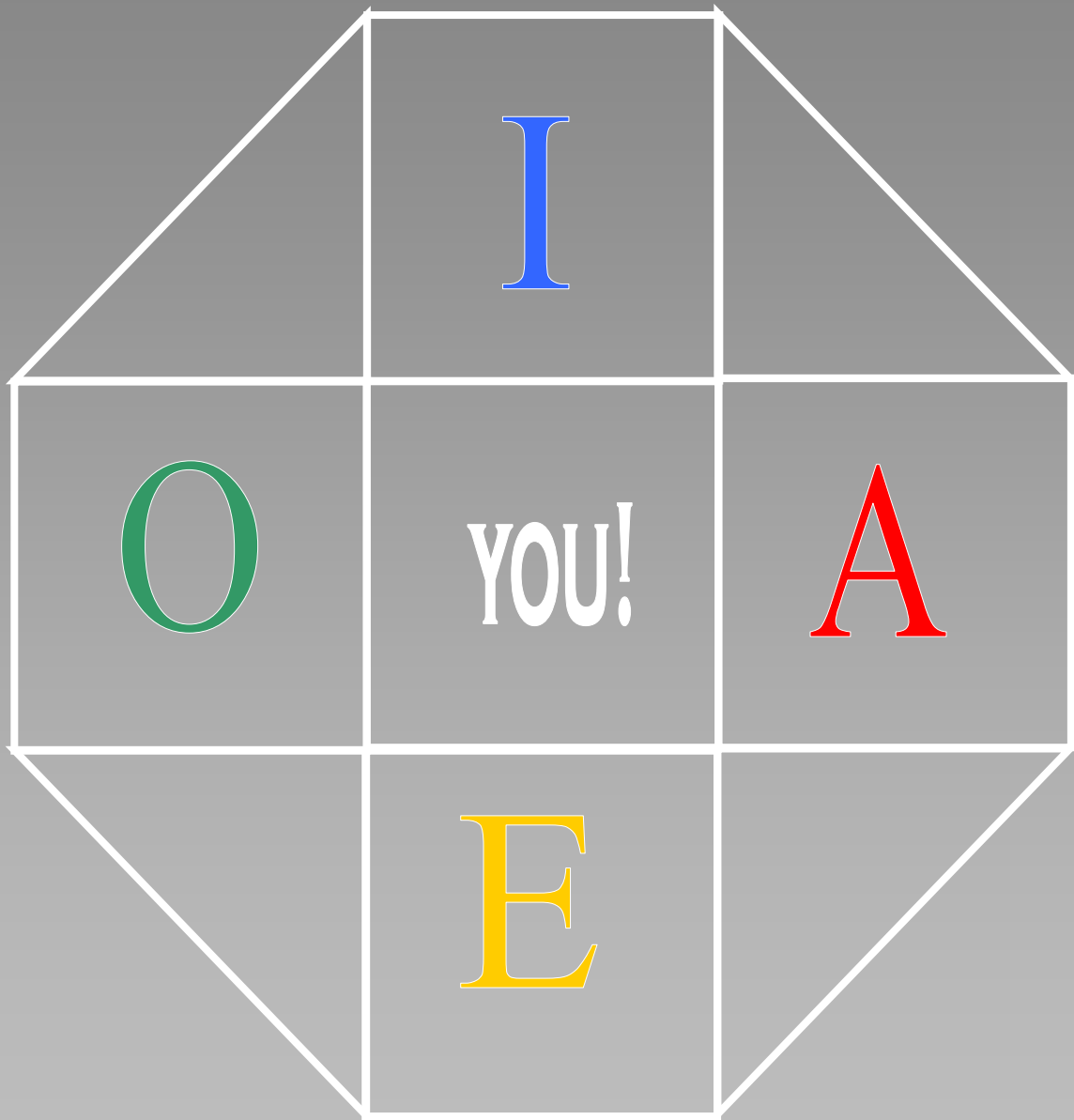


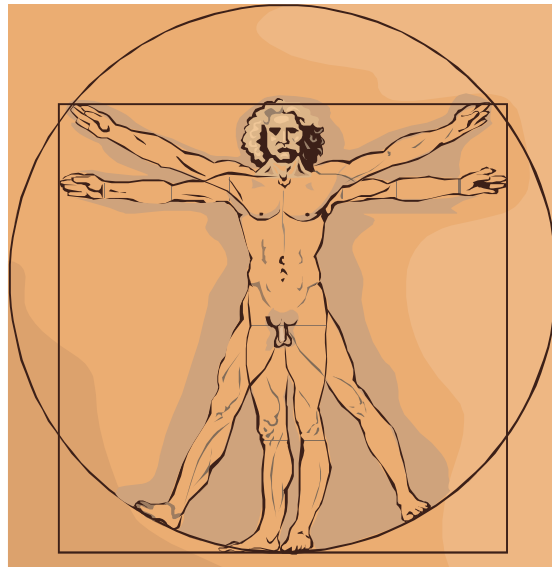
THE OCTAIKON MODEL OF



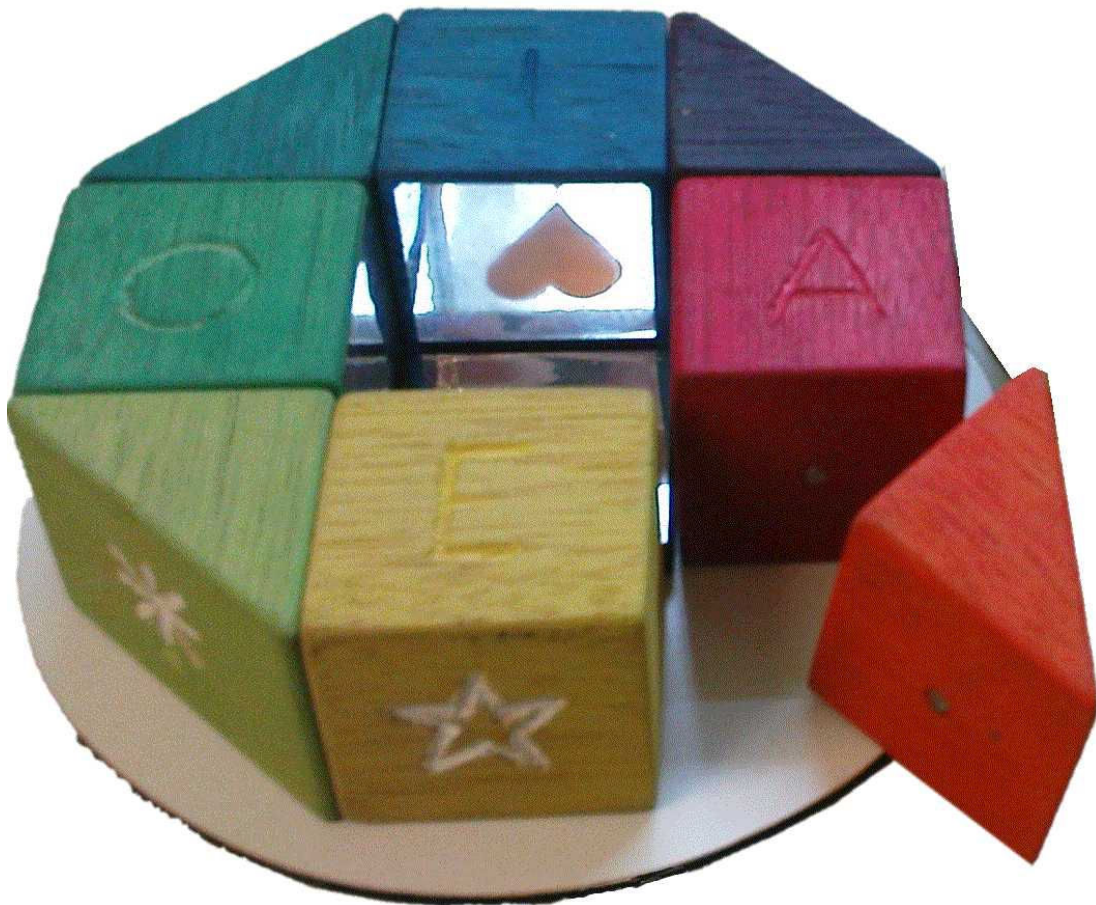
*AN INTRODUCTION TO A LIFE-LONG
TOOL FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING
ABOUT OURSELVES*

Marcus Robbins

Leonardo da Vinci's model of a person showing dimensions



An abstract model of a person showing faculties



The Octaikon model in the form of magnetised wooden blocks.
(see *Okki-blocs* on YouTube)

The Octaikon model of a person

- an introduction -

As we grow up and live our lives,
we are continually being taught and learning
about ourselves and other people,
at home, during our schooling, at work, and in society.

At home, we start learning to

- Be a person
- Be part of a family



In kindergarten we start learning to:

- Use all our faculties.
- Look after ourselves.
- Play games.
- Make friends.



At school we start learning to:

- Know how to study
- Understand academic subjects
- Pass examinations
- Understand ourselves and others
- Develop physical skills
- Prepare for leaving home and getting a job
- Identify a suitable job/career/vocation
- Live as a responsible citizen



In further education and training, we start learning to:

- Specialise in particular skills
- Find our place in society
- Make a living
- Work with other people



Within society (e.g. home, club, church) we start learning to:

- Make deeper relationships
- Set up a home
- Raise a family
- Progress at work
- Develop spiritually



The purpose of the model

During these stages of learning and teaching, we make use of many ideas and theories, old and new to help us understand how we function as people.

However, it can be hard to relate one idea to another, especially when we need to use several ideas at once. This is because we think of them as being different.

Such a situation does not help if we need to understand some new form of people's behaviour or belief which doesn't have a readymade idea to explain it.

I have therefore devised a model to help with these problems. It provides a framework to show similarities between ideas and a means for developing and using new ideas.

The earlier such a model (I call it an *Octaikon*) can be used, the better it will serve as a common point of reference whenever we need to understand more about ourselves.

