

## The Meaning of Diversity

Not all methods work for all people. In particular, we want to employ methods that successfully introduce (or re-introduce) people to their bodies, minds, souls and spirits, in such a way that they will start to make the habits of balance and synergy permanent in their lives.

**Diversity:** Diversity means different people deserve different approaches and methods. Consider that human beings experience their world simultaneously on all human levels – physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. Moreover, two people may experience the same event in profoundly different ways. Part of that experience is given by conditioning (their past and likely future), in other words the way they have *learned* to process information. But another part of that experience is given by the senses and temperaments they were born with -- the way they are *genetically predisposed* to process information.

Understanding diversity is a fundamental part of the holistic approach. By being able to understand needs, drives and desires in an individual, one can better predict the likelihood of success, failure or comfort level. Since many people come to the practices of fitness, wellness or health for the first time – or return to them after a long absence – we want to create a powerful and inspiring first experience for them. Like the old saying goes, “First impressions are lasting impressions.”

Let’s look at this principle another way. Many people have asked me over the years, “What’s the *best* workout (or diet, or stress management technique)?” My answer is always the same: “The one you’ll do again tomorrow.” Even the most comprehensive and efficient exercise regimen will not be effective if no one does it. Now imagine if you had access to a system that would aid you in predicting what an individual’s responses were likely to be given a certain set of stimuli. Now you could actually make more powerful choices in the techniques you select, steering yourself towards experiences that are likely to be more comfortable and successful. The goal: to make the lifestyle practices of fitness, wellness and health irresistibly fun and effective.

## The 5-Season BodyMind Typology

The 5-Season BodyMind Typology was developed to describe the most common ways in which human beings express their diversity. The typology was designed through a meta-analysis of dozens of different typologies, including Ayurvedic typing, Chinese 5 Element theory, Meyers-Briggs, and Human Dynamics, just to name a few.

The 5-Season typology tell us that it is possible to predict someone's personality – the way that people process information, make decisions, and become internally motivated – by observing their body, and taking note of certain physical, somatic-based information. In the same way, by observing someone's emotional and intellectual characteristics, it is possible to predict the ways their body will react to stress, foods or physical activity. Discovering a client's "Season" is the first step in the process of creating an appropriate program for them.

Because each person is extremely unique physically as well as emotionally, it is vital that exercise professionals help deconditioned exercisers find the appropriate starting point. As we'll see later on, knowing the bodymind type will make it clear what activity takes the body toward physical balance.

People also feel better about their exercise when they are successful doing it. One of the factors that contribute to this is efficiently using the types of muscle fibers found throughout your body. Apart from the smooth muscles that are a part of your organs, you basically have two types of muscle fibers distributed throughout your body: fast-twitch fibers and slow-twitch fibers. These two fibers act differently. Like their names say, fast-twitch fibers twitch, or contract, very fast. This makes them especially good for doing anaerobic, strength-type movement. Slow-twitch fibers contract more slowly, and are most efficient at aerobic, endurance-type movement.

Of course, I don't mean that people with a predominance of fast-twitch muscle should only do weight lifting exercises. But I do mean that a beginning exerciser may find that

his body feels better, or more natural, in a workout that utilizes the type of muscles fiber of which he has the most.

## The 5 Seasons of the BodyMind

- ❖ Distinct psycho-physiological profiles
- ❖ Genetically-based physical and psychological attributes
  - Morphology
  - Needs
  - Wants/Desires
  - Motivators/Drives
- ❖ Spring – The Lion, The Warrior
- ❖ Summer – The Horse, The Dancer
- ❖ Indian Summer – The Bear, The Nurturer
- ❖ Autumn – The Fox, The Thinker
- ❖ Winter – The Ox, The Strategist

## Spring-The Lion

- ❖ Psycho-physio profile: The Warrior Spirit; typical Fitness Club Member/trainer; large mesomorph, strong musculature; good competitive athletes
- ❖ Intrinsic Motivator: Achievement/Action
- ❖ Inner Destabilizer: Ignores body's warning signs
- ❖ Reaction: Over-training
- ❖ Compatible Workouts: All workouts, particularly conventional, fitness-based exercise. Benefits from goal setting process.

