



## Myers-Briggs typology and Jungian individuation

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**Abstract:** Myers-Briggs typology is widely seen as equivalent to and representative of Jungian theory by the users of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and similar questionnaires. However, the omission of the transcendent function from the theory, and the use of typological functions as its foundation, has resulted in an inadvertent reframing of the process of individuation. This is despite some attempts to integrate individuation and typology, and reintroduce the transcendent function into Myers-Briggs theory. This paper examines the differing views of individuation in Myers-Briggs and Jungian theory, and some of the challenges of reconciling those differences, particularly in the context of normality. It proposes eight principles, drawn mainly from Jungian and classical post-Jungian work, that show how individuation as a process can be integrated with contemporary Myers-Briggs typology. These principles show individuation as being a natural process that can be encouraged outside of the analytic process. They make use of a wide range of opposites as well as typological functions, whilst being centred on the transcendent function. Central to the process is the alchemical image of the caduceus and a practical interpretation of the axiom of Maria, both of which Jung used to illustrate the process of individuation.

**Keywords:** typology, individuation, Myers-Briggs, caduceus, axiom of Maria

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Joseph Wheelwright once suggested that ‘the most important thing about types is detyping’ (Wheelwright 1982, p. 54). He was not referring to what happens in Jungian analysis but to ‘what one would hesitantly call normality’ (p. 55) – i.e. the ‘individuation [or] growth’ (p. 57) that takes place in non-clinical settings. The topic of normality in analytical psychology is a complex one (Myers, S. 2013), but in relation to typology it raises two key questions. Firstly, to what extent should the process of Jungian individuation be promoted to the wider population in extra-clinical settings? There is a wide spectrum of engagement with the unconscious in society, from Jungian analysis at one end to those who are one-sided and have no interest or awareness of it at the other. In between, there are contexts such as workplace performance appraisals, training courses, or self-development books and websites that all aim to increase self-awareness. They use a wide range of techniques such as feedback from others,

psychometrics (including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, or MBTI), and concepts such as the Johari Window (a simple model to make people think about the hidden aspects of their personality). Many of these are concerned with raising awareness of the personal unconscious – which makes one ‘less individually unique, and more collective’ (Jung 1928b, para. 236). However, some go deeper and promote awareness of dreams and archetypes. Jung’s position towards the end of his life was that the promotion of individuation to these wider audiences was a moral imperative because ‘Man’s worst sin is unconsciousness ... and in all seriousness [we need to] seek ways and means ... to rescue him from ... unconsciousness, and make this the most vital task of civilization’ (Jung 1945/1948b, para. 455). He saw the need for contemporary culture to absorb into ‘its general philosophy ... the fundamental insight that psychic life has two poles’ (Jung 1963, p. 193).

The second question is what role can Myers-Briggs typology play in promoting greater integration of the unconscious? It already makes a contribution by increasing awareness, of self and others, in a wide range of applications such as career counselling, team-building or developing sales skills. It also provides an introduction to some important Jungian concepts, such as opposites or the shadow. However, it only goes so far – for example, solving the type problem of balance through a well-developed auxiliary rather than the transcendent function (Myers, S. 2016). Also, Myers-Briggs theory encourages people to identify with one type throughout life, which encourages a degree of one-sidedness and can create other problems, for example:

Identifying with the superior function ... can be a problem for any of the types ... and is awfully easy to do, especially when the function is working well. What happens is that the I, the ego, tends to become synonymous with the superior function, when in fact the superior function should be in the service of the ego.

(Wheelwright 1982, pp. 75-6)

Also, Jung pointed out that identifying with a type can result in ‘true individuality fall[ing] into the unconscious’, although he also viewed this as a ‘necessary transitional stage on the way to individuation’ (Jung 1921, para. 739). In the Myers-Briggs version of typology, identifying with a type is not a transitional stage but part of the destination, and individuation (more commonly referred to as personal or type development) is viewed as taking place within the constraints of one’s immutable psychological type. Furthermore, the theory does not hold the distinction between ego and type described above by Wheelwright, nor is there any mention of ‘dotyping’. Some Myers-Briggs literature does discuss the ego/Self axis, but it gives typological functions the central role, such that ‘our dominant/inferior spine [is] the core axis of our personality’ (Corlett & Millner 1993, p. 235). Yet, Myers-Briggs typology ought to be able to play a much more constructive role in helping people to become who they truly are *as individuals*. Wheelwright suggested that ‘Jung’s

idea of individuation is closely related to types' (1982, p. 57). This can be seen in the content of the book *Psychological Types*, which had the subtitle 'The Psychology of Individuation' (Jung 1921, p. v) for its first English version.

The definition of individuation is key to this discussion. When he laid down some concise definitions for the ideas he had developed, Jung acknowledged the tension between the amorphous nature of psychological concepts and the misunderstandings that can arise due to imprecision of definition (Jung 1921, paras. 672-75). Jungian and post-Jungian descriptions of individuation have often been amorphous, sometimes to the point of appearing contradictory. For example, Jung defined individuation as a process (*ibid.*, para. 757) but also treated it as a goal (Jung 1963, p. 222). He defined individuation as differentiation (Jung 1921, para. 757) but also said differentiation can lead to excessive one-sidedness (*ibid.*, paras. 346-47). It can be viewed as an ongoing integration/deintegration that begins in early childhood (Fordham 1985) or as a task primarily of midlife and beyond (Stein 2006). And so on. Jung's preference, even at a late stage in his life, was to avoid closed, rigid definitions because of the 'experimental, empirical, hypothetical nature of his work' (de Angulo 1977, p. 213). Nevertheless, he constructed his set of definitions in order to meet a particular need – so that 'everyone is in a position to see what in fact he means' (Jung 1921, para. 674).