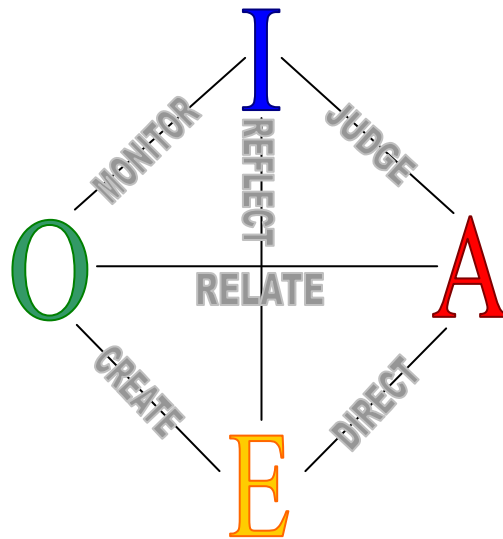
The ultimate goal of the model is to help synthesise our understanding of why we differ in our approaches to life, so as to bring about balance and harmony in our lives together.

How the model is formed

The *Octaikon* is based on **ten faculties** that all people have. Four of them are easily identified in many old and new ideas. The other six faculties that link them are also well known.

The relative positions of these ten faculties on the *Octaikon* help to show their sequence of use, and how they complement each other. Adjacent ones are similar and merge; opposite ones tend to contrast.

The **four “main” faculties** concern the way we *observe, interpret, express* and *apply* things. They are found in many existing ideas and are linked as shown (using their initial letters).



- **Observation** is about how we use our five or more senses to take in data from the world around us, and can include consuming water, air, food, and other “goods” needed in life.
- **Interpretation** is about how we use our brain or mind to process all this stuff, and turn it into useful information to solve problems, generate ideas, and plan our lives.
- **Expression** is about how we pass on what we know or feel to other people and ourselves as knowledge or emotions using language (sign, spoken, written, body or art).
- **Application** is about how we carry out physical actions, turning thoughts or words into practical deeds using our whole body – head, arms, hands, legs and feet.



Four linking faculties are more specific:

They are to *monitor*, *judge*, *direct* and *create*.

They link the main faculties around the outside of the model.

- **Monitoring** links *observation* and *interpretation* and is about how we discern and name stuff that we take in, identifying what is missing, and rejecting what is not needed.
- **Judging** links *interpretation* and *application* and is about how we make and are controlled by rules or laws, using these to evaluate, make decisions, or act instinctively.
- **Directing** links *expression* and *application* and is about how we use knowledge already been expressed to guide, advise, suggest, or promote future courses of action
- **Creating** links *observation* and *expression* and is about how we generate new ideas, make new art forms, create new life, and generally use our intuitive capacity.



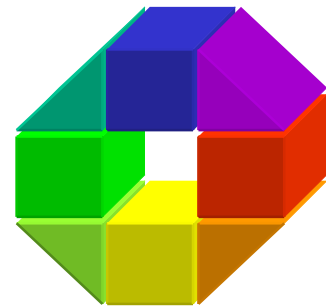
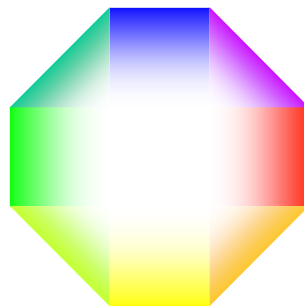
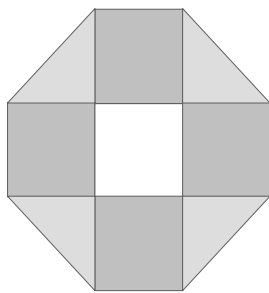
The remaining **two linking faculties** are distinct. One concerns our inner ability to *reflect* on things and the other is concerned with our external need to *relate*.

- **Reflecting** links *interpretation* and *expression* and is about how we have inner dialogue, pray or meditate, trying to discover the ultimate purpose and truth of things.
- **Relating** links *application* and *observation* and is about how we establish and build relationships, obtaining feedback and connecting with other people.



How the model can be represented

The Octaikon model can be represented by various diagrams, and the faculties can be associated with numbers, symbols, colour, and characters, depending on what may help the user.



Different media can be used to for showing the model. It can be printed on paper, shown on-screen, animated if appropriate, or it can be represented in three-dimensional form.

The best method of representation and media to use depends on what idea is being studied, and the aim of learning. All forms can be used at different ages and stages.

When and how the model can be used

The model can be introduced as early as **kindergarten** stage, when wooden blocks (*Okki-blocs*) can help to learn about colours, shapes and develop manual dexterity (see page 2).

These blocks can be useful whatever stage of learning as a physical, tactile way of remembering the faculties especially when discussing ideas in groups.

During primary and secondary education, the model can be used to remind pupils how to look after and develop their faculties. I have experimented with several ideas for resources doing this:

- ***The Octaikon model*** is a series of *ppt/pdf* slides that provide a simple explanation of the faculties, illustrated with colours and symbols.
- ***Test yourself*** is a *Flash* puzzle that helps memorise the Octaikon by allowing children to build it up for themselves, dragging and dropping.
- ***Okki the Acrobat*** is a *Flash* animation that features a fun character, who introduces the faculties, asks questions, and also entertains.
- ***All about relationships*** is a *Flash* interactive animation that allows children/adults to explore the faculties, learning how to use them.
- ***Okkivista*** is a series of *ppt/pdf* slides that shows how the faculties might be used in everyday situations; One prepared about *In the Park*.
- ***Dr Okki's checkup*** is a series of *ppt/pdf* slides that provide keywords and questions to focus on looking after the faculties.
- ***iKON*** is a *pdf* file that, printed as a booklet, mimics an iPod with the faculties expressed as helpful personal "apps".
- ***Toby's Tent*** is a short story for children in which the faculties are cast as characters who explain themselves to a boy in a dream.
- ***Okki@play*** is a series of *ppt/pdf* slides that use the Octaikon diagram and faculties as the basis for different types of learning games.
- ***Artoc*** is series of *ppt/pdf* slides that focus on the creative faculty, and show how the diagram can be used to generate artistic ideas

