

The “-tudes” are the natural essence of an individual. They guide us through life emotionally, spiritually, and mentally. Although we all have aspects of each of these natural tendencies, every one of us is unique, with one or two “-tudes” being dominant. The interaction between these natural forces makes up a physiology system in Chinese Medicine. When one of the natural forces is out of balance, it affects all the rest, and symptoms of dis-ease come up. Fixing the dis-ease is important. What we really need is to re-balance and support the underlying natural essence or “-tude” to be healthy. Take a look at the “-tudes” and see where your animal friend, or you, fit in so that you can both maximize connection.

“The Charismatic Royal Jester” FIRE-tude. Corresponds to the *Heart/Heart Protector (Pericardium)/Triple Heater* in Chinese Medicine. These bold and curious, exuberant individuals meet and greet everyone ecstatically. They are good looking, funny, love praise, love playing games, and being the center of attention. Me! Me! Me! They are natural “leaders” and everyone loves to be around them. Examples of unbalanced *Fire-tude* may be hyper-ANXIETY, training overwhelm, not being able to keep weight on, nervous system disorders, heart or circulation issues, body temperature regulation, or nervous diarrhea and vomiting.

“The Supportive Compassionate Compadre” EARTH-itude. Corresponds to the *Stomach and Spleen/Pancreas, and lymphatics* in Chinese Medicine. Anything related to digestion and the absorption of food through the body can be part of the picture. These sweet, kind, responsible, and steady caregivers love everyone, and don’t mind taking a back-seat out of the limelight. Being part of the family is very important. They make fabulous baby sitters and *live to eat*. They enjoy respect and *love to eat*. They jump on counters surfing for leftovers, always being cordial about it. Examples of unbalanced *Earth-itude* may be WORRY, almost any stomach disorder, diarrhea, absorption issue, pancreatitis, weight gain, or irritation at working or getting off the couch.

“The Astute Aloof Librarian” METAL-tude. Corresponds to the *Lung and Large Intestine* in Chinese Medicine. It’s all about taking in (oxygen) and letting go of what you no longer need (poop). Breath is LIFE. Anything related to breathing, immunity, physical strength, stamina, or colon issues can be part of the picture. Metal individuals are super intelligent and precisely perfect, like honed power tools, with strong boundaries. They are extremely independent, tough, proud, self-sufficient and love routine. Examples of unbalanced *Metal-tude* may be breathing distress and cough, environmental or skin allergies, weakness, poor immunity – catching everything that comes around, diarrhea or constipation.

“The Sensitive Courageous Chameleon” WATER-tude. Corresponds to the *Kidney and Urinary Bladder* in Chinese Medicine. Water runs deep, providing nourishing structure, supporting all. It freezes, flows and steams. The Kidney holds our *original* essence from birth and directs all body development initially. As part of *every cell* in the body, Kidney Water regulates fluid and bone metabolism – especially the spine, toxin release, urinating, body temperature, underlying immunity, and reproduction. Water individuals are extremely sensitive, smart, adapt and change quickly - like chameleons. They may be unpredictable. They are super charming and may be shy or very cautious. They supply courage from a deep place and healthy fear where needed. Examples of unbalanced *Water-tude* may be “Scaredy-cat” FEAR at everything, self-destruction from losing center, birth anomalies, back or disc problems, boney arthritis, kidney or bladder issues, or auto-immune problems.

“The Competitive Sport Captain” WOOD-itude. Corresponds to the *Liver and Gall Bladder* in Chinese Medicine. Woods are extremely athletic, strong, solid, competitive and *alpha* military type leaders. They work hard and insist that you do, too. They are bold, decisive and capable. In fact, it’s their way or the highway. Liver regulates our *mood*. Digestion, especially of fats, is under Wood’s domain and the Liver and Gall Bladder work hand and hand with the Earth Stomach and Pancreas. Wood smoothly directs the Blood and energy flow in the body, managing pain. Examples of unbalanced *Wood-itude* may be depression, frustration or anger, liver or gall bladder issues, vomiting bile, cramping, headaches, pain in any part of the body, hip arthritis, tendon, ligament or joint issues.