

Type Consilience – Unifying Knowledge on Type Development

Propositions, Questions, and Cogitations

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Introduction

If you take psychological type as a serious proposition about the nature of being human, there is no escaping the complexity of this question: “what is the nature of type development?” An important follow up question is “what are the practical insights for us given our answer to the first question?” In order to explore type development and the use of any insights from this review, I propose that we consider three dimensions of the problem as outlined below. The overall purpose of this article is to raise some questions and hopefully ignite a dialogue that will engage others to see the depth and richness of type.

When biologist Edward Wilson proposes the word “consilience”, he is concerned with the unity of knowledge about the web of life. He suggests that our specialization of information leads into a disunity of thought about the whole of the living planet. From Wilson’s point of view, dialogue is urgently needed to bring various fields of inquiry into contact, yielding more complete and better answers.¹ I propose that on a much smaller scale, the same kind of dialogue is needed to help move our understanding of type to more complete and useful levels. While there are numerous publications on type development from which we gain some initial insights, we are prompted to consider the following:

- What are the principles of human development that are accepted in general psychology, and how do these apply to psychological type? This requires an exploration of development as it applies to type.
- What are the dimensions of type development about which we should be aware? This requires us to explore the context of type in our own lives.
- What is the practical value of this knowledge? This question brings us to the heart of our individual purpose as related to self-awareness, and reasons for engaging in this kind of exploration.

Before we proceed to explore these questions, there are some “assumptions” to make conscious about type and its context. These assumptions operate as mental models throughout the entire consideration of this topic.

Prescript: Prelude to a Dialogue

With a moderate degree of self-awareness, you can identify when you focus in the moment, share ideas and concepts, explore the rationale for an action, and reach out to connect with others. Upon reflection, you might identify specific facts, explore future possibilities in the “mind’s eye,” analyze a situation, and select what you consider to be the “important” course of action. These are descriptive fragments about the eight functions of psychological type. These processes are in the “wiring” and are actively used to get you successfully from one moment to the next.

C.G. Jung indicates that these mental functions (i.e. extraverted intuiting, introverted intuiting, etc.) are natural to the human template, and are used in varying degrees of frequency and intensity. Jung suggests that the functions organize themselves in a balancing system to allow appropriate perception and judgment for adapting to life’s challenges. He takes a further step to suggest that one of the functions is in the driver’s seat of consciousness and is aided with other functions that serve the general direction of this superior (dominant) function.² (It is of historical note that the suggestion of an auxiliary function, or co-determining influence, was suggested to Jung by one of his students, Otto Gross.³)

The whole system that makes up type is embedded in a larger context of conscious and unconscious dynamics. Jung is quick to remind us that the other functions may be inferior to consciousness, but *not in strength as they operate within the individual*. It is the habit of mind in using these functions with consistency that gives us psychological type.⁴

With thousands of articles published and dissertations cataloged with research on the MBTI®, there is little argument regarding the evidence for the concepts of extraversion, introversion, sensing, intuiting, thinking, feeling, judging and perceiving. Regrettably, the frequency of such research seems to lend credence to the idea that the *individual* preferences are the real story (i.e. E and I, S and N, etc.).

Even worse, the casual reader seems to leap to conclusions about statistically significant relationships without asking the basic question: what is the practical significance of the research results? For example, a statistically significant correlation between extraversion and sociability may be reported; yet, if a simple methodology is applied to determine how much of one accounts for the other then the answer is very little, say 4% to 6%. Pragmatically this means that 94% to 96% of extraversion is unrelated to sociability. Also, of the more

than 7000 research studies, most of which gladly report correlations between the preferences and some other variable, few are quick to note the lack of practical significance such relationships imply. Even so, such material on the preferences is nowhere close to the real story and substance of type.

I suspect that one of the reasons that 90% of the 30,000 individuals who have been trained by qualifying agencies since 1988 **are not involved** with type in an active way is that they never understood the most essential aspects of type theory. These folks took the letters of the type code that result from the MBTI® as the complete, flat, boring parlor room story of type. The core notion of the theory – that the interactive nature of these qualities create a dynamic which is greater than a simple addition of separate qualities – was missed by this army of professionals, and remains questioned by serious researchers and thinkers on the nature of human psychology and type. Without this principle, however, the MBTI® is merely providing a direct read on various static personality qualities and contributes nothing to the larger question of personal variation and coping strategies, and provides few, if any, new insights into human development. It becomes a static snapshot of caricatures.⁵ And if this later proposition is so, who can blame the 30,000 for walking away saying, “Is that all there is to type?”

It would be intellectually dishonest to suggest that the dynamic nature of type is widely accepted (even among our membership in APT). Indeed, if we look at the vast number of publications and applications used on type, a vast ocean of ink is spent on the basic preferences (E,I,S,N,T,F,J,P). This simple view certainly sells. Yet, reflection and observation reveals that the normal adult manages an external energy and internal process, and behaves with remarkable consistency across situations and over time. These facts raise important questions about the dynamic and persistent nature of the individual.

Very little about this complexity and consistency is the by-product of “additive” qualities of the preferences; the best working hypotheses is that there is an interaction and dynamic energy flow among the apparent qualities of the individual. There is nothing static about psychological type, if properly understood. Type opens the door to deeper, meaningful questions about our relationships and our expectations.

