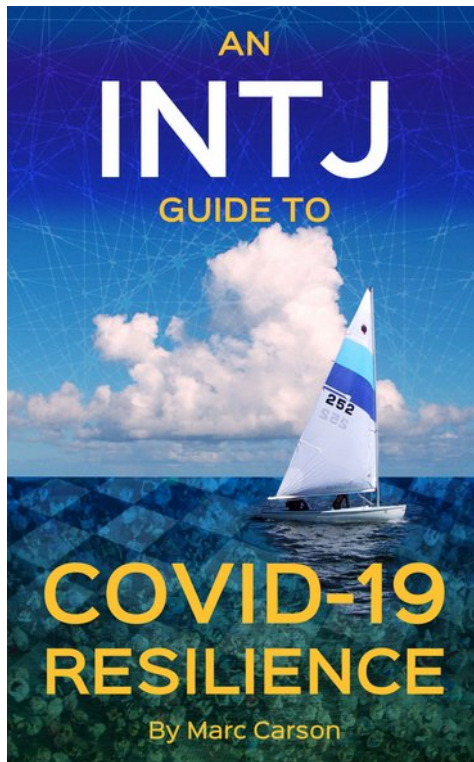


AN
INTJ
GUIDE TO



COVID-19
RESILIENCE

By Marc Carson



An INTJ Guide to COVID-19 Resilience

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Developed to support myself and others in the 2019-2020 pandemic.

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Important: Always consult a trusted medical professional before changing your approach to the management of disease.

The advice contained in this guide is for informational purposes, and any changes to your personal practices based on this information should be modified as needed, with your current health condition in mind.

Introduction

What this Guide Is Not

This guide is not *about* the COVID-19 virus. It is also not *about* the pandemic. There are thousands of articles, videos, websites, and online communities for that.

No, I've lived through previous emergencies and I learned some very important lessons. And as soon as the pandemic was announced, I knew exactly what I wanted to write instead.

What this Guide Really Is

This guide is about building and maintaining resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. Emotional Resilience
2. Mental Resilience
3. Physical Resilience

In order to aim for that goal, I'm going to provide information that can help you leverage your INTJ identity, if you're an INTJ.

(The guide is open to all personality types, by the way.)

And I'm also going to tear the INTJ concept down a bit. We all have something new to learn. If you're reading this, I'm betting that you're a learner. Lessons from other personality types can be powerful helpers for us, so some learning will be necessary.

Some of this learning may be hard, because it will work against who you are...

...but learning is how we change, and life is always changing. So let's start learning and become more resilient.

In the end, taking shelter in what you already are is a dead-end resilience strategy; your fitness coach wouldn't let you do it, and I won't either!

When Being an INTJ becomes a Limitation

There's some evidence that Carl Jung, one of the historical figures who inspired modern personality type theory, didn't like the idea of an "INTJ".

In fact, Jung didn't seem to like the idea of anybody celebrating their own personality type.

Consider this idea: If we all celebrate our own personality types, won't we just be a bunch of stubborn people?

"I hate extraverts. And feely-types. They drive me nuts. Personally I think logic and quiet, deep thinking are most needed in the world today."

Now imagine someone who thinks the exact opposite! You may even know them.

Like Jung, I don't want to live in a world like that, where everyone thinks only their way is best. A different approach is needed or we'll be mired in conflict forever.

Jung thought that we should all work to find a transcendent function—finding the middle point where we can integrate extraversion **and** introversion, thinking **and** feeling, and so on--integrating the best of all types.

Even transcending personality type, Jung thought we should do the same with socio-political issues, working to find transcendence in order to move beyond rich and poor, libertarian and communist, etc.

In this guide I'll take the same approach, integrating points from outside the typical INTJ sphere of awareness.

In fact, you're reading a guide written by an INTJ who spends a lot of time practicing how *not* to be an INTJ, for the reasons stated above.

Still, we INTJs have some powerful core gifts to offer the world! We'll focus on those, too. So let's dive in.

Wishing you the best on your journey of resilience,

Marc Carson

Ukiah, California, USA

Section 1: Waking Up to COVID-19: Building Basic Resilience

Let's start from square one, day one, in our new plan to build resilience in the middle of a historic pandemic! Whew.

So, did you get good sleep last night? (Rate it, 1 to 10?)

