BASIC ATTITUDES TOWARD LIFE: EXTRAVERSION AND INTROVERSION

We may observe that, in displaying the praises of any humane, beneficial man, there is one circumstance which never fails to be amply insisted on, namely, the happiness and satisfaction derived to society from his intercourse and good offices... Like the sun, an inferior minister of providence, he cheers, invigorates and sustains the surrounding world.

David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*

The philosopher who maintains that the "historical process" passes through his study is laughed at. He gets his revenge by settling the accounts of history's absurdities.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*

Eugene Kelly described David Hume as "a man of the world" who "made friends easily" (Navia & Kelly, 1980, p. 188). This stance toward life, Hume's preference for outer experience, is reflected even in his ethics. Rather than praise the lone individual who takes a moral stand against society, Hume praised what could be called a heroic bureaucrat, the moral person actively interacting with other human beings.

In the philosophy of Merleau-Ponty is found a contrasting value. Richard C. Mc Cleary described him as "a philosopher who made men wonder," as a man who built a "studied wall of solitude" around himself (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, p. ix). Rather than focus his energy on interacting with the external world, Merleau-Ponty preferred to view the world from his study and there settle the "accounts of history's absurdities." Hume's and Merleau-Ponty's opposing stances toward life and philosophy exemplify what Jung attempted to explain when he coined the terms extraversion, literally outward-turning, and introversion, or inward-turning.

Extraverts habitually focus their energy outwardly toward interactions with people and things. They may, as was Hume, be social and gregarious, actively involved in conversations, but not necessarily. Some extraverts are more directed toward the "things" of their environment than the people. They may assert their preference for an active life by being involved in careers, avocations, political causes, sports, or crafts.

Some extraverts may initially question that they are extraverted be-cause they highly value quiet moments of contemplation. What they may overlook is that extraverts are usually more intensely involved with outer experience for longer durations than introverts. Extraverts can long for a few moments of solitude as a brief pause from an otherwise busy day, but introverts are more likely even at work or at school to spend the greater part of each day reflecting rather than acting. Indeed, extraverts often feel that they become more energetic when interacting with people, and so can spend long hours at social events without becoming fatigued.

Introverts are more drawn to inner-experience, to their own reflections, contemplations, and plans for future action. They may talk less than extraverts, but they should not be labeled as shy or withdrawn. Many introverts are comfortable and confident in social settings, albeit in a more quiet and reserved manner. They will usually, however, have less stamina at large parties, feeling more comfortable and talkative when interacting with a few close friends. After a relatively short period of social interaction, they may choose to be alone. If that is impossible, they may "space out," psychologically withdrawing from the crowded, busy environment.

In conversations, extraverts are more likely to initiate the topics being discussed, alter the direction of the discussion, and interrupt other speakers. For them, an interruption is an integral part of conversations. Indeed, they may consider a lack of interruptions from others as an indication of apathy or boredom. Introverts are more likely to listen than talk. When they do talk, they take it seriously. After all, they have usually given much thought and consideration to their words before speaking.

As students, extraverts need activity. Since they use their greatest strengths and talents in the external world, they think best when talking and learn well in groups, but they may have difficulty sticking to their books for a long period of time. They are usually able to concentrate more fully when they take frequent and active breaks from the typically solitary tasks of reading and writing. Or, they can try to make these typically solitary tasks more suited to their preference for extraversion. They can, for example, form a study group or talk to friends about upcoming writing projects.

Since they value active experience so highly, extraverts tend to leap into tasks with very little planning. Once actively involved, they use trial and error, which naturally suits them, to complete the task. They prefer trial and error because it allows them to think as they think best: while acting or after acting.

Introverted students usually think best when alone, or at least when their inner solitude is uninterrupted. They are more comfortable than
extraverts with long stretches of study, but, unless they anticipate questions before hand or are presented some kind of agenda, they may perform poorly during in-class discussions. Because introverts do not always share what they know, teachers may be slow to appreciate their talents and depth of knowledge. In general, they may be more private and show less of themselves to others. They may, as Merleau-Ponty did, make others wonder what they are thinking.