This is no small point: if development involves simply adding to a set of individual qualities over time, then our view of type development is qualitatively different from the proposition that the whole dynamic has an integrity that permeates individual experience over time, and thus, is integral to development. I take the whole dynamic view and base this on the observations of children, teenagers, adults, and, in my research, using the whole type as a unit of measure.⁶

Let me go so far as to suggest that the triggers for type dynamics are present from the start and influence the individual throughout a lifetime. (I've heard that many others may not believe this to be true; yet the more I work with people over extended periods of time, it is increasingly apparent to me that the type dynamic is an omnipresent force in an individual's life story.) While a child may not have a well-differentiated set of functions at first, nonetheless, the interplay of external-internal experience is sorted and cataloged by a system already in the organism. Even when we want to assert later in life that we have become "more" of something, such as more extraverted or more introverted, it is through the lens of our type and its far reaching dynamic.

Numerous writers give an extensive review of Jung's elegant and complex system, which is beyond the scope of this article.⁷ If we take the proposed dynamic seriously, then the entire lens through which type and individual development is viewed is dramatically different from mainstream psychology in several important ways. My summary point is simply to note that type, as proposed by Jung, is a complex dynamic system that has inherent forces for growth designed to promote adaptive responses for a lifespan (it is a part of us as living systems).

Jung specifically uses the term "individuation" to suggest developmental principles in his work. Individuation is intended to cover the process of differentiation of an individual personality. As such, this process involves the individual being unique and adapting to the collective pressures of life. Further, this process involves the dance of conscious to unconscious energies that affect our overall functioning. When thinking about this system, Jung reminds us of the following, and are points to which we will return later:

- That the "whole system" and the dynamic nature of type are central to understanding development; it is "a compass on my psychological journeys of discovery."⁸
- "The achievement of personality means nothing less than the optimum development of the whole individual human being."⁹
- "There is no linear evolution; there is only a circumambulation of the self. Uniform development exists, at most, only at the beginning; later, everything points toward the center."¹⁰

This was the background that faced Myers when she began her work. Myers was keenly aware of the complexity of the task she was undertaking in creating the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®. She wrote in her 1962 Manual, "The purpose of the Indicator is to implement Jung's theory of type." McCaulley later modified that view by noting that the purpose of the MBTI was "to make the theory of

psychological types by C.G. Jung understandable and useful in people's lives."¹¹ It is reasonable to propose that the same purpose confronts us when exploring type development: how can we make the nature of it useful in people's lives?

Given what we have just outlined, we are confronted at the outset of our consideration of type development with the realization that any exploration of this topic will be influenced by our view of type. Is it really just the additive qualities of the preferences E+S+T+J or is it (using the same type) the dynamic of extraverted thinking aided by introverted sensing, which is also served by six other processes with varying degrees of awareness and development in making up the outlook of the individual? The predominate language used around type – written and oral – *implies* that it is additive. Even the talk about preference clarity scores leads some quickly to the notion that these are best understood as separate qualities with their own degree of developed use. ***If we are to move forward in our thinking, we have to change our language and focus to include the possibility that the dynamic is more important than the preferences to which the letters refer.***

An illustration of the importance of this assumption is contained in Myers research, and recent data also confirms, that the types respond in different ways to MBTI questions. This is one small confirmation of the dynamic underlying the types. For example, under the notion of type theory as a dynamic system, you would expect that extraverted sensing types (ESTP, ESFP) might give more situational responses about different issues – logical problem solving versus values related answers. Consequently, their scores vary considerably from other types who are less situationally driven. Would we say that the extraverted sensors are somehow "less" developed because their scores show "inconsistency"?¹² Surely the answer is no. In fact, the behavior is consistent with type theory.

Myers clearly took the view that the dynamic is at work from the beginning. She wrote that "good type development, therefore, demands two conditions: first, adequate but by no means equal development of a judging process and a perceptive process, one of which predominates, and second, adequate but by no means equal facility in using both the extraverted and introverted attitudes, with one predominating...balance means superior skill in one, supplemented by a helpful but not competitive skill in the other."¹³ In her further exploration, she points out that we need to learn the appropriate and inappropriate use of each process to enhance development, and the reward for doing so is more effectiveness, success, happiness, and mental health.

The promise of enhanced effectiveness and overall health is an important consideration (and therefore the reason for this article and for our care in addressing the topic). We are invited to take a close look at our assumptions

about type and type development, as these are the driving principles of the language and use of type. The path we use may have the opposite outcome of making matters worse and setting development back so we should tread lightly.

A close read of Myers' 1962 *Manual* indicates that she took these propositions of the value of type dynamics and development quite seriously. She seems to hold the view in her published works (the 1962 *Manual* and *Gifts Differing*) that development is tied to degrees of confidence, or belief in the efficacy of one's type, capacity of compensation for using functions, and stability, or stamina, to persist in the face of obstacles. These three factors are especially evident in her discussions on obstacles to type development in *Gifts Differing* (p. 189-192). The importance of these factors will be considered in the coming paragraphs, and I invite you to reflect on how these aspects of self have influenced the expression and use of type in your life.

As a summary to this introduction, I invite you to consider how your own mental maps, reflected in the language you use about type, affect both your understanding, and ultimate valuing of type development. Is it just preferences? Or is type a dynamic flow of energy, balancing our reflective selves with our initiating selves? Is the role of how we perceive and judge experience central to our choices, and by extension the experiences from which we learn? Does type influence all aspects of our life experience? Is type embedded within a larger context of self, influencing and influenced by our overall development of capacity and resilience? We will explore these facets of the nature of type development and hopefully end with some practical considerations for making the most of the insights that follow.

Part I: Principles of Development – A Fragment

(What are the principles of human development that are accepted and how do these apply to psychological type?)

Summary: Researchers agree that the interplay of biology, culture, and individual psychology influence the development of the individual. From a type perspective, we must be aware of how our type influences this interplay and its expression in everyday life. How we manage this interplay affects the flexibility and complexity of development throughout our lifetime.

