



Introduction

Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them to become what they are capable of being.

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

Idealistic and principled, people with the INFJ personality type (Advocates) aren't content to coast through life – they want to stand up and make a difference. For these compassionate personalities, success doesn't come from money or status but from seeking fulfillment, helping others, and being a force for good in the world.

While they have lofty goals and ambitions, INFJs shouldn't be mistaken for idle dreamers. People with this personality type care about integrity, and they're rarely satisfied until they've done what they know to be right. Conscientious to the core, they move through life with a clear sense of their values, and they aim to never lose sight of what truly matters – not according to other people or society at large but according to their own wisdom and intuition.

INFJ personalities might come across as somewhat reserved, but they are fueled by a profound internal passion. Stimulated by deep, reflective thought and an enormous amount of empathy, they dedicate themselves to the pursuit of purpose.

Seeking Purpose

Perhaps because their personality type is so uncommon, INFJs tend to carry around a sense – whether conscious or not – of being different from most people. With their rich inner lives and their deep, abiding desire to find their life purpose, they don't always fit in with those around them. This isn't to say that INFJ personalities can't enjoy social acceptance or close relationships – only that they sometimes feel misunderstood or at odds with the world.

Fortunately, this sense of being out of step doesn't diminish INFJs' commitment to making the world a better place. These personalities are troubled by injustice, and they typically care more about altruism than personal gain. They often feel called to use their strengths – including creativity, imagination, and sensitivity – to uplift others and spread compassion.

Nothing lights up an INFJ personality like changing someone else's life for the better.

Many INFJs see helping others as their mission in life, and they're always looking for ways to step in and speak up for what is right. People with this personality type also aspire to fix society's deeper problems in the hopes that unfairness and hardship can become things of the past. At times, however, INFJs may focus so intently on their ideals that they don't take adequate care of themselves – a pattern that can lead to stress and burnout.

Connecting with Others (and Themselves)

INFJs value deep, authentic relationships with others. Few things bring these personalities as much joy as truly knowing another person – and being known in return. INFJs enjoy meaningful conversations far more than small talk, and they tend to communicate in a way that is warm and sensitive. This emotional honesty and insight can make a powerful impression on the people around them.

A few close relationships, provided that they're genuine, can fill INFJs' hearts to the brim.

Thoughtful and often selfless, INFJ personalities pour a great deal of energy and care into their relationships, but this doesn't mean that they always feel appreciated in return. People with this personality type tend to slow down and really evaluate how what they do might impact others before they take action. Consequently, it can frustrate them when other people don't recognize their good intentions. INFJs are very sensitive to criticism of any kind and can take things very personally.

A Personal Mission

Many INFJ personalities feel that their life has a unique purpose – a mission that they were put onto this earth to fulfill. For them, one of the most rewarding aspects of life is seeking out this purpose – and then, once they've found it, striving to do it justice.

When INFJs encounter inequity or unfairness, they rarely give up – instead, they consult their intuition and their compassion to find a solution. With their innate ability to balance the heart with the head, these dedicated types are hardwired to right the wrongs of the world, no matter how big or small. These personalities just need to remember that while they're busy taking care of everyone else, they need to pause sometimes and take care of themselves as well.

Strengths & Weaknesses

INFJ Strengths

- **Insightful** – People with the INFJ personality type (Advocates) know all too well that appearances can be misleading. These personalities strive to move beyond superficiality and seek out the deeper truths in life. This can give them an almost uncanny ability to understand people's true motivations, feelings, and needs.
- **Principled** – INFJs tend to have strong beliefs and values, particularly when it comes to matters of ethics. They consider lying to be morally wrong, and they make a concerted effort to not deceive others – even when they could directly benefit from doing so. In fact, they are the least likely personality type to say they sometimes take advantage of other people.
- **Passionate** – INFJ personalities crave a sense of purpose in life. Rather than living on autopilot or sticking to the status quo, they want to chase after their dreams. This isn't a personality type that shies away from shooting for the stars – they are energized and impassioned by the beauty of their visions for the future.
- **Altruistic** – People with this personality type aren't happy to succeed at another person's expense. INFJs want to use their strengths for the greater good, and they rarely lose sight of how their words and actions might affect others. In their heart of hearts, they want to make the world a better place, starting with the people around them.
- **Creative** – INFJ personalities aren't exactly like everyone else – and that's a wonderful thing. They embrace their creative side, always on the lookout for opportunities to express themselves and think outside the box.

