

**THE EFFECT OF A NUCLEAR FAMILY'S SUDDEN
LOSS ON THE PERSONALITY STRUCTURES
OF INDIVIDUAL FAMILY MEMBERS**

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SUMMARY

THE EFFECT OF A NUCLEAR FAMILY'S SUDDEN LOSS ON THE PERSONALITY STRUCTURES OF INDIVIDUAL FAMILY MEMBERS

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The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the potential effect of sudden loss on the personality structures of bereaved individuals. For this purpose, I focused on the individual personality structures of five nuclear family members during the first year following the sudden loss of their daughter/sister. I followed a concurrent nested mixed model research approach and relied upon both the post-positivist and interpretivist paradigms, allowing me to integrate the complementary strengths of quantitative and qualitative data collection by means of triangulation. I utilised a within group interrupted time series design, comparing the family's MBTI® profiles prior to and following the sudden loss they had experienced. In addition, I incorporated the results of 16PF profiles of the participants administered post-sudden loss. I further substantiated my findings in terms of recurring themes on individual metaphors concerning the sudden loss experience, constructed by the participants.

The findings of the study indicated that distinct changes in personality structures occurred in terms of the personality structures of the participants. Pertaining to the four polarities of the MBTI®, I found that the participants displayed a greater preference for the Introversion attitude, as well as both the Sensing and Feeling functions, after they had experienced sudden loss. All participants displayed an inclination towards personal growth by moving closer to the Judging/Perceiving axis post-sudden loss. In addition, two general tendencies were evident amongst the participants, namely a greater dependence on the inferior functions; and secondly the tendency to rely on type exaggeration when dealing with sudden loss.

LIST OF KEY WORDS

- **Concurrent nested mixed model approach**
- **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®)**
- **Personality**
- **Personality assessment**
- **Personality change**
- **Personality structure**
- **Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF)**
- **Stability of personality**
- **Sudden loss**
- **Within group interrupted time series design**

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CHAPTER I

SETTING THE STAGE

*“Hope, faith, love and a strong will
offer no promise of immortality
only proof of our uniqueness as human beings
and the opportunity to experience full growth
even under the grimmest of circumstances.*

The clock provides only a technical measurement of how long we live.

*Far more real than the ticking of time
is the way we open up the minutes and invest them with meaning.*

Death is not the ultimate tragedy in life.

*The ultimate tragedy is
to die without discovering the possibilities of full growth.
The approach of death need not be the denial of that growth”*

(Cousins, 1989:25).

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

Bereavement¹ represents a specific stressful life event, which might be detrimental to the psychological health of individuals – both in the short-term and in the long run. Within the focus of this study, I selected the sudden loss of a family member as such a stressful life event. Subsequently, the purpose of my study was to explore the potential effect of sudden loss of a child/sibling on the personality structures of the remaining family members in a nuclear family.

Death of a family member generally brings about drastic change within the context of both individual and family functioning (Gous, 2005). Ironically however, this universal truth is still bounded by taboos and society is often hesitant to discuss it. It seems that “the unmentionable” event of death first needs to be brushed aside, before it becomes possible to determine the appropriate means of dealing with death as competently as possible, as is necessary for a healthy family life. Eliot (1930:543)² summarises this idea by stating that “*Yet to most of us, as death comes to the individual or to the family, it seems a new experience if not a unique shock*”.

Grief is an equalising global phenomenon, as unexpected loss imposed by inevitable casualties is an unfortunate reality of the 21st century. Sudden loss confronts all age groups, cultures, nationalities, countries, religious affiliations and political perspectives, whether it occurs as a result of war, violence, poor health or by accident. Consequently, the sudden loss of a loved one generally leaves those left behind with feelings of emptiness, often described as “... *the loudest absence imaginable*” (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005:195). Furthermore, regardless of religious affiliation, loss usually inflicts change.

The untimely death of a child can be regarded as a disruption of the expected life cycle, since it is normally assumed that children lay their parents to rest. Rubin and Malkinson (2001) recognise the sudden loss of a child and/or sibling as one of the most stressful life events, with a significant etiological role in the development of physical and psychiatric disorders such as depression, posttraumatic stress disorder and pathophysiological changes. Rando (1996) and Rees (1971) affirm that parental grief has been recognised as the most intense and overwhelming of all categories of grief. However, the loss of a child does not only affect the parents as individuals, but also impacts on the parent dyad, siblings, family system and community itself (Davies, 2004; Li & Olsen, 2005). The sudden loss of a child typically triggers a period of mourning during which the nuclear family has to demonstrate coping

¹ For the purpose of this study I regarded bereavement as per the description listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 2005:740) (Refer to Addendum A).

² Although I recognise that Eliot (1930) is a dated resource, I chose to include this quotation based on the quality of Eliot's work on death and the fact that I view this as a powerful statement.

behaviour – although this coping could be functional or dysfunctional. In some instances, such coping behaviour may be so extensive that it could be perceived as a change in personality structures – a possibility I explored in this study. More specifically, I chose to focus my attention on the effect of sudden loss within a nuclear family.

However, bereavement is a highly personal experience and process (Michaels Hollander, 2004). Hence, the body of inner resources and resiliency innate to an individual could assist in resolving the loss, while a lack thereof could prolong the process and pose a barrier to complete resolution of the sudden loss (Fowlkes, 1990). Insight in the way that certain personality traits are expressed in the bereaved individual's functioning post-sudden loss may allow a more profound understanding of the process and resolution of bereavement associated with sudden loss. It is expected that some of these personality traits might undergo change during bereavement, where such change might assist in better coping during the process of bereavement or result in dysfunctional grief, *i.e.* complicated bereavement.

Concerning the question how different individuals might deal with sudden loss, Li and Olsen (2005:55) state that “*both a person's interpretation of an event as stressful or not and his/her response to it depend on one's **personality** [my emphasis], prior experience, attitudes, coping capacity, culture, general state of physical health, and genetic susceptibility*”. Although the basic assumption is that the sudden loss of a family member represents a sudden traumatic and stressful life event, because it is an unanticipated, overwhelming experience, the impact thereof is often experienced as chronic (Stroebe, Stroebe, Hansson & Schut, 2001).

My initial motivation for conducting this study is primarily personal in nature. My eighteen-year old youngest brother died in a fluke accident at the pinnacle of youth. In an attempt to manage my sorrow, I consulted literature on grief and bereavement. Based on my early readings, I noticed that my family appeared to experience more intense levels of strain than generally predicted by the various stages and existing theories on the grieving process. I observed difficulty amongst my family members dealing with our loss and the changes accompanying a major loss. I further noticed some unique coping mechanisms employed by my family members, which I thought might be linked to personality traits, based on my underlying knowledge on personality theory, obtained during my training as an educational psychologist. In addition, I noted some changes in the way my family members applied themselves within different facets of everyday living. Based on these changes, I started wondering

about the possibility that the sudden loss of a loved one might result in changed behaviour amongst family members, which could possibly culminate in certain changes in individual personality structures.

Besides my primary personal interest in this topic, my motivation to undertake this study further stems from certain areas in the existing knowledge base on dealing with sudden loss, the phenomenon of “letting go” and the reality of being left behind to deal with the loss that might be elaborated upon. I specifically state *sudden loss* in my title, as it is significant to differentiate between sudden loss and loss subsequent to having suffered a long sickbed, for example. Even though both instances result in the “letting go” of a loved one, the latter allows some forewarning and therefore a time to say goodbye, whereas the former results in a number of unresolved matters due to the surprise element implied by the suddenness of the event. I believe this lack of “preparation time” concerning the impending loss might have a unique effect on the bereavement process, subsequent coping and adaptation to the altered reality in the absence of the beloved.

Throughout my initial readings, it became apparent that health care professionals could fulfil a critical role in supporting bereaved individuals (Clements, DeRanieri, Fay-Hillier & Henry, 2003). Even though these professionals generally rely on grief models to guide their interventions, the substantial amount of literature available on the topic originated from vastly different paradigms. In my opinion, existing literature do not at all times reflect the essence of individual experiences or actual needs of bereaved individuals (Davies, 2004) whose loss is in essence defined by the nature of the relationship that had been lost. For the purpose of my study, I chose to focus on sudden loss within the context of the nuclear family, as I believed this context would contribute to existing literature. In addition, research in this area of interest implied the potential of practical application by practitioners supporting bereaved individuals.

In terms of my career-based rationale for undertaking this study, I was motivated by the possibility that an understanding of the functioning of the bereaved post-sudden loss could facilitate appropriate therapeutic intervention in the context of life events arousing change, when working with a family (in my case children) whom had lost a family member unexpectedly. In turn, family members (children) could be guided to gain insight into the potential impact of loss on their unique personality structures and their abilities to cope with traumatic change. My assumption that such insights might evolve into deeper levels of understanding by family members (children) in terms of their own strengths and weaknesses during times of loss, lead to my belief that such intervention could subsequently elicit

psychological well-being. In addition, the probability of such intervention resulting in the empowerment of family units towards mutual tolerance and support inspired my decision to embark on a study of this nature. The next section offers a contextualisation of my study in terms of the specific focus area that I have chosen to explore.

1.2 CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE STUDY

Literature on “life events arousing change” indicates that the loss of a significant other might reveal a decline in coping ability, due to this loss disjuncting interpersonal processes (Magai, 1999; Miller & C’deBaca, 1994). Since personality can be regarded as a variable that determines how people perceive and cope with stress, thereby affecting their psychological well-being (Costa & McCrae, 1990), the experience of sudden loss could elicit impulsive (though probably temporary) infatuation with a figure of emotional significance and consequently induce altered behaviour. Hence, change in the construct of the self might follow, especially in any milieu connecting significant others, where intrapersonal changes could affect relational functioning. Laplanche and Pontalis (1985:465) accurately summarise the possible effect of sudden loss on those left behind:

“An event in a subject’s life is defined by its intensity, by the subject’s incapacity [or capacity] to respond adequately to it and by the upheaval and long-lasting effects that it brings about in the psychical organisation. In economic terms, the trauma [of incapacity to respond adequately] is characterized by an influx of excitations that is excessive by the standard of the subject’s tolerance and capacity to master such excitation and work them out physically”.

As dynamic human beings, individuals that show healthy post-sudden loss functioning are active in determining the courses of their lives. Despite the notion of self-determination, the reciprocal interchange between environment and the individual cannot be overlooked (Ardelt, 2000). Furthermore, adaptive functioning post-sudden loss is also shaped by individual preferences and qualities (Robins, Nofhle, Trzesniewski & Roberts, 2005). Similarly, the lack of intrinsic coping mechanisms may predispose certain individuals to struggle with the challenges imposed by the environment (Roberts, Robins, Trzesniewski & Caspi, 2003). Difficulty in coping may ultimately cause individuals to act out of character in an attempt to cope with their realities (Van Rooyen, 2006). Such extreme coping behaviour may in turn lead to perceived changes in personality (Briggs Myers, 1998).

Research results quoted by Ardel (2000) substantiated the preceding notion that individuals are indeed capable of personality change and growth, pending their social environment and personal motivation.

Due to the interrelatedness implied by the coexistence of human beings within a shared life-world, it might be worthwhile to examine/probe the likely effect of sudden loss within the context of a nuclear family, as this basic unit serves as springboard for the development of subsequent relationships. Furthermore, enquiry into the experiences of a nuclear family that has lost a child/sibling could contribute to the body of existing literature on the effect of sudden loss on intrapersonal functioning within such a bereft nuclear family, as well as on how these expected changes might influence their interpersonal relationships. The trauma of sudden loss may leave nuclear family members in need of revised frameworks for life, necessitating adjustments to allow them to learn to live with their altered reality (Clements, De Ranieri, Vigil & Benasutti, 2004).

Two major viewpoints linking individuals to their social environments can be distinguished when studying change, namely the *life course paradigm* and the *stress-related growth perspective*. The former argues that periods of transition provide the most significant opportunity for personality change, as the challenges of successfully coping with new and unpredictable situations (such as the sudden loss of a family member) often require a reorganisation of priorities, perspectives and adaptive skills (Park, Cohen & Murch, 1996). In such instances, the transition brought about by sudden loss may even prompt the bereaved to gain insight into the greater meaning of life events and facilitate individual growth (Ardelt, 2000).

On the other hand, the stress-related growth perspective (Elder, 1994) stipulates that periods of radical change (as experienced in the case of the sudden loss of a loved one) provide the ultimate prospect of personality change, as progressive coping with challenging realities typically requires a restructuring of priorities and behavioural modification (Park *et al.*, 1996). With reference to personality, Elder and O'Rand (1995) propose that certain personality traits may become more prominent during such periods of transition due to the fact that individuals are then more prone to draw on their intrinsic traits and former coping styles in order to deal with their altered reality. The phenomenon of certain predispositions shaping the bereaved individual's reaction to loss to the extent that it might result in personality change has also been affirmed in the works of Carl Jung, Catherine Briggs and Isabel Myers Briggs (Quackenbush, 2001). In view of the fact that existing studies primarily focus on loss in general, I decided to narrow the focus of my study to sudden loss within a nuclear family. As such, I attempted to gain insight into a subsection of bereavement within a specific context.

1.3 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The preceding discussion dealt with the potential emotional and behavioural impact of the sudden loss of a family member (*i.e.* a child or sibling, within a nuclear family) on the post-sudden loss intrapersonal functioning of the remaining nuclear family members. I specifically argued that nuclear family members might demonstrate extreme coping behaviour, which in turn might lead to perceived changes in personality. Hence, the purpose of this research project was to gain an understanding of the potential effect of sudden loss on the functioning of bereaved individuals, specifically pertaining to how sudden loss might affect individual personality structures.

Accordingly, I paid particular attention to the potential emotional and behavioural impact of the experience of sudden loss within the first year of bereavement on the personality structures of family members having lost a child/sibling to a sudden, unexpected death. It is important to note that I did *not* attempt to determine whether or not changes in the emotional and behavioural functioning of the participating family members were of a temporary or permanent nature. I rather focused on the effect of sudden loss on each family member's adaptive personality traits within the family context.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

This study was guided by the following primary research question: ***How might the sudden loss of a child/sibling affect the individual personality structures of remaining nuclear family members?***

In order to explore my primary research question, I addressed the following secondary research questions:

- Prior to the sudden loss, what were the personality structures of the individual nuclear family members who lost a child/sibling?
- Post-sudden loss, what were the personality structures of the individual nuclear family members who lost a child/sibling?
- Did any changes occur in terms of the nuclear family members' individual personality structures following the sudden loss of a child/sibling? If any changes occurred, what was the nature of these changes?
- Which general tendencies could be identified in terms of the potential effect of sudden loss resulting in change in personality structures?

1.5 HYPOTHESIS

Against the background of my discussion in the preceding sections, I formulated the following hypothesis: *The sudden loss of a child/sibling will result in changes in the individual personality structures of the remaining nuclear family members.*

1.6 ASSUMPTIONS

I approached this study with the following assumptions:

- The experience of loss is uniquely personal and defined by the nature of the bond between the decedent³ and the loved one left behind.
- The manner of dealing with the sudden loss of a family member is influenced by an individual's personality traits and inherent coping mechanisms.
- After the loss of a child/sibling, the functioning of individual family members may require a different approach than were relied upon during other crises, as the "original" coping mechanisms might not suffice.
- Such adapted approaches to coping with sudden loss may result in changed personality structures of individual family members dealing with the sudden loss of a child/sibling.
- The individual personality structures of nuclear family members are likely to have a significant effect on their experiences of the sudden loss of their child/sibling.
- The sudden loss of a child/sibling might uniquely affect the expression of personality in individual remaining family members, which might prompt certain personality trait changes due to extreme coping during bereavement.

1.7 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

In order to ensure a clear understanding of concepts, I now provide definitions of the key concepts within the context of this study.

³ Decedent is an euphemism for the term "deceased". Please note that this term will be used throughout this study to refer to the deceased.

1.7.1 DECEDENT

Within the context of this study, I use the concept *decedent* (Wattigney, Mensah & Croft, 2002) as an euphemism and synonym for the *deceased*, in other words, those who passed away (Encarta Dictionary, 2002).

1.7.2 EFFECT

Effect implies a change produced by an action or a cause, and is therefore regarded as synonymous with result or outcome (Crowther, 1999). For the purpose of this research project, the action or cause is the sudden death of a child/sibling and the *effect* is the result or outcome in terms of changes and/or consistencies in personality structures.

1.7.3 NUCLEAR FAMILY

Moletsane (2004) regards a *nuclear family* as a unit consisting of a parental couple (or single parent) living with biological offspring, where the unit is self-sustaining and separated from its family of origin. Popenoe (1995) supports this definition by stating that a *nuclear family* comprises of a two-generation family group that consists of a parental couple and their children, usually living apart from other relatives.

Families are defined by their organisational structure, characterised by degrees of cohesiveness, love, loyalty and purpose (Thompson & Rudolph, 2000). The psychosocial family system is composed of members who have ongoing, interpersonal relationships with one another. This relatively “*small, cooperative, domestic group of kin*” (Popenoe, 1995:310) is a living, changing entity that employs self-correcting and self-sustaining activities in response to changing demands (Figley, 1998).

The phenomenon of dealing with sudden loss within the nuclear family milieu makes the participating family in this study an example of a self-sustaining, cohesive group of kin who reveals high levels of shared values, interests, activities and attention to the needs of its members. The participating nuclear family might thus be described as a bonded family (Figley, 1998), associated with high levels of attachment, but possibly with relatively lower levels of flexibility.

1.7.4 SUDDEN LOSS

“*Loss is the irrevocable case of separation*” (Holmes, 1996:4) and suggests unexpected death associated with abruptness (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005). A *sudden loss* might be characterised by interpersonal violence, trauma or suicide and most significantly, usually represents an act of “*human design*” (Clements *et al.*, 2004:151). A *sudden loss* is more likely to create exaggerated and potentially complicated grief responses than an expected loss, as the latter allows the dying and those left behind to prepare for the loss and to say their goodbyes. Sudden deaths are perceived as untimely and unfair, often intensifying feelings of disbelief, shock and anger experienced by those left behind (DeRanieri, Clements & Henry, 2002).

Rando (1996) states that an unanticipated death confronts the bereaved not only with grief over a loved one, but also with personal trauma, resulting from the unexpected psychological assault brought about by the event. The bereaved might thus be overwhelmed by an emotional wave following the trauma of unforeseen death (Clements & Henry, 2001). As with every traumatic stressor that affects families, unexpected tragic events demand immediate and ongoing attention. A family faces great challenges in terms of psychological survival during the aftermath of pain and tragedy, and it is almost impossible to accomplish survival of this nature in isolation and seclusion (Balswick & Balswick, 1997).

Within the context of this study, *sudden loss* refers to the death of the youngest child/sibling of the nuclear family who participated. The child's death was caused by a fatal motor vehicle accident.

1.7.5 INDIVIDUAL FAMILY MEMBERS

For the purpose of my study, *individual family members* refer to the participating parenting dyad (biological mother and father) and their four offspring, of whom the youngest passed away. As emphasised by Balswick and Balswick (1997), the participating members of the family experiencing death could be expected to be grieving the sudden loss of their child/sibling. However, it could be expected that *individual family members* might apply unique coping mechanisms in response to the trauma. Yet, the responses of the *individual family members* were likely to reverberate among the other family members, due to the fact that one person's pain usually becomes everybody's pain within an interlocking system (Boyd Webb, 2002).

1.7.6 PERSONALITY AND PERSONALITY STRUCTURES

“A personality trait, whether unique or common, is a collection of reactions or responses bound by some kind of unity, which permits the responses to be gathered under one term and treated in the same fashion for most purposes” (Cattell, 1965:25). It follows that individuals’ lived realities are characterised by their behaviour patterns, thoughts and emotions (Bernstein, Penner, Clarke-Stewart & Roy, 2007) which consequently represents the “self” as it assimilates overt and covert attributes (Bergh & Theron, 2003).

Personality therefore encompasses behaviour within the physical, cognitive, emotional, social and spiritual domains of everyday living, since involvement of the various domains is required for adequate role performance as a child, adult, parent, sibling, worker, partner or societal member. Albeit that Duggan (2004) questions the stability of personality, he agrees that it comprises of the intrinsic aspects of thoughts, feelings and behaviour that allows each individual’s actions to manifest distinctively – even in comparable situations.

For the purpose of this study, I view *personality* as the intrinsic propulsion behind cognition, psychological functioning, motives and orientation, displayed in overt and covert behaviour. In my understanding of the intrinsic aspects of *personality*, I rely on the sixteen personality factors defined by Cattell (1946) and personal preferences identified by Jung (1971). I believe that a combination of the works of Cattell and Jung allows for an in-depth spectrum of personality traits and preferences, providing the background for exploring the potential effect of sudden loss on the *personality structures* of the bereaved, within a nuclear family.

Personality structure refers to the basic building blocks that constitute personality and how it is shaped. Various concepts are used, some complex, abstract and difficult to observe, others more clear, concrete, easily observable and measurable. These structural aspects of personality partially determine perceptions of the dimensions of motivation, development, adjustment, assessment and research (Bergh & Theron, 2003). For the purpose of this study the *personality structures* of the individual participating family members were determined by and defined in terms of two quantitative instruments, namely the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF hereafter) (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003) and the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI® hereafter) (Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998).

In the next section I introduce the underlying philosophy I relied upon in undertaking this study. Thereafter, I provide a brief overview of my selected research design and methodology. Both these aspects are elaborated upon in chapter III.

1.8 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

In an attempt to address my research questions, I undertook a QUANTITATIVE/qualitative study, anchored in the POST-POSITIVIST/interpretivist paradigms⁴. I integrated these two research approaches and underlying paradigms in order to draw on the complementary strengths of the various approaches and paradigms. By doing this I endeavoured to gain insight into the potential effect of the sudden loss of a child/sibling on the significant others left behind (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

POST-POSITIVIST inquiry implies the construction of knowledge that is characterised by internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity which result from the rigorous accumulation of facts (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). This philosophy holds that a truth does indeed exist, but that the observation and understanding of such a truth is curbed by the researcher's human limitations (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

In an attempt to add to the ambiguous reality implied by POST-POSITIVISM, I relied upon Interpretivism as a subordinate paradigm. This mixed method approach allowed me access to the individual lived experiences of the participants, as well as the meanings attached to these experiences, thereby gaining a more in-depth understanding of the potential effect of a sudden loss experience. Perlesz and Lindsay (2003) propose the use of interpretive lenses when doing research with families, as this paradigm acknowledges individual family members' denotations, interactional and affiliation variables, multifaceted perceptions, the impact of research on them and the rapport between the researcher and the research participants. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2004:101) state in this regard: *"Parents and siblings are active agents who are making meaning of their lives within and through their social context"*. Interpretivism therefore offers a unique and potentially valuable alternative for undertaking psychological research (Sexton, 1997) as it proposes the exploration of the participant's perception of the world in an attempt to better understand the participant's lived reality (Flynn, 1995;

⁴ Throughout this dissertation the capital letters for QUANTITATIVE and POST-POSITIVISM are used to indicate the primary approach and paradigm I followed. The lower case letters for qualitative and Interpretivism imply the supportive/secondary approach and paradigm utilised in this study.

Schwandt, 2000). In this study, lived reality refers to the individual family members' experiences and perceptions of sudden loss, as explored by means of their metaphors on sudden loss.

1.9 RESEARCH APPROACH, DESIGN, METHODS AND MATERIALS

For the purpose of this study, I chose to follow a QUANTITATIVE/qualitative methodological approach. I planned and undertook my study in accordance with the *concurrent nested mixed method approach* as described by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003). Figure 1.1 provides an overview of the research design I employed, as suggested by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) and adapted in terms of Durrheim's (1999:33) diagrammatic representation of a mixed method approach.

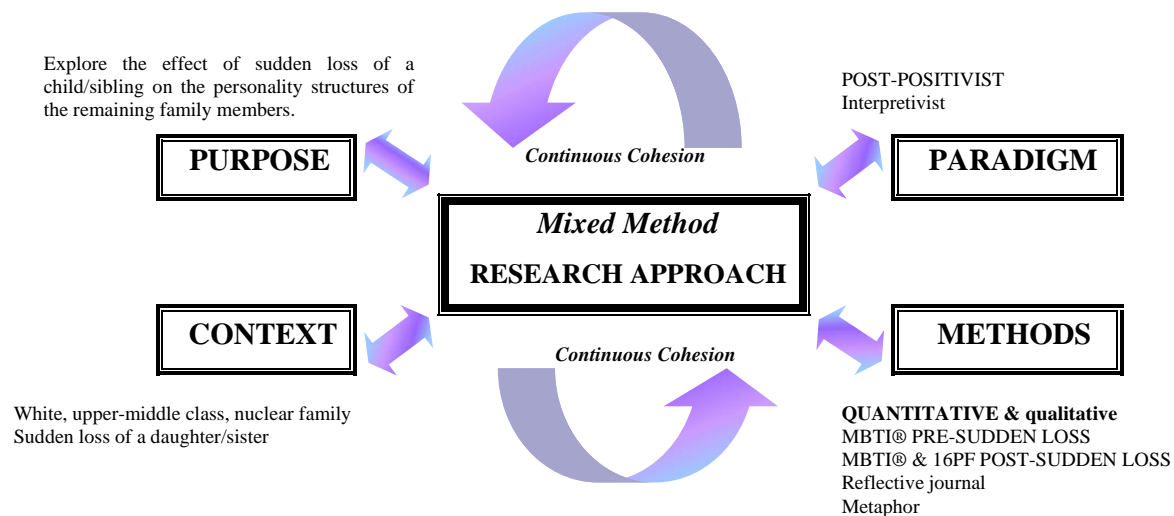


Figure 1.1: Research approach of the study (Durrheim, 1999)

I selected an adapted form of the *within group interrupted time series research design* to conduct the QUANTITATIVE aspect of my study (Creswell, 2005) and used the said sudden loss event as the variable that provided the distinction between pre- and post-sudden loss assessments conducted with the participating family members. Since I focused on the exploration of the social issue of post-sudden loss personality functioning in one case (nuclear family), I also drew on the benefits of case study designs (qualitative research) (Stake, 2000) to further inform this study.

I met the participating nuclear family when my own family joined a support group for families who suffered the tragic loss of a child. As such, I conveniently, yet also purposefully, selected the members

of an Afrikaans speaking, white, upper-middle class, Christian nuclear family from Gauteng, whom had suffered the loss of a child/sibling within the previous year, as participants.

I obtained QUANTITATIVE data by means of standardised pre- and post-sudden loss personality assessments, *i.e.* the pre- and post-sudden loss MBTI® (Myers *et al.*, 1998) as well as post-sudden loss 16PF (Cattell, 1989) of the participants. I utilised metaphors as a qualitative data collection strategy, requesting the participants to express their experiences of sudden loss in terms of a metaphor. Secondly, I relied upon a reflective journal to capture my personal thoughts on the research process, list incongruities I wanted to explore further, note my perceptions of how the participants responded to the different aspects of the research process and identify recurring themes I thought might be significant when considered holistically (Fouché, 2004; Richardson, 2000).

Figure 1.2 depicts a timeline to illustrate the sudden loss event and subsequent data collection process as conducted in reference to the *within group interrupted time series design*.

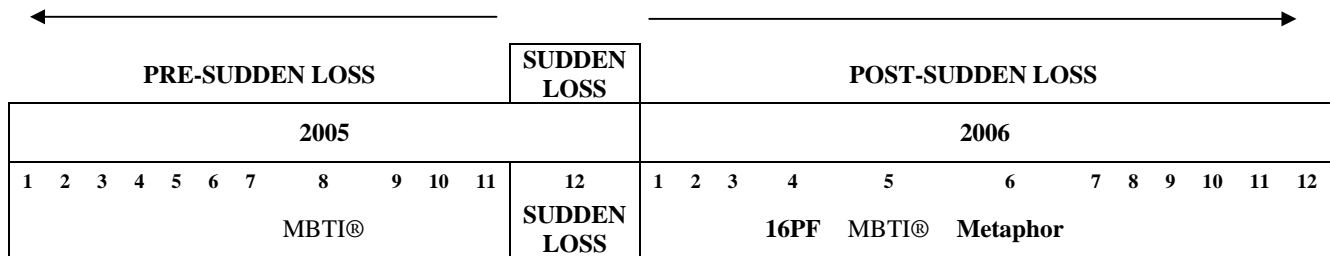


Figure 1.2: A timeline to illustrate the sudden loss event and the subsequent data collection process

The QUANTITATIVE data analysis I conducted, involved the scoring and interpretation of the 16PF (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003) and MBTI® (Myers *et al.*, 1998), which I administered after the sudden loss incurred by the death of the participating nuclear family's child/sibling. This process was followed by a comparison of the results with those obtained on an MBTI® administered prior to the sudden loss event in line with the *within group interrupted time series design* I relied upon. I was, however, only able to utilise the 16PF as supportive data for the MBTI® results, as the family members did not complete a 16PF prior to the sudden death of their child/sibling. Throughout this process of data analysis and interpretation I attempted to determine consistencies and inconsistencies (Creswell, 2003).

Concerning the qualitative data analysis I conducted, I considered the use of the software programme Atlas.Ti. However, based upon my own preference and experience as researcher, I decided to conduct the analysis myself and relied on the thematic analysis of the metaphors, with additional references from my reflective journal. The qualitative data analysis thus involved deductive analysis, during which I identified themes based on the dimensions of the 16PF (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). I then considered and interpreted the identified themes in terms of the QUANTITATIVE data I collected in an attempt to triangulate my results and draw inferences (Burns, 2000).

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In undertaking this study I was guided by both research ethics (as prescribed by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria) and the Ethical Code of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (www.hpcsa.co.za). I adhered to these ethical guidelines in order to safeguard the research participants from both physical and psychological harm.

In terms of research ethics I firstly obtained informed consent from the participants. Due to the fact that informed consent involves a research participant's formal agreement to cooperate in a study based on insight into the nature of the research and the role that the participant will fulfil (Simon, 1999), I discussed the nature of the study and the role of the participants with the selected family in person prior to my study. I then obtained written informed consent from the participants (Addendum B) pertaining to:

- Access to and utilisation of the MBTI® results obtained prior to the sudden loss. The father of the household communicated the family's consent to the clinical psychologist whom conducted the initial assessment. Subsequently, she made the pre-sudden loss MBTI® results available to me.
- Permission to conduct post-sudden loss personality assessments by means of MBTI® inventories and 16 PF questionnaires.
- Compliance with my request that each individual family member compile a metaphor on their personal loss experience.
- Acceptance of the fact that these results were to be published on the premise that the participants were to remain anonymous.

Secondly, I was guided by the principle of confidentiality (Willig, 2001). I endeavoured to be worthy of the participating family members' trust in safeguarding their identities and by ensuring non-

traceability (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2002). According to the written agreement I made with the research participants in this study, I did not disclose their identities. As a result I refer to the participants as father, mother and sibling 1, 2, 3 throughout this mini-dissertation (Neuman, 1997). Thirdly, I adhered to the principle of voluntary participation which stipulates that no participant may be coerced to partake in a research project and that participants are aware of their right to withdraw from the research project at any stage of the process without any consequences (Willig, 2001).

Lastly, I upheld the ethical guidelines of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (www.hpcs.co.za) and research ethics (Willig, 2001) in terms of the demand that researchers never deceive research participants about significant aspects that could affect their willingness to participate; such as physical risks, discomfort or unpleasant emotional experiences (Creswell, 2005). I made an effort to conduct my research in a morally sound manner, paying special attention to treating the participants in an empathetic manner due to the sensitive nature of the study. The guidance provided by my supervisor assisted me in guarding against subjectivity and drawing emotional inferences (Christians, 2000). I discuss the ethical guidelines I considered in more detail in chapter III.

1.11 CHAPTER OUTLINE

CHAPTER I: SETTING THE STAGE

The first chapter serves as an introduction to my study and provides a general overview of the study as well as my rationale for undertaking this particular study. I present the research problem and state the purpose of the study. I define the key concepts and briefly summarise my selected research design, methodology and underlying paradigm. As a final point, I refer to the ethical guidelines I considered during my study.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The second chapter outlines the conceptual framework of the study, focusing on relevant and authoritative literature in an attempt to gain insight into the phenomenon being studied. I firstly explore personality and pay special attention to Cattell's (1950) and Jung's (1971) views on personality, as their theories informed the instruments I selected as the QUANTITATIVE component of my study. I then contemplate whether or not the phenomenon of personality is a stable construct, after which I discuss the assessment of personality, specifically referring to the 16PF (Cattell, 1989) and MBTI® (Myers *et al.*, 1998).

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses on the empirical part of the study. I discuss my selected research approach and the progress of my study by focusing on the research design, selected data collection, data analysis and interpretation methods, which I justify in terms of the particular research questions formulated in chapter I. Furthermore, I explain the ethical guidelines I adhered to as well as the quality criteria I endeavoured to uphold in my attempt to enhance the rigour of my study.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH RESULTS AND FINDINGS

I present the results I obtained in chapter IV. Although I distinguish between the results in terms of the QUANTITATIVE and qualitative data, I triangulate the data to provide integrated results. I then interpret the results by relating them to existing literature, as discussed in chapter II, thereby presenting my findings.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The fifth chapter provides a summary of the study, after which I present my final conclusions in terms of the primary research question formulated in chapter I. I also consider the possible contributions of my study, as well as the challenges and limitations I identified. I conclude the chapter by formulating recommendations for practice, training and further research.

1.12 SUMMARY

This chapter offered an introduction to and overview of the planned research project. The rationale and contextualisation of the research project were discussed, as well as the purpose of the study, the research questions and research hypothesis. Certain concepts were clarified as these relate to the character and tone of this research project.

Within the next chapter I explore relevant literature on the stability of personality structures within the context of sudden loss. As such, I present my conceptual framework.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

*“The death of one’s child, or one’s sibling, at a young age
multiplies this ongoing reality because, I think,
it is time warped and not in the natural progression of expectation.
You expect to bury your parents or even your spouse,
but not your child or childhood companion.
It is shocking. It is not to be believed. It is not expected.
You are not prepared, unless, perhaps in wartime or after a long illness.
You are not ready. It is not fair. It should have been one of us, not him.
It is out of season and it remains raw and shocking and, most of all, present.
Good memories do start to surface, and, after some time elapses,
it is not always in the forefront of consciousness.
But it is ever present and never loses the raw waves of pain
(Excerpt from *The Longest Day* by Pam Landon,
in Cook & Oltjenbruns, 1998:115).*

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Loss is a uniquely personal experience (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2001) that draws upon personal attributes to assimilate a drastically altered reality (Barkin, Cohen, Colletti, Eisenberg, Goldstein, Kasden, Levine, Long, Volpe & Mitchell, 2004). Parkes (2006) explains the experience of loss as “losing the map” of one’s world, the map being a frame of reference which had been built up throughout life. Sudden loss differs from anticipated loss when considering that the bereaved are not granted any time to grasp the reality of what is about to happen (Cook & Oltjenbruns, 1998). With sudden loss, assimilation is compromised, which is often time-consuming as it necessitates the absorption of the tragic facts, the permanence of loss and the challenge of adjusting to life without the decedent (Hooyman, 2006). Those left behind are therefore denied the chance to say goodbye or to anticipate the impact of losing the relationship; to prepare for life without the decedent; and ultimately, to live at peace with the reality of a lost relationship without having addressed unresolved issues (Davies, 2004).

