THE PRESENT / PART TWO

Discovering *your virtues.*

Recognize the strengths that are already yours, and explore how they can help you grow.



THE COMPACT GUIDE

60-90 minutes / at your own pace

All the guidance. Your own notebook.

English / Content version 1.0.0
journaling.7ama.dev

A LITTLE ORIENTATION

Inside these pages

Follow the exercises in order, then repeat the worksheets for the traits, goals, or experiences you choose.

Before you begin 3

A little background 3

Extraversion/Introversion 6

Openness/Traditionalism 7

Conscientiousness/Carelessness 8

Emotional Stability/Low Stress Tolerance 9

Agreeable/Assertive 10

Choose what matters most 11

Put your priorities in order 11

Describe an experience 11

An alternative outcome 11

Build on this strength 12

A moment to look back 12

GETTING STARTED

Before you begin

Recognize the strengths that are already yours, and explore how they can help you grow.

This is a space for you. Write honestly, at your own pace. Take a break and return whenever you are ready. Suggested lengths and times are guides, not deadlines.

> Print this compact guide and write in your own notebook. Label each answer with its exercise title, and keep related worksheets together.

These pages work entirely on paper. No account or internet connection is needed after downloading. Keep your completed pages somewhere private.

Your path through this program

01 Recognize your strengths

02 Choose & prioritize

03 Build on what is good

> Select traits from each category, narrow your choices, and put them in priority order. Repeat the three reflection exercises for every trait you decide to explore.

GETTING STARTED

A little background

To complete the following exercise, there are a number of things that are useful to know (you may have encountered this information previously if you have completed the faults analysis exercise, but it might be worthwhile to review it):

Everybody's personality is composed of two higher-order traits. The first higher-order trait is known as plasticity, and can be thought of as the tendency to be flexible, exploratory, curious and quick to adapt. The second higher-order trait is known as stability, and can be thought of as the tendency to be structured, organized, emotionally stable and focused.

A little background / continued

Plasticity

Plasticity, the first higher-order trait, can be further broken down into two sub-traits: Extraversion (the tendency to be enthusiastic and dominant) and Openness (the tendency to be open-minded and intelligent).

Extraversion (Outgoing vs Reserved)

- Sociable
- Active
- Adventurousness
- Positive
- Excitement-Seeking
- Gregarious

Openness (Original vs Traditional)

- Fantasy-prone
- Aesthetically-minded
- Philosophical
- Creative
- Intuitive
- Intellectual

Stability

Stability, the second higher-order trait, can be further broken down into three sub-traits: Conscientiousness (the tendency to be orderly and industrious), Emotional Stability (lack of negative emotional volatility and the tendency to withdraw), and Agreeableness (politeness and compassion, as opposed to belligerence or aggression).

A little background / continued

Conscientiousness (Conscientious vs Carefree)

- Competent
- Orderly
- Decisive
- Achievement-oriented
- Self-disciplined
- Deliberate
- Industrious

Emotional Stability (Calm vs Nervous)

- Anxious (reversed)
- Angry (reversed)
- Hostile (reversed)
- Depressed (reversed)
- Self-Conscious (reversed)
- Vulnerable (reversed)

Agreeableness (Agreeable vs Assertive/Aggressive)

- Warm
- Trusting
- Straightforward
- Altruistic
- Modest
- Compliant
- Tender-minded
- Nice

Impact of Personality Traits

There are advantages and disadvantages to each trait, particularly at the extremes. Extremely sociable, extraverted people can be dominant and impulsive, while introverted, quiet people can easily become isolated and depressed. Extremely open people can be scattered and overwhelmed by their own thoughts and ideas, while closed-minded people may become narrow and inflexible. Exceptionally conscientious people can be obsessive about order, judgmental and rigid, while their more carefree counterparts may be messy, undisciplined and careless. People very high in emotional stability may engage in risky, dangerous behavior, while those who are more neurotic can become so preoccupied by anxiety and pain that they are unable to function. Finally, extremely agreeable people may never stand up for themselves, while those who are too assertive can be aggressive, callous and bullying.

Change

Personality is reasonably stable over the lifespan, and is also powerfully influenced by hereditary or genetic factors. Despite this, personality can broaden or even transform. As people age, for example, they tend to become more agreeable, conscientious and emotionally stable.
Changing personality means changing habits of action, presumption and perception. Personality change requires the formulation of clear future goals, as well as discipline and practice. People who are too agreeable can learn to stand up for themselves. Disorderly people can become more conscientious. Introverted people can become socially skilled. People who experience paralyzing levels of negative emotion can learn to explore.