INFJ Weaknesses

- **Sensitive to Criticism** – INFJs are often averse to criticism, especially if they believe that someone is challenging their most cherished principles or values. When it comes to the issues that are near and dear to them, people with this personality type can become defensive, dismissive, or angry.
- **Reluctant to Open Up** – INFJ personalities value honesty and authenticity, but they're also private. They may find it difficult to open up and be vulnerable about their struggles, not wanting to burden someone else with their issues. Unfortunately, when they don't ask for help, they may inadvertently hold themselves back or create distance in their relationships.
- **Perfectionistic** – These visionary personalities are all but defined by idealism. While this is a wonderful quality in many ways, it doesn't always leave room for the messiness of real life. INFJs might find it difficult to appreciate their jobs, living situations, or relationships if they're continually fixating on imperfections and wondering whether they should be looking for something better.
- **Avoiding the Ordinary** – INFJs yearn to do extraordinary things with their lives. But it's hard to achieve anything extraordinary without breaking it down into small, manageable steps. Unless they translate their dreams into everyday routines and to-do lists, they may struggle to turn their grand visions into reality.
- **Prone to Burnout** – INFJs' perfectionism and reserve leave them with few options for letting off steam. People with this personality type can exhaust themselves if they don't balance their drive to help others with necessary self-care and rest.

Romantic Relationships

Love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.

Nelson Mandela

People with the INFJ personality type (Advocates) look for depth and meaning in their relationships – and their romantic relationships are no different. This is a type known for having a vibrant, vivid imagination, but few INFJs can imagine themselves settling for a match founded on anything less than true love.

It can take time for them to find a compatible partner. Some people might think that INFJs are too choosy, and it's true that this personality type can be prone to unrealistic expectations. In fact, when they're single, they tend to construct their ideal partner in their mind. And they might be tempted to hold out for this "perfect" partner or relationship, when in reality, that perfect match just doesn't exist. The good news? INFJs' idealism – if balanced with just enough realism – can actually enhance their love life.

Is This for Real?

People with the INFJ personality type tend to be attuned to their core values and keenly aware of what matters to them on a soul level. This helps them look beyond surface-level attraction and understand whether they're compatible with someone on a deeper, more meaningful level.

Importantly, these insights are essential for helping INFJs avoid matches that aren't founded on authenticity or shared principles. INFJ personalities care about integrity, and they tend to bristle when people try to change them or talk them into something that they don't believe. As a result, they gravitate toward partners who appreciate them as they are.

As romantic partners, INFJs are warm, caring, honest, and insightful. They patiently work to uncover their loved one's innermost needs and desires.

Once someone with the INFJ personality type does find a suitable relationship, they rarely take it for granted. Instead, they tend to look for ways to grow as individuals and strengthen their connection with their partner. These personalities believe in honest communication and the importance of having an open dialogue in solving issues and disagreements.

Their ideal romantic relationship involves regular conversations full of depth where both partners can delve into each other's minds and expand their horizons. This can help INFJs' relationships reach a profound level of openness and sincerity of which many people can only dream.

The Power of Love

People with this personality type create a depth to their relationship that can hardly be described in conventional terms. Because of their sensitivity and insight, INFJs can make their partner feel heard and understood in beautiful ways. These personalities aren't afraid to express their love, and they feel it with all their heart.

One of the things that INFJs find most important is establishing genuine, deep connections with the people they care about.

INFJs tend to recognize that love isn't a passive emotion but rather an opportunity to grow and learn, and they expect their partner to share this mindset. As a result, relationships with these personalities are not for the uncommitted or the shallow. INFJs are intensely passionate in ways that transcend the present moment, and what truly fulfills them is the way that a loving, meaningful relationship evolves and deepens over time.

In their heart of hearts, people with the INFJ personality type crave an emotional and even spiritual connection with their partner. They cherish not just the act of being in a relationship but also what it means to become one with another person in mind, body, and soul.

Friendships

The most I can do for my friend is simply be his friend.

Henry David Thoreau

People with the INFJ personality type (Advocates) rarely settle for shallow, superficial friendships. When it comes to social fulfillment, they aren't satisfied by casual interactions with colleagues or classmates. INFJ personalities crave authentic, meaningful friendships – friendships that allow them to share their dreams, bare their soul, and feel understood and accepted for who they are. And if that means having just one or two confidants rather than a wide circle of acquaintances, so be it.