Nearly a century on from that work – although understanding Jung's original meaning is an important part of the context – there are now many other needs to be considered, especially in view of post-Jungian and other developments. There remains a role for antinomies which are required to 'describe the nature of the psyche satisfactorily' (Jung 1935, para. 1). But too much ambiguity or confusion can prevent people from engaging with a concept. There is therefore a need to revisit the Jungian concept of individuation and examine how it is relevant both to the wider spectrum in society (referred to earlier) and to contemporary Myers-Briggs typology. The latter is widely perceived as being synonymous with Jungian type theory, but there are some unrecognized differences between Myers-Briggs and Jungian type theory, particularly with respect to the process of individuation. As a result, Myers-Briggs typology is generally used reductively rather than constructively (Myers, S. 2016) – it is used to explain people as they are, rather than to help them 'become' a more unique and whole person (through detyping).

### Individuation and typology

For Jungian analysts, individuation is in the background of all analytic work even if it doesn't form an overt part of an individual's particular therapy. The role of typology is optional and its use varies according to individual training or practice. For some analysts, it plays little or no role. For others, it is of relatively minor assistance – used, for example, to help analysts or clients

understand their own prejudices or explain relationship difficulties. But for others typology becomes one of the primary *contents* of the process of individuation. That is, clinical practice involves the differentiation and integration of typological functions in the client's psyche.

There have been several expositions by Jungian analysts that integrate typology with the process of individuation, most notably by von Franz (1971/1986), Meier (1995) and Beebe (2006). As these have been written from the perspective of Jungian analysis, typology is viewed in the context of the main analytic process. This means that the transformation of the personality and the uniting role of the symbol are always centre stage, even if not discussed explicitly. When describing the typological contents of individuation, there are some aspects with which these three theorists broadly agree, and some where they take slightly different approaches. They agree on there being a sequence of differentiation and integration of typological functions. This is summarized in Meier's chapter on the 'compass' (Meier 1995, p. 57), which starts with differentiation of the dominant function, goes through two auxiliaries, and ends with the inferior function. All three also agree on the significance of attempting to differentiate the inferior function. And, as Beebe points out (2006, p. 141), von Franz clarified the relation of the inferior to Jung's transcendent function:

When the fourth function comes up ... the whole [conscious] structure collapses.... This, then, produces a stage ... where everything is neither thinking nor feeling nor sensation nor intuition. Something new comes up, namely a completely different and new attitude towards life in which one uses all and none of the functions at the same time.

(von Franz 1971/1986, pp. 27-28)

These theorists agree, as one would expect, that there are other (non-typological) contents of the unconscious that need to be integrated, i.e. archetypes – though they take slightly different views of their relationship to typology. Von Franz links the appearance of the inferior function in dreams to the shadow, anima/us, and the Self, suggesting this gives them 'a certain characteristic quality' (von Franz 1971/1986, p.73). Meier also suggests that typology has a role in 'shaping the archetypal figures' (Meier 1995, p. 81). Beebe goes further and has developed a model in which particular archetypal figures carry each of the eight function-attitudes in a hierarchy. This combines the process of integrating typological functions with assimilation of the unconscious because in 'integrating one's typology, the issues associated with each archetypal complex must be faced, exactly as in classical individuation' (Beebe 2006, p. 144). Having different views on how typological and archetypal contents are related has implications for the process of individuation: it shapes what the analyst pays attention to. Nevertheless, individuation forms the foundation not only for analytic work but for how typological theory is interpreted.

It is typology that provides the foundation of Myers-Briggs theory (Myers 1980). For its users, individuation is just one application amongst many, such as improving relationships, conflict resolution, choosing a career, increasing performance at work, etc. Whereas for Jungian analysts individuation is the foundation and typology is an optional extra, for Myers-Briggs practitioners typological functions provide the foundation and individuation is the optional extra. For the most part there is nothing untoward about this state of affairs, but the Myers-Briggs emphasis on functions does lead to an inadvertent reframing of individuation.

In Myers-Briggs theory, type development consists mostly of differentiation of the functions, with a limited degree of integration of the unconscious. Initially, the emphasis is placed on skilful and complementary use of two functions – ‘superior skill in [the dominant] supplemented by a helpful but not competitive skill in the [auxiliary]’ (Myers 1980, p. 174). Thereafter, there are some similarities with the sequential process defined by von Franz and others because ‘development of the dominant and auxiliary ... reaches a kind of ceiling and then more attention is paid to the third and fourth functions’ (Bayne 2004, p. 34). However, development stops there. Although Isabel Briggs Myers briefly acknowledged the potential to transcend one’s type (Myers 1980, p. 168), she didn’t see any need for it (Myers 1977, p. 21). The unconscious and the archetype of the shadow feature in Myers-Briggs theory, but they play mainly a reductive role – explaining the personality but not transforming it.

