

ENTP– Typewatching Profile

One Exciting Challenge After Another

ENTPs are highly inventive types whose enthusiasms lead them into a variety of activities, vocational and avocational. Their inventiveness is attributed to their rich iNtuition (N), which gives them a world of endless possibilities, which, when combined with their objective decision-making facility (I) and directed outwardly (E), converts everything to ideas and schemes.

Like most Extraverted-Perceivers, they are more excited about pursuing a new idea than about following through on an existing one, which can be a cause for frustration and anxiety—both for themselves and for those around them. To the ENTP, all the world is a chessboard whose pieces must be moved in such a way—by the ENTP—that all the players will get the best and the most out of life. Constantly bombarding themselves and others with ideas, ENTPs burst with an excitement that, at best, leads to tackling one exciting challenge after another and, at worst, leads to an endless series of delayed or unfulfilled dreams.

The ENTP is a “big picture” person who finds it challenging to see how many ways there are for fitting the various pieces of the whole together. In fact, it is their ability to see the big picture that enables them to generate so many creative alternatives for just about any system—whether that “system” is a family, a vacation, a record collection, or a major corporation. They know that any system, no matter how successful, can always be made better or more effective. Such perceptions can at times make them seem almost psychic about future developments in a variety of disciplines. Clearly, these qualities make them well suited for a variety of entrepreneurial adventures.

ENTPs are high rollers and risk-takers with their own resources and others’. Like other Extraverted-Perceivers, when they win, they win big, and when they lose, they lose their shirts. As a result, life for an ENTP (and for those around them) can be a roller-coaster event with great highs, thrills, scares, occasional stops—and lots of unexpected jerks and turns.

All thinking-type women swim upstream in society, and this can be especially problematic for ENTP women. When the ENTP’s objectivity presents itself in an enthusiastic, witty, competitive, argumentative woman, she is not likely to endear herself to most men. The ENTP female frequently has to struggle with traditional female “scripts” that call for a given behavior at a given time. It is the nature of all ENTPs to test the limits of any system or person, especially traditional ones.

Most iNtuitive-Thinkers learn by discussing and challenging, and this is especially true for ENTPs. They get pleasure and intellectual stimulation from arguing both sides of a subject, or from doing something unusual or unexpected just to get a reaction. ENTP women can be fun to be around, but their competitive, testing nature can be intimidating and tiring. Interestingly enough, all these same qualities can be seen as positive in ENTP males, although they, too, can become tiring, particularly to those of a different type.

In relationships with an ENTP, one can expect to be challenged—usually by whatever comes along that is new, different, or on the cutting edge. Just coping with an ENTP can be stimulating, a fact attested to by ENTPs themselves (“I find myself very interesting—but tiring”).

Excerpted from *Type Talk* by Otto Kroeger and Janet M. Thuesen

The ENTP sees the parenting relationship as one more opportunity for the growth and development of everyone involved. The ENTP's house may be crowded with the latest books, gadgets, fads, or all of the above. Children will be introduced to all of these things, which are used to challenge them—something far more important than neatness, schedule, and order. The ENTP's parenting model is “Stretch thyself,” and successful parenting involves whatever helps the child to achieve this goal. Most ENTP parents generate more ideas and possibilities per day than their children will ever be able to complete. This in itself can be tiring and, to a child of a different type, very frustrating. It was probably an NT parent, most particularly an ENTP parent, who first said, “A mind is a terrible thing to waste.” Helping the child to realize and expand the self is the ENTP's most basic principle of child-rearing. This quest may be made at the expense of hugs, kisses, and expressions of affection, although for the ENTP the process itself is the ultimate expression of love.

This focus on challenge, extremes, pursuit of ideas, and independent thinking characterizes all aspects of the ENTP's living style. The result can be a variety of kinds of instability. There may be big financial swings, as well as a lot of physical disarray and disorganization. When intellectual sparring and “doing your own thing” take precedence over completing yesterday's tasks—cleaning the house, the office, the yard, or whatever—the result can sometimes be chaos. Generally, the ENTP's home is an open haven to all, especially to those who are interested in whatever current scheme is unfolding and those who, like the ENTP, thrive on the intellectual stimulation of one-upmanship—whether they are one-upping or being one-upped.

Being allowed to dream up and pursue possibilities without any follow-through or accountability is the ultimate form of relaxation for the ENTP. It is also probably the greatest source of ENTP creativity. Giving free reign to the imagination, instead of getting bogged down in the sticky details or dull routines that may be part and parcel of the idea, allows ENTPs' creativity to flourish. They find not only stimulation and growth in the process, but relaxation too. Stress comes from being tied down by too many details.

Like their adult counterparts, ENTP children are often whirlwinds. Lots of friends, laughter, projects, and ideas fill their waking hours. Each new day is a new opportunity to design systems, challenge friends, and scheme. A single request by a parent—“to take out the garbage,” for example—can lead an ENTP child to spend hours if not days designing some sort of invention that will get the garbage from the kitchen to the backyard without human intervention. The design might demand calling friends, experimenting, or any number of other possibilities—all of which will be more exciting than actually completing the chore.

This is exactly the way an ENTP approaches learning. It is a group exchange of ideas, arguments, challenges, and projects. ENTPs would much rather learn by “getting involved” than by being lectured to. In true entrepreneurial spirit, if their involvement results in something that can be used, shared, and marketed (a new garbage-removal system), so much the better. Teaching that encourages such exchanges and opportunities is exciting to an ENTP. That which is routine, redundant, rigid, or overly detailed is boring. Assignments may be completed late (or early) and may be done sloppily. If dull or unchallenging in their original form, the ENTP student may change or reconstruct assignments in the name of “learning.” This typically ENTP behavior may be frustrating to students and teachers of different types and may result in a no-win situation—for the teacher, because he or she loses the ENTP's respect and attention, and for the ENTP student, who may do poorly in school.

Like most other things, family rituals and events are seen as opportunities to exchange ideas. ENTPs never like to miss such opportunities. Though not always given to appropriate behaviors, the ENTP is always an active participant in all such family moments. Sometimes late, sometimes underprepared, they will still be there and will

Excerpted from *Type Talk* by Otto Kroeger and Janet M. Thuesen

more than likely engage whoever is present so that the time spent together will be fun, maybe competitive, and certainly memorable.

Work that allows the ENTP to be challenged and stimulated will be highly attractive. Work that binds an ENTP to standard operating procedures will be ultimately frustrating and, quite possibly, stress-inducing. Computer science, financial investment counseling, college teaching, and other theoretical pursuits are highly attractive to ENTPs.

Later life might bring to ENTPs the opportunity to slow down some and not only “smell the daisies,” but bring to fruition some long-shelved projects and hobbies. Pausing for introspection, appreciating what their senses are telling them, and respecting some of the more tender and emotional moments of life, will all have special appeal at this time.

Famous likely ENTPs include Ralph Kramden of *The Honeymooners* (who regularly came home with some new scheme to make them rich or their lives easier), *The Odd Couple's* Oscar Madison (whose chaotic life-style undermined his obvious talent), and W.C. Durant, founder of General Motors (whose restless inventiveness and entrepreneurial skills turned a single car-company into a conglomerate).

Excerpted from *Type Talk* by Otto Kroeger and Janet M. Thuesen