temperaments are not, but show love and affection by doing special tasks. There are people who will not accept love and affection unless it is shown in specific ways. Many a man (although this is more temperament than gender related) has made his wife or girlfriend feel unloved by missing an anniversary, birthday or special occasion. Of course all men know, it does not count if you buy flowers, cards, and candy but do not truly mean it.

The area of Affection determines how emotionally open or guarded we are and how intimate we are with the special, close people in our lives. The area of Affection also determines the depth of our feelings. There are people who are committed to the deep, personal relationships in their life, but are emotionally guarded and lack the ability to share their deep, tender feeling. Therefore, those closest to them feel unloved and unappreciated. Relationship-oriented temperaments in Affection naturally make their deep, personal relationships feel loved and appreciated.

## **TEMPERAMENT TYPES**

There are five pure temperament types: Sanguine, Melancholy, Phlegmatic, Supine and Choleric. A pure temperament type is someone who is the same temperament in Inclusion (social orientation), Control (decision-making) and Affection (deep relationships). A pure temperament type is fairly uncommon. A pure temperament type would be someone who is Melancholy in Inclusion, Melancholy in Control and Melancholy in Affection. Most of us are a different temperament, i.e., Melancholy in Inclusion, Choleric in Control and Sanguine in Affection. There are many combinations available in temperament.

We must remember we are talking about temperament, not behavior. How a person behaves is a combination of temperament, living in the strengths and/or weaknesses of their temperament, environment, decisions they have made or not made, conclusions they have drawn or not drawn about right and wrong, their relationship with God or lack thereof, etc. Temperament is not the deciding factor in a person's behavior. However, it is the first of several building blocks of a person's behavior and personality. When our temperament and our behavior are more in line, our temperament traits are visible in our natural behavior, then stress, anxiety, and the related problems are greatly reduced.

There are even more combinations than mentioned thus far. Four of the temperament types can be Compulsive (all except Phlegmatic). In temperament therapy, compulsive means a person's temperament traits will be seen in his natural behavior without the person making a conscious effort. It does not mean a person is driven to unhealthy behavioral practices. While temperament and behavior can be greatly different (a Melancholy can behave like a Sanguine – of course, this would be a seriously stressed out person), a Melancholy Compulsive is going to act like a Melancholy all the time. Their compulsion has a deep hold on their behavior. Adding compulsive to the temperament mix provides many additional temperament combinations.

Then, add to all the above the fact that the Phlegmatic temperament can be mixed with the additional four temperaments. A person can be Supine Phlegmatic or a Phlegmatic Choleric in an area. No wonder we are all uniquely different, there must be hundreds, probably thousands of temperament combinations – each with their own tendencies, traits

## II. What Is Temperament?

and needs. God obviously was not trying to turn out a race of robots, otherwise He would not have gone to all the trouble to make us uniquely different.

We cannot possibly look at each temperament combination in this book. Therefore, we are going to explore the pure temperament types. We are going to view the tendencies, traits and needs of the Sanguine in Inclusion, the Sanguine in Control and the Sanguine in Affection (the pure Sanguine). We will do the same with the other four pure temperament types. This will give us the foundation we need to understand temperament, i.e., how God created us individually and how we can individually enjoy this life God has given us with less stress, less anxiety, and better relationships at home, work and play.

As you are reading, remember few persons are pure in any temperament. You will probably find yourself saying “This sounds like me” only to find yourself repeating it a little later when reading about another temperament. The fact is it could be you on both pages. The only accurate means of knowing one’s temperament is the Temperament Analysis Profile (T.A.P.) Report. The T.A.P. Report reveals a person’s temperament in Inclusion, Control, and Affection along with the temperament needs in each area. Temperament is not actual behavior. A Choleric behaving like a Supine means the Choleric is under a tremendous amount of stress. If we are Choleric, we want to be behaving like a Choleric – only out of the strengths of our temperament. Our weaknesses are easy: get out of bed and spend the day doing whatever we feel like, without regard for God, people, king or country. As our behavior parallels our temperament, stress and anxiety are greatly reduced. The problems directly or indirectly connected with stress and anxiety are also affected in a positive manner. This is what I call living in the strengths of our temperament.

Temperament is the God-given, inborn nature of a person; the inner person, the real person on the inside. Although behavior may greatly change throughout life, temperament always remains the same. The Apostle Paul’s life is a great example. He looks like two entirely different people, before his conversion versus later in life. However, his temperament remains consistent. The difference in Paul’s behavior was living in the weaknesses of his temperament before conversion and in

## God Created You

the strengths of his temperament, under God, after conversion. Immensely different behavior, but the same temperament.

Every temperament type has strengths and weaknesses. Every temperament type has temperament needs. As our temperament needs are met by healthy and godly means, we will be living in the strengths of our temperament, being the people God created us to be. We can also be meeting the needs of people around us to a degree (no one can meet someone else's needs 100%). This results in a life with less stress and anxiety, fewer problems caused by stress and anxiety, better relationships at home, work and play, and a happier life.

I conducted a Temperament Seminar for a company employing people to do computer data entry. The people sat at computers all day and typed in numbers and information. Relationship temperaments would consider this a tedious task and supplement the time at work with relationship traits; talking and socially interacting with coworkers. Task-oriented temperaments tend to concentrate on making production goals daily. As the seminar progressed, it became evident a department wide source of irritation was socialization versus production. There had been complaints about people talking instead of working or taking and making personal phone calls on company time. There were also complaints about when people took breaks and how many certain people took, not enough production being run and who should be doing more. This had been going on for years. Changing personnel (management or employees) did not seem to reduce the problem. Department stress was high and negative attitudes were prevalent.

Come to find out, this department had a mixture of task-oriented people and relationship-oriented people. The task-oriented people thought everyone should come in every day and sit there quietly and run production. The relationship-oriented people thought there should be social interaction at work as well. The only way to get to know someone is to talk. The task-oriented people thought talking and interpersonal interaction was a waste of time. Time at work should be spent on production. Thus the underlying current of irritation within the department, the high departmental stress levels, and the negative attitudes among co-workers.

During the seminar, it became clear production verses socialization is not an either/or situation. The department did not need to be either

## II. What Is Temperament?

totally task-oriented or totally relationship-oriented, impossible to obtain and maintain anyway. It is okay to run production and still get to know your coworkers. Task-oriented people need socialization. Relationship-oriented people need to run production.

The people in this department learned to help coworkers and lower job stress at the same time. Task-oriented people are less stressed when running production. The relationship-oriented people, becoming conscious of this, began socializing in places farther away from people's workstations, to be less of a distraction. Task-oriented people do not take enough breaks. Relationship-oriented people can drag them away from their desks from time to time for socialization (most task-oriented people do not get enough social interaction). Relationship-oriented people have a tendency not to get back to the task. The task-oriented people can drag them back to work after a short break. Being sensitive to people's needs and meeting those needs helps everyone's stress to be lower. Everyone's needs are met and production is accomplished. The workplace becomes a happier, more pleasant place to be forty hours a week.

Living in the temperament strengths will result in a happier, more fulfilled life at home, at work, and at play. In order to live in the temperament strengths, it helps to know the strengths and weaknesses of the Sanguine, Melancholy, Phlegmatic, Choleric and Supine temperaments. Be all you can be – do not join the Army, learn about temperament.





## CHAPTER THREE

# THE SANGUINE TEMPERAMENT

*Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.” (Luke 12:19)*

Let me point out again, in this book we are taking a look at **pure** temperaments. A pure temperament is the same in each temperament area of Inclusion, Control and Affection. Someone who is Sanguine in Inclusion and Sanguine in Control and Sanguine in Affection is a pure Sanguine temperament. Pure temperaments are rare. Most people are not pure temperaments, but a mixture of temperament; i.e., Melancholy in Inclusion and Supine in Control and Phlegmatic in Affection.

The first temperament we are going to look at is the Sanguine temperament. No temperament is more fun to be around than the Sanguine. The two top agenda items on the Sanguine’s life list are to be around people and to have fun. They get bored easily and do not see any of boredom’s virtues. Sanguines not only want to be having fun, but they want everyone to be having fun. Because of these needs, to be around people and to have fun, Sanguines tend to be on the go all the time. When they are not on the go, they desire to be. They are positive and optimistic. They are the life of the party. They want to feel exemplary and they want everyone around them to be excited also.

Sanguines experience life by feelings and emotions instead of by facts and logical reality. They love to share their experiences in life with everyone, thus they are excellent storytellers. Because facts, figures and precise details are not important to Sanguines, stories do get exaggerated. They are not necessarily lying, only recounting the events according to the emotion of the moment. While the facts and details will change during the retelling of the story (and you will hear these stories over and over again), Sanguines include every feeling and emotion for every person (and animal) involved. Every relationship detail will also be included – usually, more information than anyone wants to know. Sanguines have a habit of providing far more information than anyone wants to know, except Sanguines. They tend to be open about the most intimate details of their lives. Sanguines live life through feelings and emotions.

## God Created You

While Sanguines want to be interacting with people all the time, and attempt a 24/7 lifestyle, they cannot maintain this pace forever. Sanguines can maintain a 24/7 people related schedule more than any temperament; however, ultimately they will “crash and burn”. To watch them, it seems like they cannot choose which people to be around or what fun to be participating in therefore they attempt to do it all. These are the children parents cannot get to go to bed (changing bed times will not help). The children do not want to miss an exciting event. These are the teenagers who want to be participating in every activity with all their friends all the time. Missing any event with their friends is torture for them. These are the adults who work all day and play all night – or do not work at all and play all the time. Sanguines understand sleep deprivation. There are places to go and people to be around and activities to participate in. Sanguines do not have time for sleep and rest. They recognize the need to stay home and rest and go to bed early and catch up on their sleep, but if a last minute chance to socialize comes up, they have to go.

Until Sanguines learn self-discipline in regards to sleep, rest, and health needs, a future “crash and burn” is coming. They become ornery and irritable. They are almost impossible to live with as the “crash and burn” gets closer. They are no longer fun to be around. The longer they attempt keep going, the worse they become. Finally, exhaustion sends them to bed for 10, 12, 14 hours of sleep. Many times, Sanguines will not rest until a day or two of sickness sends them to bed for much needed sleep. Once they have recovered, the cycle continues. This 24/7 “crash and burn” cycle drives family members crazy. They can see it coming, but are reprimanded for mentioning it may be time to skip a social event and get a full night’s sleep.

The Sanguine who is living in their temperament strengths is a wonderful person to be around. It is a great temperament. However, a Sanguine living in the temperament weaknesses is a completely different story. Sandy and Sammy Sanguine are going to help us tell the Sanguine temperament story. Even though certain Sanguine traits may be mentioned with Sandy or Sammy Sanguine, the traits are not gender connected unless specifically stated.

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

## **Sanguine Inclusion Strengths**

The Sanguine in Inclusion is a social person. Sandy Sanguine has her shoes parked at the door and is ready to go in at a moment's notice to be around people. She wants and needs to be around people. It is even more than this, she wants to have an interpersonal relationship with everyone. The Sanguine in Inclusion is relationship-oriented. I am convinced the Sanguine is born with every relationship skill available, unlike people of my temperament who are born with zero relationship skills and must learn them all from scratch.

Sammy Sanguine genuinely likes people. He likes to be around people. He likes to be interacting with people. Sanguines in Inclusion approach a great many people for surface relationships and associations. They are rarely found alone and, if alone, it is seldom by their own choice. Inactivity causes Sammy Sanguine stress. When he finally has the time to enjoy a nice, quiet evening at home – he talks about wanting this all the time, he simply never has time for it – he is rattling around the house after an hour or two. Sanguines have to work at enjoying downtime.

In a group, Sanguines are the center of attention. They talk the loudest, tell the funniest jokes, and wear the brightest colors. Hippocrates identified the Sanguine by the color red, or blood. This fits the Sanguine perfectly. Sandy and Sammy Sanguine bring life and energy into a room. The Sanguine's cheerfulness and humor brightens everyone's life. If you are going to have a party, invite lots of Sanguines. Your parties will be fun and exciting. Of all the temperaments, the Sanguine is the easiest to be around socially.

Sanguine in Inclusion (i.e., social interaction, surface relationships, and intellectual energies) strengths include being:

- ☺ **Friendly.**
- ☺ **Outgoing.**
- ☺ **Inspiring.**
- ☺ **Relationship oriented.**
- ☺ **Enthusiastic.**
- ☺ **Warm.**
- ☺ **Optimistic. Sammy and Sandy Sanguine possess the ability to see the bright side of life and the best in people.**

☺ **Sammy and Sandy Sanguine genuinely like people.**

The Sanguine in Inclusion must be born with every relationship and social skill available to human beings. From birth, Sandy and Sammy Sanguine are friendly and outgoing towards everyone. Their parents have to repeatedly give the “beware of strangers” lecture. They will gladly go home with anyone after church. Sandy and Sammy are the ones parents worry about walking up to a stranger in a car offering candy or asking for directions (and not only while they are little kids, even as teenagers and adults). Sanguines genuinely like people, are rarely found alone, and freely interact with everyone.

One teenage Sanguine girl I knew could not figure out why her parents were concerned when they found out she walked right up to a car full of guys (she did not know), who pulled over to ask a question. The group of girls she was with would not go up to the car, but she did without reservation. She later told me she thought she must know them, although she did not recognize any of them, because they called her by name. However, she was wearing a coat with her name monogrammed on the front of it. Talking to them from the sidewalk, like her girlfriends, did not seem to be an option with her. Sanguines desire close and personal interaction with people.

Sammy Sanguine’s first instinct is to be friendly and open. He will tell you every detail about himself before he can remember your name; and wants the same from you. I was standing in line at my bank waiting to make a deposit. In the line next to me was a man I had never seen before. He did not know me either. He did not know I was a Christian counselor. In the five minutes before I made it to the teller’s window, this total stranger was telling me all about himself, his marriage problems, and his whole life. This is more than a person with my temperament wants to know! Especially from a total stranger. Obviously, this man was Sammy Sanguine in Inclusion. Sanguines are easy to pick out of a crowd.

Sanguines naturally like people and want to be around others. Being away from people for long periods of time causes them stress. They are relationship-oriented, even to a fault. Sandy Sanguine will readily forsake a task to be with people. (She always plans on doing the task later, but later never comes). People give her energy. Tasks suck energy from her.

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

People give her life. Tasks are boring. Sandy Sanguine genuinely likes everybody and wants everyone to like her. She makes the newly met acquaintance feel like an old friend. She is openly friendly from the first moment you meet her. Sandy and Sammy Sanguine are warm, positive and fun to be around.

The Sanguine's genuine like for people naturally comes across from the first moment of meeting them. Temperaments who do not naturally, genuinely like people think this is a put on or see it as hypocritical. However, it is not for the Sanguine. Sandy Sanguine has no ulterior motives. She genuinely wants to have a social relationship with you. She makes people feel loved, appreciated, important and uplifted. The Sanguine is fun to be around socially. If you want your next party or social function to be a hit, invite a lot of Sanguines. Everyone will have a fun time. Sanguines know how to have fun, want to have fun, and want everyone around them to have fun all the time.

Sanguines in Inclusion are inspiring to be around. Sandy and Sammy Sanguine are upbeat, optimistic, warm, friendly, and enthusiastic. When they are in the strengths of their temperament, Sandy and Sammy Sanguine are never negative. Sanguines flee from negativity. Sanguines hate negativity. Their emotions feed off of the environment. If they are in a negative environment, they feel badly and will be compelled to go somewhere else, hopefully where life is happier. If relocating is not an option, Sandy and Sammy Sanguine will attempt, verbally and behaviorally, to make everyone feel better. If it were up to Sanguines, everyone around them would always be bubbly and happy. Sanguines are fun loving and want everyone around them to feel wonderful. Their stories, although exaggerated, are uplifting and inspiring. They think everyone should always feel happy, and Sandy and Sammy Sanguine will naturally attempt to lift up the people around them up, to inspire people, and to make people feel better and happier.

Sanguines are responsive to their senses: touch, smell, taste, hearing and sight. They are touchy-feely and like to be in your space (if you are not a temperament who is relationship-oriented, Sandy and Sammy Sanguine violate your personal space often). They like bright colors. They are attracted to anything speaking to their senses. They enjoy foods with taste, items appealing to the eyes, nice to smell and touch and feel. Sandy and Sammy Sanguine love sales; getting 50% off excites them. It

## God Created You

does not matter they have no need for the item they saved money on. It does not matter they could have bought the same item for less money (not on sale) at a store closer to home. They saved 50%! It is even better if it is packaged with bright colors.

Of all the temperaments, Sandy and Sammy Sanguine probably have the less stress and anxiety. Sanguines probably enjoy life more than everyone else does. They have the ability to see the bright side of life. They are naturally optimistic. Even if today was not totally wonderful, tomorrow probably will be. Each moment is a new existence for them. The past is past and the future is not here yet. "Live for the moment" is Sandy and Sammy Sanguine's natural philosophy. Experience what you can experience. Enjoy what you can enjoy. Sanguines do not want to miss out. They want to have fun. They know how to have fun. They want everyone around them to have fun. If it were up to Sanguines, everyone would be having fun all the time.

Sammy Sanguine sees the best in people. People's faults, shortcomings, character flaws and weaknesses are mostly overlooked. Sammy Sanguine likes people. He wants to have a positive relationship with everyone on the planet. He is willing to accept people as they are, and expects everyone else to do the same. The Sanguine perceives the best in everyone, blocking out their few minor weaknesses. What different temperaments would consider major character flaws, Sammy Sanguine views as minor inconveniences; if he perceives them at all.

The rest of us could learn valuable lessons from the Sanguine temperament in this regard. Although this comes naturally to the Sanguine, the rest of us can learn to develop these God-types of qualities. Yes, I mean it, God-type qualities. God sees the best in us. God overlooks our shortcomings. God accepts people as they are, and commands us to do the same. *We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.* (Romans 15:1). *Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.* (Romans 15:7). How were we when Christ accepted us? Perfect and without faults? Already sinless? Are we sinless at the present time? If God had not overlooked our shortcomings, the gift of salvation would never have even been offered to us through Jesus Christ. *God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of*

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

**reconciliation.** (2 Corinthians 5:19). If God were not presently overlooking our shortcomings, we would not have the chance to reach perfection in Jesus Christ. This attitude comes naturally to the Sanguine, however the rest of us Melancholies, Phlegmatics, Choleric and Supines could learn a few lessons here. These lessons would greatly help us in our relationships with people and in our relationship with God.

Without Sanguines, this world would be an unexciting and boring place. Sandy and Sammy Sanguine add life and excitement and fun and interpersonal relationship attributes to the world around them. They have a nearly inexhaustible supply of positive energy when it comes to people and relationships. Even the rest of the relationship-oriented temperaments cannot keep pace with the Sanguines. The task-oriented temperaments would never have any fun or enjoyment without the Sanguines. The goal-oriented temperaments would never realize the importance of healthy relationships. God knew what He was doing when He created Sandy and Sammy Sanguine and put them on the planet. The Sanguines in Inclusion, when living in their strengths, are a joy to be around. When Sanguines are in their weaknesses, they can be miserable to be around.

### **Sanguine Inclusion Weaknesses**

The Sanguine in Inclusion is the most impulsive of all the temperaments. The Sanguine basically lives life upon the emotion of the moment. If Sandy feels happy, she is exuberantly happy. If she is upset, Sandy is mad and angry. Of course, when someone calls to invite her to a party or go to the mall or any event involving people, all the 'mad' is gone and joy has set in again. Anger turns to joy turns to sadness turns to whatever on a dime. One minute Sanguines can be angry, yelling and fighting mad but before the argument is over, they have already forgotten what they were mad about. I have had the opportunity to stop a Sanguine in the middle of a heated argument and ask her, "What are we arguing about?" She could not tell me.

Sanguine Inclusion (i.e., social interaction, surface relationships, and intellectual energies) weaknesses include:

- ⊗ **Being talkative.**
- ⊗ **Always the center of the conversation.**

## God Created You

- ⊗ **Apt to take on the behavior and morals of the people around them.**
- ⊗ **Impulsive.**
- ⊗ **Undisciplined.**
- ⊗ **Rude.**
- ⊗ **Uncaring.**
- ⊗ **Prone to exaggerate.**
- ⊗ **Need to appear successful (even to the point of exaggeration).**
- ⊗ **Will ignore responsibilities in order to be with people.**

The Sanguine in Inclusion is the least disciplined and organized of all the temperaments. Sanguines are relationship-oriented. Task related activity is stressful. Sammy Sanguine would always choose to be interacting with people instead of performing any task. People give him life. Tasks drain his energy. Thus, he is usually talking, even when he is suppose to be quiet; like in a classroom or in the workplace. Talking is not enough, Sammy Sanguine needs to always be the center of the conversation and the center of attention. In a social setting where a Choleric is involved, this can be comical – a Choleric needs to be in control of the conversation.

It is the Sanguine in Inclusion who is always talking in class, and whose parents are reminded at every school conference of their child's disruptive nature (like they can control it!). It is the Sanguine in Inclusion who stops running production on the job the moment he has the opportunity to talk to someone. Talking to someone and performing tasks at the same time is not an option with Sammy Sanguine – although over time and with much hard work, he can learn to do this. Task-related skills are a learning process also; he does not come by them naturally as the Melancholy does. The noise level of any room increases when Sammy Sanguine enters.

It will greatly help the Sanguine to learn to put tasks first and people (playing) second. This is not easy, but possible, to learn. Not only does everyone on the planet have to do tasks throughout their lives (most of us have to work in order to have an income), self-discipline also positively raises the Sanguine's natural low self-esteem. The more self-disciplined and organized Sandy and Sammy Sanguine become, the better they feel



### III. The Sanguine Temperament

about themselves. These are learned skills for the Sanguine temperament. Sandy and Sammy Sanguine do not have these skills naturally, like the Melancholy or Choleric. The more self-disciplined and organized the Sanguines become, the better people feel towards them also. Since Sandy and Sammy Sanguine need to be liked by all, this will enhance their relationships, especially with the task-oriented temperaments.

The Sanguines' major weakness is they have the tendency to adopt severe and destructive behaviors. Look at the two most pronounced behaviors: histrionic and neurotic behaviors. Because Sanguines in Inclusion need to be the center of attention, this opens the door for **histrionic behavior**. The dictionary defines histrionic as *1. Dramatic representation; theatricals; acting, 2. Artificial behavior or speech done for effect, as insincere assumption of an emotion*. Sandy Sanguine has the tendency to be over dramatic. If she is happy, she is overjoyed. If she is feeling blue, she is severely depressed. If she is angry, she is fighting mad. If she is sick, she is going to die.

Attention is reinforcing to the Sanguines' behavior. Attention is rewarding to them. When attention is withheld, Sanguines feel like they are being punished. When attention is given, they feel rewarded for whatever behavior they were involved in at the time, which reinforces that behavior. Therefore, if they undertake proper behavior, and attention is withheld, Sanguines in Inclusion feel punished. If they undertake poor behavior such as screaming, pouting, crying, or temper tantrums, and attention is given, Sanguines in Inclusion feel rewarded. If they cannot receive attention for proper behavior, Sandy and Sammy Sanguine will resort to whatever behavior brings them the attention. It does not matter to the Sanguines if the attention is positive or negative. It does not matter if the acknowledgement is for their proper actions or an additional lecture about their poor behavior. To Sanguines in Inclusion, attention – any attention – is reinforcement and reward.

I have a hard time convincing parents of Sanguine children to stop yelling and screaming at them for poor behavior. Lectures on “the advantages of proper behavior versus poor behavior” fall into this same category – reinforcement for poor behavior. Reasoning with the child also falls into this category. Attention reinforces the bad behavior. Any attention, which is not discipline for the poor behavior, rewards the child. This is true for Sanguine adults also.

## God Created You

Think of it, Sammy Sanguine is able to get all the attention he craves whenever he wants it. All he has to do is be bad at school and the teacher instantly makes him the center of attention in a classroom of 30 of his peers. If Sammy Sanguine is bad enough, he is sent to the Principal's Office (in front of the whole class) where more adults give him attention. Then he gets additional attention from his parents when he gets home. Why would Sammy Sanguine change his behavior? He is getting his #1 temperament need met on a regular basis! Attention reinforces and rewards him for his bad behavior. Correct discipline (for the Sanguine in Inclusion this involves the denial of people related activities) encourages proper behavior.

The second destructive behavior for the Sanguine in Inclusion is **neurotic** behavior. The needs are different here. The person needs attention, but also the need of social approval and acceptance. If the person does not receive attention, social approval and acceptance for proper behavior but does receive it for poor behavior, this reinforces and rewards the poor behavior. When Sammy Sanguine cuts up in class and perceives his classmates approve of and accept him, along with the attention he receives from adults, his poor behavior will continue. When Sandy Sanguine, whose life is always a disaster from husband problems, children problems, bill problems, illnesses, etc., receives attention and consolation from co-workers and special privileges from management, her poor work behavior will continue. She will consistently be coming in late, missing work, talking instead of running production, etc. The attention and approval of her coworkers is reinforcing her poor work behavior. Neurotic behavior is evidenced by constant feelings of stress and anxiety or obsessive thoughts or compulsive acts or physical complaints without objective evidence of disease. Poor behavior is designed, subconsciously by the Sanguine, to provide the attention, social approval and acceptance by the people around them.

Poor, histrionic or neurotic behavior may seem to meet the need of the moment. However, the temperament needs of being the center of attention, being needed, accepted, cared for and liked will only be satisfied through positive and godly behavior. This is why poor behavior goes from bad to worse – the temperament need is not being satisfied, only (seemingly) met for the moment. Poor behavior may make the Sanguine the center of attention today, however, tomorrow this person

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

will need to do something even more dramatic to be there again. Eventually, poor behavior removes people from the friendship circles of the Sanguine. The Sanguine in Inclusion who does not learn to get temperament needs met in proper and godly ways will end up in the most feared place of all – the place of “No Friends.”

I know it does not even seem possible for a Sanguine to not have friends. Sandy and Sammy Sanguine have all these wonderful relationship and social skills. There are billions of people on the planet to socialize with. It would seem, and does seem to Sandy and Sammy Sanguine, if they lost all their present friends there are unlimited amounts of people to draw from for new friends. In reality, continual poor behavior results in Sanguines not having any friends, good or bad. No one wants to be a friend with someone who is always exhibiting poor behavioral patterns. And eventually, even Sandy and Sammy Sanguine run out of people willing to socially interact with them. There is nothing sadder, or more miserable, than a Sanguine in Inclusion without social interaction.

One young man I was counseling, who was Sanguine in temperament, was getting into a lot of trouble with his poor behavior. I was attempting to convince him of the fact his poor behavior was eventually going to put him in a place where he would not have any friends, or any people to interact with. He, as Sanguines do, thought this idea was impossible. He made friends easily. New acquaintances always liked him. He could never remember being without friends.

As we were working on getting his temperament needs met in healthy and godly ways, he was also continuing his poor behavioral patterns. Then one day I received a phone call to say he was in jail. While he was in jail, his need to be the center of attention kicked in and he told an officer he was suicidal – which this young man was not at all. They immediately put him in solitary confinement, where he stayed for 4 months. He told me, after he was out of jail and counseling had resumed, I was right about his poor behavior putting him in a place where he would have no friends and no social interaction. He paid more attention after this experience.

It is not only poor or histrionic or neurotic behavior getting a Sanguine into trouble. All the wonderful relationship and social skills can get the Sanguine into trouble from time to time. The Sanguine genuinely likes people and accepts people as they are. The Sanguine

## God Created You

overlooks or is unaware of potential problem areas in relationships. The Sanguine is naturally attracted to people who are fun and exciting. Never mind these fun and exciting activities are neither godly nor not healthy. Never mind these fun and exciting pastimes are not even legal. Sandy Sanguine hates to be away from people. Being away from people is stress and anxiety to her. Being with anyone doing fun and exciting activities is better than being alone. Therefore, Sandy Sanguine has trouble picking out good friends. She does not naturally distinguish between good and bad friends. Everyone is a friend or potential friend and good and bad does not come into account. I am not sure Sandy Sanguine comprehends I Corinthians 15:33 as the truth, ***“Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good character.”*** It is a learned process for any Sanguine to be able to distinguish between *bad company* and good friends.

Everyone Sandy Sanguine meets is a friend. She likes everyone and wants to be liked by everyone. Herein lies a potential problem. Because Sandy Sanguine has this need to be liked by everyone and she has a hidden fear of rejection, she tends to go along with the crowd. No Sanguine recognizes this trait of going along with the crowd in their life. Sandy Sanguine denies she does this. She will swear she does not, and can even give an example of a time when she did not. This tendency to go along with the crowd (to prevent being rejected and disliked) gets her into trouble when she is hanging around with the wrong crowd (*bad company* in I Corinthians 15:33). Sandy (and Sammy, this is not gender related) Sanguine is attracted to the wrong crowd without even knowing it. She picks her friends because they are fun and excitement, not because these people would be a positive influence on her. The wrong crowd is usually fun and exciting to the Sanguine.

The Sanguine teenager who does not smoke, drink, do drugs, and sleep around may well hang around with the high school crowd who does. This crowd is the fun group. They get together often. They party. They sneak behind their parents' backs. Getting away with forbidden activities is exciting. Even though Sanguine teenagers insist they are not going to participate in such activities, they are attracted to the fun and excitement. The clean cut group who studies hard, works a part-time job, does not party often, and goes to church is boring. Sooner or later (sooner more than later for the Sanguine) Sandy and Sammy Sanguine

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

are going to be doing what the crowd they are hanging around with is practicing.

When the parents of Sandy Sanguine attempt to point out the shortcomings of hanging with this group of friends, she swears, “I don’t do what they do and I never will!” However, if this is the main group Sandy Sanguine is hanging around, it is only a matter of time before circumstances arise where “No” is not an acceptable answer. Peer pressure and Sandy Sanguine’s fear of rejection and being at the wrong place at the wrong time will zap all her will power. She will go with the emotion of the moment and follow the crowd. Many times it does not have to be more than a crowd of one person. This tendency is not limited to teenagers. Adult Sanguines have the same tendencies. They become involved in the practices of their friends.

A statement Sanguines make often is “I cannot believe what I did. I said I would never do it. I was determined never to do it. I cannot understand why I did it.” If Sammy Sanguine does not learn to pick good friends he will spend a lot of time being sorry for his actions. His sorrow is always after the fact. This is a momentary time of sorrow, repentance does not take long or last long with Sammy Sanguine. He does not learn from past mistakes.

Picking good friends is a learned ability. Since Sandy and Sammy Sanguine cannot naturally distinguish between good friends and bad friends, not having someone as a friend is inconceivable to them. It will help Sanguines to learn that true friends are people who have a positive influence and will not get them into trouble. It will help Sandy and Sammy Sanguine to ask themselves if the people they are hanging around are involved in activities contrary to activities they (the Sanguines) want to participate in. Are these people heading down the paths of life the Sanguines want to be going down? Sandy and Sammy Sanguine will benefit from reminding themselves of this tendency to follow the crowd. They do not believe this, but it is true. Sandy and Sammy Sanguine believe they are strong willed and only do what they want. However, if they will check past behavioral patterns in life, even they will have to admit this is not always the case. Therefore, it will benefit them to be in the crowd involved in activities Sandy and Sammy Sanguine want to be involved in and heading down the paths of life they want to be traveling.

## God Created You

It is in vain to attempt to convince Sammy Sanguine there are people who are true friends and people who are not friends at all. To Sammy Sanguine, everyone is a friend or potential friend. He likes everyone and wants to be liked by everyone. He wants to spend time with and get to know all his friends and to have fun with them. Only through devastating circumstances will Sammy Sanguine not consider someone a friend. What will help him is to realize the difference between good and bad friends as discussed previously. It will benefit him to hang around the good friends more often than the bad friends.

### **Sanguine Control Strengths & Weaknesses**

The Sanguine in Control (i.e., decision-making abilities, willingness to take on responsibilities and the need for independence) is unique and rare. Only **two percent (2%)** of the population are Sanguine in Control, and they are predominantly male. The Sanguine in Control is different from all the temperaments by not being stabilized. What I mean by stabilized is the Melancholy in Control is always independent. The Choleric in Control is always controlling. The four temperaments in Control have definite strengths and weaknesses true for every person with the particular temperament in Control. However, Sanguines in Control **SWING**. They swing between a dependent mode and an independent mode. One day they are totally in charge and domineering, and the next they are totally dependent. We call the Sanguine in Control Swing a dependent/independent conflict. This Sanguine Swing is only in the area of Control, not in the Inclusion or Affection areas of the Sanguine temperament. A person who is Sanguine in Inclusion or Affection, but not in Control does not swing between the dependent and independent modes.

The Sanguine in Control strengths and weaknesses correlate with their dependent/independent conflict. When Sandy Sanguine is in the independent mode, she is driven to control the behavior of the people around her, take on one project after another, and accept responsibilities. After taking on too many responsibilities and making too many decisions, she is driven to the opposite side of the temperament need, which is to be narcissistic, self-indulgent, lacking persistence and weak-willed; the dependent mode. Sandy Sanguine can only stand to be in the dependent

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

mode for a limited amount of time. She will begin to feel worthless, unloved, selfish, inferior to everyone else and irresponsible. After a period of time (which differs for each individual), she will be driven back to the independent mode. Learning to recognize the independent/dependent conflict and learning to control the swing is the key for the Sanguine in Control.

When Sammy Sanguine manifests the dependent mode of the swing, he is self-absorbed, self-indulgent, cannot follow through on projects or responsibilities previously accepted, cannot say “No”, and cannot make decisions. This is not as bad as it sounds once the Sanguine in Control learns to control the swing instead of allowing the swing to control him. However, until he learns to recognize the swing and control it, when in the dependent mode he is open to a variety of ungodly, self-indulgent behaviors and abuses. Sammy Sanguine’s self-esteem is non-existent. He would have to get a little self-esteem to have zero. He feels totally unloved and unappreciated. He feels like a totally worthless person. He feels depressed and unable to do anything right. Many times when in the dependent mode, the Sanguine in Control makes poor decisions resulting in abusive lifestyles, alcohol and drug abuse or abusive relationships. Certain lifestyles and relationships are easier to get into than they are to get out of.

When Sandy Sanguine manifests the independent mode, she is a concerned, caring person who will help people, almost to the point of servitude. She will take on almost every project presented to her. Sandy Sanguine will take on the responsibility for making many decisions, for herself and people around her. She has no problem being in control in this mode. When the Sanguine in Control is in the independent mode, no temperament can keep pace. She is a whirlwind of projects and responsibilities. She tirelessly sacrifices herself working on the projects undertaken and accepting even more responsibilities. Sandy Sanguine neglects sleep. She neglects a balanced diet. She neglects mental health. She neglects families and friends. In the independent mode the Sanguine in Control is absorbed with the current project or responsibility.

The Sanguine in Control is endlessly driven back and forth between the two modes like a pendulum. The longer Sammy Sanguine stays on one side of the temperament swing, the farther he is driven back to the opposite side. The longer he is in the independent mode, the farther he

## God Created You

is driven into the dependent mode. The farther he is into the dependent mode, the more self-indulgent he is, and the more severe the depression. Sammy Sanguine cannot learn to do away with the swing, however, he can learn to recognize and to control the swing and not allow the swing to control him. These swings are not strengths or weaknesses, but are temperament needs crying out to be met. Recognizing the swing (most Sanguines in Control do not even know when they are swinging) and learning to get the temperament needs met in godly ways, in both the independent mode and the dependent mode, is how to control these swings.

The need to receive recognition is the driving force in the independent mode. Although the Sanguine in Control projects little or no need of recognition, there is a high need of recognition, attention, approval and acceptance (these are all tied together in the need). We call this indirect behavior. Through verbal communication, body language, vibes sent out, etc., the Sanguine in Control conveys little need of attention, approval, recognition and acceptance. Therefore, Sandy Sanguine is receiving about as much as she is telling people she needs and this need is not anywhere close to getting met. This need for attention, approval, recognition and acceptance molds her. She takes on all the projects and accepts too much responsibility to receive the attention, approval, recognition and acceptance from the people around her. When this need is not met, she is driven to the dependent mode of the swing.

In learning to control the swing, the Sanguine in Control needs to accept the recognition, attention, approval and acceptance already being given. Sammy and Sandy Sanguine have a tendency to blow it off. They have a tendency not to accept the recognition already being given because 1) they do not recognize this need within themselves, and 2) they are not sure the person's motives are pure in providing it. The Sanguine in Control has the tendency to rebuke recognition with "You don't have to tell me you appreciate my work. I know I do my job well." Or "As long as God approves, it is enough for me" (recognition is not accepted from Him either). All the while Sammy and Sandy Sanguine are asking themselves, "Why is this person expressing this? What are they up to? What else do they want from me?" It will help them simply to accept



### III. The Sanguine Temperament

recognition, attention, approval and acceptance at face value and learn to say “Thank you.”

In addition to receiving the recognition, attention, approval and acceptance already being given to them, it will help Sanguines in Control to enlist the help of a few close friends. Inform these close friends about this high need of recognition and enlist their help in getting this need met. It is only wise, if a person has a high need of recognition, to have a few close people who can and will provide it. Our close relationships are providing us with what we have been expressing we need already. This is what people in close relationships do. Indirect behavior stops the Sanguine in Control from getting this need met. Family and friends are confused about how much recognition, attention, approval and acceptance the Sanguine actually needs.

If indirect behavior has been expressing the wrong ideas to the people around us, we should be wise enough to correct what we are expressing and inform specific people of our true needs. Sammy Sanguine (as well as the rest of us) needs to have a couple of people he can call and say “Hey, tell me what a great person I am; I’m feeling a little down today.” This will only happen as we learn to honestly communicate our needs. Sammy and Sandy Sanguine will benefit from close personal friends who will build them up, encourage them, and help them receive the recognition, acceptance, approval and attention they need without condemning them or looking down at them or judging them. The rest of us will also.

We all need to get our temperament needs met and it is only wise to surround ourselves with loving people who will help us get these needs met in healthy and godly ways. One of the best resources in getting our temperament needs met is God. He is able to supply us with all we need. ***And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.*** (Philippians 4:19). “***All your needs***” would include temperament needs also. God is wonderful at supplying recognition, acceptance, attention and approval. God is great at supplying whatever need any person of any temperament has. Do not overlook Him on your close personal friends list as you are getting your temperament needs met.

A third behavioral change Sanguines in Control can adopt to control the swing is to accept about 75% of the projects and responsibilities

## God Created You

they take on when in the independent mode. They take on too much because of the high need of recognition, plus the fact they enjoy helping people. However, they seldom finish projects because they swing into their dependent mode before burn out sets in. The Sanguine in Control never burns out. The swing to the dependent mode prevents it.

Sandy and Sammy Sanguine want everyone to like them. They do not want to hurt anyone's feelings. They like to help people. Therefore, they are not good at saying no. It will help control the swing as Sandy and Sammy learn to say "No, I cannot take on that project right now." As they learn to keep their schedules comfortably full (about 75% of what they think they should be doing), the swing will not be as frequent or as dramatic. It will help them to say "No" (Sandy and Sammy Sanguine REALLY do not want to hurt or disappoint anyone) to find out what God wants them to be doing and ONLY do His will. If a person is doing more than what God wants, are they in truth doing God's will? Think about it!

As the Sanguine in Control recognizes the swing has to happen and begins behavioral changes to control the swing, it will control the severity of the swing also. Many times Sanguines in Control have recognized the swing throughout their lives, but they do not understand it. They think they can defeat this dependent mode by being a stronger person. Sanguines in Control hate the dependent mode. They attempt to eliminate it by remaining in the independent mode all the time. However, Sanguines in Control can stay only a limited amount of time in the independent mode. They have to swing. It has nothing to do with will power. The Sanguine in Control will stay only a limited amount of time in the dependent mode. They have to swing. The time periods vary from person to person; hours, days or weeks, depending upon the individual and the circumstances.

The Sanguine in Control will swing from the independent mode to the dependent mode. The Sanguine swing is a God-given blessing. It usually is not recognized as a blessing until the Sanguine learns to control the swing and not be driven by it. As the swing is controlled, the blessing of this temperament begins to show up: i.e., the Sanguine in Control will never burn out, and he or she can accomplish amazing project feats when in the independent mode. Learning to receive recognition, acceptance, attention and approval will help to control the swing, and

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

this is even more important during the dependent mode, when the Sanguine in Control's behavior will not be eliciting such from the people around him or her.

Learning to be self-indulgent from time to time also helps control the swing. The need to be self-indulgent is not a weakness, but the way this need is met can be the weakness. What do you like to do for yourself and yet is not ungodly? Golf? Tennis? Fishing? Reading? Watching movies? Doing nothing? Taking a bubble bath? Find one, two or three activities you enjoy doing, without regards to spirituality, and benefit only you (this is why it is called *self*-indulgence). Now do these on a regular basis, even more often when you are under the pressure to complete projects and make a lot of decisions. BALANCE out accomplishing projects and work responsibilities with personal time, family time, and fun time. A balanced life will mean a controlled dependent/independent conflict.

One lady I know was about 48 years old when she found out about being Sanguine in Control. Her life was a life of abuses. However, she was now married to a Christian man and she was recommitted to Christ and life was doing well. She put out a Christian Newspaper and was overly active in her church. However, from time to time she would quit every activity and become very negative about herself. After her Temperament Analysis Profile (T.A.P.) Report revealed she was Sanguine in Control, I recognized this depression and lack of energy was her swing into the dependent mode.

While attempting to find godly self-indulgences (it takes a while to convince people there are such activities, because it seems selfish and Christians have been taught selfish is bad) it came out she liked to watch old movies. I convinced her when she feels this dependent mode coming on (her husband would recognize it quicker than her, as is usually the case) rent an old movie or two and watch them. When she first started this, she would watch five movies in a row! This was a bit much for me, and I like to watch movies. But it worked well for her. Eventually, godly self-indulgences became a more regular part of her life (along with increased recognition, attention, acceptance and approval). She quit taking on as much at one time and her swings became much more modified.

## God Created You

This is the key to the Sanguine in Control swing. Learn to be in control of the swing instead of continuing to allow the swing to be in control. The Sanguine swing cannot be eliminated, but the Sanguine in Control does not have to be driven between modes. With a little practice, Sandy and Sammy Sanguine can control the swing to their own benefit and a better life. They can learn to finish projects before they swing into the dependent mode. They can learn to stay in the independent mode or the dependent mode for longer or shorter periods of time, and yet not experience the violent swing results experienced when driven to the opposite mode. The Sanguine swing can be controlled and modified, and the blessing of the Sanguine in Control temperament can be experienced, as God intended.

Sandy and Sammy Sanguine need to find a place in life where they can make a smooth swing between the temperament modes. When they are in control of the swing, it is a wonderful temperament. They have a lot to offer to the people around them. They are loving and kind and caring and capable of accomplishing great feats. They are fun and a joy to be around. Their lives can be a great blessing to themselves and to the people around them. This is what God intended when He blessed them with this unique temperament.

## Sanguine Affection Strengths

Of all the people in the world, the Sanguine in Affection is the most lovable. Sanguines in Affection express love and affection in an endless supply. They will accept as much love and affection as you can show them, and need more than certain temperaments are capable of expressing. Sanguines in Affection need to be told and shown every day they are loved, appreciated and needed. Yesterday's reassurance will not carry over to today. Today is the day they live in. Today is the day they need to feel loved, appreciated and needed. Today is the day they need to be told and shown they are loved, appreciated and needed.

Sanguine Affection strengths (i.e., the need for love, affection and deep, personal relationships) include:

- ☺ **The ability to express and receive large amounts of love and affection.**

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

- ☺ **Warmth.**
- ☺ **Easy to get to know.**
- ☺ **Emotional openness.**

Sanguines in Affection show and receive love and affection verbally and physically. They are verbal in their expression of love and affection. They are touchy-feely. Do not confuse this need to show and receive love and affection as a need for sex. Sanguines in Affection have the need for love, romance, acceptance, approval and touch. They are sensitive to touch. They have a “skin hunger,” a need for human contact. However, this is not necessarily in a sexual sense.