While INFJs may seem quiet or reserved to the world at large, these personalities absolutely light up around their close friends. Few things bring them more pleasure or delight than talking through their passions, interests, and beliefs with a kindred spirit. People with this personality type enjoy the pleasure of their own company, but they still find it liberating to let their guard down and be completely and utterly themselves with a friend who they know they can trust.

Searching for a Heart of Gold

INFJs are known for having great expectations – not just for themselves but also for their friendships. High on this list of expectations is authenticity. If they have to be fake or tone themselves down to gain someone's approval, then that person probably isn't the best friend for them. And it's hard for people with this personality type to respect someone who isn't also an authentic and honest person themselves.

Another expectation that INFJs bring to their friendships is mutual support and growth. Having fun together is wonderful, but for these personalities, it isn't quite enough. They want to surround themselves with friends who inspire them to learn, expand, and improve themselves. For INFJs, the surest way for two friends to deepen their bond is by helping each other move forward on their respective life missions.

In friendship, INFJs aren't just searching for someone to spend time with. They want to find a soulmate – someone who resonates with their passions and their convictions.

This can be a tall order for many personalities. INFJs often feel that it's difficult to meet the sort of friends that they're seeking – friends who share the same idealistic values. As a result, people with this personality type may sometimes worry that they need to settle for less-than-fulfilling friendships – or else accept being alone.

Loyalty and Authenticity

Fortunately, they are more than capable of finding the types of friends that they long to meet – they might just have to devote additional energy to it. And when people with the INFJ personality type do encounter like-minded individuals, the bonds that form are profoundly deep and meaningful, making the search worthwhile.

INFJs should keep in mind that sometimes the friends they seek might be hiding in plain sight, among acquaintances whom they simply don't know all that well. This personality type is known for having astute first impressions of other people, but even they can miss the deeper potentials of the people they encounter on a daily basis. When they give these strangers a chance, INFJ personalities may find that they share values and attitudes that make them compatible on a deeper level.

Once they do find genuine friendships, INFJs make loyal, caring companions. At times they may even be surprised by the fierceness of the loyalty and devotion that they feel toward their friends.

Ultimately, the only way to be counted among INFJs' true friends is to be authentic, honest, and real. Over the years, these personalities may end up with just a few true friendships rather than a wide circle of casual acquaintances. But for those lucky few, there is almost no limit to what INFJs would sacrifice for the people they hold near to their hearts.

Parenthood

My instinct is to protect my children from pain. But adversity is often the thing that gives us character and backbone.

Nicole Kidman

As parents, people with the INFJ personality type (Advocates) have a clear vision for what matters to them: raising their children to be independent and all-around good people. INFJs take their responsibilities seriously, and if these personalities become parents, they think deeply about how they can shape their children's lives and experiences in positive ways.

Parenthood isn't easy, but few expect it to be. INFJ personalities know that many of life's most worthwhile pursuits are also the most challenging – a mindset that helps them keep sight of joy and fulfillment amid the daily struggles of raising children. In many ways, parenting allows people with the INFJ personality type to make wonderful use of their strengths, including creativity, compassion, and the incredible devotion that they feel toward those they love.

Idealistically inclined, INFJ parents have a deep desire to instill a sense of humanitarian values in their children. They yearn to raise emotionally intelligent, compassionate individuals who can contribute to the greater good.

Be Unique, Just Like Me

Caring and loyal, INFJ parents are willing to do pretty much whatever it takes to better their children's lives. But it would be a mistake to think that parents with this personality type are pushovers. In fact, INFJs can be quite strict, because their commitment to building their children's character in the long term is rarely outweighed by momentary considerations.

While they bring many gifts to raising children, it's important to note that no parent is perfect. At times, people with the INFJ personality type may hold their children to unrealistic standards that don't take into account each child's personality or stage of development. For example, an INFJ parent might expect their child to model the same integrity and honesty that they expect from themselves, becoming dismayed whenever their child behaves in a way that they perceive to be ungenerous or unethical. Or INFJs might push their children to be independent, creative, and unique, seeing it as a concerning trend if their child craves external guidance or wants to stick to the status quo.

INFJ parents may unconsciously project a great deal of their own beliefs and values onto their children.

