

OVERVIEW OF MBTI & APPLIED JUNGIAN PSYCHOLOGY

The chapter provides an over-view of the theory or system for understanding the unique characteristics of various personalities and how these differences tend to be identifiable in what is called a personality type, and now through this work, as it is applied to the functioning of congregations.

C. G. Jung's theory of psychological types¹ as described by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI[®])² is the primary language and information base used in the remainder of this book. The basic theory of this system of psychology is applied to the corporate dynamics of congregations. Each congregation has a sociological reality, a life of its own in the world. The work of identifying the congregation's personality treats the sociological reality as a corporate entity, displaying a definable personality type, a psychological reality. Increasing one's understanding of the psychological factors and dynamics will enhance the ability to assist the congregation to move toward self-differentiation and greater health. The congregation will learn the deeper dynamics of the reality of who it is, its personality, and thereby have a grounding for how it engages in the world, its vocation and mission.

This chapter will provide a brief introduction of Jung's theory of psychological types and at least an Congregation Personality Preferences elementary understanding of the language of the MBTI[®]. You are invited to use your

imagination as you review this chapter. As you work through this “MBTI 101” you will be challenged to make the leap from the application of this material as applied to individuals to thinking of the congregation as a corporate entity with an identifiable personality. In the previous chapter, you had the opportunity to assess your congregation’s personality using the Profiler of Congregation Personality Preferences (PCPP). As you read this overview of personality theory you will want to keep the four-letter type designation before you. You will also find it helpful if you know your personality type as described by the MBTI®. Jungian psychological principles are intended to create deeper self-awareness and self-understanding. They are not intended to be used for judging others, limiting them by labels or “pigeonholes.” If you are not aware of the four-letter designation for your personality type you may want to identify it before you go further. If you wish, look for a person in your community trained to administer the MBTI, or check for resources on the web or in print.

I have witnessed grace replacing negative self-criticism within the congregation as these insights of corporate personality type have been shared and deliberated. I have had the joy of seeing the light of new understanding bring healing and hope to pastors and leaders as they have discovered words and concepts with which they can now articulate their experiences of the congregation. This material opens the door for deeper relationships.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO JUNGIAN PSYCHOLOGY AND

THE MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR

Each person, and each congregation, is unique. In our culture we pride ourselves on our individualism. No one wants to be put in a box or pigeonholed. Yet, we picture most rugged individualists as tending to dress and act alike. We pride ourselves on being unique, even though we find a certain strength, encouragement, or sense of safety in the similar, in knowing we are not alone. The reality is that while we are each unique there are underlying patterns to our personalities. These patterns foster commonalities drawing us in and helping us build and maintain relationships within family, social setting, workplaces, as well as communities of faith.

My son-in-law designs sporting wear for mountain bikers. He creates many different garments with a few simple patterns through the utilization of different fabrics. The pattern may be the same, but the garment is unique because of the fabric. For example, a pair of shorts will look one way with a denim fabric and completely different when he uses corduroy and is, in turn, different when stretch nylon is used. The uniqueness we tend to see is in the fabric more than the basic pattern.

Work with the MBTI is about identifying the basic patterns through which we gather information and make decisions. Each person brings to the pattern the fabric of his or her life and experiences. There is no typology, no psychological theory, and no personality instrument adequate to explain the rich diversity of

individual differences. We may be similar, but we are, in the same moment, different and unique! This is equally true for each congregation.

Beyond celebrating characteristics of individuality, it is important to notice similarities existing within certain broad categories. Understanding the similarities, or patterns, can be useful in improving communication, strengthening relationships, and understanding differing values. Further, understanding the similarities will contribute to the constructive use of the differences. Accepting differences fosters an atmosphere in which people can be unique individuals and not merely categorized and labeled. They will be valued for the varying gifts they bring to life, to relationships. Understanding differences is a fundamental, which strengthens relationships.

Applied corporately to congregations the same holds true. While each congregation is unique, it tends to live out this uniqueness in an identifiable pattern. By understanding and working with the pattern one can build a more affirming, productive, and healthy set of relationships among the members and a healthier, more faithful corporate “sense of self.” The congregation can develop an honest estimate of who and what it is to be about in the world, which will enhance its ministry, as its posture becomes more confident and grace filled.

