USING THE FOUR TENDENCIES TO PROMOTE HEALTH BEHAVIOR CHANGE

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DISCOVER YOUR TENDENCY

https://quiz.gretchenrubin.com/four-tendencies-quiz/
THE FOUR TENDENCIES & GRETCHEN RUBIN

Gretchen Rubin

• Undergraduate and law degrees from Yale University
• Clerking for Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor when she realized she wanted to be a writer.
• Writer on habits, happiness, and human nature
• Gretchen Rubin is the creator, speaker, and author of the four tendencies framework.

Best Selling Books / Projects

• Happiness Project
• Better Than Before
• Happier at Home
• Outer Order: Inner Calm
• "Joy Index" - ten "most joyous" places to visit
Upholder, Obligor, Rebel, or Questioner

- Personality Profile
- Explain inner and outer expectations
- Determines our behavior tendency
- Impact on health behaviors
- Use tendency knowledge to promote healthy behaviors
- Effective tendency strategies when working with students or clients.
# EXPECTATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outer Expectations</th>
<th>Inner Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Expectations others place on us</td>
<td>• Expectations we place on ourselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meeting a work deadline</td>
<td>• New Years Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attending a social event</td>
<td>• Personal or professional goal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**UPHOLDER**

“DISCIPLINE IS MY FREEDOM”

- Meets outer expectations
- Meets inner expectations
- What to do what others expect of them as well as what they expect of themselves = equal importance = creative freedom
- Upholder Tightening

- Rarely suffer from burnout or resentment
- Eager to Understand
- Intrigued by Rules
- Self-Starter
- Meet Commitments
- Do what is right
- Delegation Issues
- Inflexible Schedule
- Impatient or Disdainful
- “Your lack of planning is not my emergency”
- Reluctant to hold others accountable

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# DEALING WITH UPHOLDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Health Client</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Complete homework or practice without reminders</td>
<td>• “Easy” clients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hard to change schedules</td>
<td>• Follow instructions but fail to ask enough questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Struggle to turn off upholder tendency</td>
<td>• Not helpful to exaggerate standards for adherence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Help upholder student to articulate inner expectation so inner &amp; outer expectation can be achieved</td>
<td>• Self-preservation so will speak up when expectations are too heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conflict = Upholder / Rebel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OBLIGERS
“I’LL DO ANYTHING YOU ASK, UNTIL I WON’T.”

- Meets outer expectations imposed by others
- Struggle to meet inner expectations they want to impose on themselves
- Respond to external responsibility
- Gain most by learning about their tendency (largest tendency)
- Obliger-Rebellion

What should I do for whom

Don’t experience sense of limitation

Aren’t frustrated by meeting inner expectations

Universal Partner

Struggle to self-motivate

Take times for others but not for themselves

No outer accountability, they will struggle

Outer expectations too heavy = rebellion

Ones people count on
# DEALING WITH OBLIGER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Student</strong></th>
<th><strong>Health Client</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Difficult to tell if child is obliger</td>
<td>• “I will see you here next week”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Respond to accountability / Gentle reminders</td>
<td>• Accountability groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Avoid setting expectations too high</td>
<td>• Match accountability system to obliger (apps, emails, groups, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Avoid working to please others</td>
<td>• Avoid triggering obliger-rebellion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• They will know when they need accountability</td>
<td>• Avoid setting intimating goals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**QUESTIONER**

"JUSTIFICATION LEADS TO MOTIVATION"

- Meets inner expectations
- Outer expectations that are turned into inner expectations
- Logic, information, efficiency, significance
- Want to gain their own facts
- Object anything ill-informed or ineffective
- Hate to wait in line or be questioned
- Analysis Paralysis

- Data-Driven
- Inner Directed
- Analysis-Paralysis
- Unlikely to Accept Closure if Questions aren’t Answered
- May Refuse to Observe Expectations
- Impatient with Complacency
- Resist Answering Others’ Questions
- Fair-Minded
- Effective and Efficient
- Analysis Paralysis
- Inner Directed
- Data-Driven
- Justification from Authority

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**QUESTIONER**

I’ll comply—if you convince me why.

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# DEALING WITH QUESTIONER

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Address their “why” questions</td>
<td>• Once convinced little trouble meeting health expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Probing questions push class discussions</td>
<td>• Strong urge to customize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Challenges authority</td>
<td>• Explain why instructions should be followed precisely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Childhood can be painful time for questioners</td>
<td>• Crackpot – convinced of own nonexpert conclusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher should provide thoughtful justification</td>
<td>• “Just try it, it is an experiment.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REBEL
“‘I DO THINGS ONLY IN MY OWN WAY. BLESSING AND CURSE.’”