Sandy Sanguine loves to hold hands, walk arm in arm, and be romantic with her spouse or loved one. Verbal communication of love, acceptance and approval, romance and touching is how she receives and expresses love and affection. While task and goal-oriented temperaments interpret these expressions as sexual, Sandy Sanguine receives and expresses them as emotional contact. Do not get me wrong, the Sanguine in Affection is the least inhibited of the temperaments when it comes to sexuality. However, it is imperative the act of sex be an expression of love. Emotional “oneness” is a prerequisite to any sexual act for the Sanguine in Affection.

Because this need for human contact, this “skin hunger” is not necessarily done or received in a sexual sense, the Sanguine in Affection’s need to touch and be touched is not limited to the love partner. Family members can also expect frequent gestures of love. For example, it would not be uncommon for a Sandy Sanguine to stand and rub her son’s back while talking to him. Or for her to be clingy as a child, always under foot, always wanting to sit on someone’s lap, and always around family members.

A potential tragedy in a family with a Sanguine in Affection child and a task-oriented parent is the withdrawal of verbal and physical expressions of love and affection. Task-oriented temperaments tend to interpret physical expressions of love and affection as sexual. The Melancholy father becomes uncomfortable when his teenage Sanguine daughter is expressing the “skin hunger” need. Especially once she hits puberty and begins to develop, he interprets the hugging, the touching, and the desire to be close physically as inappropriate, flirtatious, and

## God Created You

even desirous of sexual activity. Therefore, he withdraws his expressions of love and affection; if the daughter were to give him a hug he would not even hug her back. The Sanguine child feels rejected and unloved. Touch and daily reassurance of love are two major needs of the Sanguine in Affection.

My advice to fathers with a touchy-feely daughter (Sanguines in Affection are not the only ones): be the safe male in her life. Be the one male in her life who can express and receive verbal and physical expressions of love and affection without sexual overtones. She is not going to get this from the male friends at high school (and the female Sanguine has more male friends than female friends). Dad, your daughter is not going to find many safe males at college. And, I am sorry to say she is not going to find many safe males in the work place. You have the opportunity to be the predominant male in her life who can safely provide the needs of verbal and physical expressions of love and affection. If she does not get it from you, she will be seeking it elsewhere – and it is not readily available elsewhere without sexual expectations. Many a Sanguine (male and female) has adopted immoral behavior in an attempt to get this “skin hunger” need met.

Sammy Sanguine also has a major need for deep emotional contact, and he needs it from a lot of people. He is quick to reveal his inner self. Once a person is considered a close personal friend – and it does not take a lot to get there – Sammy Sanguine is open and willing to share even his most intimate feelings. There are no family secrets with a Sanguine in Affection in the house. What he knows and feels is shared with all his best friends. He also needs deep personal relationships to be as revealing, to open up and share their inner feelings, thoughts and emotions. Possessions and material goods mean little to Sammy Sanguine. Relating to people and establishing deep relationships with people is what he lives for. Sammy Sanguine is warm, emotionally open and easy to get to know. He wants to be close friends with everyone. He wants everyone to be friendly, warm and emotionally open with him.

There is probably no limit to the amount of love and affection the Sanguine in Affection can express and receive. Relationship-oriented temperaments are able to express or receive large amounts of love and affection, limited to their perception of how love and affection is to be expressed and received. The Sanguine in Affection is not limited. Sandy

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

Sanguine is open with her feelings, thoughts and emotions. She is open with everyone considered to be a close, personal, best friend. She needs a large number of close, personal, best friends. She is uninhibited in expressing love and affection in physical ways. She is touchy-feely She touches and needs to be touched. If Sandy Sanguine is Compulsive in the area of Affection, it is impossible to provide a back rub long enough or often enough. After your fingers cramp up from massaging her back, she still wants more and will move to another person to finish the backrub, though there are not enough people in the world to complete it.

Sandy Sanguine is overly trusting. She tends to take people at face value until proven wrong, and usually it takes being proven wrong several times before any trust issues are violated. I was counseling a single mother and her teenage daughter. The girl was Sanguine in Affection. During one of the sessions, it was revealed the daughter had jumped into a car at the mall parking lot with older teenage boys she did not know. They were going to one of the boys' homes to watch a movie she had wanted to see and invited her. When her mom and I pointed out getting into the car may not have been the smartest option she had, along with problems this could have led to, the girl said, "They wouldn't have hurt me! They were nice guys." Sanguines in Affection naturally trust people, sometimes to a fault.

Sandy Sanguine has few barriers to get through before she can open up and share what she is feeling. She is emotionally open and needs to have an emotional bond with several people. She does not understand families who do not get together but once or twice a year – and will never understand why families do not get together at all. She cannot understand how a person can have a close friend who lives in a different state without having a \$250/month phone bill.

Here is a point the parents of Sanguine children need to know. Of all the children to raise, the pure Sanguine in Inclusion, Control and Affection is the one to which the least amount of emotional harm can be done. You cannot wreck a Sanguine. Sanguine children will cry the hardest, weep the most often, throw more temper tantrums, and pout frequently. Yet their parents can rest assured Sanguine children are not on the verge of an emotional breakdown. It only seems that way at the moment. You cannot wreck a Sanguine child. The Sanguine is a survivor.

## God Created You

There are few life-altering events capable of breaking the spirit of the Sanguine.

Sanguines feed off the environment. A change in environment changes their mood. One moment they are heartbroken and distraught with the worst catastrophe ever happening to anyone in human existence. The next moment, a friend calls with an invitation to go to the mall and they are on top of the world. One moment you are the worst parent who has ever lived (this is NOT limited to Sanguine children). The next moment they are hugging you and telling you how wonderful you are. Their moods change with their environment, sometimes by going from one room in the house to a different room. By the time Sanguine children have reached adulthood, they will have forgotten all the arguments, fights, unfair punishments, and will regard their childhood as wonderful.

### **Sanguine Affection Weaknesses**

Although Sanguines in Affection who are living in the strengths of their temperament are a joy to be around, those living in their weaknesses are not. (Sanguines are a little difficult to live with if you are a task-oriented temperament and need peace and quiet on a regular basis). The Sanguine can be tiring, demanding and frustrating, especially to people of different temperaments who are married to them, members of their families, or involved with them in close personal relationships. This can be true when Sanguines in Affection are living in the strengths of their temperament. This is especially true with they are living in their weaknesses.

Sandy Sanguine needs to be around people. There are always people coming and going in her life. Melvin Melancholy (the opposite temperament) needs daily times of peace and quiet and personal space. Sanguines and Melancholies end up married often (opposites attract). There can be marital problems until the always on the go/need to be a homebody issues are balanced out. Melancholy parents and Sanguine children also run into these problems.

The Sanguine Affection (i.e., the need for love, affection and deep, personal relationships) weaknesses include:



### III. The Sanguine Temperament

- ⊗ **Can be easily devastated if not constantly reassured they are loved and appreciated.**
- ⊗ **Is demanding of people for love and affection.**
- ⊗ **Is plagued with feelings of jealousy when the love and attention they feel belongs exclusively to them is given to others.**

Sammy Sanguine needs daily reassurance he is loved and appreciated and needed. “Daily” is not an exaggeration. When it comes to giving and receiving love and affection, the Melancholy and Phlegmatic temperaments are at the opposite end of the scale from the Sanguine in Affection. The Melancholy or Phlegmatic in Affection may feel like “I told you 13 years ago when I married you I loved you, and if it ever changes I will send you a memo.” They need little reassurance of love and think everyone else is exactly like them. They naturally provide little reassurance – and providing daily reassurance of love and appreciation is a chore to them.

Therefore, Sammy Sanguine cannot get this need for love and affection met from one or two Melancholy/Phlegmatic people in his life. Sandy and Sammy Sanguine usually have Melancholy/Phlegmatic people in close personal relationships with them. Sammy Sanguine is attracted to the strengths of the Melancholy or Phlegmatic temperaments. Those people are attracted to the strengths of the Sanguine. Sammy Sanguine cannot get this need met by one or two people. He needs daily reassurance of love and affection from several people. He needs several people who are in a close personal relationship with him. If he does not have many people who are in this close personal relationship group, this need is not getting met. If he is Sanguine Compulsive in Affection, this need cannot be met by human means alone; he has to learn to receive love and affection from the Lord also.

When Sandy Sanguine is not getting this need of daily reassurance of love and appreciation, she is devastated. When responding in the weakness of their temperament, Sanguines tend to adopt ungodly and destructive behavioral patterns attempting to meet their needs. Sandy Sanguine begins to express negative emotional patterns around the people she feels should be meeting these needs, but are not. She becomes ornery, grouchy, angry, upset, pouty, and is never happy. She starts

## God Created You

pointing out the faults in people who are close to her. She grumbles and complains about the behavior of family members. At this point, Sandy Sanguine is upset and feeling unloved and unappreciated – and Sanguines love to share their emotions – therefore, she is attempting to make everyone else feel the same way.

Sammy Sanguine becomes intensely demanding of the love and affection of people when he is living in his weaknesses. This is especially true if he is attempting to get all his reassurance from one or two people. If he believes immediate family members should be meeting all of this need, he will be demanding more hugs and kisses from the kids than they want to give. He will not allow his wife to relax a few minutes after work, but will be demanding her immediate attention the moment she pulls in the driveway. One husband I knew repeatedly asked his wife for ½ hour after he got home from work to unwind from his day. She interpreted this request as personal rejection, and would immediately demand his attention the moment he walked in the door after work. Finally, he would come home from work and go into the bathroom and lock the door and take an hour-long bath each day after work. The relationship did not turn out well.

Sandy Sanguine also tends to be jealous of the time, energy, and attention (these are expressions of love to the Sanguine) significant others are giving to people or projects or activities. Her husband spends too much time on the golf course, even though he only golfs once a week with his buddies. Her best friend should not have any additional close relationships, or even spend time with anyone else. The kids should want to come home after school and be with her instead of going to play with friends. The children should not want to spend time with her ex, and they surely should never enjoy it when they are over there. All this time, energy, and attention given to people is viewed as rejection by Sandy Sanguine in the weakness of her temperament. She feels significant people should be spending every waking moment and all their attention on her. This is an unhealthy attitude and leads to unhealthy behaviors and hurtful relationships. Eventually, it will lead to the loss of these relationships.

It will help Sammy and Sandy Sanguine to widen the boundaries of who are considered the significant people in their lives. Develop additional close personal relationships with more people. Instead of

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

having one or two best friends, have five or six. Instead of attempting to get all their Affection needs met by immediate family members, increase the number of significant people to include close friends at church, in the neighborhood or at work.

Sammy and Sandy Sanguine need to develop several healthy close personal relationships and have a lot of intimate friends. They need daily human and emotional contact with several people, in godly, healthy, close personal relationships. They need to understand this, and the significant people in their lives need to understand this also. Only when they have several healthy close personal relationships will Sammy and Sandy Sanguine's temperament needs be met. Then they will be able to live in the strengths of their temperament and overcome the weaknesses.

It is a false concept to think our spouse or immediate family members can meet all our temperament needs. I do not know where this concept came into being, but I know many people who think this is true. My spouse should be meeting all my needs in life. No! This is not true. If I would meet my soul mate, then they would meet all my needs. No! This is not true. This is a false concept and it cannot happen. There are certain needs only our spouse should be meeting; our sexual needs for one. However, it takes more than one person, plus God, to meet our temperament needs. This is especially true for the Sanguine in Affection. The weaknesses of the temperament become noticeably evident when Sandy and Sammy Sanguine are attempting to get their affection needs met by only one or two people. A couple of people cannot do it. The Sanguine in Affection will drain them dry and eventually lose those relationships.

One more point. This is for the parents of Sanguine children who raised their kids "right" but when they left home they turned out "wrong." It is not your fault! It is only your fault if you taught them in the arts of poor behavior, to be bad, to develop unhealthy and abusive relationships, and to perfect unhealthy lifestyles. Most of us did not raise our children this way. During the formative years, most parents have worked hard to develop a morally strong and well-disciplined atmosphere. Sometimes, the grown child will revert to a behavior typically overcome prior to adulthood. For the Sanguine this is all too common. When the disciplined atmosphere or environment has ended,

## God Created You

the discipline has ended also. In many cases, when the strict moral code of ethics has ended, the morality has disappeared also.

Sammy Sanguine grows up (kids actually do eventually grow up) and goes off to college. When at home in the disciplined atmosphere there were no major problems, only the normal parent/child and parent/teen conflicts. However, when he gets to college, where there is no enforced disciplined atmosphere, he adopts all sorts of unacceptable behavior, leaving his parents in shock. Where did the parents go wrong? What could have the parents done to prevent this? This is not the parents' fault. Sammy Sanguine has grown up and is making poor choices for himself. Outside of the disciplined atmosphere of the home environment, he has fallen into the undisciplined atmosphere of college life. Sanguines tend to go with the crowd. Sanguines tend to live off the emotions of the present environment. Sammy Sanguine needs to learn to discipline himself in order to be the person God created them to be.

Sanguines are weak-willed people and the most likely of all the temperaments to take on the morals and behavior of the people around them. They do this to assure themselves of being accepted. They have a high need of acceptance and want everyone to like them. Sanguines do not handle rejection well. If Sandy Sanguine does not surround herself with friends who are involved in lifestyles she desires to be living, she is going to get in trouble. When hanging with the wrong crowd, Sandy Sanguine develops habits and lifestyles her parents (and she herself) thought she would never be involved in. Parents, although your child was the "best" kid while living in the morally strong, well-disciplined environment you provided, the Sanguine quickly adapts to the present environment once they are grown and gone. Until they learn to place themselves in positive, moral, healthy, and godly environments, all they were taught as children seems to be lost.

Christian parents have been mystified and heartbroken for centuries after raising their children in godly, moral homes to watch and hear what these grown children have gotten involved in upon going off to college or entering the workforce. These parents have the tendency to ask themselves (and God) where they went wrong. If you raised them right, you did not go wrong. It is not your fault. Your grown children are making choices, sometimes direly poor ones, but it is not because you did not show and teach them a better way.

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

## **What Sanguines Can Do To Live In The Temperament Strengths**

Whenever I get to this part in a counseling session or in a Temperament Seminar, religious people start getting nervous. There is an abundance of self-help material on the market, secular and Christian. Certain religious people have thrown it all out. “We cannot help ourselves. Only God can help us.” While I do believe this to be true, I also believe we can cooperate with God. Getting our temperament needs met and finding ways to live in the strengths of our God-given temperament does not mean we are attempting to help ourselves without God. God made us. God made us this way. God decided, ultimately, upon our temperament. This makes a few people mad at God, thinking they would have an easier life with a different temperament. However, all temperaments have different strengths and weaknesses we have to work on with His help. No one is exempt.

God does not expect us to fix ourselves without His help. In reality, mankind cannot fix themselves without God’s help – have you heard the six o’clock news lately? Mankind has been attempting to fix themselves and help themselves since getting kicked out of the garden of Eden. Our inability to change without the help of God should be evident to all. However, with His help, we can learn and apply attitudes and behaviors to help us be the person God created us to be.

How can we do this? By learning what our individual temperament is, and learning what we can do, with the help of God, to get our temperament needs met in healthy and godly ways. By learning how to reduce and manage stress and anxiety in our personal lives and learning how to enjoy better relationships with the people around us with God’s help is not a self-help technique. This is what God would have us to be doing. God would like us to learn to be the best person we can be, as well as to do what He has called us to do. I am not sure we can truthfully do all He has called us to do until we (individually) become the person He created us to be. We cannot become the person He created us to be until we know what this entails. And surely, we cannot do either without His help. Therefore, finding out what each temperament type can do to

## God Created You

live in their temperament strengths is not a self-help technique, but is a “by God’s help I can be” technique.

With all this in mind, let us look at what the Sanguine temperament can do to live in their temperament strengths and be the person God created them to be.

### ☺ **Sammy and Sandy Sanguine can learn to recognize anger as anger, and deal with it constructively and in ways pleasing to God.**

Granted, Sandy Sanguine’s anger seems only to last a moment. Even while she is screaming and yelling, many times she has forgotten what she is fighting about. However, there is a much wider range to the emotion anger than is expressed by screaming, yelling, throwing and breaking objects and hitting people. There is also the opposite end of the range, where people tend to mask and deny the emotion of anger; what humans call being upset, frustrated, ornery, or hurt. I have had people sitting in my office talking about an event or person. All the time they are talking their voice is rising, their face is becoming more flush, they are moving toward the edge of their seat and the moment I mention I detect anger they reply, “I’m not angry with them, I’m just \_\_\_\_\_.” Whatever you fill in the blank with is masking anger or denial of it.

Of all the temperaments, Sandy Sanguine probably has the least trouble with anger. I do not mean Sanguines do not get angry often or do not abuse people while angry. Sandy Sanguine does get angry quickly and does fly off the handle fast. However, she is the least likely to harbor anger for long periods of time. She is the least likely to mask or bury anger. This does not mean Sandy Sanguine does not hold grudges, however, her anger is usually as short lived and her expression of it. It usually takes a major offense for Sandy Sanguine to hold and carry a grudge.

It will help Sandy Sanguine to learn to deal with her anger in constructive and godly ways. Chapter Eight talks in detail about dealing with anger constructively and in godly ways. Let me say here, anger (the emotion, and everyone has it) needs to be recognized as anger, expressed and then released. It will help Sandy Sanguine to learn to express her anger in constructive and godly ways instead of yelling, screaming, hitting

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

objects or someone, or throwing a fit. Sanguines tend to exaggerate their emotions; and anger is no exception.

Learning to express her anger by talking calmly and constructively to the person to resolve the conflict is the best for all involved. When this is not possible, talking to a friend or talking to God about it will help. Writing her feelings in a journal or a letter to the person (always throw the letter away!) is an avenue of dealing with anger constructively also. There are as many different ways of dealing with anger constructively and in ways pleasing to God as there are people (see Chapter 8). Any of them will benefit Sandy Sanguine.

Sandy Sanguine does not have too much trouble identifying her anger, as Melancholies or Supines (who tend to mask anger and bury it in denial). She does not have too much trouble releasing her anger once it has been expressed, as Phlegmatics or Choleric (who tend to knowingly hold major grudges for eons of time). She does have trouble in the expression of her anger – oh, she expresses it quickly and verbally, but not always in constructive or godly ways. It will help the Sanguine to learn to express anger in constructive and godly ways.

Ultimately, anger needs to be released. Sandy Sanguine does not have too much trouble with this, since she tends to get over it about as fast as she got angry.

☺ **Sammy and Sandy Sanguine need to find places in life where they can interact with people frequently. This is imperative regarding employment.**

Sanguines have to interact with people. They cannot sit alone in a cubicle all day typing numbers into a computer without stress and anxiety. Sanguines are capable of task related employment, as long as people are around to interact with while working. They do have to learn to do their work and not only socialize with coworkers all day. I have noticed Sanguines have a hard time doing task-related work and talking at the same time. It is not too long into the conversation before the task gets neglected.

This is true in the classroom with Sanguine students also. When Sammy Sanguine is bored, he gets bored easily with task-related activities at work or at school or at home, he has the tendency to talk and interact

## God Created You

with the people around him. He is a social being and cannot do task related activities (only) for long periods of time.

The high schools in our town have gone to longer class times, ninety minutes versus the old fifty minutes. Every Sanguine student I have worked with, even the straight “A” students, have had a noticeable problem attempting to adjust. Melancholies and Phlegmatics love the extra task/learning-related time – relationships are not their thing anyway. They love task/learning-related activities and do not need to have people interaction for hours at a time. The relationship-oriented temperaments (Sanguine is the most relationship-oriented temperament) struggle with concentrating for an hour and a half without people interaction.

Sammy Sanguine can learn to do task-related activities and mix it with social/relationship activities at appropriate intervals. Learning to balance out task-related activities and social activities is necessary to be the person God created him to be. Here is a hint in learning the balance – tasks first and social/relationship activities afterwards. Sammy Sanguine has great intentions to return to the task once the social activity is over, however the social activities of the Sanguine are never over and thus the tasks never get done. Sammy Sanguine will learn if he does the task first, he will have plenty of time for social/relationship activities afterwards. There is plenty of time for both, when his priorities are straight. Balance will help get the task-related activities accomplished and also leave plenty of time for social/relationship activities. Balance in these areas also lifts up the Sanguine’s low self-esteem.

### ☺ **Sammy and Sandy Sanguine need to find healthy relationships in life where their need for love and affection can be supplemented, i.e., the director of a children’s choir.**

Sandy Sanguine has a high temperament need to receive love and affection. She also needs to show a lot of love and affection. She cannot get all her love and affection needs from only one or two people. If she is married to a task-oriented person and attempts to get her love and affection needs met only from her husband, she is going to make him feel smothered. Sanguines have a tendency to suck people dry when attempting to get these needs met by too few people. I am talking love and affection here, not sex. (I know, Melancholy men cannot figure out



### III. The Sanguine Temperament

the difference, however they will if they will read the chapter on Melancholies). Our spouses should be the only ones to meet our sexual needs. However, there are godly and appropriate ways to get our needs for love, affection, recognition and approval met in healthy interpersonal relationships and social activities.

When it comes to giving and receiving love and affection, Sandy Sanguine needs to give and receive a lot of it. Children are a wonderful source. Children have a lot of love and affection to give. Children need a lot of love and affection. If you have musical talent, direct a children's choir. If you do not have musical ability, teach a Sunday School class. I am sure your church is always looking for additional helpers in its Children's Ministry.

☺ **When forced to be away from people, talking on the telephone, watching TV shows or reading books about people will lessen Sammy and Sandy Sanguine's stress and anxiety.**

The only way you will ever find a Sanguine away from people is if they have been forced into solitude. Sanguines naturally gravitate to people and people naturally gravitate to Sanguines. Sammy Sanguine will be gone on a business trip for a few days and all the Melancholies, Phlegmatics and Choleric in the family are thrilled because the phone has stopped ringing off the hook. Sammy Sanguine returns and within minutes, the phone is ringing with calls for him. I do not know how this happens! I am convinced Sanguines send out radar messages saying, "Call me! I'm home!" Solitude causes Sammy Sanguine stress and anxiety.

When Sammy Sanguine is forced to be away from people, hearing people's voices (radio, television, telephone, etc.) and/or reading about people's lives will help lessen the stress. When face-to-face people interaction is not available, Sammy Sanguine can learn to supplement the need by simulated people interaction. Being in contact with people lowers his stress and anxiety, even if it is only the perception of people interaction. That is why teenage Sammy Sanguine comes home from school, has the house all to himself, turns on the television in one room and the radio in another room and gets on the computer and "instant messages" all of his friends. (And parents wonder why the after school chores do not get done).

☺ **It will reduce Sammy and Sandy Sanguine’s anxiety and heighten their efficiency to listen to the radio or TV while undertaking tasks.**

Sammy and Sandy Sanguine are not task-oriented. They are relationship-oriented. They need people contact. When they do not have people contact, stress levels rise. The next best thing to actual people interaction is simulated people contact. Talking on the phone is a notch below talking to people face to face (for the Sanguine) but is better than not having any people contact. When performing tasks, people’s voices in the background on the TV or radio will help them get the task done.

The first Corporate Temperament Seminar I conducted was for a department of about 30 people who mainly sat in individual cubicles and typed information into a computer all day. One of the rules was no listening to radios, even through a headset, during regular working hours. If people were working overtime they could listen to radios as long as they used headsets. People attempted to get this rule changed for years, without success (task-oriented temperaments find listening to the radio distracting and hindering to production). During the Seminar this point came up, Sanguines are more efficient with tasks when there is people (or “fake” people) contact. The new department manager changed the rule. As long as people used headsets, they could listen to the radio. Management was amazed at how production increased with specific people in the department. Management noticed less job related stress people had. Certain people began staying at their computers longer in between breaks. People contact – even simulated people contact – will help Sammy and Sandy Sanguine in their task-related responsibilities.

☺ **To help control Sammy and Sandy Sanguine’s impulsiveness and emotional outbursts, learn to anticipate the end results of their words and actions.**

Sammy and Sandy Sanguine have the tendency to leap before they look and to speak before they think. They act and speak according to the emotion of the moment. Their actions and words reflect their feelings at the moment. Many times, their actions and words are hurtful to themselves and/or those around them. Sammy and Sandy Sanguine

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

are impulsive and prone to emotional outbursts. They tend to exaggerate their emotions. When someone makes them angry, they are fighting mad. When fighting mad, they make hurtful statements not correctable by a simple “I’m sorry”, especially after the 100<sup>th</sup> “I’m sorry” of the day. For Sammy and Sandy Sanguine it is over as quickly as it started and the apology puts an end to it forever (until the next time). Not everyone else is as quick to put it behind them.

As Sammy and Sandy Sanguine learn to consider the outcome of actions and words before acting or speaking, will help in all their relationships. Fewer hurtful statements will be made if they will think about the person’s feelings beforehand. They will have to say, “I’m sorry” less often, and apologies will mean more to people. Sammy and Sandy Sanguine will commit fewer stupid acts by thinking of the (possible) outcome first. This will help their low self-esteem. They do not like being stupid, and most times do not know why they acted so stupidly. The reason is because it felt like the right choice at the moment. Sanguines act upon the feeling of the moment. Only after it turned out wrong did Sammy and Sandy Sanguine think about it. Think first, speak and act second.

#### ☺ **Sammy and Sandy Sanguine can raise self-perception and lessen the fear of rejection from man as they learn to be secure in the love of Christ.**

Sandy Sanguine has natural low self-esteem. She also has a high fear of rejection. She naturally, subconsciously, attempts to overcome these by being around people. People usually like Sanguines and being around people is usually a positive experience. They do not handle rejection well though. As Sandy Sanguine recognizes how much Jesus loves her, she will feel better about herself and will be able to handle rejection from people much better. Jesus’ love is boundless. He loves people as they are. He loves them in spite of all their stupid actions and statements. His love for them never changes. Sandy Sanguine likes to be loved. As she learns to be secure in His love, her self-worth grows and she will not worry (as much) about what people think about her.

Here is an interesting exercise to become more secure in God’s love. Meditate on (read and think about) I Corinthians 13:4-8(a). This is the portion of Scripture saying, *“Love is kind, love is...”* It will even

## God Created You

help to read it out loud. Do this often, maybe a couple of times a day for a month. Since the Bible says, “**God is love**” (I John 4:8), substitute the word “God” for the word “love”. “God is kind, God is...” Think about this for a while. Now, since the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5), substitute your name for the word “love”. “Rick is kind, Rick is...” As you continue to do this, you will become more and more secure in God’s love for you.

God loves you. God loves you the way you are. There is nothing you can do to put yourself outside of God’s love. (Specific behaviors will rob you of the benefits of God’s love – but He will still love you). God loves you when you are good. God loves you when you are bad. The fact is God loves you. Believe it. Learn to believe it. Continue to believe it. It is true and believing it will help everyone, Sandy Sanguine included.

### ☺ **During periods of self-indulgence, Sammy and Sandy Sanguine can learn to find ways to enjoy pleasure and be pleasing to God.**

It is not only the Sanguines in Control who have the tendency to become self-indulgent; although they are the ones driven to this. Self-indulgence in itself is not wrong or sinful, though what the Sanguine is indulging in may well be wrong. It will help Sammy Sanguine to figure out what he likes to do for pleasure and is still pleasing to God, or at least is not displeasing to God, such as: golf, archery, bowling, knitting, watching movies, playing on the computer, swimming, going out to eat, etc. There are multitudes of activities on planet earth not displeasing to God. When Sammy Sanguine has the need to be self-indulgent, he can do these. Actually, it will help to not wait until he is driven to be self-indulgent. He should put a little more godly self-indulgence in his regular routine. This way, Sammy Sanguine will not be driven to self-indulgence as much and will not be as susceptible to ungodly self-indulgent activities.

I think over righteousness is a cause of a lot of sinful self-indulgences among Christians. What I mean by this is, particular people attempt to be super spiritual all the time and they set themselves up for a big fall. Remember in the ‘80s when the televangelists were dropping

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

like flies? The accusations of their downfalls were not over little indiscretions. There were big problems, ungodly and unlawful problems.

When human beings attempt to be over righteous (attempting to be spiritual all the time, not allowing for self-indulgences that are not ungodly, etc.), we are setting ourselves up to fall headfirst into ungodly activities. Be spiritual. Be righteous. But learn to take time for yourself, to have fun, and to enjoy this life God has given to you. You will be doing yourself – and the people around you – a favor. Learn to be self-indulgent, only in ways pleasing to God or, at least not ungodly or displeasing to God.

*Do not be overrighteous, neither be overwise – why destroy yourself? Do not be overwicked, and do not be a fool – why die before your time? It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other. The man who fears God will void all extremes. (Ecclesiastes 7:16-18) NIV*

☺ **Learn to not take on negative behavior and morality to gain attention from significant others. Sammy and Sandy Sanguine will be jealous of the time significant others in their life spend with people.**

Poor behavior and even ungodly behavior may seemingly meet the Sanguine's need for attention, recognition, acceptance, love and approval for the moment. However, long-term serious problems always accompany this type of behavior. Before long the Sanguine is involved in lifestyles or habits (or both) detrimental to themselves AND their needs are not being met either. Healthy relationships are damaged, or ruined. The friends are all gone (I know, this seems impossible to the Sanguine who can make friends with anyone under any circumstances, but it is true). Ultimately, Sanguines find themselves in unhealthy and abusive relationships, lifestyles they do not want to be involved in any longer but they cannot seem to get out. On top of this, the Sanguine ends up feeling totally unloved, unappreciated, and worthless. How much better it would be for the Sanguine to learn how to get these needs met

## God Created You

with acceptable and godly behavior and in healthy relationships. ONLY through healthy and godly behavior can the Sanguine's needs be satisfied long term.

Not allowing significant others in one's life to have any time with people is not a healthy relationship. To expect and compel one's close friends to not have any additional close friends is not a healthy relationship, especially for the Sanguine in Affection who needs many close personal friendships with many people. However, Sammy Sanguine not living in the strengths of his temperament tends to become negative, ornery, angry and jealous and controlling of significant other's time. He attempts to get all his own needs met by one or two significant people. Since it is impossible to get all our needs met by one person, Sammy Sanguine's needs are more and more unmet. He also requires this significant person or two to devote all their time and energy meeting his needs. He tends to suck people dry, one person at a time. It is one person at a time because the significant other finally gets tired of it and moves out of the relationship. This is not healthy for anyone involved. Sammy Sanguine's needs are not being met. The significant other's needs are not being met. Everyone is miserable.

As Sammy Sanguine learns to have several significant people in his life, relationships developed and maintained with healthy and godly behavior, the positive traits of the Sanguine will be forthcoming. As he learns to deal with jealousy and to allow significant others time for themselves – they need a life also – relationships will be healthier and everyone will be happier.

### ☺ **Sammy and Sandy Sanguine needs to be provided with large quantities of physical expressions of affection, i.e., hand-holding, hugging, kissing, etc.**

Again, the key word for getting these needs met in long-term, satisfying ways is healthy and godly behavior. Sandy Sanguine has the tendency to follow the crowd – she does not believe this, but it is true – and it can be a crowd of one. It will help Sandy Sanguine to remind herself the ONLY way to meet her needs long-term is healthy and godly behavior.

She also needs to realize everyone does not separate physical expressions of affection from sexual results. Melancholies and

### III. The Sanguine Temperament

Phlegmatics males naturally interpret physical expressions of affection as the desire for sexual involvement (this is not limited to males). Therefore, if Sandy Sanguine does not convey to people this need apart from sexual involvement, people of different temperaments will interpret this touchy-feely interaction as sexual encouragement, or a desire of sexual involvement.

Sandy Sanguine herself may misinterpret this skin hunger as a need for sexual involvement. Yet, sexual involvement will only seemingly meet this need and for only the time period of the sexual act. The temperament need is not sexual involvement. The temperament need is to receive and to express love and affection, which she does verbally and physically. Without distinguishing the difference, she may end up promiscuous, but unsatisfied, empty, missing something and feeling like there is more she needs. This is because the actual need of physical expressions of love and affection is not being met; she is merely having sex.

Sandy Sanguine needs to recognize and express this difference to significant others. The need is for physical expressions of affection, not necessarily with sexual connections. As she expresses this need for verbal and physical expressions of affection, people in relationship with her will be free to meet this need without misinterpreting anyone's actions. As she is a little careful where and from whom and under what circumstances she gets this need met, this need can be met in healthy and godly ways.

Learning where and how to get our needs met will also help eliminate potential problems. As Sandy Sanguine picks safe areas to get this need met, i.e., working with children who have a lot of love and affection to give and need to receive a lot of love and affection, many potential problems are eliminated. It is unrealistic for a female Sanguine to expect to convey this need of physical affection without sexual involvement to the male co-worker who is a womanizer. It is unrealistic for any female to attempt to convey this need to teenage boys. Certain people are not going to get it. However, family members, close personal friends (especially of the same gender), and Sanguines can get it. Recognize your need, communicate with people, and be a little picky where and with whom you meet this need, and your needs can be met in healthy, godly, satisfying ways and relationships.

## God Created You

### ☺ **Learn to go to Christ to receive the love and affection not provided through human means. This will lessen Sammy and Sandy Sanguine's tendency for sexual sins.**

God is a people, too. Except He will never use or abuse us. People can only meet a portion of our temperament needs, but God can meet them all. This is not to say we do not need people. We can learn to look to Him to meet our needs, especially the needs not getting met by people. Philippians 4:19 (NIV) *And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.* Preachers like to use this verse to motivate people to give money into ministries, and though this does apply to financial blessings, it is not limited to them. God is able to meet all of our needs, temperament needs included. And, of course, He will meet them in godly ways – can He do anything else?

In order for God to meet our needs, we must have a relationship with Him. How do we get a relationship with Him? Step one: ask God to forgive your sins and ask Jesus to be Lord of your life. Step two: spend time communicating with God, like you do to develop a relationship with any person. Relationships are developed and enhanced by spending time together and communicating (talking and listening). Spend time with God. Personal devotions (prayer and Bible study) and church attendance are places to start. Hang out where He hangs out. Communicate with Him. Talk to Him. Share your feelings with Him. And take time to listen, He might have an important message to tell you. The more you develop and enhance your relationship with God, the more He is able to meet all your needs, temperament needs included, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

### ☺ **Sammy and Sandy Sanguine can learn to interact with God the Father and Christ as with any relationship to lessen anxiety when forced to be away from people.**

Sammy and Sandy Sanguine are born with all sorts of relationship skills. They naturally know how to interact with people. It will help them in their spiritual walk to use these relationship skills when interacting with God. Too often, people have this weird concept of how they are suppose to interact with God. They have concluded a spiritual tone in their voice, a holy archaic language, or strange body positions are somehow holier than sitting on the couch with one's legs crossed talking to a friend. God wants to be our friend. God wants to



### III. The Sanguine Temperament

have a close personal relationship with us. As Sammy and Sandy Sanguine puts those people/relationship skills into effect with God it will enhance their relationship with Him.



## CHAPTER FOUR

# THE MELANCHOLY TEMPERAMENT

*Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. (Philippians 4:8)*

There is probably more Melancholy mixed into people's temperament than any of the temperament types. At least it seems to be true with the people I know and have worked with over the years. Since most of us are not pure temperaments, we have some of this and a little of that thrown into the mix. I am not sure there are actually more Melancholies, but it seems to appear, at least on the T.A.P.s I process, more than the rest. Of course, for this book and for the purpose of instruction and learning about temperament, we are looking at the pure temperaments. As Sandy and Sammy helped us with the Sanguine temperament, Melvin and Melody are going to help us learn about the Melancholy temperament. Unless specifically indicated, the Melancholy traits are not gender related.

Melvin and Melody Melancholy are thinkers. Their brains are always turned on and thinking. They analyze this. They analyze that. They over analyze almost everything. They can see pictures and images in their minds, in perfect detail and living color. Melvin and Melody Melancholy tend to be naturally negative, therefore, they tend to be moody. Hippocrates referred to the Melancholy as the "*black temperament.*" If they do not learn to live out of the strengths of their temperament, they can be plagued with negativity and black moods and even been thrown into deep depression by their thinking process alone. Melvin and Melody Melancholy are the only temperament who can change moods and control moodiness by their thinking process alone.

Melancholies have a great thirst for knowledge. Once this thirst has been uncovered, it is almost unquenchable. The more they learn, the more they want to learn. The more they discover, the more they

## God Created You

need to discover. They also are creative. Artists, sculptors, painters, writers, and a wide variety of creative people fall into the Melancholy temperament. No temperament is more creative or more genius prone than the Melancholy. Melancholies constantly search and dig, trying to learn and unlock the secrets of the universe. Challenges to the intellect are boundless – and Melancholies love an intellectual challenge.

The Melancholy temperament is also known as the “learned behavior” temperament. While Melvin Melancholy is born with certain tendencies (as are all the temperaments), how these tendencies translate into everyday life is usually through learned behavior. How he deals with and expresses anger, for example, is by learned behavior. How he saw adults deal with and express anger when Melvin Melancholy was a child is how he will usually deal with and express anger as an adult. Occasionally, the Melancholy child will determine he is not going to do “it” the way his parents did, and learn healthier ways of dealing with anger. Most of the ways the Melancholy lives everyday life is by learned behavior.

Melody Melancholy lives in a black and white world. She gathers information, thinks about it, analyzes life and draws conclusions. This is right and that is wrong. This should be done a particular way. That should not be done at all. Little in life does not fit onto this right and wrong list. Melody Melancholy has a list for nearly every subject on the planet. Once she puts an item on the list then it is this way, period, and this is the way it should be for everyone. When everyone on the planet does not live by these conclusions of right and wrong and the way life should be, it causes her stress and anxiety.

Melvin and Melody Melancholy do not want to be in control of everyone on the planet. They do not want to make anyone do what is right. The Choleric is the one who wants to be in control of everyone, and does not mind making people behave – for their own wellbeing, of course. However, Melvin and Melody Melancholy do become stressed (and even controlling in specific relationships) when people do not live right. Of course, the right is according to what they have determined and the obvious conclusions they presume everyone has come to. Learning to perceive someone else’s point of view helps Melvin and Melody Melancholy be less stressful. Learning the world is not black and white, right or wrong helps them to be less anxious.

## IV. The Melancholy Temperament

In a study about Melancholies' weaknesses, it would be easy to conclude the Melancholy temperament is a terrible temperament. Not so! The Melancholy is a wonderful temperament, although the Melancholy temperament has many weaknesses. The Melancholy temperament is prone to many negative behaviors and attitudes. However, the Melancholy temperament has a lot of advantages and strengths. When we are living in the strengths of our temperament (any temperament), the weaknesses are non-existent or greatly minimized. It is the same principle the Apostle Paul referred to in Galatians 5:16 (NIV), *"So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature."* A person cannot be doing both at the same time. Therefore, a Melancholy living in his strengths is a completely different person (behaviorally) than a Melancholy living in the weaknesses of the temperament.

When living in the temperament strengths the Melancholy is a God-given blessing to the person and to the people around him. Yes, as does everyone else, the Melancholy must first learn to live in the strengths of his temperament. This does not come automatically; it is a learned process. The good news is the Melancholy temperament is the "learned behavior" temperament. Learning is part of the Melancholy's strengths.

### **Melancholy Inclusion Strengths**

The Melancholy Inclusion (i.e., social interaction, surface relationships, and intellectual energies) strengths include:

- ☺ **Introvert.**
- ☺ **Loner.**
- ☺ **Great thinker.**
- ☺ **Genius-prone.**
- ☺ **Artistic and creative.**
- ☺ **Often found alone in thought.**
- ☺ **Perfectionistic.**
- ☺ **Slow-paced.**
- ☺ **Great understanding of tasks and systems.**
- ☺ **A critical and challenging mind.**
- ☺ **Seeing both the pitfalls and the end results of a project undertaken.**

## God Created You

In every Seminar I conduct, people of different temperaments question specific items listed under the Melancholy Inclusion strengths. All the relationship-oriented temperaments challenge “introvert” and “loner” as temperament strengths. However, we are not talking about a relationship-oriented temperament here. Melody Melancholy is a task-oriented person. She understands tasks and systems much better than she understands people. As far as I can tell, the Melancholy in Inclusion is not born with any relationship skills. All these skills must be learned.

Being a natural loner and introvert (this does not mean Melody Melancholy does not have any social needs, she has more than she admits to even to herself) provides her with the opportunity to think. She is a great thinker. She is always thinking. She may have trouble sleeping because she cannot shut off her mind. I counsel with many Melancholies who spend ½ hour or an hour or more getting to sleep at night. I do not know how many Melancholies have asked me for the secret to quit thinking. There is no secret. Melody Melancholy cannot quit thinking. Anytime you ask a Melancholy in Inclusion what she is thinking about, and the answer is “Nothing”, it only means she is not willing to share with you her thoughts.

This thinking ability is why Melvin and Melody Melancholy are able to accomplish great and wonderful tasks. They think. They analyze. They figure problems out. They tend to be genius prone because of always thinking and gathering information and knowledge. They also tend to naturally think negatively. They tend to see the downside of every person, project, or circumstance; which can also be a strength of the temperament when used in a positive manner. (Melancholies can see the pitfalls of a new project or venture; thus problems can be compensated for before they happen). While Melvin and Melody Melancholy cannot stop thinking, they can learn to direct their thinking into a positive direction.

Melvin Melancholy does tend to borrow negative fears from the future. I do not know why, he has enough negativity concerning the present. I suppose he does not want to run out. However negative he may be naturally, Melvin Melancholy can learn to think positively. He can learn to see the positive side of a person, a situation and life in general. He can learn to see the glass half full instead of always half

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

empty. I am convinced the Apostle Paul wrote Philippians 4:8 to Melancholies,

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

There is not a negative behavior or attitude listed in Philippians 4:8. Melvin Melancholy needs to, and can, learn to think and be more positive. He can learn to see the brighter side of life. The reason the world associates black moods with artists and creative people is because many famous artists never learned to think positively. Melvin Melancholy is artistic and creative. Without learning to think positively instead of negatively, he is prone to moodiness and depression. It is not connected with his artistic or creative abilities. It has to do with learning to live out of the strengths of the Melancholy temperament; and learning to think in a positive manner is part of the process.

Melody Melancholy is often found alone in thought. Because she is emotionally guarded and unwilling to share information (not as bad as the Phlegmatic, but close), when asked what she is thinking about often brings a “Nothing” response. She may be daydreaming or thinking about a myriad of unrelated or unimportant thoughts, but she is never not thinking. Most of the time, she is thinking about, analyzing, over analyzing and even analyzing to death whatever is bothering her. Maybe it is a project she is working on. Maybe it is what someone has said to her, and she is attempting to figure out the exact meaning by analyzing the word structure of the statement (hard to do if a relationship-oriented person in the emotion of the moment said it). It is also during these times alone in thought, Melody Melancholy deciphers the mysteries of her universe. It is amazing to me the number of times I realize the answer to my problems or come up with a great idea when I am daydreaming or my mind is drifting over a thousand different, unrelated thoughts.

Melvin Melancholy is a perfectionist. There is a right way to do a task and everything else is the wrong way. If a job is supposed to be done a particular way, then it is not done until it is exactly the way he has concluded it should be done. “Close enough for government work”

## God Created You

is not, it is wrong. If you want to get a job done and get it done right, have Melvin Melancholy do it. He is task-oriented. He understands tasks and systems better than people and relationships. Once he understands a project, he will not be satisfied until it is exactly right. He tends to work at a slow, steady pace, losing momentum as the day progresses. He will keep at it until the job is done, and done right. Five parts short of production for the day is not okay, and the parts all have to be within specs. I have been known to redo a complete newsletter because a period was not in the correct spot. (I am much better now!)