FOUR FUNCTIONS

Jung describes two basic mental processes, perceiving and judging. Each of these processes, in turn, has two aspects or functions. The perceiving process of

gathering information is accomplished through two equal but opposite functions, Sensing and Intuition. The perceiving process index (SN)³ describes the person's preferred way of taking in information about the world, the process of perception. People either gather information primarily through the five senses, Sensing preference (S), or by a function of Intuition (N), which gathers information through inspiration, hunch, and awareness of possibilities.

The table displays the dichotomous relationship of the two perceiving functions and the two judging functions.

Information gathered through Perceiving		Functions	
S	five senses	intuition	N
Decisions made by Judging		Functions	
T	logical/systems	relational	F
“head rules the heart”		“heart rules the head”	

Those who prefer gathering information through the Sensing function tend to focus on the facts, on the details, and on the practical. Their orientation is toward the past or the present. The past often offers the clearest picture for factual knowledge. In the present, the orientation of the Sensing person toward facts may not be what we generally tend to think of as factual knowledge, but rather, the fact of what something feels like, or looks like: experiential facts, physical realities. How one thing tastes or another smells also may be important detailed information. The

person who prefers to gather information through the function of Sensing may tend to offer a self-description of being factual, or practical, or experiential. They can tell you what was or what is.

In contrast, or balance, are those preferring to use the perceiving function of Intuition, which is considered as equal but opposite to Sensing. They can describe what might have been or could be or will be. People who prefer Intuition as a way of perceiving focus more on the possibilities than on actualities. This personality looks more toward the future, seeing the big picture and the interrelatedness of ideas, concepts and patterns. The Intuitive, for example, may tend to describe themselves as being more creative, or inventive, or as possibly having a sixth sense. The person who prefers the Intuitive function may not be as tuned into the fine details as would be one who prefers using their Sensing function. A graphic artist who can look at an object and reproduce its appearance on paper uses her Sensing function. On the other hand, Picasso primarily used his Intuitive function to present objects in the abstract style of cubism. By dissecting and highlighting specific parts of the subject from various viewpoints he could display its essence, not reduce it to a two dimensional recreation.

Judgment is about making decisions or coming to a sensible conclusion. The judging process is about one's orientation for making decisions. This is also accomplished through two equal but opposite functions, Thinking (T) and Feeling (F). The judging function index (TF) assesses one's preferred way of making decisions, coming to conclusions about the world around. This dichotomous choice

contrasts decision-making by impersonal logical consequences and analytical behavior — Thinking (T), with decision-making based primarily on human and/or social valuing — Feeling (F). The commonly used phrase “head rules the heart” generally applies to those who prefer to make decisions through the judging process of Thinking (T). “Heart rules the head” would apply to the ones who prefer Feeling (F) as their judging, decision making, process. The Thinking function will give one’s life consistency and uniformity, while the Feeling function focuses on the nurturing and caring aspects of relationships.

People use all four functions: Sensing (S), Intuition (N), Thinking (T) and Feeling (F). In one situation you may use the perceiving function of Sensing while another task calls upon you to use Intuition for the gathering of information. The same is true for the judging process of Thinking and Feeling. In one case you may make a decision primarily out of logic, the Thinking, and another time it is Feeling which guides the decision process.

These functions, however, are not equally preferred or equally developed. Therefore, a person will predominately prefer to gather information through one of the Perceiving functions which generally is more developed, S or N, and occasionally may use the other. Decisions are also generally reached through a preferred Judging function, T or F, while the second function, the opposite function, remains less developed and less used. Generally, these four functions can be identified in individuals in order of preference and use, thereby creating a pattern describing how the person prefers to gather information and make decisions.

ATTITUDES

The four functions are further identified in conjunction with an attitude.⁴ For Jung there were two attitudinal types: Extraverted types and Introverted types. The attitudes of extraversion and introversion are abbreviated as E and I, correspondingly. Extraversion is the outward turning of psychic energy.⁵ In other words, people who favor an attitude of extraversion will generally deal, first-and-foremost, with the outer world of people and things. The Extravert types want to act on, and interact with, what and who is in their environment. They receive energy from outside stimuli. Some of the adjectives associated with extraversion, included outgoing, enthusiastic, lively, and talkative.

Introversion, on the other hand, is an inward turning of one's psychic energy⁶. Those who prefer introversion focus on the inner world of thoughts and ideas. They receive their primary energy from what is going on inside of them. Their focus is not directed toward an exterior environment. The focus of those who identify as Introverts is to an inner space where thoughts and ideas are developed, contemplated and integrated. Therefore, those who prefer an attitude of introversion may be considered detached, distant or aloof, while they may view themselves as being discerning or thoughtful and needing quiet to concentrate.

