

Understanding Your Strengths and Weaknesses*Martin Deacon**Experience: President of Teach Every Nation*

Peter: Last year we made 50 grand. And this year it has to be a hundred. And it will be if everybody does exactly what I told them to do. Or...or I'll get the staff to give donations to make up the difference. Check list. Let's make a check list.

Zanele: [on phone] And what did you say, my friend? Yes.

Caryn: You are beautiful, Caryn Smith. You are beautiful.

Zanele: And he just walked away?

Patrick: Mr. Smith did it again. The fundraiser is on us, and everything is chaos. This obviously wasn't talked through. The choir should already be here for a dress rehearsal. Even the chairs are not here.

Peter: Keynote speech by principal. Check. Pick up the choir – Caryn. Not going to happen. If you want something done, you should do it yourself. Why doesn't everybody else just pitch in the way I do?

Zanele: And you want me to help you?

Caryn: There's going to a thousand people. Oh, oh, oh. I better go meet the band. Got to look good. Got to look good. Oh, yes, I still have to pick up the cupcakes.

Patrick: Ah, at least the technical is sorted, because I sorted it myself two weeks ago. I fear the event may be a failure. But if everyone stays on budget, like I planned it, we will make money.

Zanele: Unfortunately, I won't be able to help you out this afternoon. I'm assisting with the school's fundraiser. Mr. Smith asked me to welcome the guests. And I promised I'd help serve tea. And I still need to set up the station, and buy groceries. I'm sorry. I hope you're not mad at me. Maybe I can help you afterwards. Okay. Yes, I'll help you afterwards. Okay, bye. I really need to learn how to say no to people. Okay. But I really need to

help her. She's been going through such a rough time.

Caryn: Ah, I had to pick up the choir at 6:00. Oh!

Well, we saw them demonstrating the behavior and characteristics personality of the four types. And we've discovered that we have D, I, S's, and C's in this audience, and all across Africa and the world.

Part 1. Everyone has a Behavioural Style

What does it mean to be a D, I, S, and C? Well, I want you to write on that page with the cross. And I'd like you to write here in the corner – D, I, S, and C...D, I, S, and C. The D's and the C's are in this quadrant. And to them task is more important than, at the bottom, people. So, if you and I were an S, you gravitate towards people. If you're on the left-hand side, the C or S, you like to respond. If you're on the D or the I side, you like to initiate. So the D initiates towards tasks. The I initiates towards people. The S responds to people. And the C responds to tasks. So the school principal, what was he? He was a task person that initiated projects. So we remember here, Peter, the school principal. Who was the excitable person? The I that initiated towards people, Caryn. So Caryn was the I. Who was the S, the social, steady person, the supportive person, the calm person? Zanele. And, obviously, that leaves us with Patrick, the high C, that was more correct and focused on quality.

So the D – let me tell you a few things about the D -- we call him the Doer. They're the people of action. They can't stand inaction. The I's are the Initiators. They are the exciteables. They take initiative. The S are the Social, steady people. And the C's are the Correct people. This person wants quantity – a lot of it(D). This person wants to do it right(C). This person wants lots of relationships in people(I). This person wants quality relationships and people(S). This person is a talker, the I. The S is a listener. The D is the initiator towards tasks. The C is the quality person. But he's a critical person. He analyzes things.

The D lives in the now. There's always a sense of urgency. The I lives in the future. The S, they kind of just live in what we call the Present. And the C, they primarily sometimes live in the Past, because they analyze what happened.

What is the emotion of the high D? Well, they get irritable or they get – if you waste their time, so they're impatient. It's they're too impatient, they'll even show what? Anger. The high

I, what is the emotion here? They're positive, happy people. But they can also – if they are disappointed, they can be very sad. They emotional high and low. The S emotion is Stable – stable emotions. Now, who is high S here? Although you have stable emotions on the outside, inside it can be really boiling. But they don't project emotion. The high C's, their emotion is they fear being wrong or criticized. Their emotion is to be Careful. A D has a sense of urgency. And I has a sense of future optimism. And S is relational. A C is analyzing. If you ask a D, "How are you doing?" -- they want to...they interested in what's happening now -- urgency. If you ask an I: How is he or she doing? -- they tell you about something in the future. They don't care how things are now. They're excited about what's going to happen. Then the S -- if they are doing well, it's the relationships that are going well. Everything can be nice on this campus. If you had a big fight with your child, or your boss, or with your fellow workers, you are bothered here today. Because your world is where you have relationships that are intact. And the C, they want a world that's orderly. They're happy in that kind of world.