Introverts do most of their thinking before they act. They tend to plan extensively, anticipate problems, and develop solutions to these problems before ever becoming involved in a task or activity. If asked a question, introverts will usually think about their answer, rehearse it, and only then deliver it to their audience. They are unlike extraverts, who are more likely to begin answering questions immediately, thinking of what they want to say as they speak.

WAYS OF PERCEIVING: SENSING–INTUITION

All ideas, especially abstract ones, are naturally faint and obscure. The mind has but slender hold on them. They are apt to be confounded with other resembling ideas; and when we have often employed any term, though without any distinct meaning, we are apt to imagine it has a determinate idea annexed to it. On the contrary, all impressions, that is, all sensations either outward or inward, are strong and vivid. The limits between them are more exactly determined, nor is it easy to fall into any error or mistake with regard to them.

David Hume, An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding

First, as concerns the sources of metaphysical knowledge, its very concept implies that they cannot be empirical. Its principles (including not only its maxims but its basic notions) must never be derived from experience. It must not be physical but metaphysical knowledge, namely, knowledge lying beyond experience.

Immanuel Kant, Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics

The above quotations are gleanings from one of the most fervent debates in the history of Western philosophy. In An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding (1784), Hume argued that all knowledge ultimately derives from sensations, or sensory data, and that these sensations are the clearest and most vivid kind of knowledge. He expressed a deeply held distrust of abstract ideas, which he felt were "naturally faint and obscure." Kant was in direct opposition. In Prolegomena (1783) and other works, he set out to prove that a priori knowledge does exist and is valid, that a kind of knowledge does come from sources other than sensations. It was from this and similar philosophical debates that Jung conceptualized two opposing processes of perception: sensing and intuition. Each process clearly has strengths and weaknesses.

Sensory perception represents the direct and conscious use of one’s senses, the sensations that Hume felt were the purest form of knowledge. Sensing types prefer and more highly value sensory perception, what they see, hear, touch, smell, and taste. They tend to focus on the details of perception, on what is in the here and now; they want to be sure of actualities, certain that what can be verified is verified. Only then will they inductively move on to understand the gestalt-like relationships among objects of perception.

Sensing types do develop general or abstract ideas, but generally after collecting and massaging large amounts of data. After they have felt their data, they are more comfortable about making speculations. But at times they may become so engrossed in the observation of concrete data that they fail to think beyond them.

Intuitive perception, in contrast, is less direct and employs impressionistic and even unconscious hunch-trusting. It is the process used to perceive what Kant called the "knowledge lying beyond experience." Intuitive types, those who prefer intuitive perception, first notice the gestalt. They attend to the details or sensations of perception later, if at all. Intuitive types are usually not as observant as sensing types, and are also less practical and down to earth. They are more likely to be perceived as dreamers who are engrossed in the world of possibilities.

As students, sensing types are, in general, practical and realistic; they like to put into use what they have learned. Learning for its own sake does not appeal much to them; application does. They like teachers who give clear directions that are concise and to the point, and they tend to be detailed and precise in their own communications. Most sensing students approach academic tasks as craftspeople or surgeons. They like to learn a skill or procedure, perfect it, and then practice it without much variation.

As students, intuitive types are less likely to be patient with routine or overly structured mechanical approaches to learning. Because they desire and seek the opportunity to let their gut impressions and hunches work, they tend to prefer open-ended instructions.

College-level English instructors tend to be intuitive types in an intuitive world (see Appendix 2). They value imagination and abstract thought so highly that the strengths of students who are sensing types
are often overlooked as are the weaknesses of those who are intuitive types. Sensing types are very observant, accurate with facts and details, careful about following directions, skillful at performing the most complex and intricate of kinesthetic procedures, and scientifically cautious in their development of concepts and acceptance of hypotheses. They are, however, often viewed as being unimaginative and merely concrete. Intuitive types are certainly quick to generate abstractions, but these abstractions may be the kind of flaky, inaccurate, or untested hypotheses that are valued only in academia. Intuitives are also sometimes so creative that they have difficulty accurately following even simple instructions. Writing instructors would better serve their students if they consciously realized that each process of perception—sensing and intuition—has strengths and weaknesses.

