

# The Academic, the Doctor, & the Voluntary Welfare Worker



Meredith Fuller

### 'How do solo-operating INTPs inhabit their workspaces?'

In Part 1 I observed self-employed **ENTJs** in their workspaces, and identified them as soaring eagles, swooping right on target from high altitudes. Self-employed **INTPs** remind me of Hoover-eyed owls, observers who take in everything but may not choose to empty out anything.

We tend to associate INTPs with thoughtful design—as clever, quirky observers, inventors and eccentrics; people who like using their vacuum-cleaner eyes and minds to understand and refine the world. We tend to assume that INTPs are more likely to work for organisations in R&D, theoretical or technical positions. Without an external structure provided for daily living and the implementation of their ideas, we suspect that they would battle with the practical, social and financial imperatives of self-employment.

While many INTPs prefer to avoid such routine imperatives, they have a greater dislike of other factors, such as ethical compromises, being expected to 'fit in', lack of independence, and intellectual boredom. A home-based INTP freelance technical writer told me that he once accepted a highly-paid position in a company. Prior to starting with his new employer, he spent over a month completing current assignments and dissolving his ongoing contracts with various companies. Yet he quit the job on the morning of his second day:

I couldn't stand the spartan rows of desks and the regimented hours. The ups and downs of working from home never affected me the way that place did in a few hours. No amount of money is worth that invasion, plus I had wrongly thought that I was lonely; after one day with an office full of colleagues, I couldn't wait to escape. Naturally, I had to resign immediately.

How do solo-operating INTPs inhabit their workspace? How do these conceptual thinkers go about executing the practical when there are no external cues and support services to organise production and closure?

A mental-health professional told me stories about a brilliant INTP hospital medical specialist who would throw tantrums in the corridor, terrifying the public, screaming for misplaced patient files and his glasses that were already in his hands. By the same token, she marvelled about that specialist's prodigious memory and groundbreaking innovations. Without minders, INTPs home-alone may have to wander around lost or hungry for longer chunks of time.

Armstrong & Malcolm concede that Visionary NTs, who must be aware of all relevant information and need all reference data to hand, exercise that need very differently depending on their extraversion or introversion.

In my observation, INTPs tend to surround themselves, creating nests and burrows where all the information is within sight and reach. They usually have overflowing bookcases and multi-storied in-trays. In contrast to the ENTJs who reside atop sparse mountains where the air is crisp, INTPs reside in their caverns amidst their useful copious material. All their artefacts trigger ideas, connections and musings: hence the piles of material that breed on their desks, floors and chairs. On the other hand, ENTJs prefer neater, minimalist desks, but always knowing who can brief them to bring them up to speed.

An ENTJ colleague airily waves documents and books away, telling everyone that she 'doesn't have time to read, and couldn't be

bothered wading through fine print.' She simply wants the bottom line summarised as she bustles past. On the other hand, an INTP colleague insists on consulting the cited references before accepting someone else's research findings, attributions or spelling as correct. Invariably, the INTPs I know carry worn, bulging briefcases while the ENTJs dash from meeting to meeting empty-handed.

If ENTJs scale mountains, INTPs create complex and elegant mazes. Zohar and Marshall see introverted thinkers as archetypal Guides, curious investigators who correspond to the third (*solar plexus*) chakra. While extraverted thinkers may fear their potential for abdication of responsibility, INTPs may fear their possible apathy. INTPs are easily associated with the god Mercury, the inventor and messenger. Interestingly, one of the INTPs in this study trades under the name Mithrandir which, the Tolkien reference aside, represents the endless battle between light and dark forces; he represents *truth*.

Zohar and Marshall pose the question, 'why do these Investigative types so deeply need to *know*?'

The three INTPs in this study—the **Academic**, the **Doctor**, and the **Welfare Worker**—work to their own unique timetables, and resist any procedures but the ones that reside in their computer-system brains. Possessing idiosyncratic storage pathways, they can put their hands into the seeming clutter and quickly extract whatever they want with ease.

