

Why Loyalty Matters

*The Groundbreaking Approach to
Rediscovering Happiness, Meaning,
and Lasting Fulfillment in Your Life and Work*

Timothy Keiningham and Lerzan Aksoy
with Luke Williams



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To those who truly believe that we all matter, and who seek to make the world a better place by acting like we do.



*Lack of loyalty is one of the major causes of failure
in every walk of life.*

—Napoleon Hill (1883–1970), excerpted from
Think and Grow Rich (originally published in 1937—
arguably the bestselling success book of all time)



Hana Keiningham, Sage Keiningham, Alexander Keiningham, Christopher Keiningham, and Deren Kurtay . . . we do this in the hope that you will grow up in a world surrounded by loving, loyal friends.

Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Preface | xv |
| Chapter 1: The Why of Loyalty | 1 |
| Chapter 2: Know Yourself | 27 |
| Chapter 3: Building Loyal Relationships | 49 |
| Chapter 4: The Economics of Loyalty | 61 |
| Chapter 5: Toxic Loyalty | 105 |
| Chapter 6: Faith and Loyalty | 147 |
| Chapter 7: Teaching Loyalty | 163 |
| Chapter 8: A Loyal Society | 183 |
| Chapter 9: Enlightened Loyalty | 203 |
| Appendix | 221 |
| References | 227 |
| Acknowledgments | 229 |
| Index | 235 |
| About the Authors | 245 |

Chapter 2

Know Yourself

*Self-knowledge is the beginning of
self-improvement.*

—Baltasar Gracián (1601–1658),
Spanish author

“I’m good enough. I’m smart enough. And doggone it, people like me!” Often, our introspective self-examinations more closely resemble the television comedy skit “Daily Affirmations with Stuart Smalley” from *Saturday Night Live* than a realistic appraisal.

Anyone who has ever spent an evening at an “Open Mic Night” or watched the auditions for *American Idol* quickly realizes that few of the wannabe Tim McGraws and Faith Hills actually have the talent for the job. Yet frequently the negative reaction of the audience (or Simon Cowell) is summarily dismissed by the singers instead of taken as an accurate assessment of their abilities.

While we may find such self-delusion humorous, pitiable, or frustrating, the fact is that we all lack objectivity when evaluating ourselves. We tend to minimize our failings and overstate our strengths, and to hold on to information that supports our view and forget conflicting facts. This is how our brains work—they try to reconcile our self-image with our interactions with our environment.

Challenges to our self-image make us uncomfortable. As renowned author Aldous Huxley observed, “If most of us

WHY LOYALTY MATTERS

remain ignorant of ourselves, it is because self-knowledge is painful and we prefer the pleasures of illusion.”

Improving our connections with others invariably begins with improving ourselves. But without a realistic assessment of who we are, we are flying blind. We need to know how we interact with others. We need to be clear as to where our loyalties really lie. And we need to know what this has to do with our being happy.

LoyaltyAdvisor

Most of us are loyal to something other than ourselves, but to unlock the power of loyalty in our lives, we need clarity regarding “how loyal” we really are, and “to what” we are especially loyal.

Theoretically, if we were completely objective, we could take time and write down all of the things to which we are loyal. We could then group these loyalties into different categories. Finally, we could assign a rating to identify the strength of our loyalties for each of these categories.

Most of us, however, do not have the time or the impartiality to do this type of self-analysis. Moreover, even if we did, we would have no idea how our loyalties relate to who we are in terms of how we connect with others and to our ultimate happiness.

To help provide this insight, this book includes free one-time access to LoyaltyAdvisor, a revolutionary tool for examining our loyalties. LoyaltyAdvisor provides an assessment

KNOW YOURSELF

of our relationship styles and an examination of our loyalties across multiple areas that have been proven to correlate to our happiness.

The various relationship styles, and what they mean, are described later in this chapter.

LoyaltyAdvisor also allows us to benchmark our relationship styles and loyalty levels vis-à-vis the top 15 percent of individuals in life satisfaction. The purpose of benchmarking is not to suggest that we change who we naturally are. Rather, it is to help us recognize aspects of our relationship styles and loyalties that have the potential to impact our happiness either positively or negatively. All dimensions of our relationship style have pros and cons. It is up to us to recognize and act on the potential negative aspects while maintaining the strength associated with each dimension. The benchmark serves to highlight which areas are more likely to play a role in our happiness.