**Spring** types are the quintessential go-getters, and their number one characteristic and intrinsic motivator is their initiative and drive for achievement. Springs are mavericks, pioneers, adventurers and entrepreneurs, but because they are also “take charge” kinds

of people, they can often be found as leaders in business, medicine and politics. Spring types have a strong mental component to their temperament, and like to think that they have logical reasons for everything they do—although their decisions are just as likely to be based on emotion and “gut instinct.” They are competitive and impatient, and others can sometimes interpret this as being pushy or controlling. Spring types, by the way, are typically the least likely to be interested in know about bodymind types.

Spring types love to brainstorm, and sometimes discussion with Spring types can be stormy indeed as thoughts fly back and forth, each questioning and expanding on each others’ thoughts. Often this process results in unexpected revelations and new directions not considered before. On the other hand, Spring types have to be careful not to rush forward “half-cocked.” Spring types benefit from learning how to set and achieve goals. The goal setting process, accompanied by step-by-step plans for achieving those goals, helps to bring the lofty visions of a Spring type down to earth. Goal setting provides a way to measure whether the actions of a Spring match their intentions.

Physically, Spring types tend to be medium boned and mesomorphic, though with a strong musculature. More squarely built than Summer types (who also tend to be mesomorphs), they make great competitive athletes, particularly in sports that require strength. However, Spring types need to be careful, because they can push themselves beyond their limits, ignoring the body’s warning signs of impending injury or over-training. Spring types love conventional workouts, which satisfy their need for stimulation and a sense of achievement. Conventional workouts also produce measurable effects that satisfy Spring’s goal-oriented attitudes. Most of the high-energy people in the Fitness Industry are Spring types. The best intrinsic motivator to get Spring types to become regular exercisers is the subtle sense of competition – even if it is against themselves. Workouts like this are very motivating to the Spring types. At the same time, Spring types tend to lose focus, or to be distracted by the next challenge that comes along.

The heat of competition is what sends Spring types out of balance. A good balancing strategy for Springs, therefore, is the practice of setting goals. Conventional personal trainers – who are themselves typically Spring types – recognize this about themselves, and find great success in their own lives when they use the goal setting process. This is why the Fitness industry has focused on goals so strongly – because it works so well for them!

### Summer-The Horse

- ❖ Psycho-physio profile: The Free Spirit; small-medium meso-morph. Lean dancer's body; will try new, fun things.
- ❖ Intrinsic Motivator: Spontaneity
- ❖ Inner Destabilizer: Giving too much
- ❖ Reaction: Emotional burnout/mood swings
- ❖ Compatible Workouts: Hatha yoga, low-impact aerobics, dance, jazzercise, Nia, circuit-training

The **Summer** type is characterized by their emotional spontaneity. The main organ of the Summer type - when we look at this type from the Chinese medicine point of view - is the heart, the organ of emotional thought Summer types are fiery, charismatic, dramatic; but also they are intensely loving and empathetic people. They often have a strong intuitive ability. They feel emotions strongly, both their own and those of others. They are great communicators, the life of the party, and often approach problem solving through "talking things out" At the same time, some people can view them as "touchy-feely."

Summer types are usually medium-boned and mesomorphic. They can make good athletes, dancers and gymnasts. Their skin, characteristically soft and moist, easily blushes. Summer types characteristically have an aversion to heat and are subject to digestive problems. They can also suffer from insomnia. In hot weather or in times of stress, they can overheat easily, and characteristically have a rapid pulse. Summer types have to watch out for circulatory problems.

