

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Experiencing Psychological Type:  
Interactive Insights Into the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

by

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## ABSTRACT

Carl Jung's theory of psychological type, as embodied in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, has been extensively researched. Many books have been published on the MBTI and the application of Type theory to relationships, careers, counselling, organizational development, leadership, education, and learning theory.

My thesis takes a personal and experiential approach to Type theory. My research is based on the question, "How has understanding psychological type affected your life?". Participants in this study were invited to share stories, insights and epiphanies in regard to their own Type experiences. "Learning circles" provided the opportunity for narrative, storytelling, and autobiography.

My study demonstrates the effectiveness of learning circles as a research method, and the power of Type theory as a tool for self-understanding.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“Until you are on your own side, you have no chance of winning. As long as you are opposing others, you can experience only defeat. Insight is the discovery that you can take care of yourself and support your fellow man at the same time. You do not exist apart from the universe. You are a ray of its energy, a potential for initiative and creation.

Goethe said: ‘Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.’”

If you retreat from your creation because you cannot envision the means of support, then surely, no support will materialize. Find your role. Commit yourself to its playing. And you may find the theatre you need. A producer may emerge. Other actors may arrive. And an audience may assemble to help you realize your dreams and accomplish other destinies.”

Martine J. RoBards, Ph.D.  
The Insight Game

A stage has unfolded. My stage. A stage where my role has taken form - taken flight. My love of Psychological Type began nine years ago and with great determination and patience my script has been written. But not without the support and encouragement of some wonderful people in my life - my theatre, producer, actors and audience.

My theatre: The foundation for my theatre began with believing in myself which was nurtured by a remarkable woman. Sandra Forsyth. Without her encouragement, wisdom and faith, I may never have found the strength within to follow my dreams.

She entered my life during difficult times and has fostered my growth in becoming who I am today. I thank her for her guidance, blessings and encompassing 'light'.

My script: Without the love and support from my husband, Jim, there would never have been time to write my thesis. He has been my rock, my island, my confidante. Through frustration and tears to insights and celebration he is here for me. Our children, Jimmi Dolores (26 months old) and Camryn Alexandra (7 months old), deserve special thanks. During two pregnancies and following two births, they have been patient with a mom struggling to find balance within her role - mother, teacher, student. I look forward to sharing this triumph together with them as they embark on their own journeys. I hope that I am able to give as much to them as they have given to me.

My producer: Tad Guzie, my mentor, supervisor, and friend, gave me the opportunity to develop my role. His enthusiasm, endless encouragement, and belief in me has been the genesis toward expanding my consciousness - to journey beyond flatland. To Tad, I convey my deepest admiration, appreciation and respect.

My actors: Without Carol Bull, Tammy Dewar, Laurie Hillis, Don Hurst and Nicki Olsen (my mom) my script would have remained lifeless. Their participation in our learning circles created my script. My sincere appreciation and thanks to all of you. Your insights and wisdom will live on forever. A special thanks to my mom who shared in the lives of my girls for two weeks each summer over the past two years. I thank you for giving me the freedom to focus on my role as student and for giving my girls some special time with grandma.

My audience: Throughout the years, I have experienced many synchronistic encounters. To all of you who have been a part of my universe, my journey, I thank you. My friends, Sandy Brown and Tammy Richard, deserve special thanks for believing in me and my journey.

Thank you for helping me to realize my dreams.  
We celebrate together.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
APPROVAL PAGE .....	ii
ABSTRACT .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	vii
 <b>CHAPTER</b>	
<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE AND THE MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Carl Gustav Jung - Psychological Type .....	8
Katherine Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers .....	10
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) .....	14
MBTI Step II .....	26
<b>3. LEARNING CIRCLES .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>4. OUR FIRST GATHERING .....</b>	<b>35</b>
My Ever-Inferior 'T' .....	37
Group Dynamics .....	39
T / F Homes???? .....	40
Children and Type .....	41
Thinking vs. Feeling .....	43
Slowing Down 'J' .....	46
In Thought .....	47
Concluding Circle Thoughts .....	48
<b>5. DIARY OF AN ENFJ .....</b>	<b>49</b>
Romance .....	50
My Ever-Inferior 'T' .....	51
Pumping Memoirs .....	52
A Workshop Experience .....	59
Mother/Daughter: T / F .....	60
Living for Lynchburg/Planning for Calgary .....	62
Mothering and Type .....	64

<b>6. LEARNING CIRCLES - TOGETHER AGAIN</b> .....	<b>68</b>
Group Dynamics .....	69
MBTI Step II .....	71
Thinking Females .....	75
Feeling Males .....	79
Psychological Type - A Label or Not? .....	84
Quest for More Spirit .....	86
Saying Goodbye .....	89
<b>7. TYPE BLUES</b> .....	<b>90</b>
<b>8. THE J/P CHALLENGE</b> .....	<b>95</b>
Where it All Began .....	97
J / P in Love .....	97
Caring for Children .....	100
The Art of Not Being Late .....	102
In Conclusion .....	103
<b>9. FINAL INSIGHTS</b> .....	<b>104</b>
<b>10. TO BE CONTINUED</b> .....	<b>108</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....	<b>110</b>
<b>APPENDIX A</b> .....	<b>113</b>
<b>APPENDIX B</b> .....	<b>114</b>



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

My first glimpse into the world of Psychological Type theory not only mystified me but enlightened me. Over the next nine years, my interest grew, blossomed and flowered into what would become this thesis - a garden of hope, sweat and tears. My interest turned to passion to obsession to late nights bonding with my computer in order to pave the path of this journey. So where does this journey take me?

Psychological Type theory captivates me but not as much as the expression of the people who live it. My focus with this thesis is to capture some of that expression.

How does understanding Type affect your life? This is my ultimate question. The answer not from a text book but from the people. My interest lies in the stories of those who have chosen Type to be a major part of their lives, to study it, understand it and more importantly live it. And then to share it!

From a research perspective, the participants I chose, or should I say, chose me, came to me because of their passion for understanding themselves through the arena of Psychological Type. Clearly those who participated were not randomly chosen, they had heard about my topic and expressed an interest in

joining me to share their own personal stories on the enriching experiences that understanding Type had brought to them. Several friends, family members, colleagues and acquaintances, approached me. So, how did I manage to choose the people that I did? It was all based on their Psychological Type. In order to create the full picture, it was critical for me to represent as many of the Types that I could, out of the 16 possible outcomes (see Appendix B for descriptions of the 16 Types - I chose to include the descriptions provided by Martine J. RoBards from *The Insight Game*<sup>1</sup>, based on the clarity, depth and detail they provide). The effectiveness of a learning circle would be lost if I used all 16 Types. With such a large number of people, the personal, intimate, group I hoped would develop, could not have been possible. Due to time constraints, the importance of bonding, and the principles used in conducting learning circles, I chose 6 participants, including myself. It was important to capture as many of the scales (E/I, S/N, T/F, J/P) as possible, in order to gain a broad spectrum of experiences.

The participants chose pseudonyms, myself not included. They are: Calli (ENFP), Sally (ENTJ), Sage (INFP), Laura (INTJ), Nicolette (ISTJ) and myself, Yvonne (ENFJ). My husband

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<sup>1</sup> Martine J. RoBards. *The Insight Game Version 1.0* (Melbourne, Australia: Obsidian Software, 1995).

graciously gave me permission to include him, and his experience with Type, in my own personal stories. His pseudonym is Andrew and his preference is for INFP. Nicolette (ISTJ) is my mother. I discuss the dynamics of this at a later time. For now, it is important to know my reason for including her in this study. She was the only Sensing person I knew who was even remotely interested in participating in my study. It is often difficult to find Sensing people who are interested in participating in a study such as mine, where I venture into their unknown and least comfortable realm, the abstract and theoretical with a focus on the “big picture” of possibilities. I weighed the issues between including my mom versus the enriching testimony of a Sensing person. I found that including a Sensing person, regardless of her relationship to me, would be more beneficial to this study.

Thanks to the postmodern movement, a door has been opened to a different way of researching and more importantly, recording that research. I have taken this path. You will find this thesis encompasses the writing style of a person with preference for ENFJ. There is no denying that my dominant Feeling perspective prevails. The underlying foundation of my work reflects upon the philosophies of Carl Jung. “Jung’s spiritual orientation gave him a broad perspective on science and rational knowledge. He saw the rational approach as merely one

of several approaches, which all resulted in different but equally valid descriptions of reality.”<sup>2</sup> Thinking Types prefer a more rational, analytical approach, whereas, Feeling Types prefer to focus on the people, involving a more empathic view. My interest in people and their experience with Psychological Type is the entire basis for my research. My personal motto is taken from the writings of Ken Wilber, “Transcend and Include”. In a *Brief History of Everything*<sup>3</sup>, Wilber describes the process of incorporating and moving on - transcending and including. Much like Jung, this is about going further, taking a leap from “flatland”<sup>4</sup> and discovering the valleys and hills on our path. This is what inspired me to go beyond, to venture from a more empirical approach to a personal one, in writing my thesis.

This is my journey, my story, as a woman/mother/wife, a narrator/storyteller, teacher/learner and researcher/participant. I share the stories of others - their lived experience. This is where hermeneutics come to play a critical part. What you will read here is my interpretation of the experience we shared during the learning circles. My data was collected through video taping our sessions. I chose video so that I could interpret, not only

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<sup>2</sup> Fritjof Capra. *The Turning Point* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982).

<sup>3</sup> Ken Wilber. *A Brief History of Everything* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1996).

<sup>4</sup> “Flatland”, a term used by Wilber (1996). “... the idea that the sensory and empirical and material world is the only world there is.” Ibid., 11.

through the auditory sense but visually as well. When interpreting qualitative data, it is important to understand, or attempt to understand, the “political praxis”<sup>5</sup>, the deep structure of the conversation or what lies below the surface. My reason for using video tape enabled me to see more than just the words, but body language and facial expressions as well, in order to help in interpretation of the data.

The methodology that I have chosen for my thesis is framed by oral history (the in-depth interview):

“Oral History is ... subjective: Its subjectivity is at once inescapable and crucial to an understanding of the meanings we give our past and present. This is the task of qualitative research and specifically oral history interviews: to reveal the meanings of lived experience. The in-depth interview offers the benefit of seeing in its full complexity the world of another. And in collating in-depth interviews and using the insights to be gained from them as well as different kinds of information from other kinds of records, we can come to some understanding of the process by which we got to be the way we are.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> “Political Praxis”. a term used by Langellier (1989). “All personal narratives have a political function in that they produce a certain way of seeing the world which privileges certain interests (stories and meanings) over others, regardless of whether or not they contain explicit political content. The unmasking of ideology in the personal narrative requires an analysis of deep structure and meanings, within a discursive field of multiple texts and participants.” Excerpt taken from: Eva McMahan and Kim Roger’s. *Interactive Oral History Interviewing*. (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1994).

<sup>6</sup> Valerie Raleigh Yow. *Recording Oral History - A Practical Guide for Social Scientists* (Thousands Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc., 1994). 25.

My methodology is also framed by learning circles, as described by Brenda Roddick in *Learning Circles for Lifelong Learning Connections*<sup>7</sup> and the inspiring work of Tammy Dewar in her dissertation entitled, *Women and Graduate Adult Education: A Feminist Postructuralist Story of Transformation*. Dewar reflects upon her own style in the introduction of her paper, “Thankfully, a space has been created in the postmodern world to ‘theorize the contradictory moments’, to make room in the research world for the personal accounts of multiplicity and contradiction that have always characterized the classrooms of teachers and learners, regardless of age, subject, or institutional context.”<sup>8</sup> Through poetry, storytelling, narrative and autobiography, Dewar skillfully takes research to a new level. I believe that my interest in sharing the personal accounts and lived experiences of the participants in my study is grounded in the aforementioned resources, providing the “frame” for the “picture”, so to speak.

Through the medium of learning circles, described in Chapter 3, my research participants provide insight and wisdom.

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<sup>7</sup> B. J. Roddick. *Learning Circles for Lifelong Learning Connections* (Journal of the Alberta Association for Continuing Education, Volume 21, 1993).

<sup>8</sup> Tammy Dewar. *Women and Graduate Adult Education: A Feminist Postructuralist Story of Transformation* Doctoral Dissertation (Calgary: University of Calgary, 1996).

sharing and thought. As we travel the circle, energy envelops us and we become as one - solidarity joins us for the purpose of our gathering. We take with us the stories passed from person to person, reliving our own type experiences through each other.

Our journey takes us through Type theory, the sharing of insights from two learning circles with six participants and personal stories of my own Type experience and those who are closest to me. This may be a journey few have embarked on but one which I not only struggled with but enjoyed immensely - the duality of which transcended me to a higher place within myself.

Since the beginning of this process, I have become a mother of two, moved to another country, and left my teaching career to raise our children. Much of the experience I share revolves around these dramatic changes in my life. For me, the writing of this thesis has been a tremendous growth experience. Participating in the study challenged those involved, and I hope reading it will provide clarity, understanding, appreciation and a love of the magic that Type can bring to your life.

May the journey begin ...

## CHAPTER TWO

### PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE AND THE MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR

To provide a framework for the foundation of my thesis, this chapter will discuss the theory behind Psychological Type and the instrument (*Myers-Briggs Type Indicator - MBTI*)<sup>1</sup> used to help determine it. Initially, I hadn't planned to use the MBTI Step II, however, due to the enthusiastic response of the report by the participants, there will be a description of this included as well.

#### Carl Gustav Jung - Psychological Type

Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), a famous psychotherapist, first published his theories on Psychological Type in 1921. His theory on Type developed from a personal interest in the differences among people, more specifically the differences he encountered with Freud and Adler, his colleagues, and a need to define these differences. In *Psychological Types*<sup>2</sup>, he covers the history of the development of grouping personalities into

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<sup>1</sup> *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* and MBTI are registered trademarks of Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc. They are used extensively throughout this thesis, however will only be cited this once.

<sup>2</sup> Carl G. Jung, *Psychological Types* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).



categories from ancient times to his present day, concluding with his own theories of that time.

Much research has been conducted based on the work of Carl Jung, from Psychological Type to Archetypes to Occultism to Symbols and Dreams. His own research is deeply respected and grounded in much of what human science researchers do today. My focus here is strictly with his interest in Psychological Type and how it inspired the authors of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator to create an incredible instrument to be used in the study of personality development. A greater understanding of Jung, the man, and his other works can be found in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*<sup>3</sup> and various other books, such as, *The I and the Not I*<sup>4</sup>, *Man and His Symbols*<sup>5</sup>, and his autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*<sup>6</sup>.

Jung saw patterns in people's behavior that helped to describe the differences in how people took in information and processed it. The act of taking in information he termed Perceiving and the two opposite ways of doing this are through Sensing and Intuition. When we process this information and

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<sup>3</sup> Carl G. Jung, *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967).

<sup>4</sup> Esther M. Harding, *The I and the Not I* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965).

<sup>5</sup> Carl G. Jung, *Man and his Symbols* (New York, New York: Dell Publishing, 1964).

<sup>6</sup> Carl G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1961).

come to a conclusion, we are Judging and the two opposite ways of doing that are through Thinking and Feeling.