The D wants Goals. If you want to know how a D works, he's always talking about goals. The I is talking about Opportunity, potential. That's what they're about. The S is talking about Family, and relationships. And the C, they want to talk about facts. An I has never seen a fact. They don't know what facts are. Now, you may differ. We're all a combination of these things, aren't we? So I'm D and I. So I'm doing things, and I have a view to the future about it. My wife is S-C. So she's relational – not with just many, many people, but with specific people – and she also wants to do things with quality. She's an S-C. Some of you are C-I, if you have a little bit of conflict inside of you, because you're excitable, but you want to do things correct. So tell the person next to you who you are, and tell them, "I think I'm primarily this". And forget about what the test said. The test was just an indicator about that environment that you thought about. Remember I told you to think about an environment? You may be in other environments where you have different behavior. So, forget about the test a little bit. Just based on what I said, what do you think you are primarily, and maybe secondarily influenced by? Turn to the person next to you, and say that to him or her.

I hope you've discovered how you fit. And I hope you're happy with who you are. Because, let me tell you, God made you in a wonderful way. If you're a High D, a Low D, a High I, Low I, S, or C, doesn't matter. God loves you, has a plan for your life, and He planned the mix that you're in. Because there's good works, there's a path, there's a calling, there's a role that God created you for, and your personality style is 100% correct for that. Keep that

in mind.

Part 2: My Unique Strengths and Weaknesses

I'm going to go now to the strengths and weaknesses, and I'm going to explain the strengths and weaknesses of every personality type. So you want to know how a D, an I, or an S, or a C talks and greets, because you want to figure out how they are. If you typically greet a High D, he's going to have a forceful greeting. I'm going to give you a tip. If you ever greet a High D, and you do this, like a soft hand, most D's will write you off right there. Because High D's like someone that shows confidence. So, if you want to impress a High D, how do you greet him? Forcefully. He feels respected, and he respects you. If you greet a High S, and you greet him forcefully, and you crush his hand, how does a High S feel? Woo, that's not good. So you need to greet the High S how? Kind of warm, gently. If you greet a High I, and you say, "Hi, how are you doing?" -- they want excitement, "How are you doing?" So, please, give emotion to an High I. True or false? They don't want to just be calm. And a High C -- very important -- just correctly. Keep the distance. Just do it culturally appropriate, right?

Now, how do we greet people? We greet people based on how we are. Okay, if you want to affective, understand yourself but understand others. I promise you, 99% of you greet people the way you like to be greeted. We going to give you ways to have immediately a positive people interaction with new people. If you can sum them up -- now how do you know if they D, I, S, or C? Well, if they talk slowly, and they pace their talk, are they an I? So you know, okay, you don't have to give enthusiasm yet. As a matter of fact, if you give a High C a lot of excitement and so on, you could literally intimidate that person. So you look at how the person is in terms of emotion. A High S person, a relational person, they also listen. Remember Zanele on the phone? Did she talk all the time? No, she listened with empathy. And so, if you greet a High S like this, "Hello, how are you doing? Hi, how are you doing?" -- how does the High S feel if you greet and move onto the next person who doesn't even like eye contact? -- you don't care. High S's care. So High S's, you need to say, "Hello, sister, how are you today? Good, and how are the children? They good? Fantastic. It's great to have you here. Great to have you here." Now have we connected? The High D, he wants to get to business. He doesn't like small talk. True or false? He'll do it, but he wants to get out of the small talk. He wants to get into the why we are here; the what. Right? You don't... Do you think, by asking him relational questions, you're helping yourself with him? No. You're wasting his time, right? He wants to be efficient.