This can be illustrated using the analogy of a building site. Jungian individuation can be compared to excavation of the sewers, to expose potential problems before (or as) the foundations are laid to enable construction of a new building. In the Myers-Briggs version of the encounter with the unconscious, the lid is lifted on the sewer, the immediately visible part of the tunnel inspected, but then the lid is replaced (i.e. it is more of a ‘peek’ at the unconscious than an encounter with it). Although this provides some understanding of what lies beneath, the degree of change that takes place above and below the surface is limited. In one sense that is a good thing, because it limits exposure to the dangers of the unconscious. But if those limits are too rigid they can restrict rather than encourage the natural process of individuation. For this audience, there needs to be a way of steering between these two extremes: one that involves delving deep into the realms of the unconscious, which requires analytic or psychotherapeutic training; the other that steers people away from transformation, encouraging them to remain relatively one-sided and unconscious. There have been some efforts to find this middle path. For example, Groesbeck (1978), Spoto (1995), and Johnston (2011), have tried to restore the place of the transcendent function in Myers-Briggs typology. Pearson (1986) and Beebe (2006) have also tried to promote awareness of archetypal figures within the community of users of Myers-Briggs theory.

But there still remain several challenges in the way of promoting individuation in a non-therapeutic context.

### Challenges

One challenge is the danger involved of ‘bringing unconscious contents to the surface [which] artificially create a condition that bears the closest resemblance to a psychosis’ (Jung 1928a, para. 260). But this concern refers mainly to *forcing* unconscious contents to the surface, not with the natural process of individuation that takes place outside of therapy. The challenge is to shift the emphasis from identifying with a one-sided type, which can be an obstacle to individuation, to gently encouraging the natural process of development that transcends type, integrates the opposites, and results in the emergence of the unique individual.

Another challenge might be a Jungian concern at the use of measurement, statistics and classification – topics that Jung mentioned when he declined to comment on some typological research (Jung 1976, pp. 550-52). However, none of these were showstoppers for him. For example, he took a keen interest in Rhine’s statistical measurements (Jung 1952) and conducted his own studies – such as the word association tests (Jung & Riklin 1904-7, 1910) or investigations of synchronicity (Jung 1952). He even produced his own self-report questionnaires, such as his assessment of whether people would consult a doctor or clergy when experiencing spiritual distress (Jung 1932, paras. 511-13). Also, although Jung sometimes denigrated the use of typology for classification, he also viewed the typological functions as ‘suitable criteria for a classification’ (Jung 1964, p. 50) for various reasons (e.g. see Jung 1973, p. 186). Jung’s concerns were not about measurement, statistics and classification per se but what he viewed as potential misuses that might inhibit the development of the unique individual. Sometimes, statistics could become an obstacle to self-knowledge by removing individual features (Jung 1957a, paras. 493-96). Also, classification was sometimes being used in too simplistic a manner (Jung 1934, p. xiv). But his main concern was that the transformative aspect of individuation was being overlooked (Myers, S. 2016). It was most probably this aspect that led to his conclusion, date unknown, that typology was a theory that lay people could not use correctly (Shamdasani 2003, p. 87). Although Jung saw a place for individuation outside the therapy room, he focused his attention away from typology because in popular usage it had come to misrepresent the task. There have been various attempts to address this issue, such as the writings that discuss the transcendent function mentioned earlier, but they have not had much success.

Another challenge is that, because Myers-Briggs typology and Jungian individuation have developed in different directions and are each a form of

psychology, they have become embedded mythologies. It may seem strange to describe two different versions or aspects of analytical psychology as being ‘myths’, but Jung viewed psychology as a form of myth:

Psychology, as one of the many expressions of psychic life, operates with ideas which in their turn are derived from archetypal structures and thus generate a somewhat more abstract kind of myth. Psychology therefore translates the archaic speech of myth into a modern mythologem ... a *living and lived myth*.

(Jung 1940, para. 302, original emphasis)

This theme, of psychology being mythology, has been picked up by others. For example, James Hillman described psychology and mythology as interchangeable, where ‘psychology is a mythology of modernity’ (Hillman 1979, p. 23). As psychological mythologies, both Myers-Briggs typology and Jungian individuation have deep roots in the psyche – with all the commensurate difficulties of facilitating a change of perspective.

There is also a challenge in adapting the Jungian concept of individuation for use outside the clinical setting. This is apparent from a memorandum that Jung sent to UNESCO, which was his contribution to what was colloquially known as the ‘Tensions’ project (UNESCO 1948, p. 6). Jung argues that his psychotherapeutic methodology is also ‘a technique for changing the mental attitude’ (Jung 1948, para. 1388). He goes on to describe in mostly layman’s language how individuation could be promoted in a non-clinical context. Early on, he points out one of the main differences between those undergoing treatment for neurosis/psychosis and other people:

The mental and moral conflicts of normal people [are of] a somewhat different kind: the conflicting opposites are both conscious.... [However,] no attempt to change mental attitudes can be permanently successful without first establishing a new contact with the unconscious.

(Jung 1948, paras. 1388-389)

The introduction of the concept of conscious opposites adds an extra dimension to the notion of individuation, alongside the opposites of consciousness and the unconscious. Whilst researching the transcendent function, Miller found examples of Jung discussing opposites ‘both of which are fully available to the conscious mind’ (2004, p. 40). In these cases, Jung was referring not only to an archetype creating a conscious conflict but also to a struggle between moral values. Miller concludes that ‘the transcendent function ... must include opposites in consciousness as well as those in both consciousness and the unconscious’ (ibid., p. 41). Also, such conflicts may not always be binary opposites but may reflect a multiplicity, or an absence of something (p. 42ff). Therefore, along the wide spectrum of people where individuation could take place, there may be many different types of ‘opposite’ involved. At the

Jungian analysis end, the focus is on consciousness and the unconscious. At the other end, where there is little or no awareness of the unconscious, the focus of development might be on competing moral values or perhaps the absence of morality. But as people move along the spectrum towards a greater self-awareness, the level of engagement with the unconscious will naturally increase.