We use all four functions every day in both our external worlds (Extraversion) and our internal worlds (Introversion), however, we will have a preference for two of them - one perceiving and one judging. Consequently, in combination, Jung determined eight Psychological Types describing predictable differences among people.

His theories are elaborate and complex, clearly written for the academic, leaving the person of average ability and intellect little opportunity of understanding and using Type in their lives. Fortunately for many of us, Katharine Briggs and her daughter, Isabel Briggs Myers, entered the picture - their goal, to make Type Theory available to all.

### **Katharine Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers**

Katharine Briggs (1875-1968) and her daughter, Isabel Briggs Myers (1897-1980), were women ahead of their time - true visionaries. Considering their era, they were pioneers to be revered by all people, especially women. I admire and respect who they were, what they stood for and the contributions they

made to Jung's theory of Psychological Types. Thanks to their work, it is widely understood and used by people of all backgrounds.

I have drawn mainly from two resources, in particular, to develop this section of Chapter Two: *Katharine and Isabel - Mother's Light, Daughter's Journey - The Story of the Making of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*<sup>7</sup> and the *Association for Psychological Type MBTI Training Program - Self Study Guide*<sup>8</sup>. Their life stories share with us the extreme dedication these women had to putting in the time and effort required to develop an instrument as well respected as the MBTI. They lived and breathed Type theory making it not only their interest but their life force.

The backgrounds of both Katharine and Isabel enable us to see how their perseverance and passion developed in respect to creating the Indicator. Katharine, who was home schooled until she entered college, came from a well educated family. She graduated from Michigan Agricultural College in 1893 - an accolade not many women had achieved. Education was greatly respected in her family, something she instilled into her

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<sup>7</sup> Frances Wright Saunders. *Katharine and Isabel - Mother's Light, Daughter's Journey - The Story of the Making of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1991).

<sup>8</sup> Psychometrics Canada Ltd., *Association for Psychological Type MBTI Training Program - Self Study Guide* (Kansas: APT, 1994).

daughter, Isabel. Isabel was also home schooled until College, where she earned a degree from Swarthmore College in 1919. A quote from Isabel's father, originally her mother's credo, was passed onto her, as well: "The people who keep the world moving are the people who think - and think - and think, and observe - and observe - and observe, and work - and work - and work."<sup>9</sup> This is what Isabel, with the help and support of her mother, did.

Katharine always held an interest in people and their personalities - similarities and differences. She began research of her own on grouping personalities into categories in 1917. Little did she know that a famous psychoanalyst was doing the same. Jung's book *Psychological Types* was published in English in 1923 and became a great source of inspiration for Katharine. She realized that much of what she had been studying was presented in this text. Sadly she burned her own notes, which would have had contributions of their own to make, and began an intensive study of Jung's work.

From 1923-1941 the study of Type became her main focus along with her family, especially her daughter, Isabel Briggs Myers. Isabel saw the success of the Indicator as a result of four

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<sup>9</sup> Frances Wright Saunders. *Katharine and Isabel - Mother's Light, Daughter's Journey. The Story of the making of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1991). 11.

pieces of luck in her life: her parentage (she was taught that you can do things without having formally studied them), meeting her husband (they were opposites on all but one aspect of their Types which gave Isabel a lab within her own home), Katharine's interest in the differences among people (and consequently her desire to learn all she could about Type theory), and the realization of the need for such an Indicator. Through meticulous work they set about trying out sample questions on friends, family, educated colleagues of her father, and eventually medical school students. For nearly 20 years, their focus was on creating valid, reliable questions to help in determining a person's Psychological Type. Together Katharine and Isabel began developing an instrument to make Type theory available to more people.

The event that precipitated the creation of a Type instrument was World War II, which these women saw as in many ways a conflict of Types on a global scale. They were also concerned with productivity for the war effort, which they felt could be improved by matching people's Types to the jobs that needed to be done.

After decades of data collection and research, Isabel Myers saw the first publication of her and her mother's work in 1956, by Educational Testing Service (ETS). Research continued and

the Indicator continued to improve with Isabel making it a prime focus of her life's work. Consulting Psychologists Press (CPP) began publishing the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)* in 1975 and continues to do so today.

The MBTI was designed to be used with healthy, normal people to help in determining their Psychological Type. Sixteen Types have been described and each one has special gifts and value - there are no right or wrong Types. The purpose of knowing Type is to gain a greater appreciation of self and others, an appreciation of individual differences and to use it to enhance communication and relationships. Personality is a complex area of study with many facets affecting it. My interest, and the focus of this thesis, is specifically in the area of Psychological Type as it makes up one aspect of our personality.

### **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)**

There have been many books written on the subject of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and all of them provide descriptions of Type theory. I am drawing upon several of these resources in the summary of Type theory that I present here. Those resources include: *Manual: A Guide to the Development and Use of the*

*Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*<sup>10</sup> , *Gifts Differing - Understanding Personality Type*<sup>11</sup> , *Introduction to Type*<sup>12</sup> , *People Types and Tiger Stripes*<sup>13</sup> and many others I have read throughout the past several years.

The MBTI is a self-report questionnaire which is used to determine your Psychological Type known as your Reported Type. By using several dichotomous questions it forces you to choose between opposites of equal value so that a single Type unfolds. Your subjective responses are objectively scored to provide your reported type. You are the best judge of whether this Type fits for you or not. If it does, it is considered to be your True Type, if not, then in discussion with a qualified interpreter of the Indicator, you will determine what your True Type really is. Statistics show that for most people their Reported Type is their True Type, making this one of the most reliable psychological instruments in the world.

How does one define reliability? Rather than get into a lengthy discussion on Statistics, I will refer you to the *Manual*:

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<sup>10</sup> Isabel Briggs Myers & Mary H. McCaulley. *Manual: A Guide to the Development and Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1985).

<sup>11</sup> Isabel Briggs Myers & Peter B. Myers. *Gifts Differing - Understanding Personality Type* (Palo Alto: Davies-Black Publishing, 1980).

<sup>12</sup> Isabel Briggs Myers. *Introduction to Type* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1993).

<sup>13</sup> Gordon Lawrence. *People Types & Tiger Stripes* (Gainsville, Florida: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc., 1996).

*A Guide to the Development and Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.* "A good test must be RELIABLE. Reliability refers to how consistently an instrument measures what it attempts to measure ... With the MBTI, we are interested in coming up with the same type each time a person takes the Indicator... the MBTI is reasonably consistent over time and when subjects report a change in Type, it is most likely to occur in only one preference, and in scales where the original preference was low."<sup>14</sup> Gordon Lawrence, in *People Types & Tiger Stripes*, points out that "Those who critique such instruments generally regard the MBTI as meeting or exceeding expectations for reliability and validity; that is, for getting consistent results and for accomplishing what it was designed to do."<sup>15</sup>

You may find that your Reported Type does not suit your personality. If so, there may be several reasons for this. You may have answered the Indicator according to who you think you should be or who you want to be rather than who you truly are. You may have been influenced by your current career or

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<sup>14</sup> Psychometrics Canada Ltd., *Association for Psychological Type MBTI Training Program - Self Study Guide* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1994), 4.28.

<sup>15</sup> Gordon Lawrence, *People Types & Tiger Stripes* (Gainesville, Florida: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc., 1996), 93.



relationship expectations. You may have preferences which are not clearly defined or by chance your responses were not accurate.

Once your Type is determined, we refer to it as your preference - much like having a preference for which hand you write with; you can write with both hands but will have a preference for one. Similarly with Type, you will feel most comfortable, competent and energized with your preference but may encounter times where the opposite preference is more appropriate.

The MBTI reports your preferences on four scales consisting of two opposite poles. These are:

- Extraversion (E) / Introversion (I)
- Sensing (S) / Intuition (N)
- Thinking (T) / Feeling (F)
- Judging (J) / Perceiving (P)

The Indicator gives you your results in the form of four letters, one from each scale. An example would be, ENFJ where the 'E' stands for Extraversion, 'N' for Intuition, 'F' for Feeling, and 'J' for Judging. We would say that this person has preference for ENFJ. The four basic orientations to life: E / I and J / P are known as attitudes and the four basic mental processes: S / N and T / F are known as functions. The perceiving functions are

S / N, whereas the judging functions are T / F. When the letters of the scales are combined, you end up with 16 different Psychological Type descriptions. All Types are of equal value, and all have strengths and weaknesses.

The E / I Scale indicates where you prefer to focus your attention. Extraverts focus on the outer world of people and events, whereas Introverts focus more on their inner world of ideas and reflections. It is important to understand that Extraverts are not necessarily outgoing and Introverts passive as they are so often referred to in lay terms. Simply, Extraverts are energized primarily from without and Introverts from within. A person with preference for Extraversion tends to communicate by talking, often initiates, is sociable, and may have many interests. They are often known for speaking before thinking. I have heard many E's upon leaving a meeting state, "Why did I say that? Why didn't I just keep my mouth shut?". A person with preference for Introversion tends to communicate by writing, keep personal information private, reflect before speaking and have few interests but are highly involved with them. They are the ones who leave meetings wishing they would have said more.

The S / N Scale indicates how you take in information. People with preference for Sensing take in information through their senses: hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, and touching.

They tend to be practical, focus on details, live in the present and trust in their experience. Often they are good with facts and step-by-step procedures. People with preference for Intuition, however, take in information through the big picture of possibilities and relationships using their intuitive sense (sixth sense). They tend to be more abstract, global, imaginative and future oriented. Jumping around in conversation is common with Intuitives, and this often drives the Sensing Types crazy.

The T / F Scale indicates how you make decisions. A Thinking preference habitually use a logical, analytical, and rational approach to making decisions. They can make decisions based on the good of the system rather than the people, which often gives them the image of being "tough-minded". A Feeling preference is more inclined to make those decisions based on the people involved - what is important to them and others. Feelers are thought of as "tender-hearted" since they strive for harmony and what is best for the people over the system. Personal values play a large part in the Feeling person's decision making.

Lastly, we look at the J / P Scale. This scale indicates a person's orientation towards the outer world - how others see them. A person with preference for Judging tends to be organized, methodical, scheduled and planned. Closure is of extreme importance, resulting in decisions being made quickly

regardless of whether all the information has been collected. A person with preference for Perceiving tends to be more spontaneous, open-ended, adaptable and flexible. Rather than making decisions too quickly they are more inclined to wait until all the information has been collected, which results in some decisions never being made at all.

Although the four scales are often looked at independent of one another, we get a richer description of the dynamics when we combine them to study Type on a more complex level. Let us look at the definitions of the Dominant, Auxiliary, Tertiary and Inferior Functions. The following descriptions are summarized from *Introduction to Type - Dynamics and Development - Exploring the Next Level of Type*<sup>16</sup>.

The Dominant function, one of the two middle letters (determined by the attitudes: E / I, J / P), is the most conscious and well-developed function, the function with which we are the most confident and comfortable. It is used in our preferred attitude - either Extraverted or Introverted. For example, an ENFJ would have Extraverted Dominant Feeling. Therefore the people who encountered an ENFJ would see his or her Feeling preference

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<sup>16</sup> Katharine D. Myers & Linda K. Kirby. *Introduction to Type - Dynamics and Development - Exploring the Next Level of Type* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1994).

in action, whereas, a person with Introverted Dominant Feeling (e.g. INFP) would use theirs internally so that others wouldn't see it.

The Auxiliary function, the other middle letter, is the second preferred function and it provides balance between E / I and J / P. A person with preference for ENFJ would have N as her preferred Auxiliary function. This would be the second in command, so-to-speak.

A good example of how Dominant and Auxiliary differ in Extraverts and Introverts is when we describe them as a General and Aide respectively. For Extraverts the General (Dominant) is seen at the forefront of all situations and the Aide (Auxiliary) functions in the background, taking care of business for the General. With Introverts, it is the Aide (Auxiliary) who deals with the outside world as the General (Dominant) takes care of the important business inside - the Aide only approaches the General in cases of extreme importance. It is clear to see, the difficulty that arises for the Introvert. For the Extravert what-you-see-is-what-you-get, whereas for the Introvert you first see the Auxiliary function which isn't as developed as the Dominant one. This may lead to misunderstandings.

The Tertiary function is the opposite of the Auxiliary function and is much less developed and conscious. It is not one

of our preferred functions. More research needs to be conducted on this function in order to understand its complete role in Type dynamics.

Lastly, the Inferior function is our least developed function, being the opposite of our Dominant function. According to Jungian theory, it is the key to our unconscious and the most difficult to access if a situation calls for us to use it. Our Inferior function seems to be the one that shows up first if we are under great stress and anxiety. Considering it is our weakest function, you can imagine the mess this can create. Naomi Quenk calls this being “in the grip”<sup>17</sup> When certain triggers are present, our Dominant function becomes more and more intensified to the point where it crumbles and the Inferior function takes over. In this case we act from an unconscious place with our least developed function, creating a type of “Jekyll and Hyde” contrast where we leave people baffled and confused wondering - “Who was that person?”. We are often just as confused ourselves. In Chapter 4, I give an example of the Inferior function at work in myself.

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<sup>17</sup> Naomi Quenk. *In the Grip - Our Hidden Personality* (Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1996).

Type theory in and of itself may seem complicated but with practice and patience clarity can be achieved. You will find descriptions of the 16 Types in Appendix B found at the end of this thesis.

To move beyond merely the descriptive aspect of this section, it is important to understand the applications, strengths, limitations, and ethical issues in the use of this instrument. In order to administer, score and interpret the MBTI, the users must be professionals, such as psychologists, counselors, and some educators, who are able to purchase psychological instruments by virtue of their formal education, OR have taken and passed a qualifying workshop. My own qualifications consist of MBTI courses in: A Qualifying Workshop, The Wisdom of Diversity (in-depth look into each of the Types), and the MBTI Step II Workshop.

The applications of the MBTI are numerous. "After more than 50 years of research and development, the current MBTI is the most widely used instrument for understanding normal personality differences. The MBTI is used in: self-development, career development and exploration, relationship counseling, academic counseling, organization development, team building,

problem solving, management and leadership training, education and curriculum development, and diversity and multicultural training.”<sup>18</sup>

The strengths of the MBTI are numerous. With an understanding of Type theory comes the potential for understanding human nature, in yourself and others. “The MBTI will help you to identify your strengths and unique gifts. You can use the information to better understand yourself, your motivations, your strengths, and potential areas for growth. It will also help you to better understand and appreciate those who differ from you. Understanding MBTI type is self-affirming and enhances cooperation and productivity.”<sup>19</sup>

In using the MBTI, comes great responsibility. Ethically, there are certain issues to consider when administering the Indicator. It must be voluntary, the results confidential, the purpose of using the Indicator must be expressed, and the person administering it must be a qualified user. Keep in mind that those with preference for Sensing will want to know that the results will be practical, the Intuitives will want to see future value in it, the Thinkers may be skeptical, the Feelers can sometimes be more concerned with pleasing the examiner than

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<sup>18</sup> Isabel Briggs Myers. *Introduction to Type* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1993), 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.



reporting their own preferences, and Introverts may be concerned with privacy issues. Creating a comfortable atmosphere and acknowledging the above concerns, often alleviates much of this anxiety.

