

Jungian Psychological Typology

by John Searns

The following brief summary does not pretend to do justice to the complexity of Jung's theory of psychological type. Our intention is merely to provide enough basic information so that the reader can see how types affect masculine psychology and relationships. For more detailed information on types the reader is referred to the Suggested Reading list at the end of this Appendix.

Jung's typology shows that people naturally fall into two major categories: extraverts and introverts, depending on whether their life energy is directed toward the outer world of people, objects and events (extraverts), or toward the inner world of their own subjective thoughts and feelings (introverts). These basic attitudinal differences in people are like left- and right-handedness in that they are innate and it is difficult to change one's natural inclination.

Generally speaking, extraverts like an active life and introverts prefer a contemplative one. Extraverts rarely tire of being with people; they are energized by people. But introverts need more time alone to process their experiences and will become exhausted if forced to continually relate to others. Introverts tend to be on the shy side and to wait for the world to affect them, while extraverts want to go out and affect the world.

A key point for our discussion of father-son type differences is that extraverts and introverts rarely understand each other. Introverts may experience extraverts as loud and pushy, and extraverts may see introverts as morose and passive.

Regardless of their skewed perceptions of each other, each attitude type has its unique gifts. Extraverts meet new people easily; they keep the world going. Introverts have depth of thought and feeling; they give the world meaning. A value of learning about typology is that it can give one an appreciation of the differences between people so that one does not automatically denigrate that which is different from oneself.

Jung's theory of types also contains four "functions": thinking, feeling, sensing, and intuition. Sensing and intuition, the perceptive functions, are used by the personality to perceive data. Which data are important to perceive is determined by whether the person is an extravert or an introvert. If an introvert, then data from the inner world of

thoughts, feelings, and images will be important. If the person is an extravert, data from the external world will be of foremost concern. The sensing function provides data via the five senses, and the intuition function gives information through hunches, subliminal perceptions, and unconscious processes. Intuitives, when asked how they know something, may say, "I don't know how or why I know it. Just do." Sensing tries to determine what a thing is, while intuition seeks to determine its meaning.

Thinking and feeling are the evaluative functions that help us come to conclusions about what we perceive. The thinking function uses logic to analyze data and experience; it tends to be impersonal and concerned only with the logical validity of a conclusion. Feeling operates quite differently, making evaluations based on personal values instead of logic. Regarding evaluations, thinking asks, "Does it make logical sense?" while feeling asks, "Do I like it?"

Picture a thinking and a feeling type going on a nature walk: the thinking type sees a bird and wants to know its name and what characteristics distinguish it from other birds. The feeling type is more interested in whether he or she likes that kind of bird, and in its value as one of God's creatures.

On this same walk a sensing type would be more tuned in to the colors, smells and textures of the experience. The intuitive type would be impressed with the grandeur of creation, the Great Chain of Being, or the like.

These different personalities naturally lead to different experiences of reality and differing values. To a person of one type the person of another type seems to be missing the point. Each person is caught in his or her own perspective like a person who has on red-lensed glasses so that the whole world looks red.

The type theory becomes more complicated when the two attitudes of extraversion and introversion are linked with the four functions to produce eight combinations. For example, combining extraversion with feeling produces an extraverted feeling type, a warm and outgoing person whose main interest is in people. A child of this type will, for instance, know every kid on the block and want to bring them all home for dinner.

Another example of one of the eight combinations is introversion paired with thinking to give the introverted thinking type (just the op-

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posite from the extraverted feeling type). The introverted thinker is immersed in the world of ideas and may appear awkward and tactless with people, especially in social situations. This is the classic "Ivory tower" thinker, the theorist who is concerned with ideas for their own sake and not with transforming them into practical reality.

Two other aspects of Jungian typology that are important to consider are judgment and perception. Judgment and perception are two separate ways of dealing with the outer world. Actually, we have already spoken of them in discussing the four functions: thinking and feeling are judging functions, that is, they are interested in coming to conclusions about data. And sensing and intuition are perceptive functions; they are interested in obtaining the data.

The type who uses judging to deal with the outer world prefers structure and organization; he or she likes to have things "nailed down." But the perceptive type likes to be more spontaneous and feels constrained by structure and planning. A judging type will have weekend plans, while a perceptive type prefers to wait to see how he or she feels before deciding what to do on the weekend. The negative side of the judging type is rigidity, and of the perceptive, unreliability.

In an extravert, because his or her main interest is in the outer world, the judging or perceptive function will also be the major characteristic of the personality. For example, an extraverted thinker, who is a judging type, will use his main function, thinking, on the outer world. But in an introvert the main function is used in relation to the inner world and so it is hidden. Thus, though the judging or perceptive function will still be used in relation to the outer world, it will not be the true indicator of the introvert's personality. For example, an introverted feeling person, who is a perceptive type, will be flexible in relation to the outer world, but in relation to the inner world will be judging; he or she will have firm, even inflexible, inner values arrived at by feeling.*

When extraversion or introversion and feeling or thinking, sensation or intuition, and judging or perception are combined, the result is sixteen possible type combinations. For example, a person can be an

extravert with a thinking main function and a sensation auxiliary function and then would be a judging type because his main function, thinking, is a judging function.

A father who is an extraverted thinking type might come across like an army general. He is well-organized, likes a highly structured life, goes by the book and has little tolerance for those who go against convention. As we describe in Chapter 8, the introverted feeling son who has such a father will often find himself in conflict with and overwhelmed by the imposition on him of his father's extraverted values.

For further applications to the father-son relationship see Chapter 8, and for a description of how types affect a man's work, see Chapter 4. A familiarity with type theory is valuable because it is useful in understanding almost any human interaction.

Suggested Reading

- Jung, C. G., *Psychological Types*; CW 6, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971.
- Myers, Isabel Briggs and Peter B., *Gifts Differing*. Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1980.

*The interaction between introversion and extraversion and judging and perception is explained on p. 74 of Myers, Isabel Briggs and Peter B., *Gifts Differing*. Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1980.