

Your Personality Lifestyle

Living Healthy Through Type

Includes
Revealing
Personality
Quiz

Based on the world-renowned
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®

Part 1

What's Your Type?

Part 2

***Eat According to
Your Type***

Part 3

***Exercise & Stress
Relief for Your Type***



Roberta Schwartz Wennik, M.S., R.D.N.

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Praise for *Your Personality Lifestyle*

Wennik has a winner!,

This is a breakthrough book on dieting and exercise. There are hundreds out there, but this trilogy has a new and unique take - using your personality type to diagnose the best way to lose pounds and get off the couch. For those who don't know about personality type, Wennik provides an overview and diagnostic tool to determine which of sixteen types you might be. She then proceeds to give great advice about dieting and exercise tailored for each type - what should work and what might trip you up - how your type can help and hinder your plans. The advice was spot on for my type and I'm sure will be for the others as well. For those who "yo-yo," waste money on gym memberships they never use and generally feel like a failure Wennik says: "You have not failed. The approach you have taken failed you!"

The layout is logical and useful. (I'm an INTJ - when you read through the type descriptions, you'll understand why I use those words rather than "The content is inspiring," even though both are true.) You can skip the advice for other types and hone in on your own prescriptions. But I recommend you spend some time learning about the other types, it really gives you insight into your friends and family. I use the Myers-Briggs diagnostic frequently in my job to help executives understand their decision making processes and communication styles. I loved seeing this new application.

F. L. J. - New York

A Fantastic Book!

Steve Martin said, "I'd do anything to look like him, except exercise and eat right." (A quote from the book.)

Over the years, I've read a lot of books about weight, eating and exercise. But I never come across one like this! Who expects to learn about your personality type in a fitness book? But what a help it is! How a person handles life, what motivates her, what keeps him going--it's all influenced by our personality type. I learned a lot about myself and how I'm put together.

Think about another quote from the book: "One of the major benefits to personality typing is becoming aware of who you are, what makes you tick, what you need to make your life run smoothly....The more you understand your actions, the easier it is to change those actions that aren't working for you." Of course, the type of change we're focusing on is weight loss--and the general health of our bodies. Setting goals and keeping motivated are areas the author handles well. Not all types should try to use the same methods.

I learned why people lose weight on high-protein diets--as well as on high-carbohydrate diets. But I found out better ways than both of these. I learned how to eat out safely, what to order and what not to order. I learned what types of exercise my personality type most enjoys and will stick with. I learned why coping with stress is crucial to keeping off the weight. We want to feed our bodies, not our emotions. Most of what I read had to do with the nuts-and-bolts of food and exercise. How to be motivated and committed to make the choices I need for growth and real change--so that the weight lost becomes permanent and healthy.

This is no lightweight, fluffed-up set of books. It took me a long time to get through--because there was so much I had to highlight and underline. None of it was dry, none of it useless. They were packed with solid, tasty nutrients.

Rod Harrington. - Canada

Looking at weight loss through a different lens

As a National Certified Counselor and someone who has tried almost every diet from Cabbage Soup to the Zone, I was doubly intrigued by the title of Roberta Wennik's book, *Your Personality Lifestyle*. I was already familiar with the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator but had never thought to apply it to weight loss.

Wennik divides her book into three parts. In Part One, she includes questionnaires so that readers can identify which of the 16 personality types they are. She then gives an excellent description of each of the types. For each, she outlines assets, attributes, challenges and stressors.

For example, Wennik says my strength as an INFJ is the ability to plan ahead. Where I fall down is minding the details. That sounds about right. She suggests that someone with my type should not count calories but instead follow basic guidelines that allow for some flexibility and variety. Preparing a list of rewards other than food for meeting intermediate goals will help keep me on track. Wennik concludes with an impressive list of resources in print and on the web.

In Part Two, Wennik outlines four different diet plans and advises which plan works best for which type. Four of the plans are familiar. Using The Portion Control Plan means learning what actually is a normal portion, not the "supersize" to which we have become accustomed. Even simpler, Wennik says just eat half of what you would normally eat or be served at a restaurant. The Instead Plan entails choosing better alternatives than what you have been eating. For example, choose toast with jelly instead of toast with butter or whole wheat instead of refined pasta. Eating only when you're hungry Wennik calls The Intuitive Eating Plan. If only it were this easy to avoid eating when bored, tired, angry, etc., etc., etc. Either the balanced approach of the MyPlate or a higher protein option can be used on The Choice Plan. Drawing the Line on Calories, Carbs, and Fat is Wennik's elaborate, patented monitoring system that graphs calories, carbs, and fat eaten.