Sadly, there are still people who misuse the Indicator and exploit the theory behind it. They often stereotype and pigeon-hole people into Type categories, as well as treat the descriptions as traits, using the scores to measure competence, rather than their intended use, to indicate the clarity of the preference (from a slight preference to a clear preference) . It is critical to remember that the MBTI does not involve measuring, but rather involves sorting. Fortunately, “competent and ethical uses of the MBTI are far more common than the misuses”<sup>20</sup> .

The participants in this study know my credentials and the purpose of this research. They understand that their Types (along with a pseudonym) and stories will be shared. All participants received a copy of my thesis before the final edit and were given the option of making changes pertaining to them. A copy of the consent form can be found in Appendix A.

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<sup>20</sup> Gordon Lawrence. *People Types & Tiger Stripes* (Gainesville, Florida: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc., 1996). 87.

## MBTI Step II

The MBTI Step II Expanded Interpretative Report was developed by Naomi Quenk and Jean Kummerow to give greater depth to the original MBTI. Its focus is to provide more insight into your own unique expression of each of your preferences. Form K of the MBTI is used, and through computer scoring a 24 page profile is printed. It covers an expanded description of your Type, the Step II components of your preferences, use and development of your Type, and applications in the areas of communication, problem solving, decision making, change management, and conflict management. The report concludes with a list of references and detailed graphs of your Type, including scores.

The Expanded Interpretive Report (EIR) is “based on both research and feedback from many respondents and reflects patterns of self-descriptions that have repeatedly emerged”<sup>21</sup>. It reports each person’s distinctive use of E/I, S/N, T/F, and J/P, thus giving a more individualized report. Information providing the foundation for the MBTI Step II can be found in the

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<sup>21</sup> Wayne D. Mitchell, Naomi L. Quenk, and Jean M. Kummerow. *MBTI Step II - A Description of the Subscales - A Guide for the MBTI Step II Expanded Reports* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1997), iii.

*Interpretive Guide for the MBTI Expanded Analysis Report*<sup>22</sup> , (the predecessor to the Step II) and its companion *Workbook for the MBTI Expanded Analysis Report*<sup>23</sup> . “Moreover, in the years since the publication of the *Interpretive Guide and Workbook*, additional information has accumulated through analysis of a growing database of respondent profiles, anecdotal reports from workshops, team-building efforts, and experiences that draw on the psychological and consulting practices of the two authors who developed the MBTI Step II Report.”<sup>24</sup>

Quenk and Kummerow remind us that interpretation is still crucial with the Step II, as it is with the MBTI. It is important to discuss with the client his/her “best-fit” Type, since the client is the final judge on the accuracy of the information about themselves. As with the MBTI, each subscale will need to be discussed, keeping in mind that the profile is based on their reported type.

Taking the MBTI a step further, with the Step II, we find that each preference dimension (E/I, S/N, T/F, J/P) is broken down

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<sup>22</sup> Naomi L. Quenk & Jean M. Kummerow. *Interpretive Guide for the MBTI Expanded Analysis Report* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1992).

<sup>23</sup> Naomi L. Quenk & Jean M. Kummerow. *Workbook for the MBTI Expanded Analysis Report* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1992).

<sup>24</sup> Wayne D. Mitchell, Naomi L. Quenk and Jean M. Kummerow. *MBTI Step II - A Description of the Subscales - A Guide for the MBTI Step II Expanded Reports* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1997). 2.

into five more components. However, be aware that there may be other parts, some of which have not yet been identified.

“Further, each dimension is greater than the sum of its parts - just as your basic type is greater than the sum of the four preference dimensions.”<sup>25</sup>

Each of the components consists of two opposite poles and a mix of those poles:

<u>Extraversion</u>		<u>Introversion</u>
Initiating	mixed	Receiving
Expressive	mixed	Contained
Gregarious	mixed	Intimate
Participative	mixed	Reflective
Enthusiastic	mixed	Quiet
<u>Sensing</u>		<u>Intuition</u>
Concrete	mixed	Abstract
Realistic	mixed	Imaginative
Practical	mixed	Inferential
Experiential	mixed	Theoretical
Traditional	mixed	Original
<u>Thinking</u>		<u>Feeling</u>
Logical	mixed	Empathetic
Reasonable	mixed	Compassionate
Questioning	mixed	Accommodating
Critical	mixed	Accepting
Tough	mixed	Tender

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<sup>25</sup> Naomi Quenk and Jean Kummerow. *MBTI Step II Expanded Interpretive Report* (Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1996).

Judging

Systematic	mixed
Planful	mixed
Early Starting	mixed
Scheduled	mixed
Methodical	mixed

Perceiving

Casual
Open-ended
Pressure-Prompt
Spontaneous
Emergent <sup>26</sup>

Most often the component will match your natural preference but in some cases you will find a mixture of the two opposites or an out-of-pattern preference representative of your opposite.

Out-of-pattern preferences indicate where you favor the opposite of your usual preference. For example, my preference (ENFJ) is for Extraversion, Intuition, Feeling and Judgment, however I have an out-of-pattern preference for being intimate (an Introvert component) over being gregarious (an Extravert component) and an out-of-pattern preference for being questioning (a Thinking component) over accommodating (a Feeling component). My Type description will be slightly different from other ENFJ's for in the expanded report I appear as an Intimate, Questioning ENFJ.

Some may find their components to be mixed. In my report it indicates mixed on the E / I scale with the components of enthusiastic or quiet. This provides clarity for me in showing why my preference for Extraversion isn't as strong as the other

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.. 7-10.

scales. Not only do I have an Out-of-Pattern Preference for Intimacy but I am mixed on Enthusiastic/Quiet. This affirms for me why a little Introversion is welcomed now and then, yet Extraversion is my overall preference. For those who are unclear as to what their preferences are, the MBTI Step II may show mixed for many of the various components. This could provide insight for them as to why they report as such. For example, if they report as an 'E' yet feel more like an 'I', the Step II report may show in more detail where they have Out-of-Pattern and mixed preferences which could help them in determining their True Type.

The MBTI Step II report is detailed and provides an in-depth look at your Type, expressing the uniqueness and individuality you bring to that Type. It is important that a trained professional of the Step II interpret your report with you.

### CHAPTER 3

#### LEARNING CIRCLES

In researching my interest in Psychological Type and how understanding Type affects your life, I came upon the concept of "Learning Circles". Tammy Dewar used this approach in her Dissertation, *Women and Graduate Adult Education: A Feminist Poststructuralist Story of Transformation*<sup>1</sup>, which inspired me. She recommended reading B. J. Roddick's paper, *Learning Circles for Lifelong Learning Connections*<sup>2</sup>, to gain an understanding of this type of methodology. Initially, I was unfamiliar with them, however I soon realized how similar they were to a "Sacred Circle" which I had taken part in several times in the more traditional Native American sense. From my own experience, the work of Tammy Dewar, and the paper written by B. J. Roddick, I knew this would be the approach I needed to use with my thesis.

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<sup>1</sup> Tammy Dewar, *Women and Graduate Adult Education: A Feminist Poststructuralist Story of Transformation* Doctoral Dissertation (Calgary: University of Calgary, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> B. J. Roddick, *Learning Circles for Lifelong Learning Connections* (Journal of the Alberta Association for Continuing Education, Volume 21, 1993).

Sacred circles, most often conducted by Native American people, have now become popular with those who have an interest in Native American mythology. Several years ago, a friend and I found ourselves drawn to this way of life and we participated in several of these circles. There are many types of circles, varying from a healing circle to the medicine wheel, however, the purpose is the same - they are used to give voice to the people. I wanted my participants to find their voice, share their wisdom and experience, and the learning circle seemed like an ideal format for doing so.

A circle's symbolism is powerful. Joseph Campbell believes that the circle represents totality - "everything within the circle is one thing - there is no beginning, no end"<sup>3</sup>. To feel safe, connected and as one, I drew on the power of the circle, in the form of the learning circle - strengthening the depth of our communion, a medium to tap into our collective unconscious.

Based on the information presented in B. J. Roddick's paper, *Learning Circles for Lifelong Learning*, I will give a brief summary on the use of learning circles. Learning circles involve telling "our stories", sharing our insights and wisdom with others in a safe and comfortable atmosphere. Combining the people's

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<sup>3</sup> Joseph Campbell. *The Power of Myth with Bill Moyers* (Apostrophe S Productions, Inc., and Alfred van der Marck Editions, 1988). 215.



knowledge with the expert's knowledge provides a framework for exciting learning. Together a kind of synergy develops.

Roddick provides four reasons for participating in a learning circle: "to build community, to recover our history and envision the future, to value our folk culture and to contribute to collective research"<sup>4</sup>. My intent for using the learning circle was for collective research. "Our own memories, and our collective memories are the raw data for research."<sup>5</sup> Storytelling creates a sense of shared experience between the participants - an awareness of the collective consciousness. Anyone and everyone can participate. Participants become one with the group and are caught up with the moment - time stands still. The level of sharing is profound, deep and very insightful. What better way to tap into the human psyche and all that it lives for.

The process we used in this study was as follows. I chose a stone (Rose Quartz) as our symbol to be used for passing from one person to another - I chose this symbol as our representation for relationship. The stone gave voice to the person holding it - the participants could share their wisdom or pass. I began the circle with a comment centering around Type and the participants

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<sup>4</sup> B. J. Roddick. *Learning Circles for Lifelong Learning Connections* (Journal of the Alberta Association for Continuing Education, Volume 21, 1993), 108.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 112.

carried it from there - we went around the circle several times until a natural ending took place. An interesting occurrence took place in our last circle - when the conversation was deep and meaningful (true sharing taking place) the stone was hot, very hot, however when the circle was coming to a natural close, the stone became icy cold. It is almost as though the stone guided us throughout the process. The circles lasted anywhere from two to three hours. A truly magical experience!

From my experience, I found the learning circle to be an ideal format and research method for this type of study.

## CHAPTER 4

### OUR FIRST GATHERING

*So, so nervous! The group will be here shortly. Am I ready? I guess it is now or never. Have faith and go forward.* Mom came early to help prepare goodies while I organized the living room. Everything looks great. Soft music, circle of chairs, wine and food - the setting is comforting and warm. I await their arrival!

Our first gathering was a time to share and bond with one another while engaging in dialogue about our psychological types. What a diverse group - ENFJ, ENFP, INFP, INTJ, ENTJ, ISTJ. I am so looking forward to this opportunity to understand Type and the dynamics it creates. Most of all it will be an opportunity to interact and learn about other types as well as my own. They arrive.

The room is filled with anticipation and excitement while we introduce ourselves and get acquainted. It is as though we have known one another for a very long time. We decide to get started right away so we take our places. *So, so nervous! My heart is pounding and I feel short of breath. Relax, enjoy.*

As one would expect from a 'J' Type, I was organized, prepared and structured. My teacher-self stepped forward as I

handed out information, consent forms, and my plan of how the circles would transpire. Once again, I need to remind myself to let go and allow the circle to take on a life of its own. At times I tend to over-plan. My need for control could get in the way of our sharing. Sage (INFP) reminds me to let the circle take on a life of its own and allow a natural path to develop.

Before we begin this journey, let me introduce the group. We have 6 participants: Sage (INFP), Calli (ENFP), Sally (ENTJ), Nicolette (ISTJ), Laura (INTJ), and myself (ENFJ). We have all been involved with Type anywhere from 6 months to many years; some have taken workshops and conduct them within their own professions and others simply have a personal interest in the area of Type. Sage (INFP), the only male in the group, and Nicolette (ISTJ) are new to Type whereas the other four have extensive experience with it. Calli (ENFP), Sally (ENTJ) and Laura (INTJ) conduct workshops using the MBTI so have not only personal experience with it but professional as well. I (ENFJ) have spent the past two years studying Type and participating in three professional workshops: Qualifying MBTI Program, The Wisdom of Diversity, and MBTI Step II. We are a group of intriguing individuals with diverse backgrounds.

Upon reflection after our gathering, I realize how fortunate I am to have had this encounter with an amazing group of individuals. We quickly went from introductions to an in-depth discussion of Type and how it affects our lives. We shared stories, questions, concerns ... The evening could have gone on forever; time stood still. We conducted a quick practice learning circle and then went directly into our informal discussion on Type. Truly an enlightening and spiritual experience! I waited a week before viewing the tape. Big mistake!

### **My Ever-Inferior T**

Tragedy! What a tragedy! Here I am sitting in front of my television in the basement viewing the videotape of my first learning circle about 20 minutes before my second gathering is to begin. The tears flow continuously while I cry out, "My life is over! There is no way I will ever be able to complete this thesis. I might as well call Tad and quit. I have blown it. I am such a loser. There is no way I can go on." My husband calmly and quietly held me and whispered words of encouragement. This of course, angered me all the more. No amount of consoling could ease my pain. The microphone I had used during the circle had

been bumped during the first couple of minutes and most of the 3-hour session was a steady hum while we all chatted merrily in the background. Devastation! All was lost! So much had come out of that session. Much more than I had ever anticipated. Throughout the entire session my heart had pumped with passion and intrigue at all that I was collecting on tape. All that the group was sharing, the honesty, the openness - all was lost. I could never recapture those moments, so I was doomed. My logic was convoluted and consisted of those all too common all-or-none judgments.

Thankfully, I realized how my inferior thinking function had taken over and my rational logic wasn't that rational after all. I had done it again. All or nothing thinking. I most definitely was in the midst of "the grip"<sup>1</sup>. Naomi Quenk talks about being "In the Grip" as experiencing our inferior function taking over. When faced with certain triggers, we may react with an exaggerated dominant function, mine being Feeling (F), and upon feeling more and more a sense of failure as we struggle to cope, our inferior function seems to take over our personality.

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<sup>1</sup> Naomi L. Quenk. *In the Grip* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1996).

Consequently, I go from being a dominant Feeling person to an ever-inferior Thinking person. I then tend to express myself through “excessive criticism, convoluted logic and a compulsive search for truth”<sup>2</sup> . Since my Thinking function is the least developed, it tends to be an “ever-inferior” function.

I will get back to the inferior function later. For now we return to the learning circle and what I was able to salvage from the tape amidst the hum and buzz from the audio equipment.

### **Group Dynamics**

Most of the group had never met before and were able to come together without preconceived notions or baggage. This wasn't the case for me. In looking back on the tape of our first session, from what I could salvage, there were moments when other issues were present and clearly I wasn't.

Having Calli (ENFP) as part of my learning circle was a real privilege for me. It was an honor that someone with extensive experience with type and learning circles, and who had herself completed a brilliant dissertation, would be willing to share in a project with me. Early in the session, it was apparent that I was

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.. 14.

so nervous and kept looking to Calli (ENFP) for input and support. I soon realized that she was only going to smile and lend support non-verbally - I respect her for letting me discover the process myself. Soon I was able to move on and include Calli (ENFP) as another human being there to share rather than as an icon to be honored.

### **T/F Homes????**

An interesting conversation centered around my home and how that may represent my Type. At first, I wondered if gathering in my home was a good idea. Perhaps the group would be uncomfortable in such a personal setting. Apparently not. We began a discussion of the pictures and symbols found around my living room and a great dialogue on Thinking versus Feeling homes came up. The Feelers in the group really liked my home and felt it to be so comfortable and representative of relationship, which would be as important to them as to myself. Sage (INFP) mentioned how displaying his books was important too, and represented him. Interesting to get the feedback from the Thinkers. They described their own home as being simple with



basic furniture and very little decoration. Their Preference was to have less clutter so that cleaning could be quick and simple. Wouldn't it be interesting to do a study on this?

