**INFP Overview**

For INFPs the dominant quality in their lives is a deep-felt caring and idealism about people. They experience this intense caring most often in their relationships with others, but they may also experience it around ideas, projects, or any involvement they see as important. INFPs are often skilled communicators, and they are naturally drawn to ideas that embody a concern for human potential. INFPs live in the inner world of values and ideals, but what people often first encounter with the INFP in the outer world is their adaptability and concern for possibilities.

For INFPs, the world and events are viewed from a very personal and often idealistic perspective. INFPs pursue their ideals, and their desire to find their place in the world and express who they are can take on an almost quest-like quality. INFPs look for meaning; they look for it in their lives, in their work, and in their relationships with others. They may feel a strong need to contribute something of importance to the world or to have an impact on the lives of those about whom they care, though they can also be quiet observers of people and humanity at large.

People and relationships are what the world is about, and harmony in relationships is of great importance to the INFP. They are very concerned with the impact of their decisions on individuals, not only on those about whom they care but on themselves and on their own values as well. Their deep need and desire for harmony can sometimes show as a concern with keeping peace, and with maturity, they are openminded and egalitarian. INFPs have a desire for harmony which may at times get in the way of their getting their own needs met. Their caring, warmth, and deep valuing of relationships are also difficult to communicate to others and may not be immediately apparent to people in their lives. INFPs may even appear a bit cool or aloof from the outside, though they would be surprised that others experience them in this way, given the warmth and loyalty they feel inside.

Intuition gives the INFPs' Feeling a future focus and orients INFPs to the abstract and symbolic. Intuition, however, is always secondary to the deep-felt valuing and caring that characterizes their Feeling. Their orientation to the future sometimes finds expression in their desire to help others manifest their potential. Their Intuition may also find embodiment in creative activity or show itself as an interest in communication. INFPs often have a gift for the written or spoken word, and they typically have a sense of nuance of meaning. INFPs want the freedom to live their ideals, and they do like variety in their lives.

If interested, INFPs may find an outlet for their gifts in the fields of writing, journalism, or foreign languages. Their ideas and their writing are conceptual and metaphorical, with a concern for universals and values, but their writing also tends to have a warm personal tone. Many INFPs also have a deep love and enjoyment of reading. On a subject about which they care, and on which they have had time to reflect, they can be exceptionally verbal and persuasive.

Since creativity is often of importance to INFPs, they may have artistic interests or a concern for aesthetics. They attend to style as well as content in their creative expression, and their creativity is often a vehicle for communicating their values and ideals. INFPs may be strongly attracted to, and enjoy experiencing, the human condition in all its joys and sadnesses, as represented in the works of artists, musicians, writers, and filmmakers through history.

INFPs are excited by new ideas and new possibilities, particularly as they may find expression in people's lives. As a result INFPs are often drawn to areas like counseling, where they can use their caring and grasp of the possible. With interests in academics they may be found in the fields of literature, psychology, and the arts and sciences. Spirituality can also play a large role in the lives of INFPs, as they look for a personal connection to something larger than themselves. Though INFPs care about people, they are often drawn to fields where they can work independently. Their behavior in the outer world is usually characterized by flexibility and INFPs may be frustrated by routine, structure, and rules.

In their relationships, INFPs are often adaptable people who quietly manifest compassion and sensitivity. Their sensitivity may be seen in their intense empathic responses to the joys and suffering of others, and to those in need. Commitment, loyalty, and love are often of great importance to them, as are family and children. Interestingly, INFPs may be in love with the idea of love, and without maturity, they may become passive and fail to move into compassionate and caring action. Though INFPs often have a strong sense of what is right and wrong, outwardly they are very tolerant; they will, however, let you know if you have trod on their values. Without development, INFPs may fail to express their needs clearly, and thus others may be confused or frustrated by not knowing they have violated something of importance to the INFP.

Development of extraverted Intuition is necessary for INFPs to help them stay open to new ideas, new information, and new experiences. Otherwise they may feel deeply, but never move into action, or they may fail to check whether their beliefs about people are true. As a result, their strong sense of right and wrong can lead to their being perceived as moralistic by others. Development of Intuition will also give INFPs possible ways to pursue their ideals. Without this development the INFP's energies may become trapped inside, squandered on worrying about meaningless issues, or brought to bear on issues that are so big that the INFP does not know where to start or how to have an impact. Development of Sensing and Thinking will also help INFPs take a hard real-world look at their plans, and give them the firmness needed to manifest their ideals.

Because INFPs are often attracted to new possibilities, and because they may have difficulty saying no, they may bite off more than they can chew. They can have too many projects going to successfully complete any of them. Under stress, they may also become rigid and perfectionistic, feel inadequate, and become critical of themselves. Under extreme stress, and in surprising contrast to their tolerant and caring style, they may even become outwardly critical of others, feeling that others are failing to meet the ideals the INFP has set for them.