Personality Assessment

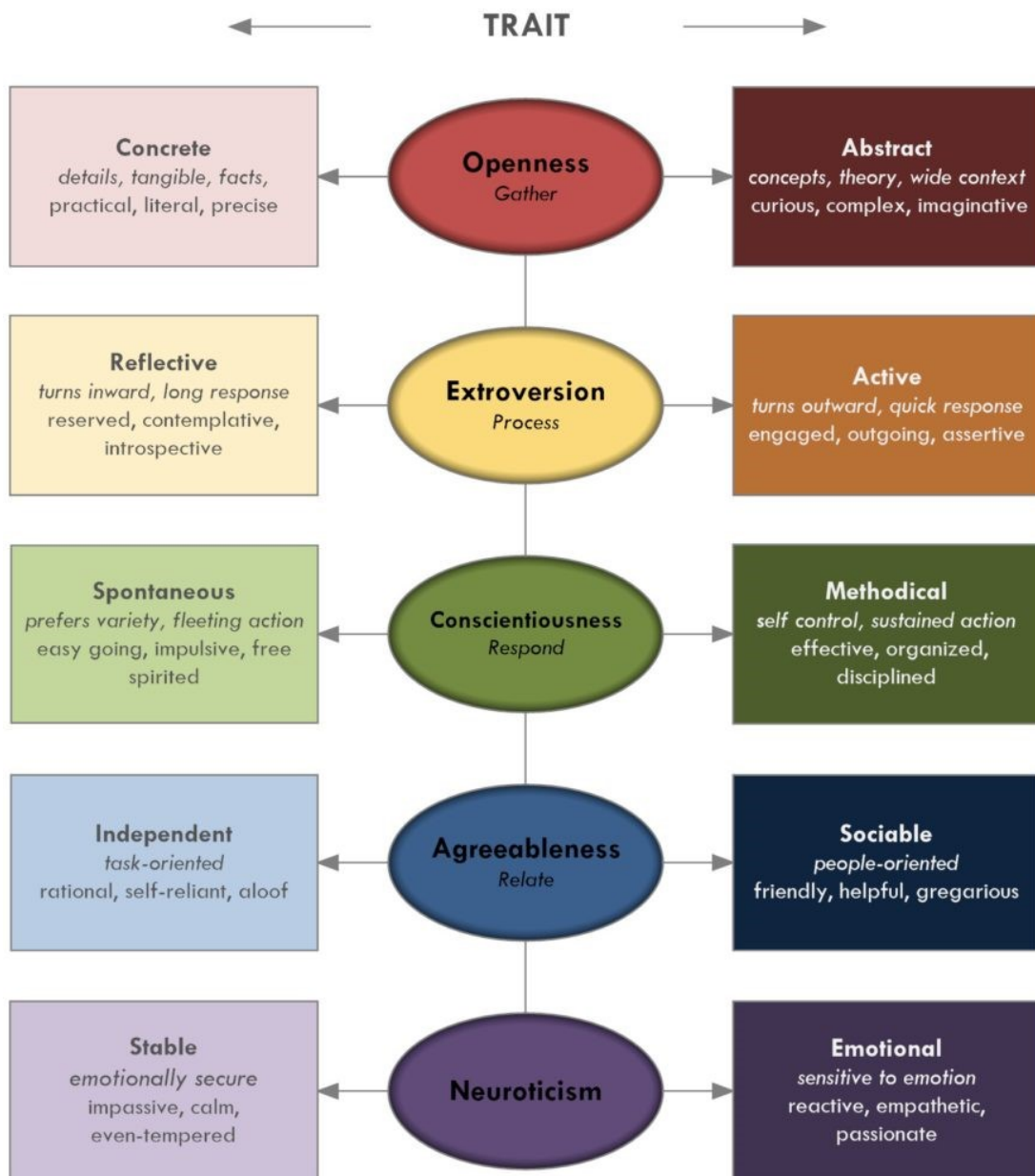