Many authors state that a modification of personal attributes might occur as a result of sudden loss, in an attempt to foster resilience and survive trauma (Barkin *et al.*, 2004; Ciarrochi & Mayer, 2007; Gous, 2005; Kaplan & Sadock, 2007; Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2001; Thompson & Henderson, 2007). On the other hand, some authors such as Costa and McCrae (1997) believe that such changes are not possible and that personality is a stable construct. It is my conviction – in support of the work done by Cousins (1989), Cutcliffe (2004), Davies (2004), Kübler-Ross and Kessler (2005) as well as Quackenbush (2001) – that one should not see the construct of personality in isolation, but rather as an integrated construct deeply affected by the circumstances surrounding the occurrence of sudden loss, and the grief that result from it. Subsequently, my aim with this study was to explore possible changes in personality structure as a result of the sudden loss of a child/sibling within a nuclear family.

Before undertaking this study, I contemplated that a study of this nature could contribute to existing literature on bereavement, as well as the phenomenon of personality. Based on limited research being available in this area of interest, I decided to specifically explore the possible effects of sudden loss in terms of personality structures. As background to the empirical study I undertook, this chapter focuses on the potential effect of sudden loss on personality within the context of the natural process of grief that follows sudden loss. Based on the focus and research questions, the study makes no attempt to quantify grief nor does it try to establish the state of grieving. It rather views the possibility of personality transition from a pre- to a post-sudden loss perspective.

I begin the chapter by providing a brief contextual backdrop to sketch typical manifestations of grief as opposed to atypical manifestations that may be a cause for concern. Next, I define the phenomenon *personality* within the context of sudden loss. In my discussion, I direct my attention to Jung's (1971) and Cattell's (1946) theories on personality, as their understanding of personality underscores the quantitative instruments I selected to utilise for the purpose of my study. Thereafter, I briefly deliberate on the question whether or not personality can be regarded as a stable construct, as this debate is of significance when considering the results of my study. Finally, I discuss ways of assessing adult personality and situate my discussion within the two assessment instruments I selected, being the 16PF (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003) and MBTI® (Van Rooyen, 2006).

2.2 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY: GRIEVING THE SUDDEN DEATH OF A FAMILY MEMBER

This study was planned and undertaken within the context of a nuclear family experiencing the sudden loss of a child/sibling. Sudden loss inevitably implies grief, as grief is the emotional response to loss (Davies, 2004; Stroebe, Stroebe & Hansson, 1997), known as the "... *subjective feeling precipitated by the death of a loved one*" (Kaplan, Sadock & Grebb, 1994:80). In planning this study, I had to gather information on grief within the context of sudden loss as background knowledge and to gain an understanding of the various factors at play when dealing with the effects of sudden loss. However, as grief was not the primary focus of my study, I do not include a lengthy discussion of this topic in this mini-dissertation. I merely provide an overview of the grieving process in terms of typical and atypical manifestations thereof, specifically after experiencing sudden loss.

Grief generally manifests in the expenditure of physical, emotional and psychological energy as the bereaved attempts to deal with loss and eventually reorganises life in the absence of the decedent. Typical somatic complaints such as headaches; blurred vision; a feeling of tightness in the throat; heart palpitations; a change in appetite; a loss of strength and energy; as well as a tendency to be easily fatigued (Kaplan & Sadock, 2007) may cause physical exhaustion and ultimately hamper the immune system (Schlebusch, 2001). In addition, intrapsychic notions such as emotional numbness, sadness, fear, depression, tearfulness, anger, loneliness, worry, guilt, anxiety, helplessness, discontentment and/or self-pity (Hibbert, 2004; Kaplan & Sadock, 2007) are often experienced by those who have lost a loved one. In this regard, patterns of interaction with bereaved relatives and/or friends are likely to determine whether bereaved individuals choose to either detach themselves by withdrawing from their existing

social networks to a point of isolation; or to become overly dependent on others. Cook and Oltjenbruns (1998) ascribe such dependence to feelings of helplessness that prohibits grieving family members from performing tasks or making decisions independently. During such a phase, altered thought processes – such as experiencing confusion, disorientation and an inability to attend to detail – can often be detected (Kaplan & Sadock, 2007).

From a social perspective, emotional outbursts are perceived to be unhelpful, yet are regarded as immediate ways of coping with loss, as it may allow a grieving family member to start accepting the reality of the loss (Lindemann, 1979⁵). Grieving the death of a family member may further emerge in dreaming of the decedent; insomnia or hypersomnia; loss of concentration; an inability to perform daily tasks; restlessness; apathy regarding both work and leisure activities; and disinterest in events previously utilised for relaxation (Kaplan & Sadock, 2005; Schlebusch, 2001). Idealisation⁶, mummification⁷ and memorialisation⁸ can also be regarded as part of normal grief responses after the sudden loss of a family member (Cook & Oltjenbruns, 1998).

Despite the potential negative responses to the sudden loss of a loved one, grief can imply some potential positive aspects. In a study by Malinak, Hoyt & Patterson (1979:1155), an interview with fourteen adults who suffered the death of their parents during the previous two years revealed that approximately half of the participants reported “... *an increased sense of strength and self-reliance, a greater caring for friends and loved ones and a more general quickening to life and deepening of their appreciation of existence*”. In support of this finding, Sanders and Myers (2000) are of the opinion that suffering a significant loss may eventually encourage those left behind to search for meaning in their own lives. Holmes (1996) classifies this event of personal growth as remoralisation or the installation of hope, whereas Walsh-Burke (2006) summarises this potential positive effect by stating that loss may transform the bereaved to the extent that self-discovery may stem from working through sudden loss.

When considering that the intensity of the manifestation of grief is expected to lessen over time (Cook & Oltjenbruns, 1998), failure to naturally progress towards resolution may indicate pathological grief (Stroebe, Von Son, Stroebe, Kleber, Schut & Van den Bout, 2000). The characteristics of grief can be considered on a continuum of severity, from relatively mild symptomatology to profoundly disruptive.

⁵ I realise that Lindemann is a dated source. However, I chose to utilise Lindemann's findings, as he is esteemed for his study on the survivors of a November 1942 fire that took the lives of 492 people in a nightclub in Boston where college students were celebrating a football victory (Davies, 2004). Lindemann identified common reactions in the acute period following sudden death – which are significant in the context of this research study.

⁶ The bereaved recalls only positive characteristics of the decedent (Worden, 2003).

⁷ The phenomenon whereby the bereaved attempts to preserve the environment of the decedent (Worden, 2003).

⁸ The bereaved pays homage to the decedent through frequent rituals (Worden, 2003).

Unsettling grieving behaviour includes an inability to accept death, frequent nightmares, intrusive, upsetting memories, persistent thoughts about death, detachment from others and excessive loneliness (Enright & Marwit, 2002; Neimeyer, Prigerson & Davies, 2004). Radical life style change and the exclusion of treasured friends, family members and/or activities associated with the decedent, may also hint at unresolved grief (Kaplan & Sadock, 2007). The continuity between uncomplicated and complicated grief thus pertains to the intensity and duration of the grief reaction, rather than the simple presence or absence of specific behaviour (Worden, 2003).

In this section I presented a broad overview of the potential manifestations of grief, as this provided me with background information on the milieu and context of sudden loss in which I planned and conducted this study. In the next section, I discuss the phenomenon of personality.

2.3 UNDERLYING THEORY OF THE STUDY: PERSONALITY

Personality can be defined as a dynamic and organised pattern of psychological and behavioral characteristics by which each person can be compared and contrasted to others (Kaplan & Sadock, 2007). These emotional, intellectual and moral qualities influence cognition, motivation and behaviour and thereby distinguish individuals from one another (Bernstein *et al.*, 2007).

According to Bernstein *et al.* (2007), the definition of personality is significant when considering whether personality is stable or malleable. Heatherton and Nichols (1994) are of the opinion that not much change will be observed when assessing personality on different occasions, as stable and reliable assessment tools can be expected to provide stable results over time. However, if the definition of personality is expanded to include psychological functioning, motives and life goals, it follows that there may be room for change in personality structures as time goes by (Pervin & John, 2001). In accordance with Pervin and John's (2001) line of thinking, McAdams (1994) defines personality in terms of three levels of personality functioning, *i.e. dispositional traits*⁹; *personal concerns* such as goals and tasks; and the *whole person*, as assessed by the narratives of life. Therefore, when considering personality as relatively decontextualised, linear, comparative traits that determine individuals' relative positions on a series of linear, bipolar scales (McAdams, 1994), it follows that personality may be subject to change over time (Quackenbush, 2001).

⁹ Dispositional traits are the so-called Big Five Traits, namely extroversion, anxiety, tough-mindedness, independence and self-control (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003).

Pervin and John (2001) are of the opinion that personality develops when particular life periods and/or domains of action result in the motivation of strategies, plans and defences in order to avoid certain conditions or to meet needs. Yet, these components of personality may still lack integration, unity and overall purpose. For example, even though motivation is indicative of orientation, it is not necessarily enough to comprehensively shed light on who a person is trying to be (Quackenbush, 2001). However, as soon as identity becomes an integrative life story, the understanding of personality moves beyond linear aspects to an authentic meaning-making process which correlates with each individual's make-up and lived reality (McAdams, 1994). During my initial literature study McAdams's view of personality sparked my interest specifically pertaining to the question of how bereaved's post-sudden loss meaning-making processes could affect their functioning, life views and subsequently, personality.

Based on the literature I consulted, I conceptualised personality as a dynamic intrapersonal phenomenon moulded by an intricate combination of nature, nurture, emotions, intellect and spirituality. These building blocks determine the driving force behind cognition, psychological functioning, motives and orientation as depicted by overt and covert behaviour. My definition allows for change in personality as it encompasses individuals' potential to adapt to the environment and lived reality – none of which is static. Against this general overview of what the concept personality entails, I focus my discussion in the next section on an understanding of personality within the context of sudden loss.

2.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY: UNDERSTANDING PERSONALITY WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF SUDDEN LOSS

Parker (2005) holds the view that individual patterns of thinking, feeling and acting are affected by the specific characteristics of the lost relationship when suffering sudden loss. I support Parker's (2005) view, as I believe that this author uncovers the rationale behind the unique way in which those who have experienced loss come to terms with their loss. The uniqueness of the relationship between the decedent and the bereft family member defines many of the intricacies of the lost relationship and thus explains why, even amid similar personality traits, relationships cannot be simplified to predictable patterns. For this reason, I guard against stereotyping and generalisations, as meaningful information might be lost when one fails to acknowledge the uniqueness of a lost relationship.

Existing studies on loss can be elaborated upon in terms of the potential effect of sudden loss (within a family) on the coping abilities of the individual family members in terms of personality structures

(Rubel, 1999). In my research study I attempted to address this aspect, as I believe that a study of this nature may contribute to the existing body of knowledge in terms of how sudden loss within a nuclear family might affect the family members left behind. Personality might be regarded as a determining agent in the manner in which family members might cope and compensate for the absence of a child/sibling (Worden, 2003).

As the individual, the social environment and individual experiences have a reciprocal effect on personality (Ardelt, 2000), consistency and change in personality cannot be studied in isolation (Duggan, 2004). Recent research marks a changed view of personality from being regarded as a unified, stable, integrated entity to being considered as a complex, active, representational system, which is subject to change (Magai, 1999). Ardel (2000) lists the following aspects influencing personality stability and/or change: definition of personality; genetics; environment; gender; age at first measurement; length of retest interval; measurement instrument; as well as the possibility of measurement error. In support of such determining agents, global measures of the self as a separate, unique, self-determined entity are continually being replaced with the cognitively complex self-concept; comprised of dynamic, purposeful self-schemas, shaping emotional and behavioural responses to events (Newman & Newman, 1999). Against this background and shift in focus the possibility of sudden loss having far-reaching effects on the personal functioning of those left behind, comes to the fore.

Life events may be particularly compelling change triggers if they “... *involve the initiation or termination of intimate relationships or other intense affiliative experiences*” (Magai, 1999:341). Losing a child/sibling can be regarded as the personification of Magai’s (1999) statement and supports the focus of my study in affirming the possibility that sudden loss might bring about change in the day-to-day functioning and personality structures of the bereaved. In this regard, Hooyman (2006), for example, found that the loss of a life-partner often results in a decline in coping ability as loss disjoints interpersonal processes (Sanders & Myers, 2000). My study might elaborate on findings like these as I indirectly focused on individual responses to sudden loss and then considered these within the context of a family consisting of family members with different personality structures. Since personality is generally being regarded as one potential factor that determines how people perceive and cope with stress affecting their psychological well-being (McCrae & Costa, 1999), the experience of sudden loss and coping with the emotions and changes implied by it could consequently result in altered behaviour and changes in personality structures (McCrae, 2001).

Before further exploring the possibility of change in personality structure, I focus my discussion in the next section on an understanding of personality as a construct. For this purpose, I guide my discussion along the theory of Cattell (1946) and Jung (1971). My choice of these two theorists is based on the fact that their work formed the foundation of the quantitative instruments I selected for my study.

2.4.1 CATELL'S TRAIT THEORY OF PERSONALITY

Raymond Bernard Cattell (1905-1998) believed that personality cannot be defined unless the concepts used are specified in detail. Cattell based his understanding of personality on the principle that personality will predict how an individual would react or behave in a given situation (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). Furthermore, Cattell specifies that personality, which is therefore concerned with concrete, observable and/or inferred behaviour, can only be fully understood when considered within the framework of the holistic functioning individual (Lamb, 1997). I will now briefly discuss Cattell's original blueprint on personality, which resulted in a remarkably rich theoretical structure (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003), in terms of his trait theory on personality.

Cattell reasoned that personality constitutes of basic building blocks, namely traits. Traits refer to inferred mental structures that account for consistency in behaviour (Lamb, 1997). It follows that a trait implies a disposition to behave in a particular manner, as expressed throughout a range of situations (Pervin & John, 2001). Based on Cattell's hypothesis that traits might be measurable, he deduced that human behaviour could become understandable and predictable to some extent in this manner. Cattell built on the work of Allport and Odbert, who listed more than 4000 words in 1936 describing various personality traits (Scherrer, Van Rooyen, De Beer, Heyns, Van der Merwe & Knoetze *et al.*, 2004) and eventually produced a pool of question items to represent the factors obtained. By means of inductive reasoning, Cattell identified the factors he regarded as significant and categorised these in terms of 4 500 surface traits (Bergh & Theron, 2003).

Cattell distinguished two primary sets of traits (Pervin & John, 2001). Firstly, he differentiated between ability traits, temperament traits and dynamic traits, and secondly, he focused on the difference between surface traits and source traits. Cattell proposed that the combination of ability, temperament and dynamic traits captures the major stable aspects of personality. In terms of the differentiation between surface and source traits, Cattell states that surface traits express behaviour that appear to correlate but do not necessarily have a common cause, whereas source traits represent associations amongst behaviours that form an independent dimension of personality (Russell & Karol, 2002). In determining

these, Cattell was of the opinion that the former can be discerned by subjective means such as asking respondents which personality characteristics they think might link to one another, whereas the latter requires refined statistical procedures of factor analysis¹⁰ (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). Cattell's factor analysis and trait distinction subsequently resulted in the development of a personality assessment instrument, namely the 16PF¹¹ (Cattell, 1946).

Cattell's theory on personality was set into motion by his contemplation of the motivation that drives behaviour and he also had a specific idea of the human ego. Insight into these two concepts enabled me to gain a better understanding of Cattell's perception of personality. Cattell believed that the variety of activities that might reveal motive strength could be measured in terms of the amount of time and energy put into that particular aspect of an individual's life. Subsequently, the more energy and time individuals put into one activity, the less time and energy they will put into another, as people only have access to a limited amount of time and energy (Cartwright, 1979¹²). The drives and interests governing time allocation are often demonstrated in times of mourning, when a bereaved's existence may become overwhelmed with feelings of loss and sorrow, because the bereaved – consciously or subconsciously – allows these thoughts and feelings to determine behaviour. Within the context of sudden loss, it can therefore be expected that the bereaved may allocate more time and energy to grieving and coming to terms with loss. The bereaved may consequently have limited resources to perform usual tasks and may also be prone to find daily challenges – such as intra-familial conflict – quite exhaustive. The choice of energy expenditure, as determined by motivation, is facilitated by the human ego.

Cattell considered the ego to be a problem-solving structure with the purpose of mediating between personal needs and environmental demands. He distinguished between these needs and external reality by constructing a range of possible solutions as well as the consequences of the implementation thereof; evaluating viable alternatives; postponing gratification; enduring aggravation; and managing one's decisions with patience and diligence (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). The functioning of the ego has a significant implication on an individual's Emotional Stability (C)¹³ score (Russell & Karol, 2002) and might consequently influence individual family members' abilities to deal with grief. In the next section, I turn my discussion to Jung's theory on personality, which I *inter alia* explain in terms of Briggs and Myers's MBTI®.

¹⁰ Factor analysis implies statistical techniques for detecting the underlying order in a number of variables (www.answers.com).

¹¹ Cattell distinguished sixteen first order personality factors, which he named according to the letters of the alphabet, namely A-O (Scherrer *et al.*, 2004). Please refer to section 2.4.4.1.1 for a detailed discussion in this regard.

¹² Although I acknowledge the fact that Cartwright (1979) is a dated source, I chose to include it in my discussion, based on Cartwright's explanation of the principles that informed Cattell's reasoning.

¹³ For the purpose of the discussion, any reference to MBTI® preferences and/or preference combinations will be indicated in **dark blue** whereas any references to factors on the 16PF will be indicated in **dark red**.

2.4.2 JUNG'S THEORY ON PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) viewed personality development as a dynamic and evolving process that continues throughout life (Viljoen, 1997). Jung disagreed with the idea of past events solely determining behaviour; and believed that individuals are continually acquiring new skills, reaching out for new goals and progressing towards self-realisation (Harré, 2006). I regard Jung's future-oriented perspective as transparent within a context of dealing with sudden loss, as a bereaved might be predisposed to adapt to altered realities and acquire skills to work through loss and deal with changed circumstances. Furthermore, the possibility of personal growth – obtained when the bereaved learn to accommodate an altered reality – may eventually result in attaining selfhood.

Jung regarded the realisation of the self – by means of becoming a single, individual being – as the ultimate life goal (so-called individuation) (Maddi, 1996). He further believed that the differentiation and integration of personality required self-knowledge and self-development, as any one-sided emphasis could produce personality disturbances (Jung, 1954¹⁴). In gaining maturity, individuation could facilitate development and growth as it allows potential to be fulfilled; experiences to be developed; and self-realisation to be achieved (Maddi, 1996). Normal conditions are typically marked by the natural unfolding of this dynamic, evolving process, as an individual aspires to integrate the opposing forces of the psyche (Myers & Kirby, 1994). As such, the self is believed to reconcile the various polarities that make up the psyche, thereby releasing energy for continued personal development.

Jung (1954) assigned the term self-actualisation to the challenging task of the fulfilment of individuation. As sudden loss of a child/sibling can be regarded as an unfamiliar force, it might challenge a bereaved's perception of life as well as the integration thereof in individuation, and ultimately, self-actualisation. Suffering sudden loss might therefore affect the bereaved at the level of individuation, resulting in the need for individuals to redefine themselves within the context of their loss (*i.e.* widow *instead* of wife and only child *instead* of sister).

Like Cattell, Jung too believed that expended energy will be met by the deterioration thereof in another aspect of functioning. I regard this belief as significant as it can be relied upon in understanding the motivation behind a bereaved's shift in focus away from areas that are usually considered important. When such a reallocation of focus continues for a significant period of time, it may have a marked effect

¹⁴ Jung's 1954 source is cited because it is the original text written by the originator of this theory.

on the personal functioning of the individual. The redefinition of the self in the context of sudden loss requires the reassignment of energy expenditure, as explained in Jung's principle of equivalence.

2.4.2.1 The principle of equivalence

Equivalence refers to the idea that “... *for a given quantity of energy expended or consumed in bringing about a certain condition, an equal quantity of the same or another form of energy will appear elsewhere*” (Jung, 1969¹⁵:18). As such, intensification in one aspect of psychic functioning is counterbalanced by a compensatory deterioration in another (Myers & Kirby, 1994). In the case of dealing with sudden loss, the increased awareness of life hereafter may for example bring about a loss of interest in the trivialities of everyday life. Furthermore, increased awareness of the finality of death may facilitate a process of questioning spiritual life. In the psychic realm, the principle of equivalence therefore implies that the sum of the energy represented in the weakening or disappearance of one value will not be lost by the psyche. Instead, an equivalent level of energy will appear in another, so that the lessening of one value signifies the amplification of another (Viljoen, 1997). Within the context of sudden loss, the loss of energy on an intrapersonal level may however be redirected towards other levels, which might be assessed by personality inventories such as the MBTI®.

Based on the underlying theory on the potential for personal development, I regard Jung's theory on personality as applicable within the context of sudden loss. However, the following questions remain: *how might a life altering experience be dealt with, how can life lessons be incorporated into a bereaved's ongoing existence and how can a bereaved assimilate any worthwhile realisation in the face of loss?* In the next sub-sections, I aim to explore questions like these in terms of Jung's typology of personality and his conflict model of personality.

2.4.2.2 Jung's typology of personality

Jung's typology of personality concerns the movement of psychic energy and individuals' means of habitually and preferentially orienting themselves in their realities (Quenk, 2000). It is important to note that Jung did not intend to label anyone or to fit individuals into restrictive boundaries of character analysis systems (Maddi, 1996), but rather for his typology to be used as a way of determining psychological orientation and thereby gaining insight into intrapersonal and interpersonal functioning

¹⁵ Jung's 1969 *Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche* serves as an original explanation of the crux of his principle of equivalence.

(Viljoen, 1997). Jung referred to the total personality as the psyche, which allows a flow of energy in various directions; *i.e.* from the consciousness to unconsciousness and back, as well as from inner to outer reality and back (Myers & Kirby, 1994).

In Jung's typology of personality, he firstly distinguished between Extraverted¹⁶ (**E**)¹⁷ and Introverted (**I**)¹⁸ individuals. Jung noted that both Extraverts and Introverts react in a specific way, though not necessarily akin to the other's conduct (Briggs Myers, 1998). The different approaches which are typically adopted by Introverts and Extraverts resulted in Jung identifying four mental functions that determine individuals' preferences to pursue or avoid certain situations *via* Perception (the so-called Sensing [**S**] or Intuition [**N**] functions) or *via* Judging (the so-called Thinking [**T**] or Feeling [**F**] functions) (Quenk, 2000). Consequently, Jung was able to distinguish two basic attitudes (*i.e.* extraversion and introversion) and four functions, namely *verstand*¹⁹, *gefühl*²⁰, *empfindung*²¹ and *intuition*²² (Van Rooyen, 2006).

As such, in addition to the basic attitudes and functions Jung identified, he noted that the manner in which individuals make sense of their experiences can be understood in terms of a rational and irrational axis (Myers *et al.*, 1998). The rational axis involves two reflective, linear functions that result in particular judgement that engages experiences. Thinking-oriented individuals (**T**'s)²³ tend to relate to the world intellectually by seeking to understand through logic and reason (Baron, 1998). **T**'s tend to suppress emotions in an attempt to view the world in a more objective and at times a more dispassionate manner (Van Niekerk, 1996). On the other hand, feeling-oriented individuals (**F**'s) normally call for the appraisal of reality in terms of positive or negative emotions related to the person-centred aspect of the issue at hand (Kroeger & Thuesen, 1992). **F**'s classify experiences into hierarchical value structures to allow themselves to judge events from an emotional point of view (Van Niekerk, 1996).

The second axis, namely the irrational axis, represents individuals' passive recording of life experiences without evaluating or interpreting these (Barger & Kirby, 2004). To gather information, sensing-oriented individuals (**S**'s) generally rely on empirical experiences gathered by means of their five senses,

¹⁶ In Jung's literature he specifically refers to Extraverts as opposed to **Extroverts**. According to Van Rooyen (2006) "**Extraverts**" specifically implies the context of Jung's work, whereas **Extroverts** is the **general term**. Therefore, **Extraverts** will be used throughout the text when referring to Jung's work and the MBTI®, whereas all other instances will make use of the **general term**, namely **Extroversion**.

¹⁷ Gaining energy from outside sources.

¹⁸ Gaining energy intrapersonally.

¹⁹ *Verstand* refers to thinking or cognitive thought (Maddi, 1996).

²⁰ *Gefühl* implies feeling or subjective judgement and valuation (Van Rooyen, 2006).

²¹ *Empfindung* is sensation or perception by means of the physical senses (Barger & Kirby, 2004).

²² Jung's *Intuition* refers to intuition or perception by means of receptivity to the unconscious (Viljoen, 1997).

²³ For the sake of clarity and brevity, the MBTI® building blocks will henceforth be referred to by their alphabet letters, namely **E** for Extraversion/Extraverts, **I** for Introversion/Introverts, **S** for Sensing/Sensors, **N** for Intuition/Intuitives, **T** for Thinking/Thinkers, **F** for Feeling/Feelers, **J** for Judging/Judgers and **P** for Perceiving/Perceivers.

whereas intuition-oriented individuals (**N's**) witness their external reality by forming impressions on a subliminal, unconscious level (Baron, 1998). Based on Jung's typology, Catherine Myers and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers consequently developed the MBTI®, which I discuss in more detail in section 2.4.4.2.

2.4.2.3 The conflict model of personality

Jung postulated the idea of relying on different psychological types to depict variance among the personalities of supposed psychologically healthy individuals (Briggs Myers, 1998). According to Jung (1971), behaviour is directed by an inborn tendency to utilise cognition in different ways. In his search for a holistic understanding Jung acknowledged the physiological²⁴, social²⁵, psychic²⁶ and spiritual/religious²⁷ dimensions of human functioning (Viljoen, 1997).

Jung's analytic psychology supposes that each individual inherently experiences a state of discord between two continually acting, yet opposed and unchangeable forces, because conflict originates and remains within the psyche (Maddi, 1996). The extent of the conflict could serve as an indication that one aspect of personality is opposing another, thus suggesting an intrapersonal battle (Harré, 2006). Jung draws on his concept of the collective unconscious²⁸ to explain this idea, consequently allowing the personal unconscious²⁹ to become almost negligible. In his reasoning, the ego signifies authentic, accurate consciousness, as opposed to the alternative of half-truths based on rationalisation (Maddi, 1996). Jung claims that defences can be lulled, thus enabling the personal unconscious to become conscious (Viljoen, 1997). With inherent, irresolvable conflict transpiring in the mind, it would be futile to merely rely on defences to dull awareness of the emotions brought about by sudden loss. Defences may simply aid the process of eliminating one of the incompatible forces from consciousness, which may jeopardise attempts to gain dynamic equilibrium amongst the various aspects of the self (Maddi, 1996). The challenge lies in achieving an innate state of compromise through an awareness of inner turmoil, which should ideally result in a liveable resolution amidst an array of seeming incompatibilities (Harré, 2006). Within the context of this study, Jung's line of argumentation made me wonder about the reasons why certain family members suffering sudden loss seemed to rely on defence mechanisms more

²⁴ Involves the processes/drives necessary for survival (Viljoen, 1997).

²⁵ Refers to interaction amongst people (Viljoen, 1997).

²⁶ Entails logical conscious processes understood/explained *via* reasoning utilized to aid people in their adjustment to reality (Viljoen, 1997).

²⁷ Denotes dependence on/subject to irrational aspects of being human (Viljoen, 1997).

²⁸ A vast reservoir of inherited wisdom, memories, insights and potential transmitted from previous generations and shared among humankind (Thompson & Rudolph, 2000).

²⁹ Consists of forgotten experiences that have lost their intensity for some reason and includes sense impressions that are too weak to be perceived consciously (Harré, 2006).

intensely than other when dealing with that same loss. Jung explains this tendency in terms of the so-called “*In the Grip*” experience, which I explore in more detail in section 2.4.4.2.5.

The challenge of maintaining a dynamic intrapersonal equilibrium is intensified when dealing with sudden loss. In an attempt to establish an acceptable state of equilibrium in which a sudden loss experience might be worked through, significant internal forces may empower the intricate process of understanding and resolving loss (Harré, 2006). According to Jung’s conflict model, the ultimate achievement in terms of lifestyle may be compromised, in order to obtain a dynamic³⁰ balance of two opposing forces (Viljoen, 1997). However, while some individuals may revert to self-compromising behaviour, others may be prone to voice the conflict they encounter in their effort to come to terms with sudden loss (Bernstein *et al.*, 2007).

For Jung, the above-mentioned unconscious processes are continually in opposition with the conscious ones (Maddi, 1996). This disparity allows individuals to draw on their inferior function in the event of stress, as the inferior function often assists them with their coping ability. Within the context of my study, I relied upon literature that focuses on the effects of stress on the coping ability of individuals, relating such tendencies to individuals’ reactions in times of sudden loss due to literature specifically concerning sudden loss being still emergent by nature. In undertaking this study, I trusted that my findings could possibly contribute to the current understanding of how sudden loss might affect personality. In view of the fact that Jung’s theory on personality allows individuals to orient themselves in terms of the reality they are confronted with, I now explore the stability or potential for change that might occur in adult personality.

2.4.3 THE STABILITY OF ADULT PERSONALITY

Different view points exist in terms of the stability (or not) of adult personality. The stability of personality is for example proposed by definitions describing personality traits as “... *dimensions of individual differences in tendencies to show consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings and actions*” (McCrae & Costa, 1990:23). Furthermore, McCrae and Costa (1990:150) claim that “... *lives surely change, personality, we maintain, does not*”. In addition, Ardel (2000) argues that personality assessment instruments magnify stability of personality due to the instruments’ insensitivity to change. As a direct result, personality inventories often focus on the unchanging aspects of personal history.

³⁰ In this context “dynamic” implies a constant state of change and have no reflection on the adjective synonymous with lively or energetic. Therefore the conflict model suggests a state of complexity where optimal flexibility is required in order to adapt to the changes imposed by reality.

However, I support Helson and Stewart (1994), who regard such narrow definitions of personality as limiting it to past-present, thereby negating the impact of the present-future on personality, as well as the possibility of personality change as a result of exposure hereto (Markus & Herzog, 1991; Markus & Ruvolo, 1989; Stein & Markus 1994). In this regard Maddi (1996) also identifies the time interval between personality assessments as inversely proportionate to personality stability. Yet, William James (Ardelt, 2000) is of the opinion that personality stability increases with age, as the older an individual is, the more stable the personality becomes.

Some definitions of personality allow for an even broader perspective. For example, Costa and McCrae (1997) state that personality is not a product of things happening to individuals or an involuntary reactive response, but rather a proactive, responsive choice when confronted with inner and outer environmental complexity. As such, McCrae and Costa (1994) regard personality as set characteristics that transcend time, place and context, whilst providing meaning to existence and a sense of individuality to the individual. Subsequently, personality cannot be regarded as limited to an individual, as it affects and is affected by the interaction of the individual with the environment (Hampson, 2000).

Research verifies that individuals are indeed capable of personality change and growth subject to their social environment and personal motivation (Ardelt, 2000; Roberts *et al.*, 2003; Robins *et al.*, 2005). In this regard, Maree (2004) emphasises the fact that human beings control their own fate, but that the challenges of their realities hold the capacity to interfere with the ability to cope. Although strong arguments can be made for the stability of personality, within the context of this study I support the argument that personality structures might change. I therefore focused on the potential effect that a changing life circumstance could have on personality structures, namely the sudden loss of a child/sibling within a nuclear family. In order to determine whether or not the personality structures of the participants in my study were affected by their sudden loss, I had to assess their personality structures prior to and after the sudden loss they experienced. In the next section I explore personality assessment in terms of the instruments I decided to utilise for assessing personality prior to and after the participants' sudden loss experience.

2.4.4 ASSESSMENT OF PERSONALITY

Adult personality assessment typically relies on structured, standardised measurement whereby adults are required to respond directly to a number of questions included in a questionnaire (Kaplan & Sadock, 2007). For the purpose of this study, I selected the MBTI® and the 16PF in order to assess the

participants' personality structures. In addition, these tests could be useful in determining interpersonal skills, facilitating the restoration of vitality, reducing stress and despondency and instilling a willingness to grow (Baron, 1998) – all of which are relevant in the context of dealing with sudden loss.

In utilising the MBTI® and 16PF, I therefore relied upon the work of Carl Jung (1971), Catherine Briggs, Isabel Myers (Myers *et al.*, 1998) and Raymond Cattell (1946) as underlying theory. It should be kept in mind that the purpose of this study was not to justify any differences between the said theories or to attempt to resolve any such discrepancies by means of reason or experiment. I merely relied upon the theory of both perspectives as background to my study and the interpretation of the results I obtained. In the next sub-section I discuss the 16PF and the MBTI® in terms of the underlying theory of the instruments. In Chapter III, I provide more information on the reliability and validity of the instruments.

2.4.4.1 Sixteen personality factor questionnaire (16PF)

The 16PF (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003) resulted from Cattell's scientific research on the basic elements of human personality in the context of ability, motivation and personality. Cattell distinguished 15 first order personality factors which he arranged according to the highest validity and predictability and therefore named it according to the letters of the alphabet (**A-O**) (Van Rooyen, 2006). Furthermore, he added four factors he regarded as significant in the context of everyday functioning and labelled them the **Q-factors (Q1-4)**. However, based on continuous research, Cattell determined that factors **D, J** and **K** were not replicable for adults and thus chose to subsequently omit them from his questionnaire (Pervin & John, 2001). By means of correlation studies, Cattell derived second order factors from the 16 first order factors, each of which comprised of a combination of a selection of the first order factors.

The five major second order factors identified by Cattell are extroversion, anxiety, cortertia, independence and sociopathy, which can be employed to enrich inferences drawn from the results of the sixteen first order factors (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). These non-threatening, simple (5th grade reading level) test items reflect a comprehensive understanding of the 16 personality dimensions identified in Cattell's multilevel model (Russell & Karol, 2002). Although some critics believe that Cattell's cognitive ability scale is brief (Lord, 1999), I regard the extent of the scale as sufficient for the purpose of this study. In the next sub-sections I provide an overview of the 16PF in more detail.

2.4.4.1.1 First order factors of the 16PF

Figure 2.1 provides an overview of the first order factors of the 16PF. These factors provide the 16 dimensions Cattell considered in his attempt to understand the phenomenon called personality. I utilise these factors in my academic endeavour to understand the potential effect of sudden loss on the personality structures of the participating family. As background to my own understanding and interpretation of the results I obtained, I unpack the meaning of the 16 personality factors in the paragraphs following Figure 2.1.

	PRIMARY SCALES	Low Score Description	High Score Description		PRIMARY SCALES	Low Score Description	High Score Description
A	Warmth	Reserved	Outgoing	L	Vigilance	Trusting	Suspicious
B	Reasoning	Less Abstract	Abstract	M	Abstractedness	Practical	Imaginative
C	Emotional Stability	Affected by Feelings	Emotionally Stable	N	Privateness	Forthright	Shrewd
E	Dominance	Humble	Assertive	O	Apprehension	Placid	Apprehensive
F	Liveliness	Sober	Happy-Go-Lucky	Q1	Openness To Change	Conservative	Experimenting
G	Rule-Consciousness	Expedient	Conscientious	Q2	Self-Reliance	Group-Dependent	Self-Sufficient
H	Social Boldness	Shy	Venturesome	Q3	Perfectionism	Causal	Controlled
I	Sensitivity	Tough-Minded	Tender-Minded	Q4	Tension	Relaxed	Tense

Figure 2.1: First order factors of the 16PF (Source: Cattell & Schuerger, 2003)

Warmth (A) is the most significant dimension of Cattell's sixteen personality factors, as it has a marked influence on variability among people and an overt effect on preferred mode of conduct (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). The descriptors of **Warmth** range from being reserved, aloof, objective, unemotional and uncompromising (**A-**), to being caring, sympathetic, generous, expressive and attentive (**A+**) (Karson, Karson & O'Dell, 1997). This dimension of personality plays an essential role in the so-called Big Five³¹, where it indicates an individual preference to move towards others in an attempt to attain proximity and attention (Cattell, 2007). Within the context of sudden loss (by implication grief), both **A-** and **A+** individuals may experience intolerance for each other as the motivation for their behaviour differ. Within a close group of individuals (such as a family) it might therefore be beneficial to be aware of one another's frame of reference in order for family members to be able to draw upon each other's support, instead of allowing these differences to challenge their coping abilities.