This raises another difficulty, which Jung describes in his UNESCO memorandum: there needs to be a strong motivation. Although mental illness can be one driver of individuation, it is not the only one – it can also be pursued when there is a degree of moral, intellectual, and educational development. In Jung's view, this puts it beyond about 50% of the normal population – though that obviously implies it is within the grasp of the other half. Jung goes on to describe what kind of person could engage in this task and how they can do it (Jung 1948, paras. 1390-392). He focuses primarily on dream analysis but also appends a list of books – the first of which is *Psychological Types* (ibid., para. 1402n). This implies he still saw a potential role for typology in the process of individuation. By this, he would have had in mind the role of the symbol and the emergence of the transcendent function out of the dialectic of opposites, not the classification of individuals.

Another challenge to promoting individuation in non-therapeutic contexts, if Myers-Briggs typology is to be involved, is that this popular interpretation of Jung's type theory is not universally accepted. Although the MBTI has a very substantial research base, there are some oft-repeated criticisms of it from within mainstream psychology (e.g. Pittenger 1993) and in the mainstream media (e.g. Burnett 2013, Zurcher 2014) which chime with Jung's own views. One criticism is that the types are stereotypes, a criticism that is similar to Jung's description of types as being 'Galtonesque family portraits' (Jung 1921, para. 666). Sir Francis Galton was a statistician and pioneer in psychometrics who invented composite photographs, centred on the eyes, so Jung was alluding to an average picture that is devoid of any individual features. Another criticism of Myers-Briggs theory is the statistical observation that 'there is no evidence of bimodal distributions for the MBTI' (Pittenger 1993, n.p.), which is contrary to what would be expected when people are classified in two groups. However, Jung did argue that there is a third, large group in the middle (Jung 1923, para. 894), which would lead to the normal distribution that is actually found in the MBTI data. Also, Pittenger criticizes the reliability of the MBTI because it is not high enough for inborn, life-long traits – but, again, this was not Jung's interpretation. Although extraversion/introversion may have an inborn component (Jung 1921, para. 561) and there might also be an original disposition for the functions, type 'changes in the course of life' (Jung 1959, p. 68). Pittenger also points out that poor reliability is a consequence of having strict cut-off points between the types. However, Jung used spatial metaphors that involve reference points, not boundaries – such as 'four points of the compass' (Jung 1931, para. 958) or 'a trigonometric net or ... crystallographic axial system'



(Jung 1936, para. 986) or, more simply, ‘points for orientation’ (Jung 1957b, p. 304). That is, the types are akin to landmarks on a map, reference points that can help determine a person’s unique location. They are not akin to geographical areas with clearly defined boundaries. A further complication is that there have been robust defences to these criticisms constructed from a Myers-Briggs perspective (e.g. Rutledge 2013), even though the criticisms are often more aligned with Jung’s interpretation of typology.

In summary, there are many challenges when seeking to integrate Jungian individuation with Myers-Briggs typology. There may be a Jungian reticence to engage with a system based on measurement and statistics. Different theoretical foundations are being used – individuation in one perspective, typology in the other. Different myths have become embedded in the different user communities. The Myers-Briggs community has already established arguments to defend itself from what are Jung’s views, which are themselves not widely known. The process of individuation needs to be revised so that it can more easily be pursued outside the analyst’s therapy room. Any encounter with the unconscious needs to be done in a way that avoids bringing up dangerous contents. It needs to be pitched to the audience using language that they can relate to, make practical use of and, most importantly, feel motivated to pursue. And if that is to be done using Myers-Briggs theory, the centrality of the transcendent function to typology needs to be restored.

### Revising individuation – eight principles

Although these challenges may seem insurmountable (and in the long term may prove to be so), there now follow eight principles that seek to integrate Myers-Briggs typology and Jungian individuation. The aim is for Myers-Briggs typology to point towards individuation through the reconciliation of opposites, rather than preserving some degree of one-sidedness. These principles are based not only on Jung’s own writings about normal psychology (Myers, S. 2013) but also on other contributions to extra-clinical applications of analytical psychology and the societal role of the transcendent function (e.g. Samuels 1993, Mattoon 1993, Stein & Hollwitz 1995, Miller 2004, Singer & Kimbles 2004).

The first principle is that individuation is a natural process of ongoing development of a transcendent function, which can to some extent be helped along or actively encouraged by the individual. The context – whether undergoing analysis or not – makes no difference to the essential nature of the process. Individuation is concerned with transforming the personality, the creation of the individual, the relationship between consciousness and the unconscious, and the development of wholeness. But there are secondary differences that can significantly change the nature of the task. In a non-therapeutic context, ‘individuation and collectivity are ... two divergent

destinies...’ (Jung 1916, para. 1099). This means that, although someone can be made aware of the existence and nature of individuation, he/she needs to be left to decide naturally the extent to which it is pursued. Individuation ‘cannot be forced upon him, since it is a good solution only when it is combined with a natural process of development’ (Jung 1934/1950, para. 618).

The second principle is that the transcendent function can emerge from between any form of opposites, or otherness, or elements that are missing from one’s conscious standpoint or identity. These opposites can include not only the typological functions, or consciousness and the unconscious, but also conscious, moral opposites – particularly ones that are found to be ‘distressing’ (Miller 2004, p. 41). Dealing with ethical values of this nature is not a purely intellectual exercise, it involves a differentiation of the self from the opposites – or the withdrawal of emotional investment from each side. An example is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa, in which victims and perpetrators of abuses on both sides gave their account of events, but without any justice, compensation or punishment as a consequence. The TRC did not take sides – whether for blacks versus whites, or for victims versus perpetrators. The transformation in South Africa was achieved through dispassionately hearing accounts from all sides.

