

ISTJ / ENTP

The Duty Fulfiller and the Visionary

An Introverted/Extraverted Relationship

The level of both harmony and conflict within Introverted/Extraverted relationships can vary considerably, depending on how strongly expressed the introverted and extraverted tendencies are for these types. With very moderate expressions only the general attitudes, desires and interests of the parties involved are likely to be factors of importance affecting the relationship, and these will depend more upon the specific functions of the personalities and less upon their introverted or extraverted expression. In other cases however, particularly where both parties have a strongly expressed dominant focus, the impact of Introversion vs Extraversion becomes an important factor affecting all the functional dynamics of the relationship. For this reason general statements about the functional give and take within such relationships are of little value where individual differences play such an important part. We have tried to take this into account in the following, but it is worth recognizing that in some instances what might appear as a conflict in one relationship can be a source of harmony in another.

ISTJ/ENTP Relationship Dynamics

This pairing can form quite different relationships depending on the gender of each type. Owing to the predominance of ISTJ males, the most common cross gender relationship will be ISTJ male to ENTP female, while both male and female pairings will also not be unusual. The reverse gender pairing of ISTJ female to ENTP male, while probable from a statistical point of view, will be, however, a less likely relationship in the real world.

The major cross functional differences here, that is, extraverted intuition vs. introverted sensation, are reverse images of each other and can be either quite supportive of each other or distinctly opposed. Often it will seem that both have the same ideas about a situation, but closer inspection and understanding will reveal that each person is looking at it in a very different manner and expecting a quite different outcome. Sometimes this will not become apparent until it is

too late to change or adjust expectations, and this can give rise to some argument.

Both strong functions here are mediated in the real world via thinking, but again, this thinking approach will be of a somewhat different focus in each, as the extraverted thinking of the ISTJ will be concrete, specific and focused in the present whilst the introverted thinking of the ENTP will be more self related and focused upon those aspects of reality which are important to them. This difference however, is not usually great enough to create difficulties, and generally offers a broad area in which considerable agreement and mutual understanding can arise.

The typologies here generally lead to quite different attitudes toward life and the world. In most cases however these will complement each other, particularly when both partners are working toward a common goal.

Real differences will only come into play when there is an open field for personal choice and significant life or relationship events have to be dealt with. Interestingly, the main creator of difficulty here can also be this partnership's greatest strength. Thinking, on both sides here, will resist feeling based connections. This means emotional affects will usually only arise if there is strong disagreement or where one partner's actions are intruding upon the other.

Where friction of this kind is minimal, the natural tendency for each is to rationalize their approach to life, making for a somewhat careful and measured relationship based upon agreement between similarly logical approaches to problems and day to day situations. Provided each is allowed the capacity to walk their own path and fulfill their own needs, these two people can deal with most issues in a quite formidable way.

The greatest difference here lies between the way these two types consider and value people, objects and situations. The ENTP tends to value things according to their potentials, particularly in regard to their potential for providing value within their own need built idea of the world.

The ISTJ on the other hand judges things according to more concrete and conventional values, with far less consideration for their effect upon their own life. For them, a thing has to be done simply because it is required by the situation, while for the ENTP, things are only worth doing if they promise some more valuable outcome or lead on toward some previously determined and personally desirable goal.

While very much personal, being extraverted, these ENTP goals nevertheless tend to match and derive from the expectations and needs of the outer world. This usually means that whilst working from different attitudes, the outcomes desired by each partner will tend to step together, each one often advancing the other's activities by a step further than their partner is able (or willing) to take.

In respect to their wider and less connected areas of life, the ENTP will no doubt consider the ISTJ as both unnecessarily conservative and lacking in imagination, while the ISTJ will consider the ENTP to be impulsive and lacking both the discipline and the grit necessary to achieve anything of value.

Both need to ensure that they do not allow these valuations of each other's ways to become an unspoken background in the relationship, as such things are apt to mine the dark places of the soul and bring to light things which were better left where they lay. Because, if there is going to be any collapse into mayhem here, it will be via one or both of the partner's under developed feeling sides, whose valuations can often present as simplistic, childish and quite emotional when placed under stress.

Self awareness and ongoing personal development is the only answer here, for while both believe their rational approach to life makes them immune to what they see as turgid emotional thinking, they can easily be blindsided by this very thing if they do not understand their own and each other's weaknesses.

Making it Work

One important thing here is for both partners to understand and remain aware of each other's difficulty with feeling and the way feelings in this relationship can so easily translate into emotion.

Each partner's feeling side will be closely coupled to their inferior function and it will often be via this weaker function that emotional responses will be triggered. For the ISTJ this means recognizing that their partner has little ability to see the world in terms of sensation based perception, particularly of the introverted kind, which only communicates its appreciations indirectly.

Actions or words which communicate an expectation that the ENTP should automatically understand such appreciations will either pass unnoticed or will be met with a certain amount of indignation, which, under the worst circumstances, can give rise to self protective behavior such as dismissal or anger.

