Preference based decision making

The S/N and T/F preference pairs

Myers-Briggs theory suggests that everyone has specific innate preferences in the way that they gather information and make a decision:

- Data gathering functions
    - Sensing preference – these people prefer to work with detailed information that is based in reality. They enjoy information that is taken in through the senses rather than imagined in an abstract manner and use data that is relevant to the present time.
    - Intuition preference – these people prefer to work with 'big picture' visionary information, they tend to think more innovatively and look for connections between things that are more abstract in nature. They enjoy considering alternative futures as a source of information.
- Decision making functions
    - Thinking preference – these people are most likely to be objective and to use a set of criteria against which decisions can be evaluated. They analyse the options available in an impartial and detached manner to identify the most logical decision.
    - Feeling preference – these people are more likely to make a decision based on subjective measures like personal values and personal relationships. They are likely to be strongly influenced by role models and the perceived culture of their chosen speciality and are more likely to take into account the perspectives of those around them.

The zig zag method

The consequence of these natural preferences is that we are prone to ignoring or avoiding the opposite preference when it comes to decision making. The Myers-Briggs Zig Zag method encourages us to use all four of the functions involved in the data gathering and decision-making process.

As you work through the boxes it is likely that some of the functions will feel more 'natural' than others, this is to be expected and is probably the result of your Myers-Briggs type. Don't skip over the boxes that feel less comfortable though, these are likely to be the areas that you have automatically given less thought as they are not your preference.

Gathering Information

Sensing

What practical details do you have about the specialities you are considering?

What is the reality of the day job at junior doctor and consultant level?

Have you prior experience of these specialities? What does this tell you?

What are your personal strengths and how do they relate to your chosen specialities?

Intuition

What do you think it will be like to work in your selected specialities?

What could your future (outside of work) look like in each speciality?

Think of times that you have enjoyed your job, what are the themes and connections?

Think 'outside the box' what other opportunities are there within the specialities being considered?

Making a Decision

Thinking

If you were to make a weighted list of pros and cons for each speciality, which would come out best?

Look at the objective data you have available, which speciality is most logical?

What are the potential impacts of each decision, cause and effect?

Have you found someone to debate / argue the decision with?

Feeling

How well do you think your chosen specialities will match with your value set?

Think of people you respect or are important to you, what might they suggest?

Think of one of your options, if that option were taken away how would you feel? How does the other compare?

Strip away all the data, which one just 'feels' right?

Gathering Information

Sensing

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Intuition

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Making a Decision

Thinking

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Feeling

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