

Discernment Tool

(for personal use only)

This *Graces of State* assessment tool is made up of a series of seven lists that help a person determine his or her “motivational gift.” For a variety of reasons, it sometimes takes both time and persistence for a person to identify his specific motivational gift. In other cases, the gift may seem quite clear to a person (or to others!), but it isn’t easy to be personally reconciled to it—perhaps this motivation seems unattractive or “less” than another one, or has been an unwitting source of embarrassment to the person because of childhood experiences or comparisons. Nevertheless, every person has only one motivational gift.

Though it is not possible to change one’s innate motivational orientation, it is possible to assimilate attributes of the other six gifts, either by close association to others in childhood or, later, as part of the maturing process of the whole person. For example, although everyone is motivated by one particular gift, it is usual to be heavily influenced by one’s parents’ motivational gifts. This means that it is common to score high in one or two other of the “graces of state,” besides one’s own. These, however, (though it *is* possible to be the same motivation as a parent) are likely to be merely learned behaviors.

God made human beings to need one another; to be truly human is to live rightly-ordered, inter-dependent lives. Though knowing what one’s motivational gift is and how it works helps an individual in many ways, it has not been given merely for one’s own benefit. Its primary purpose is relational, to lead one into cooperative interaction, particularly in the service of the Body of Christ, for the glory of God.

Because the essential orientation of the “graces of state” is relational, an excellent way to discover one’s gift or motivation is by the effect one has on other people. A very good test is to ask oneself, “Have others said this about me?” Or it is often helpful to have an intimate friend or family member read over the lists of statements in reference to oneself. If he or she says, “Yes, that is how you affect

me,” or “Yes, that is how I have experienced you,” or “Yes, that is who I know you to be,” the motivational gift can be pretty accurately pinpointed or confirmed.

Using the Graces of State Discernment Tool

This tool works best using an oral presenter who is already familiar with the “graces of state” (in order to clarify questions when an opportunity is given at the end of each section). The presenter will begin going down the lists, slowly reading aloud each statement . The participant should:

- listen carefully and check off the statements that apply to him more than half the time, for example 2 out of 3 times;
- follow your first instinct, not spending too much time analyzing for hidden meanings;
- simply leave unchecked, if the statement applies to you rarely, and move on to the next statement;
- wait to ask clarification at the end of each section.

It is important that you do not respond according to who you think you should be or who you would like to be!

Following the discernment statements is an explanation of how to calculate and interpret the results.

Person # 1

46

- ☞ I am interested in conserving resources.
- ☞ I react strongly when I see something being wasted; if something can be recycled, it should be.
- ☞ Other people have called me stingy, frugal, or miserly.
- ☞ I have a tendency to keep unused napkins and ketchup packets after a meal.
- ☞ I find that I often cheer for the one who has the least advantage.
- ☞ I am motivated to address the needs of the poor and underprivileged.
- ☞ When I desire to give and I am unable to, I feel stifled.
- ☞ I often think, "That's just not fair! Something needs to be done about it."
- ☞ The concept of investing a small amount for a large return stimulates me.
- ☞ I receive joy in making an article of clothing last a very long time.
- ☞ I am often overlooked and so I feel as if I don't make a difference.
- ☞ I keep track of things by making notes on little scraps of paper or notebooks.
- ☞ It excites me to find a useful purpose for something that has been discarded.
- ☞ I judge harshly those who indulge themselves but don't consider the needy.
- ☞ I have been accused of thinking more of others than my own family.
- ☞ I do not respond positively to people who pressure me for money.
- ☞ In social settings I seek out the person whom others are ignoring.
- ☞ I have been asked, "Why won't you throw these things away?"
- ☞ I take seriously the duty to eat right and exercise; avoid smoking and drugs.
- ☞ If I have a problem I feel the need to come up with a solution before I present it to others.