During secondary school and beyond, the *Octaikon* can be used to introduce and summarise existing ideas about ourselves, correlating them with the faculties so as to explore similarities.

In fact, the *Octaikon* can be used to explore any situation where a person, community or nation shows a particular behaviour, belief, or culture that may correlate with the faculties.

The method is to map the main elements of the idea onto the diagram, showing the best "fit" with the faculties. A coloured *Octaikon* is preferable to minimise confusing lines.

The resulting ***Okki-map*** can be supplemented by a summary text bringing out key points of the idea and posing some questions, and both map and text are then presented on a *ppt/pdf* slide.

Examples are given on pages 11-13

A note about the text layout used in the resources

It should be noted that in almost all Octaikon resources, I have used an experimental *phrase-profile* text format of my own to facilitate reading, comprehension and remembering.

In this format, text is normally centred on the page (except bullet points) and text is word-wrapped only when there is a break in meaning. This helps to improve speed of reading and comprehension.

In this brochure, lines have mostly been grouped in threes to further facilitate reading (it also helped me in drafting the text) As with the Octaikon and any new idea, be patient if it seems unusual!

I have produced over 100 *Okki-map* resources in this way which serve as summaries and reminders of existing or new ideas. Some of the topics are listed below, with example maps at the end:

BEHAVIOUR

How we behave according to temperament and personality types can be closely related to the way we prefer to use our faculties which correlate with traits, temperaments, and psychological types.

INTELLIGENCE

How we think about things, analyse, innovate, and remember can be correlated with the faculties, as in ideas concerning brain structure, learning styles, and problem solving.

MANAGEMENT

How we manage ourselves and others, form and work in teams can be very closely correlated with the eight outer faculties as in ideas of leadership types and team formation and roles.

HEALTH

Our health, well-being and ability to function as responsible people depends on what and how much we eat, drink, take as drugs etc. The effects can be usefully grouped and mapped onto the faculties.

SOCIOLOGY

The way we use our faculties to relate to people and society can be critical as we go to University, become married, raise children. The faculties can help to identify the life skills needed.

PHILOSOPHY

The Octaikon can form a useful framework in which to explore new and old ideas of body and soul, East and West concepts, and the new idea of integral philosophy.

THEOLOGY.

The Octaikon model and faculties can help to explore what it means to be made in the image of God, and understand spiritual ideas and doctrines of the divine.

EVOLUTION

The faculties can form an interesting framework for exploring how humans have evolved, what it means to be a human, and new ideas that explain form and structure of the universe.

RELIGION

It is reasonable to suppose that the varied forms of belief expressed in different denominations, ways of worship or doctrines can be correlated with the faculties believers prefer to employ.

LANGUAGE

The ability to use language is closely linked with certain physical developments in us, and there seems to be a key correlation between the faculties and parts of speech.

Since all Okki-maps start life in MS Powerpoint, they can be easily transformed into **animated slides** for presentations. I have also created abbreviated versions as **animated GIFs**.

These can be used in mobile phones or as attachments to e-mails as an additional way of making people aware of key ideas, and learning and remembering them when connected online

On the next pages you will see some example slides of Octaikon resources for teaching and learning mentioned here.

All resources described can be viewed online at the project website:

www.octaikon.co.uk

I'd be very happy to get feedback on how to develop these resources

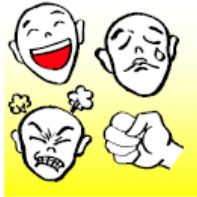

If you would like to contact me, please write to :

marcus.robbins@virgin.net




A page from The Octaikon Model explanation for children

THE OCTAIKON MODEL: FACULTIES 7 and 8 EXPLAINED

7
 The bottom, yellow square represents the ways in which we communicate our thoughts, and ideas to ourselves or to other people. It can be called our faculty of Expression (E) symbolised by a star (or a sunflower)

8
 The bottom-right, orange triangle represents the ways in which we guide ourselves and others into doing what we want or need to do. It can be called our faculty of Direction (D) symbolised by a pointing hand.


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An example page from Dr. Okki's check-up

DR. OKKI'S CHECK-UP 9: APPLYING

The ways in which we practically do things, using our whole body, acting on our thoughts or what we say.