It is folly to consider type development outside the context of understanding what decades of research on development reveal about the human organism. As such, the field converges around biological, psychological, sociocultural, and integrative perspectives. The nature of the aging process is one of diminishing physical capacity that affects perception and judgment. Yet,

such attributes do not necessarily mean that one's type development is arrested. There is evidence that we become more intellectually efficient with age, and that as long as we keep our minds active, we develop greater acuity about life situations.

Certainly each of us can identify people who have lived many years, but have had very little life experience. To some degree their intellectual flexibility has been affected by their limited experience; they seem, however, to have a reasonably developed type and well-defined coping strategies (within the context of their lives). And, of course, there are examples of just the opposite.

Perhaps what becomes evident about aging is how we integrate our life experiences, and utilize aspects of the ability to learn from experiences that are the key drivers of type development. The studies of aging imply that the ability to learn is fundamental to well being, especially later in life. Researchers seem resolute that the qualities that are "core" to us early in life are persistent and equally evident later in life, with our learning attributes being key.

Psychological frameworks range from sequential models (i.e. Erikson, Levinson, Kohlberg), to life event frameworks (Sheehy, Sugarman), to relational models (Gilligan and Jordan). Jung foreshadows all three when he writes that sequential development is part of the developing individual at first; however, as life events and relationships (intra- and interpersonal) emerge, the individual becomes more the true self he or she can be, providing one learns and integrates these insights.

One problem in understanding type development from this perspective of developmental psychology is that too often a narrow and conventional definition of development is applied to the arena of psychological type. A review of development studies usually assert that development means:

- (a) progress from simple to complex behavior (learning algebra requires basic math skills)
- (b) increasing the range of behavior (having learned basic math and now algebra, we have more mathematical tools at our finger tips)
- (c) accommodation and assimilation (first we learned the steps to do algebra and later integrated the method into our stats class, especially in dealing with multiple variables)

These principles echo Jung's statement that development is at first linear and *may contain the basic formula for developing each of the mental functions*. For example, we need to first identify the basic elements of extraverted thinking

before we can increase the range of behavior and ultimately integrate this into how we behave. But these principles do not include Jung's further observation that the rest of development is a "circumambulation of the self" and related to the development of the whole individual.

Jung was asserting that development in life progresses toward complexity and learning how to utilize this complexity. However, this progress and learning is the by-product of constantly enriching the total self. While these fundamental principles outlined above appear to be true, these are not enough to help us explore the richness of type and its development in our lives.

These basic, linear propositions about development seem to cover the movement of development over time, range, and "width" of a dimension of behavior *but not the "depth" and "integration" of a dimension of behavior*. Using the math example above as an illustration of the problem, we can see that the principles do not help us understand how learning complex math aids problem solving, promotes better analysis, and seems to enhance our abilities in many ways.¹⁴ These principles get us started but are inadequate to help us delve deeper into how such movement is integrated and used by the individual.

Far too often, development is described in terms of a basic use of a competency or achievement of a certain "task" rather than being inclusive of the whole development of the individual. In other words, the development of a certain behavior may reflect the use of a variety of type processes (e.g. extraverted thinking and introverted sensing) as managed by the dynamic of the type. Consider, as an example, that developing and demonstrating extraverted thinking looks different, depending on the type.

In part, the lack of thoroughness in the field is a by-product of the statistical procedures that assume linear and relational variables.¹⁵ The statistical measurement needed for this exploration of a "system" of behavior would have a three or four dimensional quality, an approach which really does not exist. Measuring a shift in awareness and how that shift affects behavior is problematic. This is like looking at a picture that suddenly becomes a holographic image. The image is just as real in both conditions but the holograph is more complete, closer to the "truth", and far more interesting. The shift in the level of analysis to understand the nature of the picture and the holograph is formidable. So it is with understanding the full richness of the type dynamic of the individual – that is more like a hologram of type rather than the simple four letters.

An illustration with type will make this issue clear. We often say that in type, development is knowing your preferences and knowing how and when to use the other functions. On the face of it, this seems quite reasonable. An ISTJ

understands that she is to become aware of how her Introverted Sensing function is influencing her Extraverted Thinking, and all other functions. She is to know there are situations that may require her to use Extraverted Feeling and if she is “developed”, then she is able to make use of it. Her use of it will be greatly influenced by her type dynamic such that there will be facets of Extraverted Feeling that do not look quite the same as they do for an INFJ for whom Extraverted Feeling is an auxiliary function.

But this point is merely to illustrate that the fundamental principles offered by developmental psychology have limits when we begin to consider dynamics of the type involved. The principles are useful but need a slight modification to be more applicable to type. I propose that we attack this problem by gaining clarity on these principles as related to type, which are:

- (1) **differentiated functions serve distinct perceiving and judging processes** (introverted thinking, extraverted thinking, introverted feeling, extraverted feeling, etc.); the **absence of any of these leads to distortion** and disruption in everyday life. Development is built on degrees of differentiation that promote adaptation. Adaptation requires the use of the eight functions consciously and unconsciously. You do not have to think and plan to get a glass of water, as all that is required to achieve this goal is unconscious. However, if you did not have a sensing process at work, you would be neither aware of the thirst nor be able to navigate the room you are currently in. So the implication is that we need to gain increasing clarity about the role of the eight functions in our lives in very active and experiential ways. We must identify the characteristics of the function before we can begin to test it in more conscious ways.

- (2) **the magnitude and depth of a function exist on a continuum from very basic to quite complex.** This complexity is not simply additive as in a range of behavior or understanding; it is synergistic within the whole individual. At the basic end, the use is elementary in demonstration in an individual’s life. At the most complex and deepest level of use, the functions include a concrete, practical awareness and abstract, systemic understanding of a given situation.