### **Children and Type**

Laura (INTJ) was very curious about children and their types. She wondered if we pass our own Type on to our children.

According to Jung, our Type preference is present at birth, and some even believe it to be developed in-utero (e.g. extraverted fetuses are more active than introverted fetuses - just a thought). Throughout life we develop the different facets of our Type and if encouraged and supported will live out our True Type. However, some children may be inclined to develop a false Type if a parent overpowers and controls them to an extreme, smothering their true self. In this case, neurosis may develop, only to be reversed by finding and living out the True Type.<sup>3</sup>

Elizabeth Murphy, a well respected author on Psychological Type and children, likens a child's personality development to that of a flower. "A seed is planted and develops a stem first,

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<sup>3</sup> Carl G. Jung, *Psychological Types* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 332.

then leaves, then a bud, then a blossom. The stem itself does not reveal what the blossom will be, and the blossom cannot grow until a stem and leaves have developed...Similarly, as a child's personality develops, it can only develop into the innate preferred pattern of one of the sixteen possible type combinations. People can spend a lifetime using their less-preferred functions, but their innate preferences will remain unchanged...When given the freedom to be themselves, people's natural preferences emerge."<sup>4</sup> Her theory states that the attitudes (E/I, J/P) seem to be stable and present at birth, whereas the functions (S/N, T/F) tend to develop over a person's lifetime.

During a Type workshop, I met a man who had experienced living life through a false Type. He lived most of his life as an ISTJ, truly believing that this was his true self even though much of his life he was unhappy and disjointed. During his 40's, through intensive personal growth work, he discovered that his True Type was actually ENFP - the complete opposite of ISTJ.

What did he attribute this to? His father was a military man with a strict and structured method of raising children. His influence was so profound that for his son to live out his True

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<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth Murphy. *The Developing Child - Using Jungian Type to Understand Children* (Palo Alto: Davies-Black Publishing, 1992), 12.

Type would have been virtually impossible. Thankfully he recognized this and was able to turn his life around.

### **Thinking vs. Feeling**

The Thinking and Feeling facet of Type interested all of the group members - we seemed to keep coming back to it. Half of the participants were Thinkers and the other half were, of course, Feelers. Consequently, we were able to discourse in a balanced manner. We shared stories regarding our experience with this aspect of Type.

I started off with a discussion of how I chose the participants for this project. Originally my husband Andrew (INFP) was to be a part of the group. However, my advisor Tad (ENTJ) thought it would be best to exclude him since I already had a male INFP (Sage) and another family member participating. My first thought was one of panic. How was I going to tell my husband that he couldn't be involved and still live with him throughout this process? I was so concerned with his feelings and how this would affect him and our relationship.

Tad (ENTJ) could see the concern in my eyes and reassured me that I could blame him for the rejection rather than take that on myself. Tad (ENTJ), having great insight into the Feeling

Types, knew that this would be a difficult task for me and was offering me a way out. Since Andrew (INFP) is a Feeling Type as well, I knew it wouldn't matter why he was rejected or who did it, but that he wasn't going to be able to participate. I knew he was excited about it and it hurt me to have to let him down. I appreciated Tad's (ENTJ) insight into my position as a Feeler, and understanding Type theory helped me to know where he was coming from and that it really was easy for him to say that Andrew (INFP) could not be involved since that was the logical decision - coming from a true Thinker.

I decided to tell Andrew (INFP) the truth even though I knew it would hurt him AND it did AND we survived. He took his wounded self and our daughter out for the evening so that I could conduct the learning circle at home. We have had some difficult times since, but understanding Type and using Type in our dialogue has truly made a difference and has helped us to work through this.

To us Feelers, it may appear that Tad's (ENTJ) request was cold and tough-minded, however, in his defense Sally (ENTJ) stated that Thinkers still have feelings. These two different judging processes can come to the same conclusion. I knew it wasn't a great idea to have Andrew (INFP) in the group, I just needed a different process to get there. Calli (ENFP) mentioned

the difficulty this must have presented for me with wanting to please both Tad (ENTJ) and Andrew (INFP) - coming from another Feeler who knows. Sage (INFP) really appreciated the Thinking/Judging person's way of coming to conclusions. He often wished he could be so decisive - "This is the way it is - that's that - let's move on" - he likes this approach but knows it goes against his nature to respond in this way.

Another interesting discussion was initiated by Sally (ENTJ). She talked about a long-distance relationship she had started a year or so earlier with a gentleman living in Toronto - she lived in Calgary. They were really hitting it off but she wasn't ready to give up her career and move to Toronto to be with him. So ..... they logically decided to give it a year, and if it was still meant to be they would discuss who would move and when. Well, I must say my Feeling side was surprised. My response would have been, "So can you pick me up at the airport? I'll be there in 5 hours." With relationship being so important to Feeling Types, they may sometimes - many times all too often - make decisions from their heart rather than their head. This is another good example of how understanding Type helps one to understand where another person is coming from. I (ENFJ) would have thought Sally (ENTJ) crazy had I not known her to be

dominant Thinking. Had Sally's (ENTJ) friend preferred Feeling over Thinking, this logical decision could have caused some hurt feelings, unless a Type dialogue ensued.

### **Slowing Down 'J'**

**Insight: "Slowing down 'J' and working more with intuition has brought a wealth of insight."**

Sally (ENTJ)

Sally (ENTJ) has worked with many Judging people who really were heading for nervous breakdowns, with their compulsion for planning and structuring their lives. She firmly believes that we need to keep perspective and not let Type rule our lives - something she continues to work on in herself. Sally (ENTJ) talked about friends of hers who are ESTP and ESTJ who were having marriage problems and therefore sought counseling. After three sessions, the 'J' spouse said, "It is now over - we either make it or break it" whereas the 'P' spouse was really into it and was learning a lot. I can see how this could seem like a hopeless situation for this couple. Understanding Type could be a great benefit.

Andrew (INFP) often referred to my 'J' as a little 'j' during my pregnancy with our daughter, Jimmi. Unfortunately for me, I was not as organized and structured as I wanted to be. It seemed as though whenever I tried to be somewhere, something would get in the way and it wouldn't work. For nearly 30 years of my life, I had never locked my keys in the car, however in pregnancy, I did it twice. I would drop things and spill things which I had never done before. My 'happy-to-be-P' husband took great delight in this as he watched me grow from a definite clear preference for 'J' to a withering 'j' much to my own dismay.

### **In Thought**

**Insight: "I appreciate my mother so much more now due to my understanding of Type - it was war as a child."**

Calli (ENFP)

**Insight: "It is so helpful to know people from each Type - it provides clarity, understanding and appreciation."**

Sally (ENTJ)

### **Concluding Circle Thoughts**

Considering that I was unable to salvage much from the video of our first learning circle, I was able to pull some of it together. This was thanks to the group and their willingness to share and participate in this project. Our second gathering was captured on tape and will be discussed in a later chapter. In summation, Type has had a tremendous impact on the lives of the participants, and they continue to learn and grow with it daily, applying it to their professional and personal lives.



## CHAPTER 5

### DIARY OF AN ENFJ ...

My orientation towards ENFJ has been clear to me since my first encounter with the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. I have a clear preference for Intuition (N), Feeling (F) and Judgment (J) whereas my preference for Extroversion (E) is slight. I am comfortable with many aspects of Introversion (I). However, I do see myself more in tune with Extroversion overall. During my first year of teaching we were given the MBTI during a Professional Development day in March of 1989. At that moment I knew that this day would impact the rest of my life. I just hadn't realized that it would take me 7 years to bring it to fruition.

Dr. Tad Guzie entered my life in December of 1995 - a day that I will never forget. We met under difficult circumstances, since at the time I was mentoring a student teacher who wasn't having a very successful round. I felt a connection with Tad immediately - I knew this man would play a major role in my journey of self discovery. Tad and I met at the University a few days later to discuss the possibilities of my taking a Master's Degree. When asked what my interests were and what I would want to pursue, I replied emphatically, "Psychological Type by

Carl Jung, have you heard of it?" Synchronicity! We were meant to meet. Tad has extensive experience with Type and the MBTI. This was no chance encounter. This moment stands still for me in a memory filled with tears, passion, Spirit. From here, I became involved with workshops through Psychometrics Canada and began my Master's program that following September.

I want to share some of my experiences with the effects of understanding my own type - ENFJ. These are stories that show what an ENFJ person is like, and I hope, also gives a glimpse into what lies beneath that person - me.

### **Romance**

Relationships mean everything to me. I believe that fairy tale romances do exist and that they can persevere if the effort is put forth. Wine and dine me, bring me flowers, bring romance to my life and I will be loyal and committed forever. Sandra Hirsh and Jean Kummerow describe the qualities of an ENFJ in love in their book, *Life Types*<sup>1</sup>. Loyalty and commitment are extremely

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<sup>1</sup> Sandra Hirsh & Jean Kummerow. *Life Types* (New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1989).

important to an ENFJ and consequently they do not handle break ups well - disharmony is a difficult place to be in for the ENFJ. Opportunities to discuss relationships and share openly what one truly believes provide the ENFJ with some of their most treasured and enjoyable moments with others.

### **My Ever-Inferior 'T'**

I cannot count the number of times that my ever-inferior Thinking function has nearly brought on divorce between my husband and me. Not because of anything he has done necessarily but because of my reaction to it. When we have a disagreement about something, I want to have it out right away - talk, talk, talk and then come to an agreement and move on. However, as so typical with an INFP, he needs time to think about it and prefers to discuss the situation later. Usually, I let it out anyway and end up walking away angry and frustrated with his silence and lack of cooperation. During the time that he is taking to work out his feelings internally my ever-inferior 'T' is running rampant. Once again my convoluted logic precludes me and I decide that there is no way that this marriage will ever work and the only conclusion that I can come to is one of divorce. Three days later I walk up to my husband and state that

our marriage is over and that it clearly would not have lasted anyway and then I turn and walk away, leaving behind a very bewildered and confused partner. At least now, with an understanding of type, we can talk about and even laugh about these episodes afterwards. What used to take days to deal with we can now usually recognize within minutes and focus on the real issues rather than the ever-inferior ones.

### **Pumping Memoirs**

Pumping memoirs? What on earth am I talking about? ENFJs can be described as people who “feel real concern for what others think or want, and try to handle things with due regard for the other’s feelings ... enable people to achieve their potential.”<sup>2</sup> They “are highly attuned to others, using empathy to quickly understand emotional needs, motivations, and concerns. Their focus is on supporting others and encouraging their growth”<sup>3</sup>. In every Psychological Type workshop that I have participated in, and in discourse with my fellow ENFJs,

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<sup>2</sup> Isabel Briggs Myers, *Introduction to Type* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1993), 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

these are the characteristics that come up over and over again. Many of us have even gone beyond a healthy scope of helping others to the extent that it becomes detrimental to ourselves. Some more than others have fallen into this codependent trap and many have had to learn skills of self-nurturing in order to protect their own psyche. While looking through my past journals, I came upon this entry, *Pumping Memoirs*, and thought it to be appropriate in describing in greater detail what all this means to me. I believe that it brings out the many facets of ENFJ, clearly showing my need for closure which relates to the Judging preference of my type as well as my compelling desire for meeting the needs of others. I see a need to share it, in its entirety.

Jimmi Dolores Nelson-Reid was born with a partial cleft palate. Unfortunately she wasn't able to nurse from my breast due to her inability to achieve suction, however I was provided with an electric breast pump donated by the Alberta Association for Cleft Palate so that I could express breast milk for her nourishment. This piece was written shortly after the breast pump had been recalled since another mom needed it as well, and there were only two pumps in Alberta for us to use. My pumping days were indeed over. The President of the Association had

asked me if I would be willing to share my experience with other moms who were to live out a similar experience to mine.

Throughout those 7 months I felt quite alone in my determination to continue doing what I felt was best for my daughter and I didn't want others to feel the same way. If I could help even one mom feel support and understanding, then my efforts would be so worthwhile. So, I wrote *Pumping Memoirs* and included a copy with the breast pump so that future moms would get my message. Here is that memoir.

### Pumping Memoirs

“I am at the end of an epoch. After pumping breast milk for the past 8 months the pump is about to find a new home. It seems odd, but it has become part of our family, part of the furniture, sitting on the end table in our living room - most definitely a conversational piece when guests are over. Why do I feel the need to share some words with you? This pump has become an extension of my body as it will become with you - this connects us in a strange but quite intimate way. I thought it may be helpful to share my ‘pumping memoirs’ to support and encourage those who may follow the path that I chose. Here is my experience:

“Jimmi Dolores Nelson-Reid, my beautiful daughter, was born on October 13, 1996 in Calgary, Alberta. She was born with a cleft of the secondary palate which was not discovered until 5 days later. Needless to say, there were some difficult, teary times trying to get Jimmi to latch onto the breast for her much needed nourishment. Thanks to the support of my midwives, we kept trying. My amazing child persevered and at the mere age of 2 days began drinking expressed breast milk from a 30 ml cup. Once we discovered the cleft we switched Jimmi to the Playtex Nurser bottle and with an enlarged nipple hole, and a little help from us at times by squeezing the bag, our baby was on her way.

“To pump or not to pump? That is the question.

“My next decision was a big one, yet one that I never even considered. Of course I would express breast milk, it was the best that I could do for my baby and now more than ever she needed that support. At the time I never realized the commitment that I was making. Initially I planned to pump until she was 3 months old, then it became 4, then 5 months and I found myself still pumping through the 6<sup>th</sup> month. I guess that I never gave myself the choice as to continue or not. Jimmi’s health came first, but not without many frustrating and exhausting moments.

“There were some difficult times. Feeding time was always double duty - pump then feed. For the first couple months, it seemed like this was all that I did - actually, it is all that I did. There were definitely times when I wanted to quit, then I would look at my beautiful, healthy baby and I knew that I must go on. Not only was much of my time taken with the feeding process, I wasn't even able to experience what 'normal' breast feeding moms did - bonding with a machine at 3:00 in the morning is not my idea of motherhood. My nipples were sore the entire time, constantly being tugged by the hard plastic devices of the machine - how unnatural. Planning to go anywhere was a huge ordeal, not only did I have to make sure Jimmi was fed and changed, I had to make sure we were well within my pumping zone, knowing that it could be a while before I could hook up again. There were many tears shed if I missed a pump, especially if Jimmi's supply was gone and she needed food NOW. There were even times when as I pumped, my husband would transfer milk to the bottle to feed her. We have also spent several weeks away from home, flying to the coast and even to Virginia - try explaining why you are hauling a breast pump with you wherever you go. Let's not forget that it is quite difficult to find electricity while on the road for 15 hours - talk about pressure, literally. I



wanted to quit many times, but just kept on pumping, reminding myself constantly the benefits of doing so. This is not an easy journey that you are about to embark on. I would never mislead you and say that I loved every minute of it. However, the pride and sense of great accomplishment it has given me was well worth all the struggles.