Summer types tend to think of problems in terms of the people involved and how they are "feeling." They tend to personalize problems, but at the same time they are well able to handle concrete thinking and complex issues. For this reason, they dislike being patronized or being judged too emotional.

Summer types love to have fun, to do activities that involve other people. These activities don't necessarily have to have a particular goal in mind or end result - it is the *process* that inspires the Summer type more than the goal. In fact, here is a good contrast between Springs and Summers -- Springs get motivated and Summers get inspired. If a Summer type finds an aerobics teacher or a class with people they like, they often do well and become regular participants. But here again, it is because of the people involved, and not the activity itself. Certain workouts, however, seem to have the ability to draw out the strong emotional feelings on which Summer types thrive. Two good examples are NIA and Jazzercise.

At the same time, Summer types are always outgoing, and it is in fact the pouring out their own inner energy which sends Summer types out of balance. Balancing workouts for Summers, therefore, are ones which have an inner-directed or meditative component. Summer types need an opportunity to conserve their own inner energy and find inner peace. Group classes in hatha yoga and T'ai Chi Ch'uan often satisfy the dual needs for connection with people and meditation. Also, solo activities like walking and hiking, which gives Summer the chance to commune with Nature, and hear the echo of their own soul in the poetry of motion in a soulful environment.

## Indian Summer- The Bear

- ❖ Psycho-physio profile: The Nurturing Spirit; systemic thinkers; endomorph, slower metabolism, need to be early risers
- ❖ Intrinsic Motivator: Relationship
- ❖ Inner Destabilizer: Lethargy
- ❖ Reaction: Couch potato
- ❖ Compatible Workouts: Walking, jazzercise, T'ai Chi Ch'uan, swimming, tennis, cycling, circuit training

The **Indian Summer** type is known by their "down-to-earth" nature. Their most distinctive characteristic is how they find their identity in the group, whether it be family, church, occupation or politics. They tend to be larger boned and endomorphic -- real teddy bears -- and may tend toward a slower metabolism. Their skin is characteristically moist and clear, and their eyes large, bright and the whites liquid and clear. Early mornings make the best times for Indian Summer to exercise. In fact, this is a critical time for the Indian Summer type. If they get up and get active upon first awakening, they will do well and feel energetic for the rest of the day. On the other hand, if they lay in bed or fall back asleep, they may have trouble fully waking up, and may feel sluggish for the rest of the day.

The Indian Summer type may seem slow to get moving, but once they get started... watch out! They know exactly where they are going and are not likely to swerve from their path. They are "systemic thinkers," which means they see things from a holistic point of view. They take their time gathering information, and once they see the whole picture, then they act decisively. Indian Summers are patient listeners, and extremely empathetic. They are the "family peacemakers," and often have trouble saying, "no."

## Autumn-The Fox

- ❖ Psycho-physio profile: The Thinker; ectomorphic, faster metabolism; sensitive to cold; logical, appears unemotional; linear movement patterns; "smart" competitors

- ❖ Intrinsic Motivator: Love of Values, “doing the right thing.”
- ❖ Inner Destabilizer: Overworking
- ❖ Reaction: Burnout
- ❖ Compatible Workouts: T'ai Chi Ch'uan, weight training, hatha yoga, Pilates, cycling

The **Autumn** type is characterized by their love of values, and their high degree of personal integrity. They are deep thinkers, whose thoughts may also be quick and sharp (compare them to deep, slow thinkers, like Winter). Think of them as "witty." Autumn types are characteristically logical and linear.

Autumn types tend to internalize their emotions -- or perhaps it is better said that they have the ability to put their emotions to one side. Often others may interpret this as being aloof, or even "unemotional." In fact, Autumn types feel their emotions quite deeply, but they have the ability to keep their emotions in perspective, and not let them overly cloud a central issue.

