



Choleric Phlegmatic

Nature

As a Choleric

Within this temperament there are natural tendencies to:

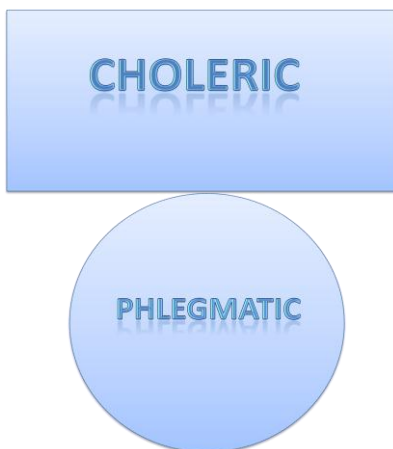
- ✚ drive forward
- ✚ be optimistic
- ✚ be strong
- ✚ be narrow-visioned
- ✚ be confident
- ✚ repress emotions and rise above them

As a Phlegmatic

Within this temperament there are natural tendencies to:

- ✚ be anxious
- ✚ self-protect
- ✚ take line of least resistance

As a Choleric Phlegmatic



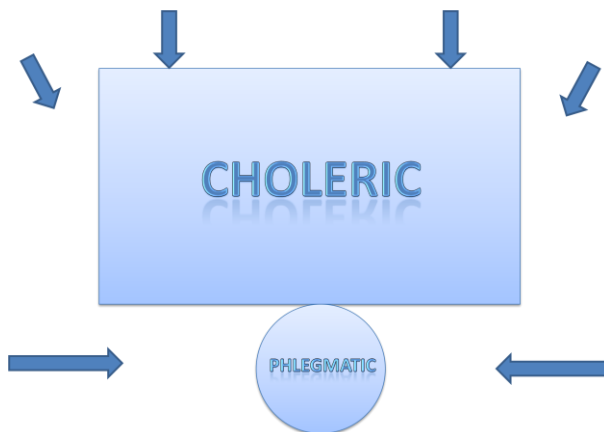
Dealing with emotions is not the Choleric's speciality so he would have little time for the 'fragile' feelings of the Phlegmatic. The two temperaments operate in stark contrast (hence the rectangle and the circle) with the Choleric rising up to meet a challenge and the Phlegmatic retreating into himself.

Nurture

It is all too easy to allow a Choleric Phlegmatic child to live in his extrovert and to pay little or no attention to the Phlegmatic. Unless the significant people in the child's life are living in their introverts, it is very likely that the Phlegmatic will be missed and the wonderful traits of this temperament are never properly cultivated. The child will appear to be coping happily enough but those around him may not be aware of the anxiety within. We ignore our introvert temperament at our peril. Just as in the physical world, 'nature abhors a vacuum' so any emotional vacuum becomes a breeding ground for fear, anxiety and guilt.



WHEN THE PRESSURE IS ON



When the Choleric Phlegmatic feels himself to be under any pressure or threat, two completely opposite things happen at the same time:

- ✚ the Phlegmatic shrinks
- ✚ the choleric expands proportionately.

In other words, the life is 'squeezed out' of the Phlegmatic into the Choleric – rather like the animal-shaped balloons. From then on he will

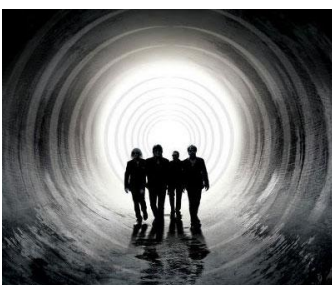
meet life as a Choleric with the Phlegmatic in retreat. This has a number of consequences:

- ✚ the traits of the Choleric are heightened
- ✚ as the Phlegmatic has diminished and 'removed' itself, the emotions it will experience are not processed and they therefore build into a pressure. The Choleric tries to cope with this by driving ever further forward as it pushes the Phlegmatic down. The Choleric characteristics – e.g. active mind, pursuit of goals – are seen even more clearly.
- ✚ this cannot be sustained indefinitely and eventually the unprocessed emotions 'burst out', engulfing the Choleric and leaving the person overwhelmed with fear and anxiety

What to do about it

Read carefully what is written above until you can recognise that the anxiety, fear and guilt are excessive. In other words, they are not necessarily the result of anything you need fear, or have done, but rather are the consequences of a neglected temperament in which the pressure built up over the years and now needs to be resolved. That understanding is important because you need to be able to look those fears in the eye and know that they have no grounding in reality. Their source is the 'emotional vacuum'.

Identify the qualities of your Phlegmatic. To name a few: calm, humorous, efficient, practical, easy-going, dependable, diplomatic, humorous, warm, ability to feel deeply, empathise and lead. When a Phlegmatic chooses to get involved they bring a solidness and strength to a situation – as well as a capacity for fun! Choose to live in, and cultivate, those qualities.



- ✚ Refuse to allow your extrovert to become the place you retreat to as a substitute for Phlegmatic involvement.
- ✚ Don't let your Phlegmatic go into retreat. Send him out to meet and embrace the situation. Tear a hole in that circle and welcome whatever would normally make you retreat. Do this consistently until the old pattern is broken and the new is established.
- ✚ To do this, you will need to talk – consistently – to someone who can help you resolve emotions from your past and present.