



MYERS BRIGGS® FOLLOW-UP GROUP

BAPT SOUTHERN CHAPTER

“FINDING OUR WAY: USING OUR INNER COMPASS”

LED BY CHRISTINE RIGDEN (INFP)

Report by Anne Marsden (INTP)

Anne and her husband Tim have been going to the Southern Group workshops for nearly 20 years. When they started visiting ex-pat communities in Africa back in 2000, they quickly realised what a useful tool the MBTI® would be to help people deal with stress and conflict in an unthreatening, non-judgmental way. Having been trained, they have run workshops with ex-pat and indigenous charitable groups here and abroad, especially in Uganda. It has taken them to some unusual places and they have been translated into Swahili, Portuguese, Danish, Chinese and sign language for the deaf.

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About 20 of us gathered for a thought-provoking and reflective day led by Christine Rigden.

We started with an icebreaker asking ‘what is the most adventurous walk or journey you’ve ever done?’ Mine (as an INTP) was a physical journey on an African bus, but my ESFP partner talked about doing an MA, having never done well at school. Chris cleverly led this to talk about our inner compass, which we all have and is rooted in Introverted Feeling which some of us find really hard to access, so we need to give time to listen to it. This presented an instant challenge for the large number of those with an S preference, as did her repeated reference to metaphors. The day was very much about personal reflection, and those with a Sensing preference did seem to get lots out of it. So what is this inner compass and how do we use it?

We had 4 sets of definitions and accompanying questions.

1. A real compass has a tangible Container. What is our type, temperament and interaction style that makes up our outer container? We looked particularly at Interaction styles and self-selected which we identified with and how that affects the way we tackle a walk/a project.
2. A compass has an intangible influence - magnetic North. What are our Values that influence our journey? We were given a big set of cards with a wide range of values to sort, and then select the 5 most important and define what they meant to us and to what extent we are living by them.
3. The compass needs interpretation. What are the Landmarks on our life’s journey to give us a reliable point of reference and indicate if we’re on the right path? We brainstormed this, which seemed to produce a very random collection, but I found it revealing as I reflected on my own landmarks over lunch!





4. We were encouraged to look at our recent past and present, through the metaphors of weather, climate, terrain ... and consider what the current Context of our lives is, within which we need to interpret our compass. We spent time looking back over the past week and seeing what came to mind as words or pictures.

In the final exercise, Chris gave us 10 minutes to reflect on what we are aiming for now, and what our Values and Landmarks had to say in relation to our current circumstances. Some people said afterwards that they could have spent 20 min or more on this part, others that they would have been more comfortable with it if they could have walked outside during the meditation.



As I have written before, we are so fortunate to have such interesting and well-informed facilitators come to our group. Thank you Chris, for travelling to be with us, and to Marion and Karen for organising it all.

[Christine is a Career Coach and an MBTI® practitioner, and owner of Insights for Change. In her work she helps her clients to understand who they are, and what they want and need from their lives. In previous work, she helped developers understand users, and what users need from software. In her semi-retired time she is Webmaster for BAPT, but also spends a lot of weeks on her narrow boat, and paints, bakes, writes poetry, and sings at church.]

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“CAN YOU SPOT IT?: RECOGNIZING THE EIGHT COGNITIVE PROCESSES” ... THE MAKING OF

VICKY JO VARNER (INFJ)



Vicky Jo Varner, MA (Depth Psychology), who lives in Hollywood, California, is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Jungian and Archetypal Studies. An MBTI® Master Practitioner, she is also a Professional Certified Coach with the ICF. A Type Discovery Specialist, she loves coaching people to identify and develop their natural personality strengths.

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“It should be clear that the psyche consists essentially of images.”

C.G. Jung.

When I underwent my MBTI® Qualifying program with Linda Berens nearly twenty years ago, she declared: “If you can’t figure out someone’s type *without* using a pencil-and-paper assessment, you shouldn’t be using an assessment at all.” This standard raised the bar for me as a practitioner and I resolved to follow her counsel and become that skilled. Later on, I heard John Beebe explain that learning the functions of type was like learning music: *Do Re Me Fa So La Ti Do!* Merely seven different notes make all the music in the world and, in like fashion, merely eight functions comprise the entire spectrum of Jung’s typology. How hard can it be to learn them? Yet I struggled mightily to separate the person from the functions that they were using. It seemed to me as though Drs. Berens and Beebe could easily recognize the types, whereas I felt like a perpetual failure at type-spotting. How could I become the excellent and astute type practitioner I longed to be?

I had begun developing material for my coaching clients around Beebe’s archetypes, but I soon discovered that my participants didn’t grasp the

functions sufficiently either, which made it impossible for them to comprehend Beebe’s model. I determined that I could not present Beebe’s theory to anyone who was not already thoroughly grounded in spotting the functions. So I changed gears, and crafted an approach that focussed on the functions first, even though it felt like I should be beyond that, and it seemed like a giant step backwards to emphasize precision in recognizing the eight functions. Rather than flying into grand archetypal schemes, sheer necessity forced me to downshift and deal with the basics.

The approach I developed starts with an explanation on how to arrive at the eight cognitive processes from the MBTI® 4-letter code. I always refer back to the MBTI® code because I count on everybody being familiar with its famous scales. It’s a common reference point. From there, I explore Jung’s original theory - referring to the judging and perceiving functions as *rational* and *irrational*, and unfold the true meaning of *introversion* and *extraversion*.

In the early days, I was working with Powerpoint slides that were covered with words words words ... I meticulously explained each of the functions in great detail and used perfectly good words, but the learning wasn’t landing. (See Image 1)



Image 1:
Words, Words,
Words