



## A FAMILY DEFINED BY PERSONALITY

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Homer Simpson of *The Simpsons* and Peter Griffin of *Family Guy* seem to have many things in common. Based on what I've seen so far, both characters have irreverent and boorish personalities that have necessitated that their respective wives and families have to forgive them countless times for slipping up. As hotheads, both tend to get mad too easily, losing their temper at the most unlikely times and slightest provocations. I have not completely embraced *Family Guy* until now, but have learned to love *The Simpsons* immensely. But one good thing about *Family Guy* is how its creator has been able to break through the silver screen via a foul-mouthed bear in the movie *Ted*.

But this is about *The Simpsons*, so there.

Bart Simpson has undoubtedly imbibed the boorish personality of his dad. He has no respect for authority, even calling his dad Homer. Although Sideshow Bob has attempted to do him in so many times, he still lives his life without regard for authority or good character. However, Bart can often take the bull by the horns and call a spade a spade. I admire that he is honest with his opinions, no matter how hurtful they may become. He is a playful chap whose pranks amuse as much as they often hurt.

Lisa Simpson is the young little girl whose genius is a great match for her brother's foolishness. The sensible, precocious little girl symbolizes idealism, goodness and honesty that are good to emulate for today's youth. A tree hugger, her mixture of tenderness and fierceness is often fascinating. I believe she is the saving grace for her family.

Marge Simpson is the devoted, unassuming wife and mother who dedicates her every waking moment to her unique family. Despite having put up with Homer's weird personality quirks for years, she has not ceased finding more ways to love him and their children. She is an image of unconditional wifely devotion and motherly love that envelop her entire family in the best and worst of times. Many real life women can learn from her wisdom in facing responsibilities.

Of course, Maggie Simpson is the forever-tripping, pacifier-sucking baby that has been considered a baby genius many times. Although she hasn't had a significant speaking part in the animated comedy till now, she has managed to show specific aspects of her personality. She can get excited, angry and frustrated at various times. She attempts to help her family, especially her dad, in several episodes. Generally, she lies in peaceful slumber or indulges in contented play.

As is apparent in the animated cartoon—and in real life—a family can be comprised of several types of personality that might clash at certain levels but still find resolution in the end. No matter how different family members inherently are, they should still find reason to love each other and try to stay together as one. Divergent personalities might be a uniting factor for stronger families.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Do you think family members should always have similar personalities to become stronger? Why or why not?
2. Describe each member of your family briefly. Focus on their personalities and what makes each one special in their own way. Would you change any one in any way?
3. How can divergent personalities make a family stronger?
4. Why do you think *The Simpsons* has been widely-accepted the world over?
5. If you could create your ideal family, what specific personality traits would you prefer to have in each member?