Melvin Melancholy is not perfectionistic about every detail in life, only about what is important to him. I have known Melancholy businessmen whose desks are a mess, but they know exactly where to find each item. There are Melancholy housewives whose houses are immaculate. They are the ones who always apologize for their dirty house when you drop in. A different Melancholy housewife will have to move magazines off the couch for you to sit down. One lady told me her T.A.P. was incorrect because it said she was a perfectionist and her house was always messy. Of course, then she proceeded to tell me she had a right to divorce her husband because he forgot to get her a present on Sweetest Day. After all, if a husband truly loved his wife, he would not forget Sweetest Day. She did look at me strange when I told her I did not even know when Sweetest Day was.

Melancholies are perfectionists in the areas of life important to them. My grandfather owned a farm for decades, retired, sold the farm to his son and moved into town. Grandpa's rule was the barn door had to be closed all the time. If you drove a tractor out, you closed the barn door before going to work in the field. His son did not think it was necessary to work in the field all day, drive up to the barn door, get off the tractor, open the door, and then get back on the tractor and drive it into the barn. He would leave the barn door open. He told me, many times he would come in from the field to find the barn door closed. Grandpa had driven by, saw the barn door open, stopped and closed it – because the barn door is supposed to be closed.

Melody Melancholy has a gift many people misconstrue. She sees both the pitfalls and the end results of a project being undertaken. When Melody Melancholy points out the downside of a proposed project, the Sanguines think she is raining on their parade. The Supines



#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

interpret her observation as an attack against the project; therefore, it is an attack against them personally because it was their idea. The Choleric want to run with the new project and tackle the problems along the way. They do not want to think about possible problems before the project begins. They like to fly by the seat of their pants. Granted, Melody Melancholy is not usually tactful. She does tend to be negative and comes across even more negatively. (Her social skills usually need work). However, she has a gift the rest of the temperaments do not. Melody Melancholy is able to see the upside and, more importantly, the downside of a project. With the pitfalls exposed, better decisions can be made and the project has a better chance of success. Every board or committee needs Melody or Melvin Melancholy sitting on it.

The last church board I was a part of had a man who was always saying, "Let me play the devil's advocate here" whenever we had a new project to consider. Now, there was a Melancholy who had worked on his social skills. He was the one who was always challenging us to think about a possible pitfall or "what if." A few board members were not happy with him because he was always being negative about new ideas. Two or three board members would roll their eyes as he began to speak. Actually, he was not negative at all. He was using his gift to point out the pitfalls to the new project if it were undertaken. Because of his ability to play "the devil's advocate," he saved us from many a problem by forcing us to consider different ideas beforehand. I am sure he saved the church thousands of dollars over the years because of his gift.

### **Melancholy Inclusion Weaknesses**

There are people who understand temperament and wonder why God would create a temperament such as Melancholy. As we are looking through the weaknesses of the Melancholy temperament, you might concur. Melancholies are naturally negative, moody, suffer from depression, seemingly anti-social (which Melancholies consider a healthy trait), and have a lot of hidden anger. Melancholies also love to live in denial.

However, one might wonder why God created any of the temperaments when only looking at the weaknesses. Thank God there are more than the weaknesses of any temperament! And thank God we are not condemned to live only out of the weaknesses of our

## God Created You

temperament! As we learn to live in the strengths of our temperament, the weaknesses are minimized and/or can even become strengths. Remember Hebrews 11:34, *“whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful...”* This is not limited to the Heroes of Faith mentioned in Chapter 11, but is exactly what God desires to do for each of us.

With this in mind, we are going to look at the Melancholy Inclusion (i.e., social interaction, surface relationships, and intellectual energies) weaknesses, which include:

- ⊗ **Extremely moody.**
- ⊗ **Suffer from “black” depressions.**
- ⊗ **Reject people.**
- ⊗ **Set standards neither they nor anyone else can meet.**
- ⊗ **Develop habits that are difficult hard to break.**
- ⊗ **Have suicidal tendencies.**
- ⊗ **Low self-esteem.**
- ⊗ **Pessimistic.**
- ⊗ **The Melancholy has a fear of economic failure preventing them from going forward.**

This (fear of economic failure) can also be a **strength** of the temperament. They tend to be thrifty and live within their means.

Melancholies are the only temperament able to change and/or control their moods by their thinking process alone. Melancholies are thinkers, but they tend to be naturally negative in their thinking. They tend to see the glass half empty, not half full. They are pessimistic. They tend to see what is wrong and not what is right. If nothing is presently wrong, there are future events with potential, and probable, problems. If 25 items in life are going right and only 1 is going wrong, Melancholies tend to continually think about what is wrong – to the point where they cannot even see what is right.

Melancholies tend to be perfectionists, setting standards beyond anyone’s reach (including God’s). Therefore, there is always more than one behavior or attitude wrong with themselves, the people and the environment around them. Melancholies tend to constantly complain about the one wrong instead of the 100 rights. A Melancholy father I

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

know once looked at his daughter's high school report card with 4 A's and 1 C on it. The daughter (and her mother) was ecstatically happy with the report card until dad spent an exorbitant amount of time talking about the one C. The daughter went to her room upset over her bad report card. He did not even mention the four A's. Come to find out, he did not think it was a bad report card, he was simply attempting to help her do better on the next one.

Melvin Melancholy can easily remember every comment ever said confirming how he does not measure up. He (subconsciously) is always searching the environment for proof he does not measure up. Of course, no one (especially himself) ever measures up and nothing is ever close enough because of his perfectionism. Needless to say, he has low self-esteem. When living in his weaknesses, Melvin Melancholy tends to attempt to handle this low self-esteem by pulling people down instead of building up his own self-image in healthy ways. Misery loves company, and he wants everyone else to be as miserable as he feels.

Melody Melancholy tends to be especially moody and suffer from "black" depressions. Her moodiness is directly connected with her thinking process. When she is thinking positively her mood goes upward and she is upbeat, even nice to be around. When she is thinking negatively her mood goes downward. For Melody Melancholy, negative thinking is like a water whirlpool; once she starts thinking negatively, she gets sucked in more and more until she is drowning in depression. Before she reaches the pits of depression, anger – often explosive and violent – is the common (if not only) emotion of expression. Someone makes a little baby mistake, and rage comes exploding out of her. Later, she acts like it never happened. If she does admit to overreacting in anger, someone else made her do it. However, before long she is overreacting again.

Since the family members and people around Melody Melancholy do not know what sets her off, they are usually walking on eggshells trying not to upset her. This does not work. It is not the shortcomings of the people nor is it what is wrong in her own life; negative thinking is the actual problem. No one knows this because Melody Melancholy is always placing the blame for her angry outbursts elsewhere, usually on people's actions at home or at work. Misdirecting the cause of the anger is a symptom of the real problem, which is her continual negative

## God Created You

thinking resulting in moodiness and even depression. When in the pits of this “black” depression, she may well have suicidal tendencies. Melancholies with suicidal tendencies do not usually attempt suicide – Melancholies with suicidal tendencies usually commit suicide.

As Melody Melancholy learns to be in control of her own mind and to be positive in her thinking, the moodiness will subside (everyone is entitled to a bad day every now and then) and her bouts with depression will be fewer and farther apart. She can learn to be happy and to have fun in life. She can be fun to be around and a pleasure to work with. She can learn to deal with anger constructively and in ways pleasing to God. The key to a happy and fun life for Melody Melancholy is learning to stay in a positive mindset, reset her perfectionistic standards somewhere close to reality, and increase her own low self-esteem.

If Melvin and Melody Melancholy do not learn positive thinking (and this is a learned process for the Melancholy, not easy but possible) they can be destructive to themselves and people. They have a tendency to harbor anger and grudges. They remember every negative statement or deed anyone has done against them since the cradle and tend to keep a mental record of it. They tend to think about ways of getting even. Melvin and Melody Melancholy tend to harbor a lot of anger built up over the years. They deny having any anger until something snaps and they overreact to a minor problem in verbal and/or physical ways, destructive to either themselves and/or other people. It would not surprise me to find out the ones who suddenly pick up a gun and kill several people and themselves are Melancholies. A better choice would be to learn to live in the strengths of the temperament.

Melvin Melancholy does not need a high amount of social interaction. Relationship-oriented temperaments do not understand this about him and think he will be happier being more social. They devise ways to cunningly get him into social settings. Being forced (real or perceived) to socialize causes Melvin Melancholy stress and anxiety. Being around people for long periods of time in a social setting causes him stress and anxiety. He usually needs more social interaction than he likes to admit. He likes to convey to the world he wants to be a hermit, but this is only true in his own mind. In reality, Melvin Melancholy needs and enjoys social interaction, when it is his choice to socialize. Even this is tiring for the Melancholy. Relationship-oriented

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

temperaments, like the Sanguine, draw energy and enjoyment from being around people. It is the opposite for task-oriented temperaments. People drain energy from Melvin Melancholy.

I enjoy going to ministers' conferences. These conferences usually begin early in the morning and last well into the night. They feature excellent speakers and relevant ministry workshops. The services are wonderful. Everyone gets to see friends from around the country and catch up on what God is doing in respective ministries. I even enjoy the organizational business meetings. However, I am Melancholy in Inclusion and after being in the same room with hundreds, even thousands, of people for several hours I am emotionally drained. I can feel my stress levels rising. I call it being "peopled-out." I have to get away, back to my motel room and hang out by myself for a couple of hours. Being around people – even under the best of circumstances – drains the energy of the Melancholy in Inclusion, which increases the stress and anxiety levels.

There are a few hindrances keeping Melvin Melancholy from enjoying a social life. Because of his fear of rejection, he tends to reject people before they can reject him, which he assumes they will. This often comes in more subtle ways than a in-your-face type of rejection. Melvin Melancholy tends to be selective with whom he socializes. He tends to make people jump through many hoops before they can be considered friends and social interaction is possible. Social interaction is not readily available to mere acquaintances – and for Melvin Melancholy there is a distinct difference between acquaintances and friends. Thus loneliness becomes a problem. Too often he finds himself in this position: What is this strange thing I am feeling? It is not hunger. It is not the flu. I am not depressed. Oh, it is loneliness. And even then, he does not know what to do to combat it.

Melvin Melancholy knows loneliness all too well because he does not show his tender feelings. Therefore, the **law of reciprocity** (*the more you give, the more you receive*) does not go into effect. There is a spiritual law on Planet Earth, the **law of reciprocity**. It is called by many names, i.e., what goes around, comes around or you reap what you sow. Jesus referred to it in Luke 6:38 (NIV), "***Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will***

## God Created You

*be measured to you.*” This law works for everyone on the planet. It works positively as well as negatively. This is why Mommy tells her children when a playmate has been hurtful to them, “Do not worry, they will get theirs.”

Most people think Luke 6:38 only refers to giving money on Sunday morning (this is the only place they have ever heard it preached). However, if you will check the context of Luke 6, you will find money is not the subject of Jesus’ text. Jesus is attempting to teach us whatever we put out is what is going to come back to us, the **law of reciprocity**. If we love, we will be loved. If we judge, we will be judged. Melvin Melancholy does not show many verbal and physical expressions of love. He does not receive love verbally or physically. He has deep tender feelings, but he does not show these feelings. Because he is not showing these feelings, people are not showing these feelings towards him. This causes a person to be lonely. The loneliness can be stopped if Melvin and Melody Melancholy will adopt three practices.

*First, develop a close personal relationship with God, in which they feel secure in God’s love and feel free to love God.* This is easier said than done for Melvin and Melody Melancholy. Relationships are not easy for them. They are born with few (none, I am convinced) relationship-enhancing skills. These skills must all be learned. Melvin and Melody Melancholy approach life as a series of tasks to be accomplished instead of endless relationships to be enjoyed. They have approximately 1,000,000 hoops for a person to jump through before a close personal relationship can be declared. There are about 1,000 hoops to jump through to make the Melancholy’s friends list. Everyone else is an acquaintance, and there is a big difference between friends and acquaintances in Melvin and Melody Melancholy’s thinking. They do not easily identify their own deep tender feelings - and are even worse at sharing these feelings. This limits developing close personal relationships with people, including God (God is a people too).

Melody Melancholy interacts with God as she interacts with people. Because she is naturally distrustful, it takes time to gain her trust and enter into close personal relationship. A person has to prove trustworthy before she dares to trust. Therefore, she puts people through tests, i.e., makes them jump through hoops. The same is true for God. The fact He is God does not mean Melody Melancholy automatically trusts Him.

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

Even God has to prove His trustworthiness before she dares to trust Him. However, as she realizes God is ultimately trustworthy, and God's love is unconditional and will not be withdrawn because she has a bad day, then she is freer to interact with God on a more personal level, thus developing a closer personal relationship with Him. The closer the relationship is with God, the less Melody Melancholy falls into loneliness.

*Secondly, develop a close personal relationship in which they would actually give up their life for that person.* Melvin and Melody Melancholy are self-sacrificing for deep personal relationships and mankind in general. Most people around them would know they were being self-sacrificing, because of indirect behavior. Melvin and Melody Melancholy make statements like, "Oh, no. I do not mind going out of my way to help." All the while they are thinking of it as a sacrifice which is not being acknowledged and appreciated. Over time, they tend to develop resentment because no one appreciates all they do.

Melvin Melancholy goes to work everyday to provide a home and food and clothes for his family (instead of buying the toys he wants for himself). He can develop resentment when his teenagers do not appreciate what they have. Melody Melancholy washes, cooks, and cleans for her family. Over time she may become resentful if no one expresses appreciation all she does and they take her for granted. All the time they are sacrificing for family, indirect behavior is sending out vibes saying, "No acknowledgment of appreciation is necessary." Therefore, no one has been providing any. Learning to convey their good works are being done to benefit friends, family, coworkers and employers will help Melvin and Melody Melancholy meet these temperament needs. Learning to say "Thank you" when acknowledgment and appreciation are given will help them to continue to be self-sacrificing without developing resentment.

Taking this attitude to the next level will then help Melvin Melancholy fight loneliness. If he will work at developing one or two deep, close, personal relationships, loneliness will not be a major problem. Relationships are work for the Melancholy. The Melancholy is born with zero relationship skills. It is fortunate Melvin Melancholy does not need many social or close personal relationships – he does not have the time, energy or skills to develop too many. However, Melvin Melancholy is a great learner. He has the ability to learn relationship skills and to

## God Created You

practice them and to develop the social and close personal relationships he needs. This is a must, if Melvin Melancholy is going to successfully combat loneliness.

*Thirdly, find a way to show those gentle feelings and love for people and mankind in general by special acts of service.* The Melancholy does not have the mechanism (naturally) to show affection in physical ways (other than sex). They show love and appreciation by doing special tasks, by acts of service. The Melancholy receives love by significant others doing special tasks for them. Thank God, there are many ways to show these feelings by practical acts of service. Do volunteer work – every organization is always looking for volunteers, including your home church. Spend more time with the family (sitting in front of the TV watching sports and yelling at the kids to be quiet does not count!). Get more involved with the work of God.

It is necessary for Melody Melancholy to convey to her significant others how she expresses love and affection through special tasks. How often has someone said, “Dad did not say ‘I love you,’ but we always had a roof over our heads and food on the table and clothes on our backs.” This is how a Melancholy shows love and affection. And here was a Dad (or Mom) who was able to convey this message to the kids as they were growing up.

Melody Melancholy can also learn to show love and affection in ways easy for significant others to receive. She can learn to say, “I love you.” She can learn to express affection in physical ways not related to sex. She can learn to share her deep tender feelings. She cannot express love and affection by verbal and physical means as often as relationship-oriented temperaments, but she can do it more than what comes naturally to her. This will never become easy or natural, but she can do this! Melody Melancholy needs (this is a temperament need; when met in healthy ways it will reduce stress and anxiety and make life better) to learn to express her deep tender feelings and love by special tasks or acts of service. She needs to let people know she expresses love by doing special tasks for special people. Relationship-oriented temperaments especially need to know this, since they express love and affection verbally and physically. (Melancholies: there are healthy and godly ways of physically expressing love and affection besides – and not leading to – sex! If you are going to have healthy relationships and



#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

not suffer from loneliness, you will need to learn and practice them). Melody Melancholy needs to incorporate a few verbal and physical expressions of love and affection into her relationships. As she learns to practice these, loneliness will become a problem of the past.

The Melancholy in Inclusion has the tendency to develop unhealthy and addictive habits. Alcohol, drugs, overeating, smoking, unhealthy lifestyles, ungodly activities, etc., too easily become the normal routine for the Melancholy. Melancholies like routines, even routines they know are not healthy. In their weaknesses, Melancholies tend to develop unhealthy habits, which are bad for them. These bad habits are not easily broken. In fact, Melancholies cannot simply quit doing bad habits. However, because Melancholies are habitual creatures, they can replace these habits with healthy ones. Learning to eat healthy and to exercise regularly can become positive habits replacing habits of snacking on junk food five times a day while sitting on the couch watching television all evening, day after day. While Melancholies struggle with quitting bad habits, they are much more successful in developing new, healthy habits to replace them.

Melvin Melancholy has a fear of economic failure, preventing him from going forward. He is not a risk-taker. First of all, he does not like to be out of his routine. Secondly, he does not like unfamiliar areas – which are areas in life he is not accustomed to experientially. Adding the fear of economic failure prevents him from trying new activities, moving up the ladder of success, going after the next promotion, starting a business, etc. While the challenge of doing a new project or trying a totally new area of life is exciting to a couple of temperaments, it is scary to Melvin Melancholy. Choleric love a challenge and are quick to take on new adventures in life. Sanguines love a change, the old has become boring.

New or different is uncomfortable for Melvin Melancholy. He likes the status quo. He likes the same routine. He likes the same old, same old – even if he grumbles and complains constantly about it. The old routine is comfortable to him and any changes or new patterns are irritatingly uncomfortable. Therefore, he tends to stay in a job financially struggling instead of attempting a career change (a new area) possibly benefiting him financially. He even talks about doing it and later wishes he had done it, but it seldom ends up done.

## God Created You

Melvin Melancholy is proficient at conquering new areas once he moves beyond this fear of economic failure and the uncomfortable feelings connected with unfamiliar territory. He learns quicker and faster and better than the rest of the temperaments, except maybe the Choleric who loves the challenge of new projects. Once he learns to step past his fears and try it and stick with it for a short amount of time, he will find he is better than most at what he is doing and will feel comfortable there. (He tends to attempt a project or activity once and if perfection is not obtained the first time, he tends to quit). In a matter of a few weeks, this new area will become the same old routine and he will feel competent and comfortable. Most importantly, he will not miss out on what he wants to try but allows fear to prevent him.

This fear of economic failure can also be a temperament strength. Melody Melancholy tends to be overly money and cost conscious. She is always looking for the great deal. She is turning off the lights (or yelling at people to turn off the lights). She is concerned about how much toothpaste the kids put on their toothbrushes. For the most part, she tends to be an economical miser. Except time to time, she does impetuously spend large sums of money foolishly. Melvin and Melody Melancholy have the tendency to constantly yell about the lights being on in the house or the furnace being 2 degrees too high. But he does not see a problem in impetuously buying a new 4X4 truck with \$500/month payments when the bills are already late every month. Or she does not see an inconsistency in buying all new school clothes for the kids and writing a check with no money in the account (or using plastic because there is no money in the bank). Once this tendency to occasionally blow money is overcome, the fear of economic failure can be a strength. Melancholies tend to be thrifty and live within their means.

When Melancholies sink to their weaknesses, they can be destructive to themselves and to people. Moses was a Melancholy (I presume. I have not had the opportunity to do a T.A.P. on him, yet). The same Moses who led the Israelites out of Egypt and through whom God performed mighty miracles for forty years had earlier killed an Egyptian while attempting to reveal himself to Israel as their deliverer. Even at the end of his life, it was Moses' Melancholy unresolved anger keeping him out of the Promise Land. He was so angry at Israel's

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

stubbornness over 40 years Moses struck the rock with his rod instead of speaking to the rock as God said.

However, once the strengths of the Melancholy in Inclusion are brought under the ordinances of God, Melvin and Melody Melancholy are capable of great accomplishments. Once God brought Moses into submission to the ordinances and will of God (no one said Melancholies were quick studies, but they are capable of learning), Moses did fine. It does not have to take 80 years for God to get Melancholies to the useable point like it took Moses. Melancholies are stubborn, but then, God is incredibly patient.

### **Melancholy Control Strengths**

The Melancholy in Control has definite strengths. When controlled, these strengths enable the Melancholy to accomplish great and wonderful achievements. The Melancholy is a wonderful temperament. In truth, all the temperaments are wonderful temperaments with unique traits and abilities. One temperament is not better than another, although one may look better if it naturally has strengths a person desires. For example, the Choleric temperament might seem like a better temperament to a Supine because the Choleric is naturally outgoing and can easily adapt to any social function. Choleric naturally take charge and do not allow people to use and abuse them (they are usually the user and abuser). However, the Choleric struggles with many weaknesses the Supine does not know about. This is true for all the temperaments. They all have strengths and weaknesses. The weaknesses of one temperament might look minor to a different temperament, it might even look like a strength. However, weaknesses are never minor to the person struggling with them.

The Melancholy in Control has wonderful potential. The Supine in Inclusion or the Phlegmatic in Affection has wonderful potential. The strengths of our individual temperament are God's gifts to us. When we are living in the strengths of our temperament, then we can be the person God created us to be. God does not expect us to do all this on our own. He will help us. One way He helps is to reveal our temperament strengths and weaknesses, providing us the opportunity to learn to live in our strengths and not to continue in our weaknesses (which we naturally do).

## God Created You

Learning to use our gifts is an important step in being the person God created us to be (this is the only place you will be happy and satisfied in life). Even in the natural realm of life this is true. If a person is especially talented as an athlete, unless he practices and develops his natural talent, he will never be accomplished and his natural gift will not be a blessing. When it comes to temperament, everyone has unique and special gifts. However, most people do not learn to develop and use these special gifts and therefore these gifts are not a blessing. The strengths of your temperament are gifts from God to you.

The Melancholy Control (i.e., decision-making abilities, willingness to take on responsibilities and the need for independence) strengths include:

- ☺ **Self-motivated.**
- ☺ **Leadership abilities.**
- ☺ **Good decision-making abilities in familiar areas.**
- ☺ **Willingness to take on responsibilities if allowed to proceed at own pace.**
- ☺ **Highly independent.**
- ☺ **Strong-willed.**
- ☺ **Adheres to the rules.**
- ☺ **Family-oriented.**

Melvin Melancholy is self-motivated. Self-motivated means, from a temperament viewpoint, the Melancholy gathers information, analyzes information (sometimes analyzes it to death), draws conclusions and acts accordingly. The promise of reward or the threat of punishment, therefore, does not easily motivate Melvin Melancholy. Self, what he has intellectually concluded, motivates him. If Melvin Melancholy concludes doing well in school is beneficial, he will be prone to do well scholastically. He will not have to be reminded to do homework often. He will not be prone to skip school or waste school time. The Melancholy worker will not need to have constant supervision, will not miss work often and will do a better than average job. The best way to motivate a Melancholy in Control is to provide him with sufficient and accurate information and allow him to draw conclusions. Melvin Melancholy

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

usually makes good decisions, depending upon the information gathered, and he adheres to his conclusions.

Melody Melancholy has leadership abilities. Although she does not desire to exercise control over a lot of people, she does not mind having responsibility over an area with a lot of people in it. She does not want to force people to do what they are supposed to be doing. Melody Melancholy is highly independent and will not tolerate much or any control over her life. She does not wish to exert control over the lives of people. The only time a Melancholy in Control is domineering is because she feels responsible to make sure select people are doing it right. Therefore a Melancholy mother might be controlling with family members because she has concluded it is her responsibility before God to make sure everyone turns out right. (Talk about setting yourself up for major failure!) Exercising control over people causes the Melancholy stress.

Although Melody Melancholy does not want to exercise control over people, she does wish everyone would do what is right. (Right is according to the conclusions she has drawn based upon the information she has gathered). She does not reveal these conclusions well. She believes any sensible person would already know this. She presumes everyone has this list of right and wrong, which includes nearly every subject on the planet, and everyone else lives in this black and white world as well. To the Melancholy everything is right or wrong, black and white – and everyone on the planet already knows all of this, therefore, there is no reason to tell them. These are obvious conclusions and should make perfect sense to anyone with a brain.

Because of this, if people are not living according to Melody Melancholy's right list, they know they are living wrongly. Melody Melancholy does not discern it is okay to do tasks differently than her way. She does not comprehend it is okay for ideas or behaviors not to be right or wrong. She does not recognize the world is more colorful than black and white. She does not understand different people (even Melancholies) have come to different conclusions about right or wrong or unimportant. This causes her much stress and anxiety. Therefore, when she is in leadership, she prefers "working along side of" to "exerting control over" people.

## God Created You

Melancholies have efficient decision-making abilities, as long as it is in familiar areas. Melancholies are not comfortable in new areas – areas not previously dealt with. In familiar areas, the Melancholy is able to gather information, analyze the data, draw sound conclusions, and make a decision. Because Melvin Melancholy has the ability to recognize the downside of ideas, his decisions are usually sound – as long as the information is accurate. Having to make decisions in unfamiliar areas makes him uncomfortable, even to the point of procrastination or being unable to make a decision. He does not want to look stupid or feel incompetent. No decision makes more sense to him than a choice making him look stupid.

Even though Melvin Melancholy has this fear of unfamiliar areas, areas not previously dealt with experientially, he is willing to take on responsibilities if allowed to move at his own pace. In new areas, he moves slowly and deliberately. He has a need to feel competent and in control, which he absolutely does not feel when embarking in new areas. However, if allowed to move at his own pace, Melvin Melancholy will end up getting there faster, quicker, better, and more efficiently. He is strong-willed. Once he puts his mind to it, he keeps hammering away at it until it is done. When it is done, it is done right.

We list “strong-willed” under the strengths of the Melancholy in Control because of “stick-to-it-ness.” Once Melody Melancholy’s mind is made up, it is not easily changed nor does she give up. Of course, wrong conclusions can be destructive. The Melancholy student who concludes she does not have to graduate from high school, or education will not benefit her, simply will not do well in school and probably will not graduate. The Melancholy husband who concludes being a decent husband only requires going to work and making a living for his family will probably never learn to meet his wife’s or children’s actual needs. The Melancholy laborer who concludes he is doing the company a favor by showing up for work from time to time will probably not be a productive worker. These Melancholies have all drawn conclusions based on inaccurate information. Even though their conclusions will prove to be false, they are strong-willed and seldom change their behaviors. Changed behavior only comes from drawing a new conclusion based on more accurate information. Usually Melancholies will not reconsider conclusions until drastically forced to rethink their position. When a

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

wife files for divorce, the Melancholy husband might consider counseling (to help his wife). When the Melancholy laborer has been fired from a job, he might reconsider his work ethics.

However, this strong-willed tendency of the Melancholy in Control is a true strength when conclusions have been based on accurate information. The Melancholy missionary who has concluded it is God's will for him to minister in a hard missionary field will most likely stay. The Melancholy parent who inherited children with the new marriage will work at being a proper parent. Most Melancholy laborers show up every day, do their jobs and do them well. Few Melancholy church members are ready to flee because a few church problems arise from time to time. They are usually the ones still there long after the problems (and people causing the problems) have left.

Living by the rules is a trait of the Melancholy in Control. It is not unique to the Melancholy; the Supine is also a temperament who tends to live by the rules. However, Melvin Melancholy does have a unique way of going about this – he makes the rules and lives only by the rules he made. Every situation in Melvin Melancholy's life fits on a list of right and wrong. This list becomes the rules he adheres to, his code of ethics. If he has concluded everyone is suppose to live by the laws of the land, he will obey to the best of his ability. If he has concluded certain laws do not have to be obeyed or the government has no right to pass such laws, he will regularly violate them.

I was sitting around talking with three pastors. During our conversation, two of the pastors began telling of occasions when they had been caught speeding. One was married to a policeman. She never received a ticket – although policemen keep stopping her and warning her. One pastor had two policemen in his congregation, therefore all the policemen knew of him (small community) and he seldom received tickets. The third pastor keep silent for a few moments and then began lecturing them on how the Bible speaks about obeying the laws of the land. Because one of them was a Youth Pastor, this third pastor also pointed out her bad example to the youth of the church by breaking the law. Before long I was dragged into the discussion, both sides were asking me how many tickets I had – none in 26 years. Neither of the two pastors bragging about fast driving could even believe it.

## God Created You

I knew two of the pastors in the conversation had Melancholy in their temperament. Yet one had concluded the laws of the land did not always have to be obeyed (by him) and one concluded it is Biblical to obey the laws of the land. Both were living by their conclusions. Both were adhering to the rules – the rules each of them had concluded should apply. Both thought the other was being unreasonable or unbiblical or both. Melancholies tend to adhere to the rules – but they decide which rules are legitimate to follow.

The Melancholy in Control is family-oriented. Now this may come as a shock to the families of Melancholies. Family life may be where Melancholies express indirect behavior the most. Indirect behavior is expressing one desire, want, or need when in reality the preference is completely different. Supines and Melancholies have the most indirect behavior. The Supine in Affection expresses through words, body language, etc., little need for physical and verbal expressions of love and affection. The opposite is true. The Melancholy in Control is family-oriented, yet this is not what is expressed to own family members. Through words, body language, anger, non-participation in family activities, Melancholies express to family members their preference not to be in the family, or family participation is only a duty. However, this is not how they truly feel. Melancholies in Control who are not involved in family relationships are rare. If they do not have a spouse and children of their own (usually not by their choice), they will be interacting with parents, siblings, relatives or close friends with families more than would be usual for Melancholies.

Melvin and Melody Melancholy do not verbally express deep tender feelings well. They are not proficient at physical expressions of love and affection. Unless they have learned to express emotions, family members do not often hear they are loved and appreciated. However, Melvin and Melody Melancholy do often express to family members what they are doing wrong, how they are acting stupid, how they are not living up to expectations and sly and hurtful comments are plentiful. They are great at pointing out the negative side of everything but limited in expressing positive points. Add the statements made in outbursts of anger like “I wish I had never married you” or “You are worthless” or “Why did we ever have these stupid kids?” It is easy for family members to conclude they are unloved and unappreciated. It is easy to see how



#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

this strength of the Melancholy in Control could go unnoticed. Melvin and Melody Melancholy need to learn to express their deep tender feelings toward family members in positive ways.

As Melvin and Melody Melancholy are living in the strengths of their temperament, it is a great benefit to the family members. They are family-oriented. They will not be quick to divorce or run away from normal family problems. They have the tendency to hang in there and stick it out during the tough times (all relationships have tough times). As family members recognize this strength, it will help them to be more secure during the tough times. As Melvin and Melody Melancholy acknowledge this strength, they will be less prone to express indirect behavior and more prone to express the love and appreciation family members need. They have deep tender feelings. They simply do not express them well. Expressing deep tender feelings by means people can easily understand is a learned trait for Melancholies. The recognition and expression of this one temperament strength, being family-oriented, will add much stability to any family.

### **Melancholy Control Weaknesses**

As Melvin Melancholy learns to live in the strengths of his temperament, a portion of the weaknesses will automatically be overcome. For example, he has this mental list of right and wrong. The only subjects in life not on this list are what he considers unimportant. He thinks everyone on the planet has the same list. Every Melancholy has this list, but it varies greatly from person to person. As Melvin Melancholy accepts the fact his right and wrong list is not totally correct, he becomes more flexible with people. As he also recognizes life is more multicolored than his black and white world, he will be more apt to give people the right to be wrong (a right they practice regularly). By living in the strengths, he will not be as rigid and inflexible – two of the weaknesses of the temperament.

Additional temperament weaknesses will need to be dealt with or consciously controlled also – it will not happen automatically. For the Melancholy in Control, anger would be a prime example. Melancholies cannot automatically override the tendency to mask and deny anger. They mask and deny anger well. They do not even know they are doing it. Denial is a great place to live – life is okay and no confrontations are

## God Created You

necessary - but it is not a healthy place to live. Dealing with anger in appropriate and godly ways will be a learned behavior demanding regular energy and control.

The Melancholy Control (i.e., decision-making abilities, willingness to take on responsibilities and the need for independence) weaknesses include:

- ⊗ **Rigid.**
- ⊗ **Inflexible.**
- ⊗ **Sensitive to failure.**
- ⊗ **Fear of the unknown.**
- ⊗ **Fear of failure.**
- ⊗ **Apt to be a rebel.**
- ⊗ **Procrastinate.**
- ⊗ **Much anger, usually masked (even to themselves).**

The flip side of the strength of being strong-willed is the weaknesses of being rigid and inflexible – and not in healthy behavior. Melancholies in Control draw conclusions from whatever information they have gathered and live by these conclusions (self-motivated in temperament terms). If someone attempts to change their mind, and they are not open to change, Melancholies in Control become rigid and inflexible in a bad way. We have all seen a movie where the husband has concluded supper is suppose to be on the table at 5:00 p.m. If it is not ready and on the table at 5:00 p.m. without excuse, there will be hell to pay. Sure enough, before the movie was over something happened and supper did not get on the table by 5:00 p.m. (usually not the wife's fault). The husband is angry, acting out, even being violent. In his eyes it is not his fault (the audience knows better). It is his wife's fault. After all, he works hard all day making a living for his worthless family and all he expects is a decent meal on time. This is being rigid and inflexible (and stupid).

These Melancholy Control weaknesses do not always come out this noticeably. However, the Melancholy in Control has a tendency to not be open to new or different ideas. Once the conclusion has been drawn, life should be this way for everybody – period. Melancholies tend to be closed minded. Whatever these conclusions, they make perfect

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

sense to the Melancholy and therefore anyone with any sense should draw the same conclusions. In the weaknesses of the temperament, any attempt for further discussion activates the rigidity and inflexibility, usually accompanied with the expression of anger in unhealthy and ungodly ways.

Melody Melancholy is prone to low self-esteem, therefore she is also sensitive to failure. The fear of failure stops her from doing or attempting new events she would like to try. In the workplace, she tends to stay at the current job instead of going after a position she would like to have. If she is not confident in her ability, she is likely not to attempt it. If she has attempted a new activity or project in the past and failed, her fear of failure is even more sensitive to new events. She feels like a total failure by merely contemplating the new job or position or promotion. In the weakness of the temperament, she will remain in the current position and will grumble, complain and often express “I wish I had...” once the opportunity goes by.

This also comes into play with the Melancholy in Control and the mid-life crisis. Often I hear, when involved in marriage counseling with people in their 40's, 50's and even 60's, “I wish I had dated more in high school.” Or, “I wish I had had more fun in college.” Or “I wish I had dated the prettier girls (or better looking guys) in school.” Or, “I think I settled. I could have done much better (referring to their spouse).” Too often, decades of regrets of not trying (because of this sensitivity to and fear of failure) results in poor decisions in the “before it is too late” attempt to compensate for their loss. An affair, a weird job change, a new sports car, etc., can be an attempt to make up for what the Melancholy in Control feels has been lost. When living in the temperament weaknesses, Melancholies in Control can be destructive to themselves and to the people who love us them.

One of the strengths of the Melancholy in Control is the tendency to adhere to the rules. The flip side, the weakness, is the tendency to be a rebel. Melvin Melancholy is self-motivated, meaning the threat of punishment or the promise of reward does not easily persuade him (behaviorally). He gathers information, draws conclusions, and behaves accordingly. When Melvin Melancholy is living in the weaknesses of his temperament, the behavior stemming from conclusions can easily equal rebellion. The rule he lives by becomes “All rules were made to

## God Created You

be broken – and I am the one to break them.” Melancholies are clever at passive-aggressive types of rebellion.

Melvin Melancholy will not necessarily verbally rebel to your face, however his actions will be in line with his rebellion and anger. As a child, he may believe parents have no right to inflict rules concerning his bedroom. He may never say defiantly, “No, I will not clean up my room” but his room will always be a mess. Grounding him to the bedroom until it is clean will not help. As a teenager who believes he should be making all of his own decisions at 15, he will not necessarily say (though he might), “I do not care what you say, I am smoking, drinking, partying, etc.” but he will be doing it behind his parents’ backs at every opportunity. Even after he has been caught several times and punished his behavior will continue. Melancholies continue to live by the rules until they change the rules. Melvin Melancholy will not necessarily attempt to get the “stupid” shop rules changed, he simply will not follow them. Reprimands will not help. If he believes the government should not be telling its citizens what to do, he will not necessarily work at changing the seat belt law, he consistently will refuse to wear one. Tickets will not change his mind. You get the idea. Melancholies are strong-willed, and when they have decided to be rebellious, the threat of punishment and the promise of reward will not change their minds.

Two of the weaknesses of the Melancholy in Control seem to feed each other. Melody Melancholy has a fear of the unknown and the tendency to procrastinate. Many times, her procrastination is a symptom of this fear of the unknown. This fear of the unknown is a tendency not to move into any areas of life unfamiliar (experientially) to her. For example, Melancholies have leadership abilities. However, if Melody Melancholy has never been in a leadership position before, she will procrastinate in applying for such a position and will be slow in acting like the boss once in the position. Once she has been the boss long enough to become comfortable, she will be an able boss, most likely.

Melvin and Melody Melancholy do not like new. They do not like changes. Change equals stress to them. Changes may be challenging, even exciting, to certain temperaments, but not to Melvin and Melody Melancholy. Change, even positive change, equals stress. I remember when our last child went off to college. She left for college one week.

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

We moved into a new home the next week. We had wanted to do it for years, but remained where we were because of the school system. We moved from the country into the city (I am a city guy). It was finally only my wife and I – freedom! A few months later, I moved the ministry into a nicer office complex. I had been praying about doing this for a couple of years. By the first of the year, I noticed my stress levels were high. “Why?” I asked myself. My life was decent – better than it had been in years. Then I remembered, Melancholies do not like change. Change, even positive change, causes us stress. Our lives had taken on several major changes in a few short months. All positive changes. All changes we had been looking forward to, a couple of them for years. However, with the changes came the higher stress levels. The Melancholy likes life to remain the way it is, even when they do not like the way it is.

Melvin and Melody Melancholy need time to move into unfamiliar areas. They always move into unfamiliar areas at a slow pace (the more they feel pressured, the slower they move). People see this slowness as procrastination. Sometimes, they are procrastinating because of the fear of the unknown, especially when it is coupled with the fear of failure. However, Melvin and Melody Melancholy do learn new projects and skills quicker and become proficient faster – once they get around to tackling it. As they learn this about themselves, they do not move as slowly into unfamiliar areas nor do they procrastinate as much.

The biggest problem the Melancholy in Control faces (and the most noticeable to those around them) is anger. Melvin Melancholy has a lot of hidden, unresolved anger. He tends to mask anger; he does not call it anger, he renames it and stuffs it away. Then he denies having any anger. He does not even know how much masked, hidden anger is residing within himself. If he is not at the point of rage, he does not think anger is a problem.

Melvin Melancholy often makes statements to justify anger like, “I am not angry, I am frustrated” (Masking). Or “If you didn’t make me mad, I wouldn’t be angry.” However, this is not true. Unless he learns (and this is a learned trait) to deal with anger in constructive ways, anger is always going to be a problem. The Bible tells us expressing our anger in inappropriate ways (like violence) is wrong. The same Bible also tells us *“Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger.”* (Ephesians 4:26 NASB). Therefore it is as wrong to mask

## God Created You

and internalize anger as it is to inappropriately externalize anger. More than being as wrong, it is as harmful to all parties.

Anger needs to be recognized, appropriately expressed and then released. It is hard for the Melancholy to learn to let go of (release) the anger. People who internalize anger or inappropriately express anger and do not learn to release it have a continual problem with anger. It continues to come up whenever their buttons have been pushed. It is never dealt with, but masked, buried and denied. This is not healthy. It is not healthy for the person. It is not healthy for the people who are in relationship with the person. Unresolved anger will not automatically go away. It will continually surface and negatively affect everyone, at home, at work and at play.

Anger internalized is as destructive as anger inappropriately expressed by yelling, screaming, throwing objects, or hitting people. Internalized anger surfaces differently. A person violates one little (usually unknown) boundary and a big explosion of anger flows from Melvin Melancholy. He tends to overreact and blow circumstances out of proportion. No one knows what sets him off. The problem is not that one minor violation (action or attitude) set him off. It is “the straw that broke the camel’s back” predicament. His masked anger is at the limit when someone violates a minor rule or a situation arises adding to the anger. It starts pouring out like water behind a broken dam. Once all the masked, internalized anger begins to come out, it all comes out; and it always comes out ugly. Like a dam breaking, everything behind the dam, no matter how long it has been there, comes rushing forth. All the anger Melvin Melancholy has internalized and stored up comes pouring forth over a minor infraction. Until he learns to let it go, it will all rebuild until the next overload and the cycle will continue.

Passive-aggressive expressions of anger, which Melody Melancholy masters easily, are also inappropriate and destructive. She is angry and becomes distant, but refuses to acknowledge the anger when asked (but everyone around knows something is wrong). She may go for days punishing people with emotional withdrawal and occasional snide remarks, all the time denying anything is wrong. She is not helping matters anymore than the one throwing a fit over a minor rule infraction. It may be easier to put up with for the moment, but it will have hurtful, destructive results to the relationship in the long run.

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

Melancholies tend to express anger in learned ways. If they grew up seeing an adult yell and throw objects when angry, they will tend to do the same. If Melancholies grew up with passive-aggressive expressions of anger from the significant adults in life, they will express anger in a passive-aggressive manner. More about dealing with anger constructively and in ways pleasing to God is found in Chapter 8.

### **Melancholy Affection Strengths**

In the temperament area of Affection, how people interact with deep, personal relationships and the need for love and affection, Melvin and Melody Melancholy are by nature task-oriented. In showing love and affection, they tend to do it in task-oriented ways. This is also true in receiving love and affection. Melvin Melancholy tends not to verbally or physically express love and affection, but expects his family to know he loves them because he works hard and provides a home, food, clothing, etc. Melody Melancholy is not overly touchy-feely but does convey to her family “if you love me then you will do this for me”. The demanded task differs greatly from Melancholy to Melancholy. “If you appreciate me, you will keep your rooms clean” has been told to many a child of the Melancholy parent.

The Melancholy in Affection does not need many close personal relationships. Developing and maintain relationships is work for the Melancholy. This is one reason Melancholies tend to be devastated by the loss of a close personal relationship, even by death. It was a lot of work to get the relationship to the point it was at and now they have to start all over again with someone else. As far as I can tell, Melancholies are born with zero relationship skills. Unlike the Sanguine, who was born with every relationship skill available to human beings, the Melancholy has to learn relationship skills.

After Melody Melancholy has learned a few relationship skills, she has to practice using these skills with people until relationships move past acquaintances to friendships. Yes, the Melancholy actually distinguishes between acquaintances and actual friendships – and there are many levels of each. After a friendship has been achieved, then more time, energy and relationship skills are needed to move the friendship into a close personal relationship; which Melody Melancholy desperately needs, even though she will not admit it. Relationships take time and

## God Created You

much energy. As hard as this may be for the rest of the temperaments to believe, I have concluded the Melancholy Compulsive in Affection can get all temperament needs met in the right family relationship and a healthy relationship with God. But, before we continue...

The Melancholy Affection (i.e., the need for love, affection and deep, personal relationships) strengths include:

- ☺ **Being a faithful and loyal friend.**
- ☺ **Self-sacrificing for deep personal friends and mankind in general.**
- ☺ **Deep tender feelings (even thought Melvin and Melody Melancholy lack the ability to express these feelings).**
- ☺ **Easily empathize with people.**
- ☺ **Have the ability to make deep commitments.**

Once a close personal relationship has been established, the Melancholy in Affection is a faithful and loyal friend. Remember the parable in the Bible where a man went to his friend to borrow bread because a friend of his had come from a distance and arrived at midnight (Luke 11:5-8)? The family was already in bed when the man came knocking at the door. The man inside the house attempted to explain why he could not get up and give his friend the bread. However, Melvin Melancholy would have gotten up, even grumbling, and given his friend the bread the first time he knocked. At least, he would have sent his wife to get the bread. (Melancholies view it as helping when they command the task to be done. "Dear, let me help you with the dishes," the Melancholy husband says to his wife. Then he yells into the next room, "Son, get off your butt and do the dishes for your Mother." The Melancholy's conclusion is he helped with the dishes).

