

The Misunderstood Alternative: Effective Type B Characteristics of Those Proven to Be Protected from Heart Disease*

People with Type B characteristics are often peak performers and hold many top positions. Below are protective traits that need fostering:

No time urgency

- More mindful in giving attention to the central task at hand
- Not easily bored or eager to move on to something else
- Usually keeps on schedule, but without frenzy or rage
- Patient (no habitual haste)
- Contemplative: enjoys beauty and metaphor, tends to see the whole more than the parts
- Able to value and enjoy the things already done, or being now done, as much as those things to be done in the future

Able to relinquish control

- Good at delegation, team players—comfortable with this
- Tolerant of differences—even enjoys them
- Often good at inspiring creative involvement with others—good leaders

An internal locus of high self-value

- Appreciates self for what he or she is as much as what he or she does
- Accepts and values self as is
- Understands that self-identity and worth are far more important than numbers
- Feels valued and of worth regardless of achievement (often derived from parents)
- Often works as hard at something as Type A's, but failure does not collapse self-esteem
- Loves growth, getting better (often through mistakes)
- Competes with self, not with others

No free-floating hostility

- No need to find fault to bolster own ego
- Can accept with equanimity the trivial errors of subordinates (“They practice the art of being wise by knowing what to disregard.”)
- Enjoys empowering and lifting others
- Uncommonly feels tense or induces tension in others
- Their self-confidence allows objectivity and ability to see through another's eyes
- Capable of both feeling and expressing affection—enjoys intimate relationships

*See the discussion of the characteristics of noncoronary prone individuals in M. Friedman and D. Ulmer: *Treating Type A Behavior and Your Heart* (New York: Fawcett, 1984), ch. 3.