Here's a therapeutic activity to try: Lay in bed for a few minutes, and do some basic list-making. I typically use Google Keep for this, but you can use anything you want: A paper notebook, your Hermes portable typewriter, your Casio digital organizer from the 1990s, or the yet-unused sound recorder dog collar your aunt gifted you as a joke.

I like to list a combination of things I need to do, and things I want to do. If I have too many of either one, that's usually a sign that I'm suffering in some way (either work tasks are too daunting / unclear, or I'm not engaged with my subjective needs and may be overworking myself).

Leverage Your Lists

A huge first lesson for INTJ resilience is: Get your thoughts out. Whenever you can. Otherwise it's all too easy to get stuck in a perceptive mode, with "what will probably happen" visualizations flowing through our heads.

(I don't know about you, but when I have a lot of things I need to do, being locked up in my inner visualizations can lead to pretty depressing feelings. I need a way to take action, even if simple.)

When we write our thoughts down, we gain additional access to "what I will make happen" thinking. It's more productive.

For most INTJs, lists are comfortable and helpful. Here's a common example:

1. Work out
2. Finish up that project for work
3. Start on that other work project
4. Attend the online work meeting at 2 p.m.
5. Check in with the team and let people know where you're at

Great job! Now you have a general direction.

OK, Now Leverage Your Lists...More

Sadly, that list above is still pretty awful. If you write lists like this (I used to myself) it's time to start learning a more resilient approach to productivity.

A resilient approach to productivity factors in your thoughts **and** emotions, your intuitions **and** your sensations.

COVID-19 is a pandemic event carrying significant emotional, physical, and mental burden, whether you are conscious of it or not. Where we're going, we need to start taking better care of ourselves, and we'll start by taking a more nuanced look at productivity.

For INTJs, a big key here is allowing our emotions and sensations to have a voice. It's important to address these factors because they can silently subvert our efforts to make it through the day.

For every "I need to finish up that project"...

...try adding a "but I don't feel like it because..." or some other statement that resonates with your feelings.

For every "I need to start on the thing that we'll need for the future event of X"...

...try adding a "however I haven't even had breakfast yet. What sounds good?" or some reflection on your current state and sensory world.

An Improved List: Let's improve the list by integrating those two elements to the list above: Sensation and Emotion.

1. Work out, but actually don't, because I haven't worked out in like a week. What is wrong with me? UGH.
2. Maybe eat a donut instead. No. You know what would feel just right this morning? Some mugicha and toast with just a bit of marmalade...
3. Finish up that project for work that's been on my mind FOREVER. Wow. What is going on? What's blocking me? I will journal about it.
4. Anyway, I'm stinky and need a shower. Get showered, get dressed, and feel better.
5. Start on that other work project. It's necessary. I think. Is it? Maybe I'll check with the stakeholders and see how necessary they think it is—what is the priority, and what's the minimum needed to get us up and going?
6. There's a work meeting at 2 p.m. I need to clean the area behind my desk, because as of right now, everyone in the meeting will be able to see a huge stack of books on the floor.
7. That meeting is so annoying I feel like a reward is needed. I'll lay in bed and scroll through Youtube mindlessly, then take some basic notes on what to do next.
8. God I hate this pandemic so far, even though nothing has really changed for me as of this morning. LOL. There's something weird in the air, a bit freaky. I'm not sure whether or when to panic, or even what panicky behavior really is. Is it panicky to run to the store and buy stuff for next week, or next month? No idea.
9. The team check-in should be pretty easy. There's a LOT of pressure though. I'll keep it upbeat and "wish everybody the best during the pandemic," LOL or some appropriate wording. Damn, what do I even say?

Whoa. This list is longer. (I embellished it a bit more than I normally would, for illustrative purposes)

But it's also more detailed, more balanced, and more true and open to feelings. Any one of those aspects can be dangerous to your INTJ productivity, if excluded.

It may seem uncomfortable to make such a change—it reads more like a diary, perhaps. Still, we haven't left anything on the table. The chances of those emotional factors continuing to subvert us have gone way down.

Additional Tips

Capture the Intuition: As soon as you see a problem in your mind's eye, write it down, or talk about it, or draw it, paint it, sing it. This will help you to slide more easily and quickly into a problem-solving mode, rather than being stuck in problem-perceiving mode.

Write the First Few Steps, or Solution Ideas: If the problem seems significant, take a moment and write down a list of first steps toward solving it, or some possible responses or solutions.