Cattell's **Reasoning (B)** factor represents a cognitive ability measure, where lower **B** scores imply a preference for a hands-on, concrete approach and higher **B** scores indicate abstract reasoning ability,

³¹ The Big Five is also known as the second order factors or the global factors which had been constructed by means of individual combinations of the first order traits as mentioned in 2.4.4.1 (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003).

well-developed problem-solving skills and the ability to grasp intangible relationships (Van Rooyen, 2006). Within the context of this study, it is however important to take note that lower scores on this factor do not necessarily represent low reasoning ability, as lower scores on factor **B** may also be ascribed to factors such as confusion, depression, anxiety, stress, fatigue or distractibility (Mead, 1999).

The spectrum of attributes spanning the **Emotional Stability (C)** factor ranges from being reactive, temperamental and easily upset (**C-**); to being calm, even-tempered and emotionally resilient (**C+**) (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). Extremely high **C** scores may indicate a reluctance to acknowledge anxieties and conflicts or an unwillingness to admit experiencing difficulties of any kind (Scherrer *et al.*, 2004), whereas low **C** scores may indicate a “cry for help” (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). Karson *et al.* (1997) mention that life events and temporary stressors may influence **Emotional Stability**, resulting in the obtained score not reflecting a characteristic way of responding. As the ego will have a significant impact on the **C** score, high **C** scores could indicate that an individual is likely to confront problems realistically and work productively towards solutions (Lord, 1999). This can be regarded as a latent strength which can be drawn upon by others (like family members) who do not display emotional stability in a certain situation, such as the period following the sudden loss of a child/sibling.

Dominance (E) implies qualities such as assertiveness and persistence, with the possibility that individuals who obtain high scores (**E+**) tend to think autonomously, criticise freely and even act harshly if politeness does not suffice. Mead (1999) describes **E+** individuals as competitive, persuasive, yet at times even rebellious individuals whom tend to be outspoken and influential. On the other hand, **E-** scores imply being cooperative, accommodating and agreeable, therefore shying away from conflict and sometimes falling prey to manipulation by others (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). **E-** individuals are often unwilling to express their ideas and make statements, thereby disowning their anger as they are unable to vent (Maddi, 1996). They might keep their emotions to themselves, but then unexpectedly have an outburst surprising those around them (Lord, 1999). Within the context of a family, individuals who are overly dominant may (unknowingly) suppress those who tend to be more submissive.

Factor **F**, **Liveliness**, ranges from being serious, restrained, introspective, reliable and careful (**F-**) to being lively, animated, spontaneous, alert, excitement-seeking and impulsive (**F+**) (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). **F-** individuals tend to display a quiet, reflective and aloof demeanour. With their self-restraint and inhibition they are more prone to experience pressure and allow themselves to be bound by routine (Cattell, 1989). Conversely, **F+** individuals thrive in groups and actively participate in activities; yet,

they often find it difficult to focus on deeper issues, may lack insight and may externalise their feelings when challenging circumstances dampen their internal locus of control (Mead, 1999).

Factor **G**, **Rule-Consciousness**, measures the degree to which individuals have been conditioned to conform to group ideals and how well they understand the rules of the social game humanity engages in (Scherrer *et al.*, 2004). Extreme group conformity (either being expedient, careless and non-conforming, *i.e.* **G-**, or, on the other hand, rule-conscious, conscientious and dutiful, *i.e.* **G+**) coupled with poor impulse control, may give rise to behaviour difficulties (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003).

The scope of **Social Boldness (H)** ranges from being shy, timid, modest, sensitive and tense (**H-**) to being adventurous, bold, resilient and gregarious (**H+**) (Lord, 1999). **H-** individuals may find it difficult to allow others in their private space because they are hesitant and sensitive to feedback. In contrast, **H+** individuals are inclined to prefer superficial interactions as they may choose to maintain a social facade rather than to engage on a deeper level (Karson *et al.*, 1997). Furthermore, **H+** individuals may be perceived to be insensitive to others' feelings and may even ignore their own feelings, oblivious to the fact that they behave in a manner that seems immune to the normal pressures of socialisation and conformity (Scherrer *et al.*, 2004).

Sensitivities and sensibilities are measured on the **Sensitivity (I)** scale (Cattell, 1989). Low scorers (**I-**) are tough-minded, factual, self-reliant, objective, distrustful and practical, whereas high scorers (**I+**) are gracious, intuitive, aesthetic, sentimental and more reliant (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). **I-** individuals characteristically do not seek help unless they are compelled to do so by significant others, whereas **I+** individuals respond well to a sensitive, supportive, accepting environment (Mead, 1999).

Factor **L**, **Vigilance**, measures the tendency to trust others' motives and intentions and is influenced by one's response to life circumstances, such as major triumphs or devastating losses (Karson *et al.*, 1997). Low scorers (**L-**) tend to trust others; are rather tolerant; appreciate being treated fairly and value loyalty (Cattell, 1989). Scherrer *et al.* (2004) warn that even though **L-** individuals represent interpersonal ease in their adaptability, they may lack wariness – even in situations that warrant it. On the contrary, high scorers (**L+**) are distrustful, sceptical, critical and not easily convinced. In anticipation of being misunderstood by others, they approach interactions by looking for hidden meanings and ulterior motives (Lord, 1999). As such, their negative expectations may cause them to come across as oppositional and unapproachable (Mead, 1999), which may, in turn, reflect their personal boundaries hiding possible insecurity about themselves (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003).

Factor **M** focuses on that which individuals think about and give attention to (Cattell, 1989). **Abstractedness** ranges from being grounded, solution-oriented, conventional and unimaginative to being artistic, absorbed in ideas and having a rich inner life (Scherrer *et al.*, 2004). Whereas low scorers (**M-**) are inclined to concentrate on the “here and now”, high scorers (**M+**) prefer to focus on the bigger picture (Mead, 1999).

Privateness (N) determines whether or not self-disclosure is a part of an individual's orientation towards others (Lord, 1999). **N-** individuals are self-revealing, unpretentious, warm and emotionally involved (Scherrer *et al.*, 2004). However, their naïveté may predispose them to exploitation if they refrain from censoring their intimate thoughts. Furthermore, **N-** individuals' forthright approach may limit their insight into others' reactions and may consequently create the perception that they lack social sophistication (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). Conversely, **N+** individuals are generally sharp-witted, private, discrete, socially aware, worldly astute, calculating and emotionally detached (Cattell, 1989). Extremely high scorers may avoid sharing personal information, thereby severely limiting any possibility to socialise and interact (Lord, 1999).

Factor **O**, **Apprehension**, extends from self-assured and untroubled (**O-**) to insecurity, guilt-proneness and being apprehensive (**O+**) (Scherrer *et al.*, 2004). This scale is especially insightful in terms of worrisome anxiousness and guilt, with extremes on this scale signalling possible disturbance. A state of being totally untroubled (**O-**) may raise questions regarding superego controls, whereas excessive worry (**O+**) creates a problem with overwhelming guilt (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003).

Openness to Change (Q1) refers to constructive reform, where low scorers (**Q1-**) prefer a traditional approach and to maintain the status quo, thus being resistant and especially insecure in the context of change (Scherrer *et al.*, 2004). **Q1-** individuals might therefore struggle to make the necessary adjustments when attempting to incorporate new coping strategies if the ones they previously employed no longer suffice (Karson *et al.*, 1997). In contrast, high scorers (**Q1+**) are experimenting, free-thinking, open-minded and questioning. They are willing to take some risks in exchange for the acquisition of gains (Lord, 1999). As the ability to cope with change can be regarded as important when dealing with sudden loss, research in this area could add to the body of knowledge on the potential effect (changes) that might occur after sudden loss.

Self-reliance (Q2) indicates whether individuals prefer company, others' input and belonging (**Q2-**), as opposed to being self-reliant, autonomous and withdrawn (**Q2+**). **Q2+** individuals generally dislike

collaborative, help-seeking conduct and may therefore be expected to be less keen to join support groups when facing difficulties (Karson *et al.*, 1997). In the case of sudden loss, they may draw into themselves in an attempt to work through their personal experience, whereas **Q2-** individuals may actively seek others' opinions, in fear of becoming lonely and secluded (Cattell, 1989). Subsequently, communication between **Q2-** and **Q2+** individuals is important when facing difficulties within a group (such as a family) in an attempt to minimise potential misunderstanding. Once **Q2-** individuals understand that **Q2+** individuals are withdrawing for intrapersonal reasons, they might feel less offended. Furthermore, an awareness of the perception of inaccessibility they might create, may cause **Q2+** individuals to monitor their behaviour so that they are available – even to a limited extent – to the rest of the family.

Perfectionism (Q3) represents the level of structure and preference to pursue goals in a meticulous manner by falling back on strength of will, moderation and impulse-control (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). **Q3+** individuals prefer predictability because they plan ahead and attempt to channel their energy into constructive, goal-oriented activities (Lord, 1999), whereas **Q3-** individuals show a preference for a casual, carefree existence and are more able to adapt to changing circumstances (Maddi, 1996).

Tension (Q4) is associated with worry and anxiety. This scale ranges from tranquil, composed, patient behaviour with low drive and ambition (**Q4-**) to tenseness, impatience, being driven, goal-oriented and frustrated (**Q4+**) (Karson *et al.*, 1997). Extreme **Q4** scores may reveal an enduring transitory state in reaction to a current reality the individual has to deal with. Cattell (1989) therefore emphasises the importance of locating the source of extreme scores in order to address concerns. The fact that **Q4** scores may reflect an individual's conscious self-concept or how the individual wants to appear, should be taken into account when considering this factor (Mead, 1999). Furthermore, **Q4-** scorers may want to indicate that they are not ready to acknowledge their stress, whereas **Q4+** scorers may convey high distress and need for assistance. As this score can be manipulated, it is important to consider the results against the Impression Management Scale³² (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003).

2.4.4.1.2 Typical patterns amongst the 16 personality factors

The 16PF focuses on the assessment of personality as a whole, analysing so-called source traits underlying observable surface traits – with both groups of traits being building blocks of personality (Conn & Rieke, 1994). I believe that my study might contribute to existing literature by providing some

³² This scale "... provides information about the extent to which test takers are attempting to present a socially desirable persona" (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003:242).

insight into how sudden loss might affect the individual personality structures of family members who have suffered the sudden loss of a child/sibling in terms of (amongst others) the traits as identified by Cattell. In addition to the separate traits discussed in the previous section, insight into distinct patterns amongst the 16 personality factors may be valuable in understanding individuals' personality structures when dealing with sudden loss, as indicated by Cattell (1989) and Cattell and Schuerger (2003). Figure 2.2 provides an overview of typical patterns amongst the 16 personality factors.

A+ H- I+	Warm, sweet, soft-hearted and generous.	A- F+	Mercurial, changeable and unpredictable in relationships.
L+ O-	Arrogant and grandiose, projecting tensions onto others.	A+ E-	Low assertiveness, countered by friendliness, adaptability and approval-seeking.
C+ L+ O-	Calm and confident but defensive.	I- M+	Innovative, objective individuals with a strong imagination.
C- F-	Ineffective decision-making skills.	I- M- O-	Tough, confident and practical individuals.
O+ Q2+	Withdrawal due to sense of unworthiness.	A+ N+	Private yet friendly.
G+ O+	Negative self-censure indicating classic guilt in those who have high standards of conventional morality.	E- I- L-	Accepting and accommodating with concern and compassion for others.
F- M-	Practical, serious and detail-bound.	A+ F- H-	Quiet, introverted, shy and restrained but warm.
E+ F+ H+	Impulsivity with aggressiveness.	F- O+	Energy and enthusiasm moderated by self-control.
E- F- H-	Shy and submissive individuals displaying extreme passivity.	F+ H+	Need for excitement, stimulation and attention to social interactions.
A- E+	Stubborn, domineering and indifferent to others.	C- E- H- Q3-	Ineffective problem-solving skills – an inability to act.
O+ Q3+	Shame for failing in own expectations.	B+ I+ Q3+	Creative potential with good control on fantasy activity.
C- E- Q4+	Passive but highly strung.	F- H- I+	Shy, inhibited and painfully sensitive, bottle-up feelings.
O+ Q3-	Inner tension between guilt and impulsivity, feels lack of control.	L+ Q2-	Interpersonal conflict of the approach-avoidance kind as there is tension between dependency and hypervigilance.
E+ I- L+	Aggressive and hostile in efforts to be dominant.	B+ E+ L+ Q1+	Intellectualised hostility, characterised by being argumentative, oppositional and distrusting.

Figure 2.2: Typical patterns amongst the 16 personality factors (Source: Cattell & Schuerger, 2003)

In the next sub-section I discuss the value and application of the MBTI® as an assessment instrument. I pay particular attention to the four polarities of the MBTI® in the context of sudden loss. I then turn my attention to the four factor combination, type dynamics and the role of the inferior and exaggerated function.

2.4.4.2 MBTI®

Jung's typology of personality (1971) resulted in Briggs and Myers's MBTI® personality inventory (Myers *et al.*, 1998), which comprises of Jung's two attitudes (Extraversion and Introversion) and four functions (Sensing/Intuition and Thinking/Feeling) in conjunction with Briggs and Myers's two lifestyles (Judging and Perceiving). The MBTI® focuses on preference combinations, such as temperament, attitude, communication, teamwork orientation, means of adapting to change, as well as implications on decision-making and lifestyle (Addendum E).

I regard the MBTI® as a suitable assessment instrument in the context of this study, as it enabled me to obtain an understanding of the potential effect of sudden loss on the personality structures of the participating individual family members. Indirectly, it also provided me with a means to help identify sources of conflict, improve communication patterns, aid in the identification of unique contributions to a system and recognise blind spots and areas of potential personal growth amongst the participants in the study (Van Rooyen, 2006).

In the following sub-sections I unpack the two attitudes, four functions and two lifestyles measured by the MBTI® within the context of sudden loss. In addition, I refer to the preference clarity index (pci) (Addendum F) throughout (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999), developed by Myers and Briggs to indicate how consistently an individual answers questions in accordance with the preferred pole of the dichotomy, *i.e.* **E/I; S/N; T/F; J/P**. As such, the pci generally provides information on the likelihood that a preference has been correctly reported (Van Rooyen, 2006).

2.4.4.2.1 Extraversion (E) and Introversion (I) within the context of sudden loss

Jung explains the difference between **E** and **I** vividly in terms of overt behaviour. The **E-I** dichotomy is represented by the preferred direction of energy; where an individual focuses energy and attention; as well as the means of attaining mental energy (Barger & Kirby, 2004). **E's** attain energy from the world around them, whilst **I's** show a preference for energy from contemplation of the inner world (Van Rooyen, 2006).

E's are generally outgoing, candid and cooperative³³. They usually adapt to new situations easily, form attachments spontaneously and often appear to venture forth with careless confidence into unknown situations. They are mostly face-to-face communicators who will take time to talk about whatever matters to them, as they value involvement, being heard and paid attention to (Barger & Kirby, 2004). **E's** gain energy from others; appreciate variety; work by trial and error; and favour experience as a means of gaining insight (Myers & Kirby, 1994). However, they may at times come across as over-confident, or even impulsive and indulgent (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999).

Within the context of sudden loss (implying grief), **E's** often tend to demonstrate their grief more overtly than **I's** (Noer, 1993). Their instinctual need to be heard may facilitate a narcissistic grieving

³³ Although I describe general preferences and patterns of behaviour in this section, I acknowledge the fact that preferences, behaviour and reactions in times of grief differ between individuals and cannot be generalised. This also applies to sections 2.4.4.2.2, 2.4.4.2.3 and 2.4.4.2.4.

process, as they might require even more input than before (Baron, 1998). **E's** may draw heavily upon the bereaved family's resources as their need for feedback, communication and sharing of their loss experience will generally direct their actions (Van Rooyen 2006). Their trial and error approach towards dealing with crises may also result in instability during an emotionally tender situation where other family members might choose to work through their grief in a manner of their own choosing, not allowing for outbursts (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005).

On the other end of the polarity, **I's** prefer familiar surroundings and one-on-one interactions with a few close friends, focusing their energy inward on their personal thoughts and experiences (Van Rooyen, 2006). They tend to be cautious, reflective and reserved as they prefer to keep to themselves (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). They generally think before they act and therefore value time alone as this allows them the opportunity to reflect on their innermost feelings (Baron, 1998). Although **I's** also enjoy social interaction, they need regular alone-time to recover from social encounters (Kroeger & Thuesen, 1992). However, they appreciate it when their opinions are sought and their concerns paid attention to (Barger & Kirby, 2004).

When dealing with a significant loss, **I's** may experience tension when they are expected to confront the external world (Noer, 1993). Although society might require of them to relate to others during this time, they will generally prefer to revert to their private, inner world in an attempt to work through their loss (Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005). As **I's** might feel uncomfortable discussing the personal nature of their sorrow with others, they may appear withdrawn and even unemotional (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). Some may become unapproachable as they focus their energy on their inner dealing with their loss, whereas others may put their own needs aside in an attempt to allow those who like to voice their opinions to take the stage (Fourtounas, 2003). **I's** often find therapeutic value in the expression of their grief in writing (Kruger & Thuesen, 1992) and may portray poor cohesion within a family setting during a time of grief, based on their coping mechanisms merely allowing them to deal with one crucial challenge at a time (Quenk, 2000).

A time of grief implies the potential of exacerbating the discrepancies between **E** and **I**. This may subsequently result in intra-familial conflict when **I's** become even more withdrawn and less communicative in an effort to contain their sorrow; focusing on their inner recollections and limiting their initiatives (Van Rooyen, 2006); whilst **E's** become more talkative, loud and expressive (Baron, 1998). As a result, the two different preferences may agitate those involved in times of grief.

2.4.4.2.2 Sensing (S) and Intuition (N) within the context of sudden loss

The functions **S** and **N** offer two means of taking in information and determining the type of information preferred, as well as the manner in which information is normally provided to others (Briggs Myers, 1998). As no interpretation of an experience is required, these functions imply irrational information gathering. **S's** prefer known facts, concrete information and data that were gathered directly *via* the senses (Myers & Kirby, 1994). They are generally realistic and practical; observant of actual events; and prefer working step-by-step (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999), as they conduct their daily activities in a pragmatic manner (Van Rooyen, 2006). During difficult times, **S's** would for example move beyond the figurative and into action as they need to understand the specifics of an event in order to work through it (Baron, 1998).

Sudden loss implies distinct challenges, as it is usually characterised by unanswered questions (Noer, 1993). As a result, bereaved **S's** may either become stuck in the details of the events that lead to the sudden loss or they may turn their attention to any other task that might result in them experiencing a sense of accomplishment (Quenk, 2000). This tendency needs to be considered when a bereaved seem to react apathetically, as ongoing indifference might predispose **S's** to a state of prolonged or late onset of grief, which may subsequently result in pathological grief (Baron, 1998). Furthermore, the shock of sudden loss could debilitate their efforts to deal with the reality of their circumstances (Myers & Kirby, 1994).

On the contrary, **N's** observe *via* the unconscious, by incorporating abstract ideas or associations that allow them to rely on insights, possibilities, patterns and relationships perceived from the outside, focusing on the "big picture" (Quenk, 2000). They are generally impatient with routine, as they take delight in variety and value innovation. They tend to pursue several possibilities without necessarily considering the actuality of their innovations (Van Rooyen, 2006) and become anxious when confronted with too many details (Kroeger & Thuesen, 1992). In their attempt to make sense of sudden loss, distraught **N's** may overeagerly search for alternative options and follow hunches in their search for explanations and the meaning of traumatic events (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). As the abruptness of sudden loss does not allow for imaginations or options, such an instance may serve as a catalyst for **N's** to argue with God in an attempt to work through their loss (Briggs Myers, 1998).

2.4.4.2.3. Thinking (T) and Feeling (F) within the context of sudden loss

Both Judging Functions (**T** and **F**) concern rational criteria preferred when making decisions and valuing perspectives (Barger & Kirby, 2004). The choice of which facts and reasoning should be considered when making important decisions, is determined by the decision-making preferences of basing judgement either on non-personal analysis and logical implications (**T**) or on personal values and the impact of the decision on those involved (**F**) (Van Rooyen, 2006). **T's** tend to analyse situations, confront challenges head-on, and address issues immediately in order to move on. They rely on cause and effect to support their reasoning and may therefore appear impersonal at times (Briggs Myers, 1998). They are usually firm-minded, logical and critical as their outlook is grounded in clear and consistent principles (Quenk, 2000). They are convinced by logic, tackle problems directly and value competence (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). Decisions are based on objective contemplation of the facts at hand. Occasionally, **T's** might be perceived as insensitive – with their defence being that they do not take things personally (Baron, 1998).

Conversely, **F's** rely on the weighing of relative values when making decisions, because they want to meet others' needs whilst showing appreciation and support (Baron, 1998). They normally avoid confrontation, hoping that problems that arise will simply go away (Kroeger & Thuesen, 1992). **F's** value the human factor; continuously strive to react tactfully and foster a need for harmony and clear, consistent values (Barger & Kirby, 2004).

During times of change, **T's** generally exhibit a calm acceptance of the circumstances by stepping back and applying “detached” logic to justify the change (Barger & Kirby, 2004). However, sudden loss might impact on their ability to remain objective, as the effect of sudden loss may lead to overwhelming emotion resulting in reactions too personal for them to disclose (Briggs Myers, 1998). **T's** may also become uncomfortable and even impatient with others' emotions during times of grief (Noer, 1993). Regardless, it is important to keep in mind that **T's** experience the same emotions as **F's**, although they often do not allow these emotions to surface, based on vulnerability that implies the possibility of them feeling out of control (Quenk, 2000).

On the other hand, **F's** have the ability to reach out to others and allow them the necessary time to process their emotions in times of sudden loss (Briggs Myers, 1998). Subsequently, compassionate **F's** may become so involved in their attempts to soothe the pain of significant others during times of grief, that they may experience feelings of neglect, over-identification, pain, misery, non-productivity and

avoidance when having to remove themselves from others' sorrow (Barger & Kirby, 2004). Furthermore, their focus on supportive interactions and harmony may force them to negate their own thoughts on loss; cause them to become stuck in sorrow; and inhibit their ability to see beyond their immediate personal turmoil which may occur at the detriment of their own consolation (Barger & Kirby, 2004). By the time **F's** realise that the nature of a sudden loss might be affecting them on a personal level, they may already have become so involved with other family members' pain that they might have intensified their own sorrow (Quenk, 2000).

2.4.4.2.4. Judging (J) and Perceiving (P) within the context of sudden loss

J's prefer living in a planned, orderly environment where they can regulate and manage their lives, schedule and plan their activities and have things settled (Quenk, 2000). They generally avoid last minute stressors by having a clear plan of action supported by defined outcomes, a time frame and a statement of priorities within the day-to-day situations they encounter (Briggs Myers, 1998). Sudden loss removes the control and leaves no opportunity to prepare for the implied changes required (Kroeger & Thuesen, 1992). Sudden loss therefore requires of **J's** to improvise and cope with unforeseen circumstances imposed upon them (Noer, 1993). This may result in them displaying behaviour such as blame, annoyance and anger towards themselves and others, to the extent that they might contaminate the family system in their attempt to control the uncontrollable (Myers & Kirby, 1994). Sudden loss goes against their preferred way of functioning (Briggs Myers, 1998); as they are required to merely accept the loss imposed upon them without being able to plan for the incident.

Conversely, **P's** tend to be flexible, spontaneous and open towards new information with which reality is understood (Baron, 1998). They seek to experience life rather than control it and adapt as they go (Quenk, 2000). They feel inhibited by structure and predictability because they prefer to stay open to new information and last minute options (Briggs Myers, 1998). As they often start projects without following through (Baron, 1998), they might experience it as challenging to resolve grief, for example in the case of sudden loss. The fact that sudden loss implies finality, without other options, may leave **P's** feeling restricted and trapped (Barger & Kirby, 2004).

Besides the focus on the four aspects discussed in the previous sub-sections, the MBTI® also pays attention to the hierarchy of the various functions. This hierarchy might be relied upon in explaining changed personality preferences (structures) that might be incurred within the context of sudden loss (Briggs Myers, 1998). In the next sub-section I explore this aspect.

2.4.4.2.5 MBTI®: four factor combination, type dynamics and development

Baron (1998) explains that each four-letter code of the MBTI® profile contains two functions, with individuals having a natural preference for one of these functions. This so-called dominant function is the most developed and relied upon function which is utilised in the preferred world of extraversion or introversion (Van Rooyen, 2006). The other function in the four-letter code serves a supporting role to the dominant function. This auxiliary function is used in a less preferred attitude, be it extraversion or introversion – thus, it is utilised in the opposite attitude of the dominant function (Quenk, 2000). The dominant and auxiliary functions work together to allow individuals to gather information; make decisions; deal with inner and outer realities; and provide balance in the personality (Baron, 1998). The process of determining each MBTI® profile's dominant and auxiliary functions works as follows:

- If the last letter of the MBTI® type is **J**, an individual will use the judgement function (**T/F**) in the external/overt world. The perception function; *i.e.* **S/I** will be utilised in the internal/covert world.
- If the last letter of the MBTI® type is **P**, an individual will use the perception function (**S/I**) in the external/overt world and the judgement function; *i.e.* **T/F** in the internal/covert world.
- If the first letter of the MBTI® type is **I**, the function used in the preferred inner world is the dominant function, with the other function being the auxiliary function.
- If the first letter of the MBTI® type is **E**, the function used in the preferred outer world is dominant, with the other being auxiliary (Baron, 1998).

It is interesting to note the purpose of the less preferred functions, *i.e.* the two that do not feature in the four-letter MBTI® code (Myers & Kirby, 1994). The opposite of the auxiliary function is known as the tertiary function, which is often not very well developed, but accessed when appropriate. The inferior function is the opposite of the dominant function; used with the opposite attitude as the dominant function (Quenk, 2000). Baron (1998) explains that the inferior function receives the least amount of attention as it is difficult to use this function consciously. It thus tends to appear repressed and under-developed under normal conditions. However, during times of crises, these adaptive functions come to the fore.

The four functions of the MBTI® are therefore relied upon by individuals in a certain hierarchy, though not always with equal comfort and energy (Quenk, 2000). An understanding of the hierarchy of functions suggests the expected stress reactions of individuals, which may involve the exaggeration of the dominant function or – under extreme stress – the so-called “*In the Grip*” experience, where individuals draw on their inferior functions as a last resort to manage stress (Briggs Myers, 1998:35).

Quenk (2000:1) explains the “*In the Grip*” experience as the out-of-character selves encountered in response to challenging situations that might result in severe stress. Falling into the grip of the inferior function is most likely to coincide with conscious energy being at a lower level, which allows the unconscious energy of the inferior function to emerge (Barger & Kirby, 2004). Quenk (2000) lists fatigue; illness; physical or psychological stress; alcohol and mind-altering drugs; as well as life-altering transitions (such as grieving the sudden loss of a loved one) as common triggers of the inferior function. The author explains that the purpose of the inferior function experience is directly related to the unconscious as an invaluable source of information which may enhance development.

When behaviour or attitude is intensely one-sided, the opposite energy in the unconscious becomes equally severe (Briggs Myers, 1998). In due course, the extreme unconscious energy may erupt in an exaggerated, disquieting manner. This means that a flare-up of the inferior function usually compensates for the over-use of the preferred functions (Baron, 1998). In this context, projection consists of attributing unacknowledged aspects of the self to others in an attempt to rid the self of unpleasant, unconscious self-knowledge (Thompson & Rudolph, 2000). This mechanism can be self-reinforcing; as it may cause individuals to behave in such a manner that they actually evoke the very behaviour that they are accusing others of (Harré, 2006). Quenk (2000) stresses that projection of the inferior function is often the first response to an imminent outburst of the unconscious.

Trauma, such as the sudden death of a loved one, may firstly force bereaved individuals to manage their crisis by relying on their dominant functions (Michaels Hollander, 2004). However, if this attempt at bridging reality fails, bereaved individuals may resort to their inferior functions in order to cope (Briggs Myers, 1998; Van Rensburg & Simpson, 2003). As such, the inferior function may serve as an autonomous feature of the psyche that relies on compensation and projection for self-regulation (Barger & Kirby, 2004). Prolonged usage of this inferior function may eventually portray a bereft individual with a change in personality preferences, and ultimately, personality structure (Diclemente, 1994; Duggan, 2004; Elder & O’Rand, 1995; Helson & Wink, 1993; Jones & Meredith, 1996; Krueger & Heckhausen, 1993; McGue, Bacon & Lykken, 1993) – either gradually (Clausen, 1993; Helson & Stewart, 1994), or more abruptly (Ardelt, 2000; Baumeister, 1994; Miller & C’deBaca, 1994).

As the typologies ISTJ, ISFJ, ESFP and ESTP imply **N as inferior function** (Briggs Myers, 1998), these individuals may often see life as gloomy and consequently feel trapped when suffering intense stress. Such feelings may be intensified when they experience an “end of the world” impression due to the negative events they are confronted with. They may subsequently experience feelings of

hopelessness and a state of denial which may cause them to inappropriately attribute meaning to certain events (Myers & Kirby, 1994). Once a state of equilibrium is restored, those with intuition as inferior function may feel ridiculous for having reacted in a preposterous manner (Van Rooyen, 2006).

In the case of **S being the inferior function**, INTJ's, INFJ's, ENFP's and ENTP's may tend to overdo things when coping with difficulties by becoming overly detail-bound and preoccupied with irrelevant facts (Barger & Kirby, 2004). They may revert to making long lists, overindulging in sensual pleasures – such as over-eating, getting stuck on the internet, watching unimportant television programmes and drinking too much (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). Their state of “mania” might further be complicated by an involuntary focus on gathering information and/or obsessive cleaning rituals. Furthermore, they might start suffering from an almost hypersensitive awareness of the body (Briggs Myers, 1998). Once the state of crisis has passed, those with sensing as inferior function may feel frustrated with their preoccupation and over-indulgence (Van Rooyen, 2006).

With INTP's, ISTP's, ESTJ's and ENTJ's, **F is the inferior function** (Myers *et al.*, 1998). During challenging times these individuals may become hypersensitive to inner states; take criticism highly personally; feel worthless or taken for granted; and suffer unrealistic feelings of guilt (Baron, 1998). This may cause them to feel isolated and unloved; resulting in them demanding attention (Quenk, 2000). Upon the restoration of rationality, those with feeling as inferior function may feel embarrassed by their hypersensitivity and emotionality (Barger & Kirby, 2004).

As **T serves as the inferior function** with the typologies of ISFP, INFP, ESFJ and ENFJ, individuals with these typologies generally become tougher when experiencing strain, which may result in them demanding blame to be allocated (Baron, 1998). They may hand out excessive, uncalled for criticism, treating individuals impersonally and making random judgements of incompetence (Van Rooyen, 2006). In times of crises, they may resort to compulsive searches for the truth which may result in excessive, fault-finding analysis. These traits may result in them being difficult to cope with within the context of a family suffering loss (Myers & Kirby, 1994). Upon reflection, those with thinking as an inferior function may feel guilty for having lost control and having lashed out at unsuspecting, innocent bystanders and significant others (Quenk, 2000).

According to Quenk (2000), most competent adults are presumed to have developed the necessary skills and levels of maturity to allow them to utilise their mental processes appropriately under normal conditions *i.e.* when the environment is reasonably supportive. Myers *et al.* (1998) reason that stressful

situations may however result in individuals investing energy in their dominant function in an effort to manage the stress they experience, as these “best parts” of the selves usually support individuals to function more effectively (Barger & Kirby, 2004). If stress continues to further escalate, the dominant function may in turn become overextended and unyielding to the extent that an investment of more energy into this function can be counterproductive; ultimately resulting in so-called type exaggeration³⁴ (Noer, 1993). Type exaggeration is likely to occur at the detriment of significant others and might also inhibit the optimum functioning of the individual (Myers & Kirby, 1994). As such, individuals experiencing an exaggerated state, tend to access information that is distorted; might experience an unbalanced judgement (albeit temporary) and could suffer compromised ability to plan and follow through on their plans (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999).

2.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter I focused my attention on understanding the phenomenon of personality and the possibility of personality change within the context of sudden loss. In exploring the phenomenon of personality, I specifically attended to the theories of Jung (1971) and Cattell (1946), as their theories support the assessment instruments I chose to utilise for the purpose of my study. Next, I attended to the debate on personality being a stable or changing construct. I then turned my attention to the assessment of personality and discussed the significance of the MBTI® and the 16PF, being the instruments I selected for the quantitative component of my study.

In the next chapter I describe the empirical study I conducted. I explain my methodological choices by relating them to the research questions and the purpose of my study, as formulated in chapter I.

³⁴ Type exaggeration therefore refers to the over-utilisation of the dominant function as this trusted, conscious mode of functioning is usually a helpful aid when endeavouring to function optimally (Myers *et al.*, 1998).

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

*“Not everything that can be counted counts,
And not everything counts that can be counted”*
(Albert Einstein as cited in Patton 2002:12).

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter I explored the phenomenon of personality. I discussed the theories of Cattell (1989) and Jung (1971); and then paid attention to personality within the context of sudden loss. I specifically considered whether or not personality is a stable construct. Thereafter, I discussed the assessment of personality, referring to the MBTI® and the 16PF as assessment instruments, as background to the personality assessment which formed part of the empirical study I undertook. In this chapter, I discuss my research in terms of my selected paradigmatic approach, research design and research methodology. I further describe the quality criteria I endeavoured to uphold as well as the ethical considerations I adhered to in undertaking the study.

3.2 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002:6) describe paradigms as “... *all-encompassing systems of interrelated practice and thinking that define for researchers the nature of their enquiry...*” A research paradigm is determined by three dimensions, namely ontology, epistemology and methodology. Ontology involves the nature of reality and what can be known about it; whilst epistemology refers to the nature of the association between the researcher and that which can be known. Methodology addresses the method of obtaining knowledge or an understanding of what is sought (Adams, Collair, Oswald & Perold, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 2000). For the purpose of this research I relied upon a POST-POSITIVIST-interpretivist paradigm, combining the QUANTITATIVE and qualitative methodological approaches, collectively referred to as a mixed method approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). In the next sections I discuss these choices in more detail.

3.2.1 META-THEORY

I primarily relied upon the POST-POSITIVIST paradigm to test the hypothesis that the sudden loss of a family member might affect the personality structures of those left behind (Creswell, 2005). Secondly, I selected an interpretivist paradigm as supportive philosophy, thereby providing the research participants with a “voice” and the opportunity to express their experiences by means of individual metaphors (Benner, 1994). Therefore, as a POST-POSITIVIST researcher, I firstly sought to test a hypothesis and establish a probable truth. Supplementary to this, as an interpretivist, I incorporated qualitative data aiming at an in-depth understanding of the embedded meaning that formed the background to the quantitative data I obtained (Creswell, 2005).