We can all recall a lecturer who had fecund mounds of paper on their desk and space, but could pull out the pertinent sheet immediately—usually an obscure journal article they'd read once, five years earlier. Phil Kerr, this *Review's* INTP editor, shared with me this gem of an anecdote from his MBTI accreditation program:

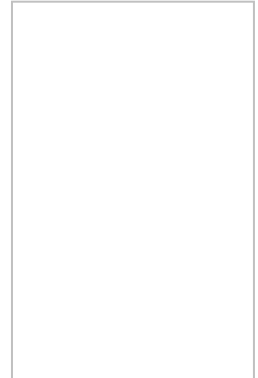
One of the other participants, Doug, a fellow INTP, mentioned in passing that he had an article on some topic of interest in a bundle of papers that he kept in the boot of his car. That struck me as a very INTP thing to do.

Cars, briefcases and bags represent extensions to their 'body of knowledge', as they prefer to have everything at hand, wherever they may be, just in case they may need it. INTPs tend to like miniatures they can secrete on their person, such as tiny Swiss Army knives, mini dictionaries, newspaper cuttings, screwdrivers, stethoscopes, etc. They are more likely than other types to make highlighter marks, pencil comments and store bookmarks of dubious origin in their books.

Photographs of these INTPs as children reveal their serious 'little adult' stances. They have been thinking hard ever since they were born.

## The Academic

**Selby Markham** was born in Junee, near Wagga, in 1943. He trained in psychology and philosophy, and worked for international and Australian tertiary institutions as a practitioner, academic and vocational systems designer. Holding a rare doctorate in vocational guidance, while working in Britain he was headhunted by RMIT University. After ten years he left to set up an international private practice, and spent several years developing career guidance systems in third world countries. In 1999 he added working as a part time Research Fellow at Monash University.



## The Doctor

**Robert Hoffman** was born in Sydney. He graduated from the University of Sydney in arts in 1974 and medicine in 1981. He has worked, in treasury, for overseas banks in Australia and in Chicago. Robert has owned and is involved in several software companies—and also works in part-time medical practice in Melbourne.

## The Welfare Worker

**Judith Fuller** was born in Victoria in 1931, and worked for a bank before raising her two children and doing voluntary welfare work. A Commissioner for Taking Affidavits, she volunteered at citizens advice bureaux, half-way houses, theatre groups (stage manager, prompt, ticket sales), and was social chairperson for Parents Without Partners, in addition to various positions on committees. Judith was the Year 2000 recipient of the Rotary Unsung Hero Award for community service.



When writing papers or submissions, pedantic INTPs tend to cite extensive references. ENTJs, in contrast, are more likely to skim-read without bothering to deface; to subscribe only to book or journal summaries; or carry dot point notes. Most impatient ENTJs do not bother to cite any references: they know what they are talking about, and are usually dismissive of those who wish to split hairs or argue a minor point.

While NTs generally 'will work with anyone they have to', the INTPs I've known have an uncanny knack of ensuring that they only work with the people and projects they prefer. This may be due to several factors, including a truculent passive-aggression that frustrates or scares off others, and a lack of follow-through on anything they don't want to do.

Similar to many other INTPs, these three did not have mentors. Usually the ones to stretch others, it can be difficult finding mentors to sufficiently stretch them. The Academic and the Doctor were self-sufficient and mentored themselves. The Welfare Worker identified a historical figure: while she didn't have any mentors, the Scarlet Pimpernel appealed 'because he went about achieving miracles quietly and without fuss. He helped people to escape.'

Essentially humble people, the three all volunteer that they have neither been ambitious nor sought recognition. Indeed, while they collect general information, they have not kept personal scrapbooks or evidence of their efforts, and found it difficult to recall their inventions, published papers and professional achievements. The Doctor hasn't kept any copies of his banking and IT inventions; the Academic hasn't kept any publications or inventions; and the Welfare Worker has not kept any records of her orchestration of governmental policy change and design of constitutions and blueprints for self-help groups and halfway houses. They personify the NT approach to life: achievement isn't celebrated, but immediately forgotten, while the bar must be raised for the next challenge.

They quickly shrug off their direct and indirect influence on the lives of hundreds or thousands of people. The Academic designed a career guidance system for an entire country, as well as being the first internationally to design and conduct a career counselling Internet business, over 10 years before anyone else tackled the idea. His ideas in vocational psychology revolutionised theory into practice for the Victorian psychologists he taught—but he didn't keep copies of his work. The Doctor designed major systems for international banks and hospitals. The Welfare Worker co-overhauled dysfunc-

ional government systems and provided refuge and support for hundreds of sole parents and their children.