RECOGNIZE YOUR PATTERNS

Extraversion/Introversion

Choose 2-10 strengths that feel familiar. You will narrow your selection later. There is no need to judge yourself as you read.

- [ ] Can be the life of the party
- [ ] Easily start conversations
- [ ] Don't mind being the center of attention
- [ ] Can take charge and lead
- [ ] Feel at ease with people
- [ ] Feel comfortable around people
- [ ] Talk to a lot of different people at social occasions
- [ ] Make friends easily
- [ ] Know how to captivate people
- [ ] Am skilled in handling social situations

Extraversion/Introversion / continued

- [ ] Am often happy
- [ ] Am enthusiastic about new opportunities
- [ ] Like to invite people out or at home to socialize
- [ ] Do not dominate conversations
- [ ] Do not spend my money on a whim
- [ ] Do not attract undue attention to myself
- [ ] Am not grandiose or arrogant
- [ ] Enjoy time in natural surroundings
- [ ] Am rarely impulsive
- [ ] Let other people have the spotlight
- [ ] Make other people laugh and have fun
- [ ] Am fun to be around
- [ ] Can listen well
- [ ] Am rarely or never too loud
- [ ] Do not party or socialize excessively
- [ ] Do not always talk about myself
- [ ] Am comfortable alone
- [ ] Do not always need to seek excitement or novelty
- [ ] Do not always have to be the center of attention
- [ ] Think before I act

RECOGNIZE YOUR PATTERNS

Openness/Traditionalism

Choose 2-10 strengths that feel familiar. You will narrow your selection later. There is no need to judge yourself as you read.

- [ ] Am full of ideas
- [ ] Can handle a lot of information
- [ ] Catch on to things quickly
- [ ] Am philosophically inclined
- [ ] Am a creative person
- [ ] Am always learning new things
- [ ] Am entrepreneurial
- [ ] Can always see new possibility in things
- [ ] Am a very sensible person
- [ ] Respect authority
- [ ] Am quick to understand things
- [ ] Carry the conversation to a higher level
- [ ] Have a rich vocabulary
- [ ] Have a vivid imagination
- [ ] Have excellent ideas
- [ ] Spend time reflecting on things
- [ ] Have a lot of insight into myself and others
- [ ] Believe that the tried and true way is the right way
- [ ] Never follow fads
- [ ] See the value in tradition and custom

Openness/Traditionalism / continued

- [ ] Do not believe in change for the sake of change
- [ ] Am stable in my moral beliefs
- [ ] Am concerned that my parents or relatives approve of my decisions
- [ ] Am a down-to-earth person
- [ ] Am seldom attracted by foolish, new-age ideas
- [ ] Am seldom or never bothered by strange thoughts or feelings
- [ ] Try not to introduce unnecessary change into my life
- [ ] Do not upset my parents or other cultural authorities with doubts and questions
- [ ] Am not flighty or unpredictable
- [ ] Am resistant to radical, dangerous thoughts

RECOGNIZE YOUR PATTERNS

Conscientiousness/Carelessness

Choose 2-10 strengths that feel familiar. You will narrow your selection later. There is no need to judge yourself as you read.

- [ ] Am always prepared
- [ ] Am exacting in my work
- [ ] Do things according to a plan
- [ ] Get chores or tasks done right away
- [ ] Love order and regularity
- [ ] Pay attention to details
- [ ] Always arrive at appointments early or on time
- [ ] Do what I say I am going to do
- [ ] Can easily be spontaneous and enjoy the moment
- [ ] Do not set my expectations too high
- [ ] Do not feel that I always have to be in control
- [ ] Am not bothered when things don't go according to plan
- [ ] Don't get too caught up in my work
- [ ] Have a very long attention span and can work without being distracted
- [ ] Continue until everything is perfect
- [ ] Strive for efficiency and economy
- [ ] Have seen my tendency for hard work pay off
- [ ] Make plans and stick to them
- [ ] Am extremely reliable
- [ ] Am very goal-oriented
- [ ] Have a relaxed, laid-back attitude
- [ ] Am not judgemental
- [ ] Am never perfectionistic
- [ ] Do not impose a rigid set of standards on other people
- [ ] Live in the moment
- [ ] Am seldom bothered by disorder

Conscientiousness/Carelessness / continued

- [ ] Never do more work than is necessary
- [ ] Know how to go with the flow
- [ ] Am not too uptight
- [ ] Don't waste my time thinking about little details

RECOGNIZE YOUR PATTERNS

Emotional Stability/Low Stress Tolerance

Choose 2-10 strengths that feel familiar. You will narrow your selection later. There is no need to judge yourself as you read.

