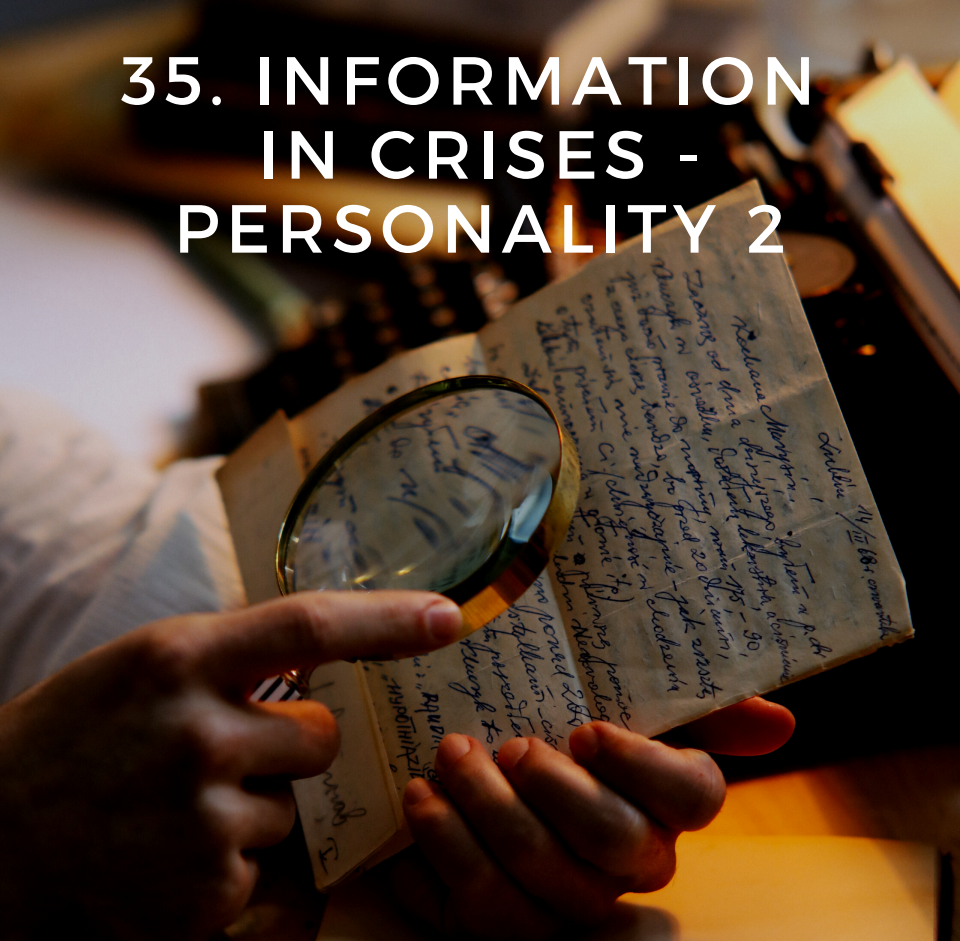


# 35. INFORMATION IN CRISES - PERSONALITY 2



*Do you tend to view life and  
information through a  
microscope, or a binocular?*

#NCSAMENTALHEALTHDEVOTIONS

## INFORMATION IN CRISES - PERSONALITY 2

*Romans 11:33-34: "Oh the depths of the riches both of the wisdom (big picture) and the knowledge (facts) of God! How unsearchable are His judgements and unfathomable is His ways."*

In the first presentation on personality preferences we discovered how the introvert and extrovert recharge their energy and how living in lockdown in a house with these two different preferences of personality could make life easier if you understand the differences, or more difficult if you don't understand one another. This presentation is about **information in crisis**.

The classification we are using comes from the Myers-Briggs Indicator (MBTI). There are four different preferences within the personality types, which means we respond to life in four different ways. We respond to how we get energised; how we receive information; how choices are made and how we live our lives.