One of the issues in being too far ahead with pioneering discoveries, ideas and inventions is that by the time the rest of the world catches up, they have completely solved the puzzle, lost interest, and moved on to something new. INTPs are more likely to find a more receptive world for their work in the latter part of their lives—the arc of accumulating numbers of people and theoretical and technical discoveries provide the potential for the rest of the world to cotton on to what it earlier dismissed or ridiculed.

For INTPs, their workspace is inside their heads. They describe themselves as career drifters or wanderers. External symbols of status or aesthetic considerations are not prized; they have worked from wherever they had to.

Wherever the Academic goes, he takes his laptop and well-worn briefcase stuffed with books, as do most of the INTPs I have met. The Doctor, too, has a battered briefcase brimming with all manner of things. The Welfare Worker, now bedridden, has several bags filled with books, newspaper clippings and other paraphernalia attached to her walking frame.

They work unusual hours, and may strike their best insights in the middle of the night while they are playing with their computers or thinking about the discrepancies or omissions in the ten texts by their beds that they read simultaneously.

They are deep thinkers who have a great facility with language and riddles or puzzles. Their greatest pleasure is in solving a puzzle that has eluded everyone else, or inventing new paradigms or models. They tend to sit thinking for a long time so they can work out the most elegant way forward. They require uninterrupted time for reflection and dreaming, yet they are happily distracted when someone interrupts with a philosophical question or an intricate problem.

One aspect that is less publicly apparent is their intense devotion to those they love; their families are uppermost in their feeling life.

There is a strong affinity with learning, meaning, knowledge, and language. They are known for their droll wit. On a lighter note, all love to read mystery and crime. The Academic's favourite authors are Kerry Greenwood and James Lee Burke. As testimony to his wide reading and analytical skills, he writes critical essays about 'white hats and black hats' that classify and categorise virtually all crime writers. The Doctor enjoys reading crime adventure; his favourite

authors include Shane Maloney, P D James, Tom Clancy, Robert Ludlum and John Le Carré. He has drafted some crime novels, and has outlines for future stories. The Welfare Worker prefers true crime, but also enjoys writers from Josephine Tey to Agatha Christie. As children, they all adored the *Biggles* books by W E Johns.

They each mention a brief fascination with the heavens: with the stars and with skyscrapers, planes and helicopters. However, they spend most of their time in tightly-filled places close to the ground—mazes or labyrinths, both interior and exterior. Their colours are not the whites of the ENTJs, but rich, mysterious purple, maroon, and earth shades of chocolate and tan.

Finally, another habit all share is to amble away from a social gathering, grab an armchair and inspect any books on the premises. While the ENTJs tend to tower in the midst of the crowd, the INTPs tend to sit by the door, to ensure a swift exit. Unlike the 'in your face' ENTJs, you need to hunt out the INTPs before they have left the building.

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## The Academic:

### **Dr Selby Markham, INTP**

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Selby, academic and psychologist, is the hirsute elder statesman of vocational behaviour and careers counselling in Australia. Since 1967 he has counselled, lectured and consulted in the area internationally.

A voice of commonsense dissent, he challenged existing theory and practice. Former graduate students remember him with either great awe, delight and respect, or horror and humiliation from his acerbic jousts. He prepared content- and process-rich lectures for the group or conducted action-learning simulations. He didn't see himself as a group facilitator.

After years as an academic, he resigned to run his own international consultancy business for over a decade. 'The only thing I didn't like about being self-employed was my lack of business acumen and meeting fewer interesting people with ideas. But I still brought in enough money to survive, so it didn't bother me.'

Recently, Selby returned to academia as a part-time research fellow, and continues his consulting practice part-time. During one of his overseas consulting projects, he single-handedly designed and built the career guidance system for an Asia-Pacific country.

As a child Selby wanted to be an aeronautical engineer, but at 16 he discovered the world of literature and philosophy. 'Anyway, I couldn't be a test pilot with glasses.' He used to read comics and *Biggles*:

I saved up for a joy flight when I was young, and went for a quick spin in shorts and bare feet. It felt great going *zip zip zip*, then landing on terra firma. I never did it again, and I don't know why.