This leads into the third principle, which is that individuation can be applied to, and transform, not only the individual (i.e. emerging from an intrapersonal conflict) but also relationships (interpersonal conflict) and culture (collective or societal conflicts). There are several examples of Jungian concepts being applied at a collective level (e.g. Stein & Hollwitz 1995, Corlett & Pearson 2003). A concise and cogent argument as to why this is valid has been laid out by Singer and Kimbles (2004, pp. 1-7). Myers-Briggs typology itself often acts as a form of transcendent function at a group level. Through learning about individual personality types, a team that suffered from internal conflict is frequently transformed to one that handles internal oppositions in a more constructive manner.

The fourth principle is that the overall process of individuation is represented by the caduceus, an alchemical image that was adopted by Jung: ‘The right way to wholeness is ... snakelike, a path that unites the opposites in the manner of the guiding caduceus’ (Jung 1944, para. 6). The caduceus is the rod of Hermes, the messenger of the gods, and consists of a staff entwined by two snakes. As Stein (2006) points out, individuation is a mix of gradual development, abrupt spurts and discontinuities that can be illustrated using two metaphors – a journey, which is linear, and circularity or circumambulation. This combination of metaphors is expressed by the caduceus, in which the cycles of individuation are not simply repeating the same old ground but making some form of progress in terms of consciousness. Each circular area, between where the snakes cross, represents one cycle, i.e. the transcendence of one set of opposites – though they tend to ‘ease off only gradually’ (Jung 1946, para. 400). Typology might represent some of these cycles, but there are many other opposites they can



Figure 1. The caduceus

represent – e.g. democracy/autocracy, competing religions, different cultures, political ideologies, social justice vs economic competence, etc. Progress up the caduceus can be made even if the typological functions are not transcended, but a failure to transcend type differences does mean that ‘the process of [typological] division will be repeated later on a higher plane’ (Jung 1921, para. 825) – i.e. higher up the caduceus.

The fifth principle is that each individual cycle consists of two movements. Stein (2006) has described them for analysis but they apply just as well to other contexts. The first movement involves the differentiation of some element of consciousness from its opposite. It is represented on the caduceus by an upwards and *outwards* move. This is both ‘an advantage and a drawback at the same time’ (Jung 1916/1957, para. 138), because it increases consciousness whilst also creating a division in the psyche. The second movement, integration of the opposite, involves a differentiation of the Self from the opposites. This is represented by an upwards and *inwards* move on the caduceus. This results in a further increase in consciousness whilst healing some of the divisions in the psyche.

In this view, individuation can be a continual process, as per Fordham, but it might also involve a major change during midlife, as per Stein. That is, in the first half of life the individual encounters many opposites, some of which are

integrated, but in most cases a one-sided attitude is differentiated (more out than up on the caduceus). At midlife and beyond, the individual may come to recognize the value of conflict and paradox, and therefore tend to seek out a more balanced perspective (more inward and up). A key task of the second movement is ‘the withdrawal of all the projections we can lay our hands on’ (Jung 1938/1940, para. 141). This involves, Stein suggests, being curious, listening to small clues, paying attention to the numinous, seeking to expand knowledge, etc. – or that change might be enforced through the experience of a catastrophe. This is an area where Myers-Briggs typology can have a significant impact, through its inclusion of projection in discussions of the inferior function and shadow.

The sixth principle is that each individual cycle passes through four states of consciousness, which Jung represented using the axiom of Maria: ‘One becomes two, two becomes three, and out of the third comes the One as the fourth’ (Jung 1951, para. 237). There is no definitive interpretation of this axiom. As Jung acknowledged, this is a ‘cryptic observation’ (Jung 1952, para. 962), and even ‘the alchemists flounder[ed] about in ... attempts to interpret the axiom of Maria’ (Jung 1955-56, para. 68). Jung liked to play with the meaning of numbers, and he interpreted the axiom differently in different contexts. Sometimes the axiom is the sequence 1-2-3-4 described above, sometimes it is the reverse 4-3-2-1 (Jung 1946, paras. 404, 451, 525), and sometimes it is all the numbers simultaneously (Jung 1958, para. 768). He sometimes associated the axiom of Maria with the interplay of opposites, but sometimes with the order of differentiation of typological functions (Jung 1942/1948, para. 184) or the Godhead (*ibid.*, para. 290). He also expressed wholeness or the unifying principle using different numbers – the fourth (in the axiom of Maria), the third (Jung 1921, para. 85), the fifth (Jung 1951, para. 353), the ninth (Jung 1942, para. 187), etc. A contemporary interpretation of the axiom of Maria has been described by Schwartz-Salant (1998, p. 84) and Sharp. Both convey the same essence, with the latter summarizing it as:

*One* stands for the original, paradisiacal state of unconscious wholeness.... *two* signifies ... a conflict between opposites (e.g., persona and shadow); *three* points to a potential resolution; *the third* is the transcendent function; and *the one as the fourth* is psychologically equivalent to a transformed state of conscious wholeness.

