

Christmas, Happiness & Personality

by Gaelle Piernikarch, December 10, 2018

Early December. The days are getting shorter, the temperatures are dropping, and the sky is more often cloudy than sunny. People start rushing around to get their Christmas presents on time, in the shops Christmas carols are playing all day long and you feel it's time to bring some coziness into your life.

Are you comfortably seating with colleagues in meetings with a warm mug of coffee? Meeting with friends for a drink in cozy places? Going home a bit earlier to spend the evening hours with the family?

Now it's also time to get ready for the last days of the year. Countdown. 14 days left before Christmas. How are you going to spend Christmas? How would you like to spend Christmas? What would make you happy?



Christmas Meaning

I am always amazed by the different answers I get from friends and colleagues when asking these questions. And it's not only cultural. Actually, I could testify of huge differences from one person to the other in most cultures I was in touch with. So, if it's not only a matter of culture, could personality be a key to understand individual differences in how we like to spend Christmas?

Well indeed, there's really interesting research out there, among other a survey from [The Myers Briggs Company](#) showing how personality types influence our enjoyment of Christmas¹.

Among the 60% of people who said the meaning of Christmas was about family, friends, children, togetherness and loved ones, we can draw a first line on how many people we like to party with: people who have a natural preference for Introversion seem to be slightly happier spending Christmas with just one other person than people with a natural preference for extraversion. And those who prefer Extraversion tend to be happier than the former in spending time with more people; their enjoyment goes up the more people they spent time with.

Perhaps not a big surprise here, but a reminder that while some of us will feel energized by big Christmas and New Year's Eve parties, it might be overwhelming for others who will need to find some quiet moments on their own to recharge their batteries and start 2019 with fully loaded energy.

Interestingly, for both, the more parties being attended, the more they expect to enjoy Christmas, busting the common myth that all Introverts hate parties!

Further, here are some other interesting findings revealing how different Personality Types view and enjoy Christmas.

Christmas Cards, Shopping & Favorite Christmas Activities

Personality preferences have a direct impact on our Christmas habits and rituals as well as on our enjoyment of Christmas activities.

For instance, out of the 70% of people who said they would send Christmas cards or e-cards, those with a "Sensing" preference (which refers to processing information through experience and our five senses) are more likely to send physical cards rather than e-cards.

As far as online shopping is concerned, especially people with a logical and objective approach to decision-making ("Thinking" preference) said they shop online because it is quick and efficient. Less expected is the fact that those with a "Feeling" preference (which indicates a value-based and people oriented decision-making) are three times more likely than Thinkers to shop online, not because of the efficiency, but because that's how they can find that **perfect** gift.

The same way, our happiness during Christmas activities is strongly influenced by personality preferences in the choice of the activities we do and our perception of them.

As an example, among those quoted, it's interesting to note that Extraverts are happier if playing games while Introverts tend to rank higher in happiness if going to church or for a drink. Individuals with a "Perceiving" preference (which in the MBTI terminology indicates a

¹ Nikita Dost, "Christmas, happiness and your MBTI type", December 2017. In: <https://eu.themyersbriggs.com/en/Knowledge-centre/Blog/2017/December/Christmas-happiness-and-your-MBTI-type>

flexible, somewhat emerging way to approach life) seem more likely than others to enjoy playing games together with meeting family and friends.

Another interesting finding is that people with “Thinking” preference, are the ones to appreciate more than anything else seeing family and friends. As for enjoying presents, individuals who see patterns, possibilities and symbolic meanings when processing information (the so-called “iNtuition” preference) ranked highest.

What about you? What do you like doing most?

In conclusion

Fortunately, only 7% of us find Christmas stressful and enjoy it less than others. For 93% of people Christmas brings the perspective of spending happy moments with loved ones, or taking a break from work, or even enjoying a time of over-indulgence (for once!).

Countdown. 14 days before Christmas. I wish you all an enjoyable and stress-free time until then and a merry Christmas!

Do you want to find out more about how the MBTI can help you develop personally and professionally? Get in touch with us at Cambiana.com.



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