We get **energised** in two different ways, either by spending time alone (*introversion*) or by spending time with people (*extroversion*). In this presentation we are going to look at how we **gather and interpret information**. This is done through sensing or through intuition. Remember that your personality type is formed by preferences and that the one is not right and the other one wrong. Preference is the natural or comfortable way of doing things. We live in an information age. Never has there been so much access to information as there is today.

**HOW DO YOU GATHER AND  
INTERPRET INFORMATION? IS IT  
DONE THROUGH SENSING OR  
THROUGH INTUITION, WHICH DO  
YOU PREFER?**

I am sure you may have noticed that since the outbreak of COVID-19, the news and social media and everything else have exploded and are saturated with information regarding this virus. To navigate everything the people are saying, the different theories and conspiracy theories and facts and information became a nightmare. There was a time at the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown in South Africa when there was so much information being sent and put on social media that I couldn't take it anymore and I simply switched off my data. I would leave my phone for hours not wanting to see what was going on because of the information overload. The many facts to sift through and trying to make sense of it all, to know what is true and what isn't true and how it is applicable to my life, was very tiring. I wanted to make meaning of it all, but the facts were too much for me. So, I ended up not making meaning of anything and just switching everything off.

In the process I've realised that I am not a very big lover of information and the details of information. I just want to figure out how it applies to my life and how it applies to my general mission and my goals in life. So, I am an intuitive person. **Intuitive** people are not so much into the detail but rather the bigger picture behind the detail. They want to know what the *purpose* of all the information is. Sometimes they skip the information and just make their own conclusions.

**Sensing** people on the other hand, enjoy factual information more. know my husband for example, is a sensing person. Whenever he shares information, he loves gathering the details of this information.

**INTUITIVE PEOPLE ARE NOT SO MUCH INTO THE DETAIL BUT RATHER THE BIGGER PICTURE BEHIND THE DETAIL. THEY WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE PURPOSE OF INFORMATION IS.**

He loves having every single fact, date, name and all the finer detail of the places where things happened. That is his preference. With all the COVID-19 information going around (facts, conspiracy theories and details of new developments), he loves researching and sifting through all the facts and drawing conclusions from it all. Then he would share it with me. I've learnt to appreciate his thoroughness in investigating and searching through the information.

My natural mind and inclination is to say, "Okay, I am getting the picture." Sometimes it takes long to sift through the facts and in the back of my mind I am looking for the bigger picture – what the meaning of it all is and how it is applicable to my life. That is because I am *intuitive* and he is *sensing*. He needs to go through all the facts. The facts give him pleasure and joy and make him draw his own conclusion at the end of it all. I just want to get to the end of it all. Sometimes I skip a few facts to get to the end. I don't need to know that it was on the 3rd of March at some rally about a COVID-something debate when Susan said blah, blah, blah..... Just tell me what some woman said and get to the point of it all.

The difference between the intuitive and sensing ways of gathering information is the bigger picture versus the details. It is like seeing the world through two different coloured glasses. The one sees it through blue glasses, wanting to make meaning of it, and the other one sees it through green glasses, seeing all the facts and details. Those who have a **sensing** preference usually observe everything through their senses – their smell, their taste, their eyes and their ears. They take everything in and they see the small details as if they are looking through a microscope.

SENSING PEOPLE ENJOY  
GATHERING FACTUAL  
INFORMATION WITH AS MUCH AS  
POSSIBLE DETAIL.

**Intuitive** people on the other hand, observe life through binoculars or sometimes even through a telescope, looking at the bigger picture. Looking at the world and the universe, not specifically in the sense of the world in the universe, but the big picture. They want to know what all the facts mean for them, for their purpose and for their happiness in life. They want to get to the practical side of things and not so much into the theory of things.

It is like two people walking in the woods. The one looks at the tree that is right in front of him; the life within the tree, the bark, the colour, the shape of the leaves and feeling the texture. The other person, walking next to him, is staring at the forest, the trees, the grass, the sand, the bugs and the birds that live in the trees. He looks up at the sun beating down on them, he feels the wind breathing through the trees and hears the rustle of the leaves. So they are very different, the one sees the detail, the other one sees the bigger picture.