“The benefits of pumping breast milk for my daughter are endless. Usually, cleft palate babies are prone to ear infections - Jimmi has NEVER had one. She has been content, healthy (even a cold she acquired from one of our trips ended after only 1 day - my husband and I were sick much longer, perhaps a diet of breast milk would have helped us, too) and is growing and gaining wonderfully. I am so proud of her. The way I see it, she is the one with the struggle and the least I could do was offer my milk to lighten that struggle. Whether you pump for a week or 8 months as I have, your perseverance will pay off. Any amount of breast milk our cleft palate babies can get is like gold! Just do the best that you can and if ever you need support, know that it is out there for you.

“One last thing, remember that the bond you are creating with your child is just as precious as nursing, maybe even more so. I have never breast fed a baby, as Jimmi is my first child,

however, going to the lengths that I have to give her my milk has created a bond that is indescribable. I have had people tell me that I don't know the bond that develops between baby and mom when nursing, they are wrong. Physically, they are right, I don't know what it feels like to have a baby nurse from my breast, but emotionally and spiritually I have experienced it all!

"I wish you all the best in the choices that you make. Those of us who choose to feed our babies breast milk share not only the pump itself, but a bond of motherhood and deep commitment to our children. It is not an easy task but one I know will reward you for a lifetime!"<sup>4</sup>

I concluded with my name, phone number and email address so that I could be reached. How did this impact others? I don't know. What I do know is that I received a call from a mom a couple of months later and we talked for over an hour. She was the recipient of the pump following me. My words inspired her and gave her comfort in her experience - my gift received. To my surprise, I was even able to reach a mom who didn't have a cleft palate baby. A friend of mine was having

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<sup>4</sup> Yvonne D. Nelson-Reid. *Pumping Memoirs* (Unpublished Paper. Calgary, 1997).

difficulty with nursing her child and pumped for a few days while considering whether to quit or not. She was touched by my words and persevered and is still nursing today, 7 months later.

Isabel Briggs Myers describes ENFJs as being people whose "... focus is on supporting others and encouraging their growth. ENFJs are catalysts, drawing out the best in others, and they can be inspiring leaders as well as loyal followers."<sup>5</sup> As a lover, mother, friend and teacher, I see these qualities in me. There are no words to describe the feeling that I get when I can tap into another person's energy and support them in finding the best in themselves. For me this is a truly spiritual moment.

### **A Workshop Experience**

During a workshop in December, 1996, called "The Wisdom of Diversity", myself and a fellow ENFJ gave a presentation on what it is like to have this orientation. The intent of this course was to get a deeper understanding of the various Types by hearing directly from them what living their Type was like. During our presentation on ENFJ, I found that we were able to

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<sup>5</sup> Isabel Briggs Myers. *Introduction to Type* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1993), 23.

connect with our audience and not only tell them what it is like but show them as well. A song came to mind when I was preparing our presentation, *I Will Take Care of You* by Amy Sky. Regardless of Type, this song really touched the moms in the group, but afterwards we discussed how well it also described an ENFJ mom.

I'll just share the chorus with you here:

“I will take care of you  
the very best that I can  
With all of the love here in my heart  
and all of the strength in my hands  
Your every joy I'll share  
for every tear I'll be there  
my whole life through  
I will take care of you”<sup>6</sup>

I would be interested in the response of other ENFJs as to whether this song portrays this Type for them.

### **Mother/Daughter: 'T/F'**

Mom and I had offered to make Sue's, my sister-in-law's, wedding dress for her. Sue was to spend 5 days with us and we were going to combine our creative talents and share in a bonding moment of mother/daughter togetherness.

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<sup>6</sup> Amy Sky. *I Will Take Care of You* (Canada: Café Records. 1996).

We were so busy over those next few days. Sue took care of my daughter Jimmi, and mom and I created. A masterpiece was being designed. Imagination and creativity were my greatest contributions (Intuition) whereas mom could make it happen with a needle and thread (Sensing). Our team work was inspiring.

Thinking is mom's preferred judging function whereas mine is Feeling. Not a great combination we had found out in the past. We seemed to collide in so many ways. I felt she was cold and uncaring and she often called me too mushy and "always building a mountain out of a mole hill". Type theory has really united us and given us a medium to communicate - we still struggle but find it much easier to have a place to start which isn't threatening to either of us. In fact, there are times we are even able to call on the skills of the other to help with decision making.

Midnight on Wednesday evening, the night before Sue was to fly back to Vancouver Island, the dress was still not finished. We were all so tired but I was prepared to stay up the entire night in order to finish before she left at 6:00 am. I would sacrifice myself so that Sue would have her dress to take home with her. This was so important to me. Mom instantly refused to do this.

She was tired and knew she wouldn't do a good job if she continued. At first I was appalled. How could she be so callous? Didn't she know how much Sue wanted to take her dress home with her? Aha! A clear Type difference. I realized that I needed to call on mom's ability to make a logical decision since I was much too vested personally and was more concerned with Sue's feelings than anything else.

Well, we went with mom's plan. Mom and I worked on the dress all day Thursday and it was on the bus by that evening. Sue received it on Friday. And it turned out perfect.

### **Living for Lynchburg/Planning for Calgary**

In March, 1997 Andrew (INFP) and I (ENFJ) traveled to Lynchburg, Virginia, he for a course, and myself for the holiday. We really enjoyed the area and the people. Within two days he was offered a full time position which meant we may be transferring. We were both excited and scared all at the same time. We spent the next two weeks looking at Real Estate and getting an idea of what we would be getting ourselves into. Soon we were back home again to await the decision.

Living for Lynchburg - the essence of my life. My entire focus became this motto. I spent many hours planning (J) and preparing for the transfer through research on the Internet and lengthy discussions with family and friends. We kept waiting and waiting and waiting ... I was going crazy - I needed closure and it wasn't happening. Andrew (INFP) seemed more patient with the wait whereas I needed answers. We kept waiting for Lynchburg to make up their minds and begin the transfer process. By September, my frustration came to a head. I realized that I had focused ALL of my energy on this aspect of our lives and that I was truly "Living for Lynchburg" and nothing else mattered. If I didn't do something I would burst. So ... I began to "Plan for Calgary".

My need for closure, future planning and relationship healing were overwhelming me. I needed time to say goodbye and prepare. My frustration led to my letting Lynchburg go and preparing for a life in Calgary. We decided to move to Black Diamond in December which gave me another direction to focus my attention on.

In January, 1998 we were back in Lynchburg for a three month contract with my husband's work; I took advantage of the holiday. Once again we were on the roller coaster of "Living in

Lynchburg” because he was offered another position. This time the process went quickly and my need for closure was met. However, my ‘J’ definitely had some shrinking to do since so much was out of my control - selling our house, expecting our second child, who was born in Lynchburg in May, saying our goodbyes in only two weeks - I had to let it go. In order to stay sane I relied on my husband’s capital ‘P’ to get us through.

Although it was a difficult time for me, understanding and using Type, helped get me through it, both sane and still married. My thanks to my husband for supporting me through the transition. Now we are settled in our new home with our two children living in Lynchburg, Virginia. Finally, my conclusion to a year of indecision and lack of control! A ‘J’s nightmare!

### **Mothering and Type**

My new role, as Mother, has been challenging, deeply rewarding and at times, depressing. Jimmi was only a few days old when I knew that I wouldn’t be going back to work. Being a stay-at-home mom was never my intent, but when I held this tiny baby who relied on me for so much, I just knew I needed to be with her, regardless of how I felt - she needed me.



This journey has not been an easy one. I love my girls dearly and couldn't imagine anyone else taking care of them for me, yet at the same time, I felt a loss of self. My role was so radically different and my emotions so radically charged, that at times it was hard to adjust. An understanding of Type theory has helped me to deal with much of my own confusion.

*The M.O.M.S. (Mothers of Many Styles) Handbook - Understanding Your Personality Type in Mothering*<sup>7</sup> by Janet Penley and Diane Stephens, has been a source of enlightenment. They clearly describe characteristics of the various Types in respect to mothering. Wow! Talk about being struck by a bolt of lightning! This resource has been a real source of support and inspiration for me.

I will share with you some of what they say, in reference to a mother with preference for ENFJ. The Extraverted mother is often on the go, introducing her children to new social situations. She enjoys getting to know kids and engaging them in conversation. Extraverted moms may struggle with being at home with babies and toddlers (aha!), often feeling isolated. The Intuitive mother fosters imagination and creativity in her children, giving children choices and seeing mothering as a

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<sup>7</sup> Janet P. Penley & Diane W. Stephens. *The M.O.M.S. (Mothers of Many Styles) Handbook - Understanding Your Personality Type in Mothering* (Wilmette, IL: Penley and Associates, Inc., 1995).

personal growth experience. Struggles an Intuitive mom may encounter are: unrealistic expectations, living in the moment and keeping things simple. An interesting story Penley and Stephens share, reminds me of myself. An Intuitive mother avoids filing some papers because she knows the whole filing system needs reorganizing. So, rather than do a small part of the bigger project, they avoid it and the papers continue to pile, making the project completely out of their reach. The suggestion is to do a little, rather than nothing at all! The Feeling mother often gives her children the physical and emotional closeness they need to feel loved, foster family harmony and initiate “heart-to-heart” talks with the kids. Some difficulties could be keeping her emotions separate from those of her children, dealing with confrontation and trying to meet the needs of everyone in the family at the same time. Lastly, the Judging mother keeps her child’s life organized and planned, making sure that her children don’t miss out. A major struggle for her, is giving up control, letting go of doing things the “right” way, and listening to her kids before making a snap judgment.

Penley and Stephens see the ENFJ mother as the “Heart-to-Heart” mother. More specifically, they see ENFJ mothers’ strengths as being: communications skills, organization, resourcefulness, and people orientation (high value on

relationships). The struggles ENFJ's encounter are: choosing between people or order, backing off (may be overbearing), and objectivity in handling family situations. A few tips would be to use humor in dealing with difficult situations, enjoy some time alone to re-energize and spend some time with special people engaging in "heart-to-heart" conversations.

I would like to conclude this chapter with a quote from Sandra Hirsh's and Jean Kummerow's, *Life Types*, an acronym for ENFJ:

**"Everyone Needs Fulfillment and Joy"<sup>3</sup>**

A fitting phrase for an ENFJ.

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<sup>3</sup> Sandra Hirsh & Jean Kummerow. *Life Types* (New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1989), 219.

## CHAPTER 6

### LEARNING CIRCLES - TOGETHER AGAIN

*What a beginning! Clearly I was really shaken with the discovery of the damaged tape from our first learning circle. As I review the video tape from our second gathering, I relive the anxiety I was feeling at that moment.*

I explained to the group the horrible mishap of the recording of our first session. My voice cracked and tears formed in the corners of my eyes. My peers were sympathetic and understanding. Unfortunately, it appears that my sadness overwhelmed me and distracted me from the mission of our second meeting. It appears as though I am not quite present. At the time I thought I had put it all behind me but in reviewing the video tape, I see that my mood may have influenced the circle.

This learning circle seems more forced than the original one with my being distant and others being tired from a long day's work. Although the synchronicity we naturally fell into with the first meeting seemed lacking here, we were able to pull together some valuable insight into Type and how it has affected our lives. This chapter will cover those insights.

## Group Dynamics

As with our first learning circle, it is important to know what dynamics were present within the group since the dynamics can influence the quality and depth of sharing.

My own distress regarding the loss of sound with my first recording, as I mentioned earlier, affected my own contributions to the group and may consequently have affected others. I wasn't always as clear as I needed to be and at times I even found myself trying to control the direction I wanted the group to take. This became evident when I was interested in each participant's 'Quest for More Spirit' in their lives and how Type had affected that. The group dissipated and soon after came to an end. Myself (ENFJ) and Sage (INFP) were the most eager to venture into this domain, however, I sensed a distancing from the others - perhaps due to tiredness rather than topic.

One of the participants was my mom and in hindsight I am not sure if this was a good idea or not. There appear to be family dynamics taking place throughout the circle as well, definitely affecting my role, perhaps my mom's as well. Rather than keeping the circle talk on Type only, I think other issues and baggage may have contributed to the discussion.

The level of Type knowledge may also have influenced the dynamics of the group. There were four members with extensive Type background and two participants who were very new to Type. My concern is with the lack of understanding and consequently lack of depth in sharing of the two participants with little experience with Type. However, it may also be refreshing to have the insight of someone who has just discovered the importance of Type in their lives. Perhaps the diversity was necessary after all. Considering my focus was on the effects of understanding Type in our lives, regardless of how long one has worked with Type, the effects could still be seen and discussed.

An interesting dynamic within the group was the difference between Extraverts and Introverts in comfort level of sharing. The E's openly and quickly shared their stories and insights with the group whereas the I's took a little more time in processing and seemed to sit back until they were comfortable with the direction the circle was going. Interesting to see the two in action - one from within and one from without. Once comfortable, the Introverts shared tremendous insight. Perhaps even more insight could have come forth if they were able to share more even a day later. Something to consider. I did distribute the learning circle questions a week earlier, keeping in

mind the extra processing time required by Introverts. This is an important factor to keep in mind when working with people professionally or personally.

## **MBTI Step II**

Many of the participants had never heard of the MBTI Step II and were interested in taking this indicator to get a greater insight into their Type. Between the two circles, I met with each member and discussed the results of their Step II portfolios. They were both intrigued and fascinated with their results.

As I mentioned earlier, the Step II details our subscales which describes any out-of-pattern preferences we may have. For all participants this was very enlightening. For example, Calli (ENFP) has never fully felt like a “true” Feeling person. She offered a story to clarify what she meant.

Calli (ENFP) found herself in a situation where she was being asked to take on more than she wanted to. There were people clearly in need and rather than take a ‘tender’ approach which is most indicative of a Feeling person, she took a ‘tough’ stance and told them that it wasn’t her problem. Throughout her life, especially after learning about Psychological Type, she saw

herself as uncharacteristic with this facet - at times more Thinking rather than Feeling. To her relief the Step II helped to explain this. The Step II indicator showed Calli (ENFP) that an out-of-pattern preference for her was being tough (Thinking) rather than tender (Feeling). So even though overall she has a preference for Feeling, there is a small part that prefers Thinking. Calli (ENFP) described this as a push/pull effect between Thinking and Feeling for her. Although it was more natural for her to be 'tough-minded' (Thinking) she often questioned herself because she thought she should be more 'tender-minded' (Feeling). The Step II has helped her to feel more comfortable with this.

**Insight: "Knowing Type and going deeper with Type has allowed me to be more comfortable with situations that I am in."**

Calli (ENFP)

Calli (ENFP) was not alone with her observations. The rest of the group emphatically agreed with her that understanding their out-of-pattern preferences gave them peace of mind as it clearly showed why they did or didn't fit in exactly with all of the characteristics of their Type.



Understanding the subscales also helps to see why all ENFJ's, for example, are not the same. Similar Types can be different and the Step II displays this. ENFJ's are often described as being social and enjoying large gatherings. In fact, during my MBTI Step II workshop, I was stereotyped as being this way. When I explained that I prefer a more intimate setting with one-on-one conversations, many were surprised. When we received our Step II reports it was clear as to why I was more comfortable with this. An out-of-pattern preference for me was a preference for intimacy over being gregarious. This understanding has given me a greater appreciation for the differences amongst the many Types including those that are the same.

I met a woman on one of my teaching staffs who was also an ENFJ and we were radically different. Perhaps more was working here than just Type, but I am sure a Step II would clarify some of those differences. I find that using the Step II with someone who has difficulty finding the Type that fits them will help decipher some of the confusion, especially those whose preferences are not that clear.