Your brain will automatically consider this a therapeutic problem-solving activity—you are working to attack what is known as a *stressor*. And that can sometimes mean the difference between getting a good night's sleep and waking up rested, or...the opposite of that.

Reorganize the Information: Organization is an example of a key human technology-building activity that differentiates us from animals. Whenever you feel you're getting off the rails, take some time to make a new list, or reorganize the old one.

Going Further: Take a look at [Task BATL, my comprehensive productivity method](#). It incorporates Thinking, Feeling, Sensory, and Intuitive aspects of productivity, broken into specific topics like personal values and physical comfort.

I also developed something I call the [Howl at the Moon Hack](#), a funny yet effective way of breaking through emotional barriers to productivity.

We just made ourselves more resilient with some tweaks to our list-making method.

What else can we do?



Notes of Best Wishes: Did you see that last item on that list?

Wishing people the best? In my experience, that's getting into black belt-level personal development for INTJs.

A typical gut reaction from an INTJ might go something like this:

“Using *socially appropriate wording*? Are you kidding me? What a laugh. Just say what you need to and get it over with! It's more efficient. This is work, not a dating platform. Nobody cares about your warm sentiments.”

And yet, the ability to naturally ignore that factor is also why it's very dangerous territory for INTJs. **These customs are part of society, including work society, whether we like it or not.** Over time a lack of attention here can form into a reputation as a cold and callous individual. This can subvert your entire career.

Plus, if you've been here before, you already know: It just feels good to pay attention to the human factor. It's far better to share your positive wishes for others than to share no sentiment at all.

Pay attention to your peers' emails and messages to calibrate your approach. Watch for the experts--people who don't overdo it, but still give off a pleasant, easy-to-work-with vibe, on top of the normal robotic, on-task messages.

You can read more about this in my article, [An INTJ weakness so big, it makes us laugh.](#)

Section 2: Taking Better Care of Yourself

Now that you're out of bed, engaging with the day, it's time to look at basic self care.

INTJs are famously bad at this. I'm sorry to use a word like "famously," but it's true; where self care is concerned, we (as a group; individuals may differ) tend to be found at the bottom of the self care ranks.

Have you seen any online messages like this?

"My INTJ husband works about 60 hours a week, isn't interested in anything when he gets home, and is uncommunicative and grumpy. We basically don't have a relationship. And I have to force him to eat. He thanks me for it, but I really don't like this state of affairs."

You and I know that this INTJ is probably super-effective at work.

Maybe.

Hmm...makes you wonder, doesn't it?

Back when I lived like that, I was "effective", but mostly at the wrong things. Even at work. I had some of my biggest career problems when I worked in that way. It put all kinds of negative pressure on others, for one.

Questions for Self Care

Throughout the day (this needs to be done way more than just once), ask yourself:

- How does my body feel right now?
- What are my emotions telling me right now? Can I even access them? Do they have a voice?
- What food or foods sound just right to my body right now? In what amounts?
- What physical activity would help me feel better?
- How does my mind feel? Scattered? Organized? Something else?
- What fears are on my mind right now?

Some of the answers may be unclear. That's normal and OK for beginners.

Another thing that's normal for beginners is the *black and white assessment of what this means*.

For example, you might think, "wait, so you want me to ask myself how my body feels? How about asking 'how do I protect my family from this pandemic?'"

That kind of hyperbolic assessment is normal. And yet: You can do both. Plus, consider that taking better care of yourself will help you find ways to take better care of those around you. Everyone needs basic and gentle care.

INTJ Tips for Self Care

Keep Your Emotional Debt in Mind

Consuming information about COVID-19 can quickly build up a hidden emotional debt. This debt must eventually be paid off in various forms.

The emotional debt could lead to increased stress behaviors (who else is a stress eater?), ruminations, and so on. It is similar to spending your time reading obituaries, or news about tragic accidents. If you do a lot of it, is it any wonder that you will begin to cause harm to your emotional state?

I was once listening to a podcast interview with a talented psychiatrist. She specialized in working with individuals who had encountered serious trauma. She cautioned against spending too much time on bad news. She shared that a very primitive part of the brain interprets stories or images of trauma as if they were really happening to us, right now.