In marriage counseling, Melvin Melancholy's wife will share example after example of how friends take advantage of him. He views this as helping a friend, not being taken advantage of by friends. She, a different temperament, sees this as a mild form of abuse and is greatly irritated by it. However, he is a faithful and loyal friend (once the relationship is developed) and views helping a friend in need as what friends are suppose to do.



#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

One Sanguine wife was telling me how her Melancholy in Affection husband had worked long hours all week and then spent the weekend helping a friend roof his house. The Melancholy husband responded with facts and logic, the job had taken longer than expected because certain problems arose. It was also the only time available to help this friend. He could not see why she was upset because he had helped this guy, who had been a close friend of his for many years. When she revealed she felt like it was taking time away from the family, I could tell by his response her thought had never crossed his mind. In his mind, he was helping a friend, which took precedent over personal or family preferences. In her mind, his friend was taking advantage of him at the cost of the family.

Here is a thought: because you are married to a Melancholy in Affection does not automatically place you on the close personal relationship list. This is a place you must qualify for over a period of time and by jumping through many hoops, passing many tests and proving you are worthy. No one can get there by an act of God (being born into a family) or by a legal document (a marriage license). People may presume a husband and wife should automatically be best friends. Specific temperaments, like the Sanguine, would be prone to interact like best friends once married and expect the same, because of the marriage, from the spouse. Most Melancholies in Affection would not fall into this category. Friendships and close personal relationships have to be developed and earned over a period of time. People have to prove themselves worthy, metaphorically speaking, of being the friend or best friend of the Melancholy. This does not usually happen by a ceremony or signed document.

Nor does this happen because one is a family member of the Melancholy in Affection. Being the child of a Melancholy parent does not automatically qualify you for the close personal relationship list. I was talking to a Melancholy father about developing a relationship with his grown children whom he had been estranged from because of a divorce and what his ex-wife had said about him to the kids. His attitude was, “they know where I live and if they want a better relationship with me they can call me”. And this guy wanted a renewed relationship with his children!

## God Created You

There is no way to automatically be the best friend of a Melancholy in Affection. However, once the relationship is established, Melvin and Melody Melancholy are loyal and faithful friends. They are self-sacrificing for deep personal relationships and for mankind as a whole. This is why it seems people tend to take advantage of them, because of this self-sacrificing trait. It is a great trait; the rest of the temperaments would benefit by incorporating it into their own regular behavior (Supines naturally do). Learning to set boundaries and saying “No” occasionally will stop most people from taking advantage of this self-sacrificing trait of Melvin and Melody Melancholy.

It will also help Melvin and Melody Melancholy to inform people of exactly what they consider a sacrifice. They tend to come off as “I want to do this for you.” They tend to blow off appreciation or recognition for tasks accomplished. Because of this indirect behavior, the recognition and appreciation begin to slack off. They do not need a high amount of appreciation, but when this need is not being met (which indirect behavior causes) they do feel people are taking advantage and resentment begins to build. The more resentment, the more grumbling and complaining about helping these friends. Melvin and Melody Melancholy need to learn to accept recognition and appreciation. Learning to say, “You’re welcome” to someone’s “Thank you” will help. It will also help to learn to convey what is a sacrifice to them.

I knew a man whose time had come to get a new vehicle. He had been driving an old small pickup with a lot of mile on it and it was quickly wearing out. His wife had a new(er) car and now it was his turn. His youngest daughter had graduated from high school and was going to college in the fall. The rest of the kids were out of the house and on their own. He had talked about getting a new truck for a long time. And, finally, his time had come. His name was next on the list. This was his summer to get a new truck.

However, his daughter’s car was older and would not make it through four years of college. The more he thought about it, the more he saw no reason for her to take her car to college only to have to attempt to replace it in a couple of years on a student’s budget. He and his wife helped her to get a nicer, more dependable car thinking it would last her through four years of college. In the process, he would have to

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

wait a while for his new truck. He was willing to make this sacrifice for his daughter.

During one of her visits home the first college year, she was griping about her car (it needed minor repairs). She also made a few negative comments about his old beat up truck and said he should go and buy a new one. He was getting angry at her attitude. He sacrificed his new truck in order for her to be able to drive a decent car and now she was griping and complaining about it. However, he had never informed her of the sacrifice he had made. His wife knew, but his daughter did not. Instead of continuing to allow his anger to mount and fester, he matter-of-factly informed her he sacrificed buying a new truck for her to be able to drive a decent car while she was in college. He also informed her he did not appreciate the griping and complaining he was hearing. She obviously did not know about his sacrifice and stopped complaining and started being more appreciative (over time). His anger subsided because he had expressed his perspective instead of allowing it to grow and fester. It will help Melancholies to let people know when they are making, or have made, a sacrifice.

Even though Melvin Melancholy does not look like it, nor does he necessarily want anyone to know this, he does have deep tender feelings. Most of the time he comes across as someone who is heartless or uncaring. However, he does have deep tender feelings but lacks (naturally) the ability to express these feelings. In fact, he has a hard time identifying exactly what he is feeling. Anger, once it has hit the rage end of the scale, is identifiable. The rest of the emotions he simply throws into the pile of frustration. The emotions not fitting into frustration are put in the good category.

Conversations with Melvin Melancholy about his emotions are usually completed in one word sentences. “How are you feeling?” ends up with a “good” or “frustrated.” Except when he is discussing anger and who made him angry. Anger conversations go on and on and on, rehearsing over and over who did what, while he gets angrier and angrier. Conversations about any other emotion are extremely limited. This is partly because of Melvin Melancholy’s lack of ability to identify and express his own emotions and partly because he is emotionally guarded – he does not necessarily want anyone else to know how he feels. Until he learns to identify his emotions and express these feelings in

## God Created You

comfortable ways, he will remain emotionally guarded. This causes him to remain distant to the people attempting to have a close personal relationship with him (including spouses and family members). Thus few (fewer than he actually needs) close personal relationships. Thus loneliness is a problem as mentioned earlier in this chapter.

Melvin Melancholy does not have a problem discussing the emotions of people. He can talk about their feelings. He can listen to them talk about their feelings. He easily empathizes with people. He kind of automatically knows how people are feeling and is capable of being supportive. Melvin Melancholy would be a good counselor; he is a listener, he identifies with people's feelings, he empathizes, he understands, he gives better than adequate advice – and he stays emotionally unattached. What makes a good counselor does not always make a good best friend or spouse. Close personal relationships need emotional involvement.

The good news (and the strength of this temperament) is Melvin and Melody Melancholy have deep tender feelings. They actually do care. They do not have to be taught to care. They do not have to be taught to feel. They simply need to learn to identify emotions and to express their deep tender feelings in comfortable ways. They are not comfortable expressing feelings by many different means, but are able to find ways of expression with which they are okay. This greatly reduces their own stress and anxiety, the stress and anxiety of those in close relationships with them, and wonderfully improves these relationships. Since they already have the ability to empathize, which in itself is a wonderful strength and ability, becoming a little less emotionally guarded and a little more open enhances every relationship they already have.

This ability to empathize makes Melody Melancholy a candidate for people to talk to. I have had many Melancholies in Affection tell me people always talk to them about their problems. Since Melody Melancholy is not relationship-oriented, she is mildly irritated by people's problem sharing and wonders why people open up to her. The answer is simple: she has a gift. She easily empathizes and people looking for a listening ear are naturally drawn to her. Melancholies in Affection are able counselors.

Melody Melancholy has the ability to make deep commitments. She does tend to come across like she does not want any close personal

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

relationships. She does have a touch of indirect behavior when it comes to relationships. From time to time, she may believe she does not want or need close personal relationships; they involve too much work and pain. While she does not need many close relationships, she does need a few. Melody Melancholy does need a relationship or two with the commitment level high enough to literally die for the person. Without this type of commitment to someone, she will be a lonely person. The person involved may or may not know the commitment has been made since she is emotionally guarded. She would not necessarily feel the need to express it. She is a faithful and loyal friend once the relationship has been established.

Melvin Melancholy shows love and affection by task-related means. He might express love by working hard to provide for the family. He does special tasks for people he considers special. The relationship-oriented people involved in a close personal relationship with him receive love and affection by verbal and physical expression. It is easy for his Sanguine wife to think he is not committed to the marriage. I have had many a relationship-oriented spouse in tears and unbelief in my office as the Melancholy spouse (this is not gender related) finally opened up and began to share their deep feelings of love and commitment. The problem is they have been talking in two different languages. Melvin Melancholy is talking in the language of task-oriented love and affection. His spouse is talking in the language of relationship-oriented love and affection. Until they both start talking the same language (a balance of task and relationship-oriented expressions of love and affection), both are feeling unloved and unneeded and unappreciated.

Melvin Melancholy is also able to make deep commitments to inanimate objects as well as to people. Because he is task-oriented, he is naturally able to make deep commitments to careers, organizations, jobs, churches, committees, etc., easier than to people. Once he finds a cause to believe in and once he has made the commitment, he is loyal. The Melancholy pastor who is committed to God and to the church he is serving will be faithful and self-sacrificing to both. The Melancholy laborer who is committed to her job will not be taking a lot of sick time or missing work much; she will be doing an adequate job every day she is there. Once Melvin Melancholy has made a commitment, either to

## God Created You

God or to a person or to an institution or to an idea, he is faithful, loyal and self-sacrificing to his commitments.

The Melancholy temperament has wonderful strengths. It also has devastating weaknesses. As much as any temperament, maybe even more, learning to live in the strengths of the Melancholy temperament results in a great blessing to themselves and to the people involved in their lives. Once these strengths are brought under the ordinances of God, the Melancholy is capable of great accomplishments.

### **Melancholy Affection Weaknesses**

When Melvin and Melody Melancholy sink to their weaknesses, they become destructive to themselves and to the people in relationship with them. For the Melancholy, as for all the temperaments, sinking to the weaknesses is the easy part. All they have to do is get up in the morning and live life without regards for anyone else. Do whatever pleases them. Take care of number one. Look out for them. Get all they can get, anyway they can get it, and spend it all on themselves. If any person lives this way, no matter what the temperament, every weakness will come forth. This is true for the Melancholy, as well as for the Sanguine, the Choleric, the Phlegmatic, and the Supine. The results are a life of misery and unhappiness and destruction for the person and, to a degree, everyone involved with the person in any type of relationship.

For the Melancholy, living in the temperament weaknesses result in a black, moody life filled with unhappiness and depression. Hippocrates referred to the Melancholy temperament as “the Black Temperament.” The Melancholy is prone to deep, dark depression. The Melancholy is also prone to attempt to dull the pain of life by alcohol, drugs, illicit sexual activity and similar behaviors capable of covering and dulling the hurt.

The Melancholy Affection (i.e., the need for love, affection and deep, personal relationships) weaknesses include:

- ⊗ **Melvin and Melody Melancholy dissect the past with theoretical “what ifs” (“what if” I were prettier, they would love me more)**
- ⊗ **They are critical of people.**

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

- ⊗ **Angry.**
- ⊗ **Cruel.**
- ⊗ **Vengeful.**
- ⊗ **Emotionally guarded, rarely tell people how they feel.**
- ⊗ **Low self-image.**
- ⊗ **Sensitive to rejection from deep relationships.**

Melvin and Melody Melancholy tend to analyze, over-analyze, and analyze to death what they think about. Coupled with a low self-image and natural negativity, they can easily get bogged down in depression from past mistakes. They are naturally negative; the glass is always half empty, never half full. Thank God, they can learn to think positively. I am convinced Philippians 4:8 was written for Melvin and Melody Melancholy. They need to learn to be more positive in their thinking. Review the verse carefully. There is nothing negative in it.

*Philippians 4:8 (NIV) Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.*

Melvin and Melody Melancholy are able to remember (nearly) everything said or done by anyone in life, real or perceived, proving they are not as capable as everyone else. They gather and store information proving they are sub-par, thus their low self-image. Applying Philippians 4:8 will help them to see themselves as the special, unique people God created them to be.

Until Melody Melancholy learns to think positively and see herself in God's light, she will tend to dissect the past with theoretical "what ifs." She concludes, based on little fact, if she had behaved differently or made different choices life would be better. If she had been a better child, her parents would not have divorced. If she had taken a different job, life would be better. If she had gone to college, she would be making more money and would be happier. If she had been a better wife, her

## God Created You

husband would not have beaten her. On and on goes the “what ifs” until she is constantly unhappy about life.

When Melody Melancholy is unhappy, when she is living in the weaknesses of the temperament, then the rest of the weaknesses tend to come forth abundantly. She becomes critical. People driving on the road are stupid. Co-workers are not doing their jobs right. The boss is dumb. The children are a pain. Her husband is a “man” (I am not sure what this means exactly, but it seems to be the flip side of “dumb female”). Her critical attitude is not limited to people; she also becomes critical of herself. This critical attitude is rooted in low self-image and in the emotion of anger. Since Melody Melancholy tends to bury anger and deny its existence, anger lies below the surface and grows. It can only be buried and masked and denied for a limited amount of time. Even twenty years is a limited amount of time – and she cannot live in denial for years. Anger has to be expressed. Eventually it has to come out. When anger is not dealt with in healthy and constructive ways, it always comes out “ugly.” She overreacts. One minor rule is violated and a flood of anger comes forth. When in the weaknesses of the temperament, she tends to express this flood of anger in cruel and vengeful ways.

Melancholies usually express anger in learned ways. If, when a child, the Melancholy saw adults expressing anger by inappropriate verbal means, then she tends to express anger by inappropriate verbal means as an adult. If she saw adults physically expressing anger by throwing objects, slugging walls or hitting people, then this is how she will be prone to express anger. Passive-aggressive patterns also fall into this category. If she saw dad tell mom he was not mad, but remained emotionally distant for a couple of weeks, then she will tend to express anger likewise. Whatever forms of expression the Melancholy’s anger takes, when living in the weaknesses, she tends to bury, deny, and mask anger; yet expresses it in cruel and vengeful ways in time.

Melvin Melancholy is emotionally guarded. He rarely tells people how he feels. This does not help deep personal relationships. His wife feels rejected and unwanted and unloved because he rarely says, “I love you. I like being married to you. I like having you and the kids as my family.” Oh, he is family-oriented. He simply forgets to tell the family members. Therefore, family members do not know it. He has deep



#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

tender feelings, although he does not have the skills (naturally) to share his feelings with anyone. He shows love and affection by doing special tasks, but no one knows what he is expressing love and affection through these tasks. It is like he has this attitude, “I told you I loved you when we were married 25 years ago. If it changes, I will send you a memo.”

Many times Melvin Melancholy’s deep tender feelings make it to the brain, he looks at his wife and kids and thinks, “I love you”, but it never comes out his mouth. Then he wonders why the kids do not understand how much he loves them or why his wife has filed for divorce. More than one Melancholy in Affection has come for counseling after the divorce papers have been served and told me, “I did not even know anything was wrong.” His (this is not limited to gender) wife has usually been telling him for years she was tired of being married and lonely. Now the kids are gone and she feels married to a stranger.

Melody Melancholy is sensitive to rejection from deep personal relationships. She tends to perceive rejection even where none was meant. She analyzes, over-analyzes and analyzes to death what is said or done, or not said or done, and draws the conclusion this significant person is rejecting her. Because she is emotionally guarded, she does not ask the person what was actually meant by the statement or action. She analyzes the information (real or presumed), draws a conclusion and believes this conclusion is the one and only answer. This also comes into play with the death of a significant person – the ultimate rejection. She has a hard time getting past the death of a significant person.

A major weakness Melvin Melancholy has is he is sexually oriented but not romantically inclined. He tends to “have sex”; he does not “make love”. Without training, Melancholies do not know the difference. Melancholies in Affection think touchy-feely expressions need to end with sex, otherwise, why do it? Foreplay is merely a means to an end. Once a person is married, one should have the right to the ends without the means. All that romantic nonsense was for courtship days. This Melancholy attitude about sex causes marital problems. Being romantically inclined in a learned process with the Melancholy in Affection. Everything is a learned process for the Melancholy. The Melancholy temperament is “the learned temperament.”

This “touchy-feely must equal sex” attitude is also a problem between Melancholy fathers and their daughters (Melancholy mothers

## God Created You

and sons would fall into this also). Melvin Melancholy interprets certain actions by people of the opposite gender as wanting sex. This can lead to unhealthy sexual activity between the parent and child. This can lead to an unhealthy distancing of the parent and child. More than one Melvin Melancholy father has refused to hug or touch his teenage daughter because of this Melancholy sex attitude; leaving the daughter feeling rejected and unloved and many times seeking love and affection from other males. True story: One pastor told his young, developing teenage daughters he could no longer be seen with them in public without their mother present or ever be alone with them because people would conclude an unhealthy sexual relationship was going on between them. The daughters had almost no individual contact with their father during the high school years. Both of the daughters, even into mid-life, have had a sordid sexual life.

Melancholy fathers need to also read the section on Sanguine in Affection in this book. There are a great couple of paragraphs about being the safe male in your daughter's life.

## **What Melancholies Can Do To Live In The Temperament Strengths**

Have you ever wondered why God interacts noticeably different with different people? I used to. I did not think it was fair. God always seemed to be a little more bold and demanding with me than He was with everyone else. I am sure God has never yelled or been at all forceful with my wife (of course, she is nearly perfect in every way), but He has taken me to task more than once. It seems like God is gentle and easy with one person while overly stern with someone else.

I did not understand it until I learned about temperament. God deals with us individually according to the temperament He has given us. Speak harshly to Susie Supine, even kidding, and she can be crushed in spirit. When Eric Choleric is in the "more righteous than anyone/I know what I am doing" mood, sometimes it takes a knock on the side of the head with a two-by-four to get his attention (Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus). God knows exactly how He has created everyone in temperament and He knows exactly how to deal with him or her. God deals with us individually according to our temperament.

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

We also deal with God according to our temperament, the way we interact with people. Phoebe Phlegmatic has a laid back relationship (when in the strengths of her Temperament) with people. This is exactly how she deals with God. She never gets “on fire,” but is steady and rolls with the punches well. It is hard to ruffle her feathers in her relationship with God.

Melvin and Melody Melancholy are also unique in their relationship with God. All we have said about the Melancholy temperament in relationship with people is also true in their relationship with God. It will greatly help Melvin Melancholy to do what is necessary to enhance his present relationships with people, at home, at work and at play. It will also greatly help Melvin Melancholy to interact similarly with God. This will enhance his present relationships with Him and enhance his own daily life as well.

Learning to live in the strengths of our Temperament will help us to be the person God created us to be – whatever our temperament. Melvin and Melody Melancholy can make healthy behavior and attitude adjustments to live in their strengths. We cannot help ourselves without God, nor do I mean to imply we can by any means. We can help ourselves in God by living in the strengths of the temperament God has uniquely given us. This is true for people of all temperaments or any combination of temperaments. Here we are looking at the Melancholy temperament and what Melancholies can do to be the people God created them to be.

#### ☺ Deal with anger constructively.

Yelling, screaming, hollering, throwing objects, hitting structures or slugging people is not dealing with anger constructively, but destructively. This is true for passive-aggressive displays of anger. This is true concerning masking, burying and denying anger. All these are destructive ways of handling anger. In order to deal with anger constructively, three steps must be accomplished:

First, anger must be recognized as anger. Melvin and Melody Melancholy are masters at masking anger. “Masking” means changing its name. “I am not angry, I am frustrated.” They are also experts at denying anger. I have had people sitting in my office talking about tough issues in life. They have been sitting on the edge of their seat, red faced,

## God Created You

voice level up, stern eyed. When I mentioned I detected anger about whatever we are talking about, they respond with, “Oh, I’m not angry.” Melvin and Melody Melancholy tend to think if they are not in a rage, then they are not angry. In order to deal with anger constructively, anger must first be recognized as anger.

Melody Melancholy is able to analyze her way through anger, once it is recognized. However, she must be a little careful here because sometimes when attempting to analyze anger it is like getting caught in the water whirlpool of negative thought. The longer she thinks about it, the more she is sucked in until she is mad and depressed. Even when she is attempting to work her way through anger via analyzing – and she is the analyzing expert, but not always in a healthy way – the additional two steps must be involved and reached. Melody Melancholy tends to want to do specific tasks alone, involving no one else (including God). She does not even want anyone else to know about it. However, total isolation will not work here. Stopping short of all three steps amounts to a form of masking and denial.

Secondly, anger must be expressed. Whether a person deals with anger constructively or destructively, anger will eventually be expressed. Anger must be expressed. No one can keep it inside forever. Learning to express one’s anger in constructive ways is healthy. Expressing anger in unhealthy ways usually is negatively progressive. Over the years, verbal harshness leads to verbal abuse which leads to physically displaying anger inappropriately which leads to physical abuse, or worse. The unhealthy ways of expressing anger comes naturally for Melody Melancholy. It will help her, and everyone in relationship with her, to learn to express anger by healthy and constructive means. For further information on expressing anger in healthy, constructive ways read Chapter 8.

Thirdly, anger must be released. If a person never learns to let it go, anger will always be a problem. This is harder for Melvin and Melody Melancholy than any temperament. Without putting forth an effort to deal with anger constructively, the person or event connected to the anger will continually eat away at their brain. It will absorb much thinking time. However, once they learn to express feelings constructively and release them, the days of anger controlling them are over. This does not mean they will not have to deal with anger on a regular basis; it does

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

mean Melvin and Melody Melancholy will be controlling anger instead of anger being in control.

Recognize it as anger, express it (in nice and constructive ways) and LET IT GO. Practice, practice, and practice until you get it. It is not easy for Melvin and Melody Melancholy, but it is learnable. Once it has been learned, and is regularly practiced, it makes life much easier – for them and for all the people in relationship with them. Melvin and Melody Melancholy do not recognize how much anger they have. They do not recognize how much anger controls them. They do not recognize how much anger is harming their relationships. Face reality, get control of anger. Life will be much happier.

Melvin and Melody Melancholy will know progress is being made with anger when the person, place, event or circumstance can be remembered without emotionally connection. Seeing a person who reminds them of Aunt Susie no longer makes them mad, frustrated, hurt, or whatever else they felt whenever they thought of her.

#### ☺ **Give people and themselves the right to be imperfect.**

Melvin and Melody Melancholy are perfectionists and set standards too high for themselves and people (God is included here) to reach. Therefore they are regularly irritated (what emotion would “irritated” be for the Melancholy?) by people, by events, by themselves, and by God. They realize people are not perfect. However, they think everyone should be. They see themselves as striving for perfection. In reality, the standards too high and they are setting everyone up for failure. It is possible to lower the bar without compromising one’s convictions. It would be beneficial for Melvin and Melody Melancholy to learn how to do this. Our pastor says, “People do people things.” Melancholies need to give people permission to do “people things.” Melancholies need to give people permission to be imperfect (people are going to be imperfect anyway, with or without permission). Melancholies need to give themselves permission to be imperfect, only not as an excuse for ungodliness.

#### ☺ **Forgive themselves and people (and God) for past mistakes.**

## God Created You

Forgiveness does not mean not being able to remember. Whoever came up with this “forgive and forget” idea ought to be taken out back and horse whipped (I am Melancholy and Choleric; I have trouble forgiving stupid people. “Forgive and forget” falls under stupid). Forgive and forget is NOT a biblical principle. God is able to forgive and forget, however, we are not God – although we attempt to be often - and are not capable of this. We are, however, capable of forgiving. Forgiving means dealing with the unpleasant event until we are no longer holding negative or hurtful thoughts against the people involved (God and ourselves included). Again we know we are making progress when we happen to remember the event, and we are not emotionally tied to it; the emotions we experienced are no longer a controlling factor.

Melvin Melancholy tends to automatically remember every negative statement or action directed at him by everyone since the crib. He holds grudges well. My wife worked with a lady whose mother wrote everything anyone said or did against her in a book, dated it and kept it. Obviously, she was not a Melancholy. Melancholies do not need a book, it is automatically stored in their brains. Whether perceived or real, it is stored in their brains. Whether a person or God, it does not matter (although religious Melancholies will not admit to holding a grudge against God, but their speech will reveal it. “If God . . . , then why . . .”). Until Melvin Melancholy learns to forgive people, himself and God for past mistakes, unforgiveness will cause many problems in life. He will not be happy. He will not be able to move forward in relationships, either with people or with God. He will not become the special unique person God created him.

Forgiveness is not condoning, or agreeing with, someone’s act. Forgiveness does not mean the relationship has to be restored or go on like nothing ever happened. Forgiveness does not mean there even has to be a relationship afterwards. Certain relationships are healthier when hundreds of miles are between the people involved. Forgiveness is a choice. We choose not to hold any negative attitude against the person who said or did whatever (real or perceived) against us, including God Himself. Forgiveness is a process. It begins with our choice to forgive, and then it continues until we reach the point where we truly are not harboring negative feelings against the person or people involved. Forgiveness is not mulling the offense over and over and over in your

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

mind. Melvin Melancholy will have to learn to control his thinking process to accomplish this. Positive thinking and regularly reminding yourself of the choice to forgive will help. Forgive until you are no longer haunted by thoughts of the offense. Forgive until you are no longer emotionally attached.

Forgiveness is not for the person or persons who committed the offense. Forgiveness is for our own emotionally healthy state of being. It does not require an apology or sorrow on the person's part. Many people are not sorry they have offended anyone. The only requirement to begin the process is a choice on the person's part who has been offended. I choose to forgive so-and-so, and I will continue the process until I truly do not harbor negative thoughts or feelings against him or her. Period. Melancholies, if you will make the choice to forgive, your feelings will eventually fall into line with your decision. Melancholies 1) choose to forgive, 2) continue the process, and 3) eventually feel like they have forgiven.

#### ☺ **Provide themselves with the alone, quiet time every day.**

This is probably the number one activity Melody Melancholy can do to help herself. Quiet alone time does not count if it is connected with negative thinking. Negative thinking, whatever/whenever, causes her to get sucked deeper and deeper into depression. However, quiet alone time on a daily basis, especially when coupled with positive thinking, will lower her stress and anxiety levels nearly immediately.

Quiet alone time does not have to be quiet or alone. It also does not have to be for long periods of time. The time period differs from person to person. President Kennedy would take a 20-minute nap each afternoon and awake revived enough to continue his busy schedule. Quiet alone time does have to be an activity Melody Melancholy wants to be doing – and it usually helps if she feels like it is wasted time (at first, until she learns the value of daily quiet alone time). She thinks sleep is wasted time. Non-productive time is wasted time. Therefore, she tends to not get daily quiet alone time and she tends to have high stress and anxiety levels. When stress and anxiety is high, negativity is higher than normal. Daily quiet alone time lowers stress and anxiety and Melody Melancholy becomes a much nicer person to be around. Sometimes, she can even stand to be around herself. Reading a book,

## God Created You

napping, hobbies, golfing, sports, watching a movie, sewing, doing nothing, puttering around the garage, doing crafts, playing on the computer – nearly anything Melody Melancholy wants to be doing qualifies as quiet alone time. If she wants to feel spiritual and useful, unite Bible study and prayer with daily quiet alone time.

I discovered, before I ever heard about temperament, if I took time for myself, doing what I wanted to be doing simply because I wanted to be doing it, I was a nicer, sweeter person. At first, I got this time whenever I could because more important tasks had to be done first. Eventually, I moved daily quiet alone time to the top of my priority list. The more I did not neglect quiet alone time, the better I interacted with the people around me and the better I felt and the more I got accomplished (highly important to a task/goal-oriented temperament). Daily quiet alone time became my top priority. I always get daily quiet alone time now. Since I have learned about temperament, I understand why it is important – and why life attempts to stop Melancholies from getting it. Daily quiet alone time is the #1 practice, coupled with positive thinking, the Melancholy can do to greatly (and almost immediately) reduce stress, anxiety and the problems related to stress and anxiety.

### ☺ **Discover life and work opportunities where they can undertake tasks with a minimal amount of interaction with people.**

Melvin Melancholy is not relationship-oriented. He is task-oriented. This is okay. God made him this way. He relates better to tasks and systems than he does to people. He understands tasks, systems, and projects better than he understands people. People drain his energy supply. Being around a lot of people for long periods of time is physically draining. Establishing and maintaining relationships is work. Therefore he operates best in life and at jobs where he can undertake tasks with a minimal amount of people interaction.

In the work place, if Melvin Melancholy's interaction with people is more task-oriented than relationship-oriented, he is going to do fine. Being a supervisor in a factory is more task-oriented and relationship-oriented. The supervisor's job is to get his department to run production. Being a salesperson or being in Customer Service is more relationship-oriented. A person has to be able to sell himself and people must trust



#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

him before they want to buy the product or before he can fix whatever is wrong between the customer and the company. Melvin Melancholy socializes well when he is not feeling forced to socialize and when he does not have to social often or for long periods of time. Melvin Melancholy does well at task-oriented jobs and in a task-oriented life in general.

☺ **Find employment where they can work one steady shift.  
This will add to their efficiency.**

Melancholies have a love/hate relationship with routines. Doing the same activities at the same time everyday reduces stress and helps their self-perception. They love unchanging schedules. Most of life is attempting to get everything to run smoothly, which means doing the same routines every day without surprises. In finding employment, if Melody Melancholy can work a steady shift without too many surprises it will help keep stress levels lower and will increase her efficiency and self-perception.

However, when Melody Melancholy thinks she is in a rut, she will abruptly make major changes (usually without consulting anyone) to get out of the rut. She perceives herself as hating to be in a rut. Stress and anxiety levels go up until she is in the routine of the new schedules – which someday she will perceive as a rut. It will be to her advantage to talk over major changes with someone she trusts before changes are implemented. It will also be to her advantage to resist changing ruts for the sake of change alone.

☺ **Develop routine habits enabling them to reach optimum productive potential.**

Melancholies are habitual people. Not all habits are bad. The Bible calls going to church a virtuous habit. Daily Bible studies and prayer would be a positive habit. However, Melancholies – all human beings actually – tend to naturally fall into bad habits. It will benefit Melancholies to establish habits helpful to them in life. Melancholies are habitual thinkers. Melancholies, use this to your advantage. Think about what it will take to reach the optimum productive potential in your life. Begin to put these routines into practice until they are habitual; it takes two/three weeks before it becomes a habit for the Melancholy. For example,

## God Created You

Melancholies work at a slow steady pace, losing momentum as the day progresses. If it is possible to have daily quiet alone time after coming home from work, this would regenerate the Melancholy and he would have much more energy to invest in family time during the evening.

### ☺ **Keep focused on the positive side of life in order to lessen moodiness.**

Melvin and Melody Melancholy's mood is directly connected to the thinking process. If they are thinking negatively, then their mood swings down. If they are thinking positively, then their mood swings up. The Melancholy temperament is the only temperament capable of changing moods by the thinking process alone. As Melvin and Melody Melancholy learn not to think about the negative and to think about the positive, they will be much happier for longer periods of time. As they think positively, they will not be as depressed or depressed for as long. Learning to control the thinking process and not to allow their minds wonder wherever (usually in negative areas for the Melancholy) will help them.

Positive thinking can be learning to see the glass half full instead of always half empty. Melvin Melancholy needs to learn to find the silver lining in the dark clouds – there always is at least one. *Count Your Blessings* is not only a song in the Hymnal, but it is a wonderful lesson for him to learn. The blessings always outnumber the trials. He sees the trials with such clarity he has trouble recognizing the blessings. Melvin Melancholy needs to go on a Treasure Hunting Safari. Pick out a bad incident about life, past or present. Now make a list (on paper) of the positive effects coming from or possibly coming from this bad experience. Even the darkest part of Africa has treasures in it – and people have been going there for decades to find them. The darkest part of any person's life has treasures there also. It would be healthy for Melvin Melancholy to go treasure hunting in those dark places.

Positive thinking does not have to be only seeing the positive events happening instead of the negative results. Positive thinking, whether real or fantasy (be careful here), is a wonderful attitude in the Melancholy's life. One does have to be a bit careful about fantasy, but there are godly (or at least not ungodly) fantasies. Ungodly fantasies will get a person into as much serious trouble as negative thinking. I

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

golf. I also live in Michigan. There is not much golf in Michigan in the winter. A few people are known to golf year around in Michigan, but I consider them crazy – and this is my professional opinion!

I golf a lot on the courses where I live in spring, summer and fall. I golf a lot in my head in winter. Golf is not ungodly, although the first church I ever pastored told me it was – but they did not know much. Golfing in the winter in Michigan in one’s mind is a fantasy, but not ungodly. And for me, it is a means to stay positive. When I am mentally going around the golf course (I always do better in my mind than I perform on the course) I cannot be thinking about the negative issues in life. At times, negative thoughts relentlessly bombard the Melancholy’s mind. It is impossible for him to stop thinking (obviously it is not impossible for certain temperaments). He has little success attempting to stop thinking about a specific idea. (Do not think about a large, furry, cute, green rabbit – Stop it!) Melancholies have better success by consciously thinking about a different subject. When the negative thoughts are relentlessly bombarding my mind, I play golf.

#### ☺ **Show deep, tender feelings to people in ways they are comfortable with.**

Melody Melancholy has deep, tender feelings. She does not identify her deep tender feelings well. She is even worse at expressing deep, tender feelings. Sometimes, when she attempts to show her true feelings, it comes out in ways people either do not recognize or she is uncomfortable with. She often shows family members they are loved and appreciated by doing special tasks for them. However, Melody Melancholy does not necessarily let the people know she is doing this, therefore it goes unnoticed. She may even attempt to be more touchy-feely, but roughly wrestling with the 5-year-old daughter until she is hurt and crying does not get the message across either. Communicating will help. She can ask her husband what she can do to show him how she feels. She can let family members know those special tasks she does is the expression of her deep tender feelings. She can verbalize an “I love you” on occasion. Maybe even the occasional hug. Be creative. She can find comfortable ways to express her feelings. She can find ways of expression people can clearly interpret.

☺ **Replace bad habits with healthy habits.**

Melvin and Melody Melancholy are more habitual than the rest of the temperaments. They develop habits quickly. Participate in an activity for a while and it becomes part of the normal routine (Melancholies like routine) – a habit. Because Melancholies are human beings, they tend to develop bad habits. Once a bad habit has been developed, Melvin and Melody Melancholy have a hard time breaking them. They have a hard time stopping what they have been accustomed to doing on a regular basis. However, since they tend to be habitual it is easier to replace bad habits with healthy ones. “Just say no” does not work well for Melancholies when it comes to habits.

I have counseled people who attempt to fill the void of love, affection, appreciation and recognition with junk food. I know, from experience, eating chocolate makes one feel better. I also know, from experience, eating too much chocolate makes one fat. Since Melody Melancholy tends to be a couch potato, it is easy for her to incorporate eating junk food while watching television. She does not practice anything in moderation. She can easily end up spending hours watching television and eating junk food. Before long, she feels fat and unlovable and worthless. Food-a-holics naturally counteract negative feelings by eating more junk food to feel better for the moment. Now she is caught in a vicious cycle. She attempts to quit eating junk food, she tries diet after diet and she beats herself up mentally. Nothing works.

Melody Melancholy will find more successful replacing bad habits with healthy ones. Replacing works better than quitting for the Melancholy. Replace junk food with healthy snacks (they do take getting use to). Replace 6½ hours of television each night with quality family time, or reading, or a hobby (all Melancholies need a hobby, but few have one). Instead of attempting to fill the void of love and affection with chocolate, turn to God’s Word and focus on His love. What would happen if every time (or even three-quarter’s of the time) when the urge to search the kitchen for a snack hit, Melody Melancholy picked up the Bible, read a chapter and focused on God’s love? The odds are she would do a lot more Bible reading in a year, her relationship with God would be enhanced, her self-esteem would rise and her weight would decline. It is not easy, but it is beneficial for Melancholies to learn to replace bad habits with healthy ones.

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

##### ☺ **Maintain balance in work, relaxation, diet and exercise to maintain energy levels.**

Melvin Melancholy is not an expert at balancing out life. He overdoes in an area or two while not doing nearly enough in the rest. He tends to overwork and under relax or over relax and under exercise or... When work, relaxation, diet and exercise are out of balance, Melvin Melancholy is tired, cranky, negative (more than normal), sleeping more and has a basic lack of energy. Learning to balance out his life will help maintain his energy levels. Learning to set priorities, learning to say “No”, learning to set boundaries, learning to live within his own capabilities and limitations are difficult, but necessary if he does not want to feel tired and worn out all the time.

##### ☺ **Challenge intellectual energies in stressful times by reading, working or task related pursuits. This will also help break the downward (negative) thinking process.**

Melvin and Melody Melancholy are task-oriented. When performing tasks, they are less stressed than when sitting around thinking about all the bad that is happening (or could be happening). As Melancholies become stressed, they withdraw and participate in fewer activities. They sit in front of the television more. They sleep more. They do fewer chores around the house. They neglect hobbies (if they have one). However, Melvin and Melody Melancholy do not spend less time thinking about the negative. Negative thinking actually increases, as does stress and depression. Learning to actively use their gray matter during stressful times will help them handle these times better. Projects direct their thinking into more positive areas. Accomplishing a task makes them feel better about themselves. Directing intellectual energies towards an enjoyable project diminishes the time available to be bombarded by negative thoughts. When I am exhibiting signs of stress, my wife sends me golfing (it does not take much prompting to get me on a golf course). I have to spend so much intellectual energy to hit a golf ball straight, the bombardment of negative thoughts cannot get through.

##### ☺ **Do not force themselves to socialize often or for long periods of time.**

## God Created You

Melvin Melancholy socializes well when he wants to be socializing. However, he does not need much socialization, less than any of the temperaments. Relationship-oriented temperaments view a lack of socialization as depression (a lack of socialization is a cause of depression for them). They are always attempting to get everyone to socialize more. Melvin Melancholy may come to the conclusion he should be socializing more and enjoying it, therefore something is wrong with him because of this low need to socialize. Whenever he feels forced to socialize – real or imagined – it is going to cause stress and anxiety.

The Pastor announces the annual church Thanksgiving dinner will be on the Saturday before Thanksgiving. He adds a few comments about the value of Christian fellowship, getting together with your Christian family, etc. Melvin Melancholy interprets all such comments as pressure to attend – the pastor is forcing him to socialize. Without changing expressions, he immediately begins thinking of reasons not to be there. Even if attendance is mandatory, the excuses begin to pile up in his brain. If he concludes this is an event he wants to participate in, there is no stress problem. If he has already decided he is not going, no problem. However, if this is an event he should participate in, but he has not chosen to be at, stress and anxiety begins and lasts through the event.

There are people-related events throughout life we have to attend. Many are mandatory. Office Christmas parties often require not only the employees to be there, but also the spouses. Everyone is expected to have fun also. More social gatherings are optional, but without positive consequences if the wrong choice is made. When Melvin Melancholy's wife says she understands he does not enjoy being around her relatives so he does not have to attend the next family get together, it does not mean he can stay home. The wrong choice may have dire consequences.

It will greatly reduce Melvin Melancholy's stress and anxiety to recognize this low need for socialization and not force himself to socialize often or for long periods of time. When he encounters a mandatory social event, it will help to choose to go and have fun. He socializes well when he chooses to socialize – therefore, since he has to be there anyway, make the choice to go and enjoy it. He can learn to do this. Then these social events become a positive experience instead of a source of stress and anxiety.

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

##### ☺ **Develop a deep, self-giving personal relationship. This will lessen loneliness.**

Everyone, even a Melancholy, needs a best friend. These relationships are hard work for the Melancholy. There are the hidden fears also: the effort of learning relationship skills, the effort in developing the relationship, the fear of losing the relationship (divorce, rejection, death) and having to start all over with someone else. Thus, Melancholies tend not to develop deep, self-giving, personal relationships. As a result, Melancholies suffer from loneliness. Oh, Melancholies often know a lot of people. However, they classify few acquaintances as actual friends and fewer as a best friend. Melancholies know a lot of people but suffer from loneliness. It will benefit them immensely to invest the time and energy into developing a close personal friendship.

##### ☺ **Focus on what God has given them and develop a thankful attitude.**

Melvin and Melody Melancholy are naturally negative. The glass is always half empty, never half full. It should have been an 8% raise instead of the 6% raise, and they are down because of it. They need to focus on what they have instead of what they do not have. They need to be thankful for what they have instead of being upset about what they do not have.

Melvin and Melody Melancholy think if they had more, then they would be happier. Of course, this is not true. Happiness has NOTHING to do with having material goods or being in better circumstances. Americans have a hard time with this because we are materialistic minded. We associate materialism with happiness – but notice, no matter how much anyone has it is never enough. The people with the most are still unhappy and are working to get more. One lady sat in my office and told me she had all she wanted and more. She had a wonderful husband and family. They had a nice house. She had all the toys she wanted. She could not understand why she did not feel satisfied with her life. She was unhappy and depressed, she felt she needed to be on anti-depressants and had been seeing therapists for years.

Happiness is a choice. We choose to be happy or unhappy. For Melody Melancholy, this choice includes where to focus her attention.

## God Created You

Learning to focus on what she has and to be thankful instead of mourning her losses (what she does not have but thinks she should) will result in a happier person. What does the Bible say?

*1 Thessalonians 5:16 (NIV) Be joyful always; <sup>17</sup> pray continually; <sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (emphasis mine)*

*Ephesians 5:20 (NIV) always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (emphasis mine)*

Is Melody Melancholy giving thanks to God the Father IN ALL circumstances and FOR EVERYTHING in life? Notice, it does not say she has to BE happy about the circumstances or for everything, the Bible says to give thanks to God the Father in the name of Jesus. This is not being hypocritical. This is being obedient. Obedience to God is never hypocritical. Everyone politely gives thanks for something they are not necessarily happy about at least two times a year. On birthdays and at Christmas. Ever get a gift you did not like? Did you say “Thank you” to the person giving the gift? If a person can give thanks to a person for a gift, then we can give thanks to God the Father for what we have.

### ☺ **Become secure in the love of God. Melvin and Melody Melancholy need to know God's love expresses His value of them. This will raise their self-perception.**

The Melancholy temperament automatically comes with low self-perception. I do not know why this is. I do not know why any of the temperaments have any weaknesses connected with them, except human beings were created perfect but fell into sin in the Garden of Eden. Melancholies feel they are less valuable than other people are. They do not appear this way, but they naturally have low self-perception. Melvin Melancholy does not think he is as capable at accomplishing tasks. He does not think he is as smart. He does not feel as lovable. Low self-esteem and low self-perception is compounded by his negativity. His



#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

negativity is reinforced by the ability to remember comments or actions proving and reinforcing this worthlessness – a lot of Melvin Melancholy’s proof is perceived, not factual.

It will help to focus on the love God has for him. God’s love expresses His value. God thinks Melvin Melancholy is very valuable. God’s love is unfathomable, boundless, endless and unchanging. Each human being, including Melvin Melancholy, is infinitely valuable to God. Need proof? Jesus on the cross. God the Father loved the world (individual members thereof) to the degree He would pay the highest price ever paid in all eternity for the chance one person would accept His plan of Salvation and come to Him through Jesus Christ. I realize God knows all. I realize millions, even billions, of individuals have and are coming to Christ. I also am convinced God would have done exactly as He did in order to provide salvation knowing only one individual would come to Him through Jesus Christ. Now this is a demonstration of the love of God! Think about how much God must have loved Melvin Melancholy to provide this opportunity. Think how valuable he is to Him. This will help Melvin Melancholy’s low self-perception.

