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The Mirror on the Self: The Myers-Briggs Personality Traits

Isabel Brigg Myers said, “It is up to each person to recognize his or her true preferences.” Isabel Briggs Myers and Katharine Briggs define sixteen-types of personality based on Carl Jung’s theories. This theory explains four different preferences in our personality: where our primary source of energy is, how we process information, how we make decisions, and how we organize our life. According to the Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator, I am INTJ, also known as the mastermind.

The first aspect of my INTJ personality refers my primary source of energy: introversion. The Myers and Briggs Foundation website defines introversion as: “I like getting my energy from dealing with the ideas, pictures, memories, and reactions that are inside my head, in my inner world.” As the quote mentioned, I spend a lot of time inwardly. After a long day at work dealing with customers and co-workers, I feel exhausted. The other day after work, I came home and took a nap, not to fall asleep, but to spend some quiet time to charge my batteries and to reflect about my day, about things that impacted me, and about things that I need to work on. The Psychology about Education website in the webpage titled, “What is Introversion?” states, “Their closest relationships tend to be profound and significant. They also prefer to interact with people on a one-on-one basis rather than in a large group setting.” This quote describes me accurately; I don’t like to interact with too many people at the same time. A couple months ago, close to my birthday, a friend kept asking me to celebrate my birthday; she wanted me to have a
party. She insisted for a long time, but I decided not to have one. She got upset with me, so I told her, “I don’t want to have a party, but I like to do anything with you,” so we agreed to spend my birthday together going to lunch and then going shopping. We had a great day. At the end of the day I said: “This is how I like to spend my birthday.” I prefer to give my full attention to one person at the time.

The second aspect of my personality processes information through intuition by dealing with ideas and trying to understand the big picture. The Changing Minds website in their web page titled “Sensing vs. Intuiting” describe intuitive people: “They like ideas and inspiration and tend to have a focus on the future, where they will plan to change the world rather than continue to live in the imperfect present.” As the definition says, I like to focus on the future because it is more interesting than the past. I believe that the past is over and I cannot change that, but the future is not here yet, so I can plan it better. In the past I made some wrong decisions regarding my professional career --something that I cannot change; however, I can concentrate on the things that I can do to make my future better like getting a degree; I believe that learning new skills can prepare me for a better future. Another interesting definition about intuition says, “I remember events more as an impression of what it was like than as actual facts or details of what happened” (The Myers and Briggs Foundation. Web). I agree with this definition. My sister and I have different personalities; she is a sensor. Whenever we recall past experiences, she remembers the event with so many details; I, on the other hand, remember the event by thinking about the feeling left by that moment. When we were kids, my mother used to leave us alone in the house to go shopping. My sister recalls with detail all the things we used to do while my mom was out, but I don’t remember much about it, except the fun of playing without supervision.
The next preference of my personality refers to making decisions by thinking. The website Knowyourtype in their webpage titled “Myers-Briggs Thinking Preference,” defines thinking as follows: “More impersonal in approach, thinking types believe they can make the best decisions by removing personal concerns that may lead to biased analyses and decision making.” As the definition says, I make decisions based on critical analysis of the situation; I never make decisions based on feelings. Most recently, I decided to go back to college to get a degree in nursing. I researched the pros and cons of the career. I concluded that nursing is a good fit for me because of my experience taking care of others, job availability, and money. Another similar definition found in The Myers and Briggs Foundation website title “Thinking or Feeling” says: “I like to analyze pros and cons, and then be consistent and logical in deciding. I try to be impersonal, so I won't let my personal wishes—or other people's wishes—affect me.” This quote agrees with my previous story about analyzing the pros and cons of the situation. Recently, I decided to quit my job, so I have time for college. I like my job and the people that I work with, but I could not let that interfere with my plans. I decided that I needed to spend more time studying, so I can get my degree faster; I am 42 years old and taking two classes per semester would take me too long to graduate.