- Resist all expectations both inner and outer
- Do what they want to do in their own way and own time.
- They don’t even want to tell themselves what to do.
- Act from sense of choice, freedom, and self-expression
- Aren’t persuaded by arguments
- Thrive at work when it is their aim
- Fewest tendency group

Meet challenges in their own way
Defy Customs
Don’t mind breaking rules
Believes in their own uniqueness
Do better with no expectations
Harder the push the greater the push back
Uncooperative
Resist any attempt at control
Can impose their expectations on others

Opposite of Compliance but rebellion is not freedom

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# DEALING WITH REBEL

## Student
- Can be a challenge
- Pushing a rebel child is counterproductive
- Information, consequences, choice – with no nagging or badgering
- Allow to make decisions without an audience. Audience = expectations
- Respond when an action is framed in terms of a choice, freedom, and self-expression vs. constraint/duty
- Tie an action to identity

## Health Client
- Information or encouragement may push Rebels in opposite direction
- Any action is their choice not just doctor’s orders
- Information, consequences, and choices.
- “I will show you mentality”
- Express their value through their actions
- Tie habit to identity
UPHOLDER LEANING

**Upholder / Questioner**
- Easier to question external expectations
- Question value of inner expectations
- More likely to reject expectations of society
- Conflict more emphasis is placed on inner expectations

**Upholder / Obliger**
- Tip towards responding to outer expectations
- Struggle to set limits
- Upholder/Obliger-rebellion
- Create boundaries to protect inner expectations from outer interference
- Strengthen themselves to meet other’s expectations
OBLIGER LEANING

Obliger – Rebellion

- Can feel exploited
- Other tendencies can be unsympathetic to obligers
- Can feel resentful and unappreciated
- Susceptible to burnout and exploited
- Trouble delegating tasks

- Unrealistically ambitious
- Unfair others aren’t doing their share
- Accompanied by shaming
- Nagging or disapproving
- Deprive getting credit
- Hard to please people
**QUESTIONER LEANING**

**Questioner / Upholder**

- More likely to meet outer expectations
- Rules there for reason to meet expectation
- Activity not for useful purpose, won’t do it.

**Questioner / Rebel**

- Challenge expectations resemble a rebel
- Resist expectations because it’s unjustified and don’t want to be controlled
- Ineffectiveness of expectations should be disregarded
## REBEL LEANING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rebel / Questioner</th>
<th>Rebel / Obliger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Concentrate on resisting own desires more than resisting outer expectations.</td>
<td>• Defiant and pushing back of evading control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More focused on doing what they want vs. defy others</td>
<td>• Resist inner expectations that fuels resentment and resistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Less trouble resisting their own expectations for themselves.</td>
<td>• I don’t do what others want or what I want</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If I have nothing to rebel against, I do fine.</td>
<td>• Others approval or encouragement could create resistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do whatever I choose to do</td>
<td>• Refusal to do what anyone tells me to do</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SCENARIO #1

• PE Teacher or Coach = Upholder
• Student or Athlete = Rebel
• PE Teacher/Coach is having problems motivating Student/Athlete to achieve a fitness or sports related goal.
• How can the PE Teacher or Coach most effectively communicate with the Student or Athlete?
• Describe effective approaches or activities that would positively impact the Upholder/Rebel relationship.
**SCENARIO #2**

- Health Coach or Athletic Trainer = Questioner
- Client = Obliger

- Client has suffered an injury and is working towards rehabbing but has suffered some setbacks due to lack of commitment, pain related to injury, etc.

- How can the Health Coach or AT most effectively communicate with the Client?

- Describe effective approaches or activities that would positively impact the Questioner/Obliger relationship.
SCENARIO #3

- School Principal or Supervisor = Obliger (leaning Rebel)
- PE Teacher or Health Coach = Rebel (leaning Questioner)
- PE Teacher or Health Coach has been working with a student or client for an extended period but has seen no improvement towards health goal. School Principal or Supervisor provides feedback to the PE Teach or Health Coach that has caused some friction in their working relationship.
- How can the School Principal or Supervisor most effectively communicate with the PE Teacher or Health Coach?
- Describe effective approaches or activities that would positively impact the Obliger (leaning Rebel)/Rebel (leaning Questioner) relationship.
Understanding the four tendencies can help us identify how to support and help others.
THANK YOU

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