Wow! That got my attention. I know my mind is very visual and responsive to imagery. And whether the psychiatrist's statement is accurate or not, my own observations are:

- When I consume anxiety-causing information about topics like COVID-19, I will bear an emotional burden until I share the information with others. This can be uncomfortable, because I don't want to be seen as a panicky person, but sometimes it's automatic. Upon reflection, it is very much like an emotional debt payment process.
- When others around me consume the information, they seem to do the same.
- By limiting my exposure to too much of this information, I have more control over how it can affect me. In effect, I can keep the emotional debt at a reasonable level.
- Still, it feels good to talk it out with others.
- And, I do still need *some* news. There is a balance to be found.

As I share further on in this guide, in the section about listening to the radio, I generally keep my news to a few short bursts here and there. Interspersed with the news are other self-care events like...

Get Dressed, Shower, Bathe, and Upgrade Your Body Care

Now is a great time to review your morning, afternoon, and night-time body care. What would improve that system? Are you taking care of...

- Your skin?
- Your teeth?
- Your face?
- Your hair?
- Your clothing?

- Your accessories?

I used to be the typical guy, and I thought that more than a tiny bit of attention to this stuff was ridiculous. What a regret! I've learned since then that this all adds up to additional comfort. And who doesn't want to be more comfortable?

Some specific examples include addressing any issues you have with the fit of your clothing, or the style of your hair, or the holes in your socks, if any.

Learning to let yourself enjoy the feeling of a new pair of socks is a great move for a maturing INTJ.

I recently upgraded my body care by adding a combination of podcasts and background music to my bathroom routine. I also added "mandatory heat lamp" to my body care list. I love the feeling of a nice heat lamp when I step out of the shower.

I would also include medical and dental care here. INTJs are (again, as a group), to put it nicely, not the best at getting into the doctor or dentist regularly. As you age, it's important to get that component firmly into place.

While I still think it's fun to hang out in my pajamas for a while, on most days I find that I feel more prepared and better able to solve problems when I'm fully dressed, in comfortable clothes, with my shoes on.

From there, it's important to remember that the the shoes can and should be taken off sometimes, too...

Laying Down for Strain Relief

Some say that you should only use your bed for sleeping. I disagree based on my personal experiments and observations, and I personally use the bed or couch as a self care and productivity tool. In my measurements this has done nothing to harm my sleep patterns.

You should come to your own decision about this, but it's a good idea to keep an open mind.

Laying down decreases the strain on your nervous system. It does that whether you're sick or not—think of laying down like a form of basic, but easily accessible, medical self care.

With your physical strain lessened, you may find it easier to be gentle on yourself and others. Even just a few minutes laying down can also help you regroup and gather your thoughts and emotions.

Personally I find that laying down for a half hour is at least as good as a 15-minute nap. So, even if I can't sleep because there's too much on my mind, I get my thoughts out (Note taking; see the previous chapter on lists) and feel much more rested after I get up again.

Also, if I have a headache or feel pretty low, I take a moment to review whether and how much of a snack or supplement I might need.

I use a turmeric-based supplement when my head feels a bit of an ache, or some ibuprofen. Since my mood can get pretty low, I also try to keep an open mind and use caffeine to increase my energy levels and access to the intuition (caffeine has been linked by some to better access to the intuition, for

things like brainstorming or imaginative work).

Sometimes I dig into a box of fruit snacks for my kids, as a quick pick-me-up, but please don't tell my wife I admitted this! Wink-emoji.jpg

During previous emergencies, for example an extended power outage accompanied by wildfire threatening my home, I learned that I needed much more rest than usual.

I eventually decided to give myself permission to go and lay down to relax for as long as needed, at any point during the day. While I still complete my emergency preparations, this helped me find a much more healthy balance point and avoid unhealthy stress behaviors.

(Flaring temper while rushing around the house, anyone? That may sound familiar to you...personally I'd rather rest that off and then work more effectively when my mood has improved)

Add Music

Find some music that you like. Turn it on and ask:

- Does this make me feel better? If not, what other music would?
- How is the volume? Too loud? Too soft?
- What feelings does this music bring to mind? Is it helping?

Here are some more tips:

Device It: I keep a few MP3 players around the house, and each one is loaded with albums of music or relaxation sounds—soft meditation music, thunderstorms, the ambient sounds of a group of people talking around a crackling fire. When I need to rest for a bit, these offer an additional mood boost that has helped quite a bit.

The radio by my bed, an XHDATA D-328, also has AM, FM, and shortwave radio capabilities, in addition to MP3 playing. Sometimes it's fun to see what I can tune in.