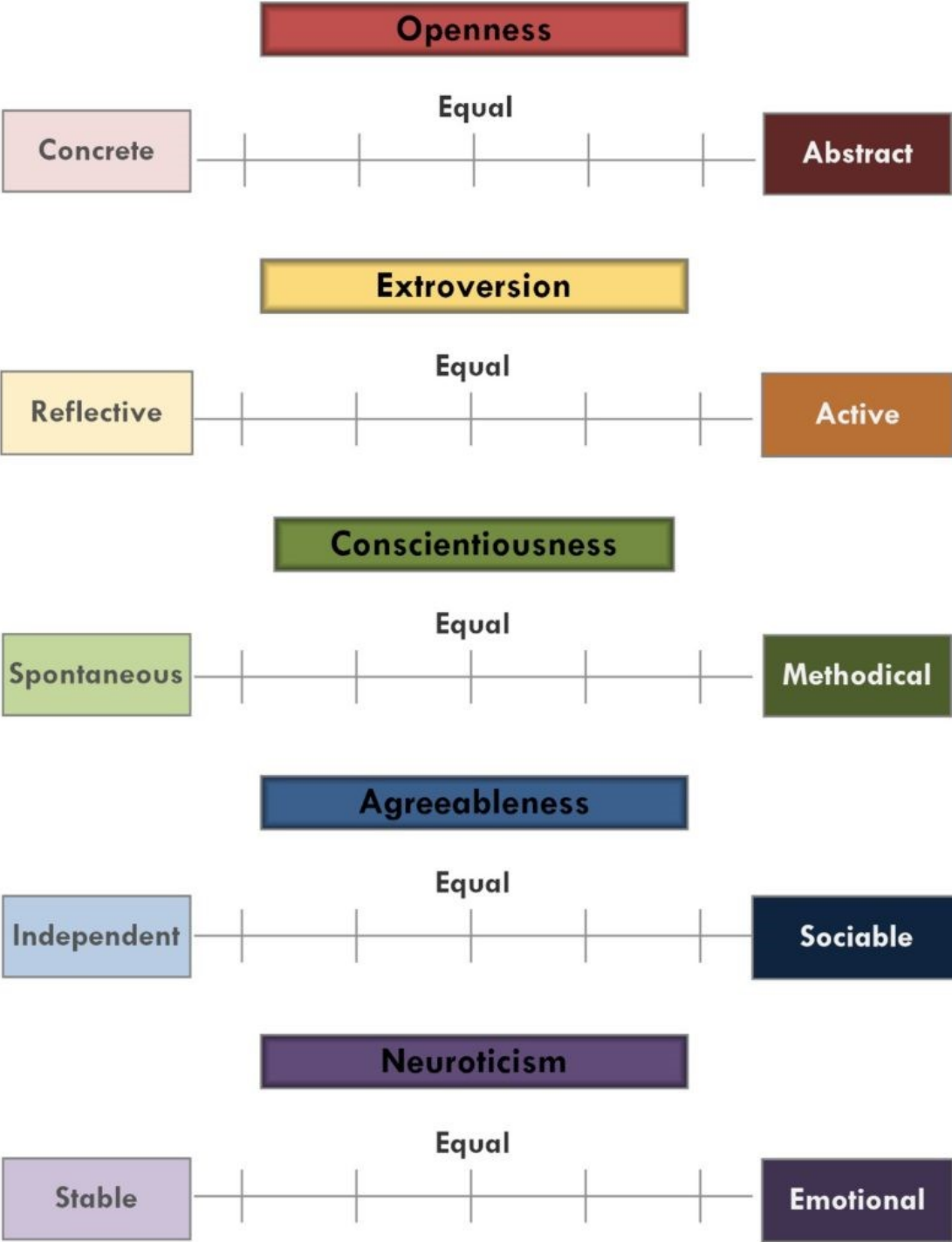## By Liz Braithwaite