#### ☺ **Follow God into unknown (unfamiliar) experiences to lessen fear. Melancholies will fear the unknown to the point where it will immobilize them.**

The idea of newness causes fear in the Melancholy. New tasks, new situations, new people, new activities, new routines, etc., triggers this fear. Even if Melody Melancholy desires this new opportunity, the fear is triggered. It may be a positive turn in life; the fear is still triggered. She may know this is God’s will; the fear is triggered. However, as she learns new experiences are like a sheer veil between where she is presently standing and where she wants to be and once she bravely steps through the veil and stands there for a little while, the fear will disappear.

Learning to follow God through the veil into the new experience will help. If she does not learn to follow God and “step through the veil” into new experiences, she will never try anything new or different – and she will regret it for years to come. If not faced and conquered, this fear will immobilize her. Melody Melancholy will not move forward in life. She will always regret not attempting it. I have known people who have regretted not going to college. They were afraid they could

## God Created You

not make it at college, so they never tried. I have known Melancholies who did not go after a new job, and regretted it until death. As Melody Melancholy learns to face her fears, and to “step through the veil” of the new experience (and stays there until she feels comfortable), she will learn she can adjust to new experiences well. Melancholies learn “it” faster and do “it” better, once they conquer this fear. Following God into the new experience will help them to conquer their fears of the unknown and unfamiliar.

I was a pointman in Vietnam. The pointman is the person leading the patrol. He is the one walking in front of everyone else. There are a lot of added dangers when you are the pointman. You are the one most likely to trip a boobytrap. You are the one responsible for not leading your patrol into an ambush. You are the one responsible for not getting everyone lost in the jungle. When I did my job correctly, everyone came in from the patrol alive. No one walks point all the time. I found when I was not on the point, walking a patrol was much easier – all I had to do was follow the person in front of me. Melancholies need to learn to let Jesus walk point when heading into new experiences. Follow Him and life will be okay.

### ☺ **Make their lives pleasing to God first, society second.**

Melancholies feel guilty if they do not measure up to the standards set by society or their family. Melancholies tend to follow the rules, when they are not being rebels. Of course, they choose which rules apply to them – they are not going to do the stupid ones. Although Melancholies do not show it, or even acknowledge it, they experience guilt for not measuring up. Sometimes guilt comes from not measuring up to personal perfectionistic ideas. Sometimes guilt comes from not measuring up to family standards, real or perceived. Sometimes guilt comes from not measuring up to society’s ideas. Melancholies need to find out what God’s standards and ideas are for them (individually), and learn to please God first. When confident they are pleasing God, Melancholies will not be feeling guilt from not measuring up to added standards and ideas.

Self or family or society are not the only groups putting standards upon people. The Church is also a group putting standards on people. One lady coming for counseling was working three part time jobs and

#### IV. The Melancholy Temperament

involved in AA and involved in her church. She had no regular day off and was busy mornings, afternoons and evenings all week long. She felt guilty for not spending enough time with her husband. She felt guilty for not spending enough time with her grandkids. On top of all this, she was feeling guilty for not doing enough in her jobs and in AA and in church. All this busyness had left her with relationship problems with her husband (why she started seeing me to begin with) and her employers and her friends and children. She was also having health problems and suffering from depression.

We spent time finding out what God specifically wanted her to be doing. We worked on setting priorities in her life. She discovered what God was expecting from her was not being met because she was busy doing all these additional activities people were expecting of her, or she perceived people were expecting of her. Now she was also feeling guilty for disappointing God. Then we began setting boundaries, learning to say “No” and keeping her schedule at a manageable level. She found out what God wanted from her was different than what the Church society expected from her and what her family’s standards were. As she began living her life by God’s standards, she got to the point where she could say “No” to these expectations without feeling the guilt. God’s priorities were getting met in her life. Her priorities were getting met in her life. Wonderful changes developed once she began living by God’s standards instead of the standards set by society (the church, in her case), her family members, and herself.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# THE PHLEGMATIC TEMPERAMENT

*“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” (Matthew 5:9)*

Drs. Richard and Phyllis Arno stated in *Created In God's Image*, “Hippocrates linked the Phlegmatic with *phlegm*, a body fluid that is thick, slow-moving and almost stagnant in nature. To the observer, the Phlegmatics are extremely slow-paced and stubborn. They allow their lives to become stagnant because it takes too much effort to use their talents. This person goes through life doing as little as possible, quietly, and expending little energy. It is not clear whether this is because they have low energy levels, or if it is because they refuse to use what energy they do have. The daily routine of the Phlegmatic temperament is to go to work, sit in a cubbyhole and work with figures all day, go home, take a nap, eat, take another nap, and go to bed. They still have trouble getting up in the morning. This is extremely difficult for the family of a Phlegmatic. There is little energy left for the family by the end of the day.”

Our world may never know what has gone to the grave with the Phlegmatic. The brilliant thoughts, great books, magnificent ministries or beautiful works of arts never realized because it required too much energy for the Phlegmatic to bring these ideas into reality. The Phlegmatic temperament has, what I call, a false fear of running out of energy. The subconscious says, “If you do this, you will run out of energy and never be able to get anymore. If you are swinging a golf club (or whatever action requires energy) and run out of energy, you will forever be frozen in a statue position.” Of course, this is not true. It does rob the Phlegmatic of the joy and satisfaction of what they would like to be doing. This false fear negatively affects what they could be doing to enhance the relationships of friends and family and co-workers.

## V. The Phlegmatic Temperament

Phlegmatics have a dry sense of humor. They do not necessarily acknowledge a dry sense of humor, but everyone around them knows it. They tend to be humorous without cracking a smile. Or, they make statements they think are humorous, but no one else gets it. This dry sense of humor can drive people crazy. If not controlled, it can be verbally harmful in the attempt to protect them from becoming too socially involved. Most of the time, the Phlegmatic's dry sense of humor is being more hurtful to the people around them than they realize.

### **Phlegmatic Inclusion Strengths**

The Phlegmatic Inclusion (i.e., social interaction, surface relationships, and intellectual energies) strengths include:

- ☺ **The ability to perform tedious tasks.**
- ☺ **Relates to both tasks and people.**
- ☺ **Easily identifies injustices and problems (and the answers).**
- ☺ **Calm.**
- ☺ **Easy-going.**
- ☺ **Profoundly efficient.**
- ☺ **Extremely perfectionistic.**

The Phlegmatic temperament does have a great capacity for work requiring precision and accuracy. Phlegmatics do well as data processors, bookkeepers, librarians, accountants, record technicians, or museum curators. If you need someone to do research, hire Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic. Not only will they do a great job, but also they will enjoy the work. Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic enjoy tedious work, which is not tedious to them. Therefore, a tedious job does not stress them out like it would a Sanguine. They are great perfectionists, so the job will get done well.

Most temperaments are either task or relationship-oriented. Phil Phlegmatic is at home performing tasks and comfortable with people in social settings, as long as he does not feel forced or pressured into it. He does not need a lot of social interaction. A long time period in a social setting will drain his energy. He can handle hostile social settings well, better than any temperament. Phil Phlegmatic is laid back and

## God Created You

does not take statements or behaviors by others as personal attacks. Nothing “ruffles his feathers.” (Remember, we are talking about the strengths of the temperament. When the Phlegmatic is living in the temperament weaknesses, it changes the whole picture – as with every temperament).

Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic have a couple of gifts. They easily identify injustices and problems, and solutions to them. While different temperaments labor over finding the answers to problems or even what is the actual problem, the Phlegmatic easily identifies injustices and problems. However, because of a low energy level and a tendency to remain uninvolved (protecting the low energy level), Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic seldom take action about the injustices and problems. Beyond noninvolvement, they are usually frustrated because no one is taking action to solve the problem. They presume the solution is obvious to everyone. The answer seems elementary to them. They fail to realize this is a unique gift only they possess.

While Phoebe Phlegmatic is frustrated over the lack of action, no one else has a clue what to do – or they would. To her the answer is simple. To most temperaments the answer is elusive. She is frustrated because someone (else) is not taking action to solve the problem. Most temperaments are frustrated because they cannot figure out what to do to solve the problem. Learning to share information with people who are willing to take action would help her utilize this gift and reduce the frustration and anger, her frustration and the frustration of the people around her.

It seems to me, Phoebe Phlegmatic plays a game with everyone in her life. The game is entitled, “I know something you do not know – and I am not going to tell you what it is, or give you a hint, or even confirm when you guess it.” She tends to be uninvolved. She does not initiate. She tends to not share information. Yet, she is frustrated and angry because someone is not taking action about the injustices and problems in life. This game stops her from using her gifts. It would be better for Phoebe Phlegmatic, even if she is not going to be involved, to provide the information needed to someone who will initiate action to correct the injustice or problem. Using her gifts and sharing information will reduce her stress and anxiety levels.

## V. The Phlegmatic Temperament

Overall, Phil Phlegmatic rolls with the punches well. He tends to take life as it comes and not be too flustered with it. He functions in social settings well. Even in hostile social environments, he functions well. If isolated from people for periods of time, he does well. If involved in tedious tasks, he does even better. If he is sitting around relaxing, he is not bored. He is seldom bored enough to get up and go find a project to do. He does not view sleeping or relaxing as a waste of time. The rest of the temperaments tend to think of the Phlegmatic as lazy, or at best a procrastinator; but then, he does not seem to care what people think anyway. When living in the strengths of his temperament, Phil Phlegmatic does well – even in spite of the people and/or the environment around them.

Phil Phlegmatic is content with life the way it is. Oh yes, life could be better; but it is not worth the effort to make changes. From his perspective, all the changes need to be made by the people around him. He is happy with life the way it is, or the way it was before people were putting pressure on him to change. If people would leave him alone and mind their own business, Phil Phlegmatic would be content and happy. His dry sense of humor is used mostly for this purpose, to get people to leave him alone, to back off, and to get them out of his space.

Once Phoebe Phlegmatic decides to take on a project, it is done efficiently. She is stubborn. When she feels forced to act or something is not fair or not her responsibility, she will stubbornly refuse to move. The harder someone pushes, the more stubborn she becomes. However, when it is her job or responsibility to do it, all the numbers are in the correct place. Everything adds up. The checkbook balances. Every penny is accounted for. Production is met. The job is done and done well.

To Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic, there is a right way and a wrong way for every project and behavior in life. It should be done this way. It should be put in this spot. This person should be doing this. A person should not be talking in a specific manner. A wife is supposed to be like this. A husband is supposed to be thus. Children are to be this way. All the rules are different for each Phlegmatic, since these are conclusions the person comes to individually. Once the conclusion is reached, this is the way it is. They seldom reevaluate the information. They are very closed minded.

## God Created You

Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic do not share information with the people around them (after all, this is the right way and everyone knows this). Nor do they consider there may be more than one right way to do a project or to behave. One reason they do well at precise and detailed tasks is because there is a right way to do it and by the time the Phlegmatic is done, the job is done right. However, this extreme perfectionism can be frustrating to people even when Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic are living in their temperament strengths. It will help them (not to mention the people in relationship with them) to be a little more open minded and to view life from someone else's perspective from time to time.

### **Phlegmatic Inclusion Weaknesses**

As we are talking about the strengths and weaknesses of different temperament types, it will help us to remember this fact, when we are living in the strengths of our temperament, the weaknesses are far less obvious in our daily behavior. This is true in reverse also. A lady e-mailed me after reading through the temperament information on my web page and said she thought her husband was Phlegmatic in temperament. However, all she could see in him were the Phlegmatic weakness tendencies and no strengths. She questioned how this could be. This is what happens when a person gets out of bed in the morning and does and says whatever he feels like without regard for the people around him or without regard for God's laws and precepts. The weaknesses of the temperament become evident in his daily behavior. However, as a person allows the strengths of his temperament to come forth, the weaknesses become less and less obvious in daily behavior.

This is why we are looking at the strengths and weaknesses of the different temperament types. As we recognize our strengths and our weaknesses, and we do what it takes to get our temperament needs met, the strengths of the temperament come forth and the weaknesses of the temperament are subdued. The writer of Hebrews stated about the Heroes of Faith in Chapter 11:24, "*whose weakness was turned to strength.*" God wants do this for us, as He did for those Heroes of Faith. One of the ways He accomplishes this is by helping us to live in the strengths of our temperament.

The Phlegmatic Inclusion (i.e., social interaction, surface relationships, and intellectual energies) weaknesses include:



## V. The Phlegmatic Temperament

- ⊗ **The unwillingness to become involved.**
- ⊗ **The tendency to be an observer, not a participant.**
- ⊗ **A dry sense of humor – to use verbal defenses often hurting people.**

Phoebe Phlegmatic sits back and watches people, busy doing projects wrongly and looking at all in the world needing change. She does not initiate. She seldom takes action about the injustices. She will try to inspire people to take action (when in the strengths of her temperament) but seldom involves herself. She can be less than tactful when inspiring people and, because she does not share information well, she can come across as controlling and critical. Many times her attempt to inspire people to take action comes out in a harsh “You should not be doing this” instead of calmly showing someone a better way. Too often, the attempts to inspire people become harsher, angrier, more critical and more controlling as her advice is not heeded. Because nothing is getting done, Phoebe Phlegmatic becomes more frustrated and angry and the people around her become more frustrated and hurt and angry. And the spiral continues. Many passive-aggressive displays of anger are usually evident as time goes on.

Phil Phlegmatic is more of an observer than a participant in life. He has this unrealistic, subconscious fear of running out of energy. He sits back and watches as life goes by. He misses out on activities he wants to be involved in because of this tendency to observe and his low energy reserves. If he sinks to the depths of this weakness, he will “*observe his life away.*” He will observe what is happening in the household without being a participating spouse and parent. He will observe what is going on at work, only doing what he views as his fair portion (what he views as fair is usually viewed as much less than fair by everyone else). In this weakness, he does not contribute ideas to help the company, does not take part in church activities, and does not participate in functions benefiting the family.

Being an observer can be a strength, once Phil Phlegmatic learns to share information and participate a little bit. He naturally observes, therefore knows about people and more. He knows how to make the

## God Created You

work place more productive and a better working environment. He understands it is more beneficial for the family to do activities and projects together instead of sending the kids to the park with Mom while he sits home and watches television. He knows what his church could do to attract people. A lack of information is not the problem. He has the information floating around in his brain. Observing becomes a strength as he learns a little tact, shares information in an understanding way, and participates on occasion at home, at work and at play.

Phoebe Phlegmatic has a dry sense of humor. She uses it as a verbal defense to protect herself from too much participation and to protect her low energy reserves. She uses it to keep people back, to get people to leave her alone. People drain her energy. I have found most people with a dry sense of humor do not even know they have one. The people around them know, though. People with a dry sense of humor (the Phlegmatic temperament is not the only one) make statements in a serious way intended to come across as funny. Or, statements meant seriously but crack everyone up. Or, statements the person thought were hilarious but no one else “gets it.” A dry sense of humor is not bad in itself. It can be a positive attribute.

The weakness of a dry sense of humor is it often hurts people. Phoebe Phlegmatic verbally hurts people more often than she realizes. She hurts people deeper than she realizes. She makes statements that could be taken 10 different ways, eight of them hurtful to the person to whom it was said. She makes hurtful statements, even though it is true and kind of funny. She tells funny stories about subjects hurtful to the person. If confronted about the statement, she responds with “I did not mean it that way. You are too sensitive.”

When counseling a Phlegmatic, as we are getting closer to the real problems, the person will make a statement hurtful towards me, but funny in a weird sort of way. The person is saying this subject is too painful and uncomfortable. She wants to change subjects. She is also saying she is experiencing pain and wants to share the pain; you hurt me (or I perceive you are going to hurt me) therefore I am going to hurt you.

Once, counseling a 15-year-old teenage girl, as we were beginning to make progress in an area, she looked at me and said, “Why are you wearing blue slacks with black socks? You are uncoordinated.” I told

## V. The Phlegmatic Temperament

her the slacks were black. She wanted to argue they were blue. In fact, every time I attempted to return to the subject we were discussing she returned to the color of my slacks and socks. After the session, she even asked the people in the waiting room the color of my slacks (the consensus was black). This went on for the next three sessions. Every time we got close to the problem area, she attempted to turn the conversation back to the slacks and socks I was wearing in the first session. Happily, we finally got past the color coordination of my clothing and addressed the problem – with promising results.

If I were to take these statements personally, as an attack against me, we would never get to the real problems. If we cannot get to the real problems then we cannot get to the real solutions. They want help, or they would not be sitting in my office. (Phlegmatics, however, seldom seek counseling. Someone else usually forces them into counseling. They believe someone else is the problem or has the problem). Their defense mechanism is kicking in to get away from the pain and to strike back with pain. The person is not consciously striking out at me necessarily, sometimes they are. Phlegmatics can be vengeful. Usually, it is a defense mechanism in use for such a long time they do not even know they are doing it.

### **Phlegmatic Control Strengths**

The Phlegmatic Control (i.e., decision-making abilities, willingness to take on responsibilities and the need for independence) strengths include:

- ☺ **Practical.**
- ☺ **Conservative.**
- ☺ **Peace-loving.**
- ☺ **An efficient peace maker/arbitrator.**

The Phlegmatic in Control is not the person with off the wall, out in left field ideas. Phil Phlegmatic does not suggest tearing down the 150 seat auditorium and building a church seating 5,000 because “God is going to send them in” when Sunday School is running 52. He will suggest practical and conservative ways to find Sunday School classrooms space. He will figure out how to incorporate the existing

## God Created You

structure into the building project. He knows what can be done to keep costs down. He likes usable space instead of showy space. No one will hear him say, "Well, it really has no purpose. It is a lot of expense, brick and mortar no one will ever use, but it sure does look pretty."

Phoebe Phlegmatic is practical in how much control she will allow over herself and how much control she wants over people. She will allow a moderate amount of control over herself. She can handle a moderate amount of control over people. She works well under authority and she does well in authority. She cannot be forced into submission, but when she chooses to be under authority there is not much resistance. When someone attempts to force her, or she perceives force, there is a lot of resistance. Even in the strengths of her temperament, she cannot be pushed. The moment she perceives someone pushing her she begins to slow down. The more they push, the slower she goes. If they keep pushing, she will come to a complete stop and stubbornly refuse to move. However, in the strengths of her temperament, Phoebe Phlegmatic is responsive to logical reasoning and accepting responsibility.

Phil Phlegmatic is conservative. He is not going to be driving a Cadillac on a Chevy's budget. He lives within his means. He does not get extravagant too often. The carpet in his office is nice, not too plush, and long wearing. He feels the boys can continue to share a bedroom instead of buying a larger house he cannot comfortably afford. After all, the kids will be gone someday and then he will have to downsize anyway. He does not own many risky stocks. He does not take risks in business. He does not own too many work suits, and is seldom flashy.

One of the gifts Phoebe Phlegmatic has is she is peace loving. She naturally knows how to bring peace to a sphere of life. When she is living in her weaknesses, there is no peace anywhere around her. In fact, she is often the cause of all the upheaval. However, when in her strengths, Phoebe Phlegmatic loves to be in a peaceful environment and she knows what to do to bring peace to hostile surroundings. She is an able arbitrator. She does not get too emotionally attached to the people involved in the dispute. She is able to clearly look at the whole picture from different points of view. She does not take sides. She is able to stay neutral. Her gift in arbitration is the ability to see ways to a more peaceful environment or relationship, if adopted by the persons at odds.

## V. The Phlegmatic Temperament

I would guess Barnabas was Phlegmatic. Without the opportunity to have a Temperament Analysis Profile (T.A.P.) Report on him, I am left with guessing. A T.A.P. is the only accurate way of knowing one's temperament. Barnabas was a natural born peacemaker. When Saul of Tarsus was converted and finally back in Jerusalem, everyone was afraid to receive him as a disciple. I guess that is understandable, he did spend 5 years heavily persecuting the Church. Barnabas is the one who took him to the Apostles and convinced them of Saul's conversion. After Saul was in Jerusalem a while, stirring up more devils than he could cast out, the Apostles sent him back to his homeland in Tarsus. Nothing was heard of him until Barnabas went to Tarsus and brought Saul, now known as Paul, to Antioch where revival had broken out. Barnabas and Paul taught large numbers of disciples in Antioch and from there Paul went on his three missionary journeys. When Paul and Mark had a falling out because of Mark's early departure on the first missionary trip, it was Barnabas who was directly involved in the reconciliation. Barnabas was a peacemaker. Phlegmatics, living in the strengths of the temperament, are peacemakers.

### **Phlegmatic Control Weaknesses**

The Phlegmatic Control (i.e., decision-making abilities, willingness to take on responsibilities and the need for independence) weaknesses include:

- ⊗ **Indecisiveness.**
- ⊗ **The tendency to procrastinate.**
- ⊗ **Difficult to motivate.**
- ⊗ **Verbal defenses often hurtful to people.**

The most damaging traits about Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic are the stubborn resistance to change and the non-involvement in life. Because of low energy reserves, when living in the weaknesses of the temperament they allow life pass by without participation, or as little participation as possible. Most of us have to work to meet the necessities of life, but Phlegmatics will only do what is minimally necessary. If they can exist without going to work everyday, they are comfortable with this. If they can get by with a part-time job not requiring much

## God Created You

effort, it is okay with them. If they have to work 40 hours a week, this is fine too; Phlegmatics do not put in overtime voluntarily. They will never be workaholics.

This pattern of non-involvement continues with the family. Phil Phlegmatic thinks life is fine when he comes home from work and watches TV while waiting for supper. Listening to the conversation around the supper table (if you can get him away from the TV to eat with the family) and participating in the conversation (making snide, critical remarks) are added bonuses in his view. The fine life continues as he watches TV after supper, naps, watches TV, and goes to bed. When chores need to be done around the house, after much nagging (unwanted reminders over a period of time), he will say he will get to it, but seldom does.

If Phil Phlegmatic perceives pressure to do a task he does not want to do, or an attempt to push him a little faster, or to participate in what is not his fair share, he stubbornly digs in his heels. He refuses to budge. Even when significant others attempt to motivate him for healthy and even godly purposes, he stubbornly resists any change. The more he is pushed, the slower he goes. As far as he is concerned, he is fine the way he is. Everything is fine the way it is, except people are always bugging him and demanding more from him. If everyone would leave him alone, life would be fine.

Phoebe Phlegmatic fails to realize life is not fine for the people around her, who have to work with her, who have to live with her, and who love and care about her. People are waiting for her to make the decisions that need making, but the decisions do not come. She says she will do whatever, but it never gets done. When people attempt to inspire her to get involved, it is met with resistance. When people attempt to remind her a chore needs to be done, it is met with resistance. When people attempt to logically reason with her, it is met with resistance. Even when she agrees with the logical reasoning and agrees change is required, nothing happens. Life is not fine for the people interacting with the Phlegmatic.

Phoebe Phlegmatic's dry sense of humor is her first line of defense – those witty, even funny (in a weird way), sayings to back people out of her space. If the pressure continues (a gentle reminder about what she said she would do three days ago), the witty remarks become sharper

## V. The Phlegmatic Temperament

and more critical. Her verbal defenses are hurtful, far more hurtful than she imagines.

Logical reasoning and positive reinforcement are the two motivators in Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic's lives that will actually change behaviors. As I said before, Phlegmatics only end up in the counselor's office because someone dragged them in. I literally had a parent drag her teenage Phlegmatic son by the arm into my waiting room and look me in the eye and yell, "Fix him!" Years of frustration in attempting to motivate this young man to do well were in this short statement. Many times it takes the threat of divorce to get a Phlegmatic spouse into counseling. The threat of divorce is not always enough; it takes filing the divorce papers. Force does not bring about change in the Phlegmatic's life. Remember, the Phlegmatic does not recognize there is a problem with the relationship. If there is a problem, the other person needs to be fixed. Phlegmatics are content with life, except people will not leave them alone.

It is hard to help people with problems when they do not recognize any. Usually, once Phil Phlegmatic is dragged into the counselor's office, he is not receptive to any idea the counselor shares. If he recognizes there is a problem and he can be a part of the solution, logical reasoning is a motivator. At this point, presenting factual information and end results will help Phil Phlegmatic find great answers. Facts and results: if you continue down the path you have chosen, the results will be thus. However, if you choose to go down this path over here, the results will be these. Phil Phlegmatic is fiercely independent and no one can force him to change. Any perceived pressure results in firm resistance. However, once he concludes changes are necessary and commits change certain behavior, it is remarkable what happens. Keep in mind, he will agree to new ideas and seemingly commit to change to avoid further conflict. He hates conflict and will avoid it at all costs. However, change only comes once Phil Phlegmatic has made up his mind to change, not said he was going to change.

I have found a better motivator than logical reasoning – positive reinforcement. Most Phlegmatics who are forced into my office for counseling are not ready to be motivated by logical reasoning. After all, the Phlegmatic does not have the problem, the other person does. Therefore, the Phlegmatic's logical reasoning says to fix the person. If

## God Created You

the wife is not happy in the marriage relationship, fix the wife. If the parents are not happy with the Phlegmatic teenager's life, fix the parents. At this point, Phlegmatics are not open to suggestions about anything they might do to help the condition. Logical reasoning requires them to at least consider different behavior/results possibilities. Positive reinforcement does not need their cooperation at all.

Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic have a high need of recognition and appreciation. The one common complaint I hear often is how they feel unappreciated by significant others. They have a list of behaviors they feel they should be receiving recognition for, but no one is saying "Thank you." Most people do not deem most of these behaviors as worthy of recognition, however Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic feel unappreciated. They get up and go to work, but no one says "Thank you." They fixed a doorknob once, but no one said "Thank you." They pay the bills on time, and no one says "Thank you." They run production at work everyday, and no one says, "You are a wonderful worker, thank you for being here." They feel unappreciated for all they do, therefore why try to do more.

My advice to people involved with Phlegmatics who are demonstrating more temperament weaknesses than strengths is to begin with positive reinforcement. Begin to compliment them on anything you can think of and as often as you can think of it. You cannot give them too much recognition. Oh, at first they will fight it. They will blow it off. They will refuse it. They will throw up walls with their dry sense of humor. Phlegmatics do not think they have a high need of recognition and appreciation. They portray little need recognition and appreciation. However, if people will provide positive reinforcement and ignore the attempts to stop it, positive behavioral changes are in the immediate future. Every time they do any activity requiring any energy, respond with "Thank you," "I appreciate what you are doing," or "Thanks, you helped me." Find ways to complement them. "You look great," "You have pretty eyes," "You are a good person," any positive statement about them or what they have done will help bring about healthy behavioral changes.

Any negative statement or action reinforces poor behavior. I do not know how many times Phil Phlegmatic has told me, "No matter what I do, it is never enough. Why try?" Now remember, he views life



## V. The Phlegmatic Temperament

differently. The response from the spouse or parent to this statement is usually, “You never do anything!” But in his mind, he has been and is doing many tasks, chores and projects; which are going unnoticed and unappreciated by significant others. Therefore, he concludes there is no reason to continue trying. No one is going to appreciate it anyway. Once Phil Phlegmatic comes to a conclusion, he will behave accordingly. Positive reinforcement, however, will quickly bring about a change in poor behavior – once the barriers have been broken through. The more his behavior is unworthy of positive reinforcement, the more he needs it.

### **Phlegmatic Affection Strengths**

The Phlegmatic Affection (i.e., the need for love, affection and deep, personal relationships) strengths include:

- ☺ **Well-balanced.**
- ☺ **Easy-going.**
- ☺ **Non-demanding.**
- ☺ **Calm.**
- ☺ **Realistic in demands for love and affection.**

Phlegmatics in Affection have temperament strengths beneficial to deep personal relationships. They do not smother people, nor are they coldly distant. They need a moderate amount of love and affection and they are able to give a moderate amount. Phoebe Phlegmatic has no fear of rejection and can handle unaffectionate and even hostile people well. If she is in deep personal relationships with people of temperaments who show little love and affection, she handles it well. She does not revert to poor behavioral patterns to demand additional attention as the Choleric or Sanguine in Affection. Phoebe Phlegmatic does punish significant others for not showing enough love and affection by withholding attention as the Supine or Melancholy. If deep personal relationships are of temperaments needing to be shown a lot of love and affection, she can easily turn it up a notch or two.

Phil Phlegmatic (living in his Affection strengths) is easy going in getting his needs for love and affection met. He knows how much love and affection is comfortable for him and is flexible in ways to receive

## God Created You

love and affection. A couple of temperaments can be demanding in the way they receive love and affection. The Choleric in Affection says, "If you love me, then you will do this or express it thus." Phil Phlegmatic will receive love and affection in ways comfortable for the person expressing it. If a significant other is task-oriented and shows love through special acts of service, he recognizes and receives love through these means. If the person is relationship-oriented and shows love through physical and verbal expression, he is comfortable receiving love through these means. He is also able to express love and affection in ways people can receive it comfortably. In the strengths of his temperament, Phil Phlegmatic is comfortable expressing moderate amounts of love and affection by special acts of service and/or by physical and verbal expressions.

Phlegmatics do their part to meet the love and affection needs of close relationships. Even in their strengths, Phlegmatics only tend to do what they view as their fair share. However, they are willing to provide a moderate amount of love and affection to significant others, even though the amount the person needs varies from person to person. The Phlegmatic parent does not have a problem with the Melancholy child who spends hours in his room playing by himself and only needs an occasional "I love you" and hug or pat on the back. Neither does the Phlegmatic parent get out of sorts with the Sanguine child who always has to be talking, crawling up on her lap, and hearing "I love you" several times a day. When Phlegmatics need a break and personal space, they are able to express (usually using their dry sense of humor) without hurting people's feelings or making them feel unwanted.

The Phlegmatic is calm, easy going, laid back, moderately reserved, etc. Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic seldom get overly excited. In the strengths of their temperament, they do not get overly down. They remain pretty even keeled and steady. Even in a crisis, they are relatively calm, observing the predicament and thinking through what needs to be done. They are not prone to emotional outbursts and exaggerated feeling, therefore they are able to maintain a level head and respond to the crisis. Nothing much "ruffles their feathers."

## **Phlegmatic Affection Weaknesses**

The Phlegmatic Affection (i.e., the need for love, affection and deep, personal relationships) weaknesses include:

- ⊗ **Unwillingness to become involved in deep relationships.**
- ⊗ **Tendency to be an observer only.**
- ⊗ **Rarely self-sacrificing.**
- ⊗ **Unemotional.**
- ⊗ **Unexpressive.**
- ⊗ **Uses verbal defenses to protect the low energy supply with regard to physical and sexual involvement.**

Phoebe Phlegmatic is an observer who does not get too involved nor does she expend too much energy with deep personal relationships. Her lack of participation and cool, complacent attitude can hurt the people who love her. The way she observes people can cause her to never give much of herself. Often, those involved in deep personal relationships with Phoebe Phlegmatic have a lonely life. This is because she does not expend energy to keep the relationship going. If any energy or sacrifice is necessary, the people in her life will have to do it. Phoebe Phlegmatic in Affection, living in the weaknesses of her temperament, is viewed as unemotional. She has deep tender emotions, but does not express or even acknowledge them well.

Phil Phlegmatic hates conflict. He is not the one to face problems. He views any attempt to confront mutual problems as conflict, and avoids it like the plague. When friends or family become angry, he either ignores the anger, goes into his observation mode (watching the participants as an uninvolved third party), or uses his dry sense of humor to anger everyone else. This way the fault for the conflict remains elsewhere. He does carry an attitude portraying everyone else as the problem and needing to get help. However, a sense of self-righteousness causes Phil Phlegmatic to ignore what he is doing wrong. It is always someone else's fault. He stubbornly refuses to make changes in his own attitudes and behavior. In his mind, he is happy the way life is, even though the people who are involved in deep personal relationships with him are not happy.

## God Created You

Phoebe Phlegmatic's low energy reserves, this unrealistic fear of running out of energy and never ever getting any more, seems to dominate life. The more she is living in the weaknesses of the temperament, the more this is prevalent. The predominant way this is noticed by the significant others is with her dry sense of humor to avoid physical, and even sexual, involvement. Any activity requiring any energy goes on the endangered list, and dry, sarcastic, hurtful remarks are aimed at anyone attempting to tap into her energy.

### **What Phlegmatics Can Do To Live In The Temperament Strengths**

There are attitudes and behaviors Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic can adopt to help them be the persons God created them to be. Anyone can be the person God created him to be. It is not easy nor painless. It cannot be done without effort and it cannot be done in our human strength alone. However, with a right relationship with God through Jesus Christ and by learning to live in the strengths of our temperament, it is possible.

#### **☺ Find employment engaging in tedious tasks without being required to interact with people for long periods of time.**

While Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic interact with people well, even hostile and ornery people, human beings are a drain on their energy supply. Accomplishing tedious tasks has an element of satisfaction and accomplishment for them. Therefore, a job crunching numbers or sitting at a computer all day (if this is what they like to do) is less stressful than being a waitress and interacting with many people over long periods of time each day.

#### **☺ Maintain a proper balance in diet, exercise, work, and relaxation to insure proper energy balance.**

This, more than any practice Phil Phlegmatic can adopt, will help him deal with the unrealistic fear of running out of energy and never being able to have any more. It is not scientifically evident whether the Phlegmatic temperament actually has less energy or he does not expend energy. In either case, this one behavioral change will really help. While Phil Phlegmatic will probably always need more sleep than the rest of

## V. The Phlegmatic Temperament

the temperaments, a balance in diet, exercise, work and relaxation is how his energy is restored. The fear of running out of energy stops him from the proper balance of exercise or relaxation. He avoids activities requiring energy. Even though he enjoys golf, for example, and golf is relaxing, he does not play as much golf as he likes in order to protect his low energy reserves. Thus he insures his energy reserves will remain low because he is not getting a balance in diet, exercise, work and relaxation. Balance is the key word here.

### ☺ **Learn to comfortably show deep, tender feelings in ways people can understand.**

This will wonderfully help the people around her, who think Phoebe Phlegmatic does not love them, does not care about them or has no feelings at all. Showing her deep tender feelings – Phlegmatics do have them – in ways other people understand will help. This will enhance all her relationships, thus making her own life less stressful, with less conflict, less demand placed on her, etc. Also, as we are meeting the needs of people around us, our needs get met. The law of reciprocity goes into effect. What goes around, comes around. Or as Jesus put it, *“Give, and it will be given to you.” (Luke 6:38).*

### ☺ **Take action about the injustices.**

Phil Phlegmatic has a gift. He sees injustices and problems, and instinctively knows what would make it better. He becomes angry and frustrated because no one is taking action. Much of what he calls frustration is the emotion anger, and needs to be dealt with in constructive, godly ways. Denying anger and burying it is no more constructive or godly than screaming, yelling, throwing objects, hitting walls or striking people. Ephesians 4:26 (NKJV) clearly states, *“Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath.”* Phil Phlegmatic tends to mask, bury and deny anger.

Most people do not see the injustice or problem. If they do see it, they do not know what to do about it. As Phil Phlegmatic motivates himself to take action – even if the action is simply sharing information with people who will take the initiative to bring about change – his own stress and anxiety levels will be lower. It will help him even more if he will take the initiative and do it himself. His own anger and frustration

## God Created You

will be greatly reduced and, since he is a perfectionist, whatever needs to be done will be done right.

### ☺ **Purposely stay involved in life and set activity guidelines in order to keep from *sleeping life away*.**

Allowing life to slip you by is not healthy for anyone. Phoebe Phlegmatic, more than any temperament, tends to do this. She ultimately has to motivate herself to stay involved with life. If she does not, feelings of worthlessness, dissatisfaction, meaninglessness, etc., take over and spoil life.

The people around her are aching for her involvement. She needs to be involved in life. She has a lot to offer people and the world. God Himself created her this way, with her gifts and talents, in order for her to be able to enjoy life and to be a blessing. However, she has to learn to take the initiative and motivate herself to be involved, or she will end up sleeping life away.

To stop from traveling on this path, learning to initiate activity guidelines will help. Go with the family to the park and play with the kids on Saturday afternoon. Remain at the table after supper and enter into the conversations, leaving out the snide remarks and negative personal comments. Participate in a few outside-of-work activities with co-workers. Go to social activities from time to time. Plan and go on a family vacation – and enjoy it. Join a golf league. Phoebe Phlegmatic will enjoy life more if she will find activities she enjoys and will take the initiative to do them with people. She does not have to become a social butterfly, but from time to time she needs to take the initiative and participate with the people and loved ones.

### ☺ **Show initiative in the deep, personal relationships in life.**

Phil Phlegmatic tends to be an observer, a non-participant, and a responder. From time to time, it will benefit him to be the initiator. The people who are involved in a deep personal level with him feel they are putting in 100% of the effort to keep the relationship going. This is because they are putting in 100% of the effort, and seeing little results. This gets tiring! A healthy relationship needs input from everyone involved in the relationship. As Phil Phlegmatic shows initiative in relationships, everyone benefits and the relationship prospers.

## V. The Phlegmatic Temperament

One way to do this is to give out compliments and positive verbal rewards without making significant others feeling like they had to drag it out of you. How many times has Phil Phlegmatic heard, “Would it kill you to say something nice once in a while?” He tends to be stingy with verbal compliments and physical signs of love, appreciation, affection and recognition, seemingly only after someone has forced it out. Take the initiative. Shock people by being nice. Tell the kids how well they are doing in school before Mom has to prod you. Tell your wife she looks nice in her new dress before she has to ask. Tell your parents how wonderful they are (if you are a teenager, this will shock them no matter what temperament you are).

### ☺ **Control critical attitudes about people.**

Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic are more critical than they perceive. Their dry sense of humor is used in a negative way to keep people out of their space and from draining their energy. People perceive negative humor directed at them personally as being critical – go figure. Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic are perfectionists. Nothing anyone else does is beyond criticism. They point out what needs to be improved upon, without mentioning what is already being done well. They are not tactful and do not balance negative observations with verbal rewards. If a teenage child brings home a report card with 4 A's and 1 C, the Phlegmatic parent will have a tendency to only talk about improving the C, with a few negative, personal comments. “Are you stupid? Math is not a hard subject. If you would study more instead of running around with your weird friends all the time, you would have a decent report card.” The 4 A's might well go totally unmentioned, leaving the child to feel like they have failed.

### ☺ **Be more willing to make sacrifices.**

While Phoebe Phlegmatic feels she is making her fair share of sacrifices in life, no one else feels the same way. This is because she feels every time energy is expended, she has made a sacrifice. The rest of the temperaments view expended energy as a normal part of life. It will benefit her to reevaluate her opinion of sacrifice, to look at it from a different person's point of view. It is not necessarily a sacrifice to baby-sit the kids while Mom is grocery shopping. Most people would

## God Created You

not consider it a sacrifice to walk across the street once or twice a week to play with your children at the park. Occasional overtime is not seen as a major sacrifice by many co-workers. Even if these are sacrifices for them, Phlegmatics need to be more willing to make sacrifices. Sacrificing for people will reduce their hidden fears, improve their self-image, and enhance their relationships with people and with God.

### ☺ **Learn to be more flexible and less stubborn.**

Phoebe Phlegmatic can be hardheaded. She believes whatever she has concluded as right is right and everything else is wrong. She thinks there is a right way to do a project, and everything else is wrong. She thinks her way is the only way, and everything else is wrong. A wife has to be like this. Children should be seen and not heard. A proficient parent will perform thusly. She can end up being, at worse, highly controlling as she attempts to “help” everyone to do and to be what is right.

Phlegmatics tend to be frustrated and angry with people who are not doing what is right and who are not being what they should be. Learning most of the world is not right or wrong, black or white, will help them. Recognizing there are several right ways to do most tasks and a lot of right ways for a person to be will help them reduce stress, anxiety, anger and frustration. Life does not have to be lived by the Phlegmatic’s view of the right way. Most people do not have to meet the Phlegmatic’s standards. As the Phlegmatic learns to lighten up, to be more flexible and less stubborn about ideas and viewpoints, everyone is happier.

### ☺ **Learn to submit to the Will of God. God will work along side the Phlegmatic, and the fears of failing and criticism will be greatly reduced.**

Phil Phlegmatic does not look like he has fears. He actually does not realize how many fears he has. He has a fear of being imperfect; making the wrong decision will prove he is not perfect and open him up to criticism. He has no problem being critical, but hates to be criticized. Most of the time, people afflict people with what they fear the most. Stalin feared death, so he killed 60 million people. Most people are not ultimately extreme in this practice, thank God.



## V. The Phlegmatic Temperament

Phil Phlegmatic criticizes people for making wrong decisions, yet procrastinates greatly before making a decision – if he will make one at all. This confuses and angers people interacting with him. People see this as hypocritical. “You cannot make up your mind. I have to make all the decisions around here, and then you criticize my decisions.” Phil Phlegmatic procrastinates in decision making because of this fear of being criticized. In his mind, no decision is better than a wrong decision, which brings criticism. Learning to seek God’s guidance will help. God always makes the right decisions.

Phil Phlegmatic desires to be in a relationship with someone who will work along side him. He does not want to go it alone. As he learns to submit to the will of God, he is going to find someone to work along side, to stand shoulder to shoulder with him. “*And surely I am with you always*” (Matthew 28:20). God will not be only an observer, but a participant. God working with him. God providing guidance. God providing new ideas. God helping him perceive life from a new perspective. God knows about his hidden fears and is very capable of meeting these needs as he learns to submit to God’s will. As he does, several fears begin to diminish, including the fear of failing and the fear of criticism. Like the rest of us, Phil Phlegmatic’s known fears and hidden fears directly affect his behavior. It is beneficial to face his fears and deal with them instead of ignoring or denying them. Much of the Phlegmatic’s anxiety and stress comes from hidden fears.

### ☺ **The Phlegmatic needs someone willing to share in making decisions and willing to accept part of the responsibility for those decisions.**

Phil Phlegmatic does not share information well. He does not (naturally) share intimate information. He is emotionally guarded. Therefore, he does not seem to need someone to share in the decision-making process. Yet, he procrastinates in decision-making and even refuses to make decisions. Why? Because he is (instinctively, even subconsciously) looking for someone trustworthy to share in the decision-making process and to accept part of the responsibility should those decisions turn out bad. Bad decisions open him up to criticism. He hates criticism.

## God Created You

Significant others can help. Offer to share in making decisions. Letting Phil or Phoebe Phlegmatic know they will not be blamed or criticized for wrong decisions. Share information, share ideas, and share thoughts about the decision to be made. Come to a mutual agreement. After discussing different options - it does take energy to get Phil or Phoebe Phlegmatic to discuss ideas and options - encouragement like, "Let's try this. If it does not work, we can always try a different approach" will help them come to a decision.

Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic make decent decisions. They gather information. They analyze it. They draw decent conclusions. When decisions turn out right, the more willing they are to continue the process on future decisions. As they are not blamed or criticized for wrong decisions, the more they will continue making future decisions.

### ☺ **Phil and Phoebe Phlegmatic need a lot of positive reinforcement.**

The Phlegmatic temperament has a relatively high need for recognition. Phlegmatics do not know or acknowledge this. They build walls (usually with their dry sense of humor) to prevent it. It will help them to recognize this need and reveal it to a couple of close relationships. This will allow these close relationships to actively meet this need. When temperament needs are being met, stress and anxiety is greatly reduced and stress/anxiety connected problems (i.e., poor relationship behavior subconsciously attempting to meet these needs) are also reduced.

I have found, by counseling with Phlegmatics, that positive reinforcement is the easiest, quickest way to bring about positive behavioral changes. On the outside, the Phlegmatic is rejecting every positive statement, compliment, and encouragement. On the inside, the Phlegmatic is soaking it in. And in most cases, within weeks (sometimes days) even longstanding behavioral problems begin to change. As long as the positive reinforcement continues, the healthy behavioral patterns also continue.

A family began coming to me for counseling because the 14-year-old son was stealing from the parents and grandparents. They addressed this matter many times and the problem would subside only to rise up again. There were also problems with the way he expressed anger, and

## V. The Phlegmatic Temperament

problems involving school and grades. But, as the parents viewed it, the stealing was the major issue. The parents were frustrated. I did T.A.P.s on the whole family and the son was Phlegmatic.