The C; be correct. The I; enthusiasm. So you going to have D, I, S, and C's. Are you getting a feel for who you are, what you like and don't like?

Now strengths and weaknesses of the D, I, S, and C. So the High D, what is the strength of the High D? And I'd like you to start evaluating yourself. Because all of you have D in you. Are you with me? Unless you have no D... I just saw someone here in front that tested out with no D, so they're not going to identify a lot with this. So, remember in your test, if you had like four or five, then there are some D in you. So don't think of yourself as, "I'm just a D or an I". You're a combination really of all four things. Is that okay?

Okay, but here's the typical High D. Their strengths is to get things done, be persistent. They take charge. They accept challenges. They make quick decisions. They solve practical problems. They're self-reliant, and they work hard.

But, weaknesses – they do have a few tendencies that can get to some of us. They can come over as insensitive, overlook risks and caution. They can take on too much. They have a high self-esteem, so they say yes to many things. They can be demanding of others. They can be impatient, inflexible. Now, detail-wise, does a High D care about a lot of detail? They don't care. They just want to know what. And they can resent restrictions. If you did tell a High D what he can't do... Like yesterday – I have a little bit of D in me – and so, someone said to me, "No, Martin, we can't get that done". When they say, "We can't get that done or we can't get that done in the next two weeks", what do you think that does to me? Does that like, "Okay, I understand. That's wonderful"? Or do I actually get motivated to get it done and get it done quicker? So, if a High D wants to get things done, and quick, it doesn't help telling me that can't be done. You actually just motivate him. Do you understand that? And he's thinking of ways to get there. And he'll cut corners to get there. But they want to get things done, and they want to get it done now.

Same thing is true with the I. They have strengths and weaknesses. The High I can be very optimistic. We need people like that, particularly in Africa. It's not going to be good being pessimistic all the time. We like optimism. Personable. They're articulate. They like to use their mouths, their voice, their tongue. They're good talkers. They're entertaining. They're enthusiastic. They will die on an island. They need people. If you don't give an I people, they don't know what to do, right? If you're I is low, you like solitude. If you did that test and you had no I, then you see these advertisements with the guy on the island with the little

palm tree, and you think that's heaven. For a High I that looks like hell. There's no people there. The High I likes to persuade. They like to make a good impression. They outgoing and friendly.

But they have weaknesses. They can lack follow-through. They say yes to many things. They want to be popular. They can talk too much. They can act impulsively. They can over-commit. They can misjudge capabilities. They can jump to conclusion. And they can be verbally manipulative.

So we looked at the D and the I, the people that initiate – they have strengths and weaknesses. And we looked at the S and C – they have strengths and weaknesses. The people bother us here by what they do. Sometimes they bother us here by what they don't do. But I love S and C's. I married an S and C lady called Anneli. And her qualities so attracted me; it was going to complement and help me. And what I loved about Anneli is all the S threads and the C ones. She has some D in her. But the S and C – I loved that, as well.

She is supportive. And S is loyal. They're consistent people. They're not this day that way. They're more stable. The High I's are all over the place. If you're an S and an I, your S will mellow you a little bit. So you'll agree with both things, and that influences it. Reliable. They're agreeable. They're service-oriented. They love to help. They are the glue in an organization or a team. They're great listeners. That's why they make great counselors. My daughter is an S-I. She wants to be a missionary and meet lots of people. That's the I in her. But she's also an S. She wants to help people. She's going to study psychology. Because they're also good listeners. So the I and S sometimes inside of them it fights a little bit, because they're not sure if they want to talk or listen. But they have skills in both areas. And an S is good in building relationships.

Now the C's. The C's -- we really need C's, because they strengths are building blocks for society. They do things orderly. They are self-disciplined. They're thorough. They're analytical. They're competent people. They don't wing things. They learn their skill. They know how to do it. They're precise. The C in them makes them – although they task people, the C in them... If you're a High C, you're often a very diplomatic person. One of my colleagues, Lee Halling, is a D-C. So he's a task person, but he's an extreme diplomat. Because C's bring finesse to the task relationship. And they know, that for this relationship to work well, it has to be diplomatic. So they sometimes have excellent people skills, although they're task oriented. They are committed to quality. That's why, if you rush a High C, how do they feel?