To me, the main advantage of this particular combination of paradigms was that the potential limitations of the one could be addressed by the strengths of the other. For example, whereas POST-POSITIVISM tends to neglect the holistic truth/person by studying its parts, one of the strengths of Interpretivism lies in its focus on multiple realities and holism (Ford-Gilboe, Campbell & Bermann, 1995). In addition, the potential loss of objectivity which might limit Interpretivism (Allen, 1985) could be dealt with *via* POST-POSITIVIST quantitative data (obtained by means of a questionnaire and inventory) that relies on precision, with the purpose of achieving credibility (Letourneau & Allen, 1999). As such, a POST-POSITIVIST-interpretivist approach seemed an appropriate choice within the context of exploring the potential affect of sudden death of a significant other on the personality structures of those left behind. In the following paragraphs I state the advantages and challenges I encountered based on the paradigmatic choice I made.

POST-POSITIVISTS support critical realism in concurring that reality does exist, but can only be known partly due to the boundaries imposed by researchers' human limitations (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). As such, POST-POSITIVIST researchers are able to discover "reality" within a particular domain of probability, therefore negating the possibility to "prove" or strengthen theory (Mertens, 1998). This paradigm strives for objectivity by meticulously following the prescribed procedures of instruments/questionnaires in maintaining neutrality. Consequently, POST-POSITIVIST researchers prevent values and predispositions to influence the data collection and research results obtained (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The underlying philosophy of POST-POSITIVISM implies that causes probably determine outcomes. Within the context of this study such a belief suggests that change in personality features may occur subsequent to having suffered sudden loss of a child/sibling. The POST-POSITIVIST obtains knowledge through careful measurement as it is believed that empirical evidence will make it possible to differentiate between plausible claims (Creswell, 2003). In this study, I relied upon pre- and post assessments of personality (by means of standardised instruments) in an attempt to "measure" the suspected change in personality brought about by sudden loss. As such, I was able to strive for objectivity by relying on the manuals of the MBTI® and 16PF for the administration and scoring of the measures; and then seeking my supervisor's assistance regarding the interpretation of the scores at the hand of existing documents on the instruments (Mertens, 1998).

Even though I regarded the principles of POST-POSITIVISM as crucial in obtaining the raw data for my study, I strove to obtain multi-faceted research outcomes by incorporating Interpretivism as a

subordinate paradigm. In addition to the quest for objectivity, Interpretivism allowed me to obtain an understanding by attempting to interpret the intersubjective world of the participants in terms of their experiences of the sudden loss (Clough, 1998). According to Benner (1994), interpretivist inquiry is a means to appreciate, amplify and understand the voices of research participants. As an interpretive researcher, I could thus enter into the meaning-making world of the participants with an ethical commitment to respect their life worlds (Schwandt, 2000).

I selected an interpretivist view for the qualitative component of my study as this allowed me the freedom to acknowledge the various time- and context dependent realities that exist, which in turn supported my understanding of the personal perceptions of the participants (Cohen *et al.*, 2002). Furthermore, I did not believe that personalised information on the individual participants' sudden loss experience could be attained *via* quantitative measures only (Patton, 2002). To authenticate the participants' meaning-making of the trauma they experienced, I regarded it as necessary to rely on their self-understanding of the loss experience which was reconstructed by means of personal metaphors (Weaver & Olson, 2005). As such, the qualitative data obtained from the metaphors added depth to the quantitative results I obtained (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). However, I continually endeavoured to objectify what I interpreted (Schwandt, 2000). This required of me to guard against the potential influence of my personal history and predispositions on sudden loss that could potentially constrain my understanding of what I observed and measured.

3.2.2 METHODOLOGICAL PARADIGM

I followed a QUANTITATIVE/qualitative methodological approach. This encompassing mixed method approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) enabled me to capitalise on the advantages of both the QUANTITATIVE and qualitative approaches, as it utilises data collection associated with both forms of data (Creswell, 2003). To me, a mixed method approach represented a multiplicity of views which enabled me to answer my research questions to the best of my ability (Creswell, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). By combining the QUANTITATIVE and qualitative approaches, I was able to confirm, cross-validate and corroborate my findings within a single study (Morgan, 1998). Figure 3.1 provides a schematic presentation of the various components of the mixed method research approach I selected, labelled as a *concurrent nested mixed method approach* by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003).

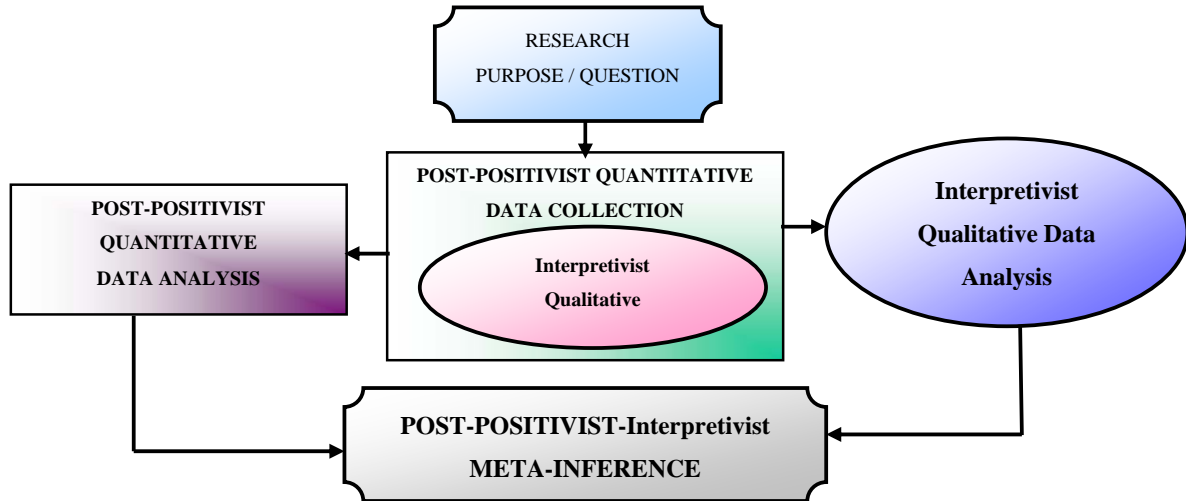


Figure 3.1: Concurrent nested mixed model research approach

(Adapted from Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003:688)

The deployment of both QUANTITATIVE and qualitative measures allowed me to facilitate the expression of diverse perspectives in an attempt to gain comprehensive insight into the participants' sudden loss experiences and the potential changes in personality structures that might have followed (Creswell, 2003). The dual nature of the mixed method approach allowed for the simultaneous collection of two types of data during the data collection phase, as well as the integration of data during the analysis phase (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). The selected *concurrent nested mixed model approach* therefore facilitated a process whereby the strengths of the one set of data could compensate for the weaknesses inherent in the other, consequently facilitating advanced perspectives (Creswell, 2003). The interpretation of the results and findings I subsequently reached, may either strengthen the knowledge claims of this study or explain any lack of convergence that could result (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

Despite the advantages of a mixed method approach, I faced certain challenges based on this choice. Firstly, I found it challenging to gain an understanding of the phenomenon I explored *via* a combination of QUANTITATIVE and qualitative strategies (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). I attempted to address the challenge by continuously discussing the combining of the two approaches with my supervisor. Next, it took some effort to integrate the results of the two sources of raw data (Morgan, 1998). For this purpose, I was guided by a thorough study of research methodology and monitored by my supervisor, whom possesses knowledge and experience in data analysis of the instruments I utilised. Lastly, I found it challenging that the two methodological approaches were unequal in priority, as I was concerned that this could result in disparate evidence which may be a cause of concern in the

interpretation of the results (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). However, it was the possibility of this very inequality that eventually guided me in allocating proportionate time and energy to my selected approach and its two main components.

3.3 RESEARCH PROCESS

Figure 3.2 provides an overview of the research process I employed, as an introduction to my discussion of the various components in the following sections.

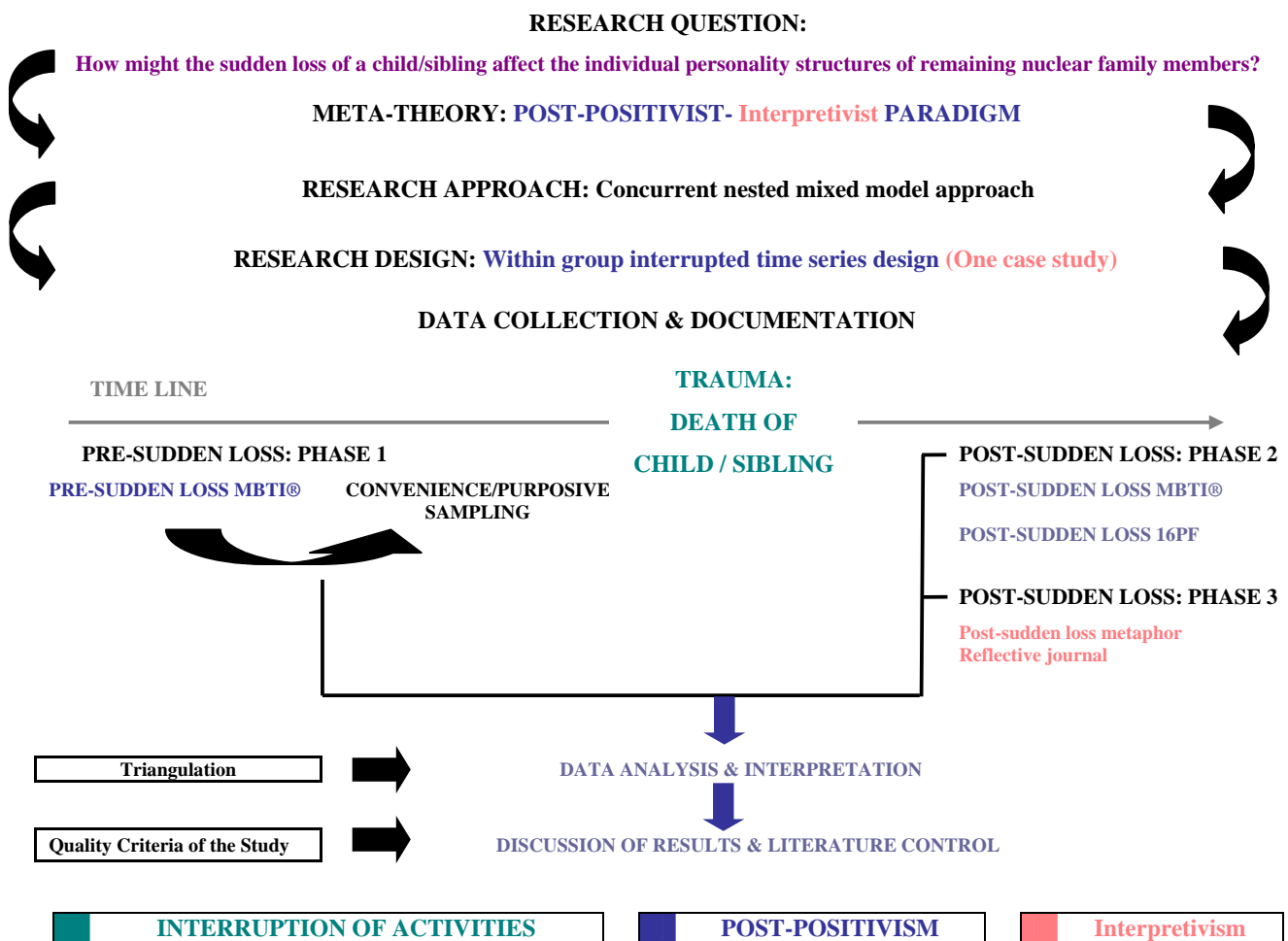


Figure 3.2: Schematic presentation of the research process

3.3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Mouton (2001), a research design is the blueprint of how one intends to conduct research. Durrheim (1999) supports this description in viewing a research design as a strategic, coherent framework for action that serves as a bridge between the research question and the execution of the research. I selected an adapted form of the *within group interrupted time series design* for the purpose of this study. To me, this design firstly implied the collection of quantitative data both pre- and post-sudden loss³⁵. For the pre-sudden loss component I relied upon MBTI® assessments of the participants conducted by a clinical psychologist in August 2005 at a family enrichment programme hosted by the participating family's church (phase 1 of the data collection). For phase two of the data collection, I conducted post-sudden loss 16PF (April 2006) and MBTI® assessments (May 2006) with the participants. I relied upon the selected questionnaire and inventory in an attempt to address my research question, thereby determining whether or not the predicted expectations of the research hypothesis proved to be true (Creswell, 2003). In addition, the qualitative component of my study (phase three of the data collection) required that each of the research participants compile a metaphor on their sudden loss experience, in this manner supplementing my primary selected research design with the advantages implied by a case study design (typically used in qualitative studies).

Creswell (2005:302) explains that the *within group interrupted time series design* consists of "... studying one group, obtaining pre-test measures for a period of time, administering an intervention (or interrupting the activities), and then measuring outcomes (or post-tests) several times". Although my study did not involve an intervention, I selected an adapted form of this design in undertaking my research. My study namely involved the investigation of a phenomenon within one group (a nuclear family) or "case" (qualitative nuance) with the aid of an MBTI® as a pre-test measure. Instead of an intervention, the nuclear family's existence was interrupted by the sudden death of their child/sibling. Within a year after the traumatic incident, the same group (nuclear family) or "case" was reassessed in terms of the MBTI® and 16PF questionnaire. The *within group interrupted time series design* implies regulation in terms of internal validity (Creswell, 2005). As all of the research participants were eighteen or older, I did not, however, consider their levels of maturation as a threat to internal validity. Given that only one group ("case") was studied and no participant decided to withdraw, I also regard the potential concern of selection and treatment as irrelevant within the context of my study.

³⁵ Ardelt (2000) remarks that it would be ideal to study personality before and after drastic changes in participants' social environments. She mentions, however, that it is generally not known when unforeseen changes in the social environment will occur. Yet, the unique circumstances of the selected family allowed the conditions Ardelt calls for.

My selected research design is congruent with the aim of identifying commonalities in an attempt to infer the possibility of a causal relationship between the potential effect of sudden death on the personality structures of those left behind. Although I am aware of the fact that a small sample size makes generalisability difficult, my decision to partially approach the study from an interpretivist stance implied an in-depth study of one selected case (nuclear family) and not the generalisation of findings or comparison with a control group (Mouton, 2001). I merely aimed at gaining a comprehensive understanding of the potential effect of sudden loss on the dynamic equilibrium of one nuclear family, in terms of the individual family members' personality structures. Yet, the fact that both the MBTI® and the 16PF had been standardised on the South African population, substantially enhanced the reliability and validity of these measures, as utilised during my study.

As I focused on one case (nuclear family) within the *within group interrupted time series research design*, I could also draw on the advantages of case study designs. In this manner, my investigation of a social phenomenon, involving one nuclear family ("case") allowed me a close view of the lived experiences of the research participants (Babbie, 2001). By including a metaphor as data collection strategy, I thus had the opportunity to obtain rich descriptions of qualitative data; thereby gaining an in-depth understanding of the perceptions of the participants (Cohen *et al.*, 2002; Mouton, 2001). As such, I could rely on qualitative measures to either substantiate or contradict the QUANTITATIVE data I obtained by means of a questionnaire (16PF) and an inventory (MBTI®).

3.3.2 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

I purposefully selected one nuclear family, consisting of five family members, for the purpose of this study (Black, 1999). I relied upon the following prerequisite selection criteria (Merriam, 1998; Neuman, 1997; Vaughn, Schumm & Sinagub, 1996):

- The participating family had to be a nuclear family, consisting of at least four members, whom had suffered the sudden loss of a child/sibling within a year prior to my research.
- The loss had to be the first trauma of such magnitude experienced by the particular family.
- Participating siblings had to be eighteen or older, as their input was based on self-knowledge and self-reflection that ought to be relatively stable after the age of eighteen.
- The family had to be headed by the biological parents of the surviving siblings and the deceased child.

- MBTI® profiles for all participating family members as obtained prior to the loss of the family member³⁶ had to be accessible.
- All members had to consent to participate in the study.

The family I selected participated in a family enrichment programme in the year before they experienced sudden loss. Due to the fact that I am a member at the church where the family enrichment programme had been facilitated, my method of selecting the participants might therefore also be regarded as convenience by nature.

The research participants I subsequently selected came from a white Afrikaans speaking nuclear family of above-average socio-economic status living in Gauteng. Having formed part of the said church support group, the MBTI® had been administered within one year prior to the tragedy the participants experienced. This allowed for a comparison of the pre-sudden loss MBTI® results (collected August 2005) with the post-sudden loss 16PF and MBTI® results (obtained April and May 2006 respectively). In conjunction with the clinical psychologist who headed the support group at the church during 2005, informed consent was obtained from the participants for participation in this research project (Addendum B). Informed consent firstly involved permission to utilise the nuclear family's pre-sudden loss MBTI® profiles. Secondly, by means of informed consent, the participants agreed to partake in the post-sudden loss personality assessments; provide me with personal metaphors on their sudden loss experience; and allow me to publish these results with the prerequisite that they remained anonymous. The father of the household conveyed the agreement to the clinical psychologist whom had conducted the initial assessments, upon which she made the pre-sudden loss MBTI® results available to me (Addendum C).

3.3.3 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES

In Figure 3.3, I summarise the phases of my data collection, before discussing the strategies I employed in more detail.

³⁶ The particular nuclear family belongs to a Dutch Reformed Church Support Group that presented a family enrichment programme during 2005. The family participated in the family enrichment programme which involved a clinical psychologist assessing and obtaining each family member's MBTI® profile in an attempt to equip family members with a user-friendly means of understanding each other and drawing on each others' strengths.

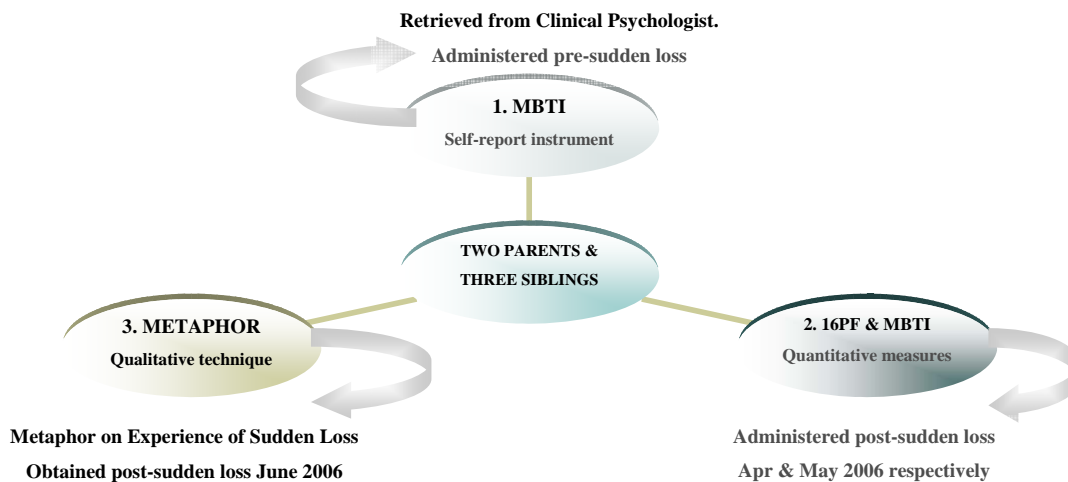


Figure 3.3: Phases in data collection

3.3.3.1 Quantitative data collection

I utilised two quantitative measures, namely the pre- and post-sudden loss MBTI® (Myers *et al.*, 1998) and the post-sudden loss 16PF (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003).

3.3.3.1.1. Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®)

The MBTI® (Myers *et al.*, 1998) is a well-researched, methodologically sound inventory for understanding personality types and preferences in an attempt to facilitate self-awareness, demonstrate how behaviour might complement or differ from others and acquire the ability to improve interpersonal relationships (Baron, 1998). This inventory holds the potential of improving self-understanding, personal growth, self-management, decision-making, conflict management, communication, cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills, especially pertaining to restoring vitality and reducing despondency in times of need (Van Rooyen, 2006).

One of the benefits of the MBTI® lies in the recognition of specific attitudes and personal preferences which underlie behaviour. As the MBTI® has proven to be valuable in the investigation of emotional issues (Quenk, 2000), I regard this instrument as suitable when considering the potential effect of sudden loss on the personality structures of bereaved family members. Furthermore, this assessment measure might provide valuable information on conflict resolution, communication patterns and the value of diversity, which might be some of the aspects a bereaved family are typically confronted with

in coming to terms with sudden loss (Kroeger & Thuesen, 1992). Within this study, the purpose of the MBTI® assessments was however not primarily aimed at determining these aspects, but rather to serve as an indicator of the preferred behaviour of the participants, ultimately allowing for a comparison of the pre- and post-sudden loss personality preferences as experienced by the nuclear family having suffered sudden loss.

In administering and interpreting the MBTI®, I adhered to the reliability and validity implied by the instrument. Reliability relates to consistency in terms of what the inventory attempts to measure (Van Rooyen, 2006) and is confirmed by split-half reliability³⁷ and test-retest assessments³⁸. In terms of validity³⁹, it is significant to note that, according to content validity, the MBTI® extensively covers the domains of Jung's theory and psychological types (Baron, 1998). Furthermore, the criterion-validity of the inventory is regarded as sound because the MBTI® provides a meaningful estimation or prediction of behaviour with consistent results (Van Rooyen, 2006). In addition, Hammer (1996) confirms that construct validity is supported by factor analysis of the instrument.

As already indicated, I utilised the MBTI® as data collection strategy during phase 1 (administered by a clinical psychologist) and phase 2 (administered by me) of my study. Repeating the instrument allowed me to subsequently compare the results of the pre- and post-sudden loss MBTI® inventories, in order to determine any changes that may have occurred. Form G of the MBTI® was utilised in both the pre- and post-sudden loss assessments. This version includes 126 items of which 94 are used to determine participants' behavioural preferences. As the participants had completed the pre-sudden loss MBTI® during August 2005, they were familiar with the instructions and lay-out of the inventory in May 2006. However, the lapse of more than six months disregarded the possibility of transference. The participants understood that they were to reflect themselves as the "*me they know themselves to be*" (Van Rooyen, 2006:36), in order to obtain the most relevant reflection of the true self as obtainable by a self report instrument. Following my analysis of the post-sudden loss MBTI® profiles, I discussed the preference clarity index (pci) with the participants (Briggs Myers, 1998).

³⁷ Split-half reliability checks the internal consistency of an assessment instrument by splitting the test items into X and Y halves and then comparing the results thereof (Baron, 1998).

³⁸ Test-retest reliability involves the usage of both continuous scores and checking reliability of results at different times of use (Van Rooyen, 2006).

³⁹ Validity pertains to how well an inventory measures what it proposed to measure and whether the results can be put to use for that which it claims to measure (Van Rooyen, 2006).

3.3.3.1.2. 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF)

In addition to the MBTI®, I conducted a post-sudden loss 16PF assessment with each participant as a second quantitative measure. My motivation for utilising this instrument was two-fold: firstly, a second standardised instrument could contribute to the validity and reliability of my findings when triangulating the data I obtained and drawing inferences; and secondly, I could rely upon the dimensions of the 16PF in interpreting the individual family members' metaphors by means of deductive analysis. I administered the 16PF during April 2006 with the participants during a joint session. Although I discussed the purpose as well as the different dimensions of the 16PF with the participants in introducing the instrument, they appeared to be more anxious than when completing the MBTI® – an instrument with which they were familiar the second time they completed the inventory. I administered and scored the 16PF myself, after which I utilised information from the manual, other related literature sources and the proficiency of my supervisor for the interpretation of the results.

The 16PF originated from Cattell's empirical quest to determine the basic structural elements of personality by means of scientific research and was originally published in 1949 (Cattell, 1989). The 16PF was standardised on 1525 South Africans (aged 18 and older), during which the following biographical variables were identified: population group, gender, study field, age and language (Maree, 2002). This personality assessment measure samples a broad range of behaviour investigating participants' behaviour in certain situations, as opposed to requesting participants to rate themselves in terms of personality traits (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). The instrument utilises non-threatening language with a standardised response format and questions are easy to understand. It is also free of gender, cultural and racial biases; and has been translated into 35 languages worldwide (Maree, 2002). The administration time for the 16PF is approximately 30-50 minutes and the supervision and scoring can be handled by a trained non-professional. Research indicates that the test-retest validity compares advantageously at both short (2 week) and long (2 month) intervals (Van Rooyen, 2006).

In terms of the potential weaknesses of this instrument, the Reasoning Scale (**B**) of the 16PF can be regarded as fairly brief. In addition, the self-report measures of the 16PF might be manipulated. Prior to administering the instrument, I therefore discussed the implication of manipulation of the self-report responses with the five participants (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003). The participants seemed to understand the possible detriment of manipulating their answers and agreed to provide authentic responses. Lastly, based on the fact that the middle answer of each question on the questionnaire (option b) can be

ambiguous (Van Rooyen, 2006), I specifically requested the participants to answer (a) or (c) as far as possible; and to only indicate option (b) when they absolutely needed to do so.

The 16PF are characterised by high intercorrelation among items as well as internal consistency reliability in terms of the degree of confidence with which administrators can interpret test scores (Barger & Kirby, 2004). The validity of the 16PF personality measure pertains to the suitability, significance and value of inferences drawn from test scores, thereby implying that the questionnaire measures what it was designed for (Maree, 2002). With regard to criterion validity⁴⁰, the 16PF has demonstrated significant consistency in the prediction of behavioural criteria like self-esteem, adjustment, interpersonal flexibility and empathy (Van Rooyen, 2006). In terms of construct validity⁴¹, the 16PF has indicated significant correlation with the Neo Personality Inventory – Revised (NEO PI-R) and also with the MBTI®, which forms part of my motivation to implement both these instruments in this research study (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003).

3.3.3.2 Qualitative data collection

Qualitative data collection implies the possibility of capturing participants' realities, thereby allowing both the researcher and the reader to gain insight into the perceptions and experiences of the research participants (Patton, 2002). In the following paragraphs, I discuss the strategies I employed for the purpose of collecting qualitative data.

3.3.3.2.1 Metaphor

I support Patton's (2002) belief that significant meaning can be conveyed by means of a metaphor. In this study I requested the participants to report on their sudden loss experience in terms of a metaphor, as this method "... bears weight, permits movement, is buried beneath the surface, and links parts together into a functional, coherent whole" (Richardson, 2000:926). By utilising metaphors, the participants were allowed to capture and document their experiences (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001), thereby providing me with a glimpse of their perceptions and personal accounts of the sudden loss the family had experienced (Kelly, 2002a).

⁴⁰ Criterion validity reflects the degree to which a questionnaire may predict behavioural criteria (Van Rooyen, 2006).

⁴¹ Construct validity refers to a set of procedures used to assess the validity of measurement, based on the extent to which test items capture the hypothetical traits they were designed to assess (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003).

Upon requesting the participants to each construct a metaphor, I made it clear to them that there were no specifications or boundaries. The participants were therefore allowed to compile their metaphors in a language of their choice, the format they preferred and as extensive or brief as they wanted to. I requested them to compile their metaphors in June 2006 and collected their metaphors one month later, allowing them ample time to gather their thoughts and formulate their experiences and emotions.

All five participants compiled metaphors in Afrikaans, which is also the family's home language. Both the father (Addendum D1) and mother (Addendum D2) presented handwritten metaphors of one paragraph each. The eldest sibling put his feelings into words in an essay format (Addendum D3); the middle sibling incorporated images to support his narrative and then sent his metaphor electronically *via* e-mail (Addendum D4); whereas the youngest sibling presented her metaphor in the form of a short message service (sms) *via* mobile phone (Addendum D5). As the use of metaphors implied the possible advantage of drawing implicit connotations embedded in the participants' choice of words, these verbal descriptions could verify the quantitative data I obtained in terms of rich descriptions of individual experiences of sudden loss (Patton, 2002). As such, the inclusion of metaphors implied the possibility of enriching my interpretation of the participants' perceptions (Richardson, 2000), using authentic descriptions to communicate meaning (Kelly, 2002b).

However, I had to remind myself to be aware not only of what was being said, but also of how the messages were communicated, for example, despondently, aggressively or even apathetically, as this could reveal suppressed emotions (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). Although I experienced the analysis and deductive inferences of the metaphors as a challenging task, I could draw on my training as an educational psychologist to meet the challenge. In addition, I relied upon Kelly's (2002a) checklist for the evaluation of an interpretive account in completing my analysis. As I merely included the metaphors as supportive data to the data I obtained from the quantitative measures I employed, I do not regard the results related to the metaphors as generalisable. Even though I decided to include metaphors as supplementary data collection technique, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the effect of sudden loss on the personality structures of individual family members, participants reported to me that the information that were contained in their metaphors had a secondary outcome. The metaphors reportedly gave rise to problem-solving, unlocked aspects of self-understanding and covered a more extensive range of life experiences than they had anticipated (Kelly, 2002a).

3.3.3.2.2. Reflective journal

Stake (2000) proposes that researchers should continually be reflexive in their thinking and actions. I kept a reflective journal (Addendum G) during my study to record my personal thoughts of the research process, especially relating to the insights I gained; the hunches I wanted to explore; and the ideas and themes that emerged during the various phases of the study (Burns, 2000). I also reflected on the research process in terms of my selection of the participants, establishing rapport with them, collecting data and analysing the data I had obtained (Kelly, 2002b). In addition, I reflected on whether or not the participants seemed comfortable disclosing their thoughts on sudden loss and to what extent I had established rapport. Throughout the research project, I considered the ethical considerations, concerns and challenges I had to face (Neuman, 1997). My reflective journal further provided me with a route to channel my personal reflections and facilitated the process of guarding against being biased due to the fact that I had also experienced the sudden loss of my youngest sibling in recent years. Lastly, my reflective journal allowed me to reflect upon the challenges I faced during my study, as well as possible strategies to address such challenges in future research.

3.3.4 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data analysis requires a systematic search for patterns and meaning in data and the consequent interpretation of these patterns in terms of a social theory or the setting in which it occurred (Hatch, 2002). My initial interest in the effect of sudden loss became apparent when I considered a seemingly abstract though logical relationship between suffering sudden loss and bereaved individuals' potential change in personality structures, which would imply deductive reasoning on a macro-level. This initial idea compelled me to test my hypothesis in terms of concrete empirical evidence (Neuman, 1997), obtained with the MBTI® (pre- and post-sudden loss), 16PF and metaphors constructed by the participants. For the deduction of the results I obtained to be credible, I had to provide evidence that is valid (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). I therefore relied upon causality for the quantitative component of my study, which required temporal order⁴², association⁴³ and the elimination of plausible alternatives⁴⁴ (Neuman, 1997).

⁴² Temporal order implies that a cause comes before an effect, thereby establishing the direction of causality (Neuman, 1997).

⁴³ Two phenomena are associated if they occur together in a patterned way or appear to act together (Neuman, 1997).

⁴⁴ "Eliminating alternatives means that a researcher interested in causality needs to show that the effect is due to a causal variable and not to something else" (Neuman, 1997:51).

Within the context of the *concurrent nested mixed model research approach* and in line with the *within group interrupted time series design* I selected, I analysed the post-sudden loss quantitative data I obtained directly after the relevant sessions of phase two of my data collection. After having interpreted the three measures of quantitative data (pre-sudden loss MBTI®, post-sudden loss MBTI® and the 16PF) separately, I compared the results I obtained. In addition, I relied upon the dimensions of the 16PF to analyse the participants' metaphors, by means of deductive analysis and in an attempt to draw inferences. As a last step of my data analysis and interpretation, I jointly interpreted the quantitative and qualitative data in terms of existing literature and by means of triangulation (Creswell, 2003). In the next sections I discuss the data analysis and interpretation procedures I employed in more detail.

3.3.4.1 Quantitative data analysis and interpretation

For the analysis and interpretation of both the MBTI® (Myers *et al.* 1998) and 16PF (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003), I relied upon the relevant manuals, related literature and the expertise of my supervisor. Subsequent to the administration, scoring, and interpretation of the MBTI® (Myers *et al.*, 1998) and 16PF (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003) conducted post-sudden loss, I compared the results with the results obtained pre-sudden loss by means of parametric data analysis techniques (Neuman, 1997). Whereas I could analyse the MBTI® results for direct comparison, the 16PF served a secondary role in providing supportive data for the MBTI® results and serving as scaffolding against which I could consider the qualitative data I obtained (Creswell, 2003).

My analysis and interpretation of the MBTI® profiles provided me with an overview of the four polarities assessed by the MBTI®, namely Extraversion (**E**) versus Introversion (**I**); Sensing (**S**) versus Intuition (**N**); Thinking (**T**) versus Feeling (**F**); and Judging (**J**) versus Perceiving (**P**). In comparing the individual pre-sudden loss MBTI® profiles with the corresponding post-sudden loss MBTI® profiles I could detect any changes in preferences, and in such cases, whether these changes represented isolated cases or were relevant to all five participants. Throughout, I relied upon the results of the 16PF as supportive to the changes I discussed.

3.3.4.2 Qualitative data analysis and interpretation

According to Mayan (2001:21), qualitative data analysis should be considered as:

“... the process of observing patterns in the data, asking questions of those patterns, constructing conjectures, deliberately collecting data from specifically selected individuals on targeted topics, confirming or refuting those conjectures, then continuing analysis, asking additional questions, seeking more data, furthering the analysis by sorting, questioning, thinking, constructing and testing conjectures, and so forth.”

I approached this study on the premise that my theory on the effect of sudden loss would suggest which evidence I would require in order to obtain the data necessary to support or reject my hypothesis (Neuman, 1997). I believed that an abstract, logical relationship existed among the quantitative and qualitative data I collected and I subsequently relied upon triangulation of the data to move towards attaining concrete empirical evidence. With the assistance of my supervisor, I thus deductively analysed the data collected by means of metaphors in terms of the dimensions of the 16PF, and – to a lesser extent and by implication – the MBTI® (Burns, 2000). In order to thematically analyse the qualitative data I obtained (refer to Addenda D 1-5), I had to immerse myself in the metaphors to gain an understanding of the participants' sudden loss experiences (Burns, 2000). After having read through the metaphors several times, I coded the qualitative data in terms of appropriate themes and categories, determined by the dimensions of the 16PF (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999).

In this manner, I could draw on qualitative data I had obtained to accentuate dominant themes derived from the quantitative data collected. Once all the data had been analysed, I interpreted my results against the background of the literature I discussed in chapter II. Throughout, I focused on triangulation of the results in my attempt to come to credible conclusions and subsequently accept or reject my initial hypothesis (Kelly, 2002b). I discuss my results and findings in the next chapter.

3.4 MY ROLE AS RESEARCHER

My role as researcher was multifaceted. For the quantitative component of my study, I had to fulfil the dual role of being both a passive participant and a psychometrist. The qualitative component primarily required that I fulfil the role of data collector, analyst and interpreter. However, at the time of my study my identity was also one of educational psychologist-in-training, posing the challenge of constantly reminding myself that I was fulfilling the role of researcher and not a professional in a supportive role. I subsequently had to rely on regular debriefing sessions with my supervisor, my reflective journal and

the support of a psychologist, my husband, family and fellow students to maintain my focus on my role as researcher.

