

## Do You Know What To Do When Someone Turns Blue?



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Here's a theory that gives new meaning to turning blue, red, white, or yellow (no, it doesn't mean becoming cyanotic, inflamed, shocky, or jaundiced). Psychologist Taylor Hartman uses colors to represent personality types (by the way, he says you can't really turn one color or another, you are what you are born). Hartman's believes that each of us, from birth, is blessed with a core motive---a drive to approach life from a certain perspective. Using colors as labels, here's how he describes four distinct personality types:<sup>1</sup>

**Reds** have a drive for power. They know how to take charge and make things happen. Red strengths are that they are confident, determined, logical, productive, and visionary. However, they can be bossy, impatient, arrogant, argumentative, and self-focused.

**Blues** are driven to achieve intimacy. They love getting to know people well, have strong feelings, and like talking about the daily details of life. Blues are creative, caring, reliable, loyal, sincere, and committed to serving others. On the flip side, they can be judgmental, worry prone, doubtful, and moody, and often have unrealistic expectations.

**Whites** strive for peace. They're independent, contented people who ask little of those around them. Whites are insightful, flexible, tolerant, easy-going, patient, and kind. But Whites tend to avoid conflict at all costs, are indecisive, silently stubborn, and may "explode" because they hold things in until there are so many things bothering them that just one more problem pushes them over the edge.

**Yellows** are driven to have fun. They wake up happy, know how to enjoy life in the present

moment, and are simply fun to be around. Yellows are outgoing, enthusiastic, optimistic, popular, and trusting. However, they tend to avoid facing facts and can be impulsive, undisciplined, disorganized, and un-committed

The Color Code®, has a 45-question profile you can take to determine your true color. While you may be a blend of two or more of the above colors, Hartman stresses that you're dominant in only one. He also points out that since you're born a particular type, it's useless to wish you were different (it would be like trying to be a different height). Rather, he encourages you to embrace your strengths and to work to overcome limitations by acquiring some of the other colors' strengths.

Applying the Color Code® helps you connect with inner drives that often lie dormant, waiting to be harnessed in positive ways. Armed with this knowledge, you can make better "people decisions", like how to nurture a team, or get along with difficult people. Imagine how you could apply this theory to help a group come together to give a presentation. You might get a productive, visionary Red to coordinate and lead the project; a caring, detail-oriented Blue to do the handouts; a peace-loving, insightful White to be a "human suggestion box" (no one's afraid to approach a White); and a fun-loving Yellow to make sure that the class is more than serious stuff (a little fun, humor, and refreshment make it an enjoyable, and therefore memorable, learning experience).

Think about what could happen in the above situation if you switched some of those personalities and tasks around! The Color Code® facilitates a crucial first step to improving thinking---understanding how and why we think the way we do (and how and why others think they way they do). These are challenging times that require us to think and work in teams. Applying these principles helps us spend less time spinning wheels and more time "in gear", fully engaged in progress.

**For more on the Color Code®, go to [www.hartmancommunications.com](http://www.hartmancommunications.com).**

**For a CE article on this topic go to: <http://nsweb.nursingspectrum.com/ce/ce236.htm>**

<sup>1</sup> Summarized with permission from: Hartman, T. (1998). The Color Code®. New York, New York: Scribner. [www.hartmancommunications.com](http://www.hartmancommunications.com)  
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