Am I proficient enough in my skills?
 Am I learning new practical skills?
 Do I practice enough?
 Do I use my hands enough?
 Do I do enough physical games?
 Am I "doing-it-myself" when possible?
 Do I take time to do things properly?
 Do I do things as best as I can?
 Do I avoid any form of violence?
 Am I taking time to repair things?
 Do I do enough outdoors activities?
 Do I live enough in the real world?
 Do I go for regular medical check-ups?
 Do I take enough exercise?
 Do I take the right type of exercise?
 Am I eating a healthy diet?
 Am I looking after my back?
 Am I avoiding drugs?
 Do I use medicines only as needed?
 Am I avoiding smoking?
 Am I moderate in drinking alcohol?
 Do I use safety equipment where required?



Act
 Administer
 Apply
 Construct
 Do
 Do-it-yourself
 Drive
 Explore
 Fabricate
 Fight
 Flee
 Handle
 Maintain
 Make happen
 Operate
 Pilot
 Obey
 Practice
 Put to use
 Repair
 Use
 Utilize
 Walk
 Work

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An example game from Okki@play

OKKI@PLAY: FACULTATE!

A game for the whole family.

This game will be good for a range of ages in the holidays.
The idea is to use your four main faculties, with everyone having a go.
Modify the rules if you can think of better ones.
Sit around a set of Okki-blocs or an Octaikon.
Each player needs paper and pencil
Number the players 1,2,3,4,5 etc.

I-SPY (observation)
Player 1 spies an object, others guess. Winner gets a point.

BRAINSTORM (interpretation)
All players write down words associated with the object guessed (beginning with same letter - in 3 minutes). Compare.
Players may need to justify their association!
Player with most unique words gets a point.

MIME (application)
Player 2 secretly chooses a word from any of the listed words, and acts it out. Person to guess gets a point.

HALF a MO' (expression)
Player 3 talks for as long as possible about the guessed word without repetition, deviation or hesitation (you know the game!)
Point to player who is the correct third challenger.

Start new round with player 2,3 and 4 until all have had a go.

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The next slides are examples taken from Okki-maps

1 OKKI-MAP: WAYS WE BEHAVE - TEMPERAMENTS +

This map summarises the idea of Hippocrates and others.

In Dr. Okki's Check-Up, you will see that we tend to answer YES to more of the questions in some faculty groups than in others.
This is because we are all different in the way we behave and what we believe.

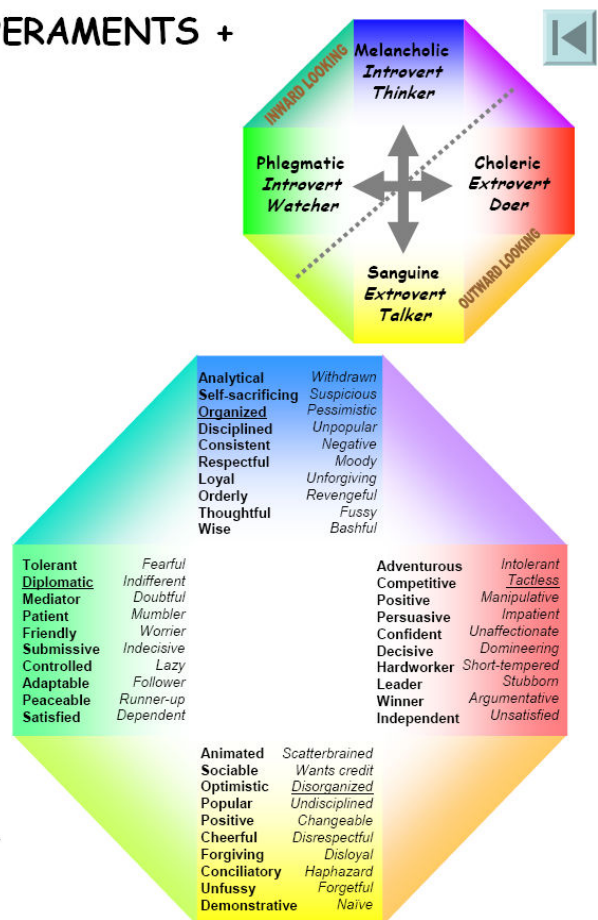
One of the oldest ways of classifying our behaviour, was worked out by a Greek - Hippocrates. He thought we tended to have one of four temperaments. These correspond to the four main faculties of the Octaikon.

- The inward-looking person who prefers to watch (*phlegmatic temperament*)
- The inward-looking person who prefers to think (*melancholic temperament*)
- The outward-looking person who prefers to talk (*sanguine temperament*)
- The outward-looking person who prefers to do (*choleric temperament*)

These temperaments can be associated with strengths and weaknesses (traits), as shown opposite. **strengths are in bold; weaknesses in italics.**

Note that each strength has a corresponding weakness in the opposite temperament (examples underlined).

In practice, each of us is a complex combination of these traits.
Can you find ones that typically describe yourself?
What are your weaknesses? What are your strengths?



10 OKKI-MAP: HOW WE USE OUR BRAIN +



This map summarises the work of Drs. Herrman and Lumsdaine.

The way our brain works seems to correspond to the way we use our four main faculties (observing/interpreting/expressing/applying).