Physically, Autumn types tend to be smaller boned, with a more compact musculature, and a characteristically upright posture. Their movements -- like their thoughts -- tend to be quicker, more precise and commonly linear. They have an aversion to cold and often times to wind. Autumn types typically have a high tolerance for discomfort, and so they often run the risk of overworking.

The **Autumn** type's most powerful intrinsic motivator is their sense of values, which manifests itself as a strong sense of integrity, and a desire to "do the right thing." Autumns are characteristically very logical, so exercise education often works well as a motivator for them. Becoming fit, well or healthy is the right thing to do, both for themselves and for their family. If they work with a coach or trainer for their initial period of exercise -- the first three weeks, for example - Autumns will likely have established themselves in the exercise habit. They are then more likely to religiously



follow their exercise routine -- almost as if inertia was keeping them from stopping. Now it will take a powerful outside force to get the Autumn to stop working out.

On the other side of this coin, however, is the potential for Autumn types to become obsessive/compulsive about their workouts. They are susceptible to over-training, because they forget that the body needs to rest. When they're on a roll, Autumns have a high tolerance for discomfort, and so may ignore pain or other warning signals. Autumn types need an opportunity to get "out of their heads," find calm, and have fun. Workouts which may balance the Autumn type are activities like T'ai Chi Ch'uan, swimming and ballroom dancing.

### Winter – The Ox

- ❖ Psycho-physio profile: The Strategist; endomorphic, with strong musculature; systemic thinkers, need to be early risers; appears aloof
- ❖ Intrinsic Motivator: Seeing the Big Picture
- ❖ Inner Destabilizer: Decreasing physical activity
- ❖ Reaction: Surprise, anger, self-criticism, denial
- ❖ Compatible Workouts: body-building, ashtanga yoga, martial arts, cardio-kickboxing, tennis, golf, swimming, Chen style T'ai Chi Ch'uan

The **Winter** type is characterized by their ability to see the big picture. They tend to be larger boned endomorphic, often sturdy and muscular, but may tend toward a slower metabolism. Early mornings make the best times for Winters to exercise. Like Indian Summer types, if they get up and get active upon first awakening, they will do well and feel energetic for the rest of the day. On the other hand, if they lay in bed or fall back asleep, they may have trouble fully waking up, and may feel sluggish for the rest of the day.

The Winter type has a great sense of the way things are connected in time. They see not only the present situation as it is, but also what has been its history and what will be its likely future. They are "holistic thinkers," which means they see things from a

synergistic, systems point of view. They take their time gathering information, and once they see the whole picture, then they act decisively.

Winters are patient listeners -- up to a point. They listen to gather information, not necessarily to understand another's emotions the way Indian Summers do. For some people, the Winter's inwardly directed attention may appear aloof, even cynical. In truth, however, the Winter type is more likely processing information, keeping what is relevant, throwing out what is superfluous, and creating strategies for setting and attaining goals.

Both **Winter and Indian Summer** types have similar physical characteristics, and share certain mental traits as well. Both types tend toward a slower metabolism. Especially as they get older, their "inner fires" tend to burn down to the embers. They settle into themselves, like bears getting ready for hibernation. For this reason, Indian Summers and Winters need constant, regular stimulation. Change and challenge is healthy for them. Tennis, fencing, swimming or martial arts are all recommended. If an individual were drawn to

Classical mind/body disciplines, then the more vigorous styles like Chen T'ai Chi or Ashtanga yoga would be more beneficial.

Indian Summers and Winters have different personality types, however, and different intrinsic motivators. Indian Summers have a strong emotional component to their personalities, while Winters typically have a strong mental component. Both are systemic, holistic thinkers, but it is Winter who is more concerned about "the big picture." wants to know, "What will this workout do for me? How will it fit in with everything else I'm doing?" A logical approach, with a good schedule is very persuasive to the Winter type. On the other hand, the Indian Summer is highly motivated by the connection to a group -- a family, company, church or significant other. Indian Summers will be interested in just about any activity, as long as they do it with some other people who are important in their lives.