The last aspect of my INTJ personality keeps my life organized through judging. According to Jane Kise in her book Differentiation Through Personality Types, she wrote: “Judging types are often adept at estimating how long things take, sequencing tasks, planning their approach, and sticking to that plan as they work at a steady pace to wrap things up” (??). As the quote says, I like to organize and plan everything; I cannot live in chaos. Last week, I started a new sewing project, but before I started anything, I organized my working area and planned how I would approach the project; I made a mental list of the things that I needed for it and then
a list of steps. A column written by Jack Falt titled “Appreciating Differences/ #5-Judging and Perceiving/ Organized or Adaptable” says:

Judgers are very organized. …There is a place for everything and everything should be in its place. Judgers like things to be in order. The Judging housekeeper likes everything put away. Don't just drop your coat at the door; pick it up and put it in the closet.

I could not agree more; I like keeping my house organized; everything has its place. I constantly remind my kids to put their stuff where they belong; it is a constant fight with them. They don’t think that is important, but I tell them that is important for my own sake.

Besides learning about the tendencies of my personalities, I had to find a career related to my personality type. By researching careers that better suit my personality, I found many career choices available. The Wayne State College website on a page titled “Career Planning: Personality & Careers: INTJ” says, “INTJ's tremendous value and need for systems and organization, combined with their natural insightfulness, makes them excellent scientists.”

Taking this quote in account, I decided to explore the career of a Medical Scientist. Based on the information provided by the “Occupational Handbook,” the entry-level of education required for this career is a doctoral or professional degree with an average income of $76,980 per year, and it doesn’t require work experience in a related occupation. Furthermore, according to the same website, “Employment of medical scientists is projected to grow 13 percent from 2012 to 2022.”

As I gathered information about this career, I realized how compatible it is with my personality. The Occupational Outlook Handbook states, “Many medical scientists, especially in universities, work with little supervision, forming their own hypotheses and developing experiments, accordingly.” As this quote says, I like working with little supervision. Once I
know what my duties are and get clear instructions, I can work on my own. I get annoyed when people bother me to tell me what to do or to check the progress of my work. In other words, I dislike micromanagement.

Another aspect of this career that connects to my personality deals with analyzing information and applying logic to studies; the Udemy website on the webpage titled “INTJ Career: Choosing The Right Job For Your Personality” says, “At the very core of the INTJ personality is a love of logic, science, and theory. …They see difficult scientific problems as a challenge, and have an innate ability to understand even deeply complex issues.” As the quote indicates, INTJs are capable of understanding difficult concepts, an important skill for medical scientists. I believe that medical scientist might be a good fit to my personality because: I like working in a quiet place where I can concentrate on my work with little supervision and interruptions; I like to analyze things and use my logical mind to solve problems; and I like challenges-- the more complex the better.

In conclusion, the Myers-Briggs personalities taught me many aspects of myself; I learned that my personality type is INTJ. Each of the four letters represents one aspect of my personality. The letter I stands for introversion; Kummerow, Barger, and Kirby in their book titled Work Types wrote, “Those who prefer Introversion have an inward focus” (??). As the quote implies, I get my energy from my inner world. In the past, I knew that I was an introverted person, but I didn’t know that being alone energizes me. Next, the letter N means intuition, meaning I process the information by looking at the whole. In addition, I learned a broader definition of intuition; before, I thought that being an intuitive person means to have sixth sense rather than a way we process information. Then comes the letter T for thinking; I make decisions based on deep analysis of the situation. And finally, the letter J stands for judging; I like organizing my life and
having a plan to follow. As anyone can see, the definitions and personal stories provided gives an idea of who I am. Furthermore, it gave me the chance to learn a little more about myself.
Works Cited


Kummerow, Jean M., Nancy J. Barger, and Linda K. Kirby. "Introduction to Type."


"What Does It Mean to Be Introverted?" Psychology.about.education. Web. 25 Nov. 2014.