- [ ] Am content with my physical appearance, despite its flaws
- [ ] Am in control of my emotions
- [ ] Am rarely or never stopped from doing what I want by my fears
- [ ] Calm down quickly when I do get upset
- [ ] Rarely complain or grumble about things
- [ ] Rarely or never suffer extreme anxiety, even when stressed
- [ ] Seldom feel depressed or blue
- [ ] Seldom get disturbed or upset
- [ ] Am rarely incautious
- [ ] Make safety a top priority
- [ ] Am aware of potential trouble even when other people appear confident
- [ ] Will go to the doctor's office if there seems to be something wrong with me
- [ ] Am a cautious, careful person
- [ ] Am difficult to offend
- [ ] Am not afraid of new people or social situations
- [ ] Am relaxed most of the time
- [ ] Don't get caught up in my problems or blow things out of proportion
- [ ] Rarely get irritated or angry
- [ ] Rarely self-conscious, ashamed or embarrassed
- [ ] Seldom feel hurt
- [ ] Seldom do anything dangerous
- [ ] Feel enough shame if I do something stupid so I won't do it again
- [ ] Watch what I eat carefully
- [ ] Am protective and careful with little children
- [ ] Am very careful with my sexual behavior
- [ ] Don't rush into things before I feel comfortable

Emotional Stability/Low Stress Tolerance / continued

- [ ] My higher levels of anxiety have kept me safer than some people I know
- [ ] Am good at identifying the risks in new situations
- [ ] Stay out of places that might have dangerous people in them
- [ ] Stick to what I know and am comfortable with

RECOGNIZE YOUR PATTERNS

Agreeable/Assertive

Choose 2-10 strengths that feel familiar. You will narrow your selection later. There is no need to judge yourself as you read.

- [ ] Trust people
- [ ] Am interested in people
- [ ] Am on good terms with nearly everyone
- [ ] Feel others' emotions
- [ ] Have a soft heart
- [ ] Work very well with other people on teams
- [ ] Inquire genuinely about others' well-being
- [ ] Know how to comfort others
- [ ] Love children
- [ ] Make people feel at ease
- [ ] Sympathize with others' feelings
- [ ] Am a good peacemaker
- [ ] Take time out for others
- [ ] Truly care about others
- [ ] Am a very loyal friend
- [ ] Will stand up for myself
- [ ] Am not easily swayed by emotions that might be manipulative
- [ ] Am good at seeing beneath the surface of false good intentions
- [ ] Am sceptical
- [ ] Am not a martyr
- [ ] Will not forgive easily if betrayed or deceived
- [ ] Can see when people are playing games
- [ ] Am not naively innocent
- [ ] Am aware that malevolence exists in the world
- [ ] Do not always believe what people promise
- [ ] Do not trust people too easily
- [ ] Am very rarely taken advantage of
- [ ] Will confront people if necessary
- [ ] Can be demanding when the circumstances warrant
- [ ] Am cautious of good intentions before proof is offered

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Choose what matters most

Choose 2-20 of your selected traits to explore. We suggest 6-9. Each one will have three short reflections.

> Refer back to the traits you checked in the category lists. Write your final selection below, or in your notebook.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Put your priorities in order

List the traits that matter most to you at the top. You can change this order later.

> Write your chosen traits from most to least important. Use this order for the reflection worksheets.

REPEAT FOR EACH CHOSEN TRAIT

Describe an experience

> Use this exercise for every selected trait, working in priority order.

Please write a short story about a time when this virtue contributed to a situation that had a positive impact on your life. Approximately 1,000 characters is a useful starting point.

REPEAT FOR EACH CHOSEN TRAIT

An alternative outcome

> Use this exercise for every selected trait, working in priority order.

What might you have done differently in that situation so that it could have turned out even better?

REPEAT FOR EACH CHOSEN TRAIT

Build on this strength

> Use this exercise for every selected trait, working in priority order.

How could you develop this virtue so that you and the people you care about benefit as much as possible?

YOUR FINAL REFLECTION

A moment to look back

Read through your pages. You can revisit any answer as your perspective changes.

What do you understand more clearly now?

What is one small step you want to take next?

Before you put these pages away

- [ ] I have worked through the exercises I chose.
- [ ] I have reviewed my reflections.
- [ ] I have chosen a next step.
- [ ] I have put my pages somewhere private.