For example, a fully developed Introverted Intuitive process provides an accurate “insight” about the future unfolding of a situation that is anchored in specific information. This information is understood in terms of its association and relationship to the other data and contextual variables, and its timelines. Intuition has one foot in the present and another in a potential future, among several potential futures. Contrast this with Introverted Sensing that is able to identify the relative value and

placement of information, but also is in tune with the physical sensations triggered by the information. Introverted Sensing has a foot fully in the present awareness and another in a specific past. Knowing the links and being able to detach from both the physical and emotional aspects of present, in the moment information, is high level perceiving. So the implication is that we need to explore ways to extend the dimensions of the mental processes.²⁵

(3) Development at the richest, **most profound level is tied to conscious identification** of the functions, or at least entertaining their power from unconscious events (i.e. dreams, symbols, etc.) as noted in the two points above, and to the full **integration of these functions into the dynamic** of the individual, providing greater behavioral choice. This integration is complex and is tied to an important capacity for on-going development. Central to this integration is an active seeking out of feedback about behavior and to intentionally testing new behaviors to explore how these choices affect overall satisfaction and performance in life. We have to be willing to be in a relationship with our unconscious and therefore willing to “hear out” our other functions, as they make themselves available to us.²⁴

It is clear that our culture, ethnic roots, and family of origin affect the tone, content, and nature of our type development. Myers outlines, in *Gifts Differing*, the power of the environment in allowing the unfolding of the development of the individual. But even in the best environments, individuals may not develop in full and productive ways. There seems to be another important factor that overrides all such matters and it is closely allied to learning. This factor is more clearly explored by Harrison Gough’s work that is an element in the California Psychological Inventory™.

Gough discovered particular “families” of qualities that are apt descriptions of our interpersonal and intrapersonal selves. Further, and more important to our consideration, was the discovery of a factor related to how an individual integrates his or her experience. This factor is related to self-realization and shows the degree to which individuals evaluate themselves as positive and achieving of potential.

An index emerged from this research which shows that those on the low scoring end tend to have self doubts, low self-esteem, deal poorly with life’s demands, seem ill-equipped to cope with stress, are often at odds with themselves and others and are not insightful about how their behavior affects others.¹⁶

Myers seems to feel that similar issues are related to development such as degrees of confidence, or belief in the efficacy of one's type, capacity of compensation for using functions, and stability, or stamina, to persist in the face of obstacles. This implies that being confident in one's type is an emotional state that allows an individual to test out other functions. To do so, we have to have developed some "capacity" in those functions; and while using those parts of ourselves that are least consciously explored, stamina allows us to persist even when we are struggling to learn a new behavior.

Of Myers and Gough's numerous propositions about this factor, there is no doubt that those on the high end learn from their experience and integrate these learnings efficiently, while those on the low end are self defeating, feel self pity, and often confused, intolerant, and resentful. Said in another way, those with a high degree of integrative capacity seem to be able to look at themselves and their context with a degree of detachment and humor while those at the low end are enmeshed with distorted expectations, unclear interpersonal boundaries, and inability to "stand outside of themselves" to gain perspective.

In an extensive analysis of the sixteen types, using the database at the Center for Creative Leadership, all of the sixteen types have individuals who score at the low and high end of this index. Those on the low end were predictably rigid within the expressions of their type, with seemingly little ability to operate outside the concrete, narrow confines of their type preferences. For example, a dominant Introverted Intuiting type functioning at this level had lots of hunches filled with dark content based on little observation of trends or reasonable hunches. On the high end of integration, the dominant Introverted Intuiting individual had penetrating insights, was optimistic about possibilities, and was eager to learn new ways of doing things.¹⁷

The field of traditional psychology provides fertile considerations for type development. As outlined above, there are some modifications to basic development principles that aid our understanding of how to proceed in type development. Most importantly, the role of learning and an overall integrating and coping strategy seem to go to the heart of developing the whole individual, inclusive of the benefits of type development and all it entails. The pragmatic actions that follow from these principles are covered in Part III.

Part II: Personal Identification – What’s Worth Knowing?

(What are the dimensions of type development about which we should be aware? This requires us to explore the context of type in our own lives.)

Summary: We have to be willing to travel in the valley of chaos for a while if we genuinely want to unleash the forces of type development within us. Primarily, this valley is chaotic because we are being asked to discover, play with, explore, test, and integrate aspects of our type, which have been ignored and need conscious attention. We have to be willing to learn about all eight functions, through the dynamic lens of our type, if we are to move to an evolved, more complete way of being in the world. We have to be willing to accept the challenge and seek the support necessary to travel this terrain in a concurrent context of feedback about our choices.

You and I are had. Our type “had” us when we arrived and we have been in its grip for so long we find it difficult to step outside ourselves to see how type has influenced us at every turn. Our challenge, nonetheless, is to do just that. If we are to move from type as the source of reaction to a source of information that informs our choice of response, we have to get a handle on how our life has been affected and what the lessons are for our future.

Robert Kegan’s work on the nature of “knowing” and levels of consciousness are insightful on this point.¹⁸ He argues that we need to transform the way we understand, making ourselves more conscious of the “voices of experience” that have influenced us. We all have a type; our capacity to recognize how type *informs our choices* rather than simply react out of our type dictates the degree of being “had.” The individual who declares “I’m a thinking type; don’t expect me to show any empathy” is “had” by type. The perpetually late individual who boasts that “this is the way it is with us ‘P’s” is had by her type. The informed perspective would be, “I feel compelled to respond out of my Extraverted Thinking preference, but I am striving to display more empathy,” or “I’m also caught up with what is emerging around me due to my Extraverted perceiving, so I need to adjust my attention so as to honor my time commitments.”

