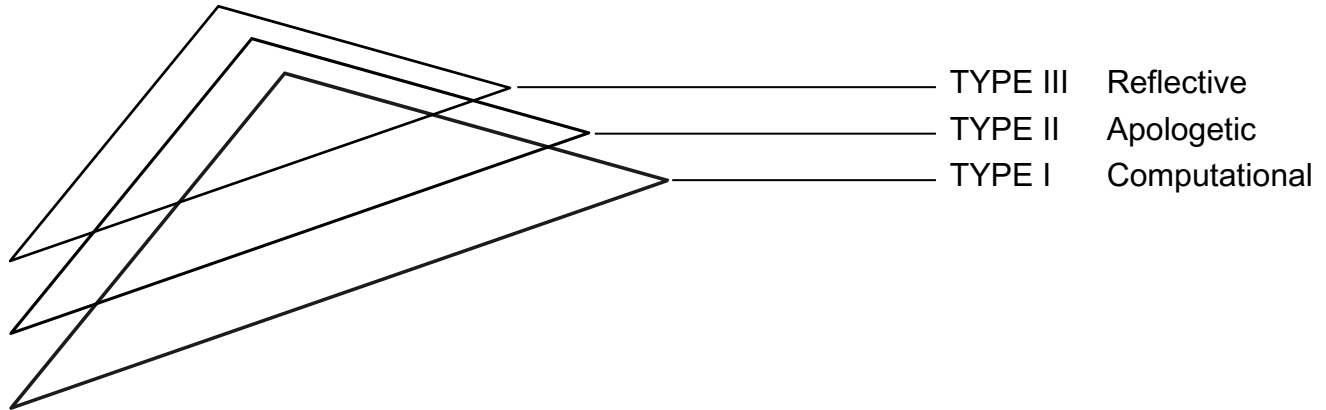


The
WARD
Analyst

THE THREE DEGREES OF THINKING (BASIC OVERVIEW)

I hope you saw what I did there...like the three degrees of glory...



Overview

Computational

Example: $2 + 4 = 6$; If the branch falls down, and a man is under the branch, and the branch is still falling, it will hit the man. This category is solely affected by the reasoner's ability to process variables, and the quantity of variables the person can recall to aid in the process. (This is known as analytic reasoning.)

Apologetic

Example: Arguments raised in support of a moral judgement. Reasoning patterns created using moral premises to create a coherent system of ethics with a goal to either justify to ones self, or to someone else the legitimacy of their position, or the illegitimacy of the other's ethical or its underlying moral position. The goal of this style is to win against someone else - a form of logical martial arts.

Reflective

Example: The thinker dissects their own beliefs, tracing their origins and attempting to challenge their intuitions

TYPE II Apologetic Thinking

“Though argument does not create conviction, the lack of it destroys belief. What seems to be proved may not be embraced; but what no one shows the ability to defend is quickly abandoned. Rational argument does not create belief, but it maintains a climate in which belief may flourish.”

– Austin Farrer, Oxford theologian and New Testament scholar

All of these types of reasoning fall within Daniel Kahneman's System 2 category - slow and deliberate strategic thinking. Type II (Apologetic) thinking however, utilizes assumptions without discriminating whether or not those assumptions are empirically verified, or taken on faith (self-evident). Type II thinking is solely a function of power - to gain advantage over and defeat another idea. It is not concerned about discovery as it is about victory. Thus, a person acting in Type II will filter out all available data which might contradict their view, and when viewing the conflicting data, assume it is either faulty or it will be resolved in the future and their opinion will win out (in theology this is called eschatological verification).

Type II Weaknesses:

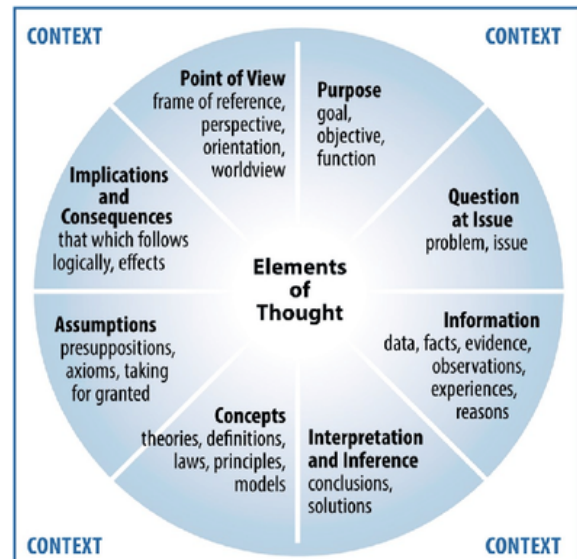
- Prone to these cognitive distortions: Confirmation Bias; Negative and Positive Filtering; Dichotomous Thinking; Catastrophizing (keeps the free-will mechanism geared towards safety); Motivated Reasoning; “Can I” vs “Must I believe”
- **“Can I Believe” vs “Must I Believe”:** Social Psychologist Thomas Gilovich outlines a dynamic of motivated reasoning. The person asks “*Can I believe...*” for a proposition that they wish is true. Their brain will release stress chemicals at the fear of being wrong, and when the person finds one piece of evidence that they perceive validates their beliefs, they stop searching, and the brain stops releasing stress chemicals. This gives the **sensation of peace**. They are unlikely to scrutinize the source and its methodologies as doing so will reignite the stress mechanism. If confronted by data they do not want to believe, they ask “*Must I believe...*”, and will search in every corner of their mind and in their available resources for evidence to counter that data. They will be more scrutinizing of the sources for this data, research methodologies used in its collection, or motivations behind the idea.
- The thinker, without much experience in Type III thinking, will likely be unsuccessful in creating arguments that will be effective at addressing the concerns and intuitions of the other person, as they can only view the world from the glasses they have rarely, if ever, have taken off and examined. They will create arguments that would be convincing to themselves, since that is the extent of their vision.
- Equates (confuses) their own certainty and zeal for a principle as a verification of the principle's truthfulness.

Type II Strengths:

- The person in Type II is acting to forward an objective or ideology.
- Creates strong social bonds of trust (relying on the safety from harm and danger biological processes the brain runs).
- Tight knit groups who are homogeneous in thinking can act and react to situations quicker than a diverse and plural group can, since deliberation can solely focus on the mechanics of completing an objective without first questioning if the objective is good.

TYPE III Reflective Thinking

Type III thinking focuses on examining the glasses through which one naturally views the world. In faith situations the term is called deconstructing, in which a person grants the assumption that their currently held beliefs may be incomplete, or their beliefs may be based on incorrect perceptions of experiences. It is what a person acting in Type II reasoning asks another person in Type II reasoning to do in order to win an argument, though they attempt to do this in force by invalidating the premises of their argument. LDS missionaries ask their investigators to deconstruct their idea of what Latter-day Saints are as a people and a religion, and to reconstruct it based on the new information the missionary provides.



from [The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking](#); by Dr. Linda Elder and Dr. Richard Paul

Elements of Thought

In the Type III thinking process, the person examines each stage of their thoughts and motivations to see if they made an error of judgement in their interpretation of an event, and their motivations for interpreting it the way they did. *[NOTE: A person in Type II may go through and examine the Elements of Thought, but not to re-examine their assumptions in intellectual humility with a desire to learn where they could be wrong on a foundational level, rather they do this to see how they can strengthen their preexisting position.]*

Type III Weaknesses:

- **Inaction:** The thinker dwells in a space of uncertainty while in this process, and thus action cannot be achieved until they take a chance (act in faith) on a conclusion given its evidence and their judgement on it based on a statistical judgement of maximized benefit and minimized loss based on the dictates of an ideology.
- **Ability:** While every person can function in Type II easily, Type III requires intellectual humility + the cognitive horsepower to process complexity.
- **Threat of Alienation:** Once a person begins to question the foundational assumptions of their group, if they show too many signs of this behavior to a group acting in Type II, they will likely have social sanctions placed on them until they renounce their doubts and realign with the group's collective consciousness. The group does this to maintain a sense of safety in the existing social rules. This makes the person less likely to engage in this type of thinking, or at least openly discuss it with others.

Type III Strengths:

- **Confidence:** Increased confidence in what they do determine to be true.
- **Structured Frameworks of Thought:** The person has mapped their beliefs and it "feels" more like their own faith, not a faith simply given to them.
- **Peace Building:** While people/groups in Type II operate under a "Peace through Strength" doctrine, Type III mandates a peace through cooperation strategy. Type III thinking allows the thinker better empathy for philosophies and ideological tribes, allowing them to create messages that appeal to the other person's concerns and intuitions in a way a Type II person cannot.