## 5-Season BodyMind Type Questionnaire

In the following questionnaire, please answer each question by rating it on a scale of 1-5. 1="This must be someone else." 5="That's me to a T!" Total each section, and compare the totals at the end. The course leader will provide the key.

### Section A.

1. \_\_\_\_ I like things to be well defined, neat and tidy, and I do well with discipline.
2. \_\_\_\_ I tend to be on the thinner side, and if I do gain weight, I can lose it easily.
3. \_\_\_\_ I feel loved the most when I'm given constant words of affirmation.
4. \_\_\_\_ I try to live according to reason and logical principles.
5. \_\_\_\_ I admire beauty and refinement, and enjoy logical principles.
6. \_\_\_\_ I like to choose my words carefully.
7. \_\_\_\_ I often get cold hands or feet, and sometimes dry skin or hair.
8. \_\_\_\_ I tend to move quickly, but precisely and meticulously.
9. \_\_\_\_ I may sometimes seem too formal and distant, even self-righteous.
10. \_\_\_\_ Intense emotions sometimes make me withdraw – but that doesn't mean I don't have feelings.

Total: \_\_\_\_

### Section B.

1. \_\_\_\_ I savor excitement and spontaneity and I delight in intimacy.
2. \_\_\_\_ I am keenly intuitive and passionately empathetic.
3. \_\_\_\_ I believe in the power of charisma and desire.
4. \_\_\_\_ I feel the most loved when someone gives me special gifts.
5. \_\_\_\_ I like to be the life of the party.
6. \_\_\_\_ Being emotionally stressed makes me tired, or sometimes cranky.
7. \_\_\_\_ I like to be hot, vibrant and bright.
8. \_\_\_\_ I usually have a good shape and physique, but if I'm not careful I can gain weight in all the wrong places.
9. \_\_\_\_ I have a fairly rapid pulse.
10. \_\_\_\_ When I'm stressed, I look for something to make me feel better: a drink, a smoke, some chocolate – even going to the movies.

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section C.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I love a challenge, and like to push the edges of the envelope.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I do well under pressure.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I admire speed, novelty and skill.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ I'm usually good at sports.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I like being a winner – I strive to be first and best.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ I'm a take-charge kind of person.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ I hate taking “no” for an answer.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel the most loved when I get physical attention from another person.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ I do well when I set specific goals for myself.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ I drink coffee regularly.

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section D.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ There is nothing more comforting than having your family around you.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I don't mind being in charge, as long as I don't have to be in the spotlight.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ am agreeable and accommodating.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ I believe in peace, harmony and togetherness.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I believe people can always find a way to get along – if they try.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Even when I get very sad, I take care not to show it.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel the most loved when someone spends quality time with me.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ If I'm not careful, I tend to be lethargic.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ I am a large-boned person, and can gain weight fairly easily.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ I sometimes form unreasonable expectations, which can lead to disappointment.

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section E.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I'm good at creating the strategies that make things happen.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I tend to be introspective, self-contained and self-sufficient.

3. \_\_\_\_ I have a penetrating and critical mind, and I like to examine things closely.
4. \_\_\_\_ I am a big-boned person, but I was quite active when I was young.
5. \_\_\_\_ I like to be behind the scenes, acting anonymously.
6. \_\_\_\_ I tend to live in my head.
7. \_\_\_\_ I value knowledge and understanding.
8. \_\_\_\_ I feel the most loved when someone does important things for me – “acts of service.”
9. \_\_\_\_ I’m not comfortable when things are unorganized, inefficient or haphazard.
10. \_\_\_\_ I’m the kind of person who says, ‘Look before you leap.’

Total: \_\_\_\_

List the totals: A \_\_\_\_ B \_\_\_\_ C \_\_\_\_ D \_\_\_\_ E \_\_\_\_

Key: A = Autumn B = Summer C = Spring D = Indian Summer E = Winter
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