Taking LoyaltyAdvisor

To take the LoyaltyAdvisor assessment, you must first log onto the Internet and go to the following URL: <http://www.loyaltyadvisor.com>. You will be prompted to provide a unique access code, which is located on the reverse side of the dust jacket of this book.

You will first be asked some questions about yourself (and your work, if applicable). You will then be taken through a series of questions designed to identify your relationship

WHY LOYALTY MATTERS

style and loyalty levels. This will take about fifteen minutes to complete and must be completed in one uninterrupted session. Immediately after you complete LoyaltyAdvisor, a copy of your assessment report will be emailed to you.

In addition, LoyaltyAdvisor provides you with the opportunity to have your friends and family assess your loyalty to them. Because the perceptions of our family and friends are likely to differ from our own, we strongly encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to see yourself through the eyes of others.

LoyaltyAdvisor allows for up to ten of your friends and family members to provide feedback. In order to protect the anonymity of the respondents, at least three email addresses are required to gain access to the friends/family assessment, and there must be at least three respondents for you to view their ratings of you. Therefore, before you begin LoyaltyAdvisor, you should have available the email addresses of those individuals from whom you would like to gather opinions. One week after completing LoyaltyAdvisor and inputting these email addresses, you will be emailed a copy of your LoyaltyAdvisor Friends & Family assessment report.

Remember that the purpose of LoyaltyAdvisor is to provide insight into ourselves. It is not designed to make claims regarding whether or not we are loyal. Rather, it helps us to understand how we present ourselves to others, to see where our loyalties lie, and to identify where

KNOW YOURSELF

this may impact our ultimate happiness. Furthermore, for those of us who choose to get feedback from our friends and family—highly recommended—LoyaltyAdvisor provides invaluable insight into the differences between how we perceive our loyalty and how those to whom we owe loyalty perceive us.

How Do I Relate?

I am currently watching [the British television show] *Richard & Judy*, and Richard is gradually winding me up. He constantly belittles Judy, interrupts her when she is speaking, asks the guests questions and then answers for them, and thinks he is so funny! Is it just me or do other people feel the same? [Posted on Yahoo! Answers]

Whether or not we have ever seen the *Richard & Judy* television show, all of us—whether we agree or not—can connect with how she feels. Why? Because all of us have felt similarly about someone we've known. And, truth be told, someone has most likely felt similarly about us.

At some level, we probably recognize that something about us contributed to the discord. But more often than not, most of us tend to think something to the effect of “What’s wrong with him?” Assuming that nothing is really *wrong* with either of us, then most likely our relationship styles were incompatible.

WHY LOYALTY MATTERS

Each of us has our own *Relationship DNA* that serves as the code for how we interact with one another. While no two people are identical in how they connect with others, our research finds that we are all made up of the same ten basic building blocks:

- Leadership
- Reliance
- Empathy
- Security
- Calculativeness
- Connectedness
- Independence
- Traditionalism
- Problem-Focused Coping
- Emotion-Focused Coping

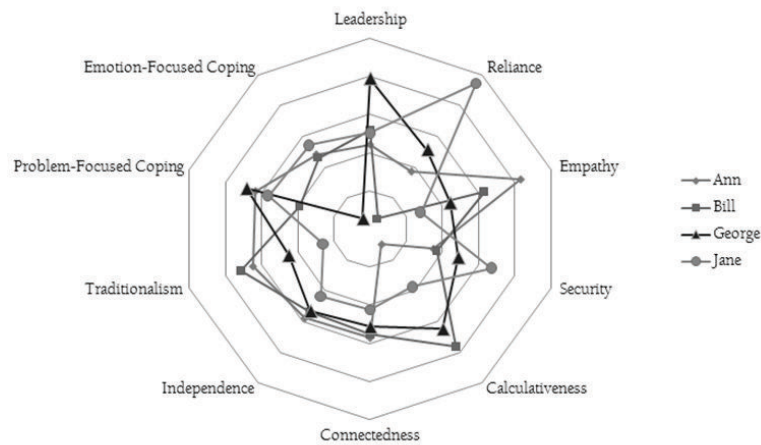
Being high or low on a particular factor does not imply good or bad, as each factor has the potential to have both a positive and negative impact on our relationships, regardless of where we fall on the factor. For example, being high in Reliance (i.e., our ability to trust and attach to people) makes it relatively easy to include others in our lives but also has the potential to cause us to see others as “crutches” rather than a social support network. On the other hand, being low in Reliance makes it much easier for us to solve problems on our own but also has the potential to lessen

KNOW YOURSELF

our ability to recognize and seek help from others when we really need it.