Quotes

Type II - Apologetic Thinking

"Doubt your doubts before you doubt your faith." - President Dieter F. Uchtdorf

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." - 1 Peter 3:15

"Christians must engage the dominant stories of our culture, either by telling a better story that shows that these stories are inadequate or incoherent, or through subversive storytelling in which they enter into a rival cultural narrative and retell its story in light of the Christian worldview. We are called to out-narrate the dominant stories that shape our culture, by exposing their weaknesses or showing how they are enfolded by our own or how they are eclipsed by a more luminous and compelling story." - Alister McGrath ([Narrative Apologetics](#))

"If you would persuade, you must appeal to interest rather than intellect." - Benjamin Franklin

"As teachers in this great Church we must hold to our one fundamental premise. We must never depart from it. We must hold to the one and only concept of the gospel and in it there can be no variance. We cannot take liberties with it, not even under the guise of academic freedom, for in teaching the gospel there is no academic freedom. I would like to repeat that in teaching the gospel there is no academic freedom. There is only fundamental orthodox doctrine and truth." - Pres. Thomas S. Monson

Type III - Reflective Thinking

"The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.'" - 1 Cor. 12:21

"That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another." - Joseph Smith

"The main thing is to engage, dialogue, bridge, and interact with people of all sorts. Unless we participate, we lose our ability to both influence the world and learn from it." - Elder Kearon

"Objectivity. Strong personal prejudices influence the way people see and remember things. These biases can be witting or unwitting and careful questioning may be required to uncover them." - U.S. Dept. of the Army; DA PAM 381-20 Counterintelligence Investigative Procedures (Unclassified)

"One of the most important things in the world is freedom of the mind; from this all other freedoms spring. Such freedom is necessarily dangerous, for one cannot think right without running the risk of thinking wrong, but generally more thinking is the antidote for the evils that spring from wrong thinking. More thinking is required, and we should all exercise our God-given right to think and be unafraid to express our opinions, with proper respect for those to whom we talk and proper acknowledgment of our own shortcomings. We must preserve freedom of the mind in the church and resist all efforts to suppress it."

"The honest investigator must be prepared to follow wherever the search of truth may lead. Truth is often found in the most unexpected places. He must, with fearless and open mind "insist that facts are far more important than any cherished, mistaken beliefs, no matter how unpleasant the facts or how delightful the beliefs."

- President Hugh B. Brown (First Presidency)

"He who knows only his own side of the case knows little of that. His reasons may be good, and no one may have been able to refute them. But if he is equally unable to refute the reasons on the opposite side, if he does not so much as know what they are, he has no ground for preferring either opinion." - John Stuart Mill

Other Comments

Self Critique:

I have reformed my views on these types of thinking a few times and this is the product of my deliberations. A possibility of an error in my framework could be in the mutual exclusion of Type II and III in the sense that they both act on faith. Type III's faith, however, is in that the pursuit of truth in an honest matter is the best course of action for one to be in the good grace of the Divine. *[Assumption: It necessitates the assumption that the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in the sense under the control of the agent, and ought to be free from the obstruction from the demands of others. That every person should be able to think necessitates they be alive to think. If a person deems communal bonds as a necessity for their happiness they should be free to associate with that community, or not if they deem the other choice as their prerogative.]* I believe Type III's requirement of intellectual humility is enough to distinguish it from Type II's faith. In Type II the ideology owns the person and uses the person as its agent. In Type III the person questions the ideology as a master - challenging the submission to the person's moral intuitions and ethical premises, and their Kantian or Utilitarian approach to the same, which they inherited from their genetics and environment and agentic responses to the environment which reinforced or reformed neural pathways that turned into habits of thought, or moral reflexes. Someone who has never reached past Type II carries a false sense of free-will, in the sense that they are choosing what naturally comes to them. They are unwilling to give weight to a counterpoint to a sufficient extent to create the conditions for a true choice of the will. This dynamic justifies to me the validity in separating the types of faith and humility into Type II and III. I do however, maintain the right to be wrong, and am continuing to disprove my premises.

Other Resources to Read:

If you want to research more on reasoning, I suggest starting with these works then branching off:

[Article on Cognitive Distortions](#)

Harvard University

[The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment](#)

Jonathan Haidt (University of Virginia)

[Moral Psychology Is Relationship Regulation: Moral Motives for Unity, Hierarchy, Equality, and Proportionality](#)

Alan Fisk (UCLA) and Taze Rai (Northwestern University)

[The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking: Concepts and Tools](#)

Linda Elder; Richard Paul

[A Course in Wisdom feat. Thomas Gilovich \[YouTube Video\] \[Can I vs Must I Believe\]](#)

[How I Became a Seeker | Steven C. Harper | BYU Devotional 2021](#)

Questioning our assumptions about Church History in developing our testimonies.