20 entries

Person # 2

47

- ☞ I'm often frustrated and think, "Am I the only one who sees that this needs to be done?"
- ☞ I do not hesitate to exhaust my own energies and resources to accomplish a goal.
- ☞ It's hard for me to say "no" to anyone who asks for help.
- ☞ Rather than ask for help it is easier to just do it myself.
- ☞ I prefer to work where no one can observe how I do things.
- ☞ At times I see so many things that I have to do that I feel paralyzed.
- ☞ It is a great satisfaction if something I have done helps another person.
- ☞ I desire to be acknowledged, but not necessarily through public recognition.
- ☞ It frustrates me to see a need and not be able to fix it.
- ☞ I do better relating one on one than performing in front of large groups.
- ☞ Although I may give the impression that I am a good leader, the idea of making decisions that affect others and then telling them what to do paralyzes me.
- ☞ I often get in trouble because I have procrastinated.
- ☞ Oftentimes, when I have a specific task to get done I will do everything else first.
- ☞ In positions of leadership I get in trouble because I cannot delegate to others.
- ☞ I love to figure out how things work.
- ☞ I often struggle with unlawful thoughts, for example, how to get things my own way.
- ☞ Repetitive menial tasks such as doing dishes annoy me and I will try to avoid them; however, once I start doing them I don't mind them so much.
- ☞ What I do truly sums up the worth that I feel about myself. If I do something great, then I am great. If I do something horrible, then I am horrible.
- ☞ Oftentimes I will neglect my own work to help others, but reserve the right to be resentful about it later.
- ☞ When strong leadership guides me I am very productive and satisfied.

20 entries

Person # 3

48

- ☞ Pain and struggle are valuable experiences for producing growth.
- ☞ When others are talking to me I often give verbal affirmation or encouragement such as “uh, huh” or “I know.”
- ☞ I am motivated to help people become the best they can be.
- ☞ I feel most comfortable relating face to face with another person.
- ☞ People seek me out to get my advice or encouragement regarding difficulties.
- ☞ I like to help people by giving them step by step actions to improve their life.
- ☞ I identify with other people’s pain in order to help them with their problems.
- ☞ When explaining a point it does not bother me if I get specific details mixed up as long as the general principle is communicated.
- ☞ I often feel hopeless because I expect results prematurely.
- ☞ It comforts me to be by myself or have “alone time.”
- ☞ I take what people say at face value.
- ☞ I find myself avoiding anyone who has hurt me in the past.
- ☞ I have a fear of being rejected or of getting something wrong.
- ☞ In crisis situations it’s easy for me to see what needs to be done.
- ☞ In my mind I’m always working on the next step.
- ☞ Information that is purely “theoretical” is annoying. I am interested in information that gives practical direction or can be applied in a practical way.
- ☞ Rules are necessary, but certain situations call for changes to the rules.
- ☞ I get things started but it’s hard to finish things.
- ☞ I am easily offended by someone who does not listen to me.
- ☞ I feel satisfied if a person believes what I have told them and acts upon it.

20 entries

Person # 4

49

- ☞ I have a strong attraction to beautiful people and beautiful things.
- ☞ I often wonder why we all can't just get along.
- ☞ It hurts me deeply to be excluded.
- ☞ It hurts me when other people are excluded.
- ☞ The reality of Final Judgment is dreadful to me and I can't bear to think of it.
- ☞ I react to being labeled, limited, or defined.
- ☞ I am repulsed by ugly or vulgar things.
- ☞ Every effort should be made to alleviate suffering and comfort those who are being afflicted.
- ☞ Deep meaningful friendships with mutual commitment is one of the most important things in life.
- ☞ Confrontation makes me extremely uncomfortable, I'll do what I can to avoid it.
- ☞ Oftentimes people come to me to unburden themselves.
- ☞ I need lots of time to process and express how I am feeling.
- ☞ Surprisingly, there are times when I am sad because of another's good fortune.
- ☞ Surprisingly, there are times when I am happy at another's bad fortune.
- ☞ Other people have told me to stop crowding them or to give them more space or that they feel like I am suffocating them.
- ☞ In conversation I easily fall into talking about others.
- ☞ I feel horrible if I forget the birthday of someone close to me.
- ☞ I am willing to overlook the faults or even the sins of another in order to keep peace.
- ☞ It's not easy for me to let go of a grudge.
- ☞ It is very important to me that the entire family gathers for holidays.