(Sharp 2001, p. 63, italics original)

I propose a slightly different interpretation, one that relates directly to positions on the caduceus (shown in Fig. 1) and communicates more clearly and practically the stages of individuation to a more general audience, including users of Myers-Briggs typology. It begins in the same way as Sharp’s – *one* being the state of unconscious wholeness. This is represented on the caduceus by the point where the snakes cross at the bottom of the cycle. To use the example of racial opposites in South Africa, this would correspond to a pre-

apartheid period. State *two* is the result of conscious differentiation, where one of the opposites is in consciousness and the other remains in the unconscious, being projected onto others. This is similar to Sharp's wording in that there are opposites, but adds the clarification of one-sidedness. This second stage is represented on the caduceus by one of the snakes moving up to one side. This corresponds to the introduction of apartheid in which white interests dominate and those of blacks and other ethnic groups are devalued. State *three* arises as a result of the withdrawal of projections, so the previously repressed opposite is owned and recognized as also being good and equally valid. That uncomfortable contradiction is then patiently held. This corresponds, in the example, to the recognition of black rights in South Africa and the release of Nelson Mandela. Although at this stage there may be the *potential* for reconciliation of the opposites, I don't associate it with the transcendent function. In one of Jung's discussions of the axiom of Maria he says: 'Three ... is logically correlated with the wicked hunter.... whereas fourness is a symbol of wholeness, threeness is not. The latter ... denotes polarity' (Jung 1945/1948b, paras. 425-26). It is represented by the other snake moving up to the side opposite to the first snake.

It is by holding the tension of state *three* that the unconscious then does its most important work. The unifying transcendent function forms in the unconscious (i.e. it is like state *one*) and then it emerges into consciousness, initially as a numinous symbol but then as a dominant conscious idea (i.e. it becomes the *fourth* when it becomes conscious). Hence, the phrase *out of the third comes the one as the fourth* has a practical interpretation. Out of holding the tension with the opposite (*three*) comes the initially unconscious function (*one*) that results in a conscious unity (*four*). This new conscious standpoint is 'a new structure of identity' (Stein 2006, p. 79), or a 'change of personality... the transcendent function' (Jung 1928b, para. 360). In the example, this corresponds to the actions of Nelson Mandela and the Government of National Unity, who held the tension of opposites between blacks and whites, and from which emerged uniting functions such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This is represented on the caduceus by the snakes moving back together at the top of the cycle. The emergence of the uniting function from the unconscious to become a new conscious dominant is represented by the line of the staff that goes from the bottom of the cycle to the top. This new conscious standpoint transcends only one pair of opposites (or one aspect of the paradox), so is only one move up the caduceus. It does not represent complete wholeness, as the personality is still one-sided and unconscious in many other respects. Therefore, this new function needs to be differentiated further and its opposite needs to be integrated. What remains as unconscious forms the basis of the next cycle.

The seventh principle is that the new structure of consciousness provides flexibility of perspective. That is, the individual is able to observe things from any of the four states described in the axiom of Maria. This is derived from

von Franz's suggestion that the individual is able to use all or none of the functions simultaneously (through the transcendent function). In state *one*, everything is viewed as the same and projected externally. In state *two*, there is now an observation of difference, but one is seen positively and associated with the ego whilst its opposite remains projected. In state *three*, the individual can see the good and bad on both sides and is able to resist exercising a preference. State *four* adds a transcendent perspective, whilst retaining the ability to see the perspectives of the other three – how everything is the same (*one*), how from opposite perspectives one side can be seen as better than the other (*two* and *three*), and how the opposites can be transcended or reconciled (perspective *four*). Conversely, it is also possible to get stuck at any of the first three stages – to remain unconscious, or one-sided, or to have split or polarized opinions that are never reconciled.

After transcending a particular set of opposites, the individual does not necessarily take perspective four in every context. For example, in a relationship with a one-sided person, an individual might play devil's advocate and take the opposite position in order to assist that person's development or spiritual growth. Another example is a manager of a business team who, recognizing a collective one-sidedness, might take an alternative position to compensate for the group's deficiency. This ability to *consciously* take a one-sided approach is a 'sign of the highest culture' (Jung 1921, para. 346).

The seven principles discussed so far have concentrated on the progress of individuation through the withdrawal of projections, interplay of opposites, emergence of the symbol, and the ongoing reinvention of the transcendent function as the dominant function of consciousness. It has not included archetypes, dreams, active imagination, myths, etc. The eighth and final principle is that these latter aspects of analytic psychology remain relevant but are secondary and optional (for the wider, non-therapeutic audience being considered). Dreams, etc., continue to play a constructive role even when they are not understood but, because of the inherent dangers of the unconscious (Jung 1916/1957, p. 68), their conscious use is best left either to the individual having a natural interest in them or to analysis:

It is often objected that the compensation [provided by dreams] must be ineffective unless the dream is understood. This is not so certain, however, for many things can be effective without being understood. But there is no doubt that we can enhance its effect considerably by understanding the dream, and this is often necessary because the voice of the unconscious so easily goes unheard. 'What nature leaves imperfect is perfected by the art' says an alchemical dictum.

(Jung 1945/1948a, para. 560).

This final principle is only partly aligned to Jung's view. In his letter to UNESCO, when he outlined a procedure to change attitudes that are conducive to world peace, he put dream analysis at the centre. Other techniques were, by implication, secondary and optional. The principles

above put the interplay of opposites at the centre of the process, making dream analysis and other techniques secondary and optional. Although this may be different from the classical emphasis in clinical work, it establishes a practical link between Myers-Briggs typology and Jungian individuation that can be used in range of non-clinical applications.