Having known him for 25 years, it seems to me that Selby appears most at home in the basement dungeons he inhabits as an academic, and buried in the masses of paper, books, art, electronic equipment and calligraphy in his home office. His extraordinarily comprehensive knowledge is supported by a capacity to recall trivial bits of data.

His abrupt switch at 16 to art and humanities also spawned his lifelong beard—initially a pre-tentious beatnik goatee:

My revolutionary fashion statement! Besides, daily shaving is a fuckwit activity, especially in winter. It's damned inconvenient not to have a beard.

Selby describes himself as 'a very bright kid from a working class background':

But it didn't matter when I was growing up, because we just did things, the question of intelligence didn't come into it. My childhood was lived wandering barefoot round the streets with other kids. We roamed the neighbourhood in packs and were rarely found at home. I was self-sufficient and interested in everything. Being working-class poor didn't matter, you comfortably associated with a range of people.

My childhood was so filmic, a stream of consciousness, impressionistic vignettes of kids doing whatever came along at the time. I was an existentialist. I loved films, and spent every Saturday at the matinee. After I left school I was not in any photos taken, because I was always the photographer.

Photography has been an absorbing interest—Selby has a collection of antique cameras. (He went through his school photos, reciting every student's parent's occupation, and the likely job outcome for each student. Similarly, I wrote notes in grade 6 and year 7 about my vocational predictions for my class. I've yet to come across anyone else who did this—perhaps it is peculiar to budding careers counsellors?)

Selby was a polymath, interested in many different things. He doesn't know what sparked his diverse interests. Streamed in a hothouse of gifted rich kids, where everyone had an IQ of over 130, his teachers assumed he'd become a politician. His parents were happy for him to do whatever he wanted. Additionally, his sister was extremely supportive.

Capricious Selby stopped reading science and selected Joyce's *Ulysses*, Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*, Sartre, and a host of topics from witchcraft to reincarnation. Logical Selby left the air force cadets when he wasn't planning to join the air force any more—why bother?

'Intelligence is all about doing many things', say Selby. 'We should be able to do a variety of things. I dislike this fixation we have about channelling science or humanities.'

I'm pedantic and arrogant—have been that way all my life. But my contrast is that I'm extremely tolerant (you couldn't do careers counselling without that). There's a strong division between ideas and tasks, and my social and professional interactions. As a teacher, I'm probably responsive to student needs, as long as they're interested and willing to respond. It doesn't matter about anything else, but they must have a *reason* for being there. I won't be manipulated—teary histrionics and pleas for extensions don't cut it with me.

I've never been ambitious or into power. I have always simply fallen into doing what I've wanted and enjoyed. At times you grab life by the short and curlies and run with it, and the rest of the time life is serendipitous.

At university, when he wasn't producing the student newspaper, Selby studied psychology and philosophy. In the future he wants to devote more time to Chinese brush painting, and to photographing trains. His father and grandfather were locomotive drivers and firemen, and Selby has an enduring passion for trains.

I have worked in most types of environments, from very formal offices through to what was virtually a cupboard behind a stage at North East London Polytechnic. The workspace does not matter a great deal. If anything, it is a matter of having a social environment that is *bearable*.

But, as a social animal, I have a tendency to get involved in conversations and discussions that interfere with the work I am doing. The general reaction I have to tasks is that something only gets the negative tag 'work' when I cannot feel that I am a part of it. This means that many of the things I do have the same general status.

Counsellors, facilitators and consultants like to discuss things with others, and need to sit around talking. You need to have like-minded souls around you, and then you can stay in a role for a long time. The best ones are thinkers, anthropologists, philosophers and artists.

He is concerned that people tend not to have hobbies any more. Their job or their jogging becomes their hobby. This insularity can restrict their capacity to innovate when the problem doesn't fit the models they know.

People are struggling—you need a creative recreation *and* a paying job. You get bored if you don't *really* want to do the work you do. The self-employed that can select what they do and whom they work with, are the most fortunate.

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## The Doctor:

### Dr Robert Hoffman, INTP

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Robert describes himself as someone who has achieved peace by getting a resolution between an emotional 'socialist' view and a conservative 'intellectual' worldview. His conservative views won out. This has been assisted by an underlying Anglo-Catholic grounding:

I have always admired Winston Churchill, a man who was so distant from others in his thinking, held firm, and ultimately proved to be right.