In addition, I faced the challenge of distancing my own grief experience from the study I undertook. Despite my own experience posing a challenge in my role as researcher, the fact that the participating family was aware that I had suffered a similar loss developed reciprocity amongst us and seemed to facilitate a process whereby they more readily seemed to share their experiences with me (Mertens, 1998). Yet, based on this shared experience I constantly had to focus on maintaining a balance and striving to successfully complete my study.

Concerning my role as mixed method researcher, I had to marry the roles of being a quantitative and a qualitative researcher. On the one hand, the POST-POSITIVIST paradigm I relied upon required of me to strive for objectivity (Patton, 2002). Yet, on the other hand, based on the interpretivist paradigm I selected as supportive philosophy, I realised that objectivity is not always possible and that insight into the phenomenon under study should be my central focus. As a result, instead of a passive stance, I followed Seale's (1999:57) proposal that an "... *all-or-nothing commitment to a philosophical position (is) unwise for practising social researchers*". I therefore preferred to assume the role of a "*passive participant*" for the quantitative component of my study (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

In contrast, the qualitative component of my study required of me to take a more active stance and maximise the opportunities for collecting and producing meaningful information (Merriam, 1998). This position required of me to foster a tolerance for ambiguity, as I had no set procedures and protocols to follow in my application of the data collection strategies I selected. Based on the conditions and nature of the phenomenon I explored, I had to remain sensitive by maintaining an awareness of the timing of data-gathering activities; and potential emotions that could surface during the composition of the metaphors. As a result, I made the necessary referrals for external support when needed. In addition, the participants gave me permission to communicate any concerns I came across to the clinical psychologist they were consulting in order for them to receive the necessary guidance and counselling.

3.5 RIGOUR OF THE STUDY

Throughout this study I attempted to view the “truth”⁴⁵ – as experienced by the participating nuclear family – holistically. I aimed to remain reflective about the context of the research participants and portray their altered perspectives in a fair and authentic manner (Patton, 2002). In the following subsections I discuss the strategies I implemented and the criteria I endeavoured to meet, in my attempt to enhance the rigour of the study (Mertens, 1998).

3.5.1 EMPLOYING TRIANGULATION AS A STRATEGY FOR ENHANCING RIGOUR

Triangulation enabled me to obtain fairly comprehensive and conceivable results in merging quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis measures (Mason, 1994). This strategy further enabled me to address the limitations of the two approaches by counteracting them with the benefits of the other approach, in my attempt to validate or reject the hypothesis I formulated (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). In this manner, triangulation provided me with more substantial evidence for conclusion (Patton, 2002).

Of the four basic types of triangulation, I relied on data triangulation, *i.e.* the use of a range of data sources, as well as methodological triangulation, where I employed multiple methods to study a singular phenomenon (De Vos, 2004; Patton, 2002). I triangulated the results obtained from both the pre- and the post-sudden loss MBTI® (obtained August 2005 and May 2006 respectively) with the 16PF (obtained April 2006) and the associated themes that emerged from the metaphors. As such, I relied upon triangulation as strategy of facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study.

3.5.2 VALIDITY

“Validity means that researchers can draw meaningful and justifiable inferences from scores about a sample or population” (Creswell, 2005:600). In quantitative research, careful instrument construction is necessary to ensure that assessment instruments measure what they were intended to measure. Being standardised instruments, both the 16PF and the MBTI® meet this criterion (Vithal & Jansen, 2001). Besides following the standard guidelines for administration in my endeavour to obtain valid results and

⁴⁵ “Truth” is a debatable concept in qualitative research. As stated here, “truth” refers to the lived experience and post-traumatic reality of the nuclear family having suffered the loss of a child/sibling.

findings, I further attempted to improve the validity of the study by comparing the results of the two instruments I used, thereby verifying the results I obtained. Based on the selected quantitative measures I utilised, I am convinced that the study adheres to the requirements of face validity⁴⁶, content validity⁴⁷, criterion validity⁴⁸ and convergent validity⁴⁹ (Neuman, 1997).

As I could eliminate the potential threat of history and testing influencing results (Mertens, 1998) due to the fact that I did not administer the pre-sudden loss MBTI® myself, I believe the results to meet the criterion of internal validity. Besides the time that elapsed between the pre- and post-test reducing the potential influence of history on the results, it also reduced the potential threat of participants being “*test-wise*” (Mertens, 1998:65). In addition, the results obtained on the MBTI® were substantiated by the results of the 16PF. In terms of external validity⁵⁰, I endeavoured to provide the necessary descriptions of the participants and their contexts (Mertens, 1998). However, I attempted to understand a phenomenon rather than to generalise the findings I obtained.

Concerning the qualitative component of my study, I strove to obtain credibility⁵¹ by maintaining an awareness of the possibility of discrepancies, yet attempted to yield a rich account of the research process and the findings thereof (Patton, 2002; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). In my attempt to meet this criterion, I relied upon the assistance of my supervisor and the dimensions of the 16PF to guide me in drawing inferences from the individual family members’ metaphors on their sudden loss experience. As an interpretivist, I continually regarded connotations as highly variable across the various dimensions of intrapersonal and interpersonal functioning; and therefore did not attempt to generalise my findings (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). I rather sought transferability by means of multifaceted descriptions of the research setting and procedures, which might be considered in other studies in similar contexts (Patton, 2002). Besides these strategies, I also regularly discussed my observations and data with my supervisor (Mertens, 1998) and monitored myself by means of a reflective journal (Addendum G). I decided not to include member checks in verifying my findings, but to rather verify the content and my interpretations of the metaphors in terms of the quantitative data I obtained. This strategy proved to be valuable as existing literature and my supervisor’s guidance on interpreting the quantitative data provided insight into the personality features of the individual family

⁴⁶ Face validity implies that a study will be valid if it draws on accredited measuring instruments (Neuman, 1997).

⁴⁷ Content validity defines the content of the definition of a construct by making use of various samples to address most aspects of a definition. A combination of QUANTITATIVE and qualitative measurements is beneficial in this instance (Neuman, 1997).

⁴⁸ Comparing the results of the 16PF and the MBTI® profiles allowed this study to adhere to the requirements of concurrent validity (Neuman, 1997).

⁴⁹ As I assume that the multiple selected indicators will converge to operate in similar ways, I believe this study to adhere to convergent validity (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002).

⁵⁰ It is the researcher’s responsibility to provide a comprehensive description of the time, place, culture and context of the study in order to allow the reader sufficient background to draw the necessary inferences (Mertens, 1998).

⁵¹ Credibility requires congruence between participants’ perceptions of a phenomenon under investigation and the researcher’s portrayal of their views (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

members which they might not consciously have provided themselves (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Lastly, triangulation of the qualitative and quantitative data allowed for credible results, as this comparison could confirm consistency of evidence (Mertens, 1998).

3.5.3 RELIABILITY

“Reliability means that individual scores from an instrument should be nearly the same or stable on repeated administrations of the instrument and that they should be free from sources of measurement error and consistent” (Creswell, 2005:597). Quantitative measures work from the premise that the assessment of personality with standardised instruments should deliver stable and unchanging realities to deliver exact, irrefutable findings (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). As such, the results of the 16PF and the MBTI® pre- and post-sudden loss profiles are not supposed to vary subsequent to the characteristics of the indicators themselves (Vithal & Jansen, 2001).

Parallel to reliable findings in quantitative research, qualitative researchers propose that findings should be dependable (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). Such dependability involves the extent to which the findings did in fact transpire as the researcher reports and therefore relies on rich descriptions to substantiate the opinions reported (Patton, 2002). In utilising metaphors as qualitative data collection strategy, I attempted to elaborate on the quantitative results I obtained, thereby formulating dependable findings. Due to the limited sample group, representative reliability (Neuman, 1997) across subpopulations and groups of people is however not claimed in this study.

3.5.4 CONFIRMABILITY

Confirmability implies that data can be traced to the source and that the logic employed in the results and findings of a study are explicitly stated (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). I endeavoured to meet the criterion of confirmability by providing a thorough chain of evidence of my data collection, analysis, results, process of triangulation and integration of the findings (Mertens, 1998). The transferability of findings relied upon my description of the family whom participated in the study, thereby providing a frame of reference with regard to the potential impact of the nature of such a family context on the findings I obtained (Mertens, 1998). However, as previously stated, the purpose of this study was not to generalise findings, but rather to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. In line with the basic principles of Interpretivism, I believe that events and individuals are unique and

therefore seldom generalisable (Cohen *et al.*, 2002), even though some inferences can be made from the data obtained.

3.5.5 AUTHENTICITY

Authenticity indicates whether or not a balanced view of participants' experiences is presented in data interpretation and the findings of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). In my attempt to obtain authentic findings, I relied upon a *concurrent nested mixed model research approach* where the strengths and weaknesses of the POST-POSITIVIST and Interpretivist paradigms could complement each other and I could rely on triangulation of the data, in an attempt to ensure rigorous, trustworthy inquiry (Mertens, 1998).

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research ethics entails a collection of moral principles that imply proper conduct towards research participants (Strydom, 2004). To safeguard those who participate in research and to clarify the responsibilities of researchers, ethical principles include general guidelines for conducting research. In undertaking this study, I adhered to both the ethical guidelines of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (www.hpcsa.co.za) and the research ethics principles prescribed by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria. Throughout the study I aimed to protect the research participants' rights, welfare and dignity. In the following paragraphs, I discuss the main aspects of ethical conduct I adhered to during this study.

3.6.1 INFORMED CONSENT AND VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Conducting research on bereavement necessitated compassion, even though I fulfilled the role of researcher and not therapist. I obtained written informed consent (Addendum B) prior to commencing with my fieldwork in terms of access to and utilisation of the MBTI® results obtained prior to the sudden loss; permission to conduct post-sudden loss personality assessments (16PF and MBTI®); participant agreement to compile personal metaphors on their sudden loss experience; and finally, that the results of the study may be published on condition that the participants remain anonymous. No participant was forced to participate and participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any moment if they wished to do so (Willig, 2001). In line with the basic components of

informed consent (Neuman, 1997), the participants in this study therefore consented to voluntary participation, based on the information they received in order to make an informed decision, as well as an understanding of what their participation would involve (Babbie, 2001).

In addition, I was guided by the social code of ethics of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (www.hpcs.co.za) which opposes deception (Christians, 2000). As such, I obtained the participants' formal agreement to cooperate in the study after explaining the nature, purpose and aim of the research, the use of the results and the potential social consequences (risks and benefits) the study could have on their lives (Simon, 1999). Participants also had access to me and the clinical psychologist whom conducted the initial pre-sudden loss MBTI®, whenever inquiries or concerns arose (Cohen *et al.*, 2002).

3.6.2 PROTECTION FROM HARM

Based on the principle of beneficence, I had to ensure that the research participants were never disadvantaged by the research (Stake, 2000; Strydom, 2004). Furthermore, throughout the study I managed the research process in order for the participants not to be exposed to undue physical or psychological harm, such as embarrassment, impact on self-esteem and invasion of privacy (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). One of the potential sources of maleficence this study could pose, concerned the functioning of the family after having participated in this project (Cohen *et al.*, 2002), which I attempted to manage by discussing the outcome of the study with the individual family members after completion of the study. In addition, I referred the participants to the psychologist they were consulting whenever I felt it was necessary for their own emotional health.

3.6.3 PRIVACY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

Christians (2000:139) states that "*The single most likely source of harm in social science inquiry is the disclosure of private knowledge considered damaging by the experimental subjects*". Confidentiality implies that only I, as the researcher, would be aware of the identity of the participants and have an agreement pertaining to any efforts of maintaining confidentiality throughout the study (Strydom, 2004). In addition, anonymity implies that no one, not even I as the researcher, would be able to identify the participants at any stage during or after the research study and in my written report of the research process, results and findings (Babbie, 2001).

Due to the nature of this study, I met the participants face-to-face during data collection activities. I could therefore explain to the participants that I would rely on pseudonyms for the sake of confidentiality and anonymity, as I only refer to the participants as father, mother and sibling 1, 2, 3. As such, I could attend to the quest for non-traceability of the participants by deleting identifying information of the participants from the data, except for reporting crude categories when needed (*i.e.* year of birth instead of date of birth) (Cohen *et al.*, 2002). Throughout, I aimed to protect the participants' identities against exposure by revealing the results of the quantitative and qualitative data behind a shield of anonymity (Strydom, 2004).

3.6.4 REPORTING RESEARCH HONESTLY, FULLY AND ACCURATELY

I continually attempted to be honest, considerate, respectful and empathic towards the participants, without taking on the role of psychologist or therapist, as I recognised the potentially intrusive nature of my research within the context of a family having experienced the sudden loss of a loved one (Creswell, 2005). I believe that the data I obtained and the findings I presented are accurate, as no results have been altered in order to satisfy preconceived ideas (Creswell, 2005). With the help of my supervisor, I have continually guarded against any omissions and contradictions (Christians, 2000). Furthermore, no work have been plagiarised and I have given credit to existing literature whenever I relied upon it (Creswell, 2005). I also made a distinct effort to ensure external and internal soundness by attempting to provide a final report which is precise, objective, evident and unambiguous (Strydom, 2004).

The interpretive paradigm I selected as supplementary philosophy allowed me access to the dynamic experiences of the family members in terms of their sudden loss (Christians, 2000), even though this case study does not provide a public or scholarly "*right to know*" (Stake, 2000:447). In this regard, I continuously reminded myself to display moral sensitivity towards the participants.

3.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter, I described the empirical study I undertook. I firstly explained my selected paradigmatic perspective in conjunction with the methodological choices I made. Next, I focused on my selected research design, data collection techniques, data analysis and interpretation strategies. Throughout, I substantiated my choices in terms of my formulated hypothesis, the research questions and the purpose

of the study, as stipulated in Chapter I. To conclude, I described my role as researcher, the quality criteria I adhered to and the ethical principles I considered.

In the next chapter I present the results of the study, interpret the results I obtained and relate my results to existing literature of relevance. I focus on both supporting and contradicting indications, thereby presenting my findings.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

*“Opening and interpreting lives is very different
from opening and closing books”*

(Excerpt from Dwight Conquergood’s Play:

Performing as a Moral Act in Lincoln & Denzin, 2003:469).

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I described the paradigmatic perspective, research design, methodological approach, data analysis and interpretation processes I utilised during this study. Throughout, I justified the choices I made against the background of the following primary research question which guided the study: *How might the sudden loss of a child/sibling affect the individual personality structures of remaining nuclear family members?*

I commence this chapter with a brief overview of the research process. Hereafter, I present my results, aiming to triangulate the quantitative and qualitative data I obtained. I discuss the results in terms of the first two secondary research questions (refer to chapter I, section 1.4), focusing on the personality structures of the participating individual nuclear family members prior to and after they lost their child/sibling. I then interpret the results in terms of existing literature on the topic, thereby discussing the findings of the study in accordance with my last two secondary research questions, firstly relating to the changes that occurred in terms of the nuclear family members' individual personality structures following the sudden loss of their daughter/sister; and secondly, in terms of general tendencies that could be identified in terms of the potential effect of sudden loss resulting in change in personality structures.

4.2 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

One nuclear family participated in this research study. At the time of the first phase of data generation (August 2005), I was not part of the process, as the family was involved in a family enrichment programme, during which the MBTI® was administered with the individual family members. The data I relied upon that was obtained during phase one, was collected by a clinical psychologist, whom might therefore be regarded as a fieldworker within this context. During the December 2005 holidays, the youngest child/sibling (female) of the participating family died in a motor vehicle accident.

Phase two of the data collection of this study took place in 2006 (post-sudden loss), when I administered a 16PF (during April 2006) and an MBTI® (during May 2006) with each of the remaining family members (quantitative data). During June 2006 (phase three of the data collection), I requested the participants to each construct a metaphor, reflecting on their sudden loss experience (qualitative data). As such, the data collection of phase two took place on two occasions and that of phase three on one occasion, of which all three sessions were conducted at the participating family's home and with the participants simultaneously. I further relied on my reflective journal for supportive evidence.

The participating nuclear family comprised of two biological parents and their three surviving children. As I commenced with my fieldwork (phase two of the data collection), the participants had entered their fourth month of mourning. By that time, the father was 59 years old, the mother 54, the eldest brother 30, the youngest brother 28 and the surviving sister 23. The family can be classified as a white, upper-middle class, Afrikaans speaking family residing in Gauteng. The father is a research academic at a tertiary institution and the mother a social worker. The eldest sibling is an educator, his younger brother a marketing consultant and the youngest sibling an entrepreneur.

4.3 BASELINE INFORMATION

The pre-sudden loss MBTI® profiles provided baseline data for this study, against which I could compare the results of the MBTI® and 16PF administered after the participants had experienced sudden loss. In Table 4.1 I present the initial MBTI® profiles of the participants, as obtained pre-sudden loss. Besides presenting the profiles in terms of their polarities (**E/I**, **S/N**, **T/F** and **J/P**), I provide descriptors in terms of the participants' reported ability to deal with change; their temperament; information usage; leading/following styles; as well as interests and choices (refer to Addendum E for more information).

	MBTI® PROFILES				DEALING WITH CHANGE	TEMPERAMENT	INFORMATION USAGE	LEADING / FOLLOWING STYLES	INTERESTS & CHOICES
FATHER	I ₅₁ Very Clear	S ₅₃ Very Clear	T ₄₁ Very Clear	J ₄₇ Very Clear	Decisive Introvert IJ	Guardian SJ	Thoughtful Realist IS	Logical Decision Maker TJ	Practical Analytical ST
MOTHER	E ₃₃ Clear	N ₂₉ Clear	T ₁₅ Moderate	J ₁₇ Moderate	Decisive Extravert EJ	Rationalist NT	Action-Oriented Innovator EN	Logical Decision Maker TJ	Logical Analytical NT
SIBLING 1	I ₁₁ Moderate	N ₁₁ Moderate	F ₁₇ Moderate	J ₃₃ Clear	Decisive Introvert IJ	Idealist NF	Thoughtful Innovator IN	Value-Based Decision Maker FJ	Insightful Enthusiastic NF
SIBLING 2	E ₁₉ Moderate	N ₁₁ Moderate	T ₃₇ Clear	J ₄₇ Very Clear	Decisive Extravert EJ	Rationalist NT	Action-Oriented Innovator EN	Logical Decision Maker TJ	Logical Analytical NT
SIBLING 3	E ₄₁ Very Clear	S ₃₁ Clear	T ₁₃ Moderate	P ₅₅ Very Clear	Adaptable Extravert EP	Artisan SP	Action-Oriented Realist ES	Adaptable Problem Solver TP	Practical Analytical ST

Table 4.1: MBTI® pre-sudden loss results (administered August 2005)

4.4 RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In my attempt to explore any potential changes in the personality structures of individual family members following the sudden loss they experienced, I compared the results I obtained on the MBTI®

that I administered after the sudden loss experience to the baseline data presented in the previous section (MBTI® profiles obtained pre-sudden loss). In addition, I relied upon the 16PF profiles of the participants, integrating these as supportive evidence with regard to the MBTI® profiles. Finally, I used my analysis of the participants' metaphors to further elaborate on the profiles I obtained by means of quantitative measures. For this purpose, I deductively analysed the metaphors (refer to Addenda D1-D5), being guided by the dimensions of the 16PF (refer to chapter II, section 2.4.4.1).

In the following sections, I firstly provide a tabulated overview of the personality profiles I obtained on the two quantitative measures. Thereafter, I discuss each participant's integrated results in terms of the three available personality profiles together with each participant's personal metaphor on the sudden loss experience (Addenda D1-5). To conclude the section, I provide a synthesis of the results of the study, identifying recurring tendencies and themes evident amongst the five participants.

4.4.1 POST-SUDDEN LOSS MBTI® RESULTS (OBTAINED MAY 2006)

Table 4.2 provides an overview of the participants' post-sudden loss MBTI® profiles. In line with Table 4.1, I provide a summary of the four polarities (**E/I**, **S/N**, **T/F** and **J/P**) but also refer to additional MBTI® descriptors (Addendum E) to enhance my discussions of the integrated results.

	MBTI® PROFILES				DEALING WITH CHANGE	TEMPERAMENT	INFORMATION USAGE	LEADING / FOLLOWING STYLES	INTERESTS & CHOICES
FATHER	I ₅₁ Very Clear	S ₅₃ Very Clear	T ₄₁ Very Clear	J ₄₇ Very Clear	Decisive Introvert IJ	Guardian SJ	Thoughtful Realist IS	Logical Decision Maker TJ	Practical Analytical ST
MOTHER	I ₁₅ Moderate	S ₁ Slight	F ₂₁ Clear	J ₁₃ Moderate	Decisive Introvert IJ	Guardian SJ	Thoughtful Realist IS	Value-Based Decision Maker FJ	Sympathetic Friendly SF
SIBLING 1	I ₁₁ Moderate	N ₁₁ Moderate	F ₁₇ Moderate	J ₃₃ Clear	Decisive Introvert IJ	Idealist NF	Thoughtful Innovator IN	Value-Based Decision Maker FJ	Insightful Enthusiastic NF
SIBLING 2	E ₁₁ Moderate	S ₁₅ Moderate	T ₆₁ Very Clear	J ₂₅ Clear	Decisive Extravert EJ	Guardian SJ	Action-Oriented Realist ES	Logical Decision Maker TJ	Practical Analytical ST
SIBLING 3	E ₃₃ Clear	N ₇ Slight	T ₁₅ Moderate	P ₁₃ Moderate	Adaptable Extravert EP	Rationalist NT	Action-Oriented Innovator EN	Adaptable Problem Solver TP	Logical Analytical NT

Table 4.2: MBTI® post-sudden loss results (obtained May 2006)

4.4.2 POST-SUDDEN LOSS 16PF RESULTS (OBTAINED APRIL 2006)

In line with my discussion of the 16PF in chapter II (refer to chapter II, section 2.4.4.1), I present the 16PF profiles of the participants in terms of the sten distribution in Table 4.3.

	PRIMARY SCALES	LOW SCORE DESCRIPTION	HIGH SCORE DESCRIPTION	FATHER	MOTHER	SIBLING 1	SIBLING 2	SIBLING 3
A	WARMTH	Reserved	Outgoing	6	7	6	3	8
B	REASONING	Less Abstract	Abstract	8	3	7	5	6
C	EMOTIONAL STABILITY	Affected by Feelings	Emotionally Stable	6	3	1	6	6
E	DOMINANCE	Humble	Assertive	2	4	1	9	8
F	LIVELINESS	Sober	Happy-Go-Lucky	3	4	1	6	6
G	RULE-CONSCIOUSNESS	Expedient	Conscientious	6	6	6	6	1
H	SOCIAL BOLDNESS	Shy	Venturesome	4	4	2	6	8
I	SENSITIVITY	Tough-Minded	Tender-Minded	6	4	7	2	1
L	VIGILANCE	Trusting	Suspicious	8	7	4	8	7
M	ABSTRACTEDNESS	Practical	Imaginative	5	8	4	4	2
N	PRIVATENESS	Forthright	Shrewd	3	5	8	8	5
O	APPREHENSION	Placid	Apprehensive	6	8	8	5	4
Q1	OPENNESS TO CHANGE	Conservative	Experimenting	7	8	6	6	8
Q2	SELF-RELIANCE	Group-Dependent	Self-Sufficient	8	5	8	2	5
Q3	PERFECTIONISM	Causal	Controlled	10	5	9	5	4
Q4	TENSION	Relaxed	Tense	7	5	6	7	7

STEN DISTRIBUTION									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
LOW			LOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE		HIGH AVERAGE	HIGH		

Table 4.3: 16PF post-sudden loss results (obtained April 2006)

4.4.3 INTEGRATED RESULTS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

In this section, I present the results I obtained for each of the five participants separately. Besides comparing the pre- and post-sudden loss MBTI® profiles with one another in terms of the polarities, I also refer to the preference clarity categories (Addendum F). Throughout my discussion, I aim to integrate the results of the 16PF (relying on Cattell & Schuerger, 2003; Hooyman, 2006; Karson *et al.*, 1997; Scherrer *et al.*, 2004; Van Rensburg & Simpson, 2003) and the themes that emerged during my analysis of the metaphors with the results of the MBTI® (relying on Barger & Kirby, 2004; Briggs Myers, 1998; Buckingham & Coffman, 1999; Quenk, 2000; Scherrer *et al.*, 2004). After presenting the results for the individual participants, I conclude the section with a synthesis of the results of the five participants. As an introduction to my discussion, I firstly summarise my comparison of the baseline data obtained by means of the pre-sudden loss MBTI® with the MBTI® profiles obtained after the sudden loss experience in Table 4.4.

	PRE-SUDDEN LOSS results obtained from clinical psychologist				POST-SUDDEN LOSS RESULTS				COMPARISON BETWEEN PRE- & POST-SUDDEN LOSS RESULTS			
	MBTI® AUGUST 2005				MBTI® MAY 2006				CONGRUITIES & INCONGRUITIES			
Father	I ₅₁ Very Clear	S ₅₃ Very Clear	T ₄₁ Very Clear	J ₄₇ Very Clear	I ₅₃ Very Clear	S ₄₉ Very Clear	T ₇ Slight	J ₄₅ Very Clear	I > ₂ More Dominant	S > ₄ More Dominant	T < ₃₄ Less Dominant	J < ₂ Less Dominant
Mother	E ₃₃ Clear	N ₂₉ Clear	T ₁₅ Moderate	J ₁₇ Moderate	I ₁₅ Moderate	S ₁ Slight	F ₂₁ Clear	J ₁₃ Moderate	I > ₄₈ Drastic Change	S > ₃₀ Drastic Change	F > ₃₆ Drastic Change	J < ₄ Less Dominant
Sibling 1	I ₁₁ Moderate	N ₁₁ Moderate	F ₁₇ Moderate	J ₃₃ Clear	I ₃₉ Clear	N ₇ Slight	F ₁₇ Moderate	J ₃₁ Clear	I > ₂₈ More Dominant	N < ₄ Less Dominant	F = No Change	J < ₂ Less Dominant
Sibling 2	E ₁₉ Moderate	N ₁₁ Moderate	T ₃₇ Clear	J ₄₇ Very Clear	E ₁₁ Moderate	S ₁₅ Moderate	T ₆₁ Very Clear	J ₂₅ Clear	E < ₈ Less Dominant	S > ₂₆ Drastic Change	T > ₂₄ More Dominant	J < ₂₂ Less Dominant
Sibling 3	E ₄₁ Very Clear	S ₃₁ Clear	T ₁₃ Moderate	P ₅₅ Very Clear	E ₃₃ Clear	N ₇ Slight	T ₁₅ Moderate	P ₁₃ Moderate	E < ₈ Less Dominant	N > ₃₈ More Dominant	T < ₂ Less Dominant	P < ₄₂ Less Dominant

Table 4.4: Comparison between the pre- and post-sudden loss MBTI® profiles of the participants

4.4.3.1 Integrated results of the father

The father's preference for the **ISTJ**⁵² mode of functioning remained stable pre- and post-sudden loss, yet the degree of his preferences changed. Based on a comparison of the MBTI® profiles obtained August 2005 and May 2006, the father's preference for both the **Introversion** attitude and the **Sensing** function seemed to have increased slightly, yet remained in the "very clear" category. However, the father's decision-making preference, namely **Thinking**, became significantly less dominant; with the preference clarity decreasing from "very clear" (41) to "slight" (7). A comparison of the results further reveals that the father's **Judging** attitude became somewhat less dominant.

As an **ISTJ**, the father appeared to be introspective and reflective by nature – both before and after the sudden loss he experienced. This result correlates with the low average score the father obtained on liveliness (**F-**) on the 16PF, which per definition implies seriousness and contemplation. In addition to the quantitative results obtained, the father also made the following statement in his metaphor: "*I cry in my core*"⁵³ (Addendum D1). This result can further be related to the **L+** (vigilance) the father obtained on the 16PF, implying that he might dwell on affronts and frustrations. This tendency is in turn supported by the following statement taken from his metaphor: "*I recurrently see her in front of me*"⁵⁴ (Addendum D1).

The father's preference for **Introversion** implies that he might be inclined to reflect, appreciate having his concerns paid attention to and prefer to assimilate changes before taking action. His metaphor confirmed this tendency when he said that "*The realisation that I will never see her again, just does not*

⁵² **ISTJ** functions are categorised as introverted **S** (dominant), extraverted **T** (secondary), introverted **F** (tertiary) and extraverted **N** (inferior).

⁵³ Translated from "... huil ek in my binneste".

⁵⁴ Translated from "... sien ek haar gedurig voor my".

want to register with me”⁵⁵ (Addendum D1). This tendency is further affirmed by the father’s low score on social boldness (**H-**) on the 16PF, yet it is in contradiction with his low score on privateness (**N-**), the latter indicating that he might have been self-disclosing and unguarded at the time of the study. In this regard, I experienced the father as private rather than self-disclosing, as noted in my reflective journal (Addendum G, 27 April 2006).

The **ISTJ** profile of the father indicates that he is probably trustworthy, reality-oriented and hardworking. These traits concur with his heightened sense of perfectionism (**Q3+**) on the 16PF, signifying that he is presumably conscientious and truthful. His MBTI® profile implies a “guardian temperament” (**SJ**); analogous with a focus on protecting and serving as well as valuing security and stability. According to the father’s 16PF, he is a quiet (**F-**), timid (**H-**) man who seems to rely on adaptability and caring ways to attain approval by means of his **H-** (modesty) **I+** (tender-mindedness) combination. This attitude is affirmed by his willingness to be emotionally involved (**N-**), as well as his supposed cooperative and accommodating nature (**E-**). Furthermore, the father’s focus on the family is supported in his metaphor when he stated that sudden loss causes him to “... *feel as if my heart has been jerked out*”⁵⁶ (Addendum D1).

As a **Sensor**, the father seemingly displayed a preference to work with specifics, realistic expectations and predictability when he completed the MBTI®. Furthermore, he appeared to believe that knowledge is important to establish what is true (**IS**), which implies that he might have felt uncomfortable if he does not understand the information derived from his senses. His focus on evidence to form his judgement is congruent with his seemingly strong abstract reasoning skills (**B+**) and his questioning of established methods (**Q1+**), as indicated by the 16PF. The father’s metaphor stating that the finality of his daughter’s death “... *just does not want to register with me*”⁵⁷ (Addendum D1) confirms that he tended to utilise his reasoning (**B+**) and vigilance (**L+**) when attempting to better understand the connection between past and present (**S**) at the time of the study. This apparent focus on **Sensing** might indicate the possibility of type exaggeration.

Concerning the father’s preference for **Thinking**, he seemed to value competence and reasonability by focusing objective analysis. This preference correlates with the father’s score on self-reliance (**Q2+**) on the 16PF, which implies a high regard for self-sufficiency and independent decision-making. However, in contrast with the expected objectivity, the father’s 16PF profile further suggests that he was self-

⁵⁵ Translated from “Die besef dat ek haar nooit weer sal sien nie, wil net nie by my insink nie”.

⁵⁶ Translated from: “... voel nog steeds asof my hart uitgeruk is”.

⁵⁷ Translated from “... wil net nie by my insink nie”.

disclosing (**N-**) and sensitive to stress (**H-**) at the time; a vulnerability which is also evident throughout his metaphor. His apparent discouragement (**F-**) and cynicism (**O+**) combined with his **F-** (restraint), **H-** (sensitivity) and **I+** (sensitive intuition) on the 16PF is, for example, in agreement with his revelation that he “cries” in his “core”⁵⁸ (Addendum D1). Yet, the latter alleged receptivity seemed incongruent with the expected traits of the **ST** profile. The possibility therefore exists that the father might have tended to rely on his self-determination (**Q2+**) and self-restraint (**Q3+**) at the time of the study, to manage emotions as they surfaced, despite the heightened level of tension (**Q4+**) he appeared to experience.

Pertaining to his **Judging** attitude, the father seemed to possess the ability to manage the tough-minded implementation of decisions (**TJ**) with the support of a firm sense of self-discipline (**Q3+**), personal restraint (**F-**), alertness to others' intentions (**L+**) and self-reliance (**Q2+**), as indicated by the 16PF. This supposed self-control corresponds with the father's **SJ** preferences on the MBTI®. Yet, in his metaphor he acknowledged that “*I want to kick walls and demolish doors*”⁵⁹ (Addendum D1) – behaviour that seems in contradiction of a cautious (**F-**), restrained individual (**M-**) preferring to avoid conflict (**E-**). As such, the aforementioned emotional declaration, in combination with the father's scores on the 16PF relating to avoidance of conflict (**E-**), self-restraint (**F-**) and threat-sensitivity (**H-**), may be indicative of a passive-aggressive tendency.

4.4.3.2 Integrated results of the mother

Based on my comparison of the mother's MBTI® profiles prior to and after the loss of her daughter, the mother's personality structure seemed to have changed significantly, namely from **ENTJ**⁶⁰ to **ISFJ**⁶¹. The mother's preferred attitude reportedly changed from a “clear” preference for **Extraversion** (33) to a “moderate” preference for **Introversion** (15). Furthermore, her “clear” preference for **Intuition** (29) was replaced by a “slight” preference for **Sensing** (1). In addition, her “clear” preference for the **Feeling** function (21) replaced her “moderate” preference for the **Thinking** function (15). Finally, the mother indicated a slightly less dominant preference for the **Judging** attitude post-sudden loss, even though her preference remained “moderate”.

Therefore, prior to the loss of her daughter, the mother indicated that she was solution-oriented, objectively critical and naturally assertive (**ENTJ**). At that stage she appeared to be energised by interaction with others. On the contrary, after experiencing the sudden loss of her daughter the mother

⁵⁸ Translated from “... huil ek in my binneste”.

⁵⁹ Translated from “...wil ek mure skop en deure stukkend slaan”.

⁶⁰ **ENTJ** functions are categorised as extraverted **T** (dominant), introverted **N** (secondary), extraverted **S** (tertiary) and introverted **F** (inferior).

⁶¹ **ISFJ** functions are categorised as introverted **S** (dominant), extraverted **F** (secondary), introverted **T** (tertiary) and extraverted **N** (inferior).

appeared to be quiet, kind, uncomfortable with conflict; and valuing commitment structure and closure (**ISFJ**). In her metaphor, she emphasised her feelings: “*My longing for my youngest daughter burns like a fire inside of me*”⁶² (Addendum D2). This emotional disclosure is supported by the mother’s high score on Warmth (**A+**) on the 16PF, which implies emotional responsiveness and affection. Furthermore, the **C-** (emotional stability) **F-** (liveliness) combination on the 16PF implies raw emotionality, also expressed in statements such as: “*My body & soul are bruised*”⁶³ (Addendum D2). The mother’s apparent inability to assimilate the loss experience, as indicated by her acknowledgment that “*My mind refuses to accept it (sudden loss) as reality*”⁶⁴ (Addendum D2), concurs with her said constricted Reasoning Ability (**B-**) and her apparent internal conflict being approach-avoidance by nature (**L+ Q2-**). During my fieldwork I observed the mother to be emotional and noted in my reflective journal that “*I feel sorry for her – the raw emotions are still very clear*” (Addendum G, 13 May 2006).