## Conclusions

This paper has developed an earlier argument (Myers, S. 2016) that identified a divergence between Jungian and Myers-Briggs versions of typology, with the latter omitting the symbol and transcendent function. It has proposed a potential solution for their reintegration based on eight principles, the first of which is that it is possible to encourage the natural development of individuation through the transcendent function. The second and third principles clarify the scope of such development as extending far beyond the clinical setting. The transcendent function can emerge when reconciling various forms of opposite including, but not limited to, moral values and typology. Individuation can take place not only within the individual but also in relationships and/or culture. The fourth, fifth, and sixth principles describe the nature of the process as being a cyclical journey, represented by the caduceus, with two movements and four states of consciousness in each cycle. The last two principles identify some key implications of the process for the non-clinical audience and applications being considered. The transcendent function provides a new, more flexible perspective and, because the interplay of opposites is at the centre of the process, other aspects of analytical psychology remain relevant but optional. One of the main aims of these principles has been to address Jung's concern that people are 'often kept unconscious by lack of education with lack of self-criticism' (Jung 1944, para. 32). The principles provide a basis on which to educate an audience interested in using typology as a foundation to pursue individuation. For users of Myers-Briggs typology, the principles may seem to contradict some of the basic elements of Isabel Briggs Myers' theory – a perception that is due to the inclusion of transcendent function. This is not a new addition to typology, however, for being able to transcend one's type is a possibility that Myers acknowledged (1980, p. 168). She excluded the transcendent function from her discussion of typology because she saw no need to develop it (1977, pp. 21-22). She saw the restoration of balance being achieved by an auxiliary function (Myers, S. 2016). Jung, however, saw the transcendent function as a key part of individual and cultural advancement (Miller 2004).

When added to the typological functions, the transcendent function turns Myers-Briggs typology from being reductive and explanatory to constructive and transformative. Myers-Briggs typology remains valid and valuable, not only explaining the differences between people but also showing what they

can become. These principles help one to recognize that the most important thing about types is detyping. They shift the emphasis onto the ‘transcendent function, i.e. the transitus to the Self. We should recognize that life is a transitus’ (Jung & White 2007, p. 238). Individuation is not a task for the few going through analysis, it has a much wider relevance:

The whole world ... is in an individuation process. But people don't know it.... If they knew it, they would not be at war with each other.... Individuation is by no means a rare thing or a luxury of the few.... Individuation is just ordinary life and what you are made conscious of.

(Jung 1973, p. 442)

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#### TRANSLATIONS OF ABSTRACT

La typologie Myers-Briggs est globalement considérée par les utilisateurs du MBTI et de questionnaires semblables comme équivalente à, et représentative de, la théorie Jungienne. Cependant, l'omission de la fonction transcendante dans la théorie, et l'utilisation des fonctions psychologiques comme son fondement, ont eu pour effet un recadrage involontaire du processus d'individuation. Ceci s'est produit malgré quelques tentatives visant à intégrer l'individuation et la typologie et à réintroduire la fonction transcendante dans la théorie de Myers-Briggs. Cet article examine ce qui diffère dans les perspectives sur l'individuation dans la théorie de Myers-Briggs et dans celle de Jung, ainsi que certains des défis qu'il y a à réconcilier ces différences, particulièrement dans le contexte de la normalité. L'article propose huit principes, tirés principalement du travail Jungien et post-Jungien classique, montrant comment l'individuation en tant que processus naturel peut être intégrée à la typologie Myers-Briggs contemporaine. Ces principes montrent que l'individuation est un processus naturel qui peut être encouragé en dehors du processus analytique. Ils font appel à un large éventail d'opposés ainsi qu'aux fonctions psychologiques, tout en étant centrés sur la fonction transcendante. Au centre de ce processus se trouve l'image alchimique du caducée et une interprétation pratique de l'axiome de Marie, que Jung a toutes deux utilisées pour illustrer le processus d'individuation.

*Mots clés:* typologie, individuation, Myers-Briggs, caducée, axiome de Marie

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Myers-Briggs Typologie wird von den Benutzern des MBTI und ähnlicher Tests weitgehend als Äquivalent von und repräsentativ für Jungs Theorie angesehen. Jedoch haben der Wegfall der transzendenten Funktion aus der Theorie und die Verwendung der typologischen Funktionen als Grundlage zu einer unbeabsichtigten Neudefinition des Individuationsprozesses geführt. Dies geschah trotz einiger Versuche, Individuation und Typologie zu integrieren und die transzendente Funktion in Myers-Briggs Theorie wieder einzuführen. Dieser Beitrag untersucht die unterschiedlichen Ansichten über die Individuation in Myers-Briggs und der Jungianischen Theorie und thematisiert einige der Herausforderungen, denen man bei dem Versuch begegnet, diese Unterschiede in Einklang zu bringen, vor allem im Kontext mit dem Begriff der Normalität. Acht



Prinzipien werden hypostasiert, entwickelt hauptsächlich aus Jungianischen und klassischen Post-Jungianischen Arbeiten, die zeigen, wie die Individuation als Prozeß in die zeitgenössische Myers-Briggs Typologie integriert werden kann. Diese Prinzipien begreifen Individuation als einen natürlichen Prozeß, der außerhalb des analytischen Prozesses gefördert werden kann. Sie greifen zurück auf eine Vielzahl von Gegensätzen sowie typologische Funktionen, wobei sie sich um die transzendente Funktion zentrieren. Im Mittelpunkt des Prozesses stehen das alchemistische Bild des Heroldstabes sowie eine praktische Interpretation des Axioms der Maria, - beides von Jung verwendet, um den Prozeß der Individuation zu illustrieren.