If you're still not sure which preference pair you identify with more, remember that we have both the sensing and the intuition inside us, but we just tend to prefer the one to the other. It is where we feel comfortable in functioning in our lives and the way we feel comfortable with information. What you need to ask yourself if you're still not sure is: "Do I tend to evaluate what is in front of me? Do I critique, do I evaluate, do I look at the smaller details or do I rather enjoy the feeling I get when I see the things around me?" Then you will know whether you are sensing or intuitive. Sensing people evaluate, intuitive people want to feel and experience the bigger picture.

**SENSING PREFERENCE USUALLY  
OBSERVE EVERYTHING THEY SEE,  
THE SMALL DETAILS, AS IF THEY  
ARE LOOKING THROUGH A  
MICROSCOPE.**

In other words, you want to determine whether you like and trust the information you get. If you like the information, then you know in which preference group you fall. Sensing people will be into facts, details, practicality, into the science and into evaluating what is actual, what is real. Intuitive people will go with their gut, what the bigger picture is, what the meaning, the purpose of it is and how it applies to their lives. They ask questions like: "How does it feel? How do I feel about this? Is it bringing purpose and something good into my life?"

To demonstrate a bit further. If I take a few people to the beach, the sensing person will see the water, the towels and the people on the beach and will comment whether the beach is crowded or empty. When they leave, they will say it was either a hot or a cold day. They will perhaps say that there was a baby who was crying the whole time. The facts of the information are taken in through their senses. For the intuitive person, the very same beach will feel like their "California Dreaming". They will feel like they're in their best family holiday spot where happiness and memories are made. Where new summer loves are formed and the freshness of the summer ushers in new possibilities. They will go back home and they will have enjoyed their day thoroughly.

Two people in the same family going to the same beach at the same time, and experience, see and feel completely different things, simply because the one is intuitive and the other one sensing. I remember my grandmother from my dad's side once came to visit us at the coastal town, Port Elizabeth.

**INTUITIVE PEOPLE ON THE OTHER  
HAND, OBSERVE LIFE THROUGH  
BINOCULARS OR SOMETIMES EVEN  
THROUGH A TELESCOPE, LOOKING  
AT THE BIGGER PICTURE.**

My family loves going to the beach, so we thought we would treat her and we took her to the beach along with us. She sat in the car the entire time because her preference was sensing. That day she saw all the little details of the beach and I remember her saying that there was too much wind and she didn't want the sand to get into her clothes and into everything. "And look at the seaweed that's lying around. What if I contract some kind of a disease?" She was looking at the facts, using her senses to gather data and to make a decision based on those facts. She was right, because when the rest of us came back after a not too long time on the beach, everything was full of sand. My hair was tangled and the sand was blowing so hard that it hurt our skins, it felt like we were being sandblasted.

On the other hand with my intuition, when we got out of the car, I saw that as an opportunity for family fun time and I couldn't care less about the facts. As a matter of fact, I didn't even take notice of all those things except for the bigger picture that it was going to be a nice day at the beach with my family and we were going to have fun. I saw family togetherness – that was what the beach meant for me. It was a time to relax, even amongst the stinky seaweed. It was a time for bonding and beautiful sunsets to be cherished. And we did bond while running away from the spiky sand that was blasting our skins and beating us down. We laughed as we returned to the car, a pleasant experience from my point of view, from my preference.

The one wasn't right and the other one wrong. It was simply a matter of preference. My granny weighed the facts and made a decision for her comfort. I went with my gut that said it could still be fun and it kind of was fun in the unexpected sandblasting kind of way.

**GATHERING INFORMATION  
THROUGH INTUITION VERSUS  
SENSING ISN'T WRONG OR RIGHT,  
ITS JUST A PREFERENCE.**

Two very different perspectives on how we view the world and how we interpret data. If we had to meet a friend on the way home and the friend would have asked my grandmother how her time at the beach was, what would she answer? She would say it was miserable. And how would I answer? I would say it was quite fun. Two very different perspectives on how we view the world and how we interpret data.

