



TOLERANT ACCEPTANCE

Core Behavioural Characteristics

Amicable and approachable.
Peace-loving and non-confrontational.
Even-paced and methodical.
Even-handed and scrupulously fair.
Optimistic and positive
Creative and adaptable.
A tendency to ignore personal needs.
Stubborn "pig-headedness"

Avoidances

Conflict in any form
Unstable or highly variable environments
Aggressive or over pushy people

Attractions

Peaceful stability
Routine and predictability
A sense of belonging and identity with a group

Veronica is the head of library services in the local municipality and called me to find out if I could perhaps see her because she was concerned about her work performance. Having held the position for the past ten years and had absolutely no apparent difficulty managing a really excellent service that I had often used, I wondered what could possibly be going on.

She explained that she liked the peace and quiet of the library environment and, in her younger years as a junior, even found herself whispering when she was packing out the stacks of returned books with colleagues after the library was closed. "I'm also not good with large groups of people," she confided "and when I have to go to large meetings, I often wake up feeling that the day will be too much for me and feel tempted to call in sick. Naturally, I can't because I am the chairperson of the meeting." She managed a watery grin and slumped back in the easy chair on which she had up until now perched on the edge.

I asked her what was going on and she paused for a minute at least, staring into open space. "I'm not quite certain how to put this." She said quietly. "There are a lot of things going on at the moment and it is all too much for me. My neighbours, a couple I have known for years, are having relationship trouble and I can hear them fighting. I try to turn up my music but don't want to disturb old Mr Jones on the other side of me with the loud music so, I can hear them even though I don't want to. It upsets me so much I have even thought of moving. Then there's the mayor's office. They keep pestering me for usage reports from the libraries. I have all the numbers on the computer but just don't seem to get around to putting it into a report. They never wanted this before so why now? I had to dismiss a youngster for stealing the other day and felt so bad that I had to go home early. On the latest book purchasing meeting, two of my regional heads started shouting at one another and I had to leave the room. I'm just not coping with all of the pressure. Perhaps they need someone who can deal with this all better than I can."

Given her history, the aversion to aggression did make some sense. Veronica came from a broken home and her parents, a colourful couple to say the least, had taken their conflict to the streets and openly fought with no concern for the effect this would have on their children or reputation. She now lives in a quiet area of town in a security block with her, now aged and profoundly deaf, mother and has never married. After her parents split up when she was seventeen, she had lived with her aunt who was alcoholic so she had her fair share of discord.