

# Matters of the Heart: Whither the Type A Personality?

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## *The Huffington Post:*

I first studied psychological science in the 1970s, and one of the most popular ideas at that time was the Type A personality. Two cardiologists, Meyer Friedman and Ray Rosenman, had made the case that a certain type of person — competitive, driven, hurried, easily angered — had a much higher risk of heart attack and heart disease than did easy-going types, which they labeled Type B. The idea of Type A personality took hold in the public imagination, and it's still heard in the common parlance today.

The concept was scientifically controversial from the start, but it did provoke a lot of debate — and an explosion of research. Indeed, the notion of a heart attack-prone personality played an important part in the emergence of health psychology and behavioral medicine as legitimate approaches to understanding disease. But the Type A idea itself soon began to erode, and eventually disappeared from serious scientific discussion.

Should the Type A personality be consigned to the dust heap of failed scientific theories? That would be a mistake, according to psychological scientist Karen Matthews of the University of Pittsburgh, who sees much of value in that original, crude concept. In an article forthcoming in the journal *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, Matthews traces the maturation of the Type A personality from its origins to its more nuanced form today.

Read the whole story: [\*The Huffington Post\*](#)

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