These preferred traits become the identifying markers for one's personality. In this language base of personality types one person may be called a Thinking type while another an Intuitive. One person will be an Extravert while the counterpart is

referred to as an Introvert. The labeling of traits becomes a little confusing as the attitudes (E or I) are connected to the four functions (S, N, T, or F). These two attitudes are found in combination with each of the four functions. So, one's type would be further described, for example, as extraverted Feeling, and another as introverted Feeling. One may be functioning as extraverted Sensing and another introverted Intuition, etc.⁷ It becomes ever more complicated when one refers to an attitude or function other than the dominant one. Language such as “an Extravert will introvert their Sensing function” or “the Introvert will extravert their Sensing function” may be used. Extraverts do introvert. They are able to deal with the inner world of thoughts and ideas, even as they prefer to live primarily in the outer world of people and things. Introverts do extravert. They function and interact with other people while that is not their strength. Grammatically, the confusion obviously arises as the words extravert and introvert are used interchangeably as nouns, adjectives and verbs. It will take some concentration and practice to be aware of how these words are being used: the Extravert, the extraverted Thinker, the Introvert extraverts, etc.

It is important to recognize these classifications are designed to increase understanding of self and others, not to limit. All mature, well-developed people use all four functions (S, N, T, F) in both attitudes (extraversion and introversion) when necessary. There tends to be, however, an observable pattern of preferences for most individuals as related to these two attitudes and four functions. One might say we

have our default settings on which we rely or to which we go when desired. The pattern of preferences often functions as the default autopilot.

Katherine Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers, mother and daughter, developed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) instrument, in which, through a self-disclosure process of choices, a person reveals the pattern of her/his individual preferences. Their goal was to make the theory of C. G. Jung understandable and practical in people's lives.⁸ To help facilitate this self-disclosure process Myers and Briggs developed a testing inventory, which could indicate a person's preferred attitude Extrovert (E) or Introvert (I), and preferred functions for gathering information Sensing (S) or Intuitive (N) and making decisions Thinking (T) or Feeling (F).

The void in Jung's approach was having no clear way to determine which function was dominant and/or which function a person would choose to use in the outer world of people and things. This is especially complicated for Introverted types. Myers and Briggs developed a second attitudinal index to address this void in self disclosure. Each person will prefer one of the perceiving functions, either S or N and one of the judging functions, either T or F. One will be extraverted by the person and one will be introverted. Which one will the person extravert and which one will be introverted?

A primary contribution by Myers and Briggs in the development of the inventory is a fourth index of Judgment-Perception (JP). This index is a second attitudinal index describing which perceiving or judging function, S, N, T or F, is

extraverted, that is, which function is primarily used by the individual to deal with the outer world. The other preferred function will be introverted. Upon taking the inventory developed by Myers and Briggs the person sees her/his preference scores for the various traits. If an individual's indicator score shows P, having an attitude for Perceiving, the person prefers to deal with the exterior world of people and things through using the preferred perceiving function of Sensing (S) or Intuition (N). While the person extraverts one of the perceiving functions, he/she holds the judging function, Thinking (T) or Feeling (F), in an introverted posture, using this function within him/herself in his/her thoughts and ideas.

When the person's score shows Judging (J) on the fourth index, an attitude favoring judgment, then he/she will extravert one of the judging functions. His/her focus will be on making decisions in the external world either through the function of Thinking (T), the logical, impersonal, and analytical, or through the value-oriented function of Feeling (F).⁹ This person would then be holding the preferred perceiving function, Sensing (S) or Intuitive (N), in an introverted posture.

This advancement in interpretation of Jung's work, the development of the MBTI by Myers and Briggs, is important for determining one's dominant function, communication pattern, time dimension orientation and spiritual posture, which will be reviewed in subsequent chapters.

A person, having completed the MBTI (not included in this book) will disclose his/her preferences for each of the four indices: attitude E or I, function S or N, function T or F, and attitude J or P. Combining the four letters of a person's

preferences is used to indicate her/his type, for example, ENTP or ISFJ. Sixteen possible combinations of preferences or sixteen personality types exist in the MBTI¹⁰ system. They are often displayed in the following matrix:

ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ

These four letter combinations are the pattern of preferences. Note the use of the word preferences. The four letters indicate the attitudes and functions one predominately chooses to use. The other four characteristics are still present in each individual but are not as readily engaged: therefore, the letters representing these characteristics are not depicted in the type designation. For example, in the case of a person who scores as an ENTP, these letters represent the preferred two functions (N and T) and the two preferred attitudes (E and P). The other characteristics of ISFJ are also present in the total make-up of the personality. However, since they often are less developed traits and act in a more behind-the-scenes supportive role in the person's life they not visually depicted in the type designation.