Take Time to Add New Music to your Collection. One way to do this is to search Youtube for your favorite artist, and then explore the video collections of the accounts that share those tracks by your favorite artist.

The idea here is to increase your exposure to what I call “sensory novelty”, which can help INTJs break free of dark feelings and perceptions—this attention to novel sensation is known as the Jungian extraverted sensing function, or Se for short. Think of it as a temporary, and healing, party or hang-out session for your brain. The novelty part is important because if we've heard it before, the effect can really be diminished.

There's nothing quite like the feeling of discovering a new favorite song. I find that the ability to let oneself be that open to new music is great for the mood, in the long term.

Tune In: Another method I like is listening to the radio, which I mentioned just a little bit above. While songs are repeated more often than other methods, it's easy to change radio stations, and over a

period of months, new songs are added all the time. One advantage here is that I can step out of my same-old-tracks playlist and end up getting into the groove in my workspace and feeling lots better because of a song I never heard before.

There are also informational benefits to the radio: During a pandemic, news about the virus is typically shared at least every hour. Local radio stations also share brief and relevant local news. This may be all you need to hear in order to stay up to date. I also noticed that local or federal agencies share information about websites and apps that can be really useful.

My favorite local radio stations also share things like strange and funny news items, facts and trivia about various topics, and weather updates.

(Note: Some of the points of trivia are obviously dead wrong. That may be really annoying to your bog-standard, model M1A1 INTJ. Did you ever correct someone in that mood? “Dear Sir or Madam...” We love to project our ability to see right through a bad fact, because who knows what could become of us all should such facts be propagated! But keep in mind that radio DJs are hired for their charisma, not their ability to perform qualitatively superior research.)

Make Your Own Music: Lots of INTJs love to sing or play instruments. Generally I find that INTJs are really great when improvising, so if you have an instrument that allows you to improvise, give it a shot. Even if you can only keep a basic rhythm, it can be fun to grab some chopsticks or silverware and start making sounds on the dishes (paying attention to what is OK with those around you...).

Do you also have a sense of humor? You may wish to start writing lyrics to your own funny songs about COVID-19 or other related phenomena. This can be a terrific stress relief and self care tool; you won't be able to do it without engaging in a healthy release of an emotional burden.

Tip: Try searching Youtube for backing tracks, so you can write lyrics and get singing right away.

Eat Less Like an Astronaut, and More Like an...ISFJ?

The INTJ prefers to give lots of attention to thinking and intuiting. So for example, it may be easy to decide, “it's an emergency, so that means I need to pay less attention to my physical comfort and spend more time on planning and execution. I'll suspend any fancy eating, and eat healthy, fundamental, prepared foods like an astronaut, and I'll schedule them like so...”

But this INTJ-style approach is also risky. Consider: A) We're also emotional and sensation-driven beings, whether we give those aspects attention or not. And B) This person just decided to lower their physical comfort. During a high stress event, that's often the last thing you want to do. Don't sacrifice your physical comfort unless absolutely necessary! A low level of physical comfort can make even the most positive emotions (for example, “hooray, I just completed my big preparation plan!”) depressingly short-lived.

ISFJs are, as a group, one of the personality types that give adept attention to healthy eating. Not only can they usually tell you what kinds of things are healthy and delicious to them in general, they can tell you what's appropriate *under the current circumstance*, which is often completely different.

This sensory superpower can transform moment-to-moment self care from a skill into a fine art.

The ISFJ style can also show us INTJs how to be more resilient in our long-term eating habits.

Let's face it: A pandemic is going to last a while, whether we want to declare it "over" or not. Sometimes INTJs take health food to an extreme (as beginners in general tend to do), while ISFJs might be perfectly fine integrating a donut or some fast food, as long as it feels just right. The nuance is important. In this way they can be more responsible to their body and its emotions.

There is a certain amount of sensory honesty and sensory discovery that can feel amazingly refreshing, so be sure to give it a try.

Go for a Walk, or Try to Integrate Gentle Exercise

Going hard at your workout feels really great sometimes. But a stressed-out INTJ is often the exact type of person who will succumb to over-exercising. Symptoms include an emotional build-up until the activity is completely ceased by silent emotions, forming an over-under loop.

If you haven't already, start experimenting with more gentle exercise. If it's possible where you live, get outside and go for a walk. While you're on your walk, you can listen to music, record your thoughts into your phone, and get reasonably good exercise without risking completely overdoing it.