How do sensing people view intuitive people? After learning the difference between sensing and intuition at a seminar, a gentleman who was the sensing type, turned to the intuitive group and said to them: "I always thought you were liars. You talked about things that weren't there and you twisted words, but now I know you are not liars. Now I know that you just interpret and perceive and gather data from your preference. You interpret the facts so that they have meaning in your life. You're not distorting them. Meanwhile, I was only looking at the facts." There can be a lot of misunderstandings if you don't understand which preference group you are dealing with.

You are probably locked up with sensing as well as intuitive preferences in your family during this COVID-19 lockdown. You are all looking at the same picture. You are all looking at this outbreak, but you see it through different glasses. Some of you are looking at the outbreak from a microscopic point of view while others are looking at it with a telescope, at the bigger picture and what it means for your life. I just want to give you a warning. It may sound as if sensing people are stuck up and that they don't have fun in comparison with intuitive people who are adventurous.

**AFTER LEARNING THE DIFFERENCE  
BETWEEN SENSING AND INTUITION  
AT A SEMINAR, A GENTLEMAN  
WHO WAS THE SENSING TYPE,  
TURNED TO THE INTUITIVE GROUP  
AND SAID TO THEM: "I ALWAYS  
THOUGHT YOU WERE LIARS".**



This may make it sound as if the one is better than the other and that is not true. Please note just like in the case of introversion and extroversion, the one is not better than the other, sensitive and intuitive people are only having different preferences, using different ways of looking at the world. Each of these preferences have strengths and weaknesses. Strengths to develop and improve on and weaknesses to overcome. If you are going to overuse your intuition, if you forget to incorporate at least some of your senses and some of the facts that are around you, you could get into a problem. If you are constantly looking at the bigger picture of things and how it brings meaning to your life and you are not looking at the facts also, you could get into trouble.

There is a biblical example of this in Judges 17:1-13. This is not a very well-known story, but I'd like to share it with you. It is a story of an Israelite man named Micah and his mother who took 200 silver coins and made an image (idol) from the silver coins. Micah took the idol and he made a shrine for it to stand on. He sewed a sacred ephod just like the ones the High Priests used to wear. Then he made one of his sons a priest to serve in their own created little temple. In his mind, he was doing a good thing. He thought they needed to love and worship the Lord.

Judges 17:6 explains why Micah did that: *"In those days Israel had no king and all the people did whatever seemed right in their own eyes."* In other words, they followed their gut. They followed their intuition, but they forgot the detailed picture. The bigger picture was that they had to worship and they needed a temple like in Shiloh. They couldn't get to Shiloh where the actual temple was, so he copied it, but forgot the detail.

**BOTH SENSING & INTUITIVE  
PREFERENCES HAVE STRENGTHS &  
WEAKNESSES. STRENGTHS TO  
DEVELOP & WEAKNESSES TO  
OVERCOME.**

He was not supposed to make idols and worship them. He was not supposed to appoint his own priest, because God was the One who appointed priests. So he was very much into the bigger picture. His motives were correct, because he looked at the bigger picture of the need to worship and to serve the Lord. He even tried to copy some of the things the Lord gave Israel to do, but he forgot the detail. The detail was very important when it involved worshipping and especially worshipping the Lord in the Sanctuary.

Proverbs 14:12 tells us that we need to be careful of following our intuition by looking at the bigger picture only. It says: *"There is a way that appears to be right unto a man, but the end of it leads to death"*. The Bible warns us against overusing one's preference. We need to incorporate a little bit of the other preference in order to be successful.

John 8:32 says: *"And you will know the truth and the truth shall set you free."* In other words, it is important to consider the facts and the specifics and not looking at the bigger picture only. I've heard people saying things like: *"It doesn't really matter how you serve God, as long as you serve God because you love Him."* This is not true because the Bible tells us in Deuteronomy 12:4 that God is into detail as well as the bigger picture. It says: *"Do not worship the Lord your God in the way that these pagan people worship their gods."* In other words, there is a specific way (look at the facts) – there is detail when it comes to how God should be worshipped. But then in Matthew 23:23 Jesus says you can also go wrong if you overuse your sensing preference, when you focus too much on the facts.

