

# 37. LIVING LIFE IN CRISES - PERSONALITY 4



*The best things in life happen  
unexpectedly , when risking life on  
the edge of the spectacular.*

**#NCSAMENTALHEALTHDEVOTIONS**

## LIVING LIFE IN CRISES - PERSONALITY 4

*Proverbs 16:3: "Commit to the Lord whatever you do and He will establish your plans."*

In the previous three presentations, we've looked at the first three preference pairs within personality types. *Extrovert* versus *introvert*, *sensing* versus *intuition* and *thinking* versus *feeling*. This classification comes from what we call the Myers-Briggs Indicator, or the MBT.

By now you would have identified where your preferences lie within the first three of the four options, the ones you naturally are inclined to use during your life and especially during times of crisis.

The first preference is how you are energised. Is it when you are alone, or when you are with people? Do you gather information by looking at the smaller details, or looking at the bigger picture? That's the second preference. Do you make decisions based on logic or on empathy for others? That's the third preference.

The fourth one covers **how you prefer to live your life**. Do you live your life by planning, or do you live your life by just going with the flow and letting things happen naturally? These two preferences are called **judging** and **perceiving**.

Judging is when you plan life very meticulously. Perceiving means that you kind of let life happen and you go with the flow, just letting things happen normally and making your decisions as you go.

DO YOU LIVE YOUR LIFE BY  
PLANNING, OR DO YOU LIVE YOUR  
LIFE BY JUST GOING WITH THE  
FLOW AND LETTING THINGS  
HAPPEN NATURALLY?

**Judging** as a preference can be summed up as someone who likes to organise things, who likes to make lists. These people make decisions and come up with plans. They tend to schedule things way in advance. When it comes to difficult and problematic situations they tend to also have a plan. They look at the problem at hand and they form and express their judgements, their opinions and plans on how to solve the problems. Then they move quickly towards bringing closure to the current issue so that they can move on. Life for them is a list of plans waiting to be ticked off when they are completed.

Making plans and executing them bring this group great joy. It makes them happy. That is where they feel comfortable and how they live their lives. People with judging as a preference will usually use words ending in **-ed**. They say things like: "I have finished**ed** that. I have completed**ed** this. I have decided**ed** that." They usually do the planning in a very neatly, orderly and established way.

There is a warning, however. The word *judging* as we are using it in this context, does not mean to *judge* people, but rather to look at the world from a specific opinion and then make plans accordingly. It means looking at the world and making plans to fit into what is happening in the world.

If, on the other hand, your preference is **perceiving**, you like to go with the flow, to be spontaneous. Life to perceiving people is not about specific plans, but about options and having those options always open, just going with whatever feels right at that moment, making decisions in the here and now. Perceiving types don't necessarily reject plans made by others.

**THE "JUDGING" GROUP LOVES MAKING PLANS AND EXECUTING THEM THIS BRINGS THEM GREAT JOY. SAYING: "I HAVE FINISHED, COMPLETED OR DECIDED THAT." MAKES THEM HAPPY.**

They don't tend to make plans for themselves, but they may also not stick to plans that have been made, especially if those plans have been made by someone else.

Think of a friend who, when plans have been made between you and this friend to go somewhere or do something, tends to always cancel at the last moment. They will let you know that something has come up, not because it is an emergency, but simply because something better has arrived. They tend to change their minds at the last minute or two. They cancel plans because they don't like being tied down to specific plans. Can you think of someone like this, or perhaps you are that someone?

This kind of letting-life-come-to-you-as-it-happens, making choices as options arise, can be very frustrating to those who have made plans and want them to be executed. They might even see it as a kind of disloyalty, thinking "how can you just drop me at the last minute? You knew we had plans that needed to be completed and finished." Basically, the perceiving type will postpone decisions to see whether there are other options available. They might act spontaneously and out of the blue in a very negative or in a positive way. They might say things like: "Let's pack up right now and go away for the weekend." They might decide what to do right on the spot, rather than forming a plan ahead of time and they tend to leave things for the last minute. They will use words ending in **-ing**. They'll say things like, "I'm finishing that. I'm completing this. I'm still deciding what I want to do." They want life's decisions to remain open-ended and they live life in a very open-ended way, not making final decisions and coming to specific conclusions.