'I was a horrible child', says Robert, 'but I have proved that I can operate in a wide range of paradigms and successfully.' He wanted to be an astronomer, but his mother wanted him to become a doctor, and ensured he did Latin and music. Robert enrolled in a science/arts degree with a maths major. He initially worked as an actuary, but that was so boring that he then did medicine, mainly because he noticed that females seemed to favour med students over the other students. A devout High-Church Anglican, he initially contemplated becoming a Presbyterian minister before his commitment to the former.

Robert works in the banking world, medicine, and computer software invention. He also writes—one of his greatest sources of satisfaction. He pens satirical observations of the white-

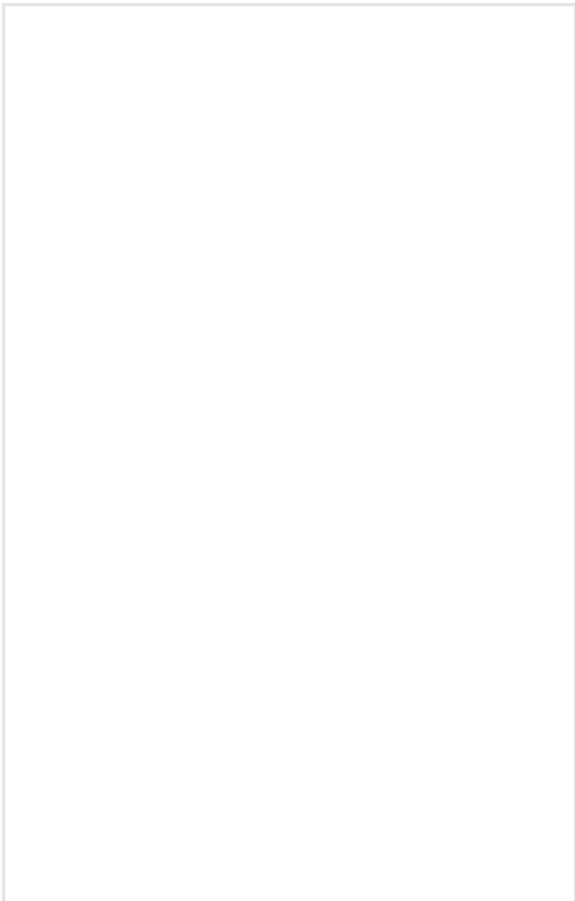
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collar rogues he has met in the business world, and has completed a draft of a fast-paced adventure thriller.

Language is so important—it's the source of my humour. I need time to respond—my greatest rejoinders are always late.

Robert spends much of his time in creative fugues, and loses himself at the computer writing software for hours. Someday he hopes to return to live in New York, combining some medicine, software development, and writing.

Robert reads 'lots of books' about theology, history and the American Civil War, and follows politics actively. Because he does so many different things, he can think in a unique way that leads to his inventions and discoveries, and can easily interact with all manner of people.



Robert takes his broad and lateral thinking for granted. His wife Marion, a medical researcher, describes him, accurately, as a Renaissance man.

I'm an observer. It's a conceit to imagine you have an impact on the world. Human life is so ephemeral. A typical doctor; I don't bother to take care of myself health-wise. My mind is on other things. Having witnessed a lot of it, I am comfortable about life and death.

I'm fascinated by vastness, and have an interest into ontological questions.

My family is my bedrock, and my legacy is my children. I was so excited when they were babies, looking forward to having interesting discussions with them.

Robert does not have a lifelong dream, apart from leaving ideas behind.

It doesn't worry me that I haven't 'got anywhere' in conventional terms. Following my curiosities, I have wandered and drifted with no plan, but I'm happy.

In addition to software development, Robert built up a securities lending business that was extremely profitable for the bank he worked for in New York. He enjoyed his time there—the big picture thinking and the big ideas. He thrived on running his own international thing.

Some of his significant achievements include the design of a foreign exchange system for banks and an accounting system for hospitals. Prosaic and not particularly passionate, he never keeps copies of past work: 'I suspect it may hold me back. I must move on to the next invention, the next possibility.'

I have rarely worked in organisations. Whenever I have, I quickly ended up being a director, or had equity. I don't work well as an employee.