**THE BIBLE WARNS US AGAINST  
OVERUSING ONE'S PREFERENCE.  
WE NEED TO INCORPORATE A  
LITTLE BIT OF THE OTHER  
PREFERENCE IN ORDER TO BE  
SUCCESSFUL.**

Jesus said to the Pharisees: “What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. You hypocrites! For you are careful in tithing even on the **tiniest** of your income from your herb gardens, but you ignore the more **important** aspects of the law (the bigger picture) – justice, mercy and faith. These you should practise without neglecting the other.” He says you should tithe, but you should also not neglect the important things like mercy and justice towards those around you.

The Bible tells us that both these preferences, sensing and intuition, are important. The details and the bigger picture of why we serve God, are important. Having the one without the other you can become imbalanced. When you just focus on the one and completely cutting out the other one, refusing to look at the big picture and just focusing on the facts, you can get into trouble. I'm not suggesting a 50/50 in both, because we do have our preferences, but having something of the other type as well. Don't just look at the big picture and overlook the details. You don't have to look at all the details, but look at some of them at least, so that you can be balanced in drawing conclusions.

The Bible is not promoting focusing on the one as opposed to the other, but warns against ignoring the other preference. Develop it as well. A good biblical example of somebody who did that is King Solomon. I believe King Solomon developed his intuition as well as his senses. The Bible tells us that he was the wisest man who ever lived because the Lord blessed him with knowledge as well as wisdom. In my opinion the knowledge represents the facts and wisdom is how the facts are interpreted to see the bigger picture.

**GOD BLESSED SOLOMON WITH  
KNOWLEDGE AS WELL AS WISDOM.  
IN MY OPINION KNOWLEDGE  
REPRESENTS THE FACTS & WISDOM  
IS HOW THE FACTS ARE  
INTERPRETED.**

The Bible tells us in 1 Kings 3:16-28 that two women went to King Solomon one day and one of them said to him: "Your majesty, this woman and I live in the same house. Not long ago my baby was born at home and three days later her baby was born. Nobody else was with us. One night, while we were asleep, she rolled over on her baby and he died. While I was still asleep, she got up and took my son out of my bed. She put him in her bed and put her dead baby next to me. In the morning when I got up to feed my son, I saw that he was dead. But when I looked at him in the light, I knew that it wasn't my son." The other woman shouted: "No, he was your son. My baby is alive, and the dead baby is yours!" The first woman yelled: "Mine is alive!" And they argued back and forth in front of Solomon until he finally said: "Both of you say that the baby who is alive is yours. Someone please bring me a sword." A sword was brought and Solomon ordered that the baby be cut in half. That way each of them would have half and get a part of him. "Please don't kill my son", the baby's mother screamed. "Your majesty, I love him very much, but rather give him to this other woman. Just don't kill him." The other woman however, shouted: "Go ahead, cut him in half. Then neither of us will have the baby." Solomon said: "Don't kill the baby." Then he pointed to the woman who said don't kill the baby, and replied: "She is his real mother. Give the baby to her."

The people were astounded because of his wisdom and his knowledge. He heard the facts, he looked at the bigger picture and then came up with a solution based on both the smaller details of the story as well as the larger picture. He wanted the facts, but he also followed his gut, in knowing that the true mother would never let her son die.

**WHEN DECIDING THE OUTCOME OF A  
SERIOUS MATTER SOLOMON  
CONSIDERED THE FACTS & HE LOOKED  
AT THE BIGGER PICTURE & THEN  
CAME UP WITH A SOLUTION TO A  
PROBLEM.**

It is important to step out of your comfort zone at some stage. As much as it is your preference, it is important to develop the other side also, to have the knowledge as well as the wisdom. How does this impact you while you are in lockdown? How could living in the home with sensing and intuitive people, if you don't understand each other and navigate around these differences, impact you? Imagine you are at home, having a lovely day, chatting with each other, spending time together as a family when all of a sudden one of your family members withdraws and is clearly unhappy. When you ask what's happening, the reply comes: "Didn't you hear what Sarah just said? She said I am a ....." And this person starts getting into the details of one word Sarah used and how the word is rude and how it means that Sarah is seeing him in a negative light. So this person is focusing on the details in front of him. He is a sensing person.