I talked to the parents about positive reinforcement. I convinced the parents, and grandparents, to try positive reinforcement with this child. It takes a while to convince people to keep throwing positive comments and affirmation towards someone they are mad and upset and frustrated with before the problems disappear. It is even more difficult to convince them to eliminate the negative comments, yelling, scolding, lectures, etc. They tend to think the person should change the behavior first. Then the person would receive positive energy from those around him. While this may well be true, it is mostly ineffective. Positive reinforcement, however, is effective in bringing about positive behavioral changes in Phlegmatics.

Once the parents and grandparents, the significant others in this Phlegmatic child's life, began pouring positive comments and affirmation on him, amazing behavioral changes began to happen. The stealing stopped almost immediately. The child's schoolwork started to improve. The problems at school decreased. His relationship with his two younger sisters even improved. It was amazing how much happened in a relatively short period of time. Positive reinforcement has a positive effect on the behavior of the Phlegmatic.

## CHAPTER SIX

# THE SUPINE TEMPERAMENT

*“Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.” (Matthew 5:5)*

Several unique results came out of the seven years of research with 5,000 people regarding Temperament done by the National Christian Counselors Association. Enough scientific evidence was drawn from the research to identify a fifth temperament. As long as temperament has been written about, it has always been known a group of people did not fit into the original four temperament types. However, until the extensive research done by the N.C.C.A., there was not the scientific support to identify a fifth temperament. Now there is.

They named this temperament type Supine. To define the Supine temperament in a short phrase, **“the servant’s heart”**. The Supine temperament has great gifts in serving people. The Supine temperament wants to help and serve people. It is a great temperament, although Supines are taken advantage of in our society. The American society tends to think everyone is supposed to be climbing the ladder of success, success being realized when one is the CEO of the corporation. Not everyone wants to be the CEO (you cannot admit this or else society will think you are strange). Not everyone wants to be in charge, or be the take charge person. If everyone was the CEO, who would be left to perform the duties of the company? The Supine wants to be in a healthy working relationship, more in the background than the forefront, being in useful service to people.

Personally, I believe King David was Supine. David is the only person recorded in the Scriptures, about whom God said **“I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will.”** (Acts 13:22). The Supine is longing to share life with someone. The Supine desires someone to work along side of, shoulder to shoulder. The Supine has wonderful gifts and talents to use in serving people. Supines prefer a supporting role. They do not like being in the spotlight.

## VI. The Supine Temperament

The name “Supine” means “with the face upwards”, like a servant looking up to his/her master. Why was David one of Israel’s greatest kings? He was working together with God as a servant of God and a servant of the people Israel. David never lost this servant’s attitude in forty years of kingship. Most kings believe the people are there to serve them. David believed he was there to serve God and Israel.

### **Supine Inclusion Strengths**

The Supine Inclusion (i.e., social interaction, surface relationships, and intellectual energies) strengths include:

- ☺ **relationship-oriented**
- ☺ **both introverted and extroverted**
- ☺ **a great capacity for service**
- ☺ **like people**
- ☺ **desire to serve people**
- ☺ **possess an inborn gentle spirit**
- ☺ **can undertake numerous tasks, especially if these tasks are performed for the development of friendships.**
- ☺ **can be markedly accommodating to people, even at their own expense.**

The Supine in Inclusion is relationship-oriented. Stewart and Susie Supine have a need to relate to people. However, they also have the ability to undertake tasks, which makes them look task-oriented. Stewart Supine’s ability to perform tasks is directly related to the development of relationships. He has a great capacity to serve people. He does not perform tasks for the sake of accomplishing the task, like Melvin Melancholy. Melvin Melancholy understands tasks better than he does people. Stewart Supine understands people better than tasks. He does not perform tasks to reach goals, like Eric Choleric. Eric Choleric will use and abuse people to accomplish a goal. Stewart Supine’s service is for the sake of establishing and maintaining friendships and deep personal relationships. He needs to be in relationship with people.

Susie Supine actually likes people. For all the goal-oriented and task-oriented temperaments reading this statement, “actually likes”

## God Created You

means she likes people for the people themselves; not for networking purposes or what “I” can get from them. Really enjoying people is a hard concept for most temperaments to grasp. But not for Susie Supine. She likes people. She wants to be in relationships with people. And, while everyone receives certain benefits from being in healthy relationships, she is in relationships to serve.

Susie Supine has a great capacity to serve people. She desires to serve. In our society, this need to serve is more often than not seen as a weakness. Americans live in a very take-care-of-me society. Therefore, Susie Supine is often used and abused because of this desire and need to serve. Learning to set boundaries, learning to say “No,” and learning to express her preferences will greatly help her not to feel and/or be used and abused. She wants to be involved in acts of service and she never tires of serving people, IF she is involved in healthy relationships. She does not want to be in the forefront. She prefers being behind the scenes. She desires to be working shoulder to shoulder with and along side of people. She is looking for relationships where she can share her life and share in the life of people. Susie Supine is an immensely loyal and faithful friend, if she is treated properly.

Stewart Supine is both introverted and extroverted. He expresses the temperament social needs as an introvert and responds as an extrovert. Melody Melancholy, who is an introvert, can be easily stressed out when forced into social interaction or when in a social setting for long periods of time. Once stressed out in a social setting, she is highly negative; she is miserable and usually makes everyone else miserable also. Misery loves company. Sandy Sanguine, who is an extrovert, can be stressed out when not in a social setting. She often neglects tasks in order to socialize. Stewart Supine needs a little of both worlds, but kept in balance. He does not have the driving need to be away from people as the Melancholy, nor does he have the driving need to be around people as the Sanguine.

Stewart Supine can be away from people for periods of time without becoming stressed out. He needs quiet time while performing tasks or for regenerating. He is also capable of socializing without becoming stressed out. Keeping these in balance is the key. If out of balance, his social needs will go unmet because he does not initiate social interaction. He does not pick up the phone and call a friend to go out socializing.

## VI. The Supine Temperament

He sits at home and wishes friends would read his mind, kind of automatically understand his social needs, and call him to go out. Learning to initiate social interaction would help Stewart Supine get his social needs met.

Susie Supine can be overly accommodating to people, even at her own expense. She is self-sacrificing, to the point of neglecting herself. A couple temperaments view this strength as a weakness and use and abuse her. Erica Choleric views this Supine trait as a person who wants to be controlled and dominated. Before long she begins to resent Susie Supine for this “weakness,” as she does with anyone who will not stand up for herself. However, Susie Supine’s self-sacrificing is a godly trait, and therefore a strength in the temperament. (Erica Choleric could learn a lot here). Jesus was self-sacrificing, and all the temperaments could learn a lesson.

Susie Supine does not want to be controlled or dominated. Being controlled or dominated causes her to become angry, which she masks as hurt feelings and buries. She desires to serve, yet she needs to be in healthy relationships. She needs recognition and appreciation for her acts of service. She does not want to be in the spotlight or in control, but she does not want to be used or taken for granted either. She desires to share in people’s lives, and she shares in people’s lives by serving.

Stewart Supine possesses an inborn gentle spirit. From my perspective, this might be the greatest strength of the Supine temperament. The Bible says much about a gentle spirit, and it is all positive. The rest of the temperaments work hard towards this goal, but never accomplish what the Supine naturally has inborn. David, the man after God’s own heart, was a man of a gentle spirit. A gentle spirit is of great worth in God’s sight (I Peter 3:4). The Supine in Inclusion, living in the strengths of the temperament, naturally has what the Scriptures encourage the rest of us to seek after and develop.

### **Supine Inclusion Weaknesses**

The Supine temperament is a wonderful temperament. However, like all temperaments, it has strengths and weaknesses. When the Supine is living in the strengths of the temperament, great gifts and abilities come forth, especially in serving people. When in the weaknesses, the opposite is true.

## God Created You

The Supine Inclusion (i.e., social interaction, surface relationships, and intellectual energies) weaknesses include:

- ⊗ **indirect behavior**
- ⊗ **expects people to “read his mind”**
- ⊗ **high fear of rejection**
- ⊗ **harbor anger (although he views it as “hurt feelings”)**

It might be said Susie Supine is her own worst enemy because of indirect behavior. Indirect behavior means she is expressing (in body language, verbally, and various forms of sending messages) a want, need, or preference, when in reality she has a completely different idea. She may have a desire to go out and eat at a nice restaurant. Indirect behavior is when her husband asks, “What do you want to do for supper tonight?” and she responds with “Oh, I don’t care. Whatever you want to do.” She knows he wants to sit in front of the television and eat leftovers, which she is beginning to despise because vegging out is all they do every night. She does not express her preference, but resents him for not suggesting they eat out. Susie Supine expresses indirect behavior the most of all the temperaments.

Stewart Supine carries a neon sign boldly declaring “**I DO NOT WANT.**” This is not true. He wants and needs very much. He does not receive what he needs because no one knows of his needs; he expects people to read his mind. In his thinking, if people have to be told, even if they respond according to his desires, it does not count because they should have done it instinctively. It will help Stewart Supine to learn to clearly express his desires, wants and preferences. Most people in relationship with him would be happy to meet his needs, IF they only knew what those needs were.

Indirect behavior comes into play often. What Susie Supine expresses she needs and wants is acutely different from what she prefers. She has a fairly high need for social interaction, yet is quiet and usually found in the background at social gatherings. She appears to be distant and cold. She responds only when approached. She seldom initiates social interaction. She sends out messages saying she does not want social involvement. She will miss social events because she was not personally invited. An announcement is made during church welcoming



## VI. The Supine Temperament

everyone to the potluck dinner following the service. Susie Supine will not feel welcome because no one said “Susie, please come to the dinner.” Stewart and Susie Supine need and want social interaction. Indirect behavior prevents their needs from being met.

To the rest of the temperaments, it seems like Stewart and Susie Supine expect people to read their minds. This is because they do expect people to read their minds, to instinctively know what their true preference or need or desire is and then take steps to meet the need. They expect people to ignore the indirect behavior messages (Supines do not know they are sending out these vibes) and to instinctively know the needs and meet them. They are often frustrated in loneliness because people cannot read their minds. As Stewart and Susie Supine learn to be more direct in sharing needs, wants, and preferences, they will discover significant others are (if it is a healthy relationship) willing to help meet these needs.

Indirect behavior is one source of Stewart Supine’s anger. He does not view anger as the emotion, but tends to mask it. Masking anger is simply changing its name. Stewart Supine calls anger hurt feelings. Because he masks anger, it ends up getting buried away deep within and never dealt with in constructive or godly ways. Anger, if you do not deal with it in constructive and godly ways, will come back and deal with you in ugly ways. Anger buried always comes out eventually. AND it always comes out ugly. Masking tends to leave Stewart and Susie Supine with a lot of unresolved anger. Supine males are usually very angry people.

A term in our society covering what happens when stored up anger comes out is “going postal.” All “going postal” means is someone lost control, snapped and began expressing anger in ungodly ways. It makes the news when someone picks up a gun and kills people for no apparent reason. The news media loves to interview people. Whenever someone has “gone postal” and people are injured or dead, the news media begins interviewing. Coworkers and neighbors tell their story. He was a great guy. He was a wonderful neighbor. He was mild mannered. I cannot believe he could hurt anyone. He did his job, showed up at work everyday and was nice to everyone. He was nice to kids and pets. But then he snapped and all his stored up anger, which Stewart Supine calls hurt feelings, came rushing out – and it came out ugly. It will benefit Stewart

## God Created You

and Susie Supine to learn to deal with anger in constructive and godly ways. Chapter Eight is about dealing with anger healthily.

Susie Supine has a high fear of rejection. She does not want anyone, anywhere on the planet, not to like her. She does not handle rejection well. She does not handle well the rejection of someone she knows. If anyone criticizes a person she knows or does not like a person she knows, Susie Supine receives it as personally rejection. She wants everyone to like her. She wants everyone to like everyone. She wants everyone to get along all the time everywhere on the planet. She tends to take it personally when this does not happen. Needless to say, Susie Supine has a lot of inner stress. When in the weaknesses of the temperament, she compensates for this fear of rejection by attempting to being the kind of person she perceives people want her to be. Sammy Sanguine compensates for the fear of rejection by being around people, thinking if these people reject me I will be accepted by those over there. Melody Melancholy pretends she does not care what anyone thinks of her and rejects people before she can be rejected.

Susie Supine interprets what people are expecting of her and attempts to be that person. Her conclusions are not always correct. She also attempts to do what she perceives people expect. Of course, no one can please all people, nor even care to attempt it. However, Susie Supine spends a lot of time and energy attempting to be and to do what she perceives people are looking for. This is not only impossible, but it is unhealthy. Many a Supine has told me, "I do not even know who I am. I have spent my life trying to be what everyone else expected of me."

Susie Supine has a need to serve people and make them happy. This is a great trait. However, she can be a natural born victim when in the weaknesses of the temperament. She tends to have unhealthy relationships because of low self-esteem and feelings of worthlessness. In her weaknesses she expresses a lot of indirect behavior. She never expresses feelings of being used. She does not set boundaries. She cannot say "No." A few people interpret her indirect behavior as a desire to be used and dominated, and they accommodate.

One lady asked me, "Am I wearing a sign saying 'Please Abuse Me'?" She had been in several unhealthy relationships. She felt everyone in her life had taken advantage of her. She felt used and abused. As far

## VI. The Supine Temperament

as I could tell, she had never been in a healthy relationship with a male person. These people throughout her life probably would not have guessed she felt this way, because of indirect behavior. Was she an angry person? Oh yes! She did not know it. She did not see herself as an angry person. She saw herself as a hurt person. However, she had been praying for years for God to kill her husband – and she was mad at God because He had not answered her prayer. Sounds like a lot of anger to me!

Stewart and Susie Supine need to learn to set boundaries, reinforce boundaries nicely, say “No,” and express their preferences clearly. These attitudes and behaviors will greatly help them be the individuals God created them to be.

### **Supine Control Strengths**

The Supine in Control has decision-making abilities, the willingness to take on responsibilities and the need for independence. The reason this is mentioned here is because the Supine in Control does not look like he or she has decision-making abilities, the willingness to take on responsibilities and the need for independence. The people in relationship with the Supine in Control may not even believe the above statement because of indirect behavior. The Supine in Control does have these abilities and needs – really! However, Susie Supine cannot independently make decisions nor take on responsibilities without becoming anxious and insecure, thus she seldom does and few people knows she can. She actually makes good decisions, but when forced to do so independently, she does not make decisions without stress and anxiety. She is looking for a close friend to work shoulder to shoulder, discuss ideas, share information and bare the responsibility for decisions gone badly.

The Supine in Control is a dependent temperament. Being totally independent and in control, especially involving people, causes great stress. Having to make all the decisions causes great stress and anxiety. On the other hand, Susie Supine does not want to be dominated or controlled, although her indirect behavior may indicate this to certain people. She is looking for a close personal friend to share responsibility in the decision-making department of life. If forced to take on responsibilities and make decisions, stress and feelings of inadequacy

## God Created You

and worthlessness result. Susie Supine (and Stewart, this is not gender connected) seeks a trusted significant person who will share in the decision-making process. She needs someone, in a healthy relationship, to share ideas with, to confide in, who will listen, guide, and reassure her.

Stewart and Susie Supine are fearful of being left alone. They are constantly searching the world for someone to share life. “Share” is the key word. They do not want to be totally independent of everyone else, although they talk about it frequently when in unhealthy relationships. They do not wish to be controlled and dominated. The Supine hates to be, or feel, dominated and used and taken for granted. What the Supine hates even worse is to be left alone. One reason Stewart or Susie Supine end up in one unhealthy relationship after another is the fear of being alone. In their thinking, being left alone is worse than the pain and agony of an unhealthy relationship; any relationship is better than being alone. What Stewart and Susie Supine really want and need is a close friend who will share in the decision-making responsibilities of life. They desire someone who will share life: who will share in Stewart or Susie Supine’s life as well as allow Stewart or Susie Supine to share in their lives.

Supine Control (i.e., decision-making abilities, willingness to take on responsibilities, and the need for independence) strengths include:

- ☺ **Dependability.**
- ☺ **Ability to enforce policies.**
- ☺ **Serve those they follow.**
- ☺ **Absolute loyalty.**

When living in the strengths of the temperament, the Supine in Control is extremely dependable. Stewart Supine shows up for work on time, does his job well and proficiently, does not take a lot of extra time off, and volunteers for overtime when necessary. He goes the extra mile without being asked. He perceives what needs to be done, and does everything in his ability to get the job done, done right, and done within the allotted time frame. He is a stickler for the rules. He does not tend to change employment often. Stewart Supine is an employer’s dream employee, in the strengths of his temperament.

## VI. The Supine Temperament

Dependability is a constant trait with the Supine in Control at home, at work, or at play. Stewart Supine is a dependable employee. He is a reliable church member. He is also a faithful husband and father and friend. Even in the strengths of the temperament, he is not flashy, the life of the party, or spontaneous. He does not initiate often (but is a great responder). He is not a great disciplinarian with the children, but is fairly good at enforcing the rules he and his wife have set together. He is committed to his relationships. He is not a flash in the pan. He is dependable. He is faithful. He is reliable. Plus, he is in the relationship to serve. He instinctively perceives the needs of his wife and children, and attempts to meet those needs (he is not always correct in his presumptions, but communication will really help here). Acts of service are his forte, so he serves his family (or his employer, or his church, or his friends) in task-related acts of service; usually more behind the scenes than in the forefront.

No one follows the rules as well as the Supine in Control. Melody Melancholy follows the rules, however, only the rules she has written or adapted for herself. Erica Choleric believes the rules are laws for everyone else, but merely guidelines for her. Everyone else has to constantly adhere to the letter of the law, but she does whatever she wants whenever she wants. Phoebe Phlegmatic keeps the rules in her own perfectionist way, which no one else can understand or measure up to. Sandy Sanguine always obeys the rules except when she has a great reason for making this one exception – she always has the best excuses and has no idea (really!) how often she violates the rules.

Susie Supine follows the rules. If there is a seat belt law in her state, Susie Supine wears a seat belt. If there is a clean sidewalk ordinance in town, her sidewalks are free from ice and snow all winter long. If she is allowed a half-hour lunch, she will be back to her desk early. Actually, she starts each workday a few minutes early just to make sure she has not cheated the company. She reads instructions. She reads ALL the instructions. She reads the instructions for the new coffee maker before brewing a pot of coffee. It does not matter how many coffee makers she has previously owned, the instructions are first read and then the coffee maker is used. She keeps all the instruction booklets for every item ever purchased (even instructions for products worn out and thrown away). Susie Supine is a stickler for the rules.

## God Created You

The rules do not have to be actual laws or even written down anywhere. The rules can as easily be whatever has always been done a particular way. Many children of Supine mothers have heard, “The dishes are not done until the counters are washed.” In reality, the chore of dishwashing may not be done until the counters are washed, but the dishes themselves are literally done once they are cleaned. The Supine rule may or may not be totally, one hundred percent accurate; however, to the Supine it is. The grass does not have to be swept off the sidewalks after mowing the lawn, the lawn is still cut. AND everyone does not have to eat supper at the dinner table. AND no one will die, nor will there be any catastrophe, if the children eat dessert before the main course. Stewart and Susie Supine do not make up these rules. Someone else made the rules for them, usually parents. However, once it has become a rule in the mind of the Supine, it will be kept religiously.

Stewart and Susie Supine have a great capacity for serving people. They have wonderful and unique gifts and abilities in the area of service, but it needs to be connected to a healthy relationship. They will serve those they follow. If Susie Supine is in a healthy relationship with her husband, then she will serve the relationship with absolute loyalty. If Stewart Supine is in a healthy relationship with his boss and coworkers, then he will serve with absolute loyalty. If Stewart and Susie Supine are in a healthy relationship with God, then they will serve with absolute loyalty. When they are living in the temperament strengths, when they are in healthy relationships, these God-given abilities, gifts and talents of serving people come shining through their lives. After 40 years of kingship, King David still desired to be of service to God and to the people of Israel. His grandson Rehoboam never caught on to the idea the king was placed there by God to serve the people. He thought God has placed the people of Israel there to serve him, resulting in the division of the kingdom.

## **Supine Control Weaknesses**

The weaknesses of the Supine temperament are more than the negative side of the strengths. When Supines are living in the temperament weaknesses, multiple problems become evident. Take indirect behavior for example. Supines have indirect behavior even when living in the temperament strengths. It is much worse in the temperament

## VI. The Supine Temperament

weaknesses. (Supines have no idea they express indirect behavior). People in relationship with Supines often feel confused. They do not know what the Supines want. To them it seems like the Supines are always changing their minds. One day they want this. Tomorrow they want everything different. In the weaknesses of the temperament, it seems like Supines are never happy. This is because of indirect behavior. Supines convey, verbally, through body language, through non-verbal communication and through various vibes they send out, different needs and wants than what they literally prefer.

When the people in relationship with Supines respond according to the vibes being sent out, their needs, wants and desires are not being met leaving the Supines feeling frustrated and hurt. The people in relationship with them are confused and unable to meet their needs. The Supines needs are not being met and they are frustrated and hurt. A vicious cycle has begun leading to many additional relationship problems. Indirect behavior needs to be recognized and appropriately dealt with. As Supines learn to clearly convey preferences and desires and set healthy boundaries, indirect behavior becomes less of a problem. With less indirect behavior, Supines are able to get their needs met. As their needs are being met, Supines will not feel used and abused and taken for granted. As they are not feeling used or taken for granted, their gifts for service will begin to flow freer meeting the people's needs around them. This is in a good cycle.

One more thought before we look at the Supine temperament weaknesses. To Susie Supine, the thought of meeting her own needs sounds bad. It sounds selfish and is contrary to her natural Supine desires to serve people. It is hard for Susie Supine to realize when her needs are not being met, she cannot continue to meet the needs of people. She can continue to try, to the point of depression, but she cannot do it. Here is a true statement: Cars are smarter than people. You can reason with your car that gas prices are high, you have put gas in your car for years, it is a nuisance, it is expensive, it is inconvenient, and it is cold in the winter (in Michigan, anyway). Use whatever logic you want, but when the car's need for gas is not being met, eventually the car will quit providing service and performing. Cars are smarter than people. People continue to give and/or attempt to meet needs when their own tank is dry.

## God Created You

If you are not getting your needs met, you cannot meet the needs of people. Sooner or later you are going to find yourself in a place where you have nothing more to give. Depression, frustration, worthlessness, etc., comes from attempting to give and serve when the well has run dry. Cars know this and quit running when their gas tank is empty. Jesus knows this, which is why He said, *“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”* (Mark 12:31). If some people treated their neighbors the way they treat themselves they would be in jail! You cannot love your neighbor if you do not love yourself. You cannot serve your neighbor unless you are serving yourself, i.e., getting your needs met. As a car cannot run with its gas tank empty, you cannot meet the needs of people if you are not getting your own needs met in healthy and godly ways.

Supine Control (i.e., decision-making abilities, willingness to take on responsibilities, and the need for independence) weaknesses include:

- ⊗ **Indirect behavior.**
- ⊗ **Aggressive disorders.**
- ⊗ **Open dependence.**
- ⊗ **Defensive against loss of position.**
- ⊗ **Weak will power.**
- ⊗ **Difficulty in saying “No.”**
- ⊗ **Highly susceptible to guilt.**
- ⊗ **Tendency to feel powerless and at the mercy of people.**

When living in the temperament weaknesses, aggressive disorders also begin to appear. The Supine temperament is a dependent temperament. This is good. This is the way God made the Supine. This is healthy for the Supine, when in the temperament strengths and healthy relationships. Society does not necessarily interpret dependency as good. The business world, and pretty much the rest of society, is always pushing (encouraging) people to stand on their own two feet, to be their own person, to climb the ladder of success and to be a leader. After a while, especially in the temperament weaknesses, Stewart Supine gets sick and tired of being this way and decides to be in control. Instead of learning to be more assertive in healthy ways, in the temperament weaknesses he tends to develop aggressive disorders. At this point he begins to



## VI. The Supine Temperament

look like a normal Choleric; independent, demanding, controlling, abusive, self-centered, self-absorbed, narcissistic and uncaring. This once passive, non-confrontational person is attempting to be totally independent and in total control of himself, his life and everyone else. This is not healthy.

The world is not kind to Stewart or Susie Supine. During childhood, children abuse and torment them knowing they will be the last to fight back. As adults, they are again abused and tormented. More aggressive, dominant temperaments order them around and dominate them in cruel, overbearing ways. Finally, Stewart and Susie Supine are overwhelmed with anger and anxiety and turn on the people who have dominated them, usually using the same unhealthy techniques of manipulation used on them. Yelling, screaming, physical force, cruel statements, aggressive behaviors and especially guilt trips become the new way of life to be independent and in control. At this point, Stewart and Susie Supine are viewed as overbearing and dominating. Their words and actions do appear manipulative and controlling. However, they are only attempting to manipulate people into taking care of them.

The aggression and attempts to be dominant are usually short-lived or sporadic at best. Unlike Melvin Melancholy, Stewart Supine cannot independently make decisions nor take on responsibilities without becoming plagued with anxiety and insecurity. Unlike Erica Choleric, Susie Supine can only be domineering for a limited amount of time, and she has to be stressed to the max even to attempt this. Erica Choleric is stressed out when she is not in control. Susie Supine is stressed out when she has to be in control. In order for her to come to the conclusion she must be in total control of herself, her life and everyone else means Susie Supine figures life as it is presently is horrible and hopeless. Aggressive disorders are her attempt to get some sanity in her life. Long term aggression is unusual for the Supine.

It is more usual to see Supines in Control who feel totally powerless and totally at the mercy of people, which is reflected in their behavior. Stewart Supine tends to become openly dependent in his temperament weaknesses. He has given up on being able to make any decisions on his own. At this point, he does whatever he perceives his wife wants. He does whatever he perceives the children want. He does whatever he perceives his boss wants. He does whatever he perceives the pets want.

## God Created You

(Oh, you think I am kidding here). When it does not work out correctly – and it never does at this stage – the failure is somehow Stewart Supine’s fault. He becomes super sensitive to the emotion of guilt.

In the temperament weaknesses, Stewart or Susie Supine have an immensely difficult time saying “No.” In the temperament strengths they have a difficult time saying “No.” After much practice, saying “No” and setting boundaries never becomes easy. In the temperament weaknesses it is even worse. They are unable to exercise any will power over themselves or over anyone, except in momentary unhealthy attempts to be aggressive. They cannot set boundaries at work or at home or at school or with friends and family. No wonder they feel powerless and at the mercy of everyone. It is very healthy for Stewart and Susie Supine to learn to say “No” and to set boundaries, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Susie Supine is severely susceptible to the emotion of guilt. She does not know this, but she wears a huge neon sign saying, “Easily motivated by guilt – Please use and abuse me.” Everyone in her life knows this. Her husband, the kids, her boss, coworkers, parents, the neighbors, friends, relatives, and even the pets know how to get Susie Supine to do what they want – guilt. Motivating her to any specific action is easy. You need only threaten her with punishment. Your displeasure (guilt) is enough punishment to motivate her. She is weak-willed. She wants to say “No” but does not want to hurt anyone’s feelings. She goes through life doing all sorts of activities she does not want to do because she perceives this will make people happy. They continue to manipulate her with guilt because she does not seem to mind and it works so well. As this continues, Susie Supine feels used, unappreciated, anxious and angry. She also (usually) feels like there is nothing she can do to change the situation. Thus she almost always feels powerless and at the mercy of everyone, for in essence she is.

As far as I can tell from the Scriptures, guilt is never from God. The Bible says, ***“Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”*** (Romans 8:1). Guilt always comes with condemnation. Conviction comes from God and conviction comes without condemnation. He has this unique way of letting us know what we have thought, done or said was wrong. However, He always does it in such a way as to inspire our repentance without filling us with

## VI. The Supine Temperament

condemnation. There is a difference between guilt and conviction. Godly conviction points out we have missed the mark somewhere and repentance is in order. Guilt always brings condemnation with it and is not necessarily interested in repentance. It is only interested in making us feel like a worthless person. It will help Supines to learn to say “No” to guilt and to attempts made by people to motivate them using guilt.

Stewart Supine needs people in his life to make and be responsible for decisions. The Supine in Control is a dependent temperament. This is not a bad trait, though our society views it as such. This does not mean he wants to be controlled or dominated. This does not mean he does not have wants or desires or preferences. He does not want to have to make the decision by himself. He does not want to be responsible for decisions going sour. The indirect behavior may indicate he does not want to make decisions, or he does not have any preferences. He wants to have input on the decisions made affecting him. He becomes angry if his choice or preference is denied or opposite decisions are made by those in control. He does not interpret anger as anger, but masks anger and calls it hurt feelings and then buries it deep down inside. No one, including the Supine, is aware of the amount of unresolved anger buried deep within. Male Supines may be the angriest of all the temperaments.

Of all the temperaments, the Supine in Control internally harbors the most anger. There are two primary reasons for this anger. First, Supines are often excluded in the decision-making process due to indirect behavior. They send out vibes that they do not want to be involved in the process. People respect their desire for lack of involvement, and make decisions without their input. They are not being asked opinions. When their preferences are expressed, people make them feel stupid or worthless. All this adds up to anger, which the Supine masks and buries deep inside until it explodes. Secondly, Supines are angry because they are expected to stand on their own two feet, yet lack the self-confidence to make decisions and take charge of their own life independently. While the Supine temperament may be the angriest of all the temperaments (although they do not see it as anger, but hurt feelings), male Supines are capable of expressing anger violently. Male Supines suffer far more anger than female Supines and are more apt to vent this anger both physically and verbally.

## God Created You

Learning to recognize anger as anger (about 90% of what Supines call hurt feelings is the emotion anger) and learning to express anger in constructive and godly ways will greatly help the Supine. Anger is the one emotion needing to be dealt with in constructive ways or it will come back in ugly ways to haunt the Supine. (Also see Chapter 8 for more on dealing with anger in godly and constructive ways).

### **Supine Affection Strengths**

In healthy relationships, the Supine in Affection is capable of absolute and total commitment to deep personal relationships. Stewart and Susie Supine have a lot of love, affection, approval and recognition to give. While they do not initiate well (naturally, they can learn), Stewart and Susie Supine desire to meet these needs in the lives of close personal relationships. Again look at King David, after 40 years of kingship (less time has ruined more than one king or emperor) he was still absolutely loyal to God, to the Israeli people, and to those who were with him before he become king. David's loyalty to Joab and his cohorts is astounding to me. Joab and his buddies would have been toast for the stunts they pulled if I had been king. However, Supines are great at forgiveness (although they do not forgive themselves well) and committed to deep personal relationships once the relationship has been established and remains (relatively) healthy.

The Supine Affection (i.e., the need for love, affection and deep, personal relationships) strengths include:

- ☺ **The ability to respond to love, affection, approval and recognition.**
- ☺ **The ability to open up emotionally when they feel emotionally safe.**

Two aspects must be remembered about Stewart and Susie Supine in regards to deep personal relationships. First, Stewart and Susie Supine do not initiate naturally. They can learn to initiate, but they never will become great at it. Therefore, if Susie Supine is going to be involved in deep personal relationships (and she needs several), people must do the initiating. Susie Supine is a responder. At a social gathering, if a person walks up to Susie Supine and begins talking to her and showing interest

## VI. The Supine Temperament

in her as a person, she will respond. She will talk, share, interact and have fun in response to someone's interest in her. If no one initiates interaction, she will remain unnoticeably in the background appearing anti-social (although wishing someone would take notice and include her).

Deep personal relationships come out of social, superficial, surface relationships. Few or no social interaction means even fewer close personal relationships (who are not family members). Everyone needs more close personal relationships than only with relatives. If someone else does not initiate the interaction it takes to establish a deep personal relationship with Susie Supine, she will stand unnoticeably by in life appearing not to need or want close relationships. Susie Supine's close personal relationships happen because another person initiates the relationship. Once a deep personal relationship has been established, Susie Supine is loyal to it.

Secondly, relationships have to be safe before the Supine can open up emotionally. Stewart Supine naturally has direly low self-esteem, to the point of feeling worthless. He has already concluded everyone else is better than he is, everyone else is smarter, etc. It does not take much to get Stewart Supine to build walls and become emotionally guarded and defensive and withdrawn. Saying, or implying, he is stupid once can stop him from sharing ideas and/or feelings forever. Now he is not initiating and not responding emotionally. This will not help establish and maintain a deep personal relationship with anyone of any temperament. Supines in Affection need several close personal relationships. There are great advantages to being in a close personal relationship with a Supine in Affection.

Stewart Supine must feel safe prior to entering and in order to remain in a deep personal relationship. He must feel safe before he will open up and share emotionally. He must feel safe before expressing his preferences and ideas. He must feel safe before allowing the walls to drop and reveal the real person on the inside. Remember Stewart Supine feels if anyone knew the true person on the inside, no one would like him. The opposite is true, of course, but he does not believe it. He wants everyone to like him. He needs people to like him. However, low self-esteem and a high fear of rejection cloud his view of his Supine gifts, which naturally attract people. People would like him if they could

## God Created You

get to know the real person. A safe environment and a healthy relationship will lower Stewart Supine's walls and allow him to move into a deeper relationship. The Supine temperament has a lot to give to deep personal relationships, but it must be a healthy relationship and safe environment prior to entering and in order to remain in it.

To initiate, to be the first to show love and affection, is a learned trait for the Supine in Affection. The Supine has the same Affection needs as the Sanguine. They both need to give and receive a lot of love, affection, approval and recognition. However, in initiation these two temperaments are at the opposite ends of the scale. Sandy Sanguine initiates all the time. Any time she detects boring/task-oriented, she is looking for people interaction and is not shy about initiating the opportunity. Susie Supine never initiates. Guess whose Affection needs are more apt to be getting met on a regular basis? While Susie Supine will never be great at being the initiator, she does need to learn to initiate at times. Otherwise, her Affection needs will never be met. Also, the people in relationship with her will feel like they have to initiate everything in the relationship – and not even the most controlling people want to do all the initiating all the time.

In regards to the deep personal relationships needs of love, affection, approval and recognition, the two Supine aspects concerning close relationships are also true: 1) the Supine does not initiate, 2) the environment and/or relationship must be safe before the Supine can emotionally open up. Stewart and Susie Supine are different from the rest of the temperaments. Sammy Sanguine initiates love, affection, approval and recognition by verbal and physical means all the time. He needs to receive a large amount of love, recognition, affection and approval and needs to give a lot. If he happens to know you (at all), the relationship is safe enough to open up and share the most intimate details of life.

Melvin Melancholy and Eric Choleric initiate love, affection, approval and recognition in order to get what they want. It is sort of a trade; I will give you what you want IF you will give me what I want. The desired result differs greatly from the individual Melancholy or Choleric. Eric Choleric tends to do this for control purposes and can very easily cross the line into unhealthy behavioral practices. Phil Phlegmatic is a moderate initiator, when in a healthy relationship. Until

## VI. The Supine Temperament

Stewart Supine learns to initiate, the normal mode is no initiation/only respond – and that is connected to how he is treated. When he is in a healthy relationship and a safe environment, once he is shown love, affection, approval and recognition he responds with a lot of love, affection, approval and recognition. He needs a lot and has a need to give a lot. However, Stewart Supine has no initiation skills naturally. When he is treated well (healthy relationship and safe environment) he responds well.

This no initiate/only respond trait of Stewart and Susie Supine is not limited to how they are treated, but also how significant people in their life are treated. Susie Supine's husband will discover she responds with love and affection when he treats their children with love, affection, approval and recognition. This is especially true in second or third marriages when stepchildren are involved. How the spouse treats the children of the Supine will determine how the Supine will respond to the spouse. If Susie Supine's husband is negative and not supportive and ornery towards the children, then she will respond accordingly towards her husband even though his treatment of her is positive and loving. The reverse is also true. If her husband is positive towards the children, she will respond positively towards him. Stewart and Susie Supine take it personally how the significant people in their lives are treated.

This also comes into play when we are talking about the Supine's need to feel safe before he or she is able to open up emotionally. The fastest way I know to shut down the Supine's emotional response is the word stupid. If Susie Supine feels safe enough to share her feelings, and the person responds with any indication implying stupidity in any shape or form, she will immediately (and maybe eternally) quit sharing her feelings. However, if a significant person to Susie Supine is called stupid or made to look foolish, the same response will be seen from her. She emotionally identifies with significant people in her life. Therefore, if you are calling one of the significant people stupid, in Susie Supine's mind, you are calling her stupid also. People interested in having a deep personal relationship with Stewart or Susie Supine need to be aware of this. I have known cases where how the pets of the Supine were treated had the same effect.

## **Supine Affection Weaknesses**

The Supine in Affection suffers from an indirect behavior conflict. Stewart and Susie Supine express little need for love and affection. They also appear not to want deep personal relationships. However, they need a great deal of love, affection, approval and recognition. They also need to give love, affection, approval and recognition. Stewart and Susie Supine also desire deep personal relationships, and need several of these relationships. Indirect behavior robs them of these temperament needs. Indirect behavior is portraying verbally, through body language and various vibes (usually subconsciously) different needs than what the person truly wants, desires and prefers.

Indirect behavior may be Stewart and Susie Supine's greatest foe in getting temperament needs met. They do not realize how much indirect behavior they exhibit. They actually believe people should automatically know what they need and meet these needs; Stewart and Susie Supine do expect people to read their minds. People, of course, cannot read their minds and are unaware of their intense need of love, affection, approval, recognition and deep personal relationships. Therefore, Stewart and Susie Supine are usually frustrated and unfulfilled because these temperament Affection needs are seldom met.

The Supine Affection (i.e., the need for love, affection and deep, personal relationships) weaknesses include:

- ⊗ **Indirect behavior.**
- ⊗ **The inability to initiate love and affection.**
- ⊗ **Stewart and Susie Supine require constant reassurance they are loved, needed and appreciated. Yesterday's assurance does not cover today. Actually, reassurance received an hour ago needs reinforcements.**
- ⊗ **People are expected to "read their mind".**
- ⊗ **Stewart and Susie Supine become angry, which is defined by them as "hurt" feelings, when affection needs are not met.**

Stewart and Susie Supine unquestionably respond to love, affection and approval. Someone else must initiate it and the fears of rejection must have subsided. Susie Supine needs a safe environment and/or



## VI. The Supine Temperament

relationship to be able to open up and reveal her inner self. She is not an initiator when in the strengths of the temperament; this is a learned trait, yet remains difficult. In the weaknesses of the temperament she does not initiate love. She does not initiate affection. In the weaknesses of the temperament the difficulty to initiate becomes an inability to initiate. This leaves the significant people in her life feeling they put all the energy into the relationship to keep it going. This can also leave the significant people in her life feeling unloved and unappreciated.

Stewart Supine is naturally insecure. He has direly low self-esteem, bordering on worthlessness, in the temperament weaknesses. It is hard for him to believe anyone could love and appreciate him. He has a high need for love, affection, appreciation and recognition. He needs to be constantly reassured he is loved, needed and appreciated. Constant is not an exaggeration. Yesterday's reassurance of love and appreciation will not take care of today's need. Actually, the expression of love and appreciation he received this morning before leaving for work will need to be reinforced tonight after work. Stewart Supine believes everyone else on the planet is a better person than he is. He believes no one on the planet could possibly love him if they actually knew the true person on the inside. Therefore he seldom lets his guard down. He seldom allows anyone to see the real person on the inside. The indirect behavior continues and his need for love, affection, appreciation and recognition continue to go unmet. As these needs continue to go unmet, his anger – which he masks as hurt feelings – continues to grow and fester.

The Supine in Affection needs constant reassurance. I am not talking about once a week – which would meet Melody Melancholy's need. I am not talking about once a day – which would meet Sandy Sanguine's need. I am talking about constant reassurance, yesterday's reassurance has long passed – feelings might have changed since then. This morning's "I love you" before he left for work needs to be reconfirmed this evening – and then again before going to bed, and a couple of times in between would not hurt.

I know a man married to a wonderful woman who is Supine in Affection. He would call her everyday at work and they would talk for a few moments; sometimes he would call her twice a day. Even though we are talking about the weaknesses of the Supine in Affection, this wife was living in the strengths of her temperament, but it will

## God Created You

demonstrate this need for reassurance. One evening, after he had been doing this for years, she said he did not need to be reassuring her all the time of his love and appreciation. She expressed she was confident in their relationship and she was assured of his feelings for her.

A few days later, he was busy at work and did not have a chance to call her. No big thing, right? She had told him a few days earlier she was secure in their relationship and did not need all the reassurance he was giving her. After work they were talking and she asked him why he had not called her. He explained his busy schedule and she, of course, understood. However, in the conversation it came out she had a fleeting thought his feelings had changed and he was not as happily married to her as he had been expressing over the years. They laughed about it afterwards, understanding this Supine trait. However, if this is true for a Supine in Affection living in the strengths of her temperament, think what happens to a Supine who is living in the weaknesses of her temperament. The Supine constantly needs to receive the reassurance of love, affection, appreciation and recognition.

Susie Supine expects people to read her mind. (This is true for the Supine temperament, no matter what temperament area, not only Affection). Susie Supine expects people to automatically know her needs, wants, desires, and preferences and to meet those needs. She is not conscious of her indirect behavior. She does not understand the vibes she is portraying contradicts her actual needs. For example, Supines in Affection, in the weaknesses of the temperament, portray they need very little love, affection, appreciation and recognition. They also portray they do not want deep personal relationships. Therefore, people in relationship with them are usually providing the level of need they are portraying instead of providing what they actually need. As Susie Supine learns to be more direct in expressing her needs and preferences, she will find these significant people are more than willing (usually) to meet her needs. However, these people cannot read her mind. Susie Supine must learn to express her needs in order to get these needs met.

When Stewart and Susie Supine's needs are not met, they become angry. They do not interpret the emotion anger as anger. They interpret the emotion anger as hurt feelings. In other words, Stewart and Susie Supine mask anger: they rename it as hurt feelings and bury it. This is unhealthy. Anger is the one emotion a person needs to deal with

## VI. The Supine Temperament

constructively. If you do not deal with anger, it will eventually deal with you – and always in unhealthy ways. If you are experiencing joy and do not express it, joy will not come back to haunt you. The emotion anger has to be expressed. Sooner or later it is going to come out. When anger comes out on its own, it comes out in unhealthy and ugly ways – always. Stewart and Susie Supine have a lot of anger buried deep inside. Male Supines have even more buried unresolved anger. Male Supines may be the angriest of all the temperaments. It is important for the Supine to learn to deal with anger constructively and in ways pleasing to God. (See Chapter Eight for more on dealing with anger constructively and in godly ways).

### **What Supines Can Do To Live In The Temperament Strengths**

As with anyone of any temperament, or whatever mixture of temperament a person might be, there are certain behaviors and attitudes Supines can adopt to help them live in the strengths of the temperament. Living in the temperament strengths is not easy. Nor is it possible to do without the help of God. These may even sound easy for someone of a different temperament type. The Sanguine might find it strange the Choleric has to learn to accept people the way they are, imperfections and all. This is easy for the Sanguine. Particular attitudes and behaviors come naturally to one temperament but are a struggle for a different temperament. However, if we are going to be the person God created us to be, if we are going to reduce our stress and anxiety and the related problems, if we desire a happier life with better relationships, then these are worth looking at and working towards. Here are behaviors and attitudes the Supine can adopt to be the person God created him or her to be, to live in the temperament strengths.

#### **☺ Find a close friend who will share in decision-making responsibilities.**

Stewart Supine needs a close personal friend who will share in decision-making responsibilities. While he makes decisions and accepts responsibilities well; he cannot do it alone without great stress. He needs a close friend to bounce ideas off of, to gather information from, and who will confirm he is making the right decisions. He needs a close

## God Created You

personal friend (or two or three) who will listen to him, work together along side of him in decision-making, and reassure him without condemning or judging or making him feel stupid.