Part Three is titled Exercise and Stress Relief for Your Type. Wennik does address these aspects but also includes a few cognitive therapy techniques, a Jungian look at the various types' shadow sides, and quite a bit of information on nutrition.

This trilogy is well-researched and very thorough. Most of the information will not come as a surprise to anyone who has ever read a diet book. Looking at it through the lens of personality types, however, is new and may just be enough of a twist to lead to success in losing weight.

Francis T - Florida

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Part 1
What's Your Type?

Introduction

While researchers are busily studying possible causes of obesity—from genetic connections to environmental factors—have you ever thought that it could just be your personality type at the root of the problem? There are too many people today who are overweight or obese to attribute it to just one reason. Yet, with 16 possible personality types (according to the mother-daughter team of Isabel Myers and Katherine Briggs, developers of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®—also known as the MBTI® instrument), maybe who we are has more to do with our gaining or losing weight than the causes researchers are studying.

This book may be just the answer for those of you who:

Didn't lose weight on that last diet you tried

Did lose weight but gained it back

Weren't able to stick to the exercise program you started

Never could get yourself started on an exercise program

Let stressful situations in your life get to you and no matter how much you tried to relax, just couldn't

Have habits you want to change but haven't found the right method to change.

I'm sure you could add to the list. I want to say up front—*You* have not failed. The approach you've taken failed you!

Let me repeat that, "You have not failed. The approach you've taken failed you!" Keep that in mind as we search for what is the right way for you.

When you see people changing their habits successfully, you probably assume they are stronger than you, having a willpower and determination you lack. They seem to exude confidence. What they've got that you don't is the *right approach*, one that fits them like comfortable shoes. You too can have that confidence if you read on.

Many people may embark on a journey of losing weight and improving their lifestyle habits. However, not all of them can boast of arriving at their destination. As people get older and "wider," they longingly remember how good they used to look and how well their clothes used to fit. They jokingly allude to some unknown phenomenon in their closet that is shrinking their clothes. They know all too well, when huffing and puffing up a flight of stairs, how out-of-shape they have become. When their friends nickname them "Spud" because of the couch potato they have become, they think about dusting off their athletic club membership card they haven't used since they joined the year before.

Maybe you're saying to yourself, "You wouldn't believe how many times I have tried to lose weight and change my habits. If there was a new diet on the market, I was on it. If there was a new miracle food, I ate it. If there was a new piece of exercise equipment, I bought it. While I experienced some success with everything I tried, before I knew it, I was back to where I started." Then there are some people who cannot even claim any level of success. "Put a donut in front of me and I'm a goner (and so is the donut!)." "I would get the latest book on how to relax, but then get stressed out for never getting around to reading it!" Sound familiar?

As a dietitian and nutrition consultant, I hear similar scenarios from many of my clients. They fervently want to change their habits so they can lose weight and improve their health. They know their bad habits are leading them down a road of destruction. When they look at themselves in the mirror every day, they assess their character in terms of their weight and berate themselves for "letting themselves go" like that. Of course, not looking good in their clothes is minor in comparison to what carrying around excess weight can do to their health. If they don't already have high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or blood sugars that are out of control, being overweight can lead to these conditions—and then on to the development of diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, stroke, and a host of other problems, including cancer. Yes, even cancer can come from being overweight, something most people aren't familiar with.

Something's Wrong Here

When I started out in my practice, I used to take a different approach when counseling my clients than I do now. My clients and I would discuss their goals and what they wanted to achieve, and after taking a medical and diet history, I would develop an eating and exercise plan for them. They would also get a weekly assignment to help them incorporate the new knowledge they were receiving. At the end of two to three months, my clients were normally well on their way to achieving their goals. They would continue with me for some months after they had reached their goal to make sure they could maintain what they had accomplished. After that, it was time for them to go it on their own.

When some of my clients were back on my doorstep nine months to a year later, I found it puzzling and disconcerting. They shared with me how good they had been at first, practicing everything they had learned. But slowly they found themselves falling back into their old habits. I felt badly for them and wondered what had gone wrong. Why were *these* people having problems when my other clients were maintaining their weight loss with their new lifestyle habits?

I questioned what had gone wrong. Did the *approach* I had taken with my clients fail them in some way? Or did these people fail themselves? While under my care, they fully participated in the process and achieved their goals. One would assume, then, that the approach taken was beneficial. But something was happening when they were on their own. What was it?

When we look at the track record of the weight-loss industry as a whole, the rate of relapse is staggering. The easy excuse is to blame the individuals, and conclude that they are simply weak-willed. However, you have to ask yourself why anyone would go through all the effort and struggles to achieve a health goal (such as losing weight or lowering blood cholesterol), and then, once the goal is reached, let it slip away. I realized that something deeper must be causing the problem.

