



# Truth or Dare

What kind of risk taker are you?

By Ralph Keyes



**E**veryone takes risks—but some people leap more eagerly than others. University of Wisconsin psychologist Frank Farley has identified two personality types: the thrill-seeker, a “Big T” person; and the thrill-avoider, the “little t” type. This quiz will help you decide which type applies to you.

For each question, circle the number preceding the answer that comes closest to describing your actions and attitudes. After answering each question, add up the circled numbers to find your score. Then compare scores with your mate.

**1. How much television do you watch in an average week?**

1. More than 20 hours.
2. Eleven to 20 hours.
3. Six to ten hours.
4. Zero to five hours.

**2. You're in an unfamiliar city, and you're beginning to feel hungry. Nearby are some comparably priced restaurants. Where would you eat?**

1. Wendy's.
2. The Country Kitchen.
3. Pedro's.
4. The Indonesian Isle.

**3. How would you most enjoy spending an afternoon at a resort?**

1. Reading a good book.
2. Talking with a fellow guest.
3. Canoeing on a river.
4. Learning to hang glide.

**4. You're planning to drive on a twisting coastal highway. Driving south means you'll have spectacular coastline views but more danger of going off cliff edges. Driving north limits both your view of the coastline and your risk of going off a cliff. Which direction would you go?**

1. North.
2. South.

**5. How often do you drive faster than 65 miles per hour?**

1. Almost never.

2. Seldom.
3. Often.
4. Regularly.

**6. Motorcycle riding strikes you as an activity that is primarily:**

1. Crazy.
2. Dangerous.
3. Romantic.
4. Exhilarating.

For questions 7 through 10, assume you're equally capable of performing each activity. For each set, circle the number preceding the one you would most enjoy. If neither seems appealing, pick the one that's least unappealing.

**7. Which would you prefer?**

1. Roller skating.
2. In-line skating.

**8. Which would you prefer?**

1. Hot-air ballooning.
2. Para-sailing.

**9. Which would you prefer?**

1. Cross-country skiing.
2. Snowboarding.

**10. Which would you prefer?**

1. Snorkeling.
2. Scuba diving.

For questions 11 through 14, circle the number preceding the word that best describes your reaction to the activity.

**11. Bungee jumping.**

1. Scary.
2. Exciting.

**12. Writing a book.**

1. Satisfying.
2. Tedious.

**13. Playing video games.**

1. Jarring.
2. Arousing.

**14. Leading a task force on health benefits at work.**

1. Challenging.
2. Boring.

**15. If you had been living on the East Coast in the 1800s, do you think you would have joined a wagon train headed west?**

1. Definitely not.
2. Probably not.
3. Probably.
4. Definitely.

**16. You are responsible for supervising an employee whose work is not meeting standards. You would be most likely to:**

1. Assume the employee will eventually straighten out.
2. Bring the employee up for peer review.
3. Send the employee a written performance evaluation.
4. Have a candid, face-to-face discussion with the employee.

**17. Picture yourself climbing to the top of a very high diving board. Behind you is a line of people waiting their turn. Looking down from the board, you become frightened so you:**

1. Turn around and climb back down.
2. Jump in, feet first.
3. Dive anyway, head first.

**18. Which of the following best describes your behavior before age 12?**

1. Very well behaved.
2. Basically well behaved.
3. Mischievous.
4. Hyperactive.

**What Your Score Means**

Any score above 30 suggests you're a "Big T" person—a high-thrills seeker. You're more at ease with activities that could involve real danger—taking up hang-gliding, perhaps, or playing the stock market. A score of 30 or below suggests you're a low-thrills seeker—the "little t" type. You are more comfortable with long-term risks such as deciding to start a family or changing careers in midlife.

For a richer life, high-thrills folks might consider taking some emotional leaps—a heart-to-heart talk with your spouse, for instance. Low-thrills people could add adventure to their lives by taking more risks, such as trying a new physical challenge. 

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