According to the pre-sudden loss MBTI®, the mother’s ability to deal with change relied on her being a decisive **extravert (EJ)**, implying less restrained judgement and swift moves towards implementing change. Post-sudden loss however, the mother presented as a decisive **introvert (IJ)** whom seemingly considered proposed changes against her internal perceptions afore implementing them. Post-sudden loss the mother displayed feelings of not being able to cope (**C-**) in combination with the apparent inner tension between guilt and impulsivity which may have resulted in her experiencing a sense of having lost control (**O+ Q3+**). These emotions might be linked to her perceived discouraged mood and lack of energy (**F- O+**), as confirmed in her metaphor when she says “*I feel so overwhelmed & disillusioned like after a Tsunami – Frantic & Drained*”⁶⁵ (Addendum D2). At the time of the study, the mother displayed an apparent spontaneity (**Q3-**) on the one hand yet a melancholy passivity (**E- H-**) on the other. When confronted with feelings of inefficiency, she might thus have reacted according to either of the above-mentioned extremes. However, the combination of **I-** (tough-mindedness) **M+** (creativity) on the mother’s 16PF implied an awareness of new possibilities from a less emotional point of view.

Based on her preference for **Intuition** pre-sudden loss, the mother was seemingly characterised by a rationalist temperament (**NT**), which implies the need for logic and reason in search for progress and competence. In contrast, based on her preference for **Sensing** post-sudden loss, the mother could at that time be classified as a “guardian” (**SJ**) with an appreciation for stability, predictability and belonging whilst fostering internal awareness (**IS**). This preference correlates with the 16PF combination of warmth (**A+**), introspection (**F-**) and sensitivity (**H-**), indicating the mother as an introverted,

⁶² Translated from “*My verlange na my kind brand soos 'n vuur in my*”.

⁶³ Translated from “*My liggaam & siel is gekneus*”.

⁶⁴ Translated from “*My verstand weier om dit as werklikheid te aanvaar*”.

⁶⁵ Translated from “*Ek voel só verslae & ontnugter soos na 'n Tsunami –WOES & LEEG!*”.

apprehensive, yet kind-hearted individual whom expressed affection in ways that may not be apparent immediately. The mother's post-sudden loss preference for **Sensing** might imply that she relied on her inferior function to deal with the effect of sudden loss.

As a reported **Thinker** prior to the sudden loss event, the mother seemed to implement decisions in a decisive and tough-minded manner; by bringing order in expressions of judgement (**TJ**). Yet, post-sudden loss the mother indicated a preference for **Feeling** and value-based decision-making (**FJ**). This indicated preference is confirmed by the results of the 16PF, showing a tendency towards low assertiveness (**E-**) and approval-seeking (**A+**), which comes to the fore as an apparent reliance on her inferior **Feeling** function. In terms of her preference for **Judging**, the mother seemingly maintained a focus on closure, predictability and control in her endeavour to come to conclusions pre- and post-sudden loss.

4.4.3.3 Integrated results of Sibling 1

Based on the results I obtained Sibling 1's preference for the **INFJ**⁶⁶ profile remained stable pre- and post-sudden loss, yet the degree of his preferences appeared to change. The results obtained on the MBTI® reveals that his preference for the **Introversion** attitude increased significantly; namely from "moderate" (11) pre-sudden loss to "clear" (39) post-sudden loss. Furthermore, his preference for the **Intuitive** function and **Judging** attitude appeared to become somewhat less dominant. His **Feeling** preference remained exactly the same.

Being a reported **INFJ**, Sibling 1 appeared to seek meaning in relationships in an attempt to understand the motivation that drives behaviour. This tendency, as indicated on the MBTI®, correlates with Sibling 1's 16PF profile, in terms of his responsiveness to others; *i.e.* **E-** (adaptable), **I+** (subjective) and **L-** (trusting), as well as his concern with practical issues (**M-**). In addition, Sibling 1's metaphor provided supporting evidence of this tendency as he said "*I am vaguely aware of the terrible, heart-rendering brokenness around me ...*"⁶⁷ (Addendum D3 p.1); indicated that he wished to "*... assist my people*"⁶⁸ (Addendum D3 p.1); and remarked that "*I want to, but I really can't*"⁶⁹ (Addendum D3 p.1). This perceived inability to assist his family corroborates with his **C-** (temperamental nature) and **E-** (diplomacy) on the 16PF, indicating that he might have been passive but highly strung at that time. Sibling 1 further affirmed the significance of relationships as indicated by his MBTI® profile in his

⁶⁶ **INFJ** functions are categorised as introverted **N** (dominant), extraverted **F** (secondary), introverted **T** (tertiary) and extraverted **S** (inferior).

⁶⁷ Translated from "*Ek is vaagweg bewus van die verskriklike, hartverskeurende stukkengeit om my...*".

⁶⁸ Translated from "*... my mense help*".

⁶⁹ Translated from "*Ek wil, maar ek kan regtig nie*".

metaphor when he said *“The speck of zest left in my heart is replenished by the unconditional love of my wife, reminiscence with family, the empathy of other wounded ones ... They readily refill my cup...”*⁷⁰ (Addendum D3 p.3).

With an indicated preference for **Introversion**, Sibling 1 appeared to often draw into his inner world and reflect independently. The results obtained on the 16PF confirm this tendency, indicating his high regard for privacy and non-disclosure (**N+**). This tendency is further congruent with the following statement included in his metaphor: *“I have never been particularly social ... Yet, I am aware that I prefer the solitude to a large extent”*⁷¹ (Addendum D3 p.1). As such, Sibling 1 might have been prone to bottling up his emotions at that time, as indicated by his **F-** (introspection), **H-** (sensitive to criticism) and **I+** (emotional) combination on the 16PF and confirmed in his metaphor when he said: *“Other wounds are too deep. It rips my soul apart and leaves me vulnerable against the elements. Who will understand that?”*⁷² (Addendum D3 p.3). In my reflective journal I summarised my observation of Sibling 1: *“He is so reserved and private. It seems as if he is busy with his own thoughts the whole time”* (Addendum G, 15 June 2006).

Sibling 1's preference for **Intuition** indicated that he tended to be conscientious and committed, with an appreciation for growth and a focus on serving the community (**NF**). This outlook seemed feasible when considering his sensitivity, empathy and kindness, indicated by **H- I+** on the 16PF. Furthermore, Sibling 1 acknowledged his personal growth in his statement that *“A few wounds now have scabs”*⁷³ (Addendum D3 p.3). In line with his indicated future-oriented perspective and idealism (**N** on the MBTI®), he emphasised his focus on the bigger picture in his metaphor by saying *“She reminds me that I have a purpose on earth and that I owe it to my loved ones to keep on living”*⁷⁴ (Addendum D3 p.4).

Due to his reported preference for **Feeling**, Sibling 1 could be expected to allow his head to rule his heart even though he might have been perceptive. The results of the 16PF correlates with him being regarded as an emotional people's person (**H- I+**) whom adapted and sought approval, was not assertive (**E-**) and felt uncomfortable dealing with conflict (**C- F-**) at the time he completed the 16PF. The tendency to avoid conflict was further evident in his metaphor when he stated that discord *“...leaves me dismayed”*⁷⁵ (Addendum D3 p.2). However, based on my analysis of his 16PF profile, Sibling 1 did not seem to be

⁷⁰ Translated from *“Die fraksie lewenslus in my hart word aangevul deur die onvoorwaardelike liefde van my vrou, die saam-onthou van familie, die empatie van ander gewondes ... Hulle vul my bekertjie hoop geredelik aan...”*.

⁷¹ Translated from *“Ek was nog nooit besonder sosiaal nie ... Tog voel ek aan dat ek tot 'n groot mate die alleenheid verkies”*.

⁷² Translated from *“Ander wonde is te diep. Dit kloof my siel oop en laat my weerloos teen die elemente. Wie sal dit verstaan?”*.

⁷³ Translated from *“'n Paar wonde het nou rowe...”*.

⁷⁴ Translated from *“Sy herinner my dat ek 'n doel op aarde het en dat ek dit aan my geliefdes verskuldig is om aan te hou léeft”*.

⁷⁵ Translated from *“...laat my verslae”*.

coping sufficiently at the time of the questionnaire being administered, as his **C- E- F- H- O+ N+** and **E- F- H-** combinations signified signs of depression, which was further confirmed in his metaphor when he mentioned that he was a "... *weaking, ...*"⁷⁶ (Addendum D3 p.1); "... *so incredibly exhausted...*"⁷⁷ (Addendum D3 p.1); and that he was "... *tired of me. My nonsense, my powerlessness, my little faith, my ungratefulness, my melancholy*"⁷⁸ (Addendum D3 p.2).

Lastly, Sibling 1's reported preference for the **Judging** attitude correlates with the **F- M-** combination he obtained on the 16PF, implying that he was practical, serious, detail-bound and preferred predictability and closure at that time. In this regard, his metaphor revealed that he didn't: "... *have any additional regrets about our relationship or harrowing concerns about her refuge*"⁷⁹ (Addendum D3 p.4).

4.4.3.4 Integrated results of Sibling 2

Sibling 2 indicated an MBTI® typology of **ESTJ**⁸⁰ post-sudden loss, as opposed to his **ENTJ**⁸¹ mode of preference prior to the sudden loss event. A comparison of the results therefore reveals that Sibling 2's preferred attitude remained **Extraversion**, even though his preference became less dominant. His "moderate" preference for **Intuition** (11) was replaced by a "moderate" preference for **Sensing** (15), whilst his preference for the **Thinking** function indicated a marked increase post-sudden loss; changing from a "clear" preference (37), to a "very clear" preference (61). Lastly, it seems as if sibling 2 relied significantly less on his **Judging** attitude after the loss of his sister, as his preference decreased from "very clear" (47) to "clear" (25).

Although Sibling 2 presented as an **Extravert** on the MBTI®, he seemed to experience himself as detached, impersonal and alone (**A-**) based on the 16PF profile, which was further affirmed by his metaphor when he said he is "*Lonely ...*"⁸² (Addendum D4 p.1). In addition, Sibling 2's statement that "*after the accident, I lost interest in everything for a significant period of time...*"⁸³ (Addendum D4 p.1) could indicate detachment, confirming his **A-** score on the 16PF. The afore-mentioned further correlates with his **L+ N+** combination on the 16PF, implying guardedness and emotional detachment, together with his account that "... *your situation teaches you a lot about yourself, your family, your friends, your*

⁷⁶ Translated from "... *swakkeling, ...*".

⁷⁷ Translated from "... *so ontsettend moeg ...*".

⁷⁸ Translated from "... *moeg vir my. My snert, my hulpeloosheid, my kleingelowigheid, my ondankbaarheid, my melankolie*".

⁷⁹ Translated from "... *nie addisionele verwyte oor ons verhouding of ergerlike bekommernisse oor haar heenkome nie*".

⁸⁰ **ESTJ** functions are categorised as extraverted **T** (dominant), introverted **S** (secondary), extraverted **N** (tertiary) and introverted **F** (inferior).

⁸¹ **ENTJ** functions are categorised as extraverted **T** (dominant), introverted **N** (secondary), extraverted **S** (tertiary) and introverted **F** (inferior).

⁸² Translated from "*Eensaam ...*".

⁸³ Translated from "*Na die ongeluk het ek vir 'n geruime tyd belangstelling in alles verloor ...*".

so-called friends and about people in general”⁸⁴ (Addendum D4 p.2). However, according to his metaphor he allowed the decedent to get to know him better than most other individuals: “*When I think of her, my heart fills with joy resulting from the inimitable times with her*”⁸⁵ (Addendum D4 p.1) – behaviour that seems to concur with the changeability of his relationships as indicated by his **A- F+** combination on the 16PF.

Sibling 2's indicated preference for **Intuition** pre-sudden loss implies that he was future-oriented, interested in possibilities and aware of the big picture at the time that the first MBTI® was administered. Yet, after the loss he experienced, his reported preference for **Sensing** implies that he was direct, present and pragmatic at the time the second MBTI® was administered. This post-sudden loss preference for **Sensing** is confirmed by Sibling 2's **E+** score on the 16PF, which indicated an ability to pull himself together by being dominant, assertive and controlling. This ability was further supported by the following phrase taken from his metaphor: “... *once you manage to rectify that part of your life...*”⁸⁶ (Addendum D4 p.2). As such, he seemed to manage his behaviour by means of his **C+ G+ Q3+** combination on the 16PF, by maintaining perspective, as he also expressed in his metaphor: “*Nothing is what it used to be, but there are still many rays of hope with regard to memories and new things in ones life that makes life worth living again*”⁸⁷ (Addendum D4 p.1). Sibling 2's post-sudden loss preference for **Sensing** might be an indication that he relied on his inferior function in an attempt to deal with the sudden loss event.

As a **Thinker**, Sibling 2 appeared likely to be convinced by logic, act objectively, value competence and communicate directly at that stage. Based on the results of the 16PF he seemed to endure tension due to internal vacillation (**E+ Q2-**) between dependency on relationships (**F+ H+ Q2-**) and his instinct to suppress dependency in an effort to remain in control (**E+ I- L+**). Furthermore, it appeared as if his alleged dominance faltered at the experience of a sense of vulnerability (**E+ I+ L-**). This could result in him intellectualising his aggression (**C+ L+ O-**) – all being characteristic of type exaggeration. These tendencies might further be linked to a heightened level of anxiety (**Q4+**) and even psychosomatic reactions; as indicated in his metaphor in the following way: “*Whenever I think of loss, and allow reality to sink in for one second, it feels as if I become sick with yearning – almost as if someone gives you a punch in the stomach to the extent that you lose your breath and gag because of the helplessness...*”⁸⁸.

⁸⁴ Translated from “... *dat jou situasie jou baie geleer het van jouself, jou gesin, jou vriende, jou sogenaamde vriende en van mense in die algemeen*”.

⁸⁵ Translated from “*As ek aan haar dink, vul my hart met vreugde van die onvervangbare tye saam met haar*”.

⁸⁶ Translated from “... *sodra mens daardie deel van jou lewe regruk...*”.

⁸⁷ Translated from “*Niks is meer wat dit was nie, maar daar is steeds baie ligpunte van herinneringe en nuwe goed in mens se lewe wat dit weer die moeite werd maak*”.

⁸⁸ Translated from “*As ek aan verlies dink, en die realiteit sink vir een sekonde in, voel dit asof mens naar word van verlange – dis amper asof iemand jou met 'n vuus hard in die maag slaan, dat jy nie asem kry nie en opgooi van hulpeloosheid...*”.

However, such a revelation does not correlate with the **I- E+** scores of Sibling 2 on the 16PF, according to which he was not prone for sorrow to overwhelm him. Yet, the possibility exists that he tended to draw on his assertion when facing sorrow, as indicated by his **A- E+** profile on the 16PF. The dominant usage of his **Thinking** preference implies that Sibling 2 might have found himself in a state of type exaggeration post-sudden loss as it is possible that he overextended this conscious function at that time.

Although Sibling 2 indicated a preference for the **Judging** attitude, his results on the 16PF do not confirm a tendency to deal with the outer world by avoiding last minute stresses and function in an organised manner due to the desire to make decisions, come to closure and move on. The **F+** score that Sibling 2 obtained on the 16PF rather implies the possibility of him being pushed towards spontaneity and impulsivity. Furthermore, he appeared to demonstrate an openness to change (**Q1+**), which is once again not in correlation with a clear preference for **Judging**. In addition, he reported on his experience of emptiness in his metaphor: *“There is an emptiness that cannot be replenished again ...”*⁸⁹ and later *“And sometimes it feels as if everybody expects everything to be normal again, even though one doesn’t know whether you are coming or going”*⁹⁰ (Addendum D4 p.2) thereby confirming his indicated proneness to group dependence (**Q2-**).

4.4.3.5 Integrated results of Sibling 3

Sibling 3 displayed a change in preference from an **ESTP**⁹¹ (pre-sudden loss) to an **ENTP**⁹² typology (post-sudden loss). Her preference for **Extraversion** and **Thinking** both became less dominant, whilst her “clear” preference for **Sensing** (31) was replaced by a “slight” preference for **Intuition** (7). Lastly, her preference to rely on her **Perceiving** attitude decreased significantly, resulting in her **Perceiving** preference changing from a “very clear” preference (55) pre-sudden loss to a “moderate” preference (13) post-sudden loss.

According to Sibling 3’s **ENTP** profile she indicated the tendency to scan the environment for opportunities and possibilities, detecting connections that are not obvious to others. Furthermore, her indicated typology suggested a love for life which is confirmed by the 16PF, indicating a love for life (**Q1+**), as well as an attitude of living for the moment (**Q3-**) and an affinity for adventure and exposure (**H+**). As such, Sibling 3 appeared to be likely to remain calm in crisis situations and produce effective solutions to problems. In relation with this apparent ability, she indicated a preference for “what might

⁸⁹ Translated from “*Daar is ‘n leegheid wat nie weer gevul kan word nie...*”.

⁹⁰ Translated from “*En soms voel dit of almal verwag dat alles weer normaal moet wees, alhoewel ‘n mens nie weet of jy kom of gaan nie*”.

⁹¹ **ESTP** functions are categorised as extraverted **S** (dominant), introverted **T** (secondary), extraverted **F** (tertiary) and introverted **N** (inferior).

⁹² **ENTP** functions are categorised as extraverted **N** (dominant), introverted **T** (secondary), extraverted **F** (tertiary) and introverted **S** (inferior).

be” over “what is” and therefore displayed the tendency to ignore time and energy constraints (**G-**). Furthermore, she tended to take risks others would rather avoid (**H+**).

Based on her reported preference for **Extraversion**, Sibling 3 appeared to be sociable, expressive, relationship-oriented and attuned to her environment (also noted in my reflective journal – refer to Addendum G, August 2006). These traits are confirmed by the 16PF results, according to which Sibling 3 is emotionally responsive (**A+**), gregarious and adventuresome (**H+**), and had a non-conforming, expedient nature (**G-**) at the time she completed the questionnaire. The **A+ M-** combination of the 16PF further implies that Sibling 3 would most likely warmly attend to concrete issues based on her responsiveness to others' practical needs. As an adaptable extravert (**EP**), the youngest sibling appeared to rely on external input (such as networks, friends and experts) and resources to energise her in the implementation of change, on the premise that such change would allow for action. This tendency was supported by her metaphor where she describes her initial reaction to her lost sibling's visit in her dream: “*She looks at me with her content crooked smile*”⁹³ (Addendum D5).

Sibling 3's reported change from **Sensing** to **Intuition** implied a shift in the means of taking in information. Originally, she appeared to prefer tangible and practical realities, whilst she seemed to be more future-oriented, focusing on connections between facts and being more prone to follow hunches after the death of her sister. In this regard, the 16PF indicated Sibling 3 to be tough, confident and practical (**I- M- O-**) – characteristics which seem to rather correspond with her pre-sudden loss preference for **Sensing**. Yet, her reported experimenting nature and open-mindedness (**Q1+**) together with the spontaneity to follow her own urges (**G-**), corresponded with her **Intuitive** focus on possibilities, as well as her preference for **Perceiving** (post-sudden loss). Sibling 3's movement away from tangible reality was further evident in her metaphor when she said “*Dreamt she came to me...*”⁹⁴ (Addendum D5). In addition, her apparent focus on the big picture, as opposed to detail, came to the fore when she referred to the decedent's whereabouts in her metaphor saying that “*...she was just away somewhere*”⁹⁵ (Addendum D5). This preference for **Intuition** indicates a possible reliance on her inferior function post-sudden loss.

Based on Sibling 3's preference for **Thinking**, she seemed to rely on cause-and-effect reasoning, strive for objective truth and could be perceived as tough-minded. These traits concurred with the results of the 16PF, indicating that she was solution-oriented (**M-**), headstrong (**E+**) and unsentimental (**I-**) at that

⁹³ Translated from “*Kyk sy vir my met haar tevrede skewe glimlag*”.

⁹⁴ Translated from “*Gedroom sy kom by my aan...*”.

⁹⁵ Translated from “*...sy was net somewhere weg gewees*”.

time. In her metaphor, she described a dream about her lost sibling, saying: “*At first I started to cry and then I physically attacked her*”⁹⁶ (Addendum D5). This report of an emotional outburst correlates with Sibling 3’s **E+ I- L+** combination on the 16PF which implied that she might have tended to be aggressive and hostile in an effort to be dominant. As such, she could seemingly have appeared to have little regard for others’ feelings – a characteristic in line with her preference for **Thinking** (on the MBTI®). Her **E+ H+** combination on the 16PF once again indicated a tendency to act out under stress, which was also supported by her description of her dream about the decedent post-morbidly. However, it seemed as if her emotional reaction might have been related to increased tension and frustration with setbacks (**Q4+**), which was also apparent in her need to assert herself together with her reliance on significant relationships (**E+ Q2-**).

Sibling 3’s reported preference for the **Perceiving** attitude implied that she was likely to be spontaneous, flexible and energised by last minute changes at the time she completed the MBTI®. On the 16PF, this tendency was evident in her apparent openness to change and freethinking spirit (**Q1+**). In relation to this tendency, her adaptive problem-solving skills (**TP**) might have implied the ability to adapt to the demands of the environment. As such, she seemed to rely on her objectivity (**E+**), scepticism (**L+**) and curiosity (**Q1+**) to make changes whenever a situation called for her to do so. However, based on her indicated tendency to being impulsive and aggressive (**E+ L+ Q1+**), she seemed to fluctuate between her need for control (**E+**) and covert dependency (**Q2-**), whilst pursuing stimulation and social interaction (**F+ H+**). Although her low score on Rule-Consciousness (**G-**) might have implied carelessness, non-conforming behaviour and a possible lack of assimilation of society’s expectations, this tendency was confirmed by her **Perceiving** preference on the MBTI®. In my reflective journal, I noted in this regard: “*She is forever on the run. I wonder if she is ever able to complete something: ideas all over!*” (Addendum G, August 2006).

4.4.4 SYNTHESIS OF THE RESULTS OF ALL THE PARTICIPANTS

In summarising the results of the various participants, I now provide a brief synthesis of the main tendencies indicated by the results I obtained. I primarily focus on the results I obtained from my comparison of the four polarities of the MBTI®, yet aim to refer to tendencies based on the 16PF profiles and the metaphors as supportive evidence throughout.

⁹⁶ Translated from “*Ek het eers begin huil, toe haar te lyf gegaan*”.

In terms of the **Extraversion/Introversion** attitude, all five participants indicated a greater preference for **Introversion** post-sudden loss. The father and the eldest sibling remained **Introverts** but obtained a higher score on the **I** scale post-sudden loss in comparison with the scores they obtained prior to the loss event. The mother's profile changed from one indicating her as a "clear" **Extravert** to one identifying her as a "moderate" **Introvert**. The youngest two siblings maintained their preference to function as **Extraverts**, yet obtained lower scores on the **E** scale post-sudden loss. On the 16PF, the **Extroversion Global Scale**⁹⁷ confirms the younger two siblings as **Extraverts**. The results confirm that the mother and youngest sibling might probably have displayed extroverted characteristics on warmth (**A+**) at that stage. The father's and the eldest sibling's scores on the **Extroversion Global Scale**, warmth (**A-**) and self-reliance (**Q2+**) substantiated their pre- and post-sudden loss preferences for **Introversion**. In the same manner, the metaphors seemed to have supported the participants' tendency to become more isolated and lonely, turning towards themselves to deal with the challenge they faced post-sudden loss.

Concerning the **Sensing/Intuition** function, the majority of the participants (three of the five) conveyed a greater preference for the **Sensing** function after the sudden loss event. However, the youngest sibling displayed an opposite tendency as her "clear" preference for **Sensing** was replaced by a "slight" preference for **Intuition** post-sudden loss, whilst the eldest brother's preference for **Intuition** slightly increased. On the 16PF, the inclination towards the **Sensing** function post-sudden loss was supported by the father's and mother's questioning of established methods (**Q1+**); the father's and the eldest sibling's high score on the **Self Control Global Scale**⁹⁸; the two brothers' scores on pragmatism (**M-**); and the parents' and their middle child's levels of strategic thinking (**L+**). The preference for **Sensing** was once again also evident in the metaphors which portrayed a predominant past-present feeling, indicating the participants' need to understand the past event and to reconnect with the present.

On the **Thinking/Feeling** polarity, three of the five participants indicated a greater preference for **Feeling**, of which the mother's preference changed from being a "moderate" **T** to a "clear" **F**. The eldest brother's results on this axis remained unchanged, whilst the youngest brother demonstrated a significant increase in his preference to rely on his **Thinking** function post-sudden loss. On the 16PF, the eldest sibling's sympathy (**I+**), the father's self-disclosure (**N-**) and the mother's and the eldest sibling's apprehension (**O+**) supported a preference for **Feeling**. The affinity for the **Feeling** function was evident throughout the three participants' metaphors where they acknowledged their raw emotions and discussed the manners in which they expressed these sentiments. On the other end of the polarity, the two

⁹⁷ Calculated as $(A + E + F + H + [11 - Q2]) / 5$.

⁹⁸ Calculated as $([G + Q3] / 2)$.

youngest siblings' preference for **Thinking** was confirmed by their **Tough-Mindedness Global Scale**⁹⁹, as well as the middle sibling's non-disclosure (**N+**) and the youngest sibling's unperturbed nature (**O-**).

With reference to the **Judging/Perceiving** attitude, all five participants indicated a change in preference closer to the middle of the axis. The four participants who indicated a preference for **Judging** prior to the sudden loss event therefore maintained this preference, yet the degree of their preference decreased. In the same manner, the only **Perceiver** in the family maintained her preference for **Perceiving**, even though this preference was markedly less after the sudden loss event when compared to the pre-sudden loss results. On the 16PF, the **Perceiving** preference of the youngest sibling correlated with her score on openness to change (**Q1+**), whereas the **Judging** preference could be detected in terms of the father's and the eldest sibling's high scores on the **Self Control Global Scale**, the two brothers' levels of practicality (**M-**), as well as the father's and the eldest sibling's scores on perfectionism (**Q3+**). From the metaphors the **Judging** attitude was evident in the apparent loss of control over emotions, coupled with the frustration at the surprise element of sudden death in the case of the four judging participants, whereas the mentioning of hope for the future signified the adaptability and flexibility evident in the **Perceiving** mode (in the case of the youngest sibling).

In addition to the themes I deductively analysed in the participants' metaphors (as discussed in section 4.4), the following additional themes clearly emerged: intense sadness; longing for the decedent; and reminiscence. These themes can, however, within the context of this study, not be substantiated as they indicate general emotions and were not investigated in terms of the personality profiles featured in this study. Further exploration is required in this regard.

4.5 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the potential effect of sudden loss on the functioning of five selected bereaved individuals of one nuclear family, in terms of the potential manner in which sudden loss might affect individual personality structures. In the previous section, I discussed the results of the personality structures of the participants prior to and post-sudden loss, comparing the two MBTI® profiles obtained for each participant and providing supportive data from the 16PF and the metaphors I obtained. By presenting the results, I addressed the first two secondary research questions formulated in chapter I (section 1.4). I now address the remaining two secondary research questions by discussing the findings of the study.

⁹⁹ Calculated as $([11 - \mathbf{A}] + [11 - \mathbf{I}] + [11 - \mathbf{M}]) / 3$.

4.5.1 CHANGES IN THE INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITY STRUCTURES OF THE PARTICIPANTS

A comparison between the pre-sudden loss and post-sudden loss personality structures of the participants revealed changes on all four polarities of the MBTI®. In the following sub-sections I discuss these changes, relating the results I obtained to existing literature.

4.5.1.1 A greater preference for the Introversion attitude

All the participants in the study appeared to display a greater preference for Introversion after experiencing the sudden loss of their daughter/sister. As Jung's Extraversion/Introversion dichotomy is determined by the focus of energy and attention; together with the means of attaining mental energy, the implication of energy expenditure, within the context of sudden loss, is significant in the sense that it might imply a redirection of energy towards the internal world (Barger & Kirby, 2004; Fourtounas, 2003; Noer, 1993). Due to the fact that a presumed significant external source of energy passed away in the form of the decedent, it might follow that extroverts could experience difficulty finding another appropriate external source of energy, consequently resulting in them referring to the introverted means of attaining energy, *i.e.* reflecting on innermost feelings (Baron, 1998; Buckingham & Coffman, 1999; Kroeger & Thuesen, 1992; Myers *et al.*, 1998). Subsequently, extraverted individuals may move towards the Extraversion/Introversion axis, or even become introverts. In the same manner, people with an Introversion preference could become more introverted, as was evident in the results I obtained in this study.

The tendency to become more private and pensive post-sudden loss is supported by Sanders and Myers (2000) who ascribe such a tendency to a renewed search for meaning by individuals when undergoing trauma. In the same manner, Holmes (1996) regards this tendency as characteristic of a period of personal growth, whilst Walsh-Burke (2006) considers it as a time for self-discovery. Hooyman (2006) provides an additional explanation by stating that the tendency of becoming more private might be the result of a displacement of interpersonal processes. Cattell's (1989) idea behind motive strength and the interests that govern time allocation provides yet another feasible explanation for the apparent preference for Introversion during times of change or tension. As the bereaved can be expected to spend some time on dealing with sudden loss, it can be anticipated that individuals grieving the loss of a loved one may have less time available for other activities, especially for activities that might require energy expenditure, such as social engagement (Cartwright, 1979).

In this regard, Enright and Marwit (2002), as well as Neimeyer, Prigerson and Davies (2002) affirm that grieving behaviour may be displayed in detachment from others. Kübler-Ross and Kessler (2001) share this view by regarding (Malinak *et al.*, 1979) isolation as an important way of grieving, as it seems to bring harmony amongst inner and outer realities. However, these authors warn that isolation should only be a step along the way and not a permanent state of being. Against this background the possibility therefore exists that the participants' move towards a preference for Introversion could have been temporary by nature in this study, yet this is a mere possibility that needs to be explored further.

Kübler-Ross and Kessler (2001) further state that being alone with one's grief often feels safer than being vulnerable with someone who may not understand. This belief correlates with the results I obtained based on the metaphors of the participants, indicating that they did not experience others as understanding of their situation. Although Kaplan and Sadock (2007) warns that the exclusion of significant others associated with the decedent may imply unresolved grief, this aspect needs further exploration in order to be able to reach a said conclusion.

4.5.1.2 A tendency to rely more heavily on the Sensing function

In my study I found that the majority of the participants tended to rely more heavily on the Sensing function after they had experienced the sudden loss of their daughter/sister than prior to the accident. This tendency might be ascribed to the event of sudden loss removing possibilities and ideas from the immediate mode of gathering information, based on it being an unanticipated, irreversible event, as supported by literature on change management by Buckingham and Coffman (1999). As such a tendency does not support a preference for Intuition, individuals might lean more heavily towards relying on their senses when facing challenging times. In an arbitrary state, grieving individuals might find comfort in resorting to what is still known; including concrete data gathered directly from the senses and observations pertaining to actual events. Behaviour like this correlates with the Sensing function of the MBTI®, providing a possible explanation for the results I obtained, namely that the participants indicated a stronger preference for the Sensing function post-sudden loss. Briggs Myers (1998), Kroeger and Thuesen (1992), Myers *et al.* (1998) as well as Van Rooyen (2006) provide supportive evidence for this explanation and line of argumentation.

Sudden loss may therefore result in a bereaved moving beyond abstract thoughts towards an action-oriented approach which would allow the individual to grasp the specifics of the sudden loss experience and work through the loss, alias Baron (1998), Barger & Kirby (2004) and Noer (1993). This possibility is further supported by Cousins (1989), Cutcliffe (2004), Davies (2004), Kübler-Ross and Kessler (2005)

as well as Quackenbush (2001) who hold the belief that personality should not be regarded in isolation but rather as an involved construct, influenced by the environment.

4.5.1.3 An inclination towards the Feeling function

Jung's Thinking/Feeling dichotomy deals with decision-making processes, specifically the criteria individuals rely on when making decisions and also to the perspectives they find persuasive (Briggs Myers, 1998). In this regard, Myers and Kirby (1994) explain that Thinkers typically step back in order to take an objective view, whilst Feelers tend to step into a situation attempting to obtain an empathetic stance (Van Rooyen, 2006). In my study, the results indicated that the majority of the participants displayed a greater preference for their Feeling function post-sudden loss. As such, they seemed to have become more people-oriented, demonstrated a greater appreciation for others and offered support to others, tendencies which are also highlighted by Baron (1998) as well as Buckingham and Coffman (1999) when describing typical behaviour of people facing challenges. In terms of decision-making, the participants in my study seemed to focus on the human factor and consequently preferred to steer clear of confrontation, behaviour which is in correlation with the work of Kroeger and Thuesen (1992), stating that Feelers reflect on their feelings, blame themselves for conflict and often deal with conflict by getting emotional. Subsequently, the event of sudden loss may result in bereaved individuals becoming more involved in others' pain, as found by Myers *et al.* (1998) and also found in this study.

As bereavement inevitably implies grief, which can be regarded as the emotional response to loss according to Davies (2004) and Stroebe *et al.* (1997), it can be expected that an event such as the sudden loss of a child/sibling might result in intrapsychic notions. These notions are namely grief, anxiety, despair, anger, separation, remorse, and/or vulnerability, as stated by Hibbert (2004), Kaplan and Sadock (2007) as well as Kübler-Ross and Kessler (2005). Malinak *et al.* (1979) agree that grief could subsequently yield a greater awareness of the human factor – a tendency which seemed to also be the case in this study. Furthermore, Magai (1999) emphasises that the termination of intimate relationships may be compelling change triggers. This line of reasoning might be relied upon in explaining why an unanticipated confrontation with the inevitability of death might predispose a bereaved individual toward being more people-oriented and consequently displaying a greater preference for the Feeling function, as I found to be the case in this study amongst the majority of the participants.

4.5.1.4 Moving closer towards the middle of the Judging/Perceiving axis

In my study I found that all the participants moved closer to the Judging and Perceiving axis post-sudden loss. Barkin *et al.* (2004), Ciarrochi and Mayer (2007), Gous (2005), Kaplan and Sadock (2007), Kübler-Ross and Kessler (2001), as well as Thompson and Henderson (2007) confirm that such a modification of personal attributes might occur as a result of sudden loss, as bereaved individuals attempt to foster resilience and survive trauma.

The Judging/Perceiving axis implies the orientation towards completing tasks and achieving goals. When faced with sudden death, individuals with a Judging preference can however usually not rely on their normal schedules, structure or “no surprises” policy. Baron (1998), Buckingham and Coffman (1999) as well as Quenk (2000) state that individuals upon whom change are imposed are subsequently left without closure and control; and forced to improvise and cope. In this study, the participants who indicated a preference for the Judging attitude did indeed appear to make an effort to adapt to the change imposed upon them and tried to foster a more flexible attitude towards life in general. In addition, the participants who indicated a preference for Judging seemed to adapt to their post-sudden loss situation by indicating a greater probability of drawing on the strengths of the Perceiving attitude. As such, the four Judgers indicated a lesser preference for Judging post-sudden loss.

I further found that the only Perceiver amongst the participants appeared to rely less on her Perceiving attitude post-sudden loss. Baron (1998), Buckingham and Coffman (1999) as well as Quenk (2000) indicate that Perceivers upon whom change is imposed typically experience frustration at not having had a chance to discuss their instincts and insights prior to the sudden loss; as they feel robbed of the luxury to work at their own pace and to try alternatives (Kroeger & Thuesen, 1992). This finding corresponds with the belief that individuals are constantly acquiring new skills and advancing towards self-realisation, as proposed by Harré (2006), Helson and Stewart (1994), Markus and Herzog (1991), Markus and Ruvolo (1989) as well as Stein and Markus (1994).

4.5.2 GENERAL TENDENCIES CONCERNING THE POTENTIAL EFFECT OF SUDDEN LOSS ON CHANGE IN PERSONALITY STRUCTURE

Besides the changes that occurred in terms of the four polarities of the MBTI®, two general tendencies relating to change could be detected, namely a tendency to rely on the inferior function and a predisposition towards type exaggeration. I now present my findings relating to these two tendencies.