To apply this to our topic at hand, we need to have some benchmarks about the eight functions that make up type.¹⁹ We cannot integrate what we do not understand; we cannot understand what we do not perceive. The following table provides an outline of the key aspects of the eight functions. Note that the functions may also affect our dreams, reactions to symbols, or produce images from which we gain insight. Such contributions to our personal understanding are somewhat more challenging to clearly identify. While there may be some

argument about the “specifics” among reasonable users of type, the gist of the functions is provided below.

More importantly, the discussion of the eight functions poses a special problem. On one hand, we can describe the eight with some clarity; on the other hand, any description is flawed because the type of the individual learning to use a given function is greatly colored as to how it is learned and expressed. The expression of extraverted feeling for an ENTJ is going to look very different from that of an ISTP.

This being said, the following bullets are provided as *simple* touchstones:

Function Characteristic	Function	Types
Analytical, Questioning, Reasoning	Extraverted Thinking	ISTJ, ESTJ, INTJ, ENTJ
Expressively connecting with others, empathetic, exploring relationships	Extraverted Feeling	ISFJ, ESFJ, INFJ, ENFJ
Focused on pragmatic, concrete in the moment information, utilitarian	Extraverted Sensing	ISTP, ISFP, ESTP, ESFP
Expressively linking and brainstorming ideas, exploring contexts and associations	Extraverted Intuiting	INTP, INFP, ENTP, ENFP
Recalls precise detail, awareness of information, precise memory	Introverted Sensing	ISTJ, ISFJ, ESTJ, ESFJ
Anticipates, explores future implications, aware of possible outcomes	Introverted Intuiting	INTJ, INFJ, ENTJ, ENFJ
Works from a framework, point of view, precise analysis of cases/effects	Introverted Thinking	ISTP, INTP, ESTP, ENTP
Concerns self with the implications of actions on others, values are manifest in choices/actions	Introverted Feeling	ISFP, INFP, ESFP, ENFP

An Illustration

Any behavior you can describe can be analyzed through the use of the eight functions. Take the simple act of getting something to eat. You become aware of being hungry (S_I perception). You begin to “look” at options (N_I perception). You start looking in the refrigerator (S_E perception) and verify your choices (S_I perception). You begin to foresee future choices (N_I perception) and what the various foods would do for you given your recollection (S_I perception) of previous consumption. After some thought about your diet (T_I judgment) and how the options contribute to your diet, some evaluation of its importance (F_I judgment) may cross your mind. You could quickly solicit (F_E judgment) the thoughts and suggestions of others and discuss (T_E judgment) the choices in front of you. You make a decision (either on a F_I, or T_I basis) and at each step of the way you rely on some aspect of these eight functions to get the job done. These functions are differentiated and serve specific purposes.

A consideration of magnitude of each function is also embedded in our example of getting something to eat. As described above, these functions are pragmatically and concretely utilized for a given purpose. These are the “basic” – we might say the concrete – uses of the functions. But the functions have the potential to offer much more. Each function has the capacity to take you to a level of understanding your eating as a more complex and moral act. I will own that the use of the term *moral* seems atypical in a piece about development but stick with me to see if this consideration makes sense.

The highest form of knowing is that the interdependence and interrelated dimensions of self and others require us to consider how our choices affect the whole. Presumably a constructive act is preferable to a destructive one. So if we fail to consider how our food choices affect our health and the health of the environment, we would consider this a failure of analysis (T_I judgment), and perhaps a poorly used perspective (N_I perception). If we failed to take in data about the concrete choices in front of us (e.g. calories, use of synthetic chemicals, etc.) we are potentially making a poor choice out of ignorance (failure of sensing), which is an undesired state. Admittedly, there is an underlying value implied in the above illustration – we act in a more extensive moral climate when we take care of the whole – which is the wisdom offered by introverted feeling.

The argument is that if we consider the full power of each function, we could find that our whole outlook on life would change and we would seek the highest form of the functions, which brings us more than simple utility, it brings fulfillment of potential.

Thus, when I refer to magnitude of each function, I mean more than range of behavior, I mean depth and complexity. Georgia O’Keefe did not simply paint flowers; she brings our awareness of red, yellow, form, and beauty to a level of sensual pleasure that enriches our perception and the hope for beauty in daily things we see. If one simply used color or form, we would miss the richness of the composition.

I propose that the integration of new depths of the functions with type dynamics is the central theme of the final principle of development. The ISTJ developing a more complex Introverted Intuition is not going to utilize and demonstrate this in the same way as an ISFJ (or any other type for that matter). The dynamic is the final organizing force of development, and it directs the manner in which the functions are used. Regrettably, this issue for each of the sixteen types is too complex to cover here, and is a rich source of discussion. If you were pondering such in your own life, what personal insights you have will ironically touch on that which is universal in the human experience.

Create a “table” in a journal or appropriate worksheet in which you list each of the functions outlined above and ask yourself three questions for each function: How does this play out for me? What about each mental function do I really need to develop? What gets in the way of using each function more deliberately? If the principles of development are correct, we have to identify, experience, link to past and most current experience, before we can integrate the behavior. The more of these functions we gain an understanding of and eventual control over, the more we are able to be the author of our own lives. We become the “artist” of our experience.

The life of an artist is perhaps the best metaphor of type development. We want to live artfully. The artist uses his or her functions in a conscious way to create and provide an aesthetic experience for the creator and observer. Conscious control means that we fully understand the power, range, and magnitude of the other functions such that we become curators of an artful life. Our paint, clay, canvas, and marble are the very experience of life that we can mold into art that is unique to our journey. To get this end result, we have to begin to play with different modalities of the functions. “Play” encompasses everything from reading to acting, testing new hobbies, and taking on unusual assignments. The artist also trusts in his or her personal creative process, which is both conscious and unconscious (as suggested by Dario Nardi).