He enjoys the total autonomy that medicine brings. In his medical rooms, he wears cufflinks saying '*buy*' and '*sell*'. Robert's fascination with people and his general curiosity are infectious.

Painstakingly thorough, his patients are never rushed. Strong and gentle, he enjoys talking about philosophy, current affairs and his patient's life, while skilfully diagnosing and devising a treatment plan. He remains oblivious to his exemplary service and the genuine care and respect that informs his work.

What do I like about medicine?

I like doing something useful for people I like. Loyalty is important. I have a continuity of patient contact, mutually self-selecting.

Deeply stationed in his internal world, he may walk into overhanging tree branches or forget what he was saying in conversation, but this is a riveting person to seek out—to explore health, literature, business, technology, current affairs, philosophy or spirituality.

## Robert's work process

Robert has strong ethics, and insists that everything must be done properly for his patients. He takes a scientific approach, undertaking exhaustive investigation. He uses the Internet to double check, thinks about the big picture while listening for the odd, obscure symptom, and follows a comprehensive paradigm.

Medicine is about problem solving. We are now in a more informed, consumerist age where patients choose to see a range of providers for their health care. Long gone are the antiquated ideas that only your GP holds the power and control over your health! Nowadays people may have a range of practitioners they see as part of their overall health plan. Clinics of the 21st century recognise this and offer inter-disciplinary team services. Patients want self empowerment, and a range of alternatives.

Robert refers patients on for things he does not do well. He is far more concerned with managing the relationship, and ensuring that patients obtain the best care. His work process with the patient is collaborative:

The use of a broad range of treatment options gives the patient some control and autonomy over their health. I encourage patients to utilise any ideas they may have that they expect will work and make them better.

## Robert's desk and work space

The space I work in resides inside my head, so workspace doesn't matter. I'll go off and work anywhere! I prefer to isolate myself from people in order to get the work done. My pattern is interrupted when people are there—and I can get sidetracked. I like to be by myself plotting and scheming business ideas, writing fiction, and losing myself in computer software.

Writing absorbs him. He attempts to write 5000 words per day. Robert is auditory—'hearing' his stories, then pushing his ideas out quickly. Later he shapes and refines his work.

Robert's ideal workspace would have a library of books, black leather, maroon walls, and a glass desk with pedestals shaped like the Empire State Building.

Robert's part-time work spaces in medical clinics vary significantly. Excited by solving problems, his fun comes from being—'doing better'—than anyone else, whether from a room the size of a broom cupboard or a massive office.

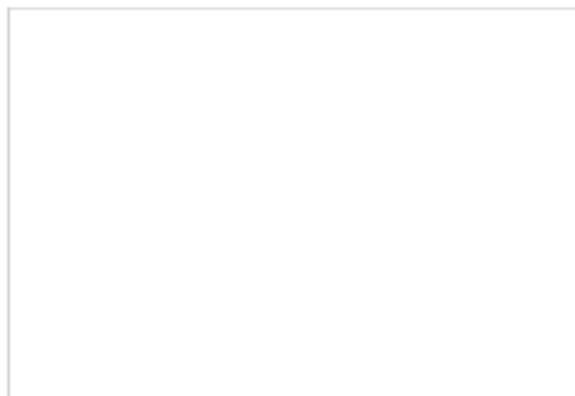
His home office has an outlook into a green area—trees and lawn that he finds calming. It is worth noting that friends and patients find his manner calming and his voice mellifluous.

His desk is usually very untidy, with the detritus of many projects, but theoretically—and every few months or so—very clear. Robert tends to work on projects in silos, then eventually cleans up before they tumble down:

The world keeps bringing stuff in, it piles up, and then I have to get rid of it.

While Robert has a lot of paperwork on his desk, he can always find whatever he wants immediately. In contrast to the current desk that his wife describes as 'putridly messy and dusty', when Robert worked as a banker, he had a clear glass desk with no drawers, that he kept pristine. 'Well, I had to. There wasn't anywhere to put anything.'

I like to sit and think. Not as disciplined or organised as I should be. I'm better with staff around to do that. I don't notice my environment—I don't see the mess. The house can suffer.



Robert refuels by doing 'very very little', and is motivated by internal fires.