In situations where there is a complex appreciation to be communicated, the ISTJ will need to cast their understanding in terms which allow their partner to make judgments from their own point of view. Quite often this simply means removing the assumption that a certain act is “necessary” or a particular relationship between things is “obvious”, and instead, offering such ideas as “possible” answers and posing their assessments as questions which their partner can answer in their own terms.

Sentences such as: “We need to put this here” can so easily be changed to: “Do you think we should put this here?” Certainly this means the ISTJ must take a step back from the strong judgments they make about their sensation based perceptions, but this allows their partner room to engage in areas of ISTJ life that they might otherwise simply leave untouched. It also frees the relationship to develop in an inclusive manner which, in many situations, can bring more effective outcomes than the personal judgments of the ISTJ would normally allow.

This same need applies for the ENTP, whose view of the world is not automatically comprehended by their partner. The difference here is that the ENTP will usually talk out their ideas, often leaving little doubt about what they see or desire to happen. In doing so they often do not realize that others may not understand their perceptions or the process by which they determine what they see as valuable or necessary.

This can leave others feeling like they are being left behind, with the ENTP throwing ideas back at them from a world they simply cannot see. Intuition is like that. For those who live within its world, everything is alive with connections leading forward, back and sideways in space and time, but these connections are often tenuous and intensely personal, even if they point towards real world action. The ENTP doesn’t usually concern themselves with explaining why a certain thing has a particular intensity of purpose or value; for them such things simply result from the obvious potentials they see within a situation. The ENTP will need to explain these potentials to their partner and recognize that by doing so they are also explaining their basis to themselves; helping them to see that such things arise from a particular viewpoint and are not the only important factors in a situation. Their ISTJ partner needs to see how to relate and apply their partner’s ideas to their own more immediate vision of the world without feeling that their own values are being pushed aside or trampled underfoot.

Once these two can come to respect each other's point of view, there will be far less chance of emotional difficulties arising from the weaker sides of this relationship.

ISTJ people can be very strong on routine and achieving correct outcomes, even in the most mundane of matters. Being locked into this kind of behavior, however, can be very hard on an ENTP. By the same token, living in the outgoing, ever moving world of the ENTP can be hard for an ISTJ.

The things that we cannot handle we often find annoying. Not being up to their demands, we fear them and find ways to reduce their significance. This can lead to "put down" behavior, which can even be present unconsciously in our choice of words and the way we address or behave toward the things our partner finds interesting.

Both partners here, particularly the ISTJ, will need to be continuously aware of the way in which negative associations can sneak into their thoughts and words regarding their partner's actions or interests. In relationships, this seemingly inconsequential negativity can nevertheless build very solid walls between people without their noticing, until it is too late and the walls are too high to climb or pull down.

Possibly the most important thing in this relationship will be for both partners to develop and rely more heavily upon their secondary thinking function, particularly when dealing with each other's ideas and needs.

For the ISTJ this will mean being careful to use their already extraverted thinking in a positive way. They need to find balanced and fully informed judgments about their partner's intuitive actions and ideas, without allowing the attitudes of their own more personal, sensation based view of the world to automatically cast such things in a negative light. In particular, their keen ability to talk things out rationally will be most essential in engaging and drawing out their partner's more personal reasoning. For the ENTP it will mean taking the time to actually stop and listen to their own thought processes, to offer them an equal value sufficient to allow them to not only interact rationally with their partner's ideas, but also to balance the intensity of their own outgoing intuitive desires against a moderating and informed reasoning.

Below, we offer some ideas to enhance the development of this relationship.

ENTP suggestions:

- When you are not otherwise keenly aware that you need to think carefully about a particular thing, your thinking tends only to follow from the things you see as immediate and important. These come mostly from your intuitive perceptions of the world, from where all the most interesting possibilities for action and fulfillment flow for you. Taking time to apply reasoning to things which are not important to you seems a waste of time, and this attitude can show in the way you glance over or past the details and more static needs that interest your partner. They may not ask or need you to think things out for them, but they do need to see that you understand the relevance and importance of the things they do. One such way is to take the time to apply your own strong function to their interests and see what ideas come up – even if the outcomes are unrelated to your own interest. They could be very valuable to your partner and your attention will show them that their needs and ideas are important to you.
- Feelings rate low on both your own and your partner's agenda. Nevertheless some things cut, often unintentionally and sometimes from our lack of patience or understanding. For both of you any negative feeling tends to translate into emotion. For you this will often express itself almost immediately in your words and actions, whereas your partner's emotions will build silently within, usually causing them to withdraw interest or concern. At such times it would be best if you caught the emotion before it translated into negative actions or words and addressed the question of the feeling causing it. Saying: "This is making me feel.... What can we do about it?" will be far less challenging to your partner than for them to have to bear the brunt of your emotions.
- Intuition is not a special talent, any more than any functions is. When we use our strong function we hardly name it for what it is, we simply look at the world and deal with our perceptions of it in the way we are used to, and we rarely think about the fact that others might not be seeing the same things in the same way. Quite naturally and through no fault on the part of your partner or yourself, the way your partner sees the world is actually one of the hardest things for you to understand about them. Because sensation is your own inferior function, you tend to see their way of seeing things in a negative light and probably often wonder how anyone could be concerned with the things they find of interest when there is so much else to be aware of and interested in. Try to remember however that they are noticing the things you miss, and quite often their