Keep in mind that the goal is not to equally use all eight functions but to at least recognize their contribution to our lives. Equal use would not be desirable. This would be like eight voices talking at you at the same time and at the same volume – chaos of self would certainly result. The goal is to enrich your overall type dynamic and personal richness by exploring and developing the

other functions to integrate this new knowledge into the self so that your natural artist expresses itself.

While inner work of reflection on the characteristics of the functions and how they would work for you is an important act, the artist works from experience, the doing, testing, utilizing, initiating outwardly based on more active use of the functions is also required. What good is “knowing” the color wheel if you do not use it?

The following table provides suggestions to consider regarding the levels of use and development of the eight functions.

Function	Basic	Complex
Extraverted Thinking	Analytical, Questioning, Reasoning	Analysis and critique provided without any edge of blame or judgment; an elegant understanding of the interrelatedness of various dimensions of a situation.
Extraverted Feeling	Expressively connecting with others, empathetic, exploring relationships	Empathetic understanding is appropriate to the individual, situation, and “reasonable”; an understanding of the interpersonal and interdependent intrapsychic web among individuals in a situation.
Extraverted Sensing	Focused on pragmatic, concrete, in the moment information, utilitarian	Focus sees to the “heart” and core of the sensual reality; it perceives beauty in its own right; fully aware in the moment of the qualities of experience and information as it presents itself.
Extraverted Intuiting	Expressively linking and brainstorming ideas, exploring contexts and associations	Focus on interrelated relevant systems that “sees” the deep timeless meaning of experience. Benchmarked by articulate conceptual fluency, at its deepest level

		of meaning and fulfillment, perceives interdependent links of past, present, and future.
Introverted Sensing	Recalls precise detail, awareness of information, precise memory	A perception that is relentless about focus, attention, mind-body-environment awareness that leads to a more accurate picture of all that is present in a situation; while anchored in the sensory input of the moment, able to "see" the limits and scope of a situation which leads to appreciation for what is as it is, perceiving an integrity in the structure and content of experience.
Introverted Intuiting	Anticipates, explores future implications, aware of possible outcomes	Accurately projects into the future the most probable outcomes; sees the relationship of variables and layers of meaning for those present in a situation; seems to have a "spiritual" knowing about the nature of things; in tune with the flow of psychological energy in a situation such that choices are made to promote the fulfillment of those present.
Introverted Thinking	Works from a framework, point of view, precise analysis of cases/effects, tends to eject information if inconsistency is discovered	Self-critical and referent within a context of processes that precisely identify the placement of a model or theory within a system of systems. While analyzing underlying principles, seems to seek out paradox – assumed to be present in

		inconsistency – and assume that the current state of affairs is a temporary container until a fuller perspective emerges.
Introverted Feeling	Concerns self with the implications of actions on others, values are manifest in choices/actions; evaluates situations from a personal values frame of reference.	Explores the meaning of experience independent of a personal set of values and seeks a universal value framework; sees the universal worth in a situation and seeks harmony with that standard. Acts to cause no harm while seeking to move a situation toward a desirable state of affairs; passionate about “understanding” as a form of finding the true path in a situation or relationship.

One note while passing through this exploration is the presence of a troubling developmentally arresting process related to type. It occurs when some people learn their type code or type preferences and proceed to be psychologically “frozen” by this newly gained information. For example, the individual who learns her preference is for extraverting and then proceeds to announce that it is not fair to ask her to contain her reactions, feelings, and actions – she proclaims, “What do you expect, I am an extravert!!” Or consider the individual who learns he has a thinking preference and then concludes that feeling types are inferior in their analysis and judgments. As alluded to earlier, both have been “had” and not informed by pondering type. Such a conclusion also reflects a lack of understanding of the true nature of type and how it applies. These individuals are caught and cannot see beyond the concrete implication of the letters from the type code. In such a state, you cannot be free to explore alternative views or actions. Why does this happen?

There is abundant evidence that as anxiety increases, flexibility and confidence decrease. This reaction to stress seems inherent in the organism.²⁰ The implication is that when we are testing a new behavior and new perspective, while it is natural to experience some anxiety, we should seek to reduce it through appropriate means. The failure to address our anxieties creates a

constraint to type development as it fuels a lack of flexibility and confidence. As noted earlier, Myers felt such matters are important when looking at type development. **If you cannot consciously test out other functions, then you can neither develop range nor depth. And as such, integration into a fuller expression of your type and potential is left unfulfilled.**

It is reasonable to assert that to promote type development, supporting the individual to help enrich his or her confidence will have positive outcomes in the whole system of the type for an individual. What are we doing to enhance our confidence? The confidence of others? What are we doing to celebrate the "gifts" we bring to a situation? To celebrate the gifts of others? In short, are we seeking out and showing regard for the significance, competence, and worth of ourselves and those around us?

With appropriate time and attention to type development, a more artful living of your life can emerge. To get there requires us to become more attuned to the aspects of ourselves we (either by choice or unconscious force) have ignored. If our mental functions are to develop, we need to seek out their identification, to test their power, and to trust their usefulness in our lives *by our actions*. Surely, if we allow ourselves not to be had by our type, to realize the wisdom the eight functions may provide when properly encouraged, Myers' hope for type can be realized: "to make perceptions clearer, and judgments more sound."

Part III: Reaching out – Now What?

(What is the practical value of this knowledge? This question brings us to the heart of our individual purpose as related to self-awareness.)

Summary: The evidence seems clear enough – type development holds enormous promise for personal and collective well being, making the effort worth the energy and commitment. If we applied what little we already know about type and type development in our schools, in our homes, and in our organizations, we will have discovered fire for the second time.

