

Sir Winter: The Phlegmatic Temperament

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“Sir Winter”, The Phlegmatic Temperament
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Like a down comforter the winter snow covers and protects mother earth in the same way the phlegmatic covers and protects both themselves and those around them. But not everyone experiences the snow in this gentle way. To some the snow is wet, cold, distant, mysterious and something that slows down the exciting pace of their life. However, to one who can connect with the rhythms of the seasons and the earth, the snow is a symbol of peace, holiday tradition and comfort and a haven from the fast-paced modern world. It is the same way with those of the phlegmatic temperament. Like the season of winter the phlegmatic temperament is often mysterious and misunderstood.

Sir Winter loves to keep himself hidden and private. His cold temperatures keep people inside and usually far enough away that they won't discover his secrets. And if the cold temperatures are not enough Sir Winter covers his secrets with ice or snow and chases away the spies with gusty winds. Many people prefer the open accessibility of the summer, the alluring charm of the spring or the urgent invitation of autumn. Not everyone wants to make the effort to venture into a season that is not easy to interact with. However, Sir Winter does not always need protection. He's quite comfortable with the cold weather and becomes quite irritable when the weather warms.

Those that do venture out into the discovery of winter usually come protected with thick coats, gloves and hats. They must have patience to put on these items of clothing. For venturing out into the winter is not as easy as opening the door or throwing on a light jacket. It requires more patience and effort. For those lucky few, however, the inner life of Winter is revealed in its full beauty – the artistic expressions of frost paintings, the majesty of snow sculptures covering trees and mountains and the surprising inner warmth of an igloo.

However, one should not blame Sir Winter for being cold and difficult to approach. In fact, being exposed can harm Sir Winter. If he is exposed to too much heat like the heat of yelling, shouting, intense activity, or hot temperatures he may become injured or even start to melt. The scars of foot-prints or ski-treads are almost always immediately covered up with another layer of snow either fallen from the sky or blown in by the wind. This is because Sir Winter is strongly motivated by his desire to keep things peaceful, steady and comfortable.

Sir Winter is also motivated by his physical being. Winter prefers to communicate in action and pictures and not as much with words. When one walks out into a winter wonderland they don't hear the laughter of the summer brook, the chirping of spring birds, or the chattering of autumn squirrels, instead one must switch their focus to the visual and the physical and notice the gently sloping snow drifts, the gently dripping icicles, and the physical beauty of each snowflake. When winter wants to communicate he does not shout, cry or laugh – he moves. Winter's philosophy in life is "don't talk about it – do it".

However, as much as Sir Winter likes to keep to himself and is motivated by his own inner world, he can also be influenced to change by others. A snow-drift can be transformed into a snow-fort, a pile of sticky snow can become a snow-man, ice on the walk can be melted by salt and an avid skier can create modern art on Sir Winter's powdery white surface. To the casual observer Sir Winter may seem impenetrable. However, to those that know him well, the secrets to bringing him out of his comfort zone are revealed. Because above all, the comfort zone is what matters most to Sir Winter.

When he is melted by the force of salt, disturbed by the noise of snow-blowers, exposed by shoveling or weakened by the glare of the sun, he will naturally want to balance himself out by adding some more irritable wind, mysterious and quiet snow, or cold ice.

Sir Winter does not prefer to be in the spotlight. However, if he chooses the spotlight, he prefers that it be in a familiar way. If he is adorned with traditional Christmas strands and garlands of popcorn he is happy. However, if he is exposed to the glare of bright spotlights he may melt away again into a corner. Sir Winter has a deep respect for tradition for it is he that carries the traditions of Christmas

and the New Year – two of the most culturally diverse and internationally celebrated holidays around the world. This task is not one he takes lightly – tradition is very important to him. Sir Winter is nurtured by reassurance, space to be alone, acceptance, respect, honesty, kindness, home cooked meals, interesting conversation, books, intellectual opportunities, hugs, gentle touches, and movement.

Sir Winter has a deep sense of fairness and honesty. He will not try to confuse you with the bright colors and variety of spring or the heat of summer. He is not like a summer rain that tries to pretend it is spring or an autumn frost that tries to pretend it is winter. Sir Winter is always honest and fair. He blankets all houses and people equally with his snow. He does not choose one culture over another or choose a rich house over a poor house – all people and places receive equal consideration.

Above all, Sir Winter is a steady and constant friend. He may be mysterious, cold and slow to some. But to those he blankets with his protective layer of gentle snow, he reveals a warmth, beauty and depth one cannot imagine looking from the outside in. And one can always depend on Sir Winter to be who he is. Sir Winter will rarely surprise you with a burst of summer or a falling leaf. You won't see daisies blooming in the fields in Sir Winter. Once you know Sir Winter you realize he is full of few surprises and once you get to know him well you have a strong and faithful friend.