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Personality Assessment Tools

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Myers-Briggs Type Indicator & NEO-PI-R

In our daily lives, we encounter people with different personality traits. You may describe your friend as outgoing and sociable, while you may say to another friend that he is a bit indifferent and shy to others. In order for us to get an accurate description of a person's personality, he or she should undergo standardized personality assessment tools that are usually administered by certified psychologists. Two of the globally recognized personality assessment tools are the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and the NEO-PI-R. Let's discuss these two one after the other.

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Myers- Briggs Type Indicator®

A self-report questionnaire, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® or MBTI® is an assessment tool that aids in determining a person's personality type. This tool is said to be the most popular inventory utilized by psychologists. Most people are misled by saying that MBTI measures an individual's intelligence or skill. In reality, MBTI is all about the person's preferences, meaning there are no right or wrong answers in taking this assessment.

The questions in the MBTI are categorized into four areas. First, it assesses where you prefer to give most of your attention and where you get the energy to do activities. This answers the

question, “Are you introverted or extraverted?” Second, it asks how you prefer to acquire information. This would determine whether you are more on sensing (taking things that are tangible and real), or on intuition (looking at the relationships between things and creating patterns between them). Third, it assesses how you perform decision making. Do you prefer “thinking” (looking at the pros and cons) or “feeling” (basing decisions on personal values)? Lastly, it asks how you deal with the ‘outside’ world. It questions you on your preferences in terms of “judging” (living in a planned and systematic manner) or “perceiving” (exercising flexibility and spontaneity in most situations). When combined, these four areas verify your personality type.

The NEO-PI-R

The NEO PI-R provides a comprehensive and detailed assessment of adult personality based on the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality. The FFM is taxonomy of personality traits in terms of five broad dimensions (the “BIG FIVE”): Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness.

Based on the Five-Factor Model of personality, the NEO PI-R is a comprehensive assessment tool that is usually administered to adults. NEO PI-R takes about 35 to 45 minutes. The results reveal a detailed assessment of the different personality styles of a person- his emotional interpersonal, attitudinal, experiential, and motivational styles.

Every domain of the NEO Pi-R is signified by six particular scales that determine the traits or facets of the domain. For instance, the Neuroticism domain has six scales: N1: Anxiety, N2: Angry, Hostility, N3: Depression, N4: Self-conscientiousness, N5: Impulsiveness, N6: Vulnerability.

The NEO PI-R involves two parallel versions containing 240 items plus 3 validity items. One version is answered as a self-report, while the other is to be filled out by a friend, the spouse or an expert.

This assessment tool is helpful not only to people with normal mental status but also to those patients with Axis II personality disorders.

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