Without too much flexing of our intellectual muscles, we might well argue that understanding type development is akin to the kind of understanding outlined in Socrates' allegory of the cave. In Socrates' story, the "slave" is chained and only can see the shadows cast on the wall of the cave. Even unchained and forced to move, the individual has great difficulty accepting that the reality he thought was so, was barely a facsimile of the truth. Further movement up through the cave reveals that even the fire, which cast the light that created the original shadows, is itself a mere fraction of the truth. Upon emerging from the cave, the individual is confronted with the sun, spreading true

light on all. But as we know, Socrates makes the point that even this emergence from the cave is but the beginning of insight about the nature of things. So it is with type development . . . we are chained to our mental maps, caught by our type to habits of mind in perception and judgment, and content to look at the shadows (which I would suggest is like simply learning one's type letters and never learning about the whole system). Only with great effort can we begin to see that the truth is more complex and requires greater effort than simple formulations.

Our development, so tied to how and what we learn, moves from making meaning by following the rules (including the "rules" of our natural type) through experimenting and dedicating ourselves to a deep purpose and meaning we have created from within the vast personal well we call our self.

We are confronted with a long list of ifs. If . . .

- Jung is correct about individuation and the power of the unconscious;
- Jung is right about type as a compass and the dynamic as central to adaptation;
- Myers is correct that type dynamics and development can be strengthened through more conscious action and experimentation;
- Developmental psychologists who look into the role of cultural, social, biological, and psychological factors are correct that differentiation is critical before integration, regardless of age or location;
- Type dynamics are as forceful in the conscious and unconscious self as they appear to be;
- Type is an energy system that is "fed" through reflection and experience;

. . . then we are forced to consider if we want to be chained in darkness or committed to the work of insight, requiring us to work through a journey toward greater "light" and personal choice. Only through such effort may we ascend to manifest the highest values of the human experience: justice, self-determination, beneficence, fidelity to truth, and non-maleficence that honors the interdependence of all living systems. It seems highly unlikely that a fully developed Introverted Feeling function for any type is going to ignore the web of life and the consequences of choice facing each individual each day.

From our exploration thus far, I encourage you to utilize some of the following activities to enrich your use of type in your own development. There is

little doubt that enrichment is but one small step toward a more effective way to be in the world. There is evidence that we are slow to change our behavior, though we may change our mind more quickly.²¹

One way to start is to create a forum for dialogue by using a journal and through conversation with trusted others who can explore (a) lessons from your childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, and current time; (b) help you identify the uses of the various functions in those lessons and what might be especially useful today; (c) link behavioral-emotional-cognitive-symbolic facets of those lessons (e.g. what are the moments, clues, conditions that you are lacking in confidence or are over-confident and what is the affect on others?); (d) identify those elements of the environment you are in that help maintain current behaviors and would need to change in any adjustment of behavior; (e) identify future preferred situations and what it would take to achieve those. This list is just a beginning look at the strategies we might employ to learn and grow.

Assuming that the developmental theoreticians are correct, we need to clearly identify our use of type mental functions, clarify their overall utility, “test them out” through experience, and integrate (cognitive-behavioral-affective congruence) the insights. Our goal in this instance is to enhance our coping strategies (physical, cognitive, emotional, spiritual) to more successfully and with greater satisfaction respond to the demands placed on us.

It may well be that the most important strategy is to begin a comprehensive look at how to improve our confidence, an affirmation of who we are, and to set about learning as much about the environment, and our reactions to the environment, in which we find ourselves. We need to become learners – relentless pursuers of understanding, not just of our own psychology, but also of our relatedness to the world. Mary McCaulley once said to me that Myers mused that we might all be better off if we focused perception on the world and judgment on ourselves.²²

Conclusion

A consilience in type, a seeking for unity in thought and practice, is to be sought. This article is a mere beginning in suggesting propositions and asking questions about type development and the merit of such effort.

To summarize, I am suggesting that:

- Type is a system that has integrity, operating within the full development of the individual;

- Developmental principles apply to identifying, testing, and integrating the mental functions inherent in the human experience;
- The mental functions have more than a range evident in expressed behavior, there is a depth and complexity to the meaning of life experience that is offered.
- Learning to integrate discoveries about our mental functions is key to our overall development and well-being.
- Learning requires being willing to be challenged, to break the chains that make us look at the shadows.
- In its fullest form, an individual serious about type development is involved in a reaching out to enhance the web of life.

If the questions and observations raised in this article stir your reflections and engage you in your own journey, then I invite you to share in the dialog. Feel free to exchange reactions on the forum provided by APT or with me at Pearman@leadership-systems.com.

¹ Wilson, E. (1998) *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge*. New York: Knopf Press, Inc.

² Jung, C.G. (1971) *Psychological Types*. Princeton University Press, pages 330-407. I am quick to note that this is my interpretation of Jung's thought and realize that others may interpret his work differently. I have endeavored to suggest several underlying principles in Jung's work, which we do not have time to fully explore in this paper. For example, the principle of opposites within the psyche is proposed as a main source of intrapsychic energy. To fully understand this principle, you are required to also understand Jung's energy system within the psyche. It is sufficient to suggest at this moment that his view of psychological types is that the habit of mind is embedded within the larger context of a developing personality.

³ Bair, D. (2004). *Jung: A Biography*. New York: Little, Brown, & Company, p.136-144.

⁴ Jung, C.G. (1971) *Psychological Types*. Princeton University Press, pages 330-407.