Some of these factors will be more prominent in our lives than others, but all will have an impact on how we interact to some degree. And while there will be others who possess a relationship style that's similar to ours, no one is exactly like us. In fact, we are able to build strong, loyal relationships with one another precisely because each of us is different. It is our differences that allow us to enrich one another's lives.

We all have differing relationship styles.



Source: Ipsos Loyalty

The Components of Our Relationship Style

LEADERSHIP

Leadership describes your belief in your ability to occupy a leadership position effectively and to influence others to follow you voluntarily. It describes to what extent you view yourself as a leader. The qualities that make a leader are encased within a general sense of being in control of yourself and your surroundings, being motivated to achieve success, attaining a comfort level interacting with others, and not being afraid to take risks.

If you are an individual high in Leadership, you may find that . . .

A leader's competitive spirit fuels ambition, and people see this fortitude and are happy to follow it. Although these characteristics help you understand how to engage others and get them on board, it has the potential to alienate people around you as others may view you as being too competitive and aggressive.

If you are an individual low in Leadership, you may find that . . .

While a less competitive and aggressive attitude may make people around you feel comfortable, it may hinder your ability to engage with others successfully and get them onboard.

KNOW YOURSELF

RELIANCE

Reliance describes how well you come to trust and attach to people around you. It illustrates the desire to have a personal support web that is founded on openness and accountability. Reliance entails opening up to others quickly, readily, and with little difficulty. It is typified by a willingness to ask for help when it's needed.

If you are an individual high in Reliance, you may find that . . .

Opening up to others is a relatively easy task and you are happy to include people in your life. Your perseverance and your desire for trust ensures that many of the acquaintances or friends you have are long term. Stretching yourself, however, to rely on others can make you vulnerable, bringing with it the risk of disappointment in others. It also has the potential to dampen confidence in your ability to overcome problems on your own and can lead you to see others as a crutch rather than a social support network.

If you are an individual low in Reliance, you may find that . . .

You tend to solve problems autonomously without depending on others. Although protecting yourself from being overly reliant on others lessens your vulnerability to being disappointed in others, the limits you impose on your perseverance and trust in others have the potential to hamper your ability to build long-term relationships.

WHY LOYALTY MATTERS

EMPATHY

Empathy describes how well you are able to identify and sympathize with others. It is the tendency to adopt a more flexible outlook and to accept and appreciate people for who they are. This brings with it warmth and friendliness that is inviting to others.

If you are an individual high in Empathy, you may find that . . .

You tend to approach others in a compassionate, kind-hearted, and understanding way. You can see problems through the eyes and hearts of others, and this wins you admiration and affection, whether you know it or not. There may be times, however, when your empathetic nature can burden you and make you feel that others inadvertently take advantage of you by consistently seeking you out for help or advice.

If you are an individual low in Empathy, you may find that . . .

You tend to avoid finding yourself in situations where you feel burdened by other people's problems. As a result, you are less at risk of being taken advantage of. But this can also prevent you from seeing problems through the eyes and hearts of others, which has the potential to create distance between yourself and others.

KNOW YOURSELF

SECURITY

Security describes a general sense of stability and comfort with yourself and your environment. It endorses a feeling that things are going well and there is no need to worry excessively or be anxious. This leads to a life with a lower amount of stress and pressure, ultimately weeding out being needlessly encumbered by a sense of the impending.

If you are an individual high in Security, you may find that . . .

You have a sense of reassurance and comfort and are able to enjoy the moment. You are relaxed and are able to manage anxiety and stress successfully. An overly relaxed attitude, however, may get in the way of your ability to foresee situations and be preemptive about sources of risk that have the potential to cause problems in the future.