Nicolette (ISTJ) is one such person. After taking the MBTI Step II she was much more at ease with herself, for now her Type made more sense to her. Her preferences were not clear and she

wasn't sure if ISTJ, her reported Type, was in fact her True Type. However, upon viewing her subscales in the MBTI Step II report, she gained a clearer understanding of herself and found that ISTJ did actually fit with her when the out-of-pattern preferences were taken into consideration.

An interesting conversation arose around the MBTI Step II. Are the out-of-pattern preferences learned or inborn? Carl Jung believed that our True Type is inborn. However, is it possible that life experience can affect our Types to the extent of creating our out-of-pattern preferences? Nicolette (ISTJ) recalls that as a child she would force herself to be more Extraverted. She felt that she was always missing out on things because she withdrew from the crowd when in large gatherings. Consequently, she would practice being more initiating and gregarious in order to fit in. Her preference would have been to become a "hermit" and spend much of her time alone. In forcing herself to become more involved, could she have developed skill in these areas which would influence her out-of-pattern preferences? She reported preference for Introversion with out-of-pattern preferences for Extraversion in the areas of initiation and being gregarious. Only

time and research can determine whether our out-of-pattern preferences are learned or inherent.

Clearly the Step II has been helpful to those I have administered it to. I would think it will become more widely used as it becomes more familiar to those in the Type field.

### **Thinking Females**

A wonderful discussion of Thinking vs. Feeling in regard to gender came up in the circle. It was fascinating to have three Thinking females, one with Dominant Thinking, out of a group of six.

Laura (INTJ) shared an interesting story regarding the differences between Thinking and Feeling. She is a facilitator for MBTI workshops with many organizations. During one such workshop she divided the participants into two groups - one Thinking and one Feeling. Then she gave them a scenario to discuss. 'If your group came upon a scene where a deer had been hit on the highway and the devastated onlookers were seeking your advice as to what to do, how would you handle it?' She said the results were quite comical and stereotypical as well. The Thinkers, without hesitation, stated, "Shoot it! ... So, where would you all like to go for lunch?" On the other hand, the

Feelers were very concerned as to how they could help the people deal with the trauma and next how they could take care of the deer. Many possibilities were discussed, with sensitivity being the main emphasis with all choices. So, how does this affect the stereotypes of gender bias?

A common issue among the Thinking females was one of being considered cold and callous. However, if a man took a 'tough-minded' approach to an issue he wouldn't be considered a "bitch" whereas these women had experienced just that. Understanding Type theory and their own True Types has given these women the confidence to be themselves and to know that they are not giving up their femaleness but rather are living out their natural preferences. If more people understood Type perhaps there could be less gender bias in the world. Many books have been written about the differences between men and women, such as, *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*<sup>1</sup>. I wonder if some of these differences relate more to Type, than gender? Often women are labeled as nurturing with a focus on relationships, whereas men are considered aggressive and insensitive with a focus on career. I happen to know men who are much more nurturing than some of my female friends, and

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<sup>1</sup> John Gray. Ph.D.. *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992).

women whose emphasis is predominantly for their own career development. I believe that Type plays a significant part in gender awareness.

Along with gender bias we need to be aware of Type bias as well. Sally (ENTJ) described a situation where she was in a group of all Thinking preferences and it was quite easy to fall into a Type bias against Feeling types. It is very comfortable to be with people of your own type, however we need diversity to fully appreciate all Types and the strengths and weaknesses they bring to any group.

We all had a laugh in how Laura (INTJ) described her uneasiness at colleagues coming to her to share personal, emotional problems. She was in a position in human resources where people would consider it okay to share with her, however she would leave work at the end of the day feeling exhausted and stressed. She would feel very uncomfortable. Understanding Type has helped her to deal with this more efficiently and with less stress than in the past. She didn't have to be so hard on herself once she realized that it was not her natural preference to deal with or listen to other's problems.

Calli (ENFP) brought up a good point for us to consider. We need to be aware of Type biases even if a Type fits for a person.

For example, she described a situation she found herself in after participating in a Type workshop with her colleagues. A Thinking colleague thought it would be best to start every morning with a personal visit and bonding time with Calli (ENFP) in order to foster their relationship, since he knew that as an ENFP she would appreciate this. For one thing, we need to give him credit for the effort, as I am sure it was very difficult for him to pull himself out of his natural preference and take time to do this for someone else. However, as Calli's (ENFP) Step II pointed out, she had several out-of-pattern preferences in the Thinking/Feeling facet of Type and could appear more Thinking, so this morning chit chat was not appreciated. Understanding Type helped Calli (ENFP) to see where her colleague was coming from and also to understand her position with it. Ultimately, we need to be aware of Type biases when working with people - just because someone is an 'F' doesn't mean that they need a personal connection and relationship building time. They may prefer not to.

**Insight: "To be safe - ask someone what they prefer regardless of Type. One 'F' is not like another - rather than stereotyping, we need to look at individual differences. Type gives us a place to start, communication takes over from there."**

Yvonne (ENFJ)

### **Feeling Males**

I seem to be a magnet for attracting INFP males. My husband has preference for INFP and every male friend I have made contact with over the past year has also had preference for INFP. I have wondered what the attraction is for me towards INFP men, and I keep coming up with the same conclusion - Dominant Feeling.

Not to stereotype all INFP males, I can only remark on those that I know and have spoken to, but there seems to be a similarity amongst them. The men I have spoken to have one childhood story that is common among them - they were often considered to be effeminate and at times were even the targets of cruel comments regarding their sexual preference. "Are you gay?" was a remark they often heard. Like I said, I am not saying that all

INFP males have experienced this, just those that I have spoken with. They describe times of sadness and confusion especially throughout adolescence. Type has helped them to understand themselves better, and how being a Dominant Feeling male has affected their lives. At least they now feel they have an explanation as to who they are, and they feel more accepted and confident in their maleness.

I know that I am drawn to a more sensitive male in tune with his feminine side and perhaps this is why many of my new male friends have preference for INFP. Whether there is a correlation or not is yet to be determined. More research with INFP males would be needed.

Another interesting similarity among my INFP peers was in their relationships with women. They pointed out that they had many female friends - often more than males - yet difficulty with dating them. Many commented that they made great friends and the women in their lives were afraid of losing that if they dated them. And when they finally did meet a woman they could date, upon breaking up, the reason would be that they were too nice. Can you imagine being told that you are too nice, I don't want to be with you? Anyway, I guess that is why I married a man with



preference for INFP - he is nice and too nice is great! Andrew (INFP) had an interesting response to this. He wondered if “being told you are too nice” was a reflection of the males or just the female softening the blow to a sensitive male - letting them down easy, so to speak.

Sage (INFP) described a situation he was in where knowing Type would have eased his pain. He had had a disagreement with his wife, who he suspects to have preference for Thinking, and as she bombarded him with a verbal attack, he described the scene as her bringing out the ‘big guns’ and when she blasted him, he felt completely shot down. At the time he withdrew and felt ashamed at not standing up to her. Instead he let the attack silence him and then he slunk away like a wounded puppy. This happened many times, which is much of the reason for his divorce. However, he now realizes that had they known about Type perhaps they may have been able to work through some of their issues.

**Insight: “Type has given me a greater sense of compassion for opposites.”**

Sage (INFP)

It is difficult to understand our opposite Types - you can “rationalize it or intellectualize it” but it is hard to fully understand it. Words spoken by a true Thinking Type. Sally (ENTJ) voiced her discord in understanding our opposites, which is a difficult task to do. However, her choice of words fit perfectly for the Thinking Type. I, on the other hand, feel that I use a more feeling approach rather than rationalizing how another Type experiences life. I (ENFJ) agree with Sally (ENTJ) that I cannot truly know what it feels like to be my opposite, but I do attempt to put myself into their ‘shoes’ in order to understand them - I come from a ‘heart’ place rather than from the ‘head’. She described being around our opposites as exhausting and stressful, especially when you’d rather be doing something else.

**Insight: “At least understanding Type helps you to understand your own reaction to what’s going on, even if you don’t fully understand where the other person is coming from.”**

Sally (ENTJ)

With regard to their careers, my INFP male friends felt more in sync with fields that respected a more sensitive male. My

husband (INFP) would come home from work exhausted and distraught after a full day of not connecting with any of his co-workers. He worked in a Thinking office where he felt disjointed and unappreciated. Andrew (INFP) needs to connect with those he spends time with in order to feel a worthy part of the organization. Fortunately, we have recently moved to Lynchburg, Virginia, due to a transfer within his company. Andrew (INFP) now works with a compassionate group of individuals and feels more success and happiness in his professional arena. I don't know if you can Type organizations but if so, I would say that the Calgary office was definitely Dominant Thinking whereas the Lynchburg division would be classified as Dominant Feeling. Their mission statements are radically different. Needless to say, Andrew (INFP) feels more at peace with himself and the career he has embarked on.

Sage (INFP) was interested in our discussion on dominant Feeling. He was wondering why I (ENFJ), for example, was comfortable sharing my Feeling side openly with others whereas he felt more inclined to keep that part of himself private and contained. There is a huge difference between introverting and extraverting our dominant functions - mine is extraverted whereas Sage's is introverted. So, of course, he was more

comfortable turning his Feeling preference inward. Not all dominant functions act or react in the same way. I made the same mistake myself with my husband who is Introverted Dominant Feeling, assuming that we would behave similarly in certain situations. This is not the case and something to be aware of when dealing with others of the same dominant function.

### **Psychological Type - A Label or Not?**

Several of us had participated in and/or conducted workshops over the past few years and a concern came forth during this learning circle. Is Psychological Type a label? Do we Type someone and then assume they are exactly as the description says? Are all INTJ's the same, for example? For us these questions were facetious. Of course similar Types have individual differences. The descriptions simply state that you MAY have these characteristics and many do, however, to label someone as such can be very presumptuous.

Psychological Type is only part of our personality. "Although psychological type is a valuable tool for understanding and promoting human development, it is important to remember that it is just one factor in personality and human functioning.

Others include motivation, life experiences, the degree of vulnerability, physical health, and personal ethics.”<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately there are people out there with little Type knowledge who are labeling others according to Type only. In fact, my first attempt at participating in the local Calgary Type chapter brought out this problem. I was accosted by another member who bombarded me with remarks as to who I was, and what I was like, based on my ENFJ preference only. He wouldn't listen to my response and kept picking at me. I ended up calling on my inferior function (Thinking) and told him off - I felt uncomfortable and anxious. I needed to get out of there as fast as I could, and I did. This negative experience with feeling labeled made it difficult for me to trust the group and return. There will most definitely be similarities among similar Types; the danger comes when we assume there are no differences.

Calli (ENFP) brought up an interesting perspective on this topic. She reminded us that Type assumes a healthy individual and we need to be careful not to dump unhealthy issues, such as gender and class issues, into Type. We need to be conscious of whether the issue is Type related or not.

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<sup>2</sup> Katharine D. Myers and Linda K. Kirby, *Introduction to Type - Dynamics and Development - Exploring the Next Level of Type* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1994), 30.

## Quest for More Spirit

As I mentioned earlier, this was a topic that I brought up towards the end of our learning circle. Rather than let the circle end naturally, my preference for Judging took precedence and I pushed the group towards this topic of 'More Spirit', that was of particular interest to me. Whether the results were due to a natural closure, tiredness among the participants, or a discomfort with the topic itself, I will never know. For now, I'll just share what discourse did take place.

It would be helpful to understand what the term 'More Spirit' means before describing the quest to achieving 'More Spirit' in our lives, however, it means different things to different people.

Dr. Tad Guzie wrote a paper entitled *Change*<sup>3</sup> that I studied in a course on post-modernism. It not only intrigued me, it touched my soul. In this paper he writes about change within education over the past 50 years and how today there seems to be an "expansion of consciousness". Tad defines Spirituality as "our basic yearning for 'More Spirit' ... a 'more'. not just a material more but an inner more which will satisfy the

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<sup>3</sup> Tad Guzie. *Change - The Spirit of Teaching Excellence* (David C. Jones, Editor, Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1995).

soul ... Whatever spirit or consciousness we have, it's never enough ... Your future, your own 'more', would unfold only from your own interiority, your own and owned spirituality."<sup>4</sup>

"Spirituality ... is a name for this quest for 'more spirit'. It is a word for our yearning to connect with something, someone, beyond ourselves."<sup>5</sup> Tad talks about the importance of the

journey towards 'More Spirit'. "Trust your experience, keep reflecting on your experience, and be true to your experience."<sup>6</sup>

And then ask yourself. "What is 'More Spirit' for you?"<sup>7</sup> I find this statement to be profound and crucial in the journey to discovering Self. My interest in this led me to ponder how Type fits into this quest for 'More Spirit' and what does that mean to people.

Consequently, I manipulated the group in such a way as to find out what their response would be. I choose the word "manipulate" consciously because I don't believe we grew into this question - I forced it. However, some participants shared what this meant to them.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.. 184-185.

<sup>5</sup> Noreen Monroe Guzie and Tad Guzie. *Journey to Self-Awareness* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1994), 87.

<sup>6</sup> Tad Guzie. *Change - The Spirit of Teaching Excellence* (David C. Jones, Editor, Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1995), 193.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.. 193.

Laura (INTJ) described her quest as a journey into “Who am I?”. She believes that the quest is for finding out who she is and then giving more of herself - not a role, not a routine task, but an expression of self. “Sharing a piece of her with the Universe - almost like playing with the Universe.” Laura (INTJ) finds this through inner work, inspiration energy pulling towards something. Understanding her Psychological Type is part of that journey. So understanding her Type has brought her closer to finding her own ‘More Spirit’.

For Sage (INFP), finding ‘More Spirit’ means following his heart over his head - feeling fully alive and following his destiny or fate. Once again Psychological Type has helped him to understand that part of himself.

As for myself (ENFJ), “Type has helped me on my own inner journey towards finding ‘More Spirit’ but it has also helped me to realize that others have a journey as well, AND to respect that and appreciate that.” The more I strive to fully understand Self, the closer I get to my soul - understanding my Psychological Type has been part of that connection.

Whether there is a relationship between one’s search for ‘More Spirit’ and Psychological Type is truly ambiguous. We can never really know the interiority of another and heaven knows it



is pretty difficult to even tap into our own. What we do know, is that understanding our own True Type is a step closer to finding our own 'More Spirit'.

### **Saying Goodbye**

Although our time together was short, only two learning circles, it was precious. The bonding and building of relationships was not only enlightening and enriching but also rewarding. It was difficult to say goodbye - our experience will always keep us connected. My thanks to all for sharing a part of my own journey.

## CHAPTER 7

### TYPE BLUES

Over the past year I have found myself going through moments of real sadness, depression and overall lethargy. Yet, I could experience times of great joy and inner fulfillment. What do I attribute this to? I have come up with several conclusions, such as post partum depression (my daughter was born 15 months ago), unable to find time for myself, unable to focus on my spiritual life or choosing not to, not teaching, being a homemaker/mother, or as Treya Killam Wilber puts it: “focus on doing rather than being, a loss of balance”<sup>1</sup> ... The list can go on forever. And at times, some of this really does make sense. However, when I look at my life from a Type perspective I get a real sense of completeness and understanding. What has happened to me?