*Schlüsselwörter:* Typologie, Individuation, Meyers-Briggs, Heroldstab, Axiom der Maria

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La tipologia del Myers-Briggs viene comunemente considerata come un equivalente della teoria tipologica junghiana da coloro che usano il MBTI e simili questionari. Tuttavia, l'omissione della funzione trascendente dalla teoria, e l'uso delle funzioni tipologiche come suo fondamento, hanno prodotto un'involontaria ristrutturazione del processo di individuazione. Ciononostante, sono stati fatti alcuni tentativi per integrare la teoria del processo di individuazione e quella tipologica, e reintrodurre la funzione trascendente nella teoria che sottende il Myers-Briggs. Questo scritto esamina le varie visioni del processo di individuazione nel Myers-Briggs e nella teoria junghiana, nonché alcune sfide implicite nel tentativo di integrare le loro differenze, particolarmente nel contesto della normalità. Proporre, inoltre, otto principi, derivati principalmente da contributi junghiani e post junghiani, i quali mostrano come il processo di individuazione possa essere integrato con la tipologia del Myers-Briggs. Secondo questi principi, l'individuazione è un processo naturale che può essere incoraggiato anche al di fuori del processo analitico. Questi contributi fanno uso di una vasta gamma di opposti, nonché di funzioni tipologiche, rimanendo al contempo centrati sulla funzione trascendente. Centrale in questo processo è l'immagine alchemica del caduceo e l'interpretazione pratica dell'assioma di Maria, che Jung usò per illustrare il processo di individuazione.

*Parole chiave:* tipologia, individuazione, Myers-Briggs, caduceo, assioma di Maria

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Типология Майерс-Бриггс широко видится как эквивалент и представитель юнгианской теории пользователями MBTI и ему подобных опросников. Однако опущение трансцендентной функции из теории и использование психологических типов как ее основы привело в результате к небрежному переформулированию процесса индивидуации. И все это – несмотря на некоторые попытки интегрировать индивидуацию и типологию и вновь ввести в поле теории Майерс-Бриггс трансцендентную функцию. Эта статья исследует различные взгляды на индивидуацию в теориях Майерс-Бриггс и Юнга, и некоторые трудности примирения этих различий, в особенности – в контексте нормальности. Статья предлагает восемь принципов, вычлененных, в основном, из работ Юнга и классических пост-юнгианских работ, которые показывают, как индивидуация может быть интегрирована в современную типологию Майерс-Бриггс. Эти принципы показывают индивидуацию как

естественный процесс, который может поддерживаться и вне аналитического процесса. Они используют широкий спектр оппозиций, равно как и типологических функций, продолжая оставаться центрированными на трансцендентной функции. Центральным является алхимический образ кадуцей и практическая интерпретация аксиомы Марии – и то, и другое Юнг использовал для иллюстрирования процесса индивидуации.

*Ключевые слова:* типология, индивидуация, Майерс-Бриггс, кадуцей, аксиома Марии

La tipología de Myers-Briggs es ampliamente considerada como equivalente y representativa de la teoría Juguiana por los usuarios del MBTI y de cuestionarios similares. Sin embargo, la omisión de la función trascendente y la utilización de las funciones tipológicas como fundamento de la teoría, ha resultado en un nuevo e inadvertido marco de referencia con respecto al proceso de individuación. Esto es más allá de ciertos intentos de integrar la individuación con la tipología, y de reintroducir la función trascendente en la teoría de Myers-Briggs. El presente ensayo explora las diversas perspectivas sobre la individuación en la teoría de Myers-Briggs y en la teoría Junguiana, particularmente en el contexto de un desarrollo normal. Propone ocho principios, tomados principalmente de la teoría Junguiana y de trabajos clásicos post-junguianos, que muestran como la individuación como proceso puede ser integrado con la tipología contemporánea de Myers-Briggs. Estos principios muestran a la individuación como un proceso natural que puede ser estimulado por fuera del proceso analítico. Los mismos hacen uso de un amplio rango de polaridades, tanto como de funciones tipológicas, mientras que se centran a la vez en la función trascendente. Es central al proceso la imagen del caduceo y una interpretación práctica del axioma de María, ambos utilizados por Jung para ilustrar el proceso de individuación.

*Palabras clave:* tipología, individuación, Myers-Briggs, caduceo, axioma de María

使 Myers-Briggs 类型学与荣格的自性化用 MBTI 量表及类似测验的人们大多把 Myers-Briggs 的类型学与荣格的理论等同, 并把它作为荣格理论的代表。然而, 这一理论遗漏了荣格理论中的超越功能, 并且将类型化的功能作为其基础。这疏忽无形中导致了自性化过程的重组。尽管也存在一些尝试, 把类型学与自性化整合, 以及把超越功能重新引入 Myers-Briggs 的类型学。这篇文章比较了 Myers-Briggs 与荣格理论中自性化观念的差异, 以及讨论了在调解这些不一致时所面对的困难, 特别是在正常的背景之下。文章提出了八个原则, 这些原则主要来自于荣格学派以及后荣格学派的工作, 它展示了自性化作为一个过程如何可以与现代的 Myers-Briggs 的类型学相整合。这些原则显示了自性化作为一个自然的过程, 可以在心理分析过程之外的过程中被鼓舞。它们充分利用了广范存在的对立, 以及类型化的功能, 同时, 又集中在超越功能上。这一过程的核心是炼金术关于的墨丘利节杖的意象, 以及对玛丽亚法则的应用性解析, 荣格曾运作这二者来描述自性化的过程。

关键词: 类型学, 自性化, Myers-Briggs, 墨丘利节杖, 玛丽亚法则

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