⁵ I am ever so tempted to launch into a long discussion on this point but I suspect if you have read this far in this paper, you already buy into the notion of a dynamic relationship among the mental functions. A great deal has been made in traditional psychology over the relationship of the preferences and other more traditional notions of personality in traditional psychology. Such correlations have been the source of much clamoring that the Indicator is actually only getting at well-established qualities that other researchers have also shown to exist. This error of understanding leads readers into all sorts of distortions about type theory. Type is NOT about the letters; it is about the integrated whole and associated dynamics that make up the type.

⁶ Pearman, R., Fleenor, J. (1996) Perceptions of the sixteen types. Myers Award given at the APT Conference in Kansas City. A random sampling of the sixteen types from the database at the Center for Creative Leadership led to a multivariate analysis using self report and observer variables. Profiles of the sixteen types were statistically different among 80 variables.

⁷ Myers, I.B. (1993) *Gifts Differing*. Palo Alto: CPP, Inc.; Myers, et al (1998) *Manual for the Myers Briggs Type Indicator*. Palo Alto: CPP, Inc.; Myers, K. et al (1994) *Introduction to type dynamics and development*. Palo Alto: CPP, Inc.; Pearman, R. and Albritton, S. *I'm Not Crazy, I'm Just Not You*. (1997) Palo Alto: Davies Black Publishing; Quenk, N. (1994) *Beside ourselves: our hidden personality in everyday life*. Palo Alto: Davies Black Publishing; Spoto, A. (1989) *Jung's Typology in Perspective*. Boston: Sigo Press, Inc.

⁸ Jung, C.G. (1933) *Modern Man in Search of A Soul*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

⁹ Jung, C.G. (1971) *The Development of Personality*. Princeton University Press, p. 291.

¹⁰ Jung, C.G. (1965) *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. New York: Vintage Books, p. 196.

¹¹ Myers, I. (1962) *Manual: the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*. Palo Alto: CPP, Inc.; Myers, I.B. and McCaulley, M. (1985) *Manual: A Guide to the Development and Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*. Palo Alto: CPP, Inc.

¹² This point is made more evident in the research reports of the polarity scores of the sixteen types on Form Q, Step II of the MBTI®. The polarity index provides a measure of consistency of selecting a "pole" among the twenty facets. As might be predicted from the view of type theory, ISFP and ESFP have the lowest polarity index while ISTJ and ENTJ have the highest scores. See Quenk, et al, *MBTI® Step II Manual*, p. 115

¹³ Myers, I. (1980) *Gifts Differing*. Palo Alto: CPP, Inc, p. 182.

¹⁴ This is akin to the problem that we can accurately describe all of the chemical interactions, electrical valences, and other assorted complex physical realities of the cortex but that does not tell us how intuiting and higher level reasoning works, yet it clearly does so in the absence of empirical evidence to prove it.

¹⁵ Elizabeth Murphy and Wayne Mitchell's work are the exception to this observation. Their work over the last decade has consistently attempted refreshing new ways to explore type dynamics and to measure the unique dimensions implied by such dynamics. The reader is strongly encouraged to review Mitchell's articles in the last several years published in the *Journal of Psychological Type*.

¹⁶ Gough, Harrison. (1996). *CPI Manual*. Palo Alto: CPP, Inc., p. 19-20.

¹⁷ This research was completed toward the end of the 1990's and continues to be a rich source of information about the types. A random sampling of 150 of each of the sixteen types served as the basis of analysis using the CPI, FIRO-B, ACL, Benchmarks multi rater, MBTI® and LSI, and biographical data. Various publications have come from this material, the most recent of which was *Introduction to Type and Emotional Intelligence*.

¹⁸ Kegan, R. (1996). *In over our heads: managing the demands of modern life*. Boston: Harvard Press, Inc.

¹⁹ Pearman, R. (1998) *Hard Wired Leadership*. Palo Alto: Davies Black Publishing; Pearman, R. (2002) *Introduction to type and emotional intelligence*. Palo Alto: CPP, Inc. Both publications provide deeper explorations of the eight functions than can be provided in this brief article. How these functions operate to influence and affect our responses is thoroughly explored in two arenas, leadership and emotional intelligence.

²⁰ Nideffer, R. (1982; 1994; 2003) *Attention and Performance in Sports Psychology*. Nideffer is among the most respected performance psychologists in the field. His work with Olympic athletes in the 1980s has extended to working with leaders worldwide today. He has identified the mechanisms of attention, distraction, and flexibility to lead to higher, more effective performance. His instrument, *The Attentional and Interpersonal Style Inventory*, is used worldwide to explore how the sources of stress, lost flexibility, and cognitive process affect performance. His research has established beyond any doubt that as we become more anxious, we become less able to make effective choices.

²¹ This observation stems from two data sources. Psychological research is replete with studies that show the slow nature of behavior change, and the requirement for change is in the supporting environment of the individual if behavior change is going to take hold. Also, any trainer knows that having people accept the value of an idea (e.g. providing constructive feedback) does not mean implementation of the idea in relationships.

²² Mary McCaulley and I had a standing date at every conference we attended from 1983 until her passing in 2003. She and I would meet to pick up our last conversation on type development. These conversations usually resulted in letters, and later emails, about our reflections of what we were learning about type. Mary was a constant source of inspiration and guidance, and approached type with such energy I hardly recognized the fact she was 40 years my senior. In fact, her passion burned so strongly that on more than one occasion I had trouble physically keeping up with her at an APT conference as she would move from session to session. Of the many gems she shared over the years, I have treasured this comment the most.

²³ & ²⁴ Poirier, D. Personal communication. An innovative and thoughtful trainer and artist, Danielle has been working with type media for twenty years.

²⁵ Nardi, D. Personal communication. He stated that John Beebe and Linda Berens would suggest this as "spine" or "tandem" behavior – introverted Intuiting linking with its "opposite", extraverted Sensing.