While you're outdoors, you may run into individuals who are suffering from high anxiety. For your own peace of mind, remember that there's no need to engage with these individuals. You can just keep walking right on by, and it's their move from there.

If you're experiencing high anxiety yourself, being outdoors may feel overwhelming, and you may experience things like ruminations about roaming hordes of crazed toilet paper hoarders, or something worse. In this kind of state I think it's OK to rest for a bit instead of going outdoors, or keep the walk really short for starters.

If you like dancing, you may find it enjoyable to learn some basic dance techniques on Youtube.

If you like fighting arts or martial arts, consider developing your own soft martial arts system. Tai Chi or other "internal" systems can be an inspiration.

I will note here that attention to violence—interest in guns, knives, fighting, even apocalyptic survival techniques—can be signs from the subconscious that we have been overcome by life circumstances, and that we desperately need to work on that.

These interests tend to scream, "my life is in apocalypse mode," whether the outside world really is that way or not. While this isn't a set rule, it has been true for many INTJs with whom I've discussed the matter.

Depending on your circumstances, you may also need to improvise. Stuck in a tiny room most of the day? Don't rule out the idea of developing your own fitness system. There's a good chance you'll like that one the most.

Find the Fun in the Day

It can help to keep a list of things that energize you. Things in which you're interested. Most people

don't do this, and as a result they become bored easily. That can lead to some really awful symptoms.

A while back, I started keeping a list. It was pretty poor and uninspiring at first. Personally, one of my interests is learning. Another one is watching movies. But I found that those were not specific enough. They're just kind of 'meh' without relevant details.

So the question became: What *kind of* learning? What *kind of* movies?

Well, I like to learn about history. *What kind of history?*

Oh, the Cold War. *What about the cold war?*

Oh, Cold War undertakings like the DEW line, and secret Soviet radio transceivers buried in the forest. *Now that's something we can chew on!*

That was an important lesson for me. And because of that experience, I [keep a very detailed list of my interests](#). The list currently contains more than 500 interests.

I decided I needed really quick access to this list, for breaks at work. So whenever I'm feeling down, like I've done too much non-fun stuff, I [click a little button on my desktop](#). It shuffles my interests list and presents some of them to me. Usually there's no thinking to be done at that point—one of them sounds pretty fun and I am naturally drawn in. It's great.

Don't miss out on the free energy provided to you by your interests (free real estate?). I've had so much fun this way. Develop your own list and try it out.

Integrating Self Care into your Journal or Daily Log: Some other questions worth asking throughout the day are, "How do I feel?" And, "Am I caring for myself well?"

Rather than asking a yes or no question, I find it helpful to use a scale which helps me give a more objective answer.

My [latest journaling template](#) contains questions like this, and includes a scale which can help you more objectively figuring out where you're "at," in terms of your self care.

Section 3: Taking Better Care...of Others

Going about your day, you'll begin encountering others.

The people around us may not be INTJs. They may need a completely different kind of care and relief. Here are some quick tips:

Engage in gentle talk, both with self, and others. We INTJs can be pretty hard on ourselves. And in few things are we harsher than when we project our insecurities onto others.

When we feel dumb, we tend to tell others to be smarter. When we feel unprepared, we tend to criticize others for not being ready! And so on.

Consider that your attitude may say more about your own emotional state than it does about others.

Seek win-win solutions or compromise. I've found that INTJs can be really, really good at finding creative solutions. This counts as "showing that you care," so be sure to offer ways in which you **and** the other party / parties can get what you want.

Let others participate in making important decisions. Think of others' personalities as another part of your own extended brain. Do they sound illogical? Untrue? Maybe there's an irrational, "soft" aspect of the decision to consider. Can you be flexible enough to take the time to understand that point of view?

Keep an open mind--prefer "you never know," to "definitely yes/no". Some people close to you will share their worries in the form of completely bad, false, or terrible information. Instead of slamming the information itself, take into account *the emotion that is sharing the information*. Show that you are keeping an open mind, and that things may be all better within a matter of days—when it comes down to it, there's just no way to know.

If this makes your INTJ prophetic intuition feel a bit insulted, keep in mind that it's called "subjective intuition" for a reason—there's just no way we can accurately predict the future in its totality. Little victories here and there are worth celebrating, but when others' emotions are on the line, it's a good idea to hold your own perceptions lightly and give the emotions a gentle focus first and foremost.