As one begins to apply these concepts to the functioning of their church, it is clear that while a specific congregation may display a pattern of preferences, say

ESTJ, individuals within the congregation may personally have different personality types, such as INFP or ENTJ. In a healthy congregational system, these individual personality types will function in a supportive role to the dominant personality type of the congregation. When understood and appreciated for their contributions, such members will bring greater wholeness to the congregation. If, on the other hand, a member with preferences differing from the congregation tries to make the congregation function according to his/her preferences trouble often ensues. More will be said about this later.

DOMINANT FUNCTION

I invite you to participate in a common exercise. Grab a piece of paper and simply write your name on it. Now, switch hands and write your name again; this time using the other hand.

Some people will sign quite naturally with their left hand while others choose to use their right. Our culture has moved past the days when a person was negatively judged for using their left hand. Rather, it is now generally understood as a preference. Most people can, with varying degrees of legibility, sign their name with either hand. Signing your name is a rather easy task you accomplish with little conscious thought as you use your preferred, or dominant hand. It takes much more concentration and intentionality to use the other, or auxiliary, hand. Most of us would not even try to make the lesser-developed hand equal to the more dominant. However, we use the weaker in the service of the dominant; it is the main helper. We use the hand less developed in the skill of writing to perform the very important

function of holding the paper still while the dominant hand writes. Beyond the dominant and auxiliary functions it is also important to understand the supportive role of the lesser developed functions and attitudes.

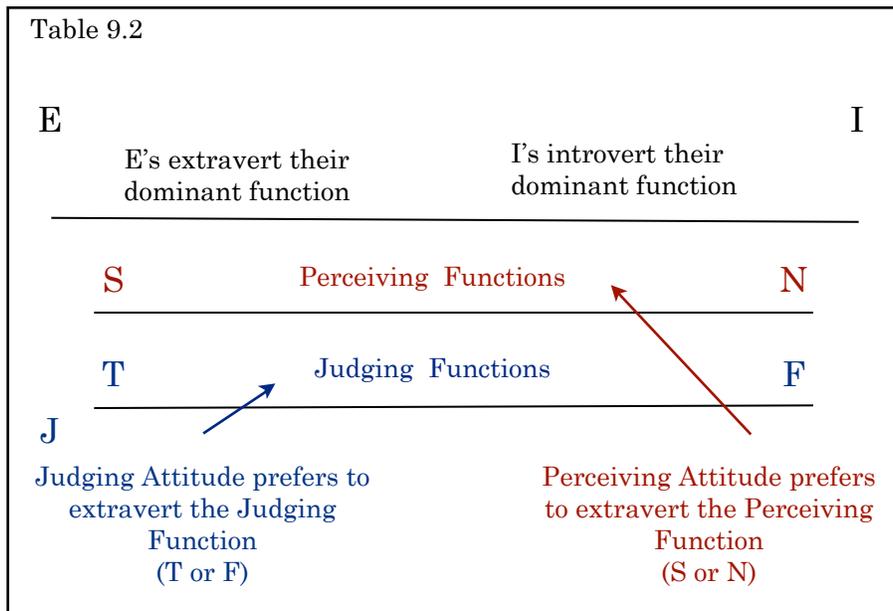
One of the functions will be dominant and will reflect the person's, or congregation's, primary focus. Identifying the function that is dominant in self and others will enhance understanding and communication and thereby help to build trust. Turning again to the four functions Sensing, Intuitive, Thinking and Feeling remember that while only two appear in the four-letter type, all four functions will be present in each personality, individual and congregational. Type theory will refer to these four functions with the designations of *dominant*, *auxiliary*, *tertiary*, or *inferior*.¹¹ The middle two letters of the four-letter type designation indicate the dominant and auxiliary functions. The tertiary and inferior functions will be present and active in the dynamics of personality, but they are not visible in the four-letter type. If the dominant function is in the perceiving process (either S or N) then the auxiliary function will be in the judging process (either T or F) and vice versa. For example, in an ENTP the NT indicates the preferred functions, Intuitive and Thinking. One of them will be dominant and one will be auxiliary. Once the dominant and the auxiliary functions are identified the identification and order of the tertiary and inferior functions follow.