4.5.2.1 A tendency to rely on the inferior function

Jung's typology states that individuals orientate themselves in their realities by means of the movement of psychic energy (Noer, 1993; Quenk, 2000). Jung further explains that the disparity between conscious and unconscious processes may allow individuals to rely on their inferior functions in the event of stress, as the inferior function may support them in their effort to cope with their changing realities (Maddi, 1996; Myers *et al.*, 1998). Although Barger and Kirby's (2004) explanation of this so-called "In the Grip" experience indicates individuals' tendency to utilise their inferior functions when enduring severe stress, this tendency might also be relied upon in interpreting the results I obtained in my study. In this manner, my finding that the majority of the participants presented with a changed personality profile post-sudden loss (Quenk, 2000), might be ascribed to them relying on their inferior functions.

For example, the mother's pre-sudden loss ENTJ profile indicated Feeling as inferior function. It can be expected that the trauma of the sudden loss of her daughter could have transpired in an acute awareness of inner states; sensitivity to criticism; feelings of insignificance; and proneness to feeling guilty (Baron, 1998; Noer, 1993; Van Rensburg & Simpson, 2003). Post-sudden loss, the mother presented with an ISFJ profile, which indeed implies that she appeared to rely so strongly on her Feeling and Sensing functions to cope with her sudden loss, that she incorporated both her tertiary sensing and inferior feeling functions to the extent that these two functions manifested as a part of her post-sudden loss MBTI® profile (Baron 1998). Secondly, in the case of the middle sibling, the change in his personality profile from ENTJ to ESTJ may also be explained in terms of Quenk's (2000) theory relating to the "In the Grip" experience. The middle sibling might have relied so heavily on his (tertiary) Sensing function that he perceived Sensing as a preferred mode of functioning post-sudden loss. This possible explanation is supported by the work of Buckingham and Coffman (1999) as well as Van Rooyen (2006). Thirdly, the youngest participant's movement from ESTP to ENTP implied a greater preference for Intuition which might once again be considered within the context of the "In the Grip" experience, as explained by Quenk (2000). She might have started relying so heavily on the inferior function of her pre-sudden loss profile (namely Intuition), that she actually considered this function as a part of her post-sudden loss profile. As I merely applied the theory of the "In the Grip" experience, which was initially developed to explain individuals' behaviour under stressful circumstances, to the context of sudden loss (and bereavement) further exploration is required to elaborate on this possibility and related findings.

The above-mentioned explanation and tendency of the participants are further supported by Jung's principle of equivalence (Jung 1969; 1971) which states that whenever a reallocation of focus continues for a significant period of time, it may have a marked effect on the personal functioning of the individual

involved (Myers *et al.*, 1998; Ryckman, 1997; Viljoen, 1997). Furthermore, altered personality profiles post-sudden loss might be clarified in terms of the fact that prolonged utilisation of the inferior function may indicate a change in preference and even a change in personality profile, as proposed by authors such as Ardel (2000), Baumeister (1994), Clausen (1993), Diclemente (1994), Duggan (2004), Elder and O'Rand (1995), Helson and Stewart (1994), Helson and Wink (1993), Jones and Meredith (1996), Krueger and Heckhausen (1993), McGue *et al.* (1993) as well as Miller and C'deBaca (1994).

4.5.2.2 A predisposition towards the exaggerated function

Myers *et al.* (1998) as well as Van Rooyen (2006) regard it as natural to invest energy in the conscious, dominant function in challenging situations, in an attempt to regain control. However, once the demands of a situation overextend the individual, the dominant function may become exaggerated and rigid, consequently inhibiting competence and jeopardising balanced functioning. Also, in the case of incessant usage, the dominant function may become exaggerated, resulting in distorted information, tainted judgement and compromised ability, as stated in the work of Myers and Kirby (1994) as well as Noer (1993). Based on the results of this study, I found that the majority of the participants relied upon their dominant function in order for them to deal with the sudden loss of their daughter/sister, thereby implying the possibility of the dominant function becoming exaggerated.

As such, the participants in this study might have been prone to type exaggeration which could have inhibited optimal functioning – a possibility explained by Michaels Hollander (2004). The results of this study reveal that both the father and the mother might have been in an exaggerated state with regard to their Sensing functions, whilst the middle sibling might have experienced this state in terms of his Thinking function and the youngest sibling in terms of her Intuitive function.

4.6 SUMMARY

In this chapter I presented the results of my study, attempting to triangulate the data I obtained by utilising two quantitative measures (MBTI® and 16PF) and one qualitative strategy (metaphor). After presenting the results I obtained pre- and post-sudden loss, I compared these results, thereby identifying recurring tendencies concerning potential changes in personality structure due to sudden loss. Hereafter, I interpreted my results in terms of existing literature, thereby presenting the findings of the study.

In the final chapter of this mini-dissertation, I present a summary of the study and come to conclusions. In addition, I discuss the potential contributions of the study and describe the challenges and limitations I faced. I then make recommendations for training, practice and future research.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“The pain now is part of the happiness then”

(Excerpt from the movie: *My Immortal Beloved*).

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter IV I discussed the results I obtained as well as the findings of the study. In my discussion of the results I addressed the first two secondary research questions formulated in chapter I. My discussion of the findings was guided by the last two secondary research questions (section 1.4).

This chapter offers a final synopsis of the study. I commence with an overview of the previous chapters, after which I come to conclusions, referring to the hypothesis and primary research question I formulated in chapter I and set out to explore in this study. I subsequently discuss the challenges I faced during the study and contemplate the possible contributions of the study. I conclude the chapter with recommendations for practice, training and future research.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

Chapter I provided a broad outline of the study. The chapter offered an introduction to my study as well as my motivation for undertaking the research, which focused on gaining an understanding of the potential effect of sudden loss on the functioning of bereaved individuals, specifically pertaining to how sudden loss might affect individual personality structures. After formulating the research questions, I stated my hypothesis that the sudden loss of a child/sibling will result in changes in the individual personality structures of the remaining nuclear family members. I then presented the assumptions with which I approached the study and clarified relevant concepts. I briefly introduced the paradigmatic perspective that informed my study; summarised my research design and methodology; and then referred to the ethical considerations I upheld. I concluded the chapter with a framework of chapters II to V.

In **chapter II** I attempted to orientate the reader with regard to the context of the study, being the sudden loss (death) of a family member – in this case the daughter/sister in a nuclear family. I then outlined the conceptual framework of my study which revolved around an understanding of the phenomenon of personality within the context of sudden loss. For this purpose, I consulted literature relevant to the research focus in an attempt to provide clarity and understanding of the topic under investigation. I selected the personality theories of Cattell (1946) and Jung (1971) as informing theories, resulting in the quantitative measures I selected to employ in my study. Thereafter, I attended to the debate on whether or not adult personality can be considered as a stable construct, this being a crucial aspect of my research. I subsequently considered the assessment of adult personality in terms of the two selected quantitative measures, namely the 16PF and the MBTI®.

Chapter III offered an in-depth discussion and explanation of the research process. I described the empirical component of the study in terms of the underlying paradigmatic perspective; methodological paradigm; research process; research design; selection of participants; as well as the quantitative and qualitative data collection, analysis and interpretation strategies. Thereafter I reflected on my role as researcher, attended to the means I employed to enhance the rigour of the study and discussed the ethical considerations I adhered to in planning and undertaking my study.

In this study I followed a *concurrent nested mixed model approach* which relied upon the integration of the POST-POSITIVIST and Interpretivist paradigms. I primarily followed a *within group interrupted time series design* (quantitative), supported by the advantages of a case study design (qualitative). Five family members of a nuclear family who had lost their daughter/sister in a motor vehicle accident participated in this study. Data were collected by means of pre- and post-sudden loss MBTI® inventories (quantitative component), post-sudden loss 16PF questionnaires (quantitative component), and metaphors created by the participants (qualitative component). A reflective journal provided me with additional evidence.

I commenced **chapter IV** with an overview of the research process. I provided the baseline information of the study obtained by a clinical psychologist prior to the sudden loss event and presented the data I obtained post-sudden loss. I then compared the two sets of data. I subsequently aimed to triangulate the results by firstly presenting the quantitative and qualitative components individually. Secondly, I provided integrated results for each of the five participants, which I then summarised in terms of a synthesis of the results of the various participants. Lastly, I discussed the findings of my study, thereby relating the results I obtained to existing literature, as discussed in chapter II. I attempted to highlight correlations, but also identify and explain contradictions.

5.3 FINAL CONCLUSIONS

I now present my final conclusions by referring to the hypothesis and primary research question that guided this study.

5.3.1 REVISITING MY FORMULATED HYPOTHESIS

Based on the findings of this study, the following hypothesis is accepted: *The sudden loss of a child/sibling will result in changes in the individual personality structures of the remaining nuclear family members.* The findings of my study revealed that all the participants displayed changes in their personality structures, as distinct changes occurred on all four polarities of the MBTI®. Two general tendencies could be identified; namely the tendency to rely on the inferior function (“In the Grip” experience) in the time following the sudden loss of a loved one and, secondly, the tendency to display type exaggeration.

5.3.2 REVISITING MY PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION

This study was guided by the following primary research question: *How might the sudden loss of a child/sibling affect the individual personality structures of remaining nuclear family members?* Based on the findings I discussed in chapter IV, I can conclude that the sudden loss of a child/sibling might indeed result in changes in the personality structures of the remaining individual nuclear family members. My findings indicate several potential changes in personality structure, as assessed in terms of the MBTI®, supported by the 16PF.

Firstly, I found that all the participants indicated a greater preference to draw on the characteristics of the Introversion attitude post-sudden loss, implying that they were probably more reserved and withdrawn in the aftermath of sudden loss. This behaviour might be ascribed to a reallocation of time and energy expenditure, as the process of coming to terms with loss utilises energy that was previously meant for other activities. Furthermore, the decedent might have served as an external source of energy, resulting in a situation where, in her absence, the family members might be forced to draw on other resources for energy. Due to the unique relationship that could have existed between each of the family members and the decedent in my study, it is likely that the family members might not have felt comfortable attempting to replace the decedent as a source of external energy at the time when they participated in this study. It is possible that the family members might therefore have preferred to revert back to themselves, attaining energy from reflection and contemplation, rather than to find a replacement for the decedent as an external source of energy. However, this is a mere hypothesis that requires further exploration.

Apart from the fact that grieving behaviour has been linked to detachment, the bereaved's privacy and containment might also be attributed to a process of personal growth and furthermore, to the redefinition of family roles which is likely to occur after a change in the family structure. In addition, the sensitive and personal nature of dealing with sudden loss should be taken into consideration. In an attempt to protect themselves, the bereaved may temporarily withdraw, until a time when they feel more able to deal with well-meant comments from a world beyond their grief.

Secondly, it seemed as if most of the participants tended to rely more strongly on the Sensing Function in coping with the effect of sudden loss, resulting in my conclusion that individuals experiencing trauma (such as the sudden loss of a family member) will probably tend to focus on what is known, actual and concrete. This focus might be ascribed to these individuals' attempts to deal with their present reality. In the face of having to deal with sudden death, the bereaved may find it difficult to envision a future with possibilities and options. For the time being they might regard it as wiser to mainly rely on their five senses and to trust their experiences until they are ready to consider vague possibilities again. This explanation is, however, a mere hypothesis that could be explored in a follow-up study.

Thirdly, the majority of the participants in this study indicated an inclination towards the Feeling function, resulting in my conclusion that individuals dealing with the sudden loss of a child/sibling will probably become more focused on emotions and being in touch with themselves and others. This tendency may be ascribed to a heightened awareness of the value of significant relationships which may result in a more people-oriented approach, as the environment of dealing with grief could facilitate the process of contemplating the meaning of life; manners of supporting others; as well as appreciating harmony and positive interaction. My reasoning behind the observed preference for the Feeling function can however not be justified by the results of this study and deserves further investigation.

However, as bereaved individuals seem to become more introverted and isolated in the time following a sudden loss, it follows that the tendency to rely more heavily on the Feeling function will initially probably be focused on the self and significant others in the direct micro-system, and not necessarily on other individuals. Yet, the possibility exists, that the preference for the Feeling function may progressively be directed towards others more often as time goes by, resulting in individuals who have suffered sudden loss more regularly displaying empathy and being oriented towards others. This hypothesis could be explored in future studies.

Fourthly, all the participants in this study demonstrated a changed preference on the Judging/Perceiving polarity, in terms of functioning closer to the middle of the axis. It is my conclusion that the Judgers' attempts to be more adaptable after they had to deal with the shock of sudden loss, could indicate potential personal growth despite the difficulty they must have experienced in relinquishing control. In the same manner, the Perceiver seemed to become more inclined towards predictability and control, as her original openness to change could possibly not safeguard her at a time when inevitable change was imposed upon her. As these are mere possibilities, future research focusing on these aspects may provide more insight in terms of how Judgers and Perceivers adapt to loss experiences.

Based on the changes that occurred as discussed in the above-mentioned paragraphs, I can conclude that two main tendencies are possible in terms of changes in personality structures as a result of sudden loss. Firstly, this study indicates that individuals may draw on their inferior functions to help them cope with changed realities. Reliance on the inferior functions might be ascribed to a disparity between conscious and unconscious processes. As a result, individuals might tend to resort to their inferior functions when their initial coping mechanisms no longer suffice. In my study it further transpired that the dependency on the inferior functions were probably so intense that the inferior functions were indicated as preferred functions in some of the participants' post-sudden loss MBTI® profiles. However, these assumptions on the role of the inferior function are based on literature pertaining to the effect of stress and change on coping mechanisms; and should be explored further within the context of dealing with (sudden) loss in future research.

Lastly, this study indicates the possibility of bereaved individuals exaggerating their dominant functions when having to deal with sudden loss. This potential means of coping relies on investing energy in the most easily accessible, conscious mode of personality functioning. However, as exaggerated functioning implies a state of disequilibrium, this coping behaviour might not be beneficial to the individuals themselves or to significant others, based on the fact that exaggerated states generally result in misrepresentation, poor reasoning abilities and compromised ability to plan and follow through. Within the context of grief and bereavement, the incidence of type exaggeration as a potential means of coping has not been explored extensively yet and may be the topic of future research studies.

In terms of both the general tendencies identified in my study, namely the tendency to rely on the inferior function ("In the Grip" experience) and the incidence of type exaggeration, I believe that further

exploration in terms of possible explanations for the atypical behaviour that is often observed within the context of grief and bereavement may contribute to the existing body of knowledge on personality, as well as grief and bereavement. Furthermore, I believe the permanence (or not) of these tendencies in a time following sudden loss also validates further research.

5.4 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

During this study I firstly faced the challenge of limited resources being available on the potential effect of sudden loss, within the specific context of personality change. I subsequently had to rely on related literature in making meaning of the phenomenon I investigated, namely on literature concerning the effect of stress on personality, in order to apply this theory in an adapted format to the results I obtained. In contrast, existing literature available on the phenomenon of personality *per se* is so extensive that I faced the further challenge of selecting which theory to include in my literature review with regard to this aspect of my study. Although my initial readings covered extensive theory relating to personality, I focused my discussion in chapter II on the works of Carl Jung and Raymond Cattell, as their theories on personality informed the empirical part of my study.

Secondly, due to the nature of my study and the requirement of collecting data prior to and after the sudden loss of a family member, the participants whom I involved came from a small population. Subsequently, the results and findings of the study cannot be regarded as generalisable. However, as I selected Interpretivism as supportive paradigm, I did not seek generalisable findings, but rather attempted to gain an understanding of a phenomenon deserving of further exploration.

The fact that only MBTI® profiles were available for the participants pre-sudden loss implies a further limitation, as the study might have benefited had the 16PF questionnaires also been administered pre-sudden loss. However, as this was not the case, I aimed to address this potential challenge by including metaphors as supplementary data collection technique, aiming to gain a deep understanding of the participants' experiences of their sudden loss and the potential effect thereof on their personality structures. Some additional qualitative data collection techniques might, however, have added even more depth and insight, such as informal interviews and discussions of the profiles obtained by means of the MBTI® and 16PF. Furthermore, an implementation of the MBTI® Step II results (Van Rooyen, 2006) could have allowed a statistic measure of the degree of change each participant encountered on

each of the MBTI® polarities. Although I considered the implementation of this resource, I decided not to rely on it, based on the limited extent of this study, as well as the fact that I have not been trained in utilising the MBTI® Step II yet.

Fourthly, my initial motivation for undertaking this study was personal by nature, as I have also experienced the sudden loss of a sibling and had to come to terms with my loss. Even though I was forewarned against and continually aware of the potential pitfalls of undertaking a study of such a personal nature, I often found it challenging to remain focused and not become emotionally involved. Besides being aware of this challenge, I aimed to address it by relying on the continuous guidance of my supervisor in conducting the study and interpreting the results; my reflective journal in dealing with my emotions; and professional support from a psychologist on a regular basis, in order to sustain an appropriate outlet for dealing with my own emotions and avoiding the possibility of transference to the family who participated.

Finally, I experienced the mixed method approach I selected as challenging. I particularly found the interpretation of the results and the integration of the data collected by means of metaphors with the selected quantitative measures as challenging and time-consuming. I aimed to address this challenge by continually relying on extensive readings on the implementation of the method I selected. I also regularly participated in discussions on the topic with my supervisor.

5.5 POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

As little research has been conducted and limited literature is available on the effect of sudden loss on the personality structures of the bereaved, the results of my study might add to the scientific body of knowledge in this field of interest. This research could make a positive contribution to understanding the challenges faced by bereaved individuals, specifically in terms of how their individual personality profiles might influence their ability to deal with their loss. An understanding of the tendencies that might influence the personal process of coming to terms with loss, might clarify altered patterns of behaviour and coping skills that have not previously been associated with bereaved individuals' general conduct.

My study addressed the issue of the stability of adult personality, indicating that sudden loss may bring about change in personality structure. As such, my findings provide evidence in support of the theorists regarding adult personality as a changeable construct. Furthermore, the findings I obtained in terms of type exaggeration and the utilisation of the inferior function within the context of sudden loss emphasise the possibility of extending the application of these principles beyond the scope of personality type and change, subsequently encouraging more research and theory building in this regard.

Besides the potential contribution in the field of personality, this study may contribute to the field of Educational Psychology. Although the life-span developmental stages of the participants of this study comprises of young and middle adulthood, stages that are traditionally not addressed within the framework of Educational Psychology, the findings of the study might consequently be applied within the framework of younger family members experiencing the sudden loss of a brother/sister. Furthermore, Educational Psychology is concerned with human development across the various life-span phases.

As such, the findings of this study might contribute to the existing literature base in the field of Educational Psychology – both in theory and in practice. Theoretically, the study might unlock the value of comparing other stress-related coping behaviours with grieving behaviour, in view of the fact that bereavement is such a sensitive issue to explore. In addition, insight could be gained in terms of potential changes family members might experience within the context of the sudden loss of a family member. In terms of the practice of Educational Psychology, practitioners in the field might apply the knowledge gained from this study when working therapeutically with children in families grieving the loss of a loved one. This study could provide some insight into the general potential experiences and possible changes that children might undergo in such challenging times. It may also reveal the motivation behind altered behaviour post-sudden loss, which might in turn affect family dynamics.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of my study, I now present my recommendations for practice, training and future research.

5.6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The findings obtained from my study may provide insight to health care professionals supporting families who had suffered sudden loss. In this regard it could be valuable for individuals in helping professions to be aware of the possibility of change in personality structures and even personality profiles, as this might have an impact on the functioning of the individuals and also on their family cohesion post-sudden loss. As such, it can be recommended that professionals such as psychologists, social workers, nurses, medical practitioners, preachers and teachers, apply the knowledge gained in this study when working with families dealing with the loss of a child/sibling. Health care practitioners may benefit from bearing in mind that their client/s might rely on their inferior functions and/or type exaggeration post-sudden loss, when working with clients experiencing grief. Should this be the case, a practitioner could draw on a post-sudden loss MBTI® profile in gaining insight into a client's manner of coping with loss.

5.6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRAINING

Even though death is an inevitable event that needs to be dealt with, it is often not a topic of conversation. However, the scope of practice in the helping professions require of individuals in training to be trained in dealing with loss and sudden loss, more specifically in how to guide and counsel bereaved clients in this regard. As such, it can be recommended that students who are trained in becoming professionals in the helping professions be trained in the potential effect of sudden loss on personality structures within the context of a family losing a child/sibling to death. In South Africa, being trained in this aspect might become increasingly more important, especially in light of the reality of HIV and AIDS; the increasing number of children committing suicide; genetically enhanced products that lead to increased incidences of cancer; as well as the poor hygiene, sanitation and medical care often evident in rural areas.

Psychology students in training might benefit from utilising complementary quantitative and qualitative personality assessment measures to support their findings when assessing personality or undertaking research projects, as the phenomenon of personality is such a comprehensive construct. Furthermore, students might also benefit from attaining more extensive training on current personality assessments,

i.e., the “In the Grip” experience and type exaggeration pertaining to the MBTI®; the implementation of the MBTI® Step II procedures; and also understanding and interpreting the 16PF fifth edition.

5.6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Based on the findings of my study, the following studies may be considered in future:

- A follow-up study determining whether or not the changes indicated in the findings of this study was permanent by nature or merely part of the phase of bereavement.
- An investigation into possible correlations between the reaction to imposed change and the effect of sudden loss, specifically pertaining to personality preferences.
- A study to determine whether or not a preference for Introversion is a feasible means of (temporarily) managing grief and, if so, why.
- Further research pertaining to the apparent preference to rely on the Sensing function in coming to terms with sudden loss.
- Research to explore the nature and underlying reason for utilising the Feeling function as a potential coping mechanism post-sudden loss.
- Research on the possibility of loss resulting in personal growth, relating such growth to the Judging/Perceiving polarity of the MBTI®.
- A follow-up study of the role of inferior functions (“In the Grip”), specifically within the context of dealing with (sudden) loss.
- An investigation into the occurrence and extent of type exaggeration amongst individuals having suffered sudden loss.
- Follow-up research on appropriate therapeutic intervention with individuals grieving the sudden loss of a child/sibling, within the context of change in personality structure, as found in this study.

5.7 A FINAL WORD

Loss is a uniquely personal experience defined by the nature of the specific lost relationship. Whenever individuals are forced to deal with the sudden loss of a loved one (such as a child/sibling) without forewarning, the effect of the suddenness of the loss will challenge their abilities to deal with the personal nature of the event. As coping occurs – *inter alia* – on the level of personality traits and preferences, the challenges implied by sudden loss might result in changes in personality structures.

In this study, I found that such changes may occur in the form of a reliance on inferior functions; greater frequency of type exaggeration; a general preference for the Inferior function; a proneness to rely on the Sensing and Feeling functions; as well as an indication of personal growth given that Judgers and Perceivers adapt to sudden loss by assimilating some of the traits of the opposite attitude in order to come to terms with their loss. As such, bereaved individuals seemed to need to assimilate the effect of sudden loss in a manner distinctive to their personality profiles given that the particular lost relationship defines the essence of the loss experience.

*“What can be controlled is never completely real;
What is real can never be completely controlled”
(Vladimir Nabokov in Prigogine, 1997:154).*

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ADDENDA

- A DSM IV definition of bereavement
- B Informed consent
- C MBTI® & 16PF profiles
- D Metaphors: father (D1), mother (D2), sibling 1 (D3), sibling 2 (D4), sibling 3 (D5)
- E MBTI® preference combinations
- F MBTI® preference clarity categories
- G Excerpt from reflective journal
- H Contribution by Dr Drienie Naudé

ADDENDUM A

DSM IV DEFINITION OF BEREAVEMENT

DSM IV DEFINITION OF BEREAVEMENT

V62.82 BEREAVEMENT

“This category can be used when the focus of clinical attention is a reaction to the death of a loved one. As part of their reaction to the loss, some grieving individuals present with symptoms characteristic of a Major Depressive Episode (e.g., feelings of sadness and associated symptoms such as insomnia, poor appetite, and weight loss). The bereaved individual typically regards the depressed mood as “normal,” although the person may seek professional help for relief of associated symptoms such as insomnia or anorexia. The duration and expression of “normal” bereavement vary considerably among different cultural groups. The diagnosis of Major Depressive Disorder is generally not given unless the symptoms are still present 2 months after the loss. However, the presence of certain symptoms that are not characteristic of a “normal” grief reaction may be helpful in differentiating bereavement from a Major Depressive Episode. These include 1) guilt about things other than actions taken or not taken by the survivor at the time of the death; 2) thoughts of death other than the survivor feeling that he or she would be better off dead or should have died with the deceased person; 3) morbid preoccupation with worthlessness; 4) marked psychomotor retardation; 5) prolonged and marked functional impairment; and 6) hallucinatory experiences other than thinking that he or she hears the voice of, or transiently sees the image of, the deceased person.”

Source: American Psychiatric Association. 2000. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*:740-741. 4th edition, Text Revision. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association.

ADDENDUM B

INFORMED CONSENT

PO Box 71655

THE WILLOWS

0041

2 March 2006

Dear Participant

I am a Masters student in Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria, conducting a study on the potential effect of sudden loss of a child/sibling on the personality structures of the individual family members. The purpose of my study is thus to obtain a greater understanding in the potential changes that might occur in the individual personality profiles of remaining family members within the first year of bereavement.

You are hereby invited to participate in this research project. **Please note that your participation is voluntary and confidential. You will not be asked to reveal any information that will allow your identity to be established.**

In a discussion with the clinical psychologist heading your Dutch Reformed Church support group, possible participants were purposefully identified according to the following predetermined criteria:

- The participating family has to be a nuclear family, consisting of at least four members, whom had suffered the sudden loss of a child/sibling within a year prior to my research.
- The loss has to be the first trauma of such magnitude experienced by the particular family.
- Participating siblings has to be eighteen or older, as their input is based on self-knowledge and self-reflection that ought to be relatively stable after the age of eighteen.
- The family has to be headed by the biological parents of the surviving siblings and the deceased child.
- MBTI® profiles for all participating family members as obtained prior to the loss of the family member has to be accessible.
- All members have to consent to participate in the study.

With your consent, the clinical psychologist supplied your contact details to me, since your family structure correlates with the specific parameters of my study.

I hereby request your permission to attain the results of your 2004 Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®) profiles; administered at the family enrichment programme you attended at your church in August 2005.

Participant

Date

In this research process, you will be requested to participate in the following procedures:

1. The assessment of your personality profile according to **Cattell's Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF)**. This paper-and-pencil questionnaire measures primary personality traits by means of one-liners describing behavioural preferences.
2. The assessment of your post-sudden loss personality MBTI® profile.
3. Constructing a **metaphor** on your experience of the sudden loss of your child/sibling. It may consist of a short paragraph or a one-pager or any other means of expression preferred. However, please note that the context, rather than the presentation of the document will be considered.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter as a declaration of your consent, *i.e.*, that you participate in this project willingly and that you understand that you may withdraw from the research project at any time. Under no circumstances will your identity be made known to the distributors of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®), the supplier of the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF), the University of Pretoria or any parties/organisations that may be involved in the research process and/or which has some form of power over the research process.

Participant

Date

Researcher

Date

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Adèle Marais (Neé Du Plessis)

Tel 082 443 0702

ADDENDUM C

MBTI® & 16PF PROFILES

PRE- AND POST SUDDEN LOSS MBTI® PROFILES

PRE-SUDDEN LOSS results obtained from clinical psychologist				
MBTI® AUGUST 2005				
Father	I₅₁ Very Clear	S₅₃ Very Clear	T₄₁ Very Clear	J₄₇ Very Clear
Mother	E₃₃ Clear	N₂₉ Clear	T₁₅ Moderate	J₁₇ Moderate
Sibling 1	I₁₁ Moderate	N₁₁ Moderate	F₁₇ Moderate	J₃₃ Clear
Sibling 2	E₁₉ Moderate	N₁₁ Moderate	T₃₇ Clear	J₄₇ Very Clear
Sibling 3	E₄₁ Very Clear	S₃₁ Clear	T₁₃ Moderate	P₅₅ Very Clear

POST-SUDDEN LOSS RESULTS				
MBTI® MAY 2006				
Father	I₅₃ Very Clear	S₄₉ Very Clear	T₇ Slight	J₄₅ Very Clear
Mother	I₁₅ Moderate	S₁ Slight	F₂₁ Clear	J₁₃ Moderate
Sibling 1	I₃₉ Clear	N₇ Slight	F₁₇ Moderate	J₃₁ Clear
Sibling 2	E₁₁ Moderate	S₁₅ Moderate	T₆₁ Very Clear	J₂₅ Clear
Sibling 3	E₃₃ Clear	N₇ Slight	T₁₅ Moderate	P₁₃ Moderate

The effect of a nuclear family's sudden loss on the personality structures of individual family members.

16PF PROFILES

	PRIMARY SCALES	LOW SCORE DESCRIPTION	HIGH SCORE DESCRIPTION	FATHER	MOTHER	SIBLING 1	SIBLING 2	SIBLING 3										
A	WARMTH	Reserved	Outgoing	6	7	6	3	8										
B	REASONING	Less Abstract	Abstract	8	3	7	5	6										
C	EMOTIONAL STABILITY	Affected by Feelings	Emotionally Stable	6	3	1	6	6										
E	DOMINANCE	Humble	Assertive	2	4	1	9	8										
F	LIVELINESS	Sober	Happy-Go-Lucky	3	4	1	6	6										
G	RULE-CONSCIOUSNESS	Expedient	Conscientious	6	6	6	6	1										
H	SOCIAL BOLDNESS	Shy	Venturesome	4	4	2	6	8										
I	SENSITIVITY	Tough-Minded	Tender-Minded	6	4	7	2	1										
L	VIGILANCE	Trusting	Suspicious	8	7	4	8	7										
M	ABSTRACTEDNESS	Practical	Imaginative	5	8	4	4	2										
N	PRIVATENESS	Forthright	Shrewd	3	5	8	8	5										
O	APPREHENSION	Placid	Apprehensive	6	8	8	5	4										
Q1	OPENNESS TO CHANGE	Conservative	Experimenting	7	8	6	6	8										
Q2	SELF-RELIANCE	Group-Dependent	Self-Sufficient	8	5	8	2	5										
Q3	PERFECTIONISM	Causal	Controlled	10	5	9	5	4										
Q4	TENSION	Relaxed	Tense	7	5	6	7	7										
STEN DISTRIBUTION																		
1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10
LOW				LOW AVERAGE		AVERAGE			HIGH AVERAGE		HIGH							

ADDENDA D 1-5

INDIVIDUAL FAMILY METAPHORS

ADDENDUM D1

FATHER'S METAPHOR

Ek voel nog steeds asof my hart uitgeruk is.

Revealing of personal matters
Emotive language
Straightforward
Self-disclosing & genuine
Physical pain & hurt, brokenness, devastation
Strong emotional ties
Abstract reasoning & state of denial
Hurt & angry

**Die besef dat ek haar nooit weer sal sien nie,
wil net nie by my insink nie.**

Irreparable change, permanence
Uncomfortable with change
Not prepared to digest loss
Overwhelmed by reality
Feels out of control
Disbelief & disillusionment
Feeling overcome & dismayed
Reflective

In my gedagtes sien ek haar gedurig voor my.

High strung & restless
Reminiscence
Longing
Dwells on affronts & frustrations
Reflective

**As ek alleen is,
wil ek mure skop en deure stukkend slaan.**

Self-sufficiency
Passive-aggressive
Insecurity projected outwards
Emotionally involved
Sense of destruction
Aggression & Frustration
Reserved

Sulke tye huil ek in my binneste.

