

Discipline

Your world needs to be predictable. It needs to be ordered and planned. So you instinctively impose structure on your world. You set up routines. You focus on timelines and deadlines. You break long-term projects into a series of specific short-term plans, and you work through each plan diligently. You are not necessarily neat and clean, but you do need precision. Faced with the inherent messiness of life, you want to feel in control. The routines, the timelines, the structure, all of these help create this feeling of control. Lacking this theme of Discipline, others may sometimes resent your need for order, but there need not be conflict. You must understand that not everyone feels your urge for predictability; they have other ways of getting things done. Likewise, you can help them understand and even appreciate your need for structure. Your dislike of surprises, your impatience with errors, your routines, and your detail orientation don't need to be misinterpreted as controlling behaviors that box people in. Rather, these behaviors can be understood as your instinctive method for maintaining your progress and your productivity in the face of life's many distractions.

Action Items for This Theme

Seek out roles and responsibilities where structure exists.

Don't hesitate to check as often as necessary to ensure that things are right. You feel an urge to do it anyway, and soon enough others will come to expect it of you.

Learn how to use a time management system. It will make you even more efficient and give you more confidence.

Create routines that make you follow through systematically. Over time, people will come to appreciate this kind of rigorous predictability.

Recognize that mistakes might depress you. Precision is a core part of who you are; however, you must find ways to move through these moments of annoyance to prevent becoming dragged down.

Help other people add a little order to their lives. Do it in the right way and they will appreciate it.

Be ready to:

Explain your Discipline theme to your close associates. Initially they might resent your perfectionism, but once you have explained how it works for you, do not be afraid to let your perfectionism show. Others will want to see it in action.

Recognize that many others are not as disciplined as you are. More than likely, their clumsy process will frustrate you, so try to look beyond it, and instead assess them on their results, not on their process.