When my returning clients and I tried to analyze what had gone wrong, one common theme appeared: It seemed they had looked at the goals they set as *end points*. Once the goal was achieved, they felt they could give up the method they had used to get there. This often felt like a great relief because, in order to reach their goals, they had relied on sheer willpower—with all its connotations of self-denial and strict self-control. Not wanting to let me down or embarrass themselves, they did what it took to reach their goal and get that proverbial gold star—and then collapsed!

Willpower takes a diligence most of us cannot maintain. It's a short-term Band-Aid® that can eventually backfire, sending people retreating to their old habits with a vengeance. If *you* have tried using willpower, you know the feeling of sacrificing, of giving something up, but missing it all the more. Finally, under the strain of being on your guard every moment and worrying you will return to your old ways, you inevitably do. Using willpower often results in your sabotaging all your good work.

Reminding myself that not all of my clients were reverting to their old ways, I had to ask: “What was working for some of them—enabling them to maintain their new approach to eating, exercise and stress reduction—that was *not* working for the others?”

An Interesting Discovery

As luck would have it, about the same time some of my clients were returning to me, I was introduced to *psychological type*. It was developed by the Swiss psychologist, Carl Jung, and later elaborated by two housewives, Isabel Myers and her mother, Katharine Briggs, who had been studying Jung's theories for some time. What interested them was how we use our mind, our values, and our feelings in the everyday business of living. With so much information available for the taking and so many decisions to make every day, something within us must be guiding us in the process. They saw this guiding force to be our personality, with its many facets coloring our lives and influencing our behaviors. In order to find out what those facets were, Myers and Briggs developed a questionnaire, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®). Using it, they were able to group people into sixteen different types according to their characteristics and values.

Psychological type, also referred to as personality type, has been used for a long time to help people discover appropriate career paths and improve their communication and relationship skills. To my knowledge, it has never been used to help people change their lifestyle habits and, in turn, to lose weight, lower blood cholesterol, stabilize their blood sugars, reduce their risk of disease, increase their energy and generally, feel their best. With that in mind, I started to explore, from the perspective of psychological type, the reason some clients were returning.

It dawned on me that the health and weight-loss program I gave all of my clients worked for the successful ones simply because it *matched their personality*. They were able to comfortably make changes that were compatible with their personality and then maintain those changes. Those who had experienced relapse had failed because the program was not a good fit with their personalities.

In the course of helping an individual with their health goals, healthcare professionals tend to tailor the program to that person's physical needs by adjusting calorie levels, teaching about appropriate food choices, and proposing some sort of exercise regimen that fits the

individual's capability. However, the basic weekly approach or plan used to make the necessary changes is usually typically the same for everyone (for example, telling each person to keep a daily food and exercise diary). If your personality favors the approach, the chances are you will achieve your goals. If not, you're back to blaming yourself for being a failure.

Once I made personality typing part of my practice, I realized that "one plan does not fit all." Due to our differing personality types, not everyone feels comfortable keeping food diaries, hanging pictures on the refrigerator of how they want to look when they have lost weight, keeping track of the number of fat grams they are eating, or scheduling an appointment with themselves each day to relax. Some people can't take that much structure, while others can. Some people need greater variety in their choices than others. Some people want to be shown the way, while others need to do it their own way.

What Is The Right Plan?

If you were to do a survey of the people with a healthy lifestyle, you would find that they are not all doing the same thing. They don't eat the same things or exercise the same way. To paraphrase the title of the Frank Sinatra song, "they do it their way." And that way is by using their personality to make the choices that are right for them. Now, you too, can do it *your way* with the help of this book. There is a right approach for you. You will find out what your personality type is and how it has contributed to:

Eating for the wrong reasons

Eating too much and not the right foods

Avoiding exercise and opting for a sedentary lifestyle

Letting stress run your life instead of you're being in control of your life.

The exciting part comes when you learn how to use the different components of your personality type to make a healthy lifestyle a habit. Then losing that extra weight, maintaining the loss, having more energy, and literally feeling like a new person will come naturally.

This is an approach that will last you a lifetime. It isn't a quick fix —it's a permanent fix. That's because you will be discovering ways to eat, exercise and relax that work with *your* personality type, *your* way of life, *your* needs. You were born with your personality type and it will be with you until you die. Therefore, it just makes good sense to make changes to your habits in a way that is compatible with your personality. Then those changes are yours for the rest of your life. You will say about your new lifestyle approach, just as did Cinderella when she tried on the glass slipper, "It fits perfectly." (And don't forget, Cinderella lived happily ever after!)