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## The Voluntary Welfare Worker: Judith Fuller, INTP

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In addition to her voluntary work for women's refuges and Parents Without Partners, Judith has lobbied for social and legal changes for over five decades. A short, tubby person, she bustled and revamped social systems, as well as listening and counselling. The body that she ignored wore out, but the mind she exercised remains extraordinary. Now in her seventies, she is confined to bed, where she continues to solve puzzles (crosswords or unsolved conundrums), does some clerical work and test scoring, and reads reference books for fun.

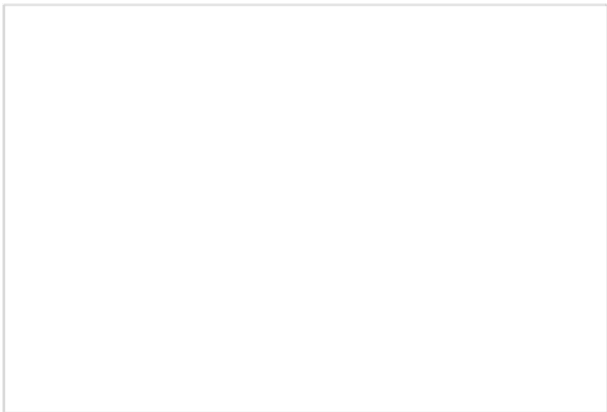
Judith is most intrigued by the question of *origin*: where we came from and how we got here.

Investigative by nature, I am both inventive and practical. I have always admired Nicola Tesla, and wanted to improve the world, too. I streamline systems, find new ways of doing things. I wanted to improve systems in my initial job in my teens, when I worked in a bank, and I continued wanting to figure out my own system for improving anything I did.

Astute from an early age, at 4 she was thinking in patterns and anticipating what might happen in the future as a result of actions in the present.

When I was little, I read a wonderful book about a gyrocopter, and I wanted to fly for a moment, thinking that being a pilot would be marvellous.

But I was more interested in solving mysteries. I fantasised about becoming a detective or a lawyer when I was in my teens, but I would have hated the restrictions that burden professionals. I didn't want to be trained or constrained. I have always wanted to do things properly but autonomously. If I couldn't do something well, I didn't want to do it.



Judith has 'always been passionate about the importance of educating our children':

Australian children are important resources that have been neglected. I wanted to ensure that my children obtained an education, despite our poverty. I feel passionate about the plight of our Aboriginal children's education.

If a child enquired about the meaning of a word, all activity would cease while Judith brought out her collection of dictionaries for a prolonged discussion. Far more interested in philosophical discussions than in housework, Judith prized ideas over cleanliness. While other women enjoyed department stores, shopping expeditions with Judith were to bookstores or hardware stores—they held such fascination, and occupied her for hours.

Judith's house was an annex for peripatetic solo parents, angst-ridden young men from the local theatre group, misunderstood judo students who didn't want to sleep in their own homes, and women seeking refuge from violent partners. Work was a 24-hour activity. Judith the Hoarder collected comatose bodies on the floor of every room in her house. On any night there could be up to 17 prone people safely wedged between artefacts, cobwebs and furniture. Items were never thrown out—they might come in handy ... especially people!

Long before 'Narrative Therapy' was coined, Judith held kitchen marathons, midnight coffee sessions where solace was provided in relay teams. No matter what the newcomer's problem, she could create sleeping self-support bodies from somewhere in the house. Roused, injected with coffee, empathic survivors shared horror stories that morphed into burlesque laughter by dawn.

We lobbied hard to change existing government terminology and requirements. For example, benefits were called 'Widow's Pension'. The use of accurate language is so important. There were countless women who had been living in their cars with three or four children because they did not realise that they were entitled to any benefits, since they weren't technically widowed.

Apparently society also used to assume that men didn't raise their children solo. Yet many women walked out of marriages leaving children behind, or suddenly died. Men were only entitled via a sickness benefits claim that had to be renewed fortnightly. Reluctantly, most of the poverty-stricken men tried to juggle fulltime work with fulltime care. This was a terrible situation for men left with babies and infants. This is why it was vital to change the name to 'Supporting Parents' Benefit' and enable men to exercise the right to raise their children fulltime.

We helped to educate the public about services and reduce the stigma of needing support. Many solo parents were so devastated by abandonment and reduced circumstances that they barely functioned, let alone had the tenacity to research hidden community resources and services. There were so many anomalies that we had to bring to the attention of various bureaucracies.