Take in outside information. Review others' plans. How are others around you helping in the community? What can reasonably be done to protect your self-care boundaries while also helping those who could benefit from your time?

Detect emotion in discussions: Hyperbole, grumpiness, an endlessly critical viewpoint, or a lack of logic. No matter the sign, emotion is behind it. This happens to us Thinker-types all the time, and before we know it we are acting about as logically as any other red-faced rager! So, try to keep a finger on the emotional pulse of your discussions. It's healthy to give this kind of attention.

And: Do not respond to emotion with only logic--it won't work. Emotions need care first and foremost. Some logic will be necessary, but often that logic has to be shared as "my logic" as in, "here's how I see it—feel free to disagree, because I know we're all learning here, self included." This is a good way to share logical thoughts without making things worse.

Decide if you can continue to contribute--do you have the energy? You may enjoy the idea of being a hero—we all do. But do you really have the energy to contribute? Sometimes it's better overall to withdraw a bit in one area in order to better support the whole.

Help extraverts find their comfort level. If you live with or communicate with an extravert regularly, encourage them to call or talk to others via video chat, to get outdoors if possible, to experience life, and to use their creativity and & help others.

At home, extraverts may need to hear noise, for example people talking. To a lot of them, this means "TV news" but you may be able to help them find other sources. Personally, I send my extravert mom lots of cute animal videos and I secretly hope to replace much of her Youtube recommendations with more upbeat things, because I know it helps her.

Be careful about the INTJ critic role—gently propose solutions or ask questions. Instead of "this is bad; what they should do is," or "what will happen is...(depressing stuff)..." consider these questions:

- "Is anybody working on...?"
- "What can we do about...?"
- "I wonder if there's a way I can / we can...here locally..."

Finally, ABSOLUTELY AVOID THESE COMMUNICATION ANTI-PATTERNS:

First, don't get caught in the "Fe blind spot" trap for INTJs: Communicating in an inconsiderate or uncaring manner. Examples:

"Well, if they didn't have the foresight to save up for 6 months of income, that's their own fault."

"I'm sorry, but complaining about things at this point is completely idiotic."

"You're worrying about nothing."

"You don't have to tell people you hope they're safe. They should just assume you care. You're their friend."

Second, be careful about being the fixer. A fixer says, "it's simple! All you need to do is..."

Third, "Just" is also a very deceiving word.

End Notes

INTJ friends, that's all I've got for now. I know this is a bit brief, a bit sloppy, a bit whatever. But thanks for reading. I put my heart into it.

And I hope you've picked up a new or possibly helpful perspective here or there.

To tell the truth, I completely wore myself out within the first week of schools closing here. That seemed to be the moment where everyone went, "oh, sh*t." My eyes rolled back into my head like some kind of ninja assassin shark high on adrenaline, and I dove straight at my work. I was determined to support my various clients as much as possible. To sacrifice my very life!

And I ended up overdoing it. Rebounding from that was really hard. I felt like an *idiot* when I realized what I'd done. I'm a life coach, for heaven's sake.

Still, I wanted to stay in the game. So I turned on my coaching skills. I put all of the items in this document back into place in my own life, and it helped immensely. I feel a lot better, and a little wiser.

In case you were wondering, here are my confident bets about the outcomes of this pandemic:

Things will get better. If you've been watching the stock market at all, you may feel like I do—it seems the market is *dying* to get back to normal. There is a huge worldwide creative and industrial capacity which is getting better and better with every passing year, and it's been forced to improvise for a while. But things will click back into place again.

Little signs like the stock market index charts seem to whisper to me that there will be a rebound. Maybe I'm wrong—one never knows, but I'm feeling confident in that.

We will be much better prepared for the next pandemic, especially if it occurs within the next 10-15 years. If it's any longer than that, our cultural memory can be a bit questionable! (Maybe your own organizational skills can help prepare us all for future events in some way?)

If you keep a journal, diary, or daily log, you'll be able to learn a lot from this. It'll help you out in the future, pandemic or no.

And, be sure to write down the cringy things you did, the regrets, the hundred extra bottles of hand sanitizer you made, but never ended up using, or whatever it is! It's all going to help "future you" build a better life. (If you have no regrets, your ability to learn and grow is limited—just my opinion.)

Wishing you all the best as we move up and onward!



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