When put into situations where we are unable to live out our true Type, great disequilibrium can develop within. Along with the other issues, I believe that this has predominantly been what I have experienced over the past year.

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<sup>1</sup> Ken Wilber. *Grace and Grit - Spirituality and Healing in the Life and Death of Treya Killam Wilber* (Boston: Shambhala Publications Inc., 1991).

As an Extravert (E), it is critical for me to have contact with others, yet here I am living the life of an Introvert (I) being a mother by day and student by night. How much more isolated can you get? I do enjoy both of these activities, yet at the same time I feel a loss of self. My heart goes out to my husband who returns home from a hectic Extraverted day at work, only wanting to spend a few Introverted (he has preference for INFP) moments to himself, and I greet him at the door and bombard him with the day's events, as uneventful as they typically are. I just really need to talk and have someone respond. He doesn't do that well, especially at this time of his day. If it wasn't for the phone, I think I would truly go crazy.

So how do I deal with this? If I knew, I probably wouldn't still be feeling the same way. I know that it is up to me to bring myself out of isolation, yet I find it hard to push myself to do it. Especially now, since I am living in Lynchburg, Virginia, where I know only one other family and I wouldn't want to wear out my welcome with them. Once again, my method of communication is through writing - email. Definitely an Introverted task.

Yesterday, I spent the entire day at home with our daughter. An extremely Introverted day! How did I feel at the end of the evening? Drained and depressed. Very little energy. It seems

that the busier I am the more I can accomplish. I remember taking my graduate courses at the University of Calgary last year. They were great. I would be mom all day, rush to the University for my evening course and rush home to study and write. These were wonderfully empowering days. I would look forward to it all day. I love my daughter and couldn't imagine anyone else raising her besides me, yet I need another outlet. Andrew is very supportive of my doing other things in the evening, so why the hesitation? I am so afraid that I am losing my sense of self. And being pregnant again, due May 20, I realize that soon I'll be taking care of two children with even less time for myself. I don't mean to go on and on with this constant whining. Finding myself and understanding myself is my ultimate goal. By talking it out even if it is on paper, I know I can accomplish this.

So where does this all fit into Type? My preference is for Extraversion, whereas I am leading a life of Introversion. Where does this leave me? Clearly I need an outlet to meet these needs.

During our second learning circle we touched on this area briefly. Sage (INFP) described his life as being quite Introverted, which is his preference. He had been working on his Doctorate for over a year and really was leading a life of seclusion, but

he has some out-of-pattern preferences for Extraversion so was beginning to get frustrated with being alone so much of the time. Calli (ENFP) found the word 'beginning' to be quite humorous and while laughing remarked, "beginning???" Give me a week and I'd be climbing the walls!!!" She then described her Introverted experience of writing her Dissertation and the stress and depression it brought on. She encouraged me to meet my need for Extraversion throughout my writing process. I now know what she was getting at.

Calli (ENFP) shared a story about a lawyer friend of hers who had broken her foot and had to stay home for a week. Even though she had plenty of work to do (files were sent home for her to work on), she was accomplishing very little and to top it off was very depressed and lethargic. She was an Extravert with no venue for an Extravert! In situations like this it is important to schedule Extravert things. For a person with preference for Extraversion the energy comes from without not within. So how can understanding Type help in this situation? Knowing whether we are facing a crisis situation or are experiencing Type discrepancy is a definite starting point in knowing how to change the situation we are in.

Sally (ENTJ) described what it was like for her to start her own business. Working from her home was an Introverted venture, however by using her Type knowledge she was able to schedule Extraverted activities in order to meet her needs. She mentioned that for an Extravert running a home based business is not an easy task.

So is depression the result of living 'out-of-Type'? I think that this could be part of it. I know that this is true for me. Since writing this chapter, I have joined a music group for moms and their children, a group for women (FEMALE - Formerly Employed Mothers At the Leading Edge)<sup>2</sup> . and make a point of getting together with other adults even if it means just a trip to the grocery store. For me, getting out and being with others energizes me and makes my Introverted time at home with my children much more rewarding.

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<sup>2</sup> F.E.M.A.L.E. - Formerly Employed Mothers At the Leading Edge is a national organization designed to lend support to women who have chosen to alter a full-time career to spend more time at home with their children.

## CHAPTER 8

### THE J/P CHALLENGE

Judging vs. Perceiving is usually an uncontroversial topic. Type biases were discussed during our initial Psychological Type Qualification Workshop along with the importance of discovering what our biases were, so that we could remedy them. One of the most important points we talked about was how all types have merit and no type is better than another. But of course, this made perfect sense to me and the thought of being biased never crossed my mind, until ...

First, let's talk in more detail about the differences between the two functions. Whether one is a judging person or a perceiving person depends on how we orient ourselves to our outer world.

"People who prefer to use their Judging process in the outer world tend to live in a planned, orderly way, wanting to regulate and control life. They make decisions, come to closure, and move on. Their lifestyle is structured and organized, and they

like to have things settled. Sticking to a plan and schedule is very important to them, and they enjoy their ability to get things done.”<sup>1</sup>

“People who prefer to use their Perceiving process in the outer world tend to live in a flexible, spontaneous way, seeking to experience and understand life, rather than control it. Plans and decisions feel confining to them; they prefer to stay open to experience and last-minute options. They enjoy and trust their resourcefulness and ability to adapt to the demands of a situation.”<sup>2</sup>

Great! Clearly there is merit in both. So when did I lose sight of this and start to develop a bias in seeing value in Judging people over Perceiving people? Even saying this brings on a sense of shame for me, guilt in even admitting to this. But to deny it would create a monster - a self centered time bomb. The importance of confronting my thoughts and the danger of living them will be presented here through shared stories of my life in love and relationship.

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<sup>1</sup> Isabel Briggs Myers. *Introduction to Type* (Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1993), 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.



## **Where It All Began**

As I mentioned earlier, my type bias wasn't present at the beginning. It seemed to develop over time and with knowledge. Funny how this is so opposite to what usually happens. With knowledge often comes insight and acceptance, but this wasn't the way with me in regard to my issues of Judging vs. Perceiving.

The more I used Type in my life, the more prejudiced I seemed to become. I awoke one day and realized that I no longer could see the value in being a person with preference for Perceiving. Where did this stem from? How did this develop? Through my love relationship.

## **J / P in Love**

At first the differences encountered in love were exciting and intriguing, a real place for learning. My husband and I differ in this facet of Type - my preference clearly being for Judging whereas my husband's preference clearly being for Perceiving. What difficulties this has created between us! At first I felt a sense of anger at our differences and in my understanding of Type. Actually my anger was directed more at

the knowledge that Type had brought to me - I must accept our differences and appreciate them. No matter how many times I told myself this, my heart would not listen. My frustration increased.

I began to talk to anyone who understood Type and what their encounters in J / P differences had been like. I was not alone. It seems as though this is the most difficult facet of Type to overcome in relationship. In the heat of the moment, it came down to my Type being right and my husband's Type being frivolous. And then I would get angry at myself for being so self-absorbed, especially when I valued my understanding and acceptance of others.

For me, dealing with conflict between Judging and Perceiving issues has been my greatest struggle. Not only do Andrew (INFP) and I (ENFJ) have this difference but we are also both Dominant Feeling, his being Inverted and mine being Extraverted. So, we not only differ on our orientation towards the outer world, we both like to avoid conflict and seek harmony in relationship. We know we experience conflict due to our J / P differences, however, rather than face these issues we avoid them in order to "keep the peace". To top it all off, if we do decide to talk about it, I do all the talking (preference for Extraversion) and

Andrew withdraws to think (preference for Introversion). This could leave us with quite the relationship mess! Understanding our Psychological Types has helped us to tidy up this mess.

Communicating through the language of Type has really helped us to gain a greater understanding and appreciation for each other and where we are coming from. We still get frustrated with our differences and often don't agree with each other but at least we have a means for talking it out. I have learned to give Andrew (INFP) the time he needs to ponder over and absorb the issues of our discussion, and he gives me (ENFJ) an opportunity to vent without taking it too personally. He also understands my need to talk over my frustrations with a friend - keeping boundaries in mind, of course.

As for our Judging/Perceiving differences, we work very hard at appreciating each other and our preferences. We do quite well except when times of great stress and over-tiredness consume us, which unfortunately seems the norm now in raising our daughters (Jimmi - 21 months old / Camryn - 7 weeks old), buying a new house, starting a new job (Andrew) and moving to a new country. However, we do much better with our Type understanding than we would without it!

There are times when we even call on each other's strengths with our J / P preferences -- most recently, our move to Lynchburg. As I wrote earlier, the waiting and lack of control that I felt was all consuming. I would find myself feeling tense, depressed and angry. Andrew's ability to 'go-with-the-flow' and deal with what happens when it happens and knowing that everything usually works out gave me a greater appreciation for 'P'. While I was climbing the walls he was there to catch me if I fell, which was unfortunately all too often.

**Insight: "Understanding Type has given us a basis for communication which has enriched our marriage and united our souls."**

Yvonne (ENFJ)

### **Caring for Children**

When dealing with J / P preferences, there is a dramatic difference in how we raise our children. Andrew (INFP) takes a more laid back approach, while my (ENFJ) style is much more structured. This has created some animosity in our lives for sure.

An example would be meal time. I prefer to have scheduled meals which cover all the food groups - well planned and organized - in order to give the girls some structure in their lives. By doing this, I believe that I can avoid the problems that arise with being over tired, over hungry, ... However, when left in the hands of a Perceiving husband, we never know when dinner will be, what it will be or how it will be.

Bedtime is another issue. Once again I prefer routine starting with a bath, a story and sleep time. Routine is boring to a Perceiving Type and he prefers the spontaneity of being flexible, usually putting the kids to bed when they are tired regardless of what time it may be.

Ultimately, I (ENFJ) know that I can create a life for my children where I meet their needs before they even realize they have them, where they are safe and protected from danger. If I can control enough of their environment they will be HAPPY and lead a life of few tears and injuries. You can imagine my husband's (INFP) response to this - "You cannot raise a child in a plastic bubble!!!". His approach is more of a spontaneous one where he meets their needs after they present them, sometimes long after they present them. We hear more tears and have more accidents with this parenting style. Clearly, these are the

extremes of how we would like to raise our children. I know it is important for them to explore the world and all that it brings with it - tears and all. Andrew knows the importance of some structure in a child's life. Compromise, communication and compassion seem to be the solution.

The right answer? Who knows? And if we did, we would be millionaires. I suppose that much depends on your child and what works best for them. Perhaps a child with preference for 'J' would like a structured life and the child with preference for 'P' a more laid back one. Maybe we need a lot of both in our parenting!

### **The Art of Not Being Late**

Another annoying aspect of living with a man with preference for Perceiving, is that regardless of when I want to be somewhere, if I need to rely on him, I know that we will go by his timetable. Making an appointment is so frustrating since my greatest fear is being late. I attempt to be early by arranging for Andrew (INFP) to meet with me at a certain time. What I have come to expect is that he will always be late for the time that I set, yet the most frustrating of all is that we always make the

appointment ON TIME! With Andrew (INFP) we are never early, never late, but ON TIME! He seems to have an internal clock that gets him to where he is going without ever having looked at a watch, which by the way he doesn't wear.

Andrew's new job in Lynchburg is perfect for him. The company is familiar with Type and use the MBTI for employee training and consequently have set up a flex start time. Employees are expected to put in an 8 hour day but can start anywhere between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. Talk about an organization with an understanding of Type. For Andrew (INFP) this is ideal.

### **In Conclusion**

The stories are endless and could go on forever. The bottom line is that dealing with Judging/Perceiving differences, whether it be personally or professionally, is very difficult. Understanding Type theory helps to alleviate some of the frustration and confusion when faced with everyday life issues. We can gain a greater appreciation for ourselves and others and hopefully strive for less judgment and more support and encouragement with our daily encounters.

## CHAPTER 9

### FINAL INSIGHTS

Overall, Type theory is clearly essential for understanding the human psyche. Many organizations and individuals have come to realize this - the proof being in how widely used the MBTI is and how long it has been around. Throughout my journey in the past two years, I have come across many people and most are familiar with the MBTI and have found the theory to be fascinating. Using Type in their lives has helped to enrich relationships not only with others but with themselves.

Back to my original question - "How has understanding Type affected your life?". From the participants of this study, the response was unanimously a positive one. All in all, Type has given them greater insight into themselves and those they live, love and work with. It has provided a means of communication when confronted with differences and conflict.

The implication of my findings have a far reaching impact on many facets of life. Type is a tool for understanding our differences: in relationship, to enhance communication; in education, to realize the differences in learning and decision making; in organization, to enhance teamwork; and personally, a greater sense of self-worth.



I leave you now with our final insights: “What has knowing and understanding Type done for me?”

**“It has made me understand why I have been so hard on myself and why I am so different from others in my workplace. Type has given me a greater appreciation for my gifts and the gifts that others have. I believe that it was definitely the key that allowed me to be who I was meant to be and not who others wanted me to be. It paved my way to opportunities that I was better suited to. Type has made it easier for me to enjoy myself and others. Type made me appreciate and enjoy living in my own skin.”**

Laura (INTJ)

**“Type has given me a greater understanding of myself and others. I feel a sense of belonging and an appreciation for the human condition - not only tolerance but acceptance. It has provided a key to my heart and soul - a purpose in life - a life journey.”**

Yvonne (ENFJ)

**“Type continues to be a lens through which I view the people and situations I find myself in... it helps me to reflect inwardly and to observe outwardly in a continuous state of awe and wonderment at the complexity of humans...”**

Sally (ENTJ)

**“When you asked me to become part of your learning circle, I had no idea of the changes that would happen in my life. The most positive change has been an appreciation of my own self worth. In understanding my personality type I have become calmer, more patient, and more caring of others who are different. Having confidence in myself has made me less judgmental and more tolerant in my work and home. My life has become richer and fuller because of them. Believing in myself and my type will be a lifelong learning process, but what a journey, and it is only a beginning! I thank you.”**

Nicolette (ISTJ)

**“Type originally gave me permission to be who I am, instead of who I was trained to be. Ironically, this freed me to develop and deepen my own "type" while exploring and valuing those undeveloped aspects of myself. Type has also been a gift**

**I've given to others. Seeing the lightbulbs and hearing the laughter during an MBTI session is rewarding. Type has allowed me a lens (I echo Sally who I believe used this language) from which to understand and appreciate others. It continues to contribute to my professional and personal growth."**

**Calli (ENFP)**

**"I have enjoyed my introduction to Type through Yvonne. It has given us a common tongue for our similarities and differences. Yvonne has been very supportive in helping me understand my interactions with others through Type. Type has caused me to be more reflective with my actions and decisions and evaluate my personal evolution."**

**Andrew (INFP)**

**CHAPTER 10**  
**TO BE CONTINUED ...**

So, where do I go from here? It seems like the more I learn about Type, the more I find I need to learn. This journey over the past few years not only provided me with many answers, it also created many questions.

Studying these questions will be a life long endeavor with many twists and turns along the road to discovery. Perhaps I'll pursue this grand adventure formally or through purely a personal interest.

Some of those questions are:

- What are the different mothering styles of the 16 Types?
  