The rank (dominant, auxiliary, tertiary, and inferior) of functions (S, N, T, F) is determined with the assistance of the preferred attitudes of E or I and J or P. One of the two preferred functions will be extraverted and the other will be introverted.

In our example of the ENTP, the attitude preferences indicated by E and P are key to determining the dominant and auxiliary functions.

The EI attitudinal index indicates the direction of the dominant function, outward or inward. The eight Extravert types use their dominant function on the external world for interactions with people and things. They direct their auxiliary function inward to processing thoughts and ideas. The eight types whose four-letter designation begins with I, the Introverts, prefer to hold their dominant function within, and use their auxiliary function in the outer world of people and things. Introverts extravert their auxiliary function.

The JP attitudinal index points to the function the person is going to use in



relating to the world outside of him/herself. This function will be extraverted. The Judging attitude (J) indicates one of the judging functions, either Thinking (T) or Feeling (F), will be extraverted. The Perceiving attitude (P) indicates that a

perceiving function, Sensing (S) or Intuition (N), will be used by the person in the outer world of people and things.

EXTRAVERTS

First applying these principles to Extraverts will be easier as their pattern is more straightforward. View Table 9.2 as you consider the ESTJ. The E indicates the function used in the outside world, the function extraverted, will be the dominant function. The J indicates a judging function will be the one extraverted and therefore primarily used in interactions. Thinking (T), not Feeling (F), is the preferred function for judging of the ESTJ. It is the dominant function for this type. Further, in the case of the ESTJ, since the preferred function is extraverted, the other displayed function, the Sensing (S), will be the auxiliary function and will have an introverted attitude.

For practice consider the ENFP. The E indicates the dominant functions will be extraverted, while the P shows it will be the perceiving function, S or N, which will be used on the outer world of people and things. Therefore, the Intuitive function (N) will be extraverted as the dominant function. The Feeling function (F) will be the auxiliary function and it will be held in the opposite attitude, Introverted

INTROVERTS

Determining the dominant function of Introverts, on the other hand, is not as direct. Understanding Introverts offers a greater challenge. Consider an ISTJ as the

arrowed graph above is reviewed. The I indicates the dominant function will not be extraverted but will be held with an introverted attitude. The JP attitude still indicates which function will be extraverted, which one will be used for interacting with people and things. The J, in the case of the ISTJ, shows that a judging function will be extraverted. In this case, the judging function of Thinking (T) will be used in the outer world of people and things. Since the Introvert holds the dominant function within, and in the case of the ISTJ extraverts the Thinking, then by logical deduction the perceiving function of Sensing (S) is identified as the dominant function. It is the one held within. The extraverted Thinking function is the auxiliary. Therefore the one preferring the ISTJ characteristics will hold their dominant function of Sensing silently in an introverted attitude while they use their auxiliary function, Thinking, to deal with others.

Consider a second example, the INFP. The attitude of I indicates the dominant function will be directed inward. The attitude of P suggests the perceiving function will be extraverted and primarily used in navigating the exterior world of people and things. The INFP's perceiving function is Intuition (N) and is the one that is extraverted. Intuition will be the auxiliary function. Therefore the Feeling function (F) will be the dominant function but held within.

FUNCTIONS WITH ATTITUDE

Not only does the E or I preference determine which of the functions is the dominant and which one will take on the auxiliary role, the tertiary and inferior

Table 9.3 Pattern of functions by Type with rank order.
 (Note: The table could be further expanded with 5-8 showing the order of functions repeated with the opposite attitude for each Type.)

ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
1. S(I)	1. S (I)	1. N(I)	1. N(I)
2. T(E)	2. F(E)	2. F(E)	2. T(E)
3. F(E)	3. T(E)	3. T(E)	3. F(E)
4. N(E)	4. N(E)	4. S(E)	4. S(E)
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
1. T(I)	1. F(I)	1. F(I)	1. T (I)
2. S(E)	2. S(E)	2. N(E)	2. N(E)
3. N(E)	3. N(E)	3. S(E)	3. S(E)
4. F(E)	4. T(E)	4. T(E)	4. F(E)
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
1. S(E)	1. S(E)	1. N(E)	1. N(E)
2. T(I)	2. F(I)	2. F(I)	2. T(I)
3. F(I)	3. T(I)	3. T(I)	3. F(I)
4. N(I)	4. N(I)	4. S(I)	4. S(I)
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ
1. T(E)	1. F(E)	1. F(E)	1. T(E)
2. S(I)	2. S(I)	2. N(I)	2. N(I)
3. N(I)	3. N(I)	3. S(I)	3. S(I)
4. F(I)	4. T(I)	4. T(I)	4. F(I)

functions can also be identified. Table 9.3¹² displays the rank of functions for each type and will help to clarify the relationship between the attitudes and the functions.