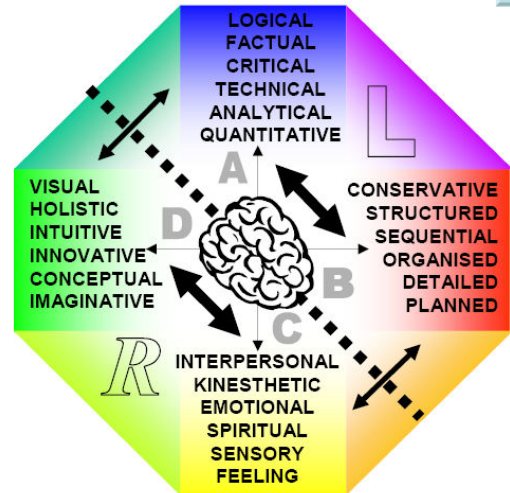
We have left (L) and right (R) hemispheres. They are shown either side of the dotted line on the Octaikon. Some researchers think that each hemisphere is made up of two parts (or "quadrants") The quadrants can be given a letter A B C D to identify them. We use each quadrant to think in the ways listed.

The arrows show how easy it is for us to change from one way of thinking to another. The thicker the arrow, the easier it is.

For instance, it is easy to change within one hemisphere (A to B) but difficult to change between opposite "quadrants" (A to C) (e.g. if you feel emotional, it can be difficult to think logically). In general, men are better at using the left brain, and women are better at using the right brain.

However, we should all try to use our whole brain when thinking. So if you think you are better at using one part than another try doing things that will help develop the other parts. (e.g. if you not very artistic, try doing something creative anyway!)

[See annexes for more information on thinking preferences](#)



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17 OKKI-MAP: WORKING IN TEAMS ++



These maps summarise research of Margerison & McCann and Belbin & Pretty.

Since we all have different skills and personalities, it can be very helpful to work together in teams. Here is one way of classifying team roles, using two axes that have been proposed by Margerison and McCann. One axis covers our behaviour: **Exploring - Controlling**. The other covers role preferences: **Advising - Organising**.

UPHOLDER-MAINTAINERS

like to ensure that standards and processes are upheld

CONTROLLER-INSPECTORS

like to check and audit the working of systems

CONCLUDER-PRODUCERS

like to operate established systems and practices on regular basis

THRUSTER-ORGANISERS

like to establish and implement ways of making things work

ASSESSOR-DEVELOPERS

like to assess and test the applicability of new approaches

EXPLORER-PROMOTERS

like to search for and persuade others of new opportunities

CREATOR-INNOVATORS

like to create and experiment with new ideas

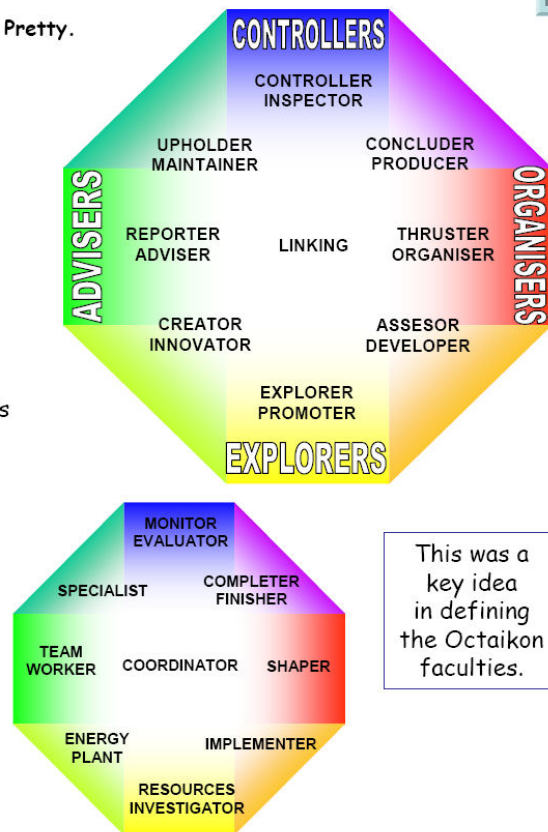
REPORTER-ADVISERS

like to obtain and disseminate information

The bottom diagram gives other names for these roles based on work of Belbin and Pretty.

Which role might you prefer?

[See the annexes for more descriptions of these types.](#)



This was a key idea in defining the Octaikon faculties.

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31 OKKI-MAP: DRINKING TOO MUCH +

This map is partly based on a Factsheet: Drinking sensibly. http://hcd2.bupa.co.uk/fact_sheets/Mosby_factsheets/alcohol_abuse.html

Alcoholic drinks are a natural part of our diet. Where there is no possibility of cold storage, alcohol preserves liquids made from grain and fruit etc. Hence the occurrence in many societies of wine and alcoholic beverages.

In moderation, alcohol can promote health, foster well being, and promote social cohesion. In excess, it can produce all sorts of problems. The map shows effects: **MODERATE**, **EXCESS**, **ADDICT**

What is moderation?

For men, it is equivalent to no more than 3-4 units a day
For women, it is no more than 2-3 units a day.