Personality

Personalities can be quantified with traits or types. Traits are the different characteristics that make up a personality. Types are grouping similar people together.

Traits

There are five commonly described personality traits: openness, extroversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and neuroticism. In the chart below I've illustrated two opposing expressions of each trait.

TRAIT

⟵   ⟶

Openness
Gather

Concrete
details, tangible, facts, practical, literal, precise

Abstract
concepts, theory, wide context curious, complex, imaginative

Extroversion
Process

Reflective
turns inward, long response reserved, contemplative, introspective

Active
turns outward, quick response engaged, outgoing, assertive

Conscientiousness
Respond

Spontaneous
prefers variety, fleeting action easy going, impulsive, free spirited

Methodical
self control, sustained action effective, organized, disciplined

Agreeableness
Relate

Independent
task-oriented rational, self-reliant, aloof

Sociable
people-oriented friendly, helpful, gregarious

Neuroticism

Stable
emotionally secure impassive, calm, even-tempered

Emotional
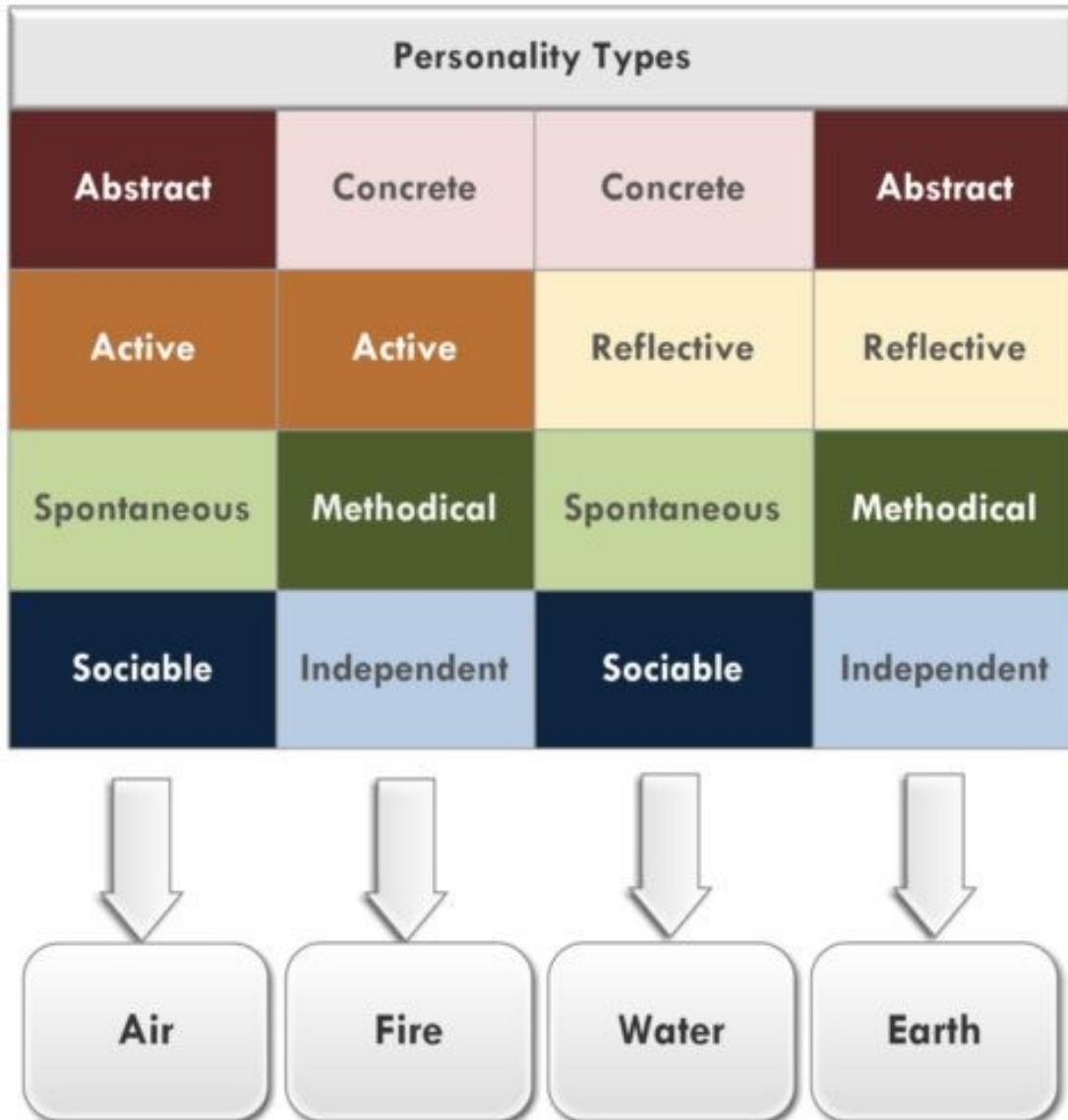sensitive to emotion reactive, empathetic, passionate

We tend to lean towards a certain expression of the trait, although we can also vary between the two approaches and have a more balanced approach. Some traits we express very strongly; others are more flexible. With the following chart, you can rank yourself on your expression of each trait.

Openness

Equal

Concrete ————————————— Abstract

Extroversion

Equal

Reflective ————————————— Active

Conscientiousness

Equal

Spontaneous ————————————— Methodical

Agreeableness

Equal

Independent ————————————— Sociable

Neuroticism

Equal

Stable ————————————— Emotional

Typing

Typing often tends to read like fortune telling: vague and not actually that helpful. But typing systems can still be fun. The majority of typing systems group people into four groups. Colors and numbers are commonly used; I've used the four classic elements which are also commonly used.

Personality Types			
Abstract	Concrete	Concrete	Abstract
Active	Active	Reflective	Reflective
Spontaneous	Methodical	Spontaneous	Methodical
Sociable	Independent	Sociable	Independent
↓	↓	↓	↓
Air	Fire	Water	Earth

After ranking traits, circle dominant traits on the table. Three on more in a column would indicate that type. Depending on your trait expression, you might find you don't fit a type or you fit more than one type. We are all unique: grouping into four types is not exact! Use your strongest traits to help narrow it down or enjoy your unique personality as it is! Most people don't fit a type exactly and frequently have a strong secondary type as well.

Final Note

Studying personality can be fun and interesting. It can be helpful by enhancing our understanding of ourselves and enabling us to live true to who we are. But ultimately, we decide who we are. No classification and ranking system can ever truly define us. It is the unique choices we make every day that define who we are.

Notes

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