Stewart Supine is not an initiator of deep personal friendships. He will have to learn to initiate closer, healthier relationships with people. He will have to open up and share his feelings and hurts and ideas and desires with select people. He will have to dare to let down the walls and allow the real person on the inside to come out. He will have to learn to clearly express his preferences. He will have to learn to set and reinforce personal boundaries. None of this is easy for Stewart Supine. However, having a close personal friend or two to work along side of in the decision-making areas of life will greatly reduce his fears, stresses and related problems.

While Stewart Supine is learning to cultivate a close personal relationship or two, this type of relationship is readily available with God. It will help him to learn to trust God the Father and Christ to receive guidance when making decisions. He knows what Stewart Supine needs – He made him. God knows how to work along side of him without violating boundaries or being dominating. God will never make him feel stupid. Learning to trust God in decision-making will strengthen Stewart Supine's will power. He will discover he makes decisions well, which God will readily confirm over and over. As he learns to receive God's reassurance, he will be more able to stick to the decisions he has made.

### ☺ **Learn to say "No" to guilt.**

Susie Supine is highly susceptible to guilt. At the opposite end of the scale is the Choleric. Erica Choleric has never experienced the emotion guilt, but uses guilt to manipulate. The closest Erica Choleric (even in her strengths) comes to experiencing guilt is the intellectual understanding she MIGHT have done or said something POSSIBLY interpreted as wrong by various people. (See why God had to strike blind the Choleric Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus?) Melody Melancholy experiences guilt, but denies she feels any emotions. She likes to be seen as unmoved by emotions. Phoebe Phlegmatic overrides her guilt by logic; people make her feel guilty therefore it is their problem,

## VI. The Supine Temperament

not hers. Sandy Sanguine remedies her guilt by a quick “I’m sorry.” Once she apologizes, the guilt is gone.

Susie Supine takes on guilt when no one else would perceive any reason for guilt. Events happening half way around the globe with absolutely no connection to her leave Susie Supine feeling guilty. Learning to say “No” to guilt, learning to not be motivated by guilt and learning not to motivate by guilt will help her. She tends to act outside of her own personal boundaries and preferences because of guilt. Everyone in any type of relationship with her knows guilt works on her. It is like she is wearing a huge sign stating “Easily Motivated By Guilt – And I Like It.” Of Course, she does not like being motivated by guilt and it causes her much anger; which she interprets as hurt feelings.

I am often asked by Supines how to say “No” to guilt. Most of the time, Supines do not even recognize guilt. I relate accepting guilt to receiving a package from Fed-Ex. If the Fed-Ex delivery person brings a smaller box to my office, with holes punched in it, and asks me to sign for it, I am not signing. Whatever is in the box needing to breathe, I do not want – especially if I hear rattling. If I do not sign, the Fed-Ex person cannot leave the box.

I tell Supines, whenever you recognize guilt – whether you feel it is somehow your fault a child is starving to death in a foreign country or it is someone attempting to manipulate you by guilt – do not sign for the package. Say “No, guilt you are not coming into my life today.” Saying it out loud works best. To begin with, the Supine will probably have to say “No” to guilt a hundred times a day. As she stays with it, learning to say “No” to guilt, Susie Supine will learn to recognize guilt more often and learn to not accept guilt as often. As far as I can tell, she will have to daily deal with guilt. She will not get to the point where guilt never attempts to invade her life. However, she will get to the point where she is not manipulated by guilt.

Because Susie Supine is easily motivated and manipulated by guilt, she has the tendency to motivate and manipulate people by guilt also. When learning to say “No” to guilt, she also needs to learn to say “No” to using guilt to motivate. Guilt is an unhealthy motivation. Attempting to motivate people by guilt borders on manipulating through emotional blackmail. Susie Supine can understand this term, since people have been attempting to motivate her by guilt most of her life and it feels

## God Created You

like emotional blackmail to her. Learn healthy ways to motivate people. Learn to motivate through love and compassion and positive reinforcement. Learn to motivate by clearly expressing desires and preferences in healthy ways.

### ☺ **Learn to receive recognition for services rendered.**

It does not appear to be, however Stewart Supine needs to receive recognition for the services he performs. We call this indirect behavior. What he does, body language, verbal messages, the vibes sent out all say he loves performing services for people and does not need recognition. The Sanguine or Choleric child comes running out of the bedroom with the latest drawing/coloring project shouting, “Mommy, see what I have done?” Not only are they looking for immediate recognition, but the picture also has to go on the refrigerator for future recognition when dad gets home. Stewart Supine is quietly sitting in the bedroom wishing Mom would come in and make a fuss over his drawing and post it on the refrigerator. When this does not happen, he feels worthless and stupid. If Mom comes in and makes a positive fuss, he seems embarrassed by it. Recognition makes Stewart Supine feel uncomfortable. It embarrasses him. However, when he is not receiving recognition, he becomes angry (which he masks as hurt feelings).

It is healthier for Stewart Supine (and all who have been on the receiving end of his unresolved anger once it comes forth) to learn to receive the recognition needed for the services rendered. It will help his to learn to say “Thank you” when recognition is offered instead of blowing it off. This will feel uncomfortable at first. As he sticks with it feelings of appreciation will replace discomfort. It will also help him to share with a few significant people this high need of recognition. Significant people usually meet our needs IF they know what we need. The significant people in Stewart Supine’s life do not know about this high need of recognition because of his indirect behavior. Let them know. This is embarrassing and hard to do, but it will be healthy for him and for the key people in relationship with him. Plus it will result in this need being met; thus less unresolved anger and hurt feelings and poor behavior resulting from it. Do not forget God. He is great at providing recognition. He is excellent at providing everything we need, if we will look to Him.

## VI. The Supine Temperament

### ☺ **Try to find employment or an environment where they can undertake tasks while interacting with people.**

Susie Supine needs people in her life. She looks task-oriented. Tasks performed are in connection with the relationships she has (or wants to have) with people. She needs recognition. She needs acceptance. She needs relationships. Sitting in a room by herself all day long performing tasks unrelated to relationships will cause Susie Supine much stress and anxiety. She performs tasks well, but the tasks need to be connected to relationships.

### ☺ **Learn to recognize anger as anger and to deal with it constructively.**

Unless Stewart and Susie Supine have learned to recognize and deal with anger constructively, they have a lot of masked, buried anger. Male Supines have more anger than female Supines and are more apt to express it in destructive ways. Because Stewart and Susie Supine tend to mask anger as hurt feelings, recognizing the emotion anger is important. They cannot deal constructively with anger if they do not think they have any. If the emotion anger is not dealt with in constructive ways, it always comes back to haunt the person. Stewart and Susie Supine tend to think they are not angry, but hurt. I hear it all the time when counseling with Supines. “I am not angry, but it hurt me badly.” It is evident the person is not only hurt, but also angry. For the Supine temperament, hurt feelings are (mostly) the emotion anger. Until they learn to recognize anger as anger, it cannot be dealt with in constructive ways.

We talk about dealing with anger constructively in Chapter Eight. However, a quick note about anger is in order here. First anger must be recognized as anger. For Stewart and Susie Supine, this would include statements and actions causing them to feel hurt. Secondly, anger needs to be expressed in healthy ways. Yelling, screaming, hollering, throwing objects, hitting walls or striking people are not healthy ways of expression. Withholding love, affection, and personal interaction while denying there is no problem is not healthy either. Talking and sharing your feelings with a person can be a constructive way to express anger. I am convinced everyone needs a best friend; a person who will listen, be there, and not judge or condemn. I am also convinced if everyone

## God Created You

had two best friends, who fit this category, I would be out of a job and have to find real employment.

Stewart and Susie Supine do not have to talk to a human being, they can talk to God – He is a great listener; and He is adequate in the answer department also. I have been known to take my Doberman for a walk and tell her all about my anger towards whomever. She is a great listener and never holds anything I say against me. Stewart and Susie Supine could take a chair and mentally put a person in the chair to express their feelings to. Graveside confrontations also work great for settling issues. Whether imagining the person in a chair or looking at the gravesite, express everything, in detail, which needs to be dealt with. For the first time ever they cannot interrupt or make excuses or argue back. They may not feel like talking to anyone. Write it down. A journal or diary is a great way of expressing anger. Put your feelings on paper. Do not keep a historical record; put the feelings (real, imagined, logical, illogical) on paper.

The third, and most crucial part of dealing with anger constructively, is to learn to let it go. Release it. Once Stewart and Susie Supine have expressed their feelings, by talking or writing or whatever, anger has to be released. Expressing anger and then burying it again will not work. Anger has to be recognized, expressed and then released. I have always found releasing anger to be the hardest part. As I practiced letting go of the anger, which usually involves forgiving someone since most of my anger is people related, I learn to finish the process of dealing with anger constructively and in ways pleasing to God.

### ☺ **Learn how to be more assertive and to confront when confrontation becomes necessary. Supines need to voice their needs and desires.**

This is easier than easy for a couple of temperaments. It is much harder (seemingly impossible sometimes) for the Supine temperament. Eric Choleric does not need to learn to be more assertive and confrontational! He is this way from birth. Stewart Supine is not assertive and does not like confrontation of any kind. The idea of confrontation causes stress and anxiety. He desires the whole world to get along and wants everybody to love everybody. Because of this, he does not voice his needs and desires if he perceives it might bring about the slightest



## VI. The Supine Temperament

confrontation. He tends to go along with ideas and actions he does not want nor prefer to prevent anyone from making any waves. He feels used, unappreciated and/or his opinion is worthless. Thus the unresolved anger continues to pile up.

As Stewart Supine learns to voice, in nice ways, his opinions, preferences, needs and wants, his stress levels will be reduced. Even when he does not get what he wants, he will find lower stress levels as preferences are expressed. He will also find there will not be nearly as many confrontations and conflicts as he presumed there would be by expressing ideas. The reason I say he needs to learn to do this in nice ways is because when he first starts becoming more assertive he tends to come across overly gruff. I think it is because it takes a tremendous amount of energy for him to express his opinion (at the beginning). Therefore all this energy comes out harsh and forceful. With practice, he can learn to be assertive and voice his preferences in nice ways.

Learning to set and reinforce personal boundaries would also fall into this category. Stewart Supine attempts to be and to do what he perceives people expect. He also has a high fear of rejection and is easily manipulate by guilt. Thus, learning to set personal boundaries, and reinforce them when necessary, is a new experience for him. In setting boundaries, he has to learn to say “No” to people. I have people stand in front of a mirror at home and look themselves straight in the eye and practice saying “No” out loud and with authority. I have had Supine mothers in my office telling me they cannot stand the way their children talk to them and disrespect them. I have asked them if they have ever told their children “You are not to talk to me this way” or “This is inappropriate language in our house.” Their response always is they could never say this to the children because they are afraid the children would not like them. Excuse me, but cussing at your mother is not a term of endearment. Set boundaries and reinforce them when necessary!

☺ **Provide themselves with experiences to supplement the need for love and affection, i.e., more friends, more social interaction and a deeper relationship with the Lord.**

Again, initiating is not a strong point (naturally) with Susie Supine. Because of this and indirect behavior, her social and relationship needs

## God Created You

are not getting met. She needs more social interaction and more close relationship – best friend – interaction. However, people do not know this because of her indirect behavior. Many a time she is feeling alone, desiring to interact with someone, but no one is calling and inviting her to participate in a social function. It will help Susie Supine to learn to initiate contact for social interaction. Call someone and suggest they go out to lunch or to a movie or get together. Ask her husband to go out as a couple instead of sitting around the house being bored. As she learns to initiate activities, she will find people are willing – sometimes sitting around wishing someone would call them – to interact socially. Do not take “No” as a rejection, but as poor timing – and keep trying. Most of Susie Supine’s friends would love to have more social interaction with her; however, they do not believe she wants social interaction because of indirect behavior. Change the behavior. Say “Yes” when invited to social functions. From time to time initiate social interaction.

Initiating a deeper relationship with the Lord Jesus will also help to supplement Susie Supine’s need for love and affection. It is not hard to have a deeper relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Instead of sitting on the couch flipping channels, turn off the television and read the Bible. Spend a little time in prayer when rattling around with nothing to do. Get involved in a church function or home Bible study group. A relationship with God is developed the same way a relationship with a person is developed. She has to spend time with a person interacting with the person for a relationship to be developed. Spend time with God and interact with God (as she would a person) and she will develop a deeper relationship with Jesus.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# THE CHOLERIC TEMPERAMENT

*Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity. (Ephesians 4:26, 27)*

Of all the temperaments, the Choleric temperament is the most controlling. Eric and Erica Choleric want to be in control of people and they will allow little or no control over their own lives or behaviors. They are not above using poor behavioral patterns to gain and maintain control over the lives and behaviors of people. When it comes to healthy or poor behavior, Eric and Erica Choleric have unique behavioral traits and attitudes. For example, if Eric Choleric has been raised from childhood with strong moral values, then his behavior will tend to be better. He will not tend to discard these moral values in adulthood. However, if a sense of right and wrong has not been instilled into him as a child, he will grow up a “cloudy” Choleric. His vision of right and wrong and his understanding of good and evil will be clouded. In this case, he will undertake any behavior to have his own way.

This is why Eric (or Erica, this is not gender connected) Choleric can become sociopathic. The sociopath has no comprehension of good and evil. If he does possess a conscience, it is seldom, if ever, used and does not alter behavior. In this case, when he reaches adulthood, he is exceptionally self-reliant and confident. He has no need for anyone, even for God. Thus he has no reason to modify his behavior to benefit the people in relationship to him. He can feel comfortable with life the way he is, even though all the people who are in relationship with him are miserable.

This also makes it difficult to reach Cholerics for Christ. However, God deals with the most difficult of cases well. The strong Choleric who is reached in adulthood is usually reached by direct intervention of God. In the Apostle Paul’s case, he literally had to be struck blind and miraculously healed. After God brought Paul to Himself, He used

## God Created You

his temperament traits to accomplish His will. Paul took the gospel of Jesus Christ to places totally unreached by Christianity. Paul established churches everywhere he went. Paul was able to keep them flourishing, even from a distance. Usually, Choleric are reached in ways as miraculous; some type of personal encounter with God.

God has provided mankind with few pure Choleric temperaments. This temperament has more power and is capable of more destructive force than any of the temperaments. The world's most fearful criminals and terrible dictators have been pure Choleric. As the Apostle Paul is a great example of the wonderful accomplishments by the Choleric who has learned to come under the authority of God, Adolf Hitler would be an example of a pure Choleric living in all the weaknesses of his Choleric temperament. Let me quote from "*Created In His Image*" by Drs. Richard and Phyllis Arno.

"Adolf Hitler is a good case study of how a person with a Choleric temperament can operate. A small, nondescript man, Hitler inspired a whole country and attempted to control the destiny of the world. Using his social graces and charisma, he positioned men, *tools for the Choleric to use*, in places of power who would help and not interfere with his plan. A plan as immense and evil as his could not be undertaken without evil men who would follow his dream. Thousands of people who were perceived to taint the pure German blood were systematically eliminated. Hitler did not even say "*kill or murder*"; they were not people to him, only "things" to be eliminated. The pure Choleric has almost **no emotions**, therefore they feel **no pain, no remorse, no guilt**. Since he felt **no love, compassion, tenderness or gentleness**, he felt nothing for the men, women, or children who were eliminated. They were only inconveniences that stood between him and his ultimate goal. This plan was evil and unattainable, but this did not deter Hitler. He had the strength of will to carry it through to the end, and if it had not been for God's intervention and World War II he might have been successful. In a similar example, Stalin systematically set out to imprison and murder millions of Russians. From what you see here, the pure Choleric in this depraved form is the most dangerous of all temperaments. However, God also uses Choleric for His Kingdom." Thank God for this!

## VII. The Choleric Temperament

To better understand the Choleric temperament, let us look at the Choleric strengths and weaknesses in the temperament areas of Inclusion, Control and Affection.

### **Choleric Inclusion Strengths**

The Choleric Inclusion (i.e., social interaction, surface relationships, intellectual energies) strengths include:

- ☺ **Being open.**
- ☺ **Friendly.**
- ☺ **Confident.**
- ☺ **Outgoing.**
- ☺ **Optimistic.**
- ☺ **Tough-minded.**
- ☺ **Task oriented.**
- ☺ **Perfectionistic with an excellent ability for envisioning new projects.**
- ☺ **An extrovert of a highly selective nature.**

Eric Choleric in Inclusion looks a lot like Sammy Sanguine. He is highly personable and charming and can inspire great numbers of people. He is emotionally open. He will reveal much of his emotions and ideas. He is friendly, confident, outgoing and optimistic. However, Eric Choleric, unlike Sammy Sanguine, does not like people. Stewart Supine and Sammy Sanguine genuinely like people. Eric Choleric is a task and goal-oriented person. He has a tendency to view people as tools to be used to accomplish his tasks and goals.

Eric Choleric does not naturally tend to view people as persons, but as someone who can be used to help him reach goals and accomplish tasks at hand. He is VERY task and goal-oriented. Thus he tends to be an extrovert of a highly selective nature. He socializes with people whom he views as being able to help reach his goals. Networking is a great term to describe what he does socially. Once he learns and understands people are more important than reaching goals, and reevaluates his use of people, this tendency becomes a strength. He has many social skills naturally and is able to make people feel loved, needed and accepted.

## God Created You

The Apostle Paul is a great example of a Choleric who was living in the temperament strengths. Once God had his attention (usually a tough ordeal for the Choleric, who tends to be stubborn and set in his ways), Paul looks like a different person. Paul figured out reaching people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ was the task before him. He found out people were more important than goals, not an easy lesson for the Choleric. His caring, compassion, empathy and genuine concern for people was evident to those he ministered to as well as to us today through his writings. Paul simply had to get his priorities straight, with the help of God.

Erica Choleric is tough-minded. Once she gets it in her head a project needs to be done, or life ought to be a certain way, it is hard to change her mind. She is tenacious, a great trait once she is headed in the right direction. She will not easily let go of a task until it is accomplished. She will not quit because the going gets tough. She finishes what has been started. After a few years of ministry, the Apostle Paul could have settled down anywhere he had traveled and been the pastor of any of the local churches he had started. Life would have been much easier for him. He had earned the right to settle down, have a family, and enjoy the fruits of his labors. However, he understood it was God's will for him to continue to take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to places where people had never heard about the saving grace of God through Jesus Christ. Year after year after year Paul continued to go and suffer (and rejoice in his sufferings) while giving people the chance to hear the Good News. Only death stopped him. That is tenacious.

Erica Choleric is also a perfectionist. There is a right way and everything else is wrong. Life has to be perfect according to her standards. These standards are set excessively high. God Himself would have a hard time living up to them, as does everyone else. She does have an excellent ability for envisioning new projects and does have the fortitude to see these new projects through until the end. When these projects are completed, they will be close to perfect. However, until she learns to reset her perfectionist standards to a more reasonable, attainable level, it can be hard to work with her. Once she learns to have reasonable, attainable expectations, and to delegate responsibility, she is capable of great accomplishments.

## VII. The Choleric Temperament

The Choleric temperament, once it is brought under the authority of God, is an awesome temperament and capable of reaching wonderful goals and accomplishing great tasks. The Choleric temperament not under the authority of God can bring great destruction and disappointment to the Choleric and everyone. No temperament is capable of accomplishing as much, or causing as much pain and destruction as the Choleric.

### **Choleric Inclusion Weaknesses**

The Choleric in Inclusion has a personable, almost arrogant manner in dealing with people. Most of us would believe Cholerics are genuine in relating to people. However, Cholerics are task-oriented. The real purpose for social interaction is because of their driving need for accomplishments and recognition for those accomplishments. Cholerics approach many people for surface relationships because people are necessary to complete a project or reach a goal. Sanguines approach many people for surface relationships because they genuinely want social relationships. Supines genuinely desire social, surface relationships, but do not approach or initiate interaction with people.

Eric and Erica Choleric are great at networking. They associate with people who are easily dominated and used. They need people to accomplish goals and tasks, and they need recognition for these accomplishments. In the temperament weaknesses, they are capable of using (even abusing) people, walking over them to reach the end results and then discarding them. They are intensely goal-oriented, and in the temperament weaknesses they use people as tools to accomplish tasks and reach goals.

Eric Choleric is a fast-paced individual who undertakes projects quickly and efficiently. He is great at envisioning new projects because of his intellectual energies. He is a thinker, but unlike Melvin Melancholy, who completely and thoroughly and totally thinks a new project through, Eric Choleric likes to fly by the seat of his pants. He enjoys taking whatever comes and handling it on the fly. He likes to cross a bridge when he gets to it. He does not like to totally map out a project before beginning it. Therefore, he does have a difficult time seeing any of the possible pitfalls lying ahead. Nor does he want anyone to tell him of any possible pitfalls ahead. He is a perfectionist and will question the

## God Created You

means and the methods of the people around him. He believes he knows “a better way to do it.”

Choleric Inclusion (i.e., social interaction, surface relationships, intellectual energies) weaknesses include:

- ⊗ **Hot-tempered.**
- ⊗ **People user, although everyone uses people to an extent, the Choleric in Inclusion “carries the flag.” Cholerics think of themselves as people motivators.**
- ⊗ **Easily frustrated in attempts to “motivate” people.**
- ⊗ **Harbors anger.**
- ⊗ **Can be cruel and abusive.**

The Choleric temperament is called the angry temperament. Eric Choleric has one of the worst tempers of any temperament. Sandy Sanguine flies off the handle fast and cools down quickly. Melvin Melancholy does not express anger until he is almost at the rage stage. Phil Phlegmatic is even tempered. Stewart Supine can be demonstrative and destructive with his temper, but does not seem this way until he is out of control. Eric Choleric has the intellectual ability to use this temper against the people around him who displease him. Because he is a perfectionist, the list of those who displease him is usually a long one. He is capable of being cruel and abusive with his temper. He is capable of using his temper to hurt people and/or control people. In the temperament weakness, this is usually where he is.

Eric Choleric flies off the handle quickly and many times is abusive. He seldom takes the responsibility for these fits of temper, but place the blame on everyone else. He almost never accepts the responsibilities for his faults. He views himself as perfect; even his faults are perfect. He is constantly making statements like “If the kids (or spouse, or co-workers, or people) would behave, I would not be angry.” Of course, this is not true. The people around him are constantly attempting not to “make” him angry. People tend to walk on eggshells around him. But nothing works and he is angry again and no one knows what has set him off.

Eric Choleric unquestionably uses his temper, anger, cruelty and abusiveness as a means of controlling people, i.e., to get them to do



## VII. The Choleric Temperament

what they should be doing. Everyone uses people to an extent – and there are healthy ways to use and motivate – but the Choleric in Inclusion “carries the flag”. When Eric Choleric is living in the temperament weaknesses, the tasks at hand, the present project, the goal becomes dominant over all. He must accomplish the goal at all costs and leaving a few (or more than a few) hurt, used, abused, discarded human beings along the way to the accomplishment of the goal is perfectly acceptable. If someone breaks a hammer on a building project, you get a new hammer and throw the broken one away. To Eric Choleric, people are tools to be used to accomplish goals and tasks.

While Erica Choleric is a people user, she does not see herself as using people. She views herself as a people motivator. She thinks she is motivating people to do what they should be doing or what needs to be done. She feels she is motivating people for their own benefit. Never mind she is using outbursts of anger, verbal or even physical abuse, guilt and unhealthy means of manipulation to force people to do what they do not want to be doing. Never mind she uses people for her own personal achievements. Never mind she throws people away after whatever has been accomplished. Erica Choleric, especially in the temperament weaknesses, believes she is doing this to motivate people for their own benefit.

Of course, most people do not appreciate being motivated against their will to do what they do not want to be doing. This causes much frustration to Erica Choleric (not to mention the people being “motivated”). She cannot understand why people are stubborn, or lazy, or stupid. In her mind, she has clearly laid out the project or goal as well as the need and duty of the person or persons to help with this project, but they are not responding with great enthusiasm. She truly has a hard time understanding why people do not want to be forced to do (or think or believe) the way they should. It does not take too long before this frustration turns into anger, which Erica Choleric tends to harbor – until it comes busting forth in almost uncontrollable ways. She harbors a lot of anger (one of the few emotions she understands or even thinks she has). However, she knows it is not her fault she has all this anger. She would not even be angry IF people would simply...

This is only a weakness when Erica Choleric is using unhealthy means to “motivate” people who do not want to be “motivated.” In the

## God Created You

temperament strengths, she has natural leadership skills. People naturally follow Eric and Erica Choleric when they are using healthy ways of motivation, i.e., love, compassion, encouragement, etc. It is only in the temperament weakness this becomes controlling, manipulating, domineering, and a pharaoh complex. It will help Erica Choleric to learn healthy motivating skills. She is a natural born leader. If she will lead, people will automatically follow. When she is using healthy motivating skills, the goals are reached without everyone being stressed out or left laying wounded along the roadside.

This “motivating people” weakness of the Choleric is not limited to the heathen world outside the Church. Throwing God into the mix of a person’s temperament does not automatically make everything right. Sometimes we think if a person would get saved or religious or right with God all the wrongs in their life will automatically become right. This conclusion is not true. Behavioral changes – becoming the person God created us to be – still takes time and energy and correct choices – and the power of God. The heathen boss or husband/father who is Choleric and using unhealthy means to maintain control of his employees or family is no different than the Choleric pastor who is using the same means. The Choleric pastor using unhealthy means of “motivation” – modified by religious statements – to lead the church down the paths of God they should be traveling is as harmful to members of the congregation as the father who beats his children into submission. Unhealthy means of manipulation are still unhealthy even though we have changed the language to religious terms.

I was counseling a college student years ago. She was a Christian, going to college full time, working a job to pay for college, and involved in her church’s youth ministry. She was overextended and stressed and getting too little sleep. We talked about where she could get more time, rearrange activities in her life and reset priorities for her remaining senior year of college (which involved a semester of overseas studies). She could not cut down on work; she needed the money for college. She could not cut down on college classes, she needed the credits to graduate on time. She had no social life to cut down on. She was not dating and did not have a boyfriend. However, she could cut down on the many hours each week she was involved with the church youth group. She did not want to give up involvement with the youth, but she was

## VII. The Choleric Temperament

overextended given all she was attempting to do during her college years. I suggested she talked to the youth pastor and see what could be done.

The youth pastor listened to how busy she was, what all she needed to be doing for her college credits and the fact she was going to be gone for a semester in a couple of months anyway – what could they do to lessen her responsibilities with the youth group. The Youth Pastor (to my surprise) challenged the student's commitment to God and her spirituality stating she should consider her priorities. She should have God first (meaning the youth group) even if it meant having to cut back on college and not studying overseas. The youth pastor went on to suggest if she could not get her priorities straight, maybe she should not be involved with the youth group at all. This is what finally happened.

Knowing the situation and the people involved as I did, I would have to put this under a Choleric using unhealthy means of manipulation – spiritual intimidation – to get his/her own way in the name of God. The student did find much needed time (and much less stress) when not involved with the youth group, spent a semester overseas studying, graduated from college and is doing well in life and with God. The Youth Group also did well after her departure; God already had people ready to take over the responsibilities she had been undertaking, although it took more than one person to do all this one college student had been doing. I think everyone could have come to these conclusions in a healthier, better way.

Eric Choleric has an additional weakness he views as a strength. He always dominates social conversations. He is not necessarily rude, simply domineering in all social interactions. He controls the social scene. Sammy Sanguine is talkative, interrupting conversations and telling elaborate stories on the social scene because he needs to be the center of attention. Eric Choleric needs to be in control. People would enjoy socializing with him more if they were allowed to participate more in the conversation and he would listen more. Believe it or not, Eric and Erica, not everyone enjoys hearing you talk as much as you do. Learn to listen, you will be amazed at what you learn. You have a thirst for knowledge, listen more and you will learn more. You will also be amazed at how much people will enjoy interacting with you socially, once you learn not to dominate the social scene.

## **Choleric Control Strengths**

The Choleric Control (i.e., decision-making abilities, willingness to take on responsibilities and the need for independence) strengths include:

- ☺ **Tough-willed.**
- ☺ **An able leader.**
- ☺ **Capable of making intuitive decisions.**
- ☺ **Capable of taking on responsibilities, usually done in an efficient, well-disciplined military fashion.**
- ☺ **Possessing the will power to carry projects through to completion.**

The Choleric in Control has excellent leadership abilities. Leadership skills can be taught and learned by anyone of any temperament. However, not all temperaments are able to effectively put leadership skills into practice (to the point where people actually follow). The Choleric in Control is a natural born leader. People follow the Choleric in Control (good, bad or otherwise – Choleric never go anywhere alone). The Choleric in Control wants to be in control. The Choleric in Control needs to be in control. The Choleric's stress levels are lower when in control of people, situations and circumstances. In the temperament strengths, when Choleric are using healthy means to lead and motivate (love, compassion, encouragement, etc.), they are great leaders.

Erica Choleric has excellent decision-making abilities. She makes quality decisions and handles responsibilities in a magnitude everyone else would run away from. Her decisions are made quickly and intuitively, leaving the rest of the temperaments in her wake. These decisions are usually based on facts instead of feelings. The Sanguine in Control, in the independent mode, looks Choleric but bases decisions on feelings of the moment. Erica Choleric is great at gathering information. She has a thirst for knowledge. She draws excellent conclusions (usually) from the information she gathers. When she takes on responsibilities, they are done in an efficient, well-disciplined, military fashion. She usually sees herself as the general of projects undertaken – even if she is not technically in charge of the project. No temperament is as well organized and disciplined as the Choleric in Control. As any able general, Erica

## VII. The Choleric Temperament

Choleric has a gift for choosing people to help complete the project who will do exactly what she wants done.

Eric Choleric is tough-willed. He possesses the will power to carry projects through to completion. As long as he keeps priorities in perspective, namely the importance of people versus goals reached or a project accomplished, the positive side of these qualities will come out. He has a tendency to view the goal or project as the all-important priority, thus he has a tendency to use and abuse people. He can (without even knowing it) view people as tools to be used to accomplish tasks or to reach goals. This will power to carry projects through to completion is a healthy trait. The job will get done (he is a perfectionist, it will be done right), the goal will be reached and the project will be accomplished when he is in control.

Raising a Choleric in control must be fun. My mother has been known to use different terms for it. Choleric are very strong-willed. The positive side of this is once their minds are made up, they are not going to be deterred. The Choleric who decides he is going to do well in school will never hear a lecture about grades. The Choleric who decides drugs and alcohol are not for him will never be bothered by them. Once a Choleric puts his mind towards a goal, he has the ability and tenacity to accomplish it. The Choleric who decides he is going to live for God is not going to fight the battles people fight about wholeheartedly serving God today. Choleric usually do whatever they do wholeheartedly, full blast, 110%. If they are living for the devil – they are the best at it. If they are living for God, they are the best. Once the decision is reached, Choleric are tough willed enough to see it through to completion.

Parents, you can help your Choleric children to come to the right conclusions. Give them facts and figures and correct information. Explain to them, if they choose path A this is where it will lead. If they choose path B this will be the result. Provide them with adequate, honest, and correct information. They can draw conclusions and reach correct decisions if they have accurate information. Do not lie to your children! “If you do not quit distorting your face, it will freeze like that.” Please, Choleric are usually intelligent, even bordering on geniuses. Even at a young age, Choleric can figure out what is true or not. Give them honest facts, figures and information. Parents, you are not going to

## God Created You

pressure them, either. The threat of punishment or the promise of reward does not influence Choleric. However, Choleric usually come to decent decisions if they are provided with accurate information.

Erica Choleric has a high need of recognition for accomplishments. One reason she accepts a large amount of responsibilities – Choleric are the temperament most likely to burn out – is because of this high need of recognition. She does not reveal this high need of recognition to people. She conveys the opposite. She tends to blow it off when she gets recognition. She does have indirect behavior, but not nearly as much as Susie Supine. When Erica Choleric does not receive adequate recognition for her accomplishments, anger is the result. When she becomes angry, which is not rare – the Choleric temperament is known as the angry temperament; Choleric do not need a reason to be angry, at certain times they are just angry – she tends to ventilate anger in unhealthy, even damaging, ways.

More than any one lesson, it will help Eric and Erica Choleric, and everyone in relationship with them, to learn to deal with anger constructively and in ways pleasing to God. Choleric do not need a reason to be angry. The Choleric temperament is the angry temperament. I am Choleric in Control. One day my father and I were discussing temperament and I mentioned the Choleric is known as the angry temperament. Choleric are born angry. He laughed and then told me this story. When I was born I was being pushed out of the delivery room on a table. I was rolled over on my belly, raised up on my arms, and screaming mad at the world. This is how he first saw me. I spent a lot of my childhood, youth, and early adulthood angry – until I learned to constructively deal with my anger in ways pleasing to God.

It will also help Eric and Erica Choleric to recognize their high need of recognition. When not receiving the recognition they feel is deserved, anger is the result. If they will recognize this high need of recognition, then there are ways to get this temperament need met. First, it will help to stop blowing off the recognition they are presently receiving. When I was learning about my temperament and learning to get my temperament needs met in godly ways, I was praying about this high need of recognition and how to get this need met in my own life. It was like a voice in my head saying, “Stop refusing what recognition you are getting.” It kind of took me by surprise. I did not know I was

## VII. The Choleric Temperament

rejecting recognition. With God's help, I learned a couple of things. I was a pastor at the time and after every sermon people made positive statements about the sermon as I was shaking hands in the foyer. I did not receive "foyer recognition" because I figured they had to make nice comments on the way out of the church building. In other situations, if I did not feel the person's motivation for providing the recognition was pure, I did not receive the recognition.

I would also only receive recognition from select people when it was done in specific ways. Of course, I would not let anyone know who or what. It was their job to figure it out. If they did not figure it out and provide it accordingly, then I had an anger problem. Once I began receiving the recognition I was already being given and broadened my thinking about where and when to receive it, much more of my high need of recognition was immediately being met. Then I developed relationships where I let certain people know about this temperament need. I now have people I can contact at any time and say, "I am having a rough day. Tell me what a great guy I am." These people will meet this need in my life without being critical or judgmental. People cannot meet our needs if we do not open up and allow them know about our needs.

### **Choleric Control Weaknesses**

Two issues come readily to mind when we are talking about the Choleric temperament: anger and control. The Choleric temperament is the angry temperament. Choleric do not need a reason to be angry. Anger is a part of their daily life, especially in the temperament weaknesses. Many Choleric do not even know they have any emotions besides anger. Unlike some temperaments, the Choleric's anger is not masked or buried. Melancholies bury and deny anger. Supines mask anger as hurt feelings. The Choleric's anger is evident and explosive and can be cruel and destructive.

Eric and Erica Choleric do not actually like people, even though they seem to be people-oriented. They need people in order to accomplish tasks and reach goals. However, especially in the temperament weaknesses, they view people as a necessary evil. Therefore, expressing anger outwardly and even violently is not a moral dilemma. Neither is using anger to control the people around them. If

## God Created You

there are any skills in using one's anger to control the people around them, Eric and Erica Choleric are born with them all. They know instinctively how to use anger to their advantage.

The Choleric Control (i.e., decision-making abilities, willingness to take on responsibilities and the need for independence) weaknesses include:

- ⊗ **Anger.**
- ⊗ **Cruelty.**
- ⊗ **Capability of undertaking any behavior to keep control.**
- ⊗ **Associating with weak people and resenting their weaknesses.**

Cholerics in Control need to be in control. They want a lot of control over a lot of people but will tolerate almost no control over their own lives and behaviors. The more Cholerics are in control over people's lives and behaviors, the less stressed they are and the less anxiety they have. The more Cholerics feel people have control over them, the higher their stress and anxiety. If they want to relate to people and want relationships with people, then they will have to control those people with whom they associate. As Cholerics learn to be in control of their own personal lives and not to be dominating with people, but allow them to be the unique individuals God created them to be, the positive side of their Choleric temperament will come forth.

In the temperament weaknesses, Eric Choleric has little idea of how to handle people except through domination. The people around him are always seeking encouragement from him because they are in awe of him – Cholerics are charismatic. Eric Choleric attracts people. However, instead of encouragement, these people receive put-downs and discouraging remarks. Eric Choleric surrounds himself with weak-willed and easily dominated individuals (we are talking about the temperament weaknesses here). After a while he begins to despise and lose respect for the people he has surrounded himself with because of their weaknesses. He views being controlled as a weakness. Therefore, he views these people who he holds control over as weak people. He holds them in contempt and begins treating them cruelly.



## VII. The Choleric Temperament

Eric Choleric is capable of undertaking any behavior necessary to be in control or to get his way. Actually, because of his natural abilities in connecting with people (not for social or relationships reasons, but for networking purposes – he needs to know the right people in order to accomplish tasks and reach goals), he can become anyone or adapt to any condition. I do not know how many Choleric have told me they no longer know who they are because they have spent all their life being someone else. They make great actors. Supines attempt to be someone else in order to serve the people they are in relationship with. They attempt to perceive how people want them to be and then try to be this way, in order to please those people. Supines need people to like them. Eric Choleric becomes someone else in order to have control over people. In the temperament weaknesses, healthy or poor behavior is not important; the only important thing is getting the project done, accomplishing the task and reaching the goal. Whatever behavior he uses to do this is only a means to an end and perfectly justified and necessary in his own mind.

To Erica Choleric, the end justifies the means. She is intensely task and goal-oriented. Especially when she is living in the temperament weaknesses, accomplishing the task and/or reaching the goal becomes the all-important issue. How she gets there is not important, only getting there. The people she uses and abuses to get there are not important, only reaching the goal. Whatever type of behavior she has to use to “motivate” people to do what needs to be done is not important, only accomplishing the task. Saul of Tarsus was not having any moral dilemma about persecuting the Church all those years. The fact he was violating Jewish law or Roman law or humanity was perfectly justified in his own mind because he was stamping out this heretical sect for God. Whatever means he had to use to accomplish his goal was okay because, to the Choleric, the end justifies the means.

The Choleric temperament is susceptible to burn out. Eric Choleric can be depressed and burned out without even knowing it. Everyone around him knows it, but he is still on an adrenaline high and feels fine. He tackles and accomplishes all he does by turning on the adrenaline and letting it flow. He gets high on adrenaline. He gets addicted to adrenaline. He thinks the adrenaline high is normal life. He thinks he should feel the adrenaline high all the time.

## God Created You

Adrenaline gives our bodies a sudden rush of energy, usually connected with a flight or fight scenario. Choleric are able to turn on the adrenaline and use the energy to take on huge responsibilities and attempt great accomplishments. They love the recognition they receive for their accomplishments. They love tackling and accomplishing tasks people cannot handle. They love the superior feeling they get by taking on and accomplishing more projects and larger than life goals. They love the adrenaline rush. God never intended for people to live a life pumped up on adrenaline. Adrenaline is a poison and will kill a person in large enough doses. Adrenaline can kill a person in small doses over a long period of time. No one can stay high all the time, whether from medication or illegal drugs or adrenaline. A person has to come down, one way or another. A severe crash and burn is awaiting Choleric who attempt to maintain a workaholic lifestyle. (I have a hard time convincing pastors of this. They are workaholics for God and somehow that makes it okay).

An additional reason Eric Choleric is highly susceptible to burn out is he feels no one else can do it (the tasks, the project, reach the goal) as well as he can. It is not hard to convince him he is the best, or he is the only one who can do it. He feels a little superior to people to begin with. He is a perfectionist and no one else ever totally measures up. He will tolerate almost no interference and seldom trusts anyone else with projects. He does not naturally know how to delegate. He absolutely believes, "If you want it done right, do it yourself." Of all the temperaments, the Choleric is the temperament most likely to burn out.

### **Choleric Affection Strengths**

The Choleric Affection (i.e., the need for love, affection and deep, personal relationships) strengths include:

- ☺ **Being open.**
- ☺ **Optimistic.**
- ☺ **Outgoing.**
- ☺ **Eric and Erica Choleric express a great deal of love and affection.**
- ☺ **Approach only select people for deep relationships.**

## VII. The Choleric Temperament

The Choleric in Affection, living in the temperament strengths, looks like a Sanguine. The Sanguine in Affection is naturally open, optimistic, outgoing and wonderful at expressing great amounts of love and affection. Sanguines do this because they truly like people and want to be in close relationships with many people.

Likewise, Erica Choleric is bright, optimistic, and affectionate. In the temperament strengths, she is fun to be around, positive, caring, loving, sharing and affectionate. She has a great amount of love and affection to give. She is outgoing. She initiates and plans and can be spontaneous with deep relationships. She is emotionally open, like Sandy Sanguine. Sandy Sanguine will share emotional and intimate information with those she is in close relationship with, which means she has at least seen you once before in life somewhere; she does not need to know where. Erica Choleric is also open for emotional and intimate information to be shared in her close relationships.

Sandy Sanguine wants to be in close relationships with many people because she likes people. Erica Choleric appears to want deep personal relationships with a large number of people, but she is highly selective with the people she chooses to be in relationship with. She does not genuinely like people for the sake of liking people as Sandy Sanguine. Erica Choleric needs to be in close relationships with specific people to get her own Affection needs met. This does not mean she, in the temperament strengths, does not genuinely like the people she is in close relationship with, because she does. It means she has an agenda to be in close relationships – although she does not appear this way (indirect behavior).

People, once they get to know Erica Choleric, can be amazed at her indirect behavior. Even in the temperament strengths, she expresses indirect behavior. She appears to want many deep personal relationships, but in reality she does not. She wants a few deep personal relationships. When she is approached for love and affection she has a tendency to reject it if it does not meet her criteria. She only gives and receives love and affection according to her own interpretation of how love and affection should be given and received. She is not great at sharing this information. When approached for a deep personal relationship she tends to walk away if her agenda is not met. She appears to be rejecting

## God Created You

what she is asking for. This indirect behavior can be confusing to the people in her life.

Even in the temperament strengths, Erica Choleric is selective when it comes to deep personal relationships. She has terms and conditions (varying from Choleric to Choleric) to be met prior to establishing a deep personal relationship. She has terms and conditions to be met to continue in a deep personal relationship. She does not necessarily share these conditions with people. She expects people to automatically know the conditions for deep personal involvement and to abide accordingly. Supines are not the only ones who expect people to “read their minds.” Erica Choleric thinks (really!) everyone has these same conditions and if they are not abiding by these conditions they are doing (or not doing) it on purpose and obviously do not love or appreciate her. She does tend to take personal offense when it is merely a matter of miscommunication or misunderstanding.

Eric Choleric has a large amount of love and affection to give. He also has certain needs in the area of Affection. However, to live in the temperament strengths, he has to learn he cannot have life only on his own terms. When he attempts to get needs met only on his terms (which he does naturally, even subconsciously) then no one’s needs are being met. As he learns to live in the temperament strengths, using these natural abilities to meet the needs of people and to get his needs met in healthy and godly ways, then he can be the person God created him to be.

Learning to communicate his ideas of how love and appreciation and affection should be expressed and listening to how different people express and receive love and affection will help Eric Choleric and all in relationship with him to get their Affection needs met. Often times, no one’s Affection needs are being met in his relationships. His needs are not being met because no one around him knows how he gives and receives love and affection. He is giving love and affection, but only on his terms, which does not necessarily meet people’s needs. Communication and understanding will help to get everyone’s needs met. Eric Choleric will learn to give love and affection in ways people receive love and affection. People will learn to give love and affection in ways he can receive it. Everyone will be meeting everyone else’s needs, thus everyone’s need will be met.

## VII. The Choleric Temperament

### **Choleric Affection Weaknesses**

In the temperament weaknesses, Choleric in Affection seems to have few (if any) emotions and feelings except anger. Remember, the Choleric temperament is the angry temperament. This is the one emotion Choleric are readily in touch with and knowledgeable about using and expressing in poor behavioral ways. Close observation could easily draw the conclusion they consider compassion, tenderness and warmth generally a waste of time. Choleric in the temperament strengths can be genuine at expressing compassion, tenderness and warmth. This is a learned trait for the Choleric in Affection. However, in the temperament weaknesses, such emotions are only used to manipulate people to meet the Choleric's needs at best – and at worst the Choleric is incapable of expressing such emotions.