If you are an individual low in Security, you may find that . . .

You are more likely to feel on edge, to have an underlying sense that something is wrong or that things are going to go wrong. And although this prevents you from getting too comfortable, it also results in greater worries, which has the potential to impact your ability to enjoy the moment.

CALCULATIVENESS

Calculativeness describes your ability to control and promote your image and ideal environment for your personal benefit.

WHY LOYALTY MATTERS

It is an ongoing evaluation of others and the role they play in your life based on the innate belief that there are multiple layers to every person and every interaction. This brings with it a level of formality in interactions and selective articulation of yourself, and control over self-presentation.

If you are an individual high in Calculativeness, you may find that . . .

You are able to surmise the potential gains and losses for you in a relationship. You place importance on showcasing yourself in the right way. This has the potential, however, to cause others to view you as less sincere and less worthy of their complete trust. It may also lead others to perceive you as being unemotional and manipulative in some circumstances.

If you are an individual low in Calculativeness, you may find that . . .

You are less likely to see relationships as a means of potential gains versus potential losses. You are also more comfortable being yourself instead of controlling how your image is showcased. This can lead others to view you as more sincere and worthy of their trust. Although the ability to be yourself is reassuring, it has the potential to bring with it a sense that you are being too naïve and not realizing the full potential of opportunities that present themselves.

KNOW YOURSELF

CONNECTEDNESS

Connectedness describes how you view and interact with others on a personal level. Close and tight relationships typify the crux of this dimension. A feeling of connection to others forms the basis and bedrock of happiness. It encompasses a style of frequent and close interaction and navigating people and drawing them close with ease.

If you are an individual high in Connectedness, you may find that . . .

You tend to be passionate about the relationships in your life and you invest time, effort, and faith in developing them. When a relationship begins to fail, however, it results in restlessness. Because of the value placed on personal connections with others, it can become uncomfortable if a connection deteriorates.

If you are an individual low in Connectedness, you may find that . . .

Given that less of your happiness hinges on the closeness of the relationships you have, there is less room for disappointment and discomfort when a personal connection deteriorates. This has the potential, however, to cause you to feel like a loner or to lead to a life of primarily casual friendships/relationships that lack the fulfillment that deep and intense bonds provide.

WHY LOYALTY MATTERS

INDEPENDENCE

Independence describes the level of comfort with spending time by yourself or leading an autonomous life. It is about your approach to feeling control over your own destiny. Self-discipline and thoroughness are all integral components of this outlook.

If you are an individual high in Independence, you may find that . . .

You tend to feel like you're in the driver's seat. You tend to have strong self-discipline, but you can get disappointed in yourself when this discipline breaks down. Your independence reduces your chances of getting disappointed by others, but you have the potential to be missing out on valuable opportunities to capitalize on other people's ideas and strengths.

If you are an individual low in Independence, you may find that . . .

Your reduced sense of independence allows you to take advantage of and capitalize on other people's ideas. You are more likely to take pleasure in the company of others. These tendencies, however, have the potential to lead you to over-rely on others, missing out on the opportunity to make decisions that would best suit your needs.

KNOW YOURSELF

TRADITIONALISM

Traditionalism describes your perceptions on the nature and pace of your preferred everyday life. It reflects the desire for consistency, normalcy, and regularity. It brings with it a sense of caution when approaching truly unfamiliar situations, and a tendency to operate within your comfort zone. There is no felt need to show off or flaunt.

If you are an individual high in Traditionalism, you may find that . . .

You tend to prefer to take the safe route, the tried-and-true way of getting things done. You also are cautious in new environments. You don't flaunt your success, instead preferring humility. As a result, however, others may remain in the dark about your achievements and potential, and you may be missing out on new experiences that could potentially provide you with novel perspectives and excitement.

If you are an individual low in Traditionalism, you may find that . . .

You are more likely to be open to new ideas and experiences. This enables you to take advantage of different and novel perspectives. You tend to be more accepting of change and of getting out of your comfort zone. As a result of these tendencies, however, you have the potential to get sidetracked or feel like you are lost in uncharted territory.

