

# Mental Mechanisms

In the early part of the 20th century, Swiss psychologist Carl Jung developed his theory of psychological types. Jung proposed that each person has a preferred orientation for directing mental energy, either outward, toward people and things (extraversion), or inward, toward ideas and concepts (introversion).

Jung also proposed that each person has two pairs of mental mechanisms for interacting with the world. These include two methods of gathering information and two ways of making decisions about that information. He believed that each person uses all four mechanisms, with a relative preference for one of each pair.

In the 1940s, Katharine Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers recognized another pair of mental mechanisms in Jung's work. This pair describes how people operate in the world, with a preference for either planned or spontaneous behavior.

The "mental mechanisms" defined in this workbook are:

General Orientation:

**Introversion - Extraversion**

Modes of Operation:

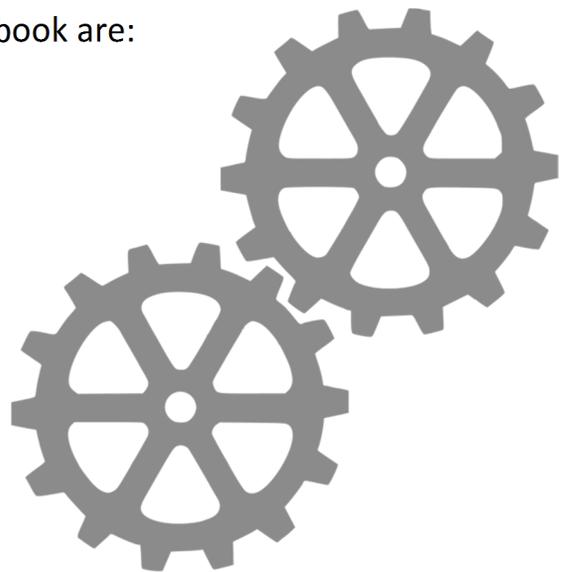
**Planned - Spontaneous**

Gathering Information:

**Hands-On - Theoretical**

Making Decisions:

**Objective - Subjective**



These mental mechanisms are also referred to as psychological type preferences.

*"Everyone possesses both mechanisms, extraversion as well as introversion, and only the relative predominance of one over the other determines the type."*

- Carl Jung (Psychological Types p.4)

*"Outer circumstances and inner disposition frequently favor one mechanism and restrict or hinder the other."*

- Carl Jung (Psychological Types p.6)

## General Orientation

### Extraversion:

describes an outward orientation toward people and things



A person who favors extraversion is likely to study in a group where they can process thoughts through dialogue with others.

### Introversion:

describes an inward orientation toward ideas and concepts



A person who favors introversion is likely to study alone in a quiet place where they can process thoughts inside their head.

## Modes of Operation

### Planned:

describes a more structured way of operating within the world.



Someone who favors a planned approach will typically pack in advance for a trip. They like to make decisions in advance and bring things to closure. They find schedules and routines comforting. They crave consistency and enjoy being prepared.

### Spontaneous:

describes a more “see what comes” way of operating within the world.

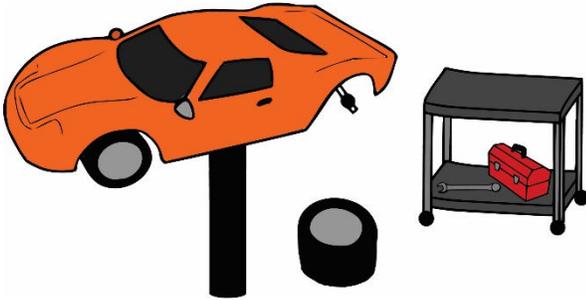


Someone who favors a spontaneous approach will typically pack at the very last minute for a trip. They like to leave options open and make decisions in the spur of the moment. They find schedules and routines restricting. They crave variety and enjoy improvising.

## Information Gathering

### Hands-On:

describes a concrete way of gathering information, using the 5 senses.



A person who favors hands-on gathering of information likes to put pieces together one step at a time and "get their hands dirty". They trust only what they can see, hear, touch, taste, and smell. They tend to focus on "what is" right now in the present moment, or on past, lived, experience.

### Theoretical:

describes an abstract, intuitive way of gathering information, using insight and patterns.



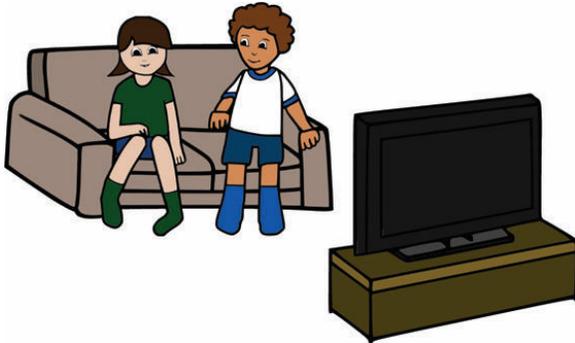
A person who favors theoretical gathering of information likes to put pieces together from all directions at once and use their imagination and insights. They see patterns and possibilities everywhere. They tend to direct their attention towards "what could be" in the future.

## Making Decisions

### Objective:

describes a decision-making mode that is based on logic and impersonal facts.

That is so illogical!

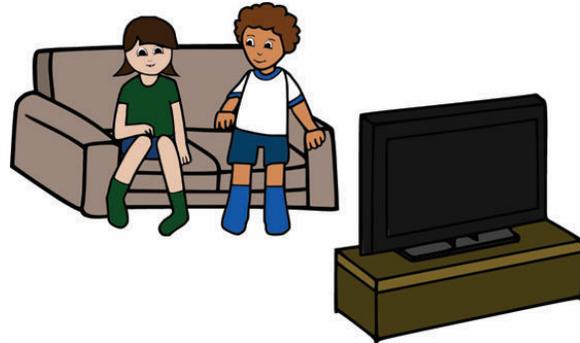


Someone who favors making decisions objectively is more likely to debate and defend a point of view. They seek clarity and have a sincere need to evaluate and improve. They are able to detach from their emotions and prefer to make decisions using logical reasoning. They are more likely to point out flaws in a movie, a book, or an argument.

### Subjective:

describes a decision-making mode that is based on values and personal impact.

Oh no look out!



Someone who favors making decisions subjectively is likely to sympathize with and accept other people's opinions. They seek harmony and have a sincere need to know that others care how they feel. They prefer to incorporate a measure of their feelings when making decisions. They'll usually look past flaws in a movie and empathize with the situations.