When Sarah is confronted about this, she might say: "I didn't mean anything by it. We were having such a good time and laughing and everything was fine. I had no ill intentions. Can't you see the word in light of the bigger picture and realise what I meant?" Don't focus on what was **said**, but focus on what was **meant**. See the bigger picture. Sarah is an intuitive person. The differences, if not understood and navigated, will most certainly cause distress. So it is good to learn about one another's preferences. It is good to look at the small details as well as the bigger picture because there is beauty in both. Sensing people will go about their day, completing their tasks, looking at the facts around them, saying things like: "I've done the dishes, I've completed this in the house, now the house is clean and the beds are made." Sticking to the facts. An intuitive person will ask: "Well, did you enjoy it while you were doing it? Did it add to the joy in your life? Is there a deeper meaning or purpose why you cleaned the house and spend so much time on it?"

**IT IS GOOD TO LOOK AT THE SMALL  
DETAILS & THE BIGGER PICTURE  
BECAUSE THERE IS BEAUTY IN BOTH.**

Intuitive people will actually become unproductive if they cannot see the deeper meaning and purpose in something. They will stop listening to information when they cannot see the bigger picture whereas a sensing person will stop listening as well if only the bigger picture is given and not any detail.

In a crisis, those who identify with sensing, might say something like: "We have no money but we have flour and yeast. We can bake some bread." They stick to the facts. An intuitive person will say: "We have no money. It is a test of our faith. We must pray more." They look at the bigger picture and the meaning behind it all for them.

A sensing person will say the house is dirty and there are dishes to be washed. [Facts.] An intuitive person will say that the house is dirty because they had fun last night. They were playing games and spending some quality time together and it is okay for the house to be dirty. [Bigger picture and the meaning for them.]

A sensing person will say: "We had a fight, because you spoke to me in a rude way." [Facts.] An intuitive person will say: "It was only a joke, we were having so much fun and I really didn't mean anything by it." [The bigger picture.]

You might say something like: "You called me a monkey", and the other person will say: "No, I called you my monkey. I meant it in a loving way, not a hurtful way."

Do you see that the one is not right and the other one wrong? They are just different. Understanding this will bring a lot of relieve. Know your preference.

**INTUITIVE PEOPLE WILL ACTUALLY  
BECOME UNPRODUCTIVE IF THEY  
CANNOT SEE THE DEEPER  
MEANING & BIGGER PICTURE IN  
SOMETHING.**

Know your family members' preferences so that you don't fight unnecessarily about these differences. Talk about the different preferences and also learn to step outside your own preference like Jesus did. Develop skills in both areas so that, if the situation calls for it, you can step out of your comfort zone.

Intuition and sensing are both important. Think of the story of Jesus and Peter. Jesus said to Peter he should be careful of using his senses above his intuition. In the Garden of Gethsemane, just before Jesus was going to die, Peter looked around him as the soldiers were approaching to arrest Jesus. He looked at the facts and he realised that he must defend Jesus – there were too many men with swords, coming to arrest Jesus. With this factual information, he chopped off the ear of one soldier. Jesus said to Peter not to do that, not to look at the facts in front of him only.

He should not only observe that His life was in danger which was bad, but he should look at the bigger picture. Jesus said to him: "He who lives by the sword, will die by the sword." In other words Jesus said to him that He was supposed to be arrested because He was heading towards the cross.

May you, during this time, begin to balance the two preferences. May you learn to shift your focus, so that if you are mostly looking at the details, you will learn to look at the stars once in a while and if you are mostly looking up that you may learn to look down once in a while and notice a beautiful small ladybird sitting right in front of you.


**SENSING PERSON WILL STOP LISTENING TO A CONVERSATION IF ONLY THE BIGGER PICTURE IS GIVEN AND NOT ANY DETAIL.**

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