The Choleric Affection (i.e., the need for love, affection and deep, personal relationships) weaknesses also include:

- ⊗ **Extremely self-centered, although they do not appear this way.**
- ⊗ **Indirect behavior.**
- ⊗ **Rejecting people.**
- ⊗ **Rejecting the love and affection of people; they will accept love and affection only according to their terms.**
- ⊗ **Being cruel to those who reject their manipulation for love and affection.**

When living in the temperament weaknesses, Choleric in Affection are self-centered people – although they do not always seem egotistic. Sometimes they will be nice, but when their niceness is not producing the desired response, they become cruel. Choleric in the temperament strengths can be nice and without the motivation of manipulating people to respond with love and affection according to their terms. Certain people feel if a Choleric in Affection ever develops any feeling or emotions, it is because of the direct intervention of God. This may be true. The Choleric husband who is being (strangely) loving and affectionate towards his wife and children but does not see his desired response from them in a quick enough time period often becomes verbally abusing and degrading towards them. He is nice one minute

## God Created You

and terribly degrading the next. Family members do not know what sets him off because they do not know what he is manipulating them to do.

Everything Erica Choleric does in the temperament weaknesses is to get her needs, wants and desires met. The needs, wants and desires of people do not count and their emotions are thought of as useless sentimentalism. Thus she can easily reject the obvious cry for love and affection and attention from her children with hurtful and degrading remarks about them being babies for showing their emotions. But when she needs a hug and it is not readily forthcoming, the same children are put down for not loving her after all she has done for them. She is self-centered and cruel to her loved ones when the household is not conducted according to her hidden agenda.

Indirect behavior can be a big problem with Eric Choleric. He portrays, through words, body language and vibes sent out, he wants love and affection and deep personal relationships from many people. However, when people attempt to be in a deep personal relationship with him, their attempts are rejected. When people attempt to show his love and affection, it is rejected. He will only accept love and affection according to his conditions. He does not reveal these special terms to loved ones. Not only does he reject the attempts people make to meet (what they view as) his needs, but the people themselves many times are rejected, and in cruel and hurtful ways. Of course, the blame is never accepted by Eric Choleric, but is always placed on the person being rejected.

Imagine Eric Choleric sitting at his computer doing whatever online. His wife is vacuuming the floor and accidentally runs the vacuum cleaner over the surge protector, turning off the power to the computer. He is angry and makes hurtful statements. She is hurt and retaliates. They attempt to talk about it later and the tiff occurs again. A few days later they are in a counselor's office talking about it, still angry and hurt respectively. The husband finally says he was not actually angry, he was hurt because his wife did not apologize for cutting the power to the computer. She interjects the fact she did apologize. He responds with the point she did not apologize very quickly. The counselor asks how long was it before she apologized, expecting later in the evening or the next day. Eric Choleric said it took her a couple of minutes. The

## VII. The Choleric Temperament

counselor did not think a couple of minutes were a long time. He went on to say, “If you accidentally bump into someone on the street you say ‘I’m sorry’. If she had apologized in 20 seconds, I would have been fine. But she made me feel like a stranger on the street was more important than me because it took her such a long time to say ‘I’m sorry.’”

While incidences like this are not limited to one temperament type, the Choleric in Affection has unique ideas about receiving and expressing love and affection. Eric Choleric thinks everyone knows and understands these rules and if someone is not abiding accordingly, the person is doing it on purpose to send a message to him. In reality, people do not know or understand these Choleric rules because he does not express them. A Choleric rule comes to light usually after someone, who does not know it even exists, has violated it. After enlightenment, Eric Choleric is usually amazed by the fact most people are not remotely interested in attempting to live by these unique rules and ideas (which people often perceive as weird).

If Eric Choleric does not learn to better express his ideas of receiving and expressing love and affection, his needs will continue not to be met. If he does not learn to receive and express love and affection in ways people can understand and accept, neither his needs nor the needs of close relationships will be met. If he continues to live in the temperament weaknesses, he is going to have a lot of angry moments with the ones who are closest to him. The close personal relationships he has will continue to become fewer and fewer over the years unless his behavior changes. In the temperament weaknesses, he will never realize behavioral changes on his part are necessary – it will always remain the other person’s fault.

Cholerics, living in the temperament weaknesses, will not be a blessing to God, themselves or everyone else. Saul of Tarsus was a religious “Hell on Wheels” and devastated the Church for years. I am not sure he was a terrific guy to be around, unless you were beneficial to him and his career. Cholerics, living in the temperament strengths, are be a blessing to God, themselves and everyone around them. The Apostle Paul is an example. Once his temperament traits were brought under the will of God, wow! He was a great guy, beloved by (most) of the people he ministered too, and contributed wonderful

accomplishments to the Kingdom of God. Same person. Same temperament. The only difference was Paul learned, by the help and power of God, to live in the temperament strengths. God can and will help us to do the same, to be the person He created us to be by living in the strengths of our God-given temperament.

## **What Choleric Can Do To Live In The Temperament Strengths**

I am sure you have this figured out by now: The best thing anyone of any temperament type can do for themselves is to live in the temperament strengths, to be the person God created them to be. We cannot do this by ourselves. We need the help and power of God. Even after we know what we should be doing and/or not doing, we cannot accomplish it by our own power. Too often we find ourselves where Paul stated he was, *“For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.”* (Romans 7:19). Will power will not get the job done. We cannot fix ourselves. By the power of God, we can learn to live in the strengths of our temperament. Here are a few behaviors and attitudes the Choleric can adopt to be the person God created them to be.

### **☺ Deal with their anger constructively and in ways pleasing to God.**

Eric Choleric’s anger is not usually masked or buried. Nor does he usually turn his anger inward. He is an expert at using anger to manipulate people into doing his will and/or getting his needs met. He also uses anger to keep people off balance and walking on eggshells. This keeps him in control of the people around him. He wants to be in control and anger is a natural, instinctive way for him to do this. Not feeling like he is in control will cause him stress and anxiety, which converts into anger. While he does know instinctively how to use anger to control people and get his needs met, Eric Choleric does not instinctively know how to deal with anger constructively and in ways pleasing to God. Therefore, it is almost always expressed and used in unhealthy ways and connected with poor and damaging behavior. Learning to deal with anger constructively and in ways pleasing to God (see Chapter Eight) will greatly help him and everyone he is in relationship with.



## VII. The Choleric Temperament

One of the steps for Eric Choleric to learn to deal with anger constructively and in ways pleasing to God is to first make up his mind he is not going to lash out with an angry, cruel temper. This is a natural response for him when someone else makes him angry. He does not have to learn how to lash out with an angry, cruel temper. But he does have to learn not to lash out – and what to replace the lashing out with.

Eric Choleric, you are strong willed. Make up your mind you are not going to lash out in anger at anyone. Make up your mind you will never again hurt people physically or emotionally when angry. Then predetermine what you are going to do instead of these unhealthy behavioral patterns. For example, you might predetermine instead of lashing out in anger you are going to hold your tongue and then, at the first available opportunity, write a letter to the person fully expressing all your feelings. Put all your feelings on paper (anger needs to be expressed) and then **THROW THE LETTER AWAY** (anger needs to be released, and seeing the paper hit the wastepaper basket can be an excellent visual aide in releasing anger). Never mail the letter, nothing positive ever comes from it (I know, I mailed a couple when I was young and stupid). More healthy and godly ways of dealing with anger are available in Chapter Eight.

### ☺ **Recognize the rights and feelings of people.**

Erica Choleric's natural tendency is to use people as tools to accomplish projects, to reach goals and to get her personal needs met. Once she comes to the understanding people are more important – to God and on planet earth – than projects or goals, then she can learn to recognize the rights and feeling of people. People are important.

Individual people are vitally important to God. How important? If only one person would have received the free gift of salvation though the ages, God would still have done everything the way He did it to provide the plan of salvation. Jesus still would have come to earth as a baby. He still would have lived and suffered and died and been raised from the dead. God did not do this because He knew millions and millions of people would be saved over the ages. He did it because each individual is vitally important to Him and He wanted to provide the opportunity for each one to be saved. It only makes sense since individual people are of great importance to God, then people's rights and feeling

are important also. Erica Choleric needs to learn to value people. She needs to learn to value people's rights and feelings.

☺ **Submit to authority, especially the Lord, while maintaining control of their personal lives.**

Here is a tough one! These are all tough because these do not come naturally to the Choleric. Like all of us, whatever does not come naturally is tough to incorporate into our lives.

Eric Choleric wants to be in control over the lives and behaviors of many people. He does not want control exercised over his life and behavior. Submitting to authority is not his strong point. Even submitting to God is difficult for Eric Choleric. However, he can learn to submit to authority and maintain control over his life as well. Choosing to be under authority will help him accomplish this. When he chooses to be under authority, he has made the choice and therefore, is still in control of his life. Here is how he thinks. I am here, under this authority, because I choose to be here. Thus I am still in control even though I am submitted to someone else's authority for a specific time and place. This works for Eric Choleric.

Take Eric Choleric's relationship with God for example. He does not have to be under God's authority. He does not have to obey God's laws and principles. He is a unique individual and can basically do whatever he chooses – good, bad or ugly. Somewhere in life, many people of many temperament types come to the conclusion it is beneficial for them to be under God's authority. Even when Eric Choleric comes to this conclusion and turns his life over to God, it is still difficult for him to be under authority – even God's. There is seldom a problem as long as God is going along with his plans and direction. The problem comes in when God's will and direction clash with his will and direction. He needs to be in control – even with God. Learning to submit to God is not easy. He tends to rebel against God when He takes control of his life – even after he has turned life over to Him. Eric Choleric needs to learn rebellion only breeds misery. He also needs to learn submission unlocks the potential for achievement God has placed within him.

It is a struggle for Eric Choleric to be under authority, even God's. However, choosing to be under the authority of God will help. It will help the Choleric to choose to follow God's direction whenever it clashes

## VII. The Choleric Temperament

with his. Choosing to pray, *“Not my will, but your will be done”* (Matthew 26:39) and meaning it (this will take a little practice) will help. If God answers this prayer (and He always does), then it means life is NOT going to go Eric Choleric’s way. I know Choleric who pray *“Your will be done,”* then get mad at God (but deny it) because situations in life are not going their way. *“Not my will”* means you do not get your way, right?

The two hardest things Eric and Erica Choleric will ever accomplish are to 1) learn to be in control of their own personal life instead of the lives of people, and 2) learn to be under the authority of God. Everything else is a piece of cake!

### ☺ **Recognize the needs of people and show them love and affection. Quit giving love as a means of manipulation.**

The Choleric temperament has the tendency to do whatever it takes to get its own needs met. When Erica Choleric is doing this in the temperament weaknesses, then it is unhealthy behavior used to get her needs met. Because she has a high need of love, affection, recognition and approval (these kind of go together), she often uses the giving of love as a means of manipulating people into showing her love and affection. What she is saying by her actions is, “If you do not show me love and affection in the ways I dictate, then I will withhold all love and affection from you.” This is unhealthy behavior.

In order for Erica Choleric to be the person God created her to be and to live in her temperament strengths, she needs to learn to recognize the needs of people. What a wonderful world this would be if everyone learned to recognize people’s needs and worked at meeting those needs in ways the person could accept and receive. The Choleric temperament may be the worst of the temperaments at recognizing and meeting people’s needs. Although we know it is possible because of the life of the Apostle Paul. Once his Choleric temperament traits were brought under the authority of God, he spent the rest of his life meeting the needs of people.

Erica Choleric is self-centered. Even when she does recognize people’s needs, she tends to use meeting those needs as manipulation in getting her own needs met. As she learns to give love and affection in healthy, godly ways, by means the person can receive, it will strengthen

## God Created You

the relationships she has. It will also strengthen her relationship with God and she will find her needs for love and affection being met. Remember, Jesus Himself said, *“Give and it will be given to you.”* (Luke 6:38). Preachers love to use this verse of Scripture at offering time. However, check the context of this verse. Jesus was talking about much more than money here.

### ☺ **Trust people and accept them as they are.**

Here is a “tuff” for Choleric. First of all, they are not the trusting type simply because they themselves are seldom without hidden agendas in their dealings with people. Secondly, no one is perfect except the Choleric – even his or her faults are perfect. The Choleric would love nothing more than to change people and their behavior until they are perfect also. Learning to take people at face value and to trust them is tough enough. Coupling it with accepting people as they are is even more difficult for the Choleric.

I have had a lot of Choleric take me to task over Romans 15:7 *“Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God.”* They do not have any problem accepting someone who is already perfect. However, when it comes to people Choleric are in relationship with, they believe it is their calling to help the person (i.e. straighten the person out by whatever means are necessary). No. The Choleric’s calling is to accept people as they are (it was a Choleric who wrote this, by the way). It is God’s calling to straighten people out – and He does not need a Choleric’s help in this matter.

### ☺ **Delegate responsibility to lessen the possibility of burnout.**

Eric and Erica Choleric tend to burnout because:

1) They take on too much responsibility. About 75% of what they think they should be able to do is about how much responsibility Eric and Erica Choleric should take on. For short periods of time, they can handle much more. For even shorter amounts of time, they can dazzle everyone by what they accomplish. But they cannot live there (although they think they should be able to).

2) They think no one can do it as well as them. Eric and Erica Choleric can be a bit arrogant about their abilities compared to everyone

## VII. The Choleric Temperament

else. They need to learn to delegate responsibility. I know, people may NOT do it as well. I know, people will do it in ways and by means Eric and Erica Choleric would not use. However, in most cases, the project will be done and the desired results will be reached. People are capable (usually) of taking on tasks and projects and seeing those projects through to completion. Eric and Erica Choleric will be amazed (IF they learn to delegate and then keep their hands out of it) at how well projects do get done. Plus when they delegate (healthily) they will be able to oversee more than they can personally accomplish. Delegating responsibilities benefits people because they are able to take on tasks and projects under healthy leadership and accomplish them. It benefits Eric and Erica Choleric because they will be able to be involved in more of what they believe they need to be involved in without the usual burnout problems they tend to experience.

Again the Apostle Paul is a great example. During the first few years of his ministry, he is going everywhere doing everything in every city. Later in life, sometimes because of confinement in prison, he is sending ministers to different places. Learning to delegate is of great benefits to the Choleric.

### ☺ **Motivate people through healthy behaviors, like love, compassion and encouragement instead of abusive behavior.**

Eric Choleric, especially in the temperament weaknesses, tends to take on whatever (unhealthy) behavior is necessary to get his needs met. He uses love and affection to control the people who are closest to him. He uses abusive behaviors, outbursts of anger, verbal and mental abuse to control people. This is unhealthy. This is ungodly. Plus, unhealthy and ungodly behavior never works well. Yes, it may meet the need for the moment. The kids may quietly go play in the bedroom once dad has thrown his fit and exhibited his anger. However, the relationships have been further damaged and the stage is being set for further, unhealthy conflicts. Unhealthy, ungodly and abusive behavior NEVER meets the long-term needs of anyone. In reality, it seldom meets the short-term needs of anyone either.

Eric Choleric is a natural motivator. In the temperament weaknesses, this comes out as manipulation and dominance. However,

## God Created You

as he learns to be a true motivator, one who motivates through love, compassion and encouragement, then the real gifts of this temperament come through. I know, it is easier to get everyone to do what they should do through outbursts of anger, or nagging, or verbal abuse, or physical abuse, or a number of poor behavioral patterns. Nothing healthy ever comes from unhealthy behavioral patterns.

God has given Eric Choleric real gifts and abilities – gifts and abilities greatly benefiting himself and mankind. Motivation is one of these gifts and abilities. He has the ability to motivate individuals as well as large numbers of people to reach truly wonderful and godly goals. However, he is not going to motivate anyone until he learns to motivate by healthy behavior, love, encouragement, compassion and recognition (etc.). Anything less is going to come back to haunt him. Look at any dictator of any country you know about. If they forced their way into power and maintained power by force and manipulation, it always came back to haunt them. It is never a blessing to the people they governed. The same is true for any parent who uses poor behavioral patterns to control their children. Or, the spouse who unhealthily controls their spouse. Or, the pastor who dictates over his own little kingdom (church). Or, the board member who manipulates to get his way. Or – well, you get the idea. A dictator is a dictator and no one likes being under the control of a dictator – religious or otherwise.

Most of us have been positively influenced (motivated) by someone well experienced in healthy behavior (a role model), compassion, encouragement, and love. We were motivated to be a better person. We were motivated to rise to the next level. We were motivated to take on a project and see it through to completion. We were motivated to do our best. Whatever. Their positive behavior and expression motivated us to be more and to do more. Eric Choleric has these motivational gifts naturally, once he learns to motivate by healthy behavior instead of poor behavior, love instead of abuse, encouragement instead of put downs, compassion instead of self-centeredness, etc.

### ☺ **Learn to forgive in order to release penned up anger and painful memories, which can fuel vengeance.**

Erica Choleric has more of an anger problem than she realizes. Choleric is the angry temperament. She does not believe she is an

## VII. The Choleric Temperament

angry person. She is not angry most of the time, in her opinion. She believes she would not be angry at all if it were not for the stupid people around her. People make her angry – which is not true at all; she has a lot of pent up anger and people's stupid actions are a great excuse to vent her anger. You would think someone who vents her anger on such a regular basis would not have much left inside. However, when anger is vented in unhealthy ways and not dealt with in constructive ways pleasing to God, it continues to build inside the person. Erica Choleric needs to learn to deal with her anger (I suggest daily, even when she does not think she is having a problem with anger) constructively and in ways pleasing to God. (See Chapter Eight).

Because much of Eric Choleric's anger is people-directed, learning to forgive will greatly help her in dealing with anger. She takes offense when people are stupid, cannot be controlled, are weak-willed and easily controlled, make the wrong comment, act wrong or look at someone cross-eyed. People easily offend her, although it looks like nothing can penetrate the tough, emotionless force field around her. These offenses are stored in a secret little vault inside her heart (she does have a heart and feelings) and quickly turns into anger. She is capable of expressing her anger in many harmful ways. She likes to get even, no matter how long it takes. Vengeance is satisfying to the Choleric.

Learning to forgive will greatly help Erica Choleric deal with anger. When people are stupid, let it go and move on. When people do not want to be motivated to do what is right, do not store it in the secret file for later reference. Give people the right to be human and thus do and say stupid human things. I know, if people would listen to you (Erica Choleric) the world would be a much better place. But they do not care. They do not want your wonderful advice. They do not want you to help them be better people. They want to be ignorant and stupid. God gives them the right to be this way. It will help you to be a little more like God in this area. Jesus said, *“Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions.”* (Mark 11:25). (A side note: how long can you stand praying, anyway? Three weeks?) Holding *“anything against anyone”* for Erica Choleric will result in pent up anger and will be connected with future vengeance if not dealt with in healthy ways. Forgive them. Do not file their offenses in

## God Created You

the secret place. Let it go. Move on and be the person God created you to be and let Him take care of them.

While we are talking about forgiveness, it will help Erica Choleric to learn to forgive old painful memories and replace them with positive, joyful ones. This will break the circle of anger and vengeance. Thinking about those painful memories over and over feeds her anger and compels her to seek a form of vengeance (even if it is only in her mind). Forgive the old painful memories. Forgive the people who were involved in those painful memories. Then, when those memories attempt to invade her thinking space, replace them with positive, joyful ones. Whenever she finds herself thinking about an old painful memory, stop and begin thinking about a positive, joyful memory. It does not even have to be related. She will find she cannot be thinking about the old painful memory and the positive, joyful memory at the same time. It is one or the other. It is a choice. A healthy choice will help her with the process of forgiveness and in dealing with anger and the tendency to want to take vengeance. *Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. (Romans 12:19)*

### ☺ **With the help of God, learn to control him or herself and not people.**

Eric Choleric loves to be in control over people. He needs to control people's behaviors, actions, decisions, thoughts, ideas, etc. He is controlling naturally. He naturally knows how to control people (except the Phlegmatic temperament, which causes the Choleric much stress). However, much of the time, Eric Choleric's own life is out of control. He is controlled by anger. He is controlled by people's behaviors and ideas – which makes him angry and thus he reacts accordingly. He may be controlled by bad habits, poor behavioral patterns, and poor attitudes.

Learning to be in control of his own personal life (behaviors, attitudes, lifestyle, ideas, etc.) may well be the hardest issue Eric Choleric will ever face on planet Earth. He naturally knows how to control people, especially through poor behavioral patterns. Learning to be an actual leader and to motivate through healthy behavior (love, compassion, encouragement, etc.) is not easy, but doable – with the help of God –



## VII. The Choleric Temperament

and personally satisfying for him. However, learning to be in control of himself and not over people takes all the will power he can muster and divine intervention as well. Plus it is not a short-term project. This is one of those lifestyle changes people talk about – the behavioral changes for the rest of one's life.

There are a couple of items Eric Choleric is going to have to stay on top of on a regular basis for life. One is dealing with anger. Anger is not a problem he gets over. Anger is an emotion he can control daily. Being in control of himself and not dominating people also falls into this category. This is not a goal reached and attained and then automatically maintained. Being in control of himself and not dominating people is a daily project, easier to maintain once it is reached, but too easily fallen away from. Old habits and the temperament weaknesses (no matter what temperament we are) are easily returned to. Taking one day at a time, being the person God created us to be for today, will get us through life successfully and victoriously. We cannot do it ourselves, but then He (Jesus) is always right there to help and guide and enable and empower us. With God's help, Choleric can learn to be in control of themselves and not over people.

☺ **Look at people with *the eyes of Christ*. This will give them permission to be imperfect and lessen your criticism of people.**

Eric and Erica Choleric tend to be perfectionists. They have specific ideas of what is right and wrong, what should be or should not be, and how life ought to be lived. This causes them to be critical of people, because people are never being or doing it right. They are not often too critical of themselves, because whatever they are being or doing is right – even their faults are perfect.

It will help Eric and Erica Choleric to look at people with the eyes of Christ. Jesus sees people with all their faults and shortcomings, yet He loves them and is never critical. He helps people when asked, but never holds people's faults and shortcomings against them. Jesus accepts people as they are and patiently works to help them to be the people He created them to be. As Eric and Erica Choleric learn to view people with the eyes of Christ, it will help them to be less critical. They need to

## God Created You

learn to accept people. They can think of it in this manner, people are not your kids (even if they are your kids, this will help you) and they are not your responsibility. They are God's kids and His responsibility. You cannot save them and you cannot sanctify them, therefore allow God do His work in them. Learn to love them and accept them as they are and allow God to do His job. He is great at His job.

### ☺ **Dedicate all achievements to God and seek His recognition. This will reduce their dependency on man for recognition.**

Erica Choleric has a high need of recognition. Because of indirect behavior, this need often goes unmet. When this need is not met, she becomes angry and allows it to fester until an ugly ordeal happens. Too often she is totally dependent upon human beings to meet this need. People often fall short of meeting our needs – no matter the need.

As Erica Choleric learns to accept God's recognition for achievements and to be less dependent upon people to completely meet this need, it will help her in a couple of areas. First, God is great at meeting needs. *"And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 4:19). While God does use people to meet needs, He is fully capable of meeting all needs – whatever they might be – without the help of anyone else. When Erica Choleric is not looking to Him to get her needs met, she is cutting off a valuable source. Secondly, it will help her to keep her priorities straight. After all, who ultimately is she attempting to please? Man or God? When she is attempting to please man, she is going to be direly disappointed. When she is attempting to please man, she is capable of poor behaviors bringing recognition from man, but displeasing to God. When her priorities are straight, and she is dedicating her achievements to God, and receiving recognition from God, she is a happier, more satisfied person. Everyone is happier when Erica or Eric Choleric is happier.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

# DEALING WITH ANGER

(CONSTRUCTIVELY AND IN WAYS PLEASING TO GOD)

Every person has to deal with anger from time to time. Specific temperaments have big problems with anger. There are people who, in spite of their temperament, have never learned to deal with anger constructively and therefore have anger problems. There are unhealthy ways to deal with anger: denial, masking, stuffing it, screaming, yelling, hitting objects or people, throwing articles, physical abuse, verbal abuse, mental abuse, etc. There are also healthy ways of dealing with anger.

Anger is only an emotion. Everyone who is healthy has anger. It is neither good nor bad, but the ways we deal with it can be. Our behavior when we are angry can be good or bad. Whether we are in control of it or anger is in control of us can be good or bad. But, anger – the emotion – is neither. Many people consider anger as bad. The church I was saved in considered anger a sin. You cannot imagine the denial, masking, and stuffing going on in the congregation. It was a sin to acknowledge you were angry. Righteous indignation was okay if you were in leadership in the church, but anger was a sin. I heard many a weird explanation when it came to God being angry in the Old Testament or Jesus cleaning out the Temple.

Anger needs to be recognized as anger and then dealt with constructively. If you do not deal with anger, it will deal with you – in ugly ways. If you never learn to deal with the emotion of joy, it will never come back to haunt you. Do not learn to deal with anger, and you are setting yourself up for many problems. Years of anger not constructively dealt with come out in all sorts of ugly ways. Different ways for different people, but all of them ugly. Most people end up bitter, ornery, and miserable. A few people go off the deep end and pick up a gun and kill people or themselves or both. More internalize it and end up with sickness and disease and physical or emotional or mental problems. The list goes on and on, but everything on the list is ugly. There are no positive benefits for unresolved anger.

## God Created You

A couple of temperaments mask anger. They change its name and therefore do not have to deal with anger because they believe they are not angry. I have had a lot of people tell me over the years, “I am not angry, but I was deeply hurt.” Yet, they have been acting out in anger for years. Many people think if they are not in a manic rage, then they are not angry. They rename the emotion anger as hurt or frustration or something else and then bury it away inside. This is not healthy.

One or two temperaments flatly deny anger. I saw a lot of denial in the church I was saved in. Anger is a sin. I am a Christian. Therefore, I am not angry even though steam is blowing out of my ears. This is denial. Some temperaments internalize anger. Different temperaments externalize anger by yelling, throwing objects or hitting people. Neither is healthy.

It is neither better to externalize or internalize anger. If anger is not dealt with in constructive and godly ways, it is still unhealthy and unresolved. Unresolved anger will ALWAYS come back to haunt you and possibly the people in relationship with you. The same Bible telling us not to express anger in inappropriate ways like outbursts of rage, hurting people (physically or emotionally), or hurting ourselves also says:

***“Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. Ephesians 4:26, 27 (NKJV)***

Therefore, masking anger (changing its name) and stuffing it away or denying anger and stuffing it away (without changing its name) is as harmful as screaming, yelling, breaking objects and hurting people. The Bible says, ***“Be angry, and do not sin.”*** Externalizing one’s anger in ungodly ways (screaming, yelling, breaking objects, throwing articles, and/or hurting people either physically or emotionally) is recognizable as unhealthy. Internalizing one’s anger would also fall into this same category because the same Bible – the same sentence – says, ***“do not***

## VIII. Dealing with Anger in Constructive Ways

*let the sun go down on your wrath.*” When one internalizes his or her anger, it stays with him or her for many years of sundowns.

The emotion anger is not the problem, but the behavior stemming from the anger can be the problem. The emotion anger is a healthy emotion when dealt with in a constructive and godly manner. God gets angry; thus anger itself cannot be bad. Anger is an emotion, like joy is an emotion. However, anger needs to be dealt with or the behavior stemming from it will become a problem. Since the sun sets everyday, this verse (26) also reveals how often we should be dealing with anger in constructive and godly ways. Daily would be an excellent interpretation.

Every temperament deals with anger in its own unique way. Those anger issues unique to each temperament are discussed in the chapters dealing with the different temperament types. In this chapter, we are discussing three steps to help anyone of any temperament deal with anger constructively and in ways pleasing to God. These are not the only three steps to dealing with anger, but these are the minimal goals, which have to be reached in order for anger to be dealt with in a healthy way.

How do we know when we have dealt with anger? When the person, place or thing can be remembered without all the original emotional attachment. The event can be recalled but the rage, anger, frustration, hurt, etc., is no longer connected to it. This is similar to remembering a historical fact. If we are still emotionally tied to the person, place or thing, then we have not completed the process. Dealing with our anger constructively and in ways pleasing to God is a process. Sometimes the process takes time, energy, even pain and agony. However, the alternative – carrying it around as it continues to grow extraordinarily ugly – is even more time and energy consuming and far more painful in the end. The three (minimal) steps to dealing with anger constructively and in ways pleasing to God are: 1) Identify the Anger, 2) Express the Anger, and 3) Release the Anger.

Cholerics and Sanguines have no problem identifying their anger. When they are angry, they know it and everyone else knows it, however they do not necessarily express this in healthy ways. They do not release anger and therefore it keeps showing up on a regular basis. They can kind of skip step one because recognizing anger is not a problem.

## God Created You

The rest of the temperaments tend to mask or bury or deny anger (or all of the above). When you are upset or hurt or frustrated or whatever, take a moment and name the emotion. None of the above are emotions, but they are names given to emotions when a person does not know what emotion they are feeling. It does not mean they are angry because their feelings have been hurt. However, Melancholies and Supines tend to mask anger with feeling hurt or frustrated – especially the lower end of the scale of anger. They are not enraged but a teeny bit angry with the person who hurt or frustrated them. Anger needs to be identified as anger and dealt with accordingly. If a person does not deal with anger constructively, anger will deal with the person sooner or later (and it will not be pretty).

Along with identifying the anger, it would also be helpful to identify the source of the anger. Too often, anger is not being dealt with constructively and in ways pleasing to God and it is also being misdirected. It is unfair if I am angry with my boss and come home and scream and holler at the kids for minimal (or imaginary) infractions of the house rules. It is unfair for the Pastor to go home and kick the dog when he is angry with the church board. Misdirecting anger is not healthy, and it is unfair to those who are on the receiving end of it (usually the ones we love more than the ones we are angry at). Identify the anger. Name the emotion. Figure out the source (if possible – if it is not possible, move on to step two).

Step two is learning to express anger in constructive and godly ways. Anger has to be expressed. No one can stuff anger forever. After a while, sometimes years, out it comes! When it comes out on its own it always comes out ugly. The longer it has been buried and stuffed and denied the uglier it is when it comes out. And it will come out! Anger has to be expressed. It is expressed as sickness in certain people and as violent acts by different ones. Society has people who lash outwardly (verbally or physically) and people who lash inwardly at themselves. There are tons of different ways anger will express itself and they are all ugly. It is much better and healthier to learn to express anger in constructive and godly ways.

I think the best way of constructively dealing with anger is talking to the person you are angry at and coming to a resolution. However, this is not always possible. Maybe someone has committed a crime

## VIII. Dealing with Anger in Constructive Ways

against you or your family. Maybe it is your boss and no talking or resolution is possible. Maybe you know talking with the person is impossible – nothing can be resolved and matters will only be worse. Most ex-spouses fall into this category. People tend to think if the person is dead, the opportunity to express one's anger and find resolution is lost. Not true! Go to the gravesite. Express everything you have wanted to express (for the first time, the person cannot interrupt or make excuses or attempt to turn it around implying it is your fault!). Let them have it! Do not hold back. This is very therapeutic.

Even when you cannot talk directly to the person, or if your anger is not people-related, you still need to express it. Talk to God about it. He is a great listener. You do not have to worry about offending Him, because He already knows what is in your heart. You will not shock Him with your feelings. He is great at keeping a secret – you will not have to worry about Him gossiping about you and your feelings.

Meet with your best friend over coffee and dump on him (this works best when it has been prearranged with the person getting dumped on, or he may take it personally). Everyone would benefit by having a close friend or two who will listen without judging, condemning, or attempting to fix the problem. Everyone needs, and most people do not have, at least one person to be there for them. Everyone needs a person who will listen and allow them to get issues off their chest. Everyone needs a person they can talk to without taking it personally – a person who will not tell them how to feel or not feel, a person who will listen, empathize, and be there.

If you do not have this type of relationship with someone, while you are establishing a best-friend-whom-I-can-dump-on relationship, use your pet. The real key is to express anger (feelings). I have been known to take my Doberman for a walk and tell her all about every person who was making me angry. She is great to talk to. She never gets upset with me or condemns me for the way I am feeling. She never interrupts me when I am talking. She never tells me I am stupid for feeling the way I feel. I have gotten better answers from her than from many people I know.

It takes a while to develop these kinds of best friend relationships. However, they are beneficial to persons who are involved in them. Seek out a person or two who is willing to have this type of relationship.

## God Created You

When seeking these relationships, do not overlook God. God will be this kind of friend, if you will let Him. If you do not have a human being type person to talk to, start with God. God is a people, too. Talk to God about it. Even after you do have a few people who will be in this type of relationship with you, keep talking to God also. He is a wonderful listener. Besides, He knows a thing or two and might be able to come up with a suggestion every now and then.

Keeping a diary or a journal works well when dealing with anger. There are times when no one is available (but God). It takes time to develop a venting relationship. A diary or journal or writing a letter (never send the letter) is a healthy means to deal with anger. It is healthy to put on paper exactly what you are feeling, to whom you are feeling it, and why you are feeling the way you are feeling. It does not matter if you “should” or “should not” be feeling this way. If you are angry (this works well in dealing with the rest of the emotions also), the anger needs to be dealt with constructively. Putting your feelings on paper is a healthy way of dealing with it. If you are going to keep a journal or a diary, keep it in a safe place where you are assured no one will ever read it. If it is not in a safe place, you will not be free to fully express your feelings. Personally, I suggest once it is written down, destroy it and throw it away.

Personally, I write letters since people are usually the focus of my anger. Dear So and So, I hate you for the following 1000 reasons. I put everything I am feeling at the moment on the paper. Once this is done, I sign my name to it and tear it up and throw it away. Before I was wise enough to throw it away, I sent it to people; but I found out sending it causes many more problems than it is worth! Over the years, I have written letters I wanted to send or leave in a place where the person would accidentally read it. Resist temptation! The purpose of putting our feeling on paper is to deal with our anger, not to work on the relationship. Over time, the picture of the paper hitting the wastepaper basket became a visual aide in helping me to get to and accomplish the next step – release it. Anger has to be let go of, released. I wrote those early letters over and over but finally got to the place where, when the paper hit the basket, the anger was a done deal. It was over. It was dealt with and gone; not denied and stuffed.



## VIII. Dealing with Anger in Constructive Ways

People who are more creative by nature might want to try putting anger in story form, or poetry. Artistic expressions can be a healthy way of dealing with anger. Drawing or painting pictures or sculpting or any artistic form of expression a person enjoys doing can be used to constructively deal with anger. Artistic forms of expression are healthy ways of expressing anger, IF step three is also included. If not, it is going to be a lot of years of angry, negative pictures with little or no results in the person's anger level.

Physical exercise burns off the energy of anger. My father use to tell me to go out in the yard and kick a can around until I felt better. Sports are a positive activity for people to get out their hostility. Personally, golf works well for me. I have to concentrate hard on hitting the golf ball lying there defying me. Thus I do not have any mental energy left to analyze and over analyze whatever has sparked my anger. My wife says she gets a lot of house cleaning done when she is angry.

Anger needs to be recognized. Anger needs to be expressed. Then and most importantly, anger must be released. You have to learn to let it go. You have to learn to get past it. You have to learn to move on. It does not matter how you put it anger must be released. A person can recognize anger and express it over and over, however, if it is never released anger will continue to be a problem. If it is people-related anger, someone else made you mad, you have got to learn to forgive.

Until a person can forgive the people who have caused the anger, the anger cannot be released. Unresolved anger harms the person who retains it – it does not harm the person who caused it. Forgiveness is a process. It cannot be done in a moment, most of the time. I have found it is easier to preach about forgiving than it is to forgive. I have found it is easier to preach about any subject than to practice it. Forgiveness must be important, or Jesus would not have said, *“Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions.”* (Mark 11:25).

First a person makes the choice to forgive. This is not easy to start with, especially when there is a reason to hold a grudge. Secondly, do not revisit the incident over and over mentally, and if you find yourself revisiting it you reconfirm your commitment to forgive. Then you treat the person as if the offense did not happen. This does not mean you

continue to allow unhealthy interaction between yourself and the person. Sometimes major changes need to be made in order to have a healthier relationship with the person. I have found it is easier to forgive someone who is 1200 miles away, at times. You know you are making progress with the forgiveness process when you can think of the person or incident without emotional attachment. As long as you have *a complaint against anyone*, the process is not complete.

*So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. (Colossians 3:12,13)*

Learning to release anger, letting it go and getting past it, is not easy and does take practice. As I said earlier, I learned over the years to release the anger when I throw the letter away. The paper hitting the wastepaper basket is a visual aide for me. It was not easy to learn to do this, but when the paper hits the trashcan, the anger is released and it is over. A lot of paper hit the trashcan as I was learning to release the anger. *“Be angry, and do not sin”*: *do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil*. Recognize it, express it, and release it.

## CHAPTER NINE

# CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, there you have temperament. We are all unique individuals. Most of us have completely different temperaments from everyone else. Therefore, we have Sanguines who cannot understand why everyone does not enjoy social interaction 24/7 (meaning 24 hours a day, 7 days a week). They think the world would be a happier place if everyone spent more time socializing, and they are continually attempting to get everyone to be with people, have fun, party more often, etc. Melancholies are tired after a long day of work and want to go home and eat supper and veg out in front of the television and relax before bed. Socializing causes them stress except in unique circumstances. Choleric do not mind social activities, as long as they get to network. They look like a Sanguine, but their motives are different. Phlegmatics do not care, they are happy however life happens to be. They function well at social events or they function well as couch potatoes. Supines need more social interaction than they are getting, but are sending out messages they do not want to socialize. Hence invitations to social events are limited. Temperament determines how we interact with people and the world around us; what causes us stress and anxiety and what reduces stress and anxiety.

Even in cases where two people have the same temperament, they are uniquely different because of how they were brought up, decisions they have made, choices they have not made, ideas they have, conclusions they have drawn, etc. Thus two parents with the same temperament (this would be rare) may find themselves with different views in child rearing. One parent may be way too strict. This was the way he was raised and if it was okay for him, then it is fine for his kids. After all, he did not turn out too bad (in his opinion). His wife may be too permissive because an overbearing father raised her. She will not put her kids through all the pain and stress she suffered. If there is not a lot of communication, seeking out common ground, and compromise, the parenting years are going to be miserable for these two. The same temperament but with different conclusions drawn from life's information resulting in different behavioral patterns and expectations.

## God Created You

Knowing about temperament helps us in our interactions with people. Even if we are not in a position to know the person's actual temperament – which is only available through a Temperament Analysis Profile (T.A.P.) Report – knowing about temperament will still help us in several areas. Mostly to realize everyone is uniquely different, and acts and reacts and interacts differently to the same situations, people and/or circumstances. Knowing this will help us accept people as they are. Temperament also helps us to relax and be us. I do not have to attempt to be someone else. God created me this way and it is okay for me to be me – as long as I am living in the strengths of my temperament. Temperament is not an excuse to be weird and ugly (living in your temperament weaknesses will cause you to be weird and ugly). I am not a social butterfly – this is okay, this is the way God made me. I do not have to attempt to be a social butterfly to prove to all the social butterflies my normality. God made them the way they are – and it is okay. God made me this way – and it is okay also.

Have you notice in the Scriptures Jesus dealt with different people in different manners? He dealt with the crowds who had come to hear Him preach differently than He dealt with the Pharisees. Jesus dealt with the believing Jews differently than He dealt with the disciples. Even among the Apostles, Jesus dealt with them individually differently (this is an excellent lesson for parents – your children are uniquely different also). Peter, James and John seem to have received additional teaching and training and interaction with Jesus. Peter, James and John also received revelations and experiences the rest did not. It was Peter, James and John who were there on the mountain top when Jesus, in His glory, was talking to Moses and Elijah.

I am sure part of the reason Jesus dealt differently with different people was temperament. Everyone is uniquely different in temperament and thus interacts and responds differently. When Nathanael was called to follow Jesus (Philip went and found him and brought him to Jesus), it was a statement by Jesus concerning Nathanael's character and a thought only Nathanael knew about under a fig tree convincing him Jesus was the Son of God (John 1:45-49). Special knowledge does appeal to a Phlegmatic. Phlegmatics like to think they know what no one else knows. The statements John the Baptist said about Jesus, evidently,

## IX. Conclusion

convinced Philip. There is no record of any secret revelation about Philip by Jesus. Melancholies do not need special revelations, simply (this means in the simplest terms possible) give them the facts and let them make up their own minds.

Peter and Andrew fishing when Jesus walked by and said, ***“Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”*** (Matthew 4:19). I do not see any special revelation here, merely a promise of something better and more fun than a dull, hard life as a fisherman – new, better, and fun always appeals to a Sanguine. Notice Jesus did not tell the Sanguine Peter of all the hard work, tough times, pain and suffering ahead of him as He did the Choleric Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:16). Sanguines tend to run from anything negative while Choleric love a challenge. James and John, a little further down the lake from Peter and Andrew, only received a personal invitation and immediately left their nets to follow Jesus. Supines need a personal invitation to feel included, but seldom change careers (or make any major decision) without consulting a trusted significant person. Jesus does qualify as a significant trusted person with many of us. Maybe their father Zebedee (who was with them in the boat) gave them the nod as they looked to him after Jesus’ invitation.

The most amazing account, in my opinion, of Jesus calling someone to follow him is in Mark 2:14, ***“As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, “Follow Me!” And he got up and followed Him.”*** There is no written record Matthew (Levi) had any previous knowledge of Jesus. We may assume he did, however there is nothing written. There is no record Matthew ever heard Jesus preach or he had ever seen a miracle done by Jesus. Matthew was an outcast among the Jews, since he was a tax collector and probably did not hang out with the common people. He was rich, for the same reason, and Jesus mostly preached to the common people. Matthew was simply sitting at his tax-collecting table and, as Jesus walked by one day, He said to him, ***“Follow Me!”*** Matthew responded by immediately getting up and following Jesus. A simple command and a remarkable response. Melancholies, Phlegmatics and even Choleric follow people whom they know are intellectually superior. Choleric are most noted for intuitive decisions.

None of us will ever know human behavior as well as Jesus. Knowing temperament will help. It will help us to be the person God created us to be, by living in the strengths of our temperament. It will help us to live a happier, less stressful life. It will help us to allow the people around us to live happier, less stressful lives also. Knowledge of temperament will help us to understand ourselves better. It will help us to understand people better. It will help us to be more tolerant (in a healthy way) and more patient with people. It will help us in our relationships, at work, at home and at play. God created each of us as unique individuals. He gave each of us a unique temperament. By His help, we can learn to live in the strengths of our temperament and to be the person He created us to be.



## ABOUT TEMPERAMENT

### *Exerpt from Chapter 2*

There are five pure temperament types: Sanguine, Melancholy, Phlegmatic, Supine and Choleric. ....

How a person behaves is a combination of temperament, living in the strengths and/or weaknesses of their temperament, environment, decisions they have made or not made, conclusions they have drawn or not drawn about right and wrong, their relationship with God or lack thereof, etc.

Temperament is not the deciding factor in a person's behavior. However, it is the first of several building blocks of a person's behavior and personality. When our temperament and our behavior are more in line, our temperament traits are visible in our natural behavior, then stress, anxiety, and the related problems are greatly reduced.

Living in the temperament strengths will result in a happier, more fulfilled life at home, at work, and at play. In order to live in the temperament strengths, it helps to know the strengths and weaknesses of the Sanguine, Melancholy, Phlegmatic, Choleric and Supine temperaments. Be all you can be – do not join the Army, learn about temperament.

- *Dr. Rick Martin*

*Cook Communication*  
P.O. Box 451  
Dundee, IL 60118  
USA