20 entries

Person # 5

50

- ☞ If other people work with me, I have a strong expectation of personal loyalty.
- ☞ I am willing to endure negative criticism if it means we are arriving at the goal.
- ☞ If I am not working towards a goal I feel lethargic, useless, and unimportant.
- ☞ When I get frustrated I often hear myself say, "Oh, what's the point anyway?" or "Who cares, anyway?"
- ☞ I have heard other people say that I am lazy, or that I appear lazy, or "Why aren't you doing anything?" when I am actually working hard to figure something out.
- ☞ My first emotional response when my will gets crossed is anger.
- ☞ Menial and repetitive tasks such as washing dishes annoy me. I will do almost anything to avoid them.
- ☞ When I approach a problem I make it as bullet-proof as possible, so I don't have to deal with it in the future.
- ☞ It is exhausting for me to communicate one on one with another person for an extended time or on a deep emotional level.
- ☞ I need things to look good: my personal appearance my car, my house, my spouse, and my children are important to me
- ☞ Other people are easily intimidated by me, or people have told me they are easily intimidated by me.
- ☞ I find it easy to identify people and resources that are necessary to get a job done right.
- ☞ Generally I find it difficult to form intimate friendships. I feel more comfortable in a group of people I trust or just by myself.
- ☞ When I need to I can easily charm an individual or an entire group of people.
- ☞ My circle of trust does not extend beyond what I can control.
- ☞ Others have said, "Why do you always get it your way?"
- ☞ I feel good when I have something to look forward to.
- ☞ To get things done some people's feelings will get hurt. That's just the way it is.
- ☞ I enjoy the challenge of establishing new procedures.
- ☞ When motivated towards a goal I don't get deterred by small details, I stay focused on the outcome.

20 entries

Person # 6

51

- ☞ I prefer to acquire knowledge about a situation before acting upon it.
- ☞ I feel compelled to clarify exaggerations.
- ☞ It is important to read and follow directions.
- ☞ It is easy to discuss all the aspects and details of a topic that I know well.
- ☞ Others have said that I have a refined sense of humor.
- ☞ I enjoy puns and plays on words.
- ☞ It's essential to be prepared before presenting to others.
- ☞ I tend to not speak about something I know nothing about.
- ☞ I prefer social settings when I know what etiquette is expected of me.
- ☞ I find it difficult to limit myself in something I like.
- ☞ It makes me feel important to explain complicated processes or concepts in a way that others can understand it.
- ☞ When I consult anyone it comforts me if they are licensed and certified.
- ☞ When cooking I prefer to follow a recipe.
- ☞ It is not easy for me to maintain meaningful relationships.
- ☞ I do not feel comfortable doing things extemporaneously.
- ☞ I accumulate and file knowledge for future reference.
- ☞ I do not like making decisions on the go.
- ☞ When something goes wrong it is important to discover the reason.
- ☞ I get impatient when people don't get to the essential point.
- ☞ It annoys me when rules are changed in the middle of a game.

20 entries

Person # 7

- ☞ Everything in life is either black or white.
- ☞ I know the good are rewarded and the bad are punished.
- ☞ I believe there is a heaven and probably most people are going to hell.
- ☞ I hate dishonesty.
- ☞ Complete strangers confess their sins to me.
- ☞ I react to phony people.
- ☞ I feel a compulsion to speak the truth to others.
- ☞ Details bore me, large things excite me.
- ☞ I will cut off a relationship in order to separate myself from evil.
- ☞ I am willing to do the right thing even if I have to suffer alone for it.
- ☞ I will use my own person in extreme ways to make a point. ☞ I know I need God in my everyday life.
- ☞ I make decisions quickly and without second thoughts.
- ☞ I am comforted by the thought of Final Judgment.
- ☞ I easily get obsessed with immoral images.
 - ☞ It's easy for me to exaggerate.
- ☞ I get accused of being judgmental.
- ☞ I get impatient for justice to be accomplished.
- ☞ I feel anxious watching other people perform.
 - ☞ Violent weather and political upheaval stimulate me.

20 entries

Please tabulate your scores from the Discernment questions.

Person #1 Giving Motivation I checked _____ out of 20.

Person #2 Serving Motivation I checked _____ out of 20.

Person #3 Exhorting Motivation I checked _____ out of 20.

Person #4 Mercy Motivation I checked _____ out of 20.

Person #5 Administrating Motivation I checked _____ out of 20.

Person #6 Teaching Motivation I checked _____ out of 20.

Person #7 Prophecy Motivation I checked _____ out of 20.

My highest score was person # _____, the _____ Motivation.

This is most likely your Grace of State/Motivational gift.

The next one or two high score persons were # _____ and # _____.

When you are finished you should have one distinct result that is higher than all the rest. This is likely to be your designation as to what Grace of State you have.

Is there also one or two that are higher than the remaining four? These may indicate the motivational gifts by which your parents or other influential persons in your life have influenced you. There might be only one next higher score, since you may actually have the same motivational gift as one of your parents. It is also possible that one of the lower scores represents the gift that is complementary to yours.

There are occasions when these discernment questions aren't sufficient in identifying your Motivational Gift. Don't despair! If your scores are too close to give a clear distinction, then it is sometimes helpful to ask someone who knows you well to ask their opinion about how you answered certain questions. Is this really how I respond in circumstances?