



# Personal Intelligence: The Power of Personality and How It Shapes Our Lives

*John D. Mayer*

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John D. Mayer, the renowned psychologist who co-developed the groundbreaking theory of emotional intelligence, now draws on decades of cognitive psychology research to introduce another paradigm-shifting idea: that in order to become our best selves, we use an even broader intelligence—which he calls personal intelligence—to understand our own personality and the personalities of the people around us.

In *Personal Intelligence*, Mayer explains that we are naturally curious about the motivations and inner worlds of the people we interact with every day. Some of us are talented at perceiving what makes our friends, family, and coworkers tick. Some of us are less so. Mayer reveals why, and shows how the most gifted "readers" among us have developed "high personal intelligence." Mayer's theory of personal intelligence brings together a diverse set of findings—previously regarded as unrelated—that show how much variety there is in our ability to read other people's faces; to accurately weigh the choices we are presented with in relationships, work, and family life; and to judge whether our personal life goals conflict or go together well. He persuasively argues that our capacity to problem-solve in these varied areas forms a unitary skill.

Illustrating his points with examples drawn from the lives of successful college athletes, police detectives, and musicians, Mayer shows how people who are high in personal intelligence (open to their inner experiences, inquisitive about people, and willing to change themselves) are able to anticipate their own desires and actions, predict the behavior of others, and—using such knowledge—motivate themselves over the long term and make better life decisions. And in outlining the many ways we can benefit from nurturing these skills, Mayer puts forward an essential message about selfhood, sociability, and contentment. *Personal Intelligence* is an indispensable book for anyone who wants to better comprehend how we make sense of our world.

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