To a child, all of these expectations can feel contradictory and impossible to fulfill. And depending on the child's personality and their developmental stage, these expectations might quite literally be impossible for their kids to achieve. In adolescence, children might rebel by flouting these standards or by espousing beliefs that go against their parents' values. In this situation, INFJs may feel that their children are criticizing or rejecting them – a hurtful thing to such a sensitive personality type.

That being said, it's also important to remember that INFJ personalities are well-known for their capabilities of empathy and understanding. So, while initial misconceptions might bring about challenges, they have an inherent ability to reassess, adapt, and evolve their approach.

A Job Well Done

INFJs strive to make sure that their children grow up with a firm understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Parents with this personality type encourage their children to fight for a cause that they believe in and to be the best they can be. Whatever age their children might be, these parents can find a great deal of fulfillment and meaning simply in helping their children learn to be true to themselves.

Ultimately, INFJ parents tend to realize that it isn't a sign of failure if their children turn out differently than they'd expected. Instead, they come to see this as a sign that they've successfully raised someone who has the ability to form their own ideals. And their kids often come to appreciate the combination of independence and integrity with which they were raised – especially as they get older.

Career Paths

It's better to fail while striving for something wonderful, challenging, adventurous, and uncertain than to say, 'I don't want to try because I may not succeed completely.'

Jimmy Carter

For people with the INFJ personality type (Advocates), professional decisions are not guided by conventional yardsticks of success like financial gain or status but by the potential their work holds for meaningful connection and personal fulfillment. These personalities long to find a career that aligns with their values and their dreams – a career that allows them to fulfill their unique mission in this world. To INFJs, a job isn't satisfying if it doesn't offer a deeper sense of purpose – no matter how good the salary is. The good news is that people with this personality type can use their creativity and determination to find work that suits their needs in just about any field.

In fact, INFJs have trouble deciding which job is best for them because they're able to imagine so many possibilities. They may see half a dozen wildly different paths forward, each with its own set of rewards. This can be exciting but also stress inducing, because picking just one means letting go of so many others. They may even feel a sense of loss when so many doors close because they finally committed to one path. But they needn't worry, as one can have many different paths, purposes, and jobs in this lifetime.

The Search for Purpose

For these altruistic personalities, jobs that involve helping and connecting with people can be deeply satisfying. It's no surprise, then, that many INFJs gravitate toward work as counselors, therapists, psychologists, social workers, teachers, yoga instructors, and spiritual leaders. They may also enjoy service industry positions that allow them to interact directly and build genuine relationships with their customers. Careers in health care can also be rewarding options for INFJs, including occupations such as nursing, physical or occupational therapy, medicine, nutrition, or more holistic paths such as acupuncture.

Deep and introspective, INFJ personalities are drawn to professions where they can evaluate problems on a human level, employing their empathetic nature to provide comfort, understanding, and solutions for those facing hardships or conflicts.

INFJs are often passionate communicators, though sometimes in subtle ways. This explains why they are often drawn to careers in writing, creating many popular books, blogs, stories, video games, and screenplays. For people with this personality type, the opportunity to tell stories for a living can be nothing short of a dream come true. Other INFJs might pursue music, photography, design, illustration, or fine art. Even if these artistic pursuits aren't their primary job, many find that creative side hustles offer a much-needed outlet for the themes and ideas that occupy their imaginations.

Nonprofit workplaces, from museums to nature centers to food pantries, also hold a special appeal for INFJs. With their focus on serving the community rather than drawing a profit, these organizations can be a natural fit for these personalities. But even in workplaces that are very much for-profit, INFJs can find ways to direct their energy and creativity toward helping others. No matter what it says on their business cards, their insight can enable these personalities to spot unusual patterns and come up with outside-the-box solutions, creating real change in others' lives.

A Sense of Mission

INFJs are incredibly versatile, but some work environments may rub them the wrong way. This is especially true of workplaces that offer little independence or agency, forcing employees to adhere to rigid, repetitive protocols without regard for their individual needs or strengths. People with this personality type may also chafe at the criticism and pressure that come with cutthroat, competitive work environments.

For this reason, many INFJ personalities seek out more flexible, autonomous positions – or branch off altogether to start their own businesses. They may also find it gratifying to create bridges between seemingly disparate professional fields – for example, by writing about psychology or by being an environmental lawyer. Such hybrid careers can offer plenty of opportunities for INFJs to exercise their creativity and their love of learning.