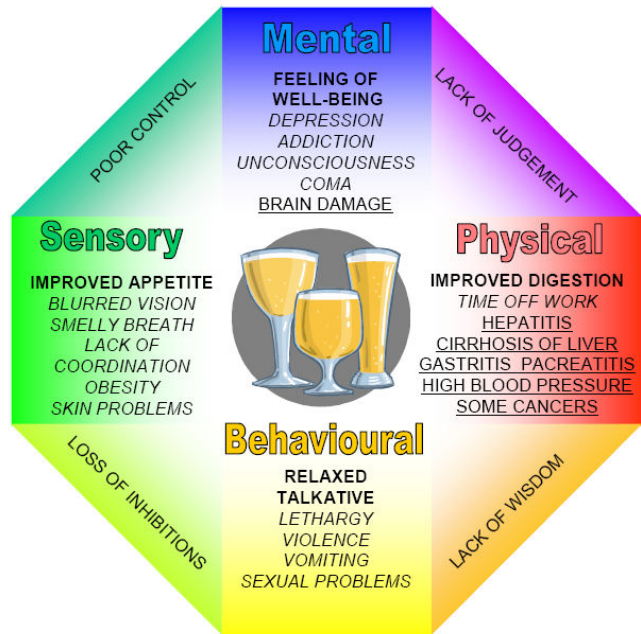
What is a unit?

Here are some examples from the BUPA factsheet:
One pint of strong lager (alcohol 5% vol) = 3 units
One pint of standard strength lager (alcohol 3 - 3.5% vol) = 2 units
One 275ml bottle of an alcopop (alcohol 5.5% vol) = 1.5 units
One standard (175ml) glass of wine (alcohol 12% vol) = 2 units
One measure (25ml) of a spirit strength drink = 1 unit

Excessive drinking is a modern problem.

It leads to poor work attendance,
misused hospital services,
breakdown of families,
ruined lives and death!

DRINK SENSIBLY!



Do you know when to stop?
If you don't stop, why don't you?
Is it too much peer pressure?
Why don't you set the example?

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99 OKKI-MAP: LIFE AFTER SCHOOL +

Based on my own experience, and that of family and friends

If you are a young person leaving school you have to develop lots of skills for life at work, college or university.

This map summarises some of these skills using the 10 Octaikon faculties to group them, with the help of memorable keywords.

You will need to know how to:

GET and manage input; money, food, drink, entertainment.
FOCUS on the important stuff you really need to know.
PROCESS all that information into useful knowledge.
REFLECT on its real meaning - physical and spiritual.
DECIDE on what is true/false, right/wrong, or simply best.
TELL other people (especially examiners) what you know.
GUIDE yourself and others, and seek guidance when needed.
ACT in deed, making a difference to your life and others.
CREATE works of art, beauty, wisdom, love.
RELATE to all around you, making lasting friendships.

Some of these skills need special attention e.g.

*Budgeting your money, whether earned or loaned.
Balancing your time wisely, using enough for study.
Taking control of your social life, e.g. drinking and sex.
Understanding how to tackle the inevitable exams.
Looking for suitable jobs that use your talents.
Knowing where to go when it all seems to get too much!*



Which of these skills do you need to improve?
Where can you find more information?
Who can help/mentor/advise you?
Why are you at college or university?
What does it mean to be wise?
What is the purpose of your life?
Discover life: visit www.octaikon.co.uk

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36 OKKI-MAP: PINCHES AND CRUNCHES IN MARRIAGE ++

This map summarises information from various marriage preparation resources.

When couples first meet they will want to show off their good points or **strengths** and only later may their bad points or **weaknesses** surface. These can form "**pinches**" in the couple's future relationship if they are not recognised and dealt with early on.

Pinches can be dealt with constructively in two ways: either they can be **accepted** and "**forgiven**" or they can be **discussed** and a **compromise** reached.

If you try to ignore pinches, they may suddenly become a **crunch** - a **major row**. Even worse, they may provoke retaliation which escalates the row and leads to **serious conflict**. If help (i.e. counselling) is not found quickly a marriage may then end up in **separation** or **divorce**.

Pinches can in fact build up a relationship helping partners to be more tolerant, if we allow them to make us realise that we are different and all have weaknesses as well as strengths.

Pinches (and crunches) can be handled effectively if there is:

*good communication,
mutual understanding,
willingness to forgive, and a
continued commitment to each other.*



Here are some possible pinches mapped onto the Octaikon faculties. Which are already potentially serious? Could the minor ones eventually lead to a crunch?

Remember...
When you point a finger at someone there are three pointing back at you!

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96 OKKI-MAP: COMPLETE CHRISTIAN LIVING ++

This map is my interpretation of Christianity as having four strands and draws on concepts such as integral, emerging, or holistic Christianity/church. See also #93

The Christian church, in its fullest form can be thought of as having four branches, all equally important in connecting us with God and the created world - whether as individuals - body and soul, as different groups, or as humanity in general.

These branches can be called: Contemplative, Cognitive, Expressive, and Active. They can all lead us to the divine centre of our faith.

Unfortunately, the divisions within the church have led to an imbalance and conflict as some branches have been either rejected, ignored, misunderstood, or given too much emphasis.