**THE "PERCEIVING" GROUP DON'T TEND TO MAKE PLANS FOR THEMSELVES, BUT THEY MAY ALSO NOT STICK TO PLANS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE, ESPECIALLY IF THOSE PLANS HAVE BEEN MADE BY SOMEONE ELSE.**

Judging types plan their lives in a systematic way to reach their goals. Perceiving types live their lives by making choices spontaneously, or leaving their options open to change, without remaining with one choice.

Which one do you lean towards? Which one do you feel more comfortable with and do you identify with? The fourth preference pair is probably the one with the biggest gap between their differences and therefore it can cause quite a great amount of friction in relationships, whether at home or at work.

A person with a very strong judging preference might find it very hard to get along with somebody who has a very strong perceiving preference and vice versa. Somebody who is very open-ended and doesn't like to make plans might find it very hard to live in a house, or to work with somebody who is very meticulous and strict on making plans and executing them and getting to the end of it all.

On the other hand, as much as it could be very difficult to live with these two types of people in the same home or work at the same place, **mixed couples** (one perceiving and the other one judging) in the same environment could actually **complement** each other very well. If they have developed themselves enough to be able to accept each other's differences and work around those differences, the relationship can benefit from it.

With all of this in mind, how does God want our Christian lives to look like? What is His preference? Does He want us to be planners or does He want us to go with the flow and just let life happen in the here and now?

IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN  
A RELATIONSHIP WHERE ONE PERSON  
IS MORE OF THE "MAKING PLANS"  
TYPE, AND THE OTHER ONE IS A "GO  
WITH THE FLOW" TYPE.

Is it always wise and prudent to live life with restraints and possible plans to follow through on?

There is a saying that one should always plan ahead, because it wasn't raining when Noah built the ark. So there are those who would say that from God's perspective, plans are good. Plans need to be executed, need to be brought into fruition. You might not see the point of the plan right now, but when the crisis comes, the plan will be in place and you'll feel more at ease.

Or is it wiser to make decisions as they arise? A kind of risky, edgy, out-there, half-crazed way of approaching life? There is a saying by Ryan Hansen that goes: *'Being spontaneous at times is a must. Being spontaneous all the time, is for crazy people.'* Within the Christian walk, there are times when we have to take risks, when we have to be edgy, out-there and come across as being a bit crazy. To say: "You know what, I haven't made a plan for this, but I am leaving it in God's hands. I am just going to go with whatever happens and trust Him."

Do we choose either/or, or do we choose both? What does God want? When we look at the Bible, I believe God recommends that we plan. If we look at Jeremiah 29:11, it says: *"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*

There are other verses, like Amos 3:7 where the Lord declares that He Himself has plans. *"Surely the Lord God does nothing without revealing His plans to His servants the prophets."*

**YOU SHOULD LEARN TO PLAN  
AHEAD, WHY? YOU MAY ASK,  
BECAUSE IT WASN'T RAINING  
WHEN NOAH BUILT THE ARK.**

Ecclesiastes 3:1 also gives me the idea that God is into planning, where Solomon says: *"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens."* Proverbs 16:3 says: *"Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans."* 1 Corinthians 14:40 reads: *"Let all things be done decently and in order."*

When we summarise these verses, God says that He has a plan for you, that He reveals His plan through the prophets and it is a systematic time-based plan for your life where there is a time for everything. God also says He knows that you have some ideas about your life and how to live life. He says you must take those ideas to Him: *"Bring those plans to Me and I will establish them. I will bless them."* It also says that you should plan well. Don't just make silly little plans, but plan them well and in an orderly fashion. I believe God does promote and is into planning and into the judging preference. There is a saying that goes: *'Failing to plan, is planning to fail.'* It kind of sounds as if God is in agreement with this.

But then on the other hand, the Bible indicates that there are times when God says it is not wise and prudent to have plans and that He doesn't want us to make plans. In Luke 10:3-4 for example, when Jesus was sending out His disciple to go and preach the gospel, He said to them: *"Now go and remember that I'm sending you out as lambs amongst wolves. Don't take any money with you, nor a traveller's bag, nor an extra pair of sandals. And don't stop to greet anybody on the road."* God told them very specifically not to plan for their journey ahead and not to take anything with.

**FAILING TO PLAN, IS PLANNING  
TO FAIL.**

# Podcast



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*Northern Conference, Pastoral Counselling Department  
Revive, Refresh, Restore  
fleming@nc.adventist.org  
Cell: +27836584296  
Author: Nandi Fleming  
Editors: Kobus & Adele Beukes*