

A Terrapsychological Take on Personality Types

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What is your personality type?

C. G. Jung did a lot of research on typologies. His four orienting functions of consciousness for navigating life are: Thinking, Feeling, Sensation, and Intuition. Functions can be introverted or extroverted, conscious and unconscious. The primary is the function we rely on most, the auxiliaries less so.

This results in 8 psychological types arrayed as opposites (using mostly introverted intuition means less conscious extraverted sensing, etc.). Note that modes of consciousness are being typed, not people. Jung was interested in the perceptual styles by which we see ourselves and communicate with each other.

Jung's book *Psychological Types* mentions animals several times, but not in connection with types. Yet at least something of typology must live in the world of nature, the biological source of our human capabilities. We can see this in animals: one cat companion is more extroverted, for example, than another. Likewise, some plants seem showier in blossom or reach, especially in spring, than others with quieter, more confined gestures. Of two lemon trees of the same species, one showers the ground with offerings of fruit and blossoms, while the other rarely offers a single ripe fruit but quietly grows many; even its branches seem turned inward.

The addition of the Judging (structuring) vs. Perceiving (adapting) preferences by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator adds a valuable dimension to types. Additionally, the language of preference helps overcome the oppositional emphasis Jung gave to typology. However, judging sounds somewhat like what Jung said Feeling accomplishes, and Perceiving sounds like Sensing. To avoid confusion and preserve a useful distinction, perhaps we should refer to Judging as Structuring and Perceiving as Adapting.

If we imagine nature—whether our own or all around us—as alternating in tone between a here-and-now *being mood* and a once-removed *ordering mood*, then the Adapting preference reflects the former and the Structuring preference the latter. Adapting sails on the wind; Structuring contextualizes experience via a secondary world of concepts or possibilities. The latter is not unique to humans: animals plan too. Let us call this preference axis Spontaneity.

Now, Jung believed that *imagination* can align and integrate the functions and orientations (in the language of MBTI, the preferences). However, for some among us, fantasy life clings to what is tangible in the daily round: concrete details, specific relationship dynamics. Try as they might (and they seldom wish to), these people will never dwell in Faerie. But that does not mean they lack imagination. Everyone imagines.

Jung tended to describe them as Sensate types (preferers), with Intuitives as their opposite number, but intuition is not necessarily imaginative, nor is being factual always somatic.

Intuition gives insights in flashes and lives in abstract possibilities and fleshless patterns joining everything with everything else regardless of value or priority. It flies above the ground. By contrast, imagination, opulent in detail, tends to seek full expression through image, story, or craft. Creativity sunders the supposed opposition of dreaming vs. doing.

Perhaps we need another axis, then: Imagination, with the preferences of Heredreaming vs. Theredreaming. Some of what Jung thought of as Sensate activities—prizing facts and bottom lines—seem to belong better to Heredreaming. Intuition is a thinner quicksilver sibling to the rococo richness of Theredreaming.

The axes of typological preference combinations would then be

- Orientation (Introverting or Extroverting), more or less as in Jung
- Primary function (Thinking, Feeling, Sensing, Intuiting), as in Jung
- Second auxiliary function, as in Jung and MBTI
- Spontaneity (Structuring or Adapting), more or less as in MBTI
- Imagination (Heredreaming vs. Theredreaming)

resulting in 32 types: Introverting Intuiting (primary) Feeling (auxiliary) Structuring Theredreaming, or IIFST; Extroverting Sensing Thinking Adapting Heredreaming, or ESTAH; and so on.

This can get cumbersome. A simpler schema would be to first consider three axes and add the others as needed: Introverting vs. Extroverting, Structuring vs. Adapting, and Heredreaming vs. Theredreaming:

- Introverting Structuring Heredreaming (ISH): keeping an orderly inner world tied to concrete details.
- Introverting Structuring Theredreaming (IST): organizing an orderly inner world lived elsewhere.
- Introverting Adapting Heredreaming (IAH): going with the inner flow of feeling and sensation.
- Introverting Adapting Theredreaming (IAT): the body as a portal to realms beyond.
- Extroverting Structuring Heredreaming (ESH): imposing fantasies of order on one's surroundings.
- Extroverting Structuring Theredreaming (EST): working to align one's surroundings with far-off possibilities.
- Extroverting Adapting Heredreaming (EAH): sensing and aligning with what presents itself outwardly.
- Extroverting Adapting Theredreaming (EAT): outer events as promptings for profound fantasies about how things could be one day.

In the end, gaining comfort with non-preferred combinations depends heavily on practice. As Jung observed, the goal is not to categorize people, but to show up in life with as much conscious wholeness as possible. A wholeness with which we access our intimate relations with the things of the world around us: presences which in the end also dwell within us

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