- appreciations are far from negative, and if taken together with your own actually create a wider and far more useful understanding of a situation.
- The difference between a perceptive type like yourself and a judging type like your partner is not always obvious, but it does come to light quite strongly in our dealings with others and our attitude towards the world. Perceptive types, like a poem in free verse, tend to flow and change with whatever the situation offers or demands, whereas judging types like your partner tend to have a lot of punctuation. The poetry of their movement through life is more like a classic ode, structured and controlled by particular laws which must not be broken. Try to respect these inner laws and conventions in your dealings with them. When you together try not to step over or too far past the rules that maintain their behavior. Rather than showing yourself as a free spirit expressing things as you see them, behavior which moves too far beyond the boundaries of their own conventions will often, to their eyes, merely cast your ideas and actions in a more negative light.

ISTJ suggestions:

- Like your partner, your thinking tends only to follow the things you see as immediate and important. These come mostly from your sense of the world, where all the most immediate needs for action and fulfillment flow for you. Taking time to apply reasoning to things which are not important to you seems a waste of time, and this attitude can show in the way you glance over or past the possibilities and less concrete notions that interest your partner. They may not ask or need you to interest yourself in such things, but they do need to see that you understand the relevance and importance of the things they see. One such way is to take the time to apply your own strong function to their interests and see what the right approaches would be and the immediate requirements that would need to be fulfilled if you were to follow one of their ideas. Even presented as casual advice, such things could be very valuable to your partner and your attention will show them that their needs and ideas are important to you.
- Feelings rate low on both your own and your partner's agenda. Nevertheless some things cut, often unintentionally and sometimes from our lack of patience or understanding. For both of you any negative feeling tends to translate into emotion. You tend to keep such emotion locked inside, but doing this only means it remains, to sour goodwill and serve as a foundation for further negativity. You also prefer not to address any obvious emotion in your partners words or behavior and at

such times would rather withdraw your interest. It would be better however, if you addressed the question of such feelings immediately rather than allowing them to build. By doing so you will circumvent the gradual accumulation of negative emotion which could eventually destroy the quality of your relationship. Instead of merely letting things get to you, consider the reasons why they do. In discovering the sensitivities within yourself which give rise to such things, you will be able to decide upon and implement changes which will lessen the chance of such things occurring between yourself and your partner in the future.

- When we use our strong function we simply look at the world and deal with our perceptions of it in the way we are used to, and we rarely think about the fact that others might not be seeing the same things in the same way. Quite naturally and through no fault on the part of your partner or yourself, the way your partner sees the world is actually one of the hardest things for you to understand about them. Because intuition is your own inferior function, you tend to see their way of seeing things in a negative light and probably often wonder why they have to be so concerned with the things they find of interest when there is so much else that has to be done and organized. Try to remember however that they are looking past the things you see, and quite often their appreciations are far from negative, and if taken together with your own actually create a wider and far more useful understanding of a situation.
- The difference between a judging type like yourself and a perceptive type like your partner is not always obvious, but it does come to light quite strongly in our dealings with others and our attitude towards the world. While perceptive types tend to flow and change with whatever the situation offers or demands, judging types like yourself tend to sit back and appraise each situation as it arises, using a set of strongly held and often conventional values. These values are sometimes too narrow to correctly measure all the possibilities of life or the outcomes of every situation and sometime we need to balance our judgment against a wider and less visible set of values. Quite often, what is “right” is not necessarily reasonable. Momentarily setting aside our structured view of things to allow for the possible gives our thinking a chance to see how not everything outside our view of the world is necessarily negative. Even unrestrained speech or behavior can have its place if it works toward better understanding or a quality that cannot be gained in another way. Use your thinking to tip the scales in favor of your partner, at least far enough and for long enough to get the measure of their ideas and integrity.

The Key

If there is a key to this relationship, it is balance. It is essential for both partners here to discover and maintain a balanced tension between their strong function and their thinking ability. The most dangerous direction for this relationship lies down the path of unrestrained intuitive and sensation based behavior. In their own right, neither function has the necessary rationality for proper human relationship. A real focus of awareness is needed here for each partner to maintain a continuing rational dialogue, both with themselves and with each other. Both need to discover and maintain a healthy respect for their own and each other's susceptibility to their weaknesses, and both will need to find ways to generate and promote positive emotions within the relationship.