WAYS OF JUDGING: THINKING—FEELING

According to one opinion, the principles of morals are evident a priori, requiring nothing to command assent, except that the meaning of the terms be understood. According to the other doctrine, right and wrong, as well as truth and falsehood, are questions of observations and experience. But both hold equally that morality must be deduced from principles; and the intuitive school affirms as strongly as the inductive that there is a science of morals.

John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism

The moral significance of our conduct can only lie in the effect produced upon others; its relation to the latter is alone that which lends it moral worth, or worthlessness, and constitutes it an act of justice, loving-kindness, etc., or the reverse.

Arthur Schopenhauer, The Basis of Morality

In the above quote, John Stuart Mill, attempting to summarize a long history of treatises on ethics, concludes that “morality must be deduced from principles.” Some philosophers may develop principles inductively, from observations and experience as a sensing type might. Others may seek principles that they believe are “evident a priori,” as intuitive types might. But both, Mill contends, seek principles on which they can base ethical decisions. Schopenhauer found principles far less appealing. He felt that there existed no system of principles or moral rules that could be followed unequivocally, for rules and principles do not account for “the complicated nature of human affairs.” Rather than rely on principles, Schopenhauer based his ethics on personal values, what he called “a feeling in our own mind,” and on how one’s actions affected other people. Jung used the terms thinking judgment and feeling judgment to describe these opposing processes of making decisions. Jung felt that both thinking and feeling judgment are rational functions, each bringing a different kind of order to our decision making: the objective base of logic, or the subjective base of valuing.

Thinking types, who prefer thinking judgment and use it more frequently, value the objectivity of decision making. They thus prefer to formulate decisions on what transcends human vacillations, on the objectivity of “things” or ethical principles. Whether decisions are mundane or catastrophically important, they seek to be fair, consistent, and just. For example, when phoning someone, they may establish a criterion to help them to decide when to hang up; they may let the phone ring six times and then hang up. When they do not use criteria, thinking types tend to rely on ethical principles. John Stuart Mill believed that ethical decisions should be based on “the greatest happiness principle,” that we should do what promotes the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. Because thinking types tend to base decisions on criteria or principles, they are—when at their best—consistent, tough minded, truthful, and forthright. At their worst, they may slight the “people issues” of making decisions. They may fail to consider extenuating circumstances (e.g., that Bill has been going through a divorce) or how the decision will affect other individuals (whether someone’s feelings will be hurt or someone may feel left out).

Feeling types, who prefer feeling judgment, value the “people issues” of decision making. Whereas thinking types base decisions on criteria and principles, which transcend people and can be applied to all people consistently, feeling types base decisions on personal values, which evolve from people and have meaning only as long as they are attached to people. Rather than establish criteria or principles, feeling types seek to clarify their own values. They strive to understand what Schopenhauer called “a feeling in our own mind.” They attempt to determine what they care about most and how they are personally invested. Since feeling types also value affiliation and harmony, the establishing of networks with others, they often base a decision on how it will affect the people around them. They want others to feel valued, and they strive to promote group harmony. At their best, feeling types are supportive, warm, tactful, and sensitive. At their worst, they may be reluctant to offer even constructive criticism and be sentimentally wishy-washy.

As with other dimensions, one’s preference toward thinking or feeling judgment significantly influences communication styles. The talk of thinking types usually reflects their thought process, which is rule- or principle-based and syllogistic. They often explain their decisions by
counting off "reasons" on their fingers: "the first reason is . . . the second reason is . . . the third reason is . . ." They also frequently punctuate their talk with the markers of an orderly, syllogistic thought: thus, therefore, in conclusion. Their discourse is what Kinneavy (1971, p. 88) calls "thing-centered." They concentrate on content, what is being said, rather than on process, how the message is connecting with the audience. They may, as a result, come to their point too quickly, or express it too bluntly.