The functions are numerically ranked 1 through 4, but only the dominant and the auxiliary functions are displayed in the middle two letters of the four-letter type and are numbered as 1 and 2 for each of the types in Table 9.3.

An example: in the ISTJ the Sensing and Thinking functions are represented. The Sensing function is ranked as number 1 for this type and is the dominant

function. The auxiliary function is Thinking. It is labeled number 2. The ISTJ will also use, albeit to a much lesser degree, the Intuitive (N) and the Feeling (F) functions for gathering information and making decisions. These tertiary and inferior functions, numbered 3 and 4, while present and active in one's personality, are not represented in the type designation. The table shows the order for the four functions by type.

The subscript E or I in parenthesis, ^(E) or ^(I), following the letter designating each function in Table 9.3, will indicate the attitude of each function. The ^(E) indicates the functions for a particular type that will be used with an extraverted attitude. These functions will direct the individual in how to be involved in the outer world of people and things. In each type, the ^(I) associated with a function indicates the individual will engage each of those functions interiorly dealing with thoughts and feelings, rather than to publicly engage people and things.

Let's look first at the eight Extravert types in the bottom two rows of the table. The function numbered as 1 is held with an extraverted attitude and therefore is labeled with the ^(E). Each Extravert will tend to engage this function as its primary way of interacting with others. The Extravert will tend to hold the remaining three functions in an attitude of introversion, ^(I). That is, they will tend to deal with issues of these three functions within themselves rather than openly with others.

The auxiliary function helps give the individual balance. It is the remaining function shown in the four-letter preference of type. This function will take on the

opposite attitude of the dominant function.¹³ Looking back at the table, note how for the ESTJ the Thinking is the dominant function (1. T_(E)) and is held with an extraverted attitude. The Sensing function is in the auxiliary position (1. S_(I)) and is held in an attitude of introversion.

The tertiary and inferior functions (numbered 3 and 4 in the table) are the two functions, (S or N, T or F), not visually represented in the four-letter type designation. However, they continue to be operative in the individual's personality, though not as readily called upon and generally are not as well developed. The tertiary, or third, function will always be the opposite trait of preference for the auxiliary function, while the inferior function will always be the opposite trait of preference for dominant function.¹⁴ Sensing is the opposite function to Intuition, as Thinking is to Feeling. Observe how these three functions, auxiliary, tertiary, and inferior, all hold the opposite attitude, (E) or (I), of the dominant function.

The ESTP, when interacting with others will primarily focus on gathering information through the dominant Sensing function (1. S_(E)) and hold the other three functions (2. T_(I), 3. F_(I), and 4. N_(I)) within their thought processes to organize the gathered information, determine its value and plan a response.

As one considers the top two rows of Table 9.3, the eight Introverted types will conversely hold their dominant function with an introverted attitude, (I).¹⁵ What is of the most interest to the Introvert will generally be addressed within their mind and heart, not exposing that to others. The supportive three functions, held in an attitude of extroversion, (E), are pressed into service when the Introvert has to deal

with the outer world of people and things. This has a profound effect on communication and will be further discussed in the chapter on communication.

Endnotes

1. C. G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, trans. by H. G. Baynes, rev. by R. F. C. Hull (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976).
2. Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and MBTI are registered trademarks of Consulting Psychologist Press, Inc., Palo Alto, CA. Myers-Briggs is a trademark of Consulting Psychologist Press, Inc.
3. Note: A letter designation is used in the MBTI for each of the preferences and since the “I” is used to indicate introversion, the second letter of intuition, the “N”, is used for that preference.
4. Jung, 330-409.
5. Ibid., 428.
6. bid., 452-453.
7. Ibid., 330-405.
8. Isabel Briggs Myers and Mary H. McCaulley, *Manual: A Guide to the Development and Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1985), 1.
9. Briggs Myers and McCaulley, 2.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., 15-16.
12. Ibid., 18.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., 14-19.
15. Ibid., 14-16.