

THE CONSCIOUS FEMININE AND THE FEELING FUNCTION

by Margi Ross

The 'Conscious Feminine' is the next stage in the development and expression of the Feminine Principle. It is about the birth of Feminine concepts and thought forms which can support Feminine Reality and Feminine law, which is the law of love and inter-relatedness: it is about the soul coming into everyday life.

There are tools which can help us bring the Feminine into life and one of these tools is Jung's concept of the Four Functions.

THE FOUR FUNCTIONS

Jung first wrote about the theory of the Four Functions in the 1920s. He realised that each person had a superior function, which can be either feeling (water), thinking (air), sensation (earth) or intuition (fire). Thinking in this map has nothing to do with the intellect, as any type can be intellectual: feeling has nothing to do with emotion: any type can be emotional.

Feeling types organise their world according to the value of relationship and thinking types through the linking of associated ideas in a logical sequence. Jung classed feeling and thinking as rational functions, as they are both concerned with ordering. Intuitives live their lives through their ability to 'know' what is happening and this intuitive knowing is accurate and can be relied on: The world of symbols and imagery is easily accessible to them, as is a sense of the potential in situations and in people. Sensation is about matter and the world of energy. The sensation type has the ability to order matter accurately, e.g. to be a mountaineer your perception and judgment of the reality of the rock face has to be accurate. I sense that you would have to have sensation as your superior function or your auxiliary function to be a really good mountaineer.

Jung realised that opposite to the superior function is the inferior, therefore, if someone had feeling as the superior function, the inferior function would be thinking. He or she would then have sensation or intuition backing up the superior function; this is called the auxiliary function.

The map looks like this:

FEELING

Superior Function

SENSATION

Auxiliary Function

INTUITION

Fairly chaotic but
not as chaotic as thinking

THINKING

Inferior Function

or:

FEELING

Superior Function

INTUITION

Auxiliary function

SENSATION

Fairly chaotic
but not as chaotic as thinking

THINKING

Inferior Function

Or both the 'auxiliary' functions might be equally developed, then the map would look like this:

FEELING

Superior Function

SENSATION

INTUITION

Quite well developed

Quite well developed

THINKING

Inferior Function

The superior function is where we are skilled and comfortable and subtle. The inferior function is where we can be very creative, or very clumsy and inaccurate.

If we understand the theory of the Four Functions, it can give us an important tool for Right Relationship. In Right Relationship we use our mind to help us see from the heart and understand the other person's reality and perspective.

It is my belief that countries, like people, have a superior function and I sense that, in Britain, it is thinking. Thus in schools and institutions thinking types are favoured and seen as intelligent, while the gifts of other types are not so well supported. If we live in a country where only certain people have a language and support, much suffering is caused. Earth and water are by tradition feminine elements and their reality is not understood and respected in psychological and spiritual circles. We associate the spiritual with air and fire and a transcendent reality, not also with an immanent presence, which exists in everything. In over 20 years of working with feeling types, (including myself), I have been able to see and understand what this does to people. If feeling is not understood it leads to illness, despair and apathy in the individual and in the country generally.

The damage that a purely thinking approach can bring to an area of life can be seen in the current approach to educational standards in Britain. Of course we need standards, but these should include the needs and reality of all the children and teachers, not just one group. In any school, the functions will probably be evenly distributed throughout the children. If the person organising the evaluation is a thinking type, then the criteria for excellence will be those of a thinking type. It will not meet the needs or give value to the abilities of other types. In school, feeling type children are seldom given the help and encouragement they need to develop their gifts. They usually leave school with their throat chakras blocked and low self-esteem. It affects the development of the mind and intellect, because in the feeling type this would largely be going into the differentiating of feeling values. Teachers do not stand against such distorted methods of evaluation partly because those who have the potential to do so, do not have a voice yet. The feeling type is so repressed in our culture that often he/she dare not speak. This can change: in many years of working with feeling types in therapy, I have seen it change, and the ability of the feeling type to bring relationship into every walk of life can be healed.

What makes the feeling type so valuable is that they will include relationship and put it first even when under extreme pressure. They can hold the value of water in a positive way and help it move in time and space. The feeling type can sort relationship effortlessly because that is what the feeling type does: it is their function. As people learn to support feeling and sensation, life becomes safer, and all life benefits.

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