

INFP

Introverted Feeling with Intuition

People with INFP preferences have a great deal of warmth, but may not show it until they know a person well. They keep their warm side inside, like a fur-lined coat. They are very faithful to duties and obligations related to ideas or people they care about. They take a very personal approach to life, judging everything by their inner ideals and personal values.

They stick to their ideals with passionate conviction. Although their inner loyalties and ideals govern their lives, they find these hard to talk about. Their deepest feelings are seldom expressed; their inner tenderness is masked by a quiet reserve.

In everyday matters they are tolerant, open-minded, understanding, flexible, and adaptable. But if their inner loyalties are threatened, they will not give an inch. Except for their work's sake, INFPs have little wish to impress or dominate. The people they prize the most are those who take the time to understand their values and the goals they are working toward.

Their main interest lies in seeing the possibilities beyond what is present, obvious, or known. They are twice as good when working at a job they believe in, since their feeling puts added energy behind their efforts. They want their work to contribute to something that matters to them-human understanding, happiness, or health. They want to have a purpose beyond their paycheck, no matter how big the check. They are perfectionists whenever they care deeply about something.

INFPs are curious about new ideas and tend to have insight and long-range vision. Many are interested in books and language and are likely to have a gift of expression; with talent they may be excellent writers. They can be ingenious and persuasive on the subject of their enthusiasms, which are quiet but deep-rooted. They are often attracted to counseling, teaching, literature, art, science, or psychology.

The problem for some INFPs is that they may feel such a contrast between their ideals and their actual accomplishments that they burden themselves with a sense of inadequacy. This can happen even when, objectively, they are being as effective as others. It is important for them to use their intuition to find ways to express their ideals; otherwise they will keep dreaming of the impossible and accomplish very little. If they find no channel for expressing their ideals, INFPs may become overly sensitive and vulnerable, with dwindling confidence in life and in themselves.