- When given the MBTI, people are excited and energized with the results, yet often in organizations the interest dissipates and little follow through takes place. How do we encourage people to continue using Type in their lives? What can I do as a facilitator to foster this development?
  
- Is there a correlation between type and homosexuality?

-Are Out-of-Pattern Preferences learned or inborn?

-Upon looking into the homes of varying Types, would we find a correlation between Type and decor?

-When put into life situations which call on us to live out our least preferred functions, do we experience more depression? Is there a correlation between depression and living out-of-Type?

The journey continues ...

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## APPENDIX A

### Consent Form

Yvonne D. Nelson-Reid, an MA student in the Graduate Division of Educational Research, University of Calgary is studying how people have been affected by understanding their psychological type. She is under the supervision of Dr. Tad Guzie in the Graduate Division of Educational Research. This research study has important implications in theory and practice in education, organization and Psychological Type related fields. Your participation in the study is voluntary.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ do hereby agree to participate in a learning circle in regard to the affects on my life of understanding psychological type. I understand that all of the information I give will be held in the strictest confidence. My name will NOT be used when summarizing the data. If, in the highly unlikely event, the researcher wished to release my name or to use any identifiable records for teaching, publication, or presentation. my written permission will be required for her to do so. I also agree to be video-taped for the purpose of the research, to be viewed only by the researcher herself unless given written permission to use otherwise.

I would like the following pseudonym to be used when I (or my comments) am referred to in the above written work

\_\_\_\_\_.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B****The 16 Psychological Types by Marine J. RoBards, Ph.D., 1995****ISTJ**

ISTJs are quiet, serious, responsible, sensible, patient, conservative, loyal and steadfast—maintainers of society's time-honored traditions and institutions. This "Rock of Gibraltar" type needs to be needed and readily takes on a parental role, in their working relationships, as well as with friends and family. They often settle in occupations in law enforcement or government, teaching, banking and finance, religious service or administration, or business. They are ideally suited to positions in bureaucratic organizations, and they naturally adapt to playing the roles assigned to them—whether as leaders or followers. ISTJs function well in jobs requiring accurate record keeping of facts and figures. They are the enforcers of law, policy, procedure, schedules and principles, and they exert a stabilizing effect on society. Hard work, honesty, politeness, timeliness and faithfulness to family, friends and country are foremost among the ISTJ's honored values. They tend to resist unnecessary change in all aspects of their lives and they see most innovation as disruptive.

**ISFJ**

ISFJs are private, faithful, sensible and sensitive. Shy, modest and unassuming, this type needs to support and minister to others in order to feel useful. Others count on the ISFJ's steadfast caring and help—so much so that they may become irresponsibly dependent on this type's support. Martyrdom is often an occupational hazard for self-sacrificing ISFJs, who may have to struggle with inner doubts and fears before expressing their personal needs and desires. Work is life to these conservative souls, who put in long hours at the workplace, as well as at home. ISFJs volunteer their help generously, often behind-the-scenes. Innovation, change and uncertainty are unnerving to these folks. They prefer a stable, organized, well regulated, scheduled life, even if someone else is to control what will happen and when. The deeply compassionate ISFJ gravitates toward traditional helping occupations: human services, the ministry, homemaking, teaching and clerical work. They are happy handling details and routine, especially if there is a human element in the work they do.

## **ESTP**

ESTPs are outgoing practical thinkers—masters of experience, observation and the analysis of cause-effect relationships, free from the biasing influence of theory, tradition or emotion. Action is the ESTP's middle name. This type thrives on it and creates it when life gets too boring. Resourceful troubleshooters, dynamic entrepreneurs and engaging negotiators, ESTPs apply a flexible, common-sense reasoning approach to any problem they tackle: planting a garden, fixing a car, settling a dispute, or reorganizing a multibillion-dollar corporation. Just don't try to sell this type on fantasies and abstract ideas! Spontaneous, competitive and generous, ESTPs turn work into play, whenever possible, and apply the model of an athletic team to all their relationships. Teamwork matters to the ESTP. Although they can be charming, clever and seductively open, rarely do ESTPs merit description as deeply feeling people. When life becomes too complex with unwanted obligations and personal entanglements, count on the ESTP to escape from the situation.

## **ESFP**

The ESFP is warm, outgoing, optimistic and caring—a cheerful person who's always ready for a good time and avoids the company of dreary “doom and gloom” people who take themselves too seriously. Count on ESFPs to settle in occupations which let them be “people people”—working in sales, human services, business, nursing, crisis intervention or the performing arts. They are naturally gifted at observing human behavior and figuring out what others want. Whatever the ESFP's work choice, talking must be part of the job! To be at their best, ESFPs need to be around other people—and this type will go to great lengths to avoid solitude and isolation. ESFPs believe that life, work and relationships should be fun and rewarding. ESFPs are unlikely to stick around when clouds darken the skies for too long at a stretch. Charming, clever and open-minded, the witty ESFP is likely to be seen by others as a party person—so much so that this type may be ill-at-ease in business fields which expect seriousness, formality, logic, conceptual thinking, organization and punctuality.

## INTJ

Independent, innovative, logical and driven by the inner world of ideas and possibilities, the INTJ often appears to others as a quietly self-confident (and sometimes stubborn) critic of the status quo, convinced that reality can be altered, the future reshaped. Wherever there is a need for change in systems, programs, concepts or theories, INTJs will be working behind the scenes to reorganize and revise. This type's focused attention to the personal mission may be inspiring or frankly obsessive, depending on the observer's viewpoint or the success of the enterprise. Introspective and somewhat shy, INTJs place their trust in logical analysis and intuition to guide their thoughts and decisions. More feeling types may find them chilly, and more practical types accuse them of being unrealistic, but INTJs take their cues mostly from those they recognize as intelligent. Often attracted to theoretical, analytical and methodological areas of inquiry, INTJs succeed in a wide variety of fields, from ones heavily dependent on mathematics and science to more philosophical, literary or applied disciplines.

## INFJ

INFJs are intuitive, caring, quiet and peace-loving: deep and complex people who may seem equally at home dealing with the personal and analytical spheres of life. The interior world of vision and ideas is this type's most comfortable domain, but some degree of human connection is essential for the INFJ's happiness; a potential conflict for this type. Articulate, empathetic and idealistic, INFJs often say they just know things, they know them directly, and they may not be able to tell you how or why! INFJs seem to be able to feel others' feelings vicariously and sense the good and evil in situations: an almost psychic ability which may be an asset in many "people professions". Spiritual, sensitive and committed, INFJs enjoy being of service to others. Once this type's goals are set and the mind is made up, no argument based solely on reason and practicality is likely to divert the passionate INFJ from a mission or chosen project. Whether this characteristic manifests itself as admirable tenacity or bull-headed stubbornness may determine the individual INFJ's potential for life success.

## ENTP

Enthusiastic, outgoing, analytic idea people, ENTPs often are multitalented characters interested in nearly everything. Independent, non-conforming and sometimes a little rebellious and confrontational, this type may be an inspiration to others who will follow the ENTP guru into uncharted waters—sometimes shark-infested! Many ENTPs have a hard time dealing with long-range planning, facing practical constraints to their projects, coping with structured working situations and authority figures, and keeping their interpersonal relationships on an even keel. Entrepreneurship may meet this type's needs when more conventional business situations are unattractive. The ENTP has the ability to succeed in a variety of careers—and may move from one to another over the course of a lifetime—always seeking new opportunities and retreating from projects which have degenerated to hum-drum routine. Whatever their chosen field of endeavor, from sales to science, art or writing to psychology, ENTPs always play the role of visionary, promoter, marketer and instigator.

## ENFP

ENFPs are open-minded, imaginative, caring and outgoing. They thrive on the drama of life by observing everything enthusiastically and associating meaning and human motive with all they survey. To the ENFP, no life event is devoid of significance—a belief which may justify others' perception of them as hyperalert, oversensitive and even suspicious at times. Charming, interactive, charismatic, communicative and ingenious, ENFPs often are expansive in their approach to life, love and work—multitalented individuals who may succeed in a number of creative endeavors, so long as a strong human element is present. “Do this, do that!” jobs demanding strict compliance with rules, regulations and procedures, and attention to logic, facts and details are stressful for most ENFPs. Their characteristically short attention span and diversity of interests may sabotage their accomplishment in enterprises demanding tenacity and single-mindedness. This type's natural gift for inspiring others often is their salvation: the projects ENFPs start may be completed by their followers!

## **ISTP**

ISTPs are factual, sensible, logical and reflective. They enjoy activity, independence and solitude and may work happily and productively for 20 hours at a stretch. Curious, practical and often mechanically adept, many excellent craftsmen and production artists are ISTPs, as are professional in electronics, engineering and mechanics and stars in individual athletic competition and team sports. ISTPs are masterful at analyzing complex systems and introducing change to improve productivity and efficiency. This type is noted for working out easier ways to get things done: often a great asset, but also a potential liability if the ISTP side-steps regulations, codes and laws. In business and finance, ISTPs often rise to the top because they combine a no-nonsense facts-and-figures approach with a “why not try it?” openness to strategy. They tend to be objective, competitive and coolly rational in most life pursuits. More feeling types may perceive the ISTP’s approach to personal relationships as detached, conditional and utilitarian, but ISTPs retort that their behavior is merely unemotional.

## **INTP**

Private, intellectual, impersonal, analytical and reflective, the INTP appears to value ideas, principles and abstract thinking above all else. This logical type seeks to understand and explain the universe—not to control it! Higher education often holds a particular appeal to this type who tends to acquire degrees and amass knowledge over the entire course of life. Abstract or theoretical subjects are usually the INTP’s cup of tea, and academic or research careers may seem attractive to this type. From science and math to economics and philosophy: just name the discipline, and you’ll find INTPs perched on the loftiest rungs of theory and analysis. In whatever field they choose, INTPs take on the role of visionary, scientist or architect, and they usually prefer to make their contributions in relative solitude. The mundane details of life may be the INTP’s undoing, since this type lives in a world guided by intuitive thinking. Often perceived to be arrogant and aloof, the quiet and sometimes reclusive INTP may have to struggle in the personal realm, as well, for feelings are not this type’s natural forte.

## **ESTJ**

Assertive, practical, rational, loyal, opinionated and decisive, the ESTJ is an organized, take-charge person who brings others into line by assigning tasks and roles, giving clear-cut instructions, following up regularly to check progress and giving formal recognition to those who do as they've been told. The ESTJ usually prefers to enforce existing policies, rather than to innovate, revise or otherwise introduce unnecessary change into any system. Traditional and conservative, the ESTJ tends to apply a military model to most life situations, preferring linear channels of communication and command eliminating any disorganization or confusion. In business, education, administration, law enforcement or the military, this type is evident as the outgoing, no-nonsense leader, gratified by the precision of smoothly functioning organizations and the power and control that come with being in charge. While others may charge that this type is sometimes short on feelings and finesse. ESTJs will tell you they express their caring by looking after others' welfare in unemotional ways.

## **ENTJ**

Outgoing, logical and decisive, the ENTJ leads by providing conceptual structure and setting goals, rather than by detailing and enforcing procedures, codes and regulations. This "big picture" type rises naturally to conspicuous positions of power and responsibility in all organizational settings (business, military, educational, governmental). Disorganization, confusion, emotion, inefficiency and illogic drive ENTJs to take charge of situations and institutions. Their intuition fuels their vision and defines their goals. They deal with the world boldly, in an assertive, analytical, objective and organized way which inspires others to salute them and do whatever the ENTJ needs done—including all the detail work! ENTJs certainly do get things done, both at home and at work, but often at substantial cost in terms of wear and tear on the human spirit, for they may neglect the importance of the personal element in accomplishing their purpose. More than any other, this type seems to struggle between an inner drive toward creative spontaneity and the desire for order in the universe.

## ISFP

ISFPs are quiet, practical, sensitive and spontaneous. Somewhat shy and retiring, folks of this type are drawn to a complex array of occupations which offer some measure of solitude and also allow them to keep a finger on the pulse of life. Forestry, horticulture, farming, scuba diving, mining and construction attract some ISFPs, as do the hands-on fields of carpentry, woodworking, pottery, weaving and production art. Professional athletics, music and performance also draw a disproportionate number of this type. You'll find other ISFPs at work in a variety of human services fields, where their sensitivity and skill at observation arm them well to help others. Sensuous and earthy, many ISFPs make working or playing in the out-of-doors a high priority. The ISFP values independence strongly and tends to retreat or escape from situations which become to unpleasant, confining or demanding. This free spirit's natural characteristics run counter to the expectations of most business organizations, so you'll rarely find this type at the top of the corporate ladder.

## INFP

INFPs are quiet, creative, sensitive and perceptive souls who often strike others as shy, reserved and cool. These folks have a rare capacity for deep caring and commitment—both to the people and causes they idealize. INFPs guide their behavior by a strong inner sense of values, rather than by conventional logic and reason. Forced to cope with this facts-and-figures “real” world we inhabit, INFPs may appear to have been imported from another galaxy! They gravitate toward creative or human service careers which allow them to use their instinctive sense of empathy and remarkable communication skills. Strongly religious, spiritual or philosophical people, INFPs may see the purpose of their lives as an inner journey, quest or personal unfolding. More practical or rational types may tend to discredit the INFP's sources of understanding as mystical. The search for a soulmate is a preoccupation for many INFPs, who must balance their need for privacy and peace with their yearning for human connection. If there seems to be an air of sadness in the INFP's spirit, blame it on this type's longing for the perfect in all things.



## ESFJ

ESFJs are outgoing, sociable, practical and organized. They pride themselves on their reflexive skills to harmonize, entertain and nurture others. Duty, personal service, manners and social order come second-nature to this type. Warm, friendly and naturally talented at working with others and organizing people and events, ESFJs make excellent salespeople, health care providers, teachers, homemakers and hosts. They work well as club and committee members, and their type numbers conspicuously among volunteer, church, charitable, social and civic organizations. Traditional, conservative and loyal, ESFJs work hard, devoting their time and energy to family and friends. This caring type has little tolerance for those whose actions or omissions hurt others' feelings, and they may let the offender know! Although ESFJs derive personal satisfaction from helping others, they need verbal and tangible strokes of appreciation for their good work. When they do not receive the kind of recognition and reciprocation they feel is due, ESFJs may suffer attacks of righteous indignation.

## ENFJ

ENFJs are sociable, intuitive, sensitive and organized. These energetic, warm and charming folks are influential, and they make catalytic and charismatic leaders. People often find that they want to do whatever ENFJs want them to do! Many ENFJs have a natural gift for public speaking and for organizing people to accomplish a goal—whether in politics, business, religion, teaching, sales or therapy. Responsible, tenacious, idealistic and opinionated, outgoing ENFJs usually work their magic by artful facilitation or tactful persuasion, but they are willing to do battle with people and institutions they see as wrong-minded or mean-spirited. ENFJs honour their commitments and expect the same of others. This type's paradoxical pitfalls of conflict avoidance and "kinder-than-thou" righteous indignation may get in their way, now and then. Groups headed by competent ENFJs are marked by well-defined mission, teamwork, open communication, appreciation and support for every member—but they may be well advised to have other types look after the impersonal details.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Martine J. RoBards, Ph.D., *The Insight Game Version 1.0* (Melbourne, Australia: Obsidian Software, 1995).