INFJs tend to feel stifled unless their work allows them the freedom to act according to their conscience, their creativity, and their own common sense.

In truth, people with this personality type can do well in any field. To be truly happy, however, INFJs often need to find work that aligns with their values and allows them some independence. They crave opportunities to learn and grow alongside the people they are helping. When this happens, INFJ personalities may finally feel that they are fulfilling their life's mission and contributing to the well-being of humanity on a personal level.

Workplace Habits

People with the INFJ personality type (Advocates) have some specific needs when it comes to a satisfying work environment – the most rewarding work allows them to help others while also growing as a person. And it's a given that an ideal career for an INFJ personality must be in line with their individual values.

Anything that gets in the way of these values – from red tape and meaningless rules to office politics and unscrupulous coworkers – can seriously sap INFJs' motivation. This is a personality type that thrives in environments that promote fairness and equality. Most INFJs prefer not to think of themselves as above or below anyone else – no matter where they are on the job ladder.

INFJ Subordinates

INFJs value cooperation, sensitivity, and independence. As employees, they gravitate toward managers who are open-minded and willing to consider their input. These personalities may become frustrated when they feel unheard, so having a manager who listens to them can make all the difference.

Because INFJs tend to act on their convictions and aim to do their best, their morale can be vulnerable to criticism, particularly if it's unwarranted. Other morale killers for these personalities may include strict rules, formal structures, and routine tasks. They may find it especially dispiriting when they're asked to redo their work, particularly if it's for a reason that just doesn't seem valid to them.

Ideally, an INFJ will find a manager whose values align with their own and who offers them encouragement and praise.

Of course, a perfect work environment isn't always possible. INFJ employees with less-than-ideal managers may need to draw on their inner resilience and seek out other mentors. The good news is that people with this personality type are more than capable of handling workplace challenges, including the challenge of having a difficult manager.

INFJ Colleagues

INFJs are diligent and meticulous workers who believe in doing the right thing, always keeping integrity at the forefront. They carry a sense of personal accountability for the tasks entrusted to them, enabling them to consistently deliver high-quality work. This conscientiousness tends to earn these personalities the trust and respect of their coworkers, paving the way for effective collaborations and shared successes.

As colleagues, INFJs can be quite popular and well respected. People with this personality type are often seen as helpful, eloquent, and capable coworkers. Among their greatest strengths is their ability to identify others' motives and understand the root causes of conflict before anyone else even senses a disturbance.

At times, efficiency may be less of a priority for INFJs than collaborating with and helping colleagues who need a boost. While this is usually a strength, there is a risk that others will take advantage of INFJs' desire to help. They may find themselves picking up the slack for their less dedicated coworkers at the expense of their own energy and well-being.

INFJs' determination to be helpful can leave them feeling taken advantage of.

Although they tend to be well-liked among their colleagues, INFJ personalities are still Introverts. From time to time, they may need to step back and work alone, pursuing their own goals in their own ways. This isn't a sign of resentment or ill will – but rather a signal of INFJs' need to balance serving others with their own self-care.

INFJ Managers

As managers, INFJs may dislike wielding their power. They prefer to think of everyone as equals, no matter what a person's business card might say. Rather than micromanage their subordinates, INFJ personalities often prefer to empower them to think and act independently. They work hard to encourage others and promote an atmosphere of mutual respect, and they tend to lead by example, consistently displaying a high level of integrity and dedication.

Compassionate and fair, INFJ managers often take pride in identifying their subordinates' unique strengths.

That's not to say that INFJs have low standards – far from it. Their sense of equality means that they expect their subordinates to live up to the standards that they set for themselves. Bosses with this personality type want their employees to be rigorous, motivated, reliable, and unflinchingly honest, and they will notice if anyone misses the mark.

INFJ managers can be particularly stern if they catch someone behaving in a way that they consider unethical. These personalities have little tolerance for lapses in reliability or morality. When their employees' good intentions match their own, however, INFJ bosses work tirelessly to ensure that their entire team feels valued, fulfilled, and successful.

Conclusion

In the end, it's your actions, how you respond to circumstance, that reveals your character.

Cate Blanchett

INFJs' gifts include idealism, determination, and the ability to envision a better future – but they don't just want to hear what makes them great. INFJ personalities are committed to actually using these gifts to become better people and serve a greater purpose in this world.