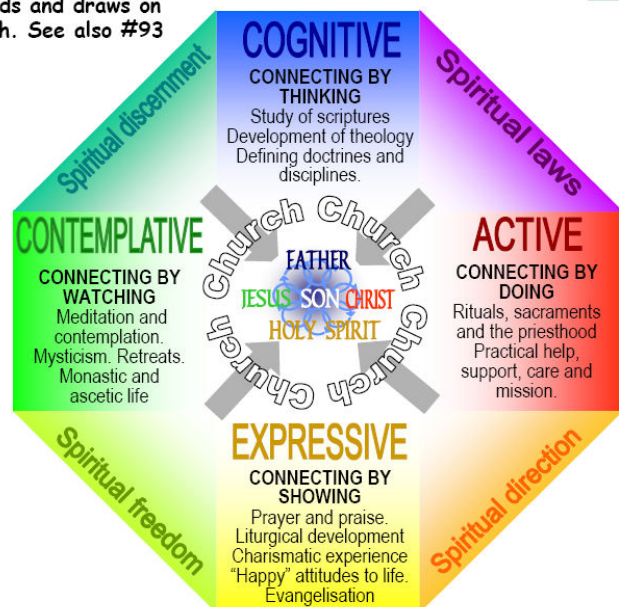
Part of the problem lies with the Western viewpoint that has largely determined how Christianity has developed.

There has been a tendency to reject all of what Eastern religions have to offer instead of accepting what is true and beneficial.

If you look at what these branches represent, you can see in them elements of other religions (see #93)

For the church to grow as a "tree of life" it is important to cultivate all branches so that they can develop and bear fruit.

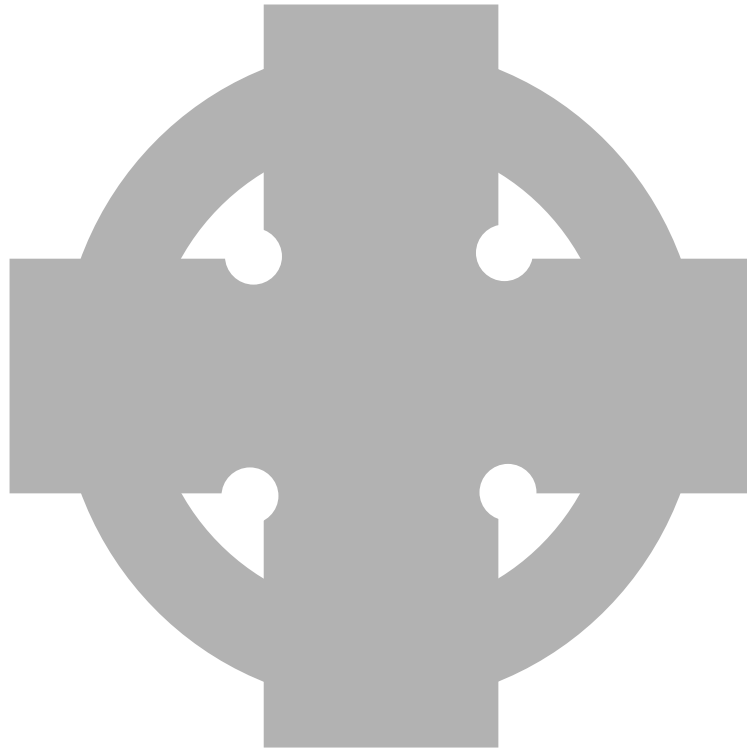
At the same time, we need to prune them when they get out of balance and unfruitful.



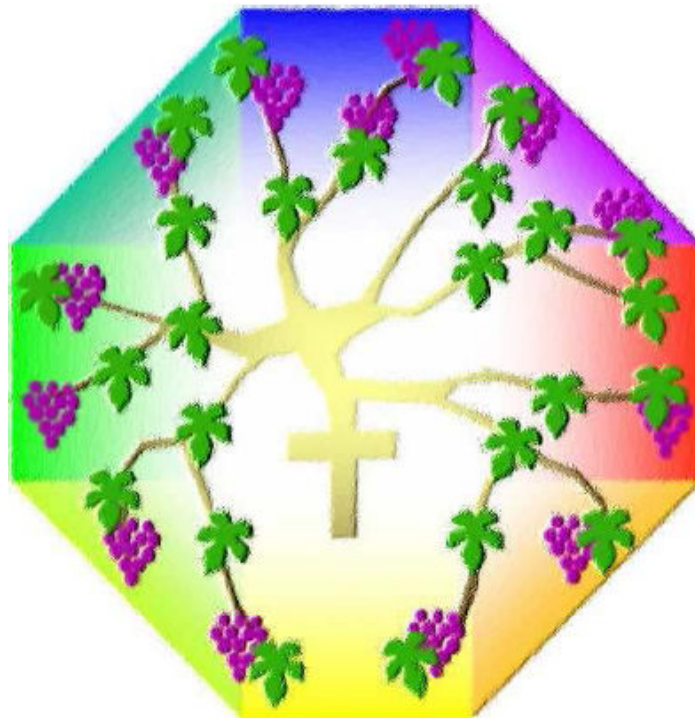
Which branches do you prefer?
Are you prepared to be open to see and accept the truth in other religions? Does this mean thinking that truth is relative? Where does your church need pruning? Which branches are more "eastern"?

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The Celtic Cross shape serves as an excellent reminder of the ten faculties.



And below is an example of artwork using the Octaikon (Artoc) inspired by Jesus' saying: "I am the vine, you are the branches"



The Octaikon model showing colours, numbers, symbols and characters that can be associated with the faculties to make them more memorable.