Frustrated. Remember when I did that test? The D's here were bored at some point, because they've done this thing. The C's, they were struggling a little bit with the test. Why? Because they want to do it what? Correct. They want to do it right. Now, some of the I's thought that they not so clever because: Why are they taking so long? But the I's just da, da, da, da. No. They actually more clever than you often. It's because they want to be right. So careful of how you think of other people. My wife is a High C. She was a top student.

Now the High C's have weaknesses, as well. But I don't like talking about the High C weaknesses because they're already tough on themselves. High C's don't need criticism. They criticize themselves all the time. And their tendencies – they can be overly cautious. They can be too rigid. They can lack spontaneity. They're very sensitive to criticism – particularly if you criticize their work. If you criticize the High I, their person, they don't like it. If you criticize a High C's work, they don't like it. They can be too detail-oriented -- too much planning; not enough action. They can be fault-finding, suspicious, or pessimistic. They think of themselves as realistic. The I's would think of them as what? Pessimistic. So here you have D, I, S, and C. Every one has strengths and weaknesses. By the way, is there such a personality that only has strengths? No, because the strength – the backside, or the flipside of the strength, is the weakness. Are you with me? You can't be excellent with tasks, project, and be excellent with relationships in a paced way. It's not possible. Do you get that? Now, you can become mature, and learn how these things work.

Now, let's say you're a great Christian. Do you lose all the weaknesses in your personality? No. That's why you still need the Lord, right? But sometimes you just need other people to accept you – not just your strengths, but your weaknesses. So, when you think of other people, if the relationships are good, you are enjoying the strengths. If the relationship has gone sour, you have started to focus on the weaknesses – right? -- and think about yourself. Now, last thing about the High C -- my wife is a High C. So, if she writes an exam... She's about a 95% C. So if she gets 80% for a test, how does she feel? She just got minus 15, from her standard. She's depressed. She wants 100, 95 to 100, then she's okay. Now my C is about 20/40, depending on the context. So if I get 80, how do I feel? So, why do I have a good self-image? Because my standards are so low, right? It's easy to feel happy about myself, right? Some of the High C's, you feel bad about yourself – the only reason is your standards are so high. It's not that you're worse than me, or the other person. Is that true or false?

Okay, tell the person next to you: What is the most interesting thing that you just heard in the last five minutes?

Okay, friends, what I'd like you to do is a little bit of self-evaluation now. You're going to see a chart – Understanding My Unique Strengths and Weaknesses. And I'd like you to identify your two high points, and just circle that one – like the D, the I, the S, or the C. And then I'd like you to do a personal evaluation. Because you are a combination, your strengths and weaknesses are kind of tempered by your other personality trait, or traits. So, I don't want to put you in a box. No one is just a D, an I, an S, or a C. Are you with me? No one is just that. So, I'm going to let you decide what strengths and weaknesses you agree with.

I want you to... If you really agree with what is under D – let's say, Driving, Logical, Independent, Daring, Decisive, Direct – if you agree with something, you underline it. If you disagree totally, "I'm not like this", you scratch it out. And if you're not sure, you put a question mark. And then, on the weakness side, you do the same. Let your wife or friend tell you about this one, okay? But do a little bit of a self-assessment on your two high points. Then we're going to go into the break. And you're just going to do self-reflection on who you are – your strengths and weaknesses. And then I want you to do two things. Remember what we said in Session 1, "God gave you your strengths so that you would praise Him"? I mean, you're not that way because you're cute. You're that way because God created you. You are a tool in the hands of God. This is how you were made. So thank God for the strengths. And then, acknowledge the weaknesses, and ask the Lord to help you -- but accept them, as well. It's okay to have weaknesses. Tell the person next to you, "It's okay to have weaknesses". Remember you can't have high strengths – people that have very, very high strengths; also their weaknesses are a little bit more. If you did that test, and you kind of scored more balanced, even-out, then your strengths are not as pronounced, but your weaknesses aren't that wild either. You look at it, and you do the self-evaluation.

[f/s – Session Questions]