Since the thought of feeling types is based more on forming hierarchies of values, their talk is more likely to be expressive, filled with markers like "I feel," "I believe," or "I like." Their discourse is more "people-centered" (Kinneavy, 1971, p. 88). They more naturally add qualifications to soften criticism or adjust messages to the audience.

As students, thinking types tend to perform to the best of their ability when given a clearly presented set of performance criteria. They also need a logical rationale to learn best; they want to know that their learning will lead toward a greater understanding of the systematic way that the world works and of the principles that underlie systems. In contrast, feeling types need to know that what they are about to learn can be put to work for people they are concerned about or in the service of personally held convictions and values. They are best motivated when their hearts are in their work. While all students certainly are at their best when both sets of conditions prevail, thinking types are less likely, as long as they are given a logical reason for doing it, to complain about dry, uninteresting writing assignments, and feeling types, unless given personal encouragement, may find many tasks boring and unrewarding.

**ORIENTATIONS TO THE OUTER WORLD: JUDGING—PERCEIVING**

Although [Merleau–Ponty] was more involved politically than his friend Sartre when they founded *Les Temps Modernes*, and never stopped speaking out for political freedom and lucidity, his aesthetic fascination with the visible and his metaphorical multiplication of perspectives subsequently led Sartre to ask whether he had not adopted the politically ineffectual position of contemplating them all without choosing any.

Richard M. McCleary, Translator's Preface to Merleau–Ponty's *Signs*

Though Sartre and Merleau–Ponty were both actively involved in French political life, each was, as McCleary explains, involved in his own way. Sartre seems to have considered fewer political options than Merleau–Ponty and reached his decisions more quickly. Merleau–Ponty seems to have been less concerned about adopting a position and adhering to it. He was more concerned with exploring all options in great depth before reaching any conclusion. Both were involved with outer-experience, but in distinctively different ways. Briggs and Myers added a fourth dimension to Jung's typology to differentiate between judging types (who tend to adopt a position and adhere to it) and perceiving types (who delay closure in order to explore a wide range of options).

The judging type's orientation to the outer world is structured, planful, and decisive. Judging types principally seek to structure the world around them for the purpose of getting things done. The perceiving type's orientation is an adaptive one, flexible, often spontaneous, and inquisitive. Perceiving types principally seek to leave the world around them unstructured for the purpose of examining it, understanding it, or engaging with it in its free, unaffected state. While judging types tend to move toward closure, arriving at conclusions expeditiously, perceiving types prefer to defer decisions until all of the possible evidence is in. At their best, judging types are productive and task-oriented while perceiving types are thorough. At their worst, judging types rush to decisions, become controlling or even pushy as they rigidly stick to their plans to meet an approaching deadline. At their worst, perceiving types are indecisive procrastinators.

As students, judging types tend to be overachievers. Their natural desire to reach closure leads them to meet deadlines by keeping commitments limited and focusing on one task at a time. Teachers often view them as being more organized and motivated than perceiving types. The natural style of perceiving types, which leads them to overcommit themselves, work on several projects at once, and delay closure until the 11th hour, may make them appear unmotivated. Teachers need to realize that the apparent procrastination of perceiving types is often as productive as a judging type's rush to meet a deadline. Perceiving types may delay beginning or finishing projects so that they can more thoroughly conceptualize or research them.

**INTERACTION OF THE DIMENSIONS: DOMINANT AND AUXILIARY PROCESSES**

As just described, Jung's model of personality has four bipolar dimensions:

- Extraversion (E) ............. Introversion (I)
- Sensory Perception (S) .... Intuitive Perception (N)
- Thinking Judgment (T) ... Feeling Judgment (F)
- Judging (J) ................. Perceiving (P)