Prior to the 1970s there were no supporting parent benefits to provide women with some possibility of economic freedom to end violent or abusive marriages. I recall how difficult it was for my own mother to return to work to support us back in the days when women were paid less than men for identical work, and mothers were expected to remain at home. I am heartened that is changing.

Working at both the macro and micro level, Judith quietly improved systems and provided shelter and education for individuals.

She orchestrated a comprehensive program for up to a hundred people every evening, ranging from table tennis to discussion groups to dances at town halls. An observer, not a participant, Judith sat on the door to collect the entrance fees for all of the functions. Her contribution was behind the scenes; organising the myriad activities and venues, liquor licenses, food, band hire, legal representation, refuge, and banking. She anticipated every contingency, using her sleep time for 'air traffic control planning.'

As well as group functions held in local halls and hired venues, there were amusing incidents at her home. Matter-of-fact-Judith was undaunted by the personal risk of sheltering migrant women from vengeful men. One husband found Judith's phone number and left on the answering machine a series of chilling calls threatening her life. She calmly phoned the police to play them the tape, then wiped it and busied herself organising a PWP dance for 500 members at the local hall. 34 pairs of flailing arms and legs tossed clothes around to share so that everyone could go. Older teenagers babysat other people's younger children.

Judith located all the kind retailers in Melbourne who would donate shop soiled goods and food to help the homeless re establish themselves when they left her transition place. She devised a collection and distribution system that ensured the items went to the most needy.

Judith had convincingly demonstrated the need for refuges, half way houses and special assistance allowances in Melbourne's South Eastern suburbs—despite the public perception that 'such problems were non-existent'—so funding for refuges and legislative improvements soon followed.

My life has been about effecting change, helping the uninformed, and drawing attention to anomalies within the Government system, by working behind the scene at a grassroots level, assisting members in court, and lobbying policy makers. Who better to alert them than those with direct experience? But I have always operated from behind the scenes, doggedly pulling the necessary strings for however long it would take. Now from my bed I devise clerical and computer systems and do figure work for my daughter, who is not numerically minded.

(To which the author replies, 'Thanks, Mum!')

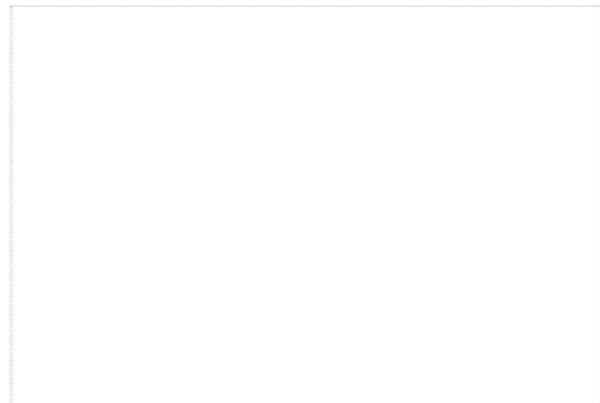
### Judith's desk and work space

'I had several desks', Judith says, 'one in almost every room of my house. I also did a lot of my administrative work on a tray in bed':

My desks have always been piled high with stuff. I accumulate a lot of things, you never know what you'll need. I have a huge collection of reference books. I started reading dictionaries and encyclopaedias when I was around eight years old and I continue to do so. I would buy a dictionary for my workplaces and leave them behind.

I have always done my best thinking in bed, surrounded by books and pillows. My brain's like a computer. I love coming up with innovative strategies to solve problems, finding the best ways to be most efficient and effective.

I have periods in my life when I like being with others, and then I prefer to be alone. I think a lot. I enjoy games, like draughts, checkers, Patience, and Monopoly. I complete a crossword puzzle every day. It keeps me sharp. My favourite colour is purple. Most of my room is mauve and purple. Scissors, paper clips, rubber bands, linen, walls, containers, and so on. Life is about persevering through obstacles, and the greatest asset is to remain curious and adaptable.



Judith's bed is surrounded by bookcases crammed with reference and art books, piles of paper, boxes brimming with screwdrivers, batteries and pens, and a plethora of cushions.

Like many self-educated INTPs, Judith's thirst for knowledge and social justice is insatiable. She has been instrumental in moving mountains—not that anyone would know! ❖

### References

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