WHY LOYALTY MATTERS

PROBLEM-FOCUSED COPING

Problem-focused coping refers to how you go about meeting challenges, overcoming obstacles, making choices and withstanding the consequences of those decisions. Problem-focused coping describes a planned and rational approach to solving problems, where negative emotions are avoided by taking some action to modify, avoid, or minimize the threatening situation.

If you are an individual high in Problem-Focused Coping, you may find that . . .

You employ a strong sense of reason and rationality when addressing a problem. You like to examine the problem from multiple angles so that you get a feel for the issue at hand and create a mental plan for dismantling each issue you encounter. This tendency has the potential, however, to get you caught up in presenting your case in a matter-of-fact way, which can at times make you appear cold or callous to others.

If you are an individual low in Problem-Focused Coping, you may find that . . .

You are less likely to address problems using a methodical, analytic framework. This tendency, however, could hinder you from identifying and effectively addressing the root cause of a problem.

KNOW YOURSELF

EMOTION-FOCUSED COPING

Emotion-focused coping refers to how you go about meeting challenges, overcoming obstacles, making choices, and withstanding the consequences of those decisions. Emotion-focused coping describes an approach that focuses on managing one's emotions in solving problems and unpleasant emotions are directly moderated or eliminated.

If you are an individual high in Emotion-Focused Coping, you may find that . . .

You tend to display your emotions openly and seek out advice and comfort from others. At times when confronted with problems, you would prefer to focus on something other than the issue that is bothering you. While this tendency allows you to keep your emotions under control, it has the potential to make you overly focused on the emotions you experience and less focused on addressing the problem at hand.

If you are an individual low in Emotion-Focused Coping, you may find that . . .

You tend to be less likely to display your emotions and to seek out advice and comfort from others when confronted with a problem. Rather, your tendency is to focus on what is bothering you. This tendency may help you focus on solving the problem at hand, but it may also cause you to suppress

your feelings, and miss out on getting valuable advice from others.

Loyalty Bonds Different Relationship Styles

Virtually all of us can think of someone in our lives with whom we interact positively but who also has traits that annoy us. Our friends can at times say the same about us.

All of us have aspects to our relationship styles that make us less than attractive at times to people who are very important to us. Even the most narcissistic among us inherently recognizes this to be true. Still, we make the effort to hold on to these connections. Why?

Our loyalties to one another mediate the connection between our differing relationship styles. Were this not the case, at some point all of our relationships would disintegrate.

And we cherish this aspect of loyalty. It means that we won't be abandoned when we aren't on our best behavior.

In fact, sometimes we stay in a relationship merely because of that person's loyalty to us. It's why we often hear something equivalent to "He may be deeply flawed, but *at least he is loyal*." For example, it isn't difficult to find quotes like this sprinkled throughout the Internet:

- "He may be worthless, but at least he is loyal."
- "Granted [he] has not done a bang-up job either, but at least he is loyal to those around him."

KNOW YOURSELF

- “She might be a b@#!, but at least she is loyal to her friends.”

For loyalty to mediate our different relationship styles, however, it is not enough simply to feel loyal. The object of our loyalty (friends, family, etc.) must perceive that we have acted and will continue to act with loyalty toward them. Often, however, this is where things break down—our perceptions of our loyalty often differ considerably from those of our friends and family.

Self-Discovery

We all want to be happy. It is in our nature to prefer to bask in the warmth of positive feedback. It is also natural to fear information that challenges our self-image.

This puts us in a catch-22. Being happy requires that we confront the things that keep us from getting there. And what keeps us from getting there often exists inside of us—in particular, in how we live our loyalties.

The place to begin is to know where you are. We need to know how we define our loyalties. But, as an old saying goes, “You can’t see the picture when you’re inside the frame.” So we need to know how we present our loyalties to others.

We hope that by revealing your loyalties—both from your perspective and the perspective of your friends and family—that you can identify not only where you are but

WHY LOYALTY MATTERS

the direction you need to go to get you where you want to be. Our loyalties define who we are. By understanding and acting on them, we can define who we will become.



This is a good time to visit <http://www.loyaltyadvisor.com> and complete the self-assessment, including supplying the email addresses of people who you would like to contribute to your assessment by providing you with an independent and confidential assessment of their perceptions of your loyalty. In chapter nine, we'll provide some guidance on what to do next in your loyalty journey.