Overburdened by external forces
Sensitive
Intense sadness, crying
Desolate & hopeless
Isolation

ADDENDUM D2

MOTHER'S METAPHOR

My liggaam & siel is gekneus –

My verstand weier om dit as werklikheid te aanvaar –

**My verlange
na my jongste meisiekind brand soos 'n vuur in my.**

**Ek voel só verslae & ontugter
soos na 'n Tsunami –
WOES & LEEG!**

Introspective
Emotionally responsive
Subdued & vulnerable
Lack of energy
Raw emotion
Avoids dealing with the issue
Blocks reasoning
Internal conflict
Expressive
Affectionate
Emotive
Self-disclosing
Feels unable to cope
Unsure how to cope with crisis of loss
Unable to act
Overburdened by external forces
Discouraged
Creative & abstracted
Volatile, upset & reactive to stress

ADDENDUM D3

SIBLING 1'S METAPHOR

<p>Sonder jou, my liefing kleinsus</p> <p>Vreemd. Ek sien myself op my sy lê in vlak seewater. Ek lyk anders, amper onherkenbaar, maar ek weet ek is ek. Golwe van seerkry, swaarkry, hartseer en onbeantwoorde geloofsvrae... lewensvrae ~ spoel oor my. My kop bly bo water want dit is net-net vlak genoeg as ek moeite doen om regop te bly. Maar ek, swakkeling, word moeg en my oë brand en my kop klop en my nek word seer en my gewigte kramp en my lyf pyn. Ek is so ontsettend moeg, moeg, moeg. Ek is vaagweg bewus van die verskriklike, hartverskeurende stukkendgeit om my, maar ek kan beswaarlik my mense help. Ek wil, maar ek kan regtig nie. Ek het nie krag nie en bowenal weet ek nie hoe om enige iets beter te maak nie. Die omstandighede is ondraaglik. Ek verstik in my snikke en raak naar van die leegheid van verlange. Ons was verknog aan mekaar. Ons al ses. Ek wens ek kan ons gesinnetjie hierdie seer spaar. Ek weet ons wens dit vir mekaar. Hoe frustrerend tog is die saak van onmoontlikheid! Ons het bederf geraak, ons ken dit nie: daar was altyd 'n plan B, ons het altyd bly hoop, bly vertrou... wat nou? Die slag van ewigheid is onoorkomentlik en dit slaan ons van ons voete af, bykans uit ons geloof uit, stukkend. Ek, wat nog altyd 'n stryd met my growwe lyf voer, voel uitgeteer. Ek lyk verwaarloos, siek, alleen. Tog voel ek aan dat ek tot 'n groot mate die alleenheid verkies. Ek was nog nooit besonder sosiaal nie. Ek was nog altyd deeglik bewus van die feit dat volgehoute afsondering my teneurgedruk laat voel. Ek verdrink in my omstandighede, maar hou my vroom gesig selfgeldend bo water. Net-net. Soms neem ek 'n groot teug sout seewater en wens die diep blou wil my verorber. Dan kry ek skaam oor die seëninge wat steeds deel van my verwysingsraamwerk is en dwing ek myself om te fokus, te bly hoop en glo, al weet ek nie altyd of ek enige realistiese wense koester nie.</p>	<p>Emotional Deep personal connection</p> <p>Emotive language Extent of sudden loss event</p> <p>Attempts to deal with sudden loss Indicates will to survive Downcast thoughts Overburdened by external forces Immobilised by emotion Physically exhausted Responsive to others Finds it hard to generate potential solutions Family oriented Difficulty coping Thinking is narrow & constricted Sense of hopelessness Intensity of feeling Psychosomatic Emotive Strong family ties</p> <p>Concern & compassion for others Heightened frustration Unsure what to do Sense of being lost in suddenness of event</p> <p>Painfully sensitive Disbelief Apparent brokenness Hopelessness Isolated Hurt Non-disclosure & guardedness Isolation Reflection Warning sign for depression Self-knowledge</p> <p>Feels overwhelmed Attempts to cope Craves escape from hurt & devastation</p> <p>Reflective Future-oriented Self-control Conscientious</p>
--	---

<p>Ai! Dit klink soos net <i>me, myself and I...</i> Wanneer het ek so selfgesentreerd geraak? Hoekom sien ek niemand anders op hierdie verlate strand nie? Ek weet tog dis nie net my seer nie! Ek deel dit met soveel ander wat so 'n besondere band met my sus, my geesgenoot gehad het.</p>	<p>Introspective Intropunitive Focus on others Rationalisation Reflection</p>
<p>Ek is moeg vir my. My snert,my hopeloosheid, my kleingelowigheid, my ondankbaarheid, my melankolie. Helaas voed ek dit nou steeds deur gehoor te gee aan die noodkreet hier binne my? Ek is stukkend en die soutwater brand my wonde. Die mense sê die brand is helend, genesend... maar dit voel vernietigend. Asof die sout stukkie vir stukkie, knaend my wese besmet en verweer en verteer. Daar is besorgdes wat omgee, wat wil hoor; wat kos aandra al is ek nie honger nie; wat moed inpraat al kan ek nie luister nie; wat helderheid aan die Here se woord probeer gee al is ek vir Hom kwaad.</p>	<p>Intropunitive Depressed Poor coping skills Reasoning to override emotions Brokenness Pain of growth Meticulous process of dealing with sudden loss Influence of others who care Appreciative Sullen, resentful & passive-aggressive</p>
<p>Die besorgdes wat nie moed opgee met my terughoudendheid nie, dring stelselmatig tot my deur. Hulle maak 'n verskil. Hul salf maak die stang van die soutwater minder. Hul deernis maak my pynrempel hoër. Hul opregtheid gee my insig. Ek is hulle ewig dankbaar. Ek weet hulle word na my ontoganklike strandbondeltjie gestuur.</p>	<p>External resources Hope Support Own inaccessibility</p>
<p>Ek bid dat ek tog eendag in hul lewens ook 'n verskil kan maak. Die ander wat net kan bekostig om 'n oomblik te talm en dan vlug van ons hartseer, laat my verslae.</p>	<p>Future-oriented Avoids conflict Dismayed</p>
<p>Ek kan nie saam met hulle oor nietighede kibbel en kuier nie. Wat maak dit tog saak? Ek staar hul agterna as hul in die niet verdwyn. Ek mis hulle. Hul menswees het eens my lewe verryk. Nou is dit nie binne my vermoë om uit hierdie soutwater op te staan en na hul bloublasiewonde te kyk nie, al weet ek die lewe ~ hoe ironies tog ~ gaan aan.</p>	<p>High expectation of others Inability to focus on others Contemplation</p>
<p>In my stilligheid is ek dankbaar saam met hulle vir hul lewensvreugdes en bid ek ~ ja, ek glo steeds ~ dat die Here hul en die kosbare besorgdes sal seën. As dit Sy wil is, sal dit vir my wonderlik wees om weer uit hierdie dooie soutsee op te staan en 'n bydrae te lewer, te lag, te troos, te onthou en te leef, sonder om ooit te vergeet, want my herinneringe is te kosbaar.</p>	<p>Focused on others' well-being Acknowledges faith Acknowledges faith Future-oriented Hope</p>
<p>My kleinsus is vervleg in my wese, sy is deel van wie ek is en daarvoor is ek haar ewig dankbaar. My kleinsus sal ek vir altyd in my saamdra. Ek wens haar mooi kan my steeds inkleur, soos wat sy altyd het. Ek mis haar intens.</p>	<p>Uniqueness of personal relationship Intense yearning</p>
<p>Op die uitgestrekte sand lê ek steeds in diepblou soutwater. Ek raak bewus van die son wat laag oor die water hang. Ek kan nie besluit of die son sak of opkom nie, maar daar is strale en dis vir my genoeg. Die lang, uitgestrekte wit sand omhul my horison en word omraam deur warm-palet duine.</p>	

<p>‘n Paar wonde het nou rowe, maar frats golwe spoel dit soms af en dan begin die heelword weer van voor af. Ander wonde is te diep.</p>	<p>Attempt to deal with sudden loss Sensitive Emotional Hurt & distraught Pain of growth Intense vulnerability Isolation Reserved</p>
<p>Dit kloof my siel oop en laat my weerloos teen die elemente. Wie sal dit verstaan? Sal ek dit ooit verstaan of verwerk of verbruik of aanwend of omskep? Die fraksie lewenslus in my hart word aangevul deur die onvoorwaardelike liefde van my vrou, die geduld van my vriende, die saam-onthou van familie, die empatie van ander gewondes, die onverwagse seën van engele wat God deurentyd oor my pad stuur en die rou-verstaan van my gesin. Hul vul my bekertjie hoop geredelik aan en ek glo ek sal weer eendag dié geskenk kan oordra. My liefing kleinsus se wese is intens by my. Ek wens ek kon haar vra hoe staan die verwese weer op uit die soutwater en wat die doel met al die seer is. Dan kry ek skaam want in my hart weet ek haar saak was reg met haar Here. Ek het nie addisionele verwyte oor ons verhouding of ergerlike bekommernisse oor haar heenkome nie. Ek weet waar sy haar bevind, al is dit so ondraaglik ver van hier. Sy wag vir ons in die heerlikheid waarin ons almal glo.</p>	<p>Narrow & constricted thinking – unsure what to do</p> <p>Relationship oriented Hope Prospect of recovery Draws on resources Acknowledges faith</p>
<p>Sy herinner my dat ek ‘n doel op aarde het en dat ek dit aan my geliefdes verskuldig is om aan te hou lééf.</p>	<p>Validation Practical Intropunitive Hope Results-oriented Acknowledges faith</p>
<p>Soos gewoonlik, wys sy op haar kalm, deurdagte manier vir my die weg en bevestig sy my admirasie vir haar groot gees, my hero, wat ek met trots as my jongste sus mag sien.</p>	<p>Reflection Future-orientation Positive, healing approach Idealism Focus on people Idealisation Values closure</p>

ADDENDUM D4

SIBLING 2'S METAPHOR

Hereby some explanations of the feeling of severe loneliness associated with the loss of one of my most treasured companions (“vertroueling”)...



The Sinner: 81: 01: 10: 00

As ek aan ons verlies dink, en die realiteit sink vir een sekond in, voel dit of ‘n mens naar word van verlange – dis amper asof iemand jou met ‘n vuus so hard in die maag slaan, dat jy nie asem kry nie en opgooi van hulpeloosheid. Jammer as dit bietjie eksplisiet is, maar dis die eerlikste beskrywing...

Isolation
Affiliative – likes to belong
Group-oriented
Outspoken
Tension
Severity of sudden loss
Grounded & concerned with concrete issues



0:00:00

As ek aan haar dink, vul my hart met vreugde van die onvervangbare wonderlike tye saam met haar. Selfs voor haar ongeluk kon ek nooit aan enige iets negatief van haar dink nie. Sy was vir my altyd die naaste aan volmaak wat ‘n mens kan kry.

Prefers company
Idealisation



0:00:00

Die lewe buite gaan aan, maar alles is anders...

Projecting tensions



0:00:00

Eensaam met ‘n diep verlange na “What once was.”

Isolation
Reserved
Contemplative
Longing



0:00:00

Niks is meer wat dit was nie, maar daar is steeds baie ligpunte van herinneringe en nuwe goed in mens se lewe wat dit weer die moeite werd maak. Daar is hoop, “a ray of light”.

Internal conflict of the approach-avoidance kind
Avoids sensitive feelings
Pragmatic & solution-oriented
Rational

The effect of a nuclear family's sudden loss on the personality structures of individual family members.



**Daar is 'n leegheid wat nie weer gevul kan word nie,
ten spyte van goeie dinge wat gebeur.**

Emotionally detached
Realistic – has few illusions



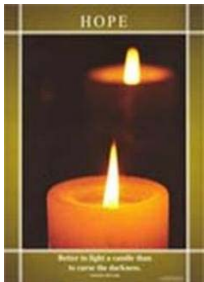
Niks is meer heeltemal heel nie.

Brokenness
Effect of sudden loss



**En soms voel dit of almal verwag dat alles weer normaal moet wees,
alhoewel 'n mens weet nie of jy kom of gaan nie.
Fokus van wat saamgemaak het verloor.**

Aware of others' opinions
Resentful & wary
High strung, tense & restless
Goal-oriented



**Na die ongeluk het ek vir 'n geruime tyd belangstelling in alles verloor,
veral in my geloofslewe.
However, sodra mens daardie deel van jou lewe weer regruk,
en beseft dat jou geloof
al is wat jou weer gaan her-enig met jou geliefdes,
kry mens weer hoop,
kan mens weer voluit lewe
en beseft mens dat jou situasie jou baie geleer het
van jouself, jou gesin, jou vriende,
jou *sogenaamde* vriende en van mense in die algemeen.**

Aloof & detached
Dwells on affronts & frustrations
Tension between dependency & dominance
Solution-oriented
Self-control
Acts on facts & logic
Affiliative
Tough, unsentimental & functional
Emotionally detached
Indifference
Aggressive & distrustful
Cynical
Alert to others' motives & intentions
Likes to belong & prefers company

ADDENDUM D5

SIBLING 3'S METAPHOR

**Gedroom sy kom by my aan
met haar slaapsak onder haar arm
en sy was net somewhere weg gewees.**

**Kyk sy vir my
met haar tevrede skewe glimlag.**

**Ek het eers begin huil,
toe haar te lyf gegaan.**

Dit was so rêrig!

Expressive
Unsentimental
Unworried
Not concerned about details
Open-minded & freethinking
Tolerates disorder, casual
Alert to others' motives & intentions
Bond with sibling
Sensitive
Not afraid of criticism
Aggressive, hostile & distrustful
Forceful & Aggressive
Careless of rules
Project their tensions onto others
Solution-oriented
Untroubled by guilt & remorse
Follows own urges
High-strung & restless
Emotionally responsive
Resilient under stress

ADDENDUM E

MBTI® PREFERENCE COMBINATIONS

INTRODUCTION TO TYPE[®]

INTRODUCTION TO TYPE[®] SERIES

ISABEL BRIGGS MYERS
SIXTH EDITION

Characteristics Frequently Associated with Each Type

		Sensing Types		Intuitive Types					
Introverts	ISTJ	Quiet, serious, earn success by thoroughness and dependability. Practical, matter-of-fact, realistic, and responsible. Decide logically what should be done and work toward it steadily, regardless of distractions. Take pleasure in making everything orderly and organized—their work, their home, their life. Value traditions and loyalty.	ISFJ	Quiet, friendly, responsible, and conscientious. Committed and steady in meeting their obligations. Thorough, painstaking, and accurate. Loyal, considerate, notice and remember specifics about people who are important to them, concerned with how others feel. Strive to create an orderly and harmonious environment at work and at home.	INFJ	Seek meaning and connection in ideas, relationships, and material possessions. Want to understand what motivates people and are insightful about others. Conscientious and committed to their firm values. Develop a clear vision about how best to serve the common good. Organized and decisive in implementing their vision.	INTJ	Have original minds and great drive for implementing their ideas and achieving their goals. Quickly see patterns in external events and develop long-range explanatory perspectives. When committed, organize a job and carry it through. Skeptical and independent, have high standards of competence and performance—for themselves and others.	
	ISTP	Tolerant and flexible, quiet observers until a problem appears, then act quickly to find workable solutions. Analyze what makes things work and readily get through large amounts of data to isolate the core of practical problems. Interested in cause and effect, organize facts using logical principles, value efficiency.	ISFP	Quiet, friendly, sensitive, and kind. Enjoy the present moment, what's going on around them. Like to have their own space and to work within their own time frame. Loyal and committed to their values and to people who are important to them. Dislike disagreements and conflicts, do not force their opinions or values on others.	INFP	Idealistic, loyal to their values and to people who are important to them. Want an external life that is congruent with their values. Curious, quick to see possibilities, can be catalysts for implementing ideas. Seek to understand people and to help them fulfill their potential. Adaptable, flexible, and accepting unless a value is threatened.	INTP	Seek to develop logical explanations for everything that interests them. Theoretical and abstract, interested more in ideas than in social interaction. Quiet, contained, flexible, and adaptable. Have unusual ability to focus in depth to solve problems in their area of interest. Skeptical, sometimes critical, always analytical.	
	Extraverts	ESTP	Flexible and tolerant, they take a pragmatic approach focused on immediate results. Theories and conceptual explanations bore them—they want to act energetically to solve the problem. Focus on the here-and-now, spontaneous, enjoy each moment that they can be active with others. Enjoy material comforts and style. Learn best through doing.	ESFP	Outgoing, friendly, and accepting. Exuberant lovers of life, people, and material comforts. Enjoy working with others to make things happen. Bring common sense and a realistic approach to their work, and make work fun. Flexible and spontaneous, adapt readily to new people and environments. Learn best by trying a new skill with other people.	ENFP	Warmly enthusiastic and imaginative. See life as full of possibilities. Make connections between events and information very quickly, and confidently proceed based on the patterns they see. Want a lot of affirmation from others, and readily give appreciation and support. Spontaneous and flexible, often rely on their ability to improvise and their verbal fluency.	ENTP	Quick, ingenious, stimulating, alert, and outspoken. Resourceful in solving new and challenging problems. Adept at generating conceptual possibilities and then analyzing them strategically. Good at reading other people. Bored by routine, will seldom do the same thing the same way, apt to turn to one new interest after another.
		ESTJ	Practical, realistic, matter-of-fact. Decisive, quickly move to implement decisions. Organize projects and people to get things done, focus on getting results in the most efficient way possible. Take care of routine details. Have a clear set of logical standards, systematically follow them and want others to also. Forceful in implementing their plans.	ESFJ	Warmhearted, conscientious, and cooperative. Want harmony in their environment, work with determination to establish it. Like to work with others to complete tasks accurately and on time. Loyal, follow through even in small matters. Notice what others need in their day-by-day lives and try to provide it. Want to be appreciated for who they are and for what they contribute.	ENFJ	Warm, empathetic, responsive, and responsible. Highly attuned to the emotions, needs, and motivations of others. Find potential in everyone, want to help others fulfill their potential. May act as catalysts for individual and group growth. Loyal, responsive to praise and criticism. Sociable, facilitate others in a group, and provide inspiring leadership.	ENTJ	Frank, decisive, assume leadership readily. Quickly see illogical and inefficient procedures and policies, develop and implement comprehensive systems to solve organizational problems. Enjoy long-term planning and goal setting. Usually well informed, well read, enjoy expanding their knowledge and passing it on to others. Forceful in presenting their ideas.

Using Type Preference Combinations



Understanding the effects of each preference is a starting point, but type becomes even more useful when we begin to explore combinations of preferences:

- Intuition *combined with* Feeling usually focuses on insights about people issues, while
- Intuition *combined with* Thinking is more likely to focus on insights about organizational structures and systems.
- Sensing *combined with* Feeling usually focuses on practical service to people, while
- Sensing *combined with* Thinking is more likely to focus on practical tasks.

The type table is organized so that similar types are next to each other; thus we can look at sections of the type table to see qualities shared by groups of types.

	S	S	N	N	
I	ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ	J
I	ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP	P
E	ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP	P
E	ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ	J
	T	F	F	T	

Combinations of Energy and External Orientations: Dealing with Change

IJ
IP
EP
EJ

Combinations of the *direction of energy (E or I)* and *orientation to the external world (J or P)* influence how people respond to change. These are the four rows across the type table.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| IJ Decisive Introverts | When changes are proposed, they check them out against their internal perceptions (data or big pictures). If the changes "fit," they move quickly to implement them. If the changes don't fit, they dig in their heels and become unmovable opponents. |
| IP Adaptable Introverts | When changes are proposed, they are curious and seek information. Then they assess the information with their internal judgment (values or logical principles). Their information seeking appears adaptable, but they move ahead only in their own time—after they have decided. |
| EP Adaptable Extraverts | When changes are proposed, they consult their networks, talk to people, find out what everyone thinks. If the changes allow room for their creativity and action, they gather resources and try to energize everyone to implement the changes. |
| EJ Decisive Extraverts | When changes are proposed, they apply their judgment (logic or values) out loud by questioning. Then, if their questions are answered, they move quickly to plan, organize, and implement the change. |

Combinations of Perception and Judgment: Career Interests

ST	SF	NF	NT
----	----	----	----

Combinations of *perception (S or N)* and *judgment (T or F)* influence career interests and choices. These are the columns of the type table.

People who prefer:	ST	SF	NF	NT
Focus on:	Facts	Facts	Possibilities	Possibilities
Handle these by applying:	Objective analysis and experience	Personal warmth, concern for others	Attention to people's potential	Theoretical concepts and systems
Thus tend to become:	Practical and analytical	Sympathetic and friendly	Insightful and enthusiastic	Logical and analytical
Find scope for their interests in:	Technical skills with objects and facts	Practical help and services for people	Understanding and encouraging people	Theoretical and technical frameworks
For example:	Applied Science Business Administration Banking Law enforcement Production Construction	Health care Community service Teaching Supervision Religious service Support services Sales	Psychology Human resources Teaching Research Literature Religious service Health care Art & music	Physical science Research Management Computers Law Engineering Technical work

Combinations of Energy Orientation and Perception: Uses of Information

IS	IN
ES	EN

Combinations of *orientation of energy (E or I)* and *perception (S or N)* influence how people typically use information. These are the four quadrants of the type table.

- IS** Thoughtful Realists Knowledge is important to establish what is true.
- IN** Thoughtful Innovators Knowledge is important for its own sake.
- ES** Action-Oriented Realists Knowledge is important for its practical uses.
- EN** Action-Oriented Innovators Knowledge is important for changing reality.

Note: From *Understanding the Type Table*, by I. B. Myers & M. H. McCantley, 1976. Copyright 1976 by Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Gainesville, FL: Center for Applications of Psychological Type. Used with permission.

Combinations of Judgment and External Orientation: Leading/Following Styles

TJ	FJ	TJ
TP	FP	TP
TJ	FJ	TJ

Combinations of the *judging function (T or F)* and the preferred *orientation to the external world (J or P)* influence preferred leadership, management, and followership styles.

- TJ** Logical Decision Makers Analytical, decisive leaders. Make decisions based on principles and systems, overall impacts, and rational assessment of outcomes, and can be tough-minded in implementing those decisions. Effective implementers of policies, if they respect the leader.
- TP** Adaptable Problem Solvers Lead by example. Value and display technical expertise, and create consistent and orderly frameworks for working. Objective, skeptical, and curious. Will change course as new information comes in. Effective problem solvers, if interested.
- FP** Supportive Coaches Warm, flexible, and encouraging leaders. Support individual work styles and like to involve others in decisions. Prefer collegial relationships, shared rewards, and consensus in decisions. Energetic followers if treated with respect.
- FJ** Values-Based Decision Makers Warm, decisive leaders. Make decisions based on their personal values and empathy with others. Strive for harmony, consensus, and a supportive environment, are expressive and often inspiring. Loyal followers if the leader honors their values.

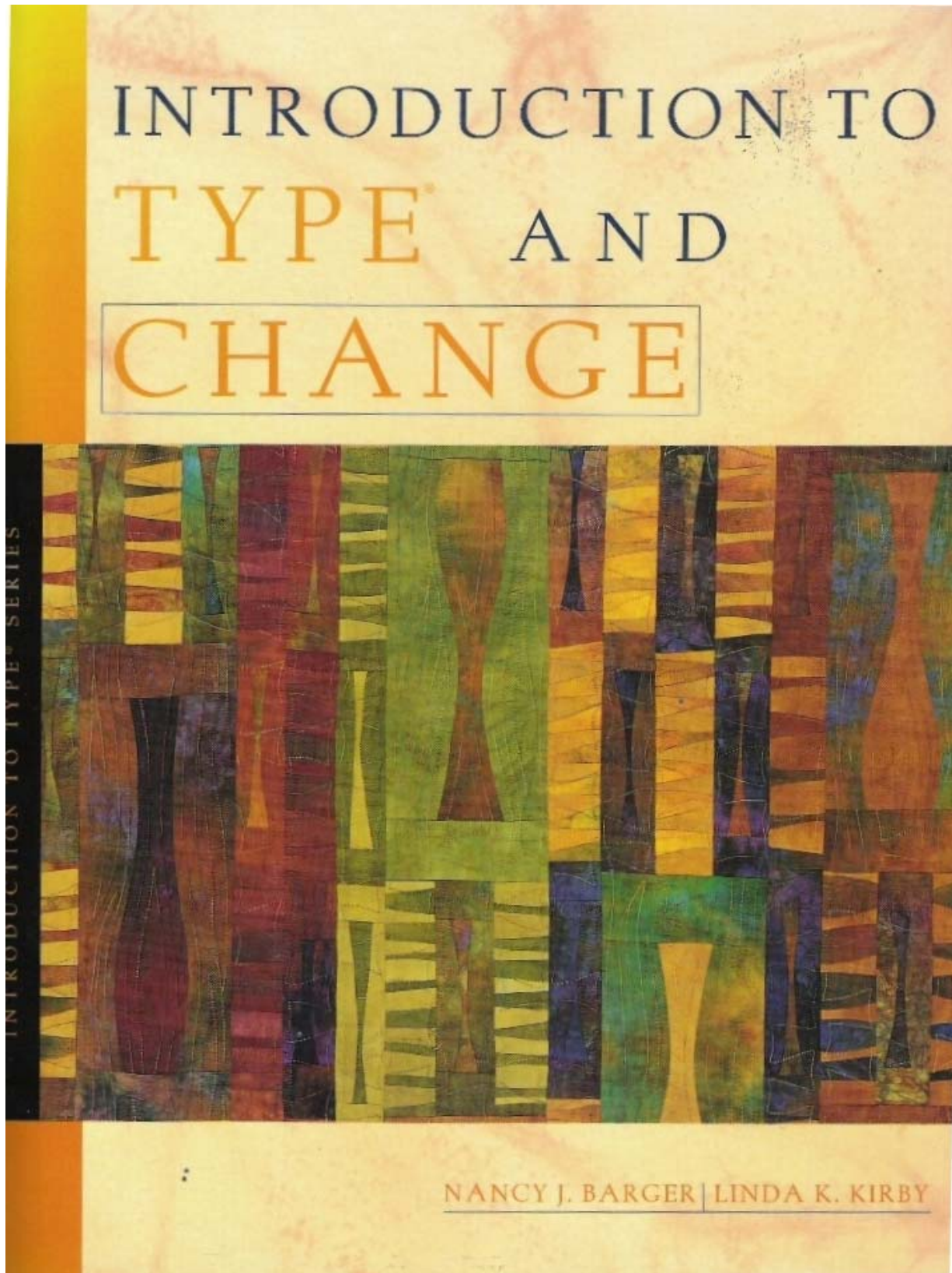
The Temperaments

SJ	NF	NT
SP		
SJ		

Temperament theory is widely used in connection with the MBTI. Though Jungian type and temperament are based on different assumptions and models of personality, they can complement each other. The MBTI gives access to both. Temperament describes four broad patterns of inter-related characteristics. There are four variations of each temperament pattern, each represented by one of the 16 types. (Many temperament users place the four temperaments in a matrix to show other aspects of temperament theory. This matrix groups together the four types that share a temperament and so is different from the type table at left.)

- NF** "Idealists" Search for unique identity and meaning. Value empathic, meaningful relationships. Generally enthusiastic. Want to make the world a better place. Trust their intuition and imagination. Think in terms of integration and similarities. Focus on developing potential in others, finding a purpose in life, and bridging differences. Want to be authentic.
- NT** "Rationals" Theory oriented. Seek to understand the principles on which the world and things in it work. Trust logic and reason. Skeptical and precise. Think in terms of differences, categories, definitions, and structures. Focus on strategies and designs that achieve long-range goals and lead to progress. Want competence and thorough knowledge.
- SP** "Artisans" Action and impact oriented. Hunger for spontaneity. Optimistic. Trust luck and ability to handle whatever comes up. Absorbed in the moment. Read people and situations and adapt to changes to get the job done. Seek adventure and experiences. Think in terms of variations. Focus on tactics to help others and get desired results. Want freedom to choose their next action.
- SJ** "Guardians" Hunger for responsibility and predictability. Like standard operating procedures to protect and preserve. Serious and concerned. Trust the past, tradition, and authority. Think in terms of comparisons, sequences, and associations. Focus on logistics to support people, maintain organizations, and achieve objectives. Want security, stability, and to belong.

Note: From *Understanding Yourself and Others: An Introduction to Temperament*, by L. Berens, 1998, Telos Publications. Copyright 1998 by Temperament Research Institute. Adapted with permission.



cause a person to feel stressed and in the form one's reactions to stress tend to take. To recognize the relationship between type and stress, we need to look at the dynamic theory of type a little more deeply.

According to type theory, each type has a most preferred mental process, called the *dominant function* (see the chart below); this is represented by one of the two middle letters of the four-letter type code (S or N, T or F). The dominant function provides the overall direction and focus of a personality, a person's sense of identity. Jung stated that people use their dominant function in their preferred world, so

types that prefer Extraversion direct their dominant function outward; types that prefer Introversion use their dominant function internally.

Understanding the dominant function is crucial because our research indicates that

- Every psychological type will resist change if the dominant function does not get what it needs
- Under the stress of ongoing change, people tend to rely on their dominant function even more heavily than they normally do

ISTJ and ISFJ

Dominant Function = Sensing, used in the Introverted attitude

Respect and rely on internally stored, realistic, and complete data about actual events and people important to them; able to access that information as needed.

INFJ and INTJ

Dominant Function = Intuition, used in the Introverted attitude

Develop and rely on clear, complex inner insights about the present and future and how they relate; maintain a clear sense of direction.

ISTP and INTP

Dominant Function = Thinking, used in the Introverted attitude

Logically organize vast amounts of data, ideas, or concepts into systematic, explanatory structures; search for the "truth."

ISFP and INFP

Dominant Function = Feeling, used in the Introverted attitude

Assess everything by their strong inner value system about honoring and supporting human beings; search for what's morally "right."

ESTP and ESFP

Dominant Function = Sensing, used in the Extraverted attitude

Delight in action and experience, stimulated by interaction with the world and people; focus on the present moment and enjoy using their creativity to respond in the moment.

ENFP and ENTP

Dominant Function = Intuition, used in the Extraverted attitude

Scan the environment for new and stimulating ideas and enthusiastically pursue them with others; search for the most creative and interesting idea.

ESTJ and ENTJ

Dominant Function = Thinking, used in the Extraverted attitude

Decisively, logically, and efficiently structure the external environment to achieve group and organizational goals.

ESFJ and ENFJ

Dominant Function = Feeling, used in the Extraverted attitude

Decisively structure the external environment to meet the needs of people and to fit with their personal values.

Table 5 What Types Look Like at Their Best and in an Exaggerated State

Dominant Introverted Sensing Types (ISTJ and ISFJ)	
At their best ...	In an exaggerated state ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are selective—choose the right facts • Have excellent recall for specifics • Are certain of facts and opinions • Reflect before acting in a timely way • Communicate effectively and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixate on the one "right" fact • Obsess about minute, unimportant data • Are dogmatic • Become unable to make decisions or take action • Shut down, withdraw
Dominant Extraverted Sensing Types (ESTP and ESFP)	
At their best ...	In an exaggerated state ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See and reflect; then do or say • Are active • Are talkative and sociable • Are straightforward and clear • Pay attention to detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak and act without thinking • Become hyperactive • Chatter and disturb others, disrupt • Are blunt and curt • Are pedantic—every detail is crucial
Dominant Introverted Intuition Types (INFJ and INTJ)	
At their best ...	In an exaggerated state ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are visionary • Are problem solvers • See connections • Develop patterns • Brainstorm "with themselves," inside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have unrealistic, even wild, visions • Are arrogant about their ideas and solutions • Are overly complex—everything is connected • Force data to fit their patterns • Are driven inward, won't or can't ask for help
Dominant Extraverted Intuition Types (ENFP and ENTP)	
At their best ...	In an exaggerated state ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form global pictures and understandings • Are innovative • Are enthusiastic, fast paced • See possibilities • Are flexible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are obsessed with /convinced of links between things • Want change for the sake of change—novelty • Are over the top—frantic, out of control • Are swamped with options, can't decide • Experience sudden, irrational changes

Type Exaggeration

In stressful situations, it is natural for people to invest energy in the "best part" of themselves to try to regain some control. After all, this is the part we normally can count on to help us be most effective.

If stress continues and builds, as it tends to do in the workplace today, this dominant function can become exaggerated and rigid. In this situation, putting more and more energy into this part can be counterproductive, leading to "type exaggeration." Table 5 shows the eight dominant functions at their best and in an exaggerated state.

With current stress levels in organizations, many people are in type exaggeration mode much of the time. This not only affects co-workers negatively; it also gets in the way of functioning at one's best. Most competent adults have developed enough skills and maturity to enable them to use all their mental processes appropriately when the environment is reasonably supportive. When they are in an exaggerated state, however, people tend to access information that is distorted, their judgment is generally not balanced, and their ability to plan and follow through is often compromised.

Table 5 What Types Look Like at Their Best and in an Exaggerated State *continued*

Dominant Introverted Thinking Types (ISTP and INTP)	
At their best ...	In an exaggerated state ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistently search for true, correct analysis • Experience depth of concentration • Are logical • Are objective • Are self-motivated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obsessively search for the truth about everything • Get lost in concentration—forget the basics of life • Accept only (their own) logic • Become totally detached • Are driven, like a machine out of control
Dominant Extraverted Thinking Types (ESTJ and ENTJ)	
At their best ...	In an exaggerated state ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are coolheaded, calm • Are rational • Present goals with clarity • Are logical • Are analytical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become detached and cold • Feel everything <i>must</i> be rational • Oversimplify for the sake of clarity • Interrupt and critique others' lack of logic • Dominate by dissection
Dominant Introverted Feeling Types (ISFP and INFP)	
At their best ...	In an exaggerated state ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are empathetic • Think people matter, including themselves • Are independent • Are sensitive • Are idealistic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are rescuers • Carry the weight of the world on their shoulders • Isolate themselves • Become hypersensitive • Become pompous and demagogic
Dominant Extraverted Feeling Types (ESFJ and ENFJ)	
At their best ...	In an exaggerated state ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are encouraging • Are interested in others • Seek harmony • Are outward looking • Are people and relationship oriented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are insistent: "Here's what will be best for you" • Become intrusive, prying • Ignore/deny problems for the sake of superficial harmony • Lack focus, become scattered • Overidentify with others, become overburdened

Note: For specific examples illustrating different types under stress and demonstrating type exaggeration, see Barger & Kirby, 1995, pp. 159–163.

Dealing with Stress

What can you do to deal with the stress? Most important, you can recognize and acknowledge your own type exaggeration, the type-related ways you may express your stress. Then, when you recognize that you are slipping into that exaggerated state, use your best coping-with-stress mechanisms: breathe deeply, take a walk, play a computer game, talk to a colleague, take a time-out—whatever works for you. It's also important to learn from these experiences.

- Can you identify what has been causing you the greatest stress?
- Are there things you can change about that?
- Can colleagues or friends help?

None of us can get rid of all stress in our work life, but recognizing our reactions and observing their effects may guide us toward modifying our work to reduce the stress.

This information can also allow us to help our colleagues. Instead of reacting with our first, usually negative, response to colleagues' type exaggeration, we can recognize what's going on for them. It is usually helpful, at that point, to ask, "What can I do that would be most helpful to you right now?" Then respond positively to the request, if you can, even though the request may be quite different from what you find helpful when you're under pressure. It's a time to be kind to yourself and others.

ADDENDUM F

MBTI® PREFERENCE CLARITY CATEGORIES

MBTI® PREFERENCE CLARITY CATEGORIES

LEVELS OF PREFERENCE: Form M

MBTI® FORM M CONVERSION TABLE

DICHOTOMY	GREATEST RAW POINTS	PREFERENCE CLARITY CATEGORIES
Extroversion- Introversion	11-13	Slight
	14-16	Moderate
	17-19	Clear
	20-21	Very Clear
Sensing - Intuition	13-15	Slight
	16-20	Moderate
	21-24	Clear
	25-26	Very Clear
Thinking – Feeling	12-14	Slight
	15-18	Moderate
	19-22	Clear
	23-24	Very Clear
Judging – Perceiving	11-13	Slight
	14-17	Moderate
	18-20	Clear
	21-22	Very Clear

GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETING THE PREFERENCE CLARITY CATEGORIES

These guidelines are best used to assist during the type verification process. They provide information regarding the confidence one may have that a respondent holds the preference he or she reported on each dichotomy of the Indicator.

Very Clear Preference (pci 26-30)

Respondents who report very clear preferences (roughly a pci of 26 or more) usually agree that they hold the preferences reported by the MBTI® and often display most of the attitudes and skills that accompany those preferences.

Clear Preference (pci 16-25)

When an individual's pci is between 16 and 25, there is a reasonable probability that the respondent holds and acts on the reported preference and many of the attitudes and skills that accompany it.

Moderate Preference (pci 6-15)

With a pci of 6 to 15, the respondent may still most often agree with the description of the reported preference. The interpreter should verify with the respondent whether the interpretation of the reported type fits. It is quite likely that such an individual makes habitual use of one or more aspects of the opposite pole of the dichotomy and may spontaneously describe such use.

Slight Preference (pci 1-5)

When the pci is 1 to 5, change of one or two answers to certain questions could change the letter designation. The interpreter should carefully inquire about whether the reported preference describes the individual best or not. For some individuals, social demands can provide different pressures for men and women on the T-F dichotomy. Men are encouraged more toward Thinking activities and women more toward Feeling activities.

Source: Van Rooyen, J. 2006. *MBTI® TRAINING: JVR Innovative Assessment and Development Solutions*:60-61. Johannesburg: Jopie van Rooyen & Partners SA (Pty) Ltd.

ADDENDUM G

EXCERPT FROM REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

28 January 2006

I've completed my Internship.
I've come so far, yet, this
final phase eludes me.

It's almost a year since my
darling brother died & I still
struggle to put it on paper.
He would have wanted me
to move on, to regain control,
to attain my goal: my
Master's Degree...

I have to make an effort -
time is running out... I
just can't get myself to
read more about ADHD. I
understand the plan & purpose
of the research - I'm just
not passionate about it?

February 26th

Finally. I've made my move!
I've defended my proposal
and have been given the
go ahead!

Even though this topic is
deeply personal, I'm ready
to tackle it head on. I
want to read about life &
loss & how to face inevitability.

I'm ready. Bring it on.

27 February 2006

Preparation. Admin. Permission.
Consent. Consideration. Impact.
Implication. Protection from
Harm. Field of Ed. Psych.
Feasible. Reasonable. Conducive.

These are the terms & topics
I have to deal with in order
to lay the groundwork for
my fieldwork.

I'm learning a lot. I realize
I have to abide by these
rules. Even well-meant
conduct can be detrimental
if it is not considered in the
bigger scope of things.

I'm off to obtain informed
consent. Here, goes...

3rd April 2006

After having conducted numerous phone calls & having sent a number of e-mails, I am finally scheduled to meet with the participating nuclear family in my role as researcher.

I realise that I will have to put a lid on my emotions. I anticipate that I will see the pain in their eyes. I've been there - yet, this is not my role. I'm on my way to investigate a phenomenon. The information I retrieve from this, might be valuable to future "grievors" and the therapists who meet with them.

Maybe I can make a difference?

April 29th

The 16PF went well. We all needed to make an effort to focus, but we came around and did what we set out to do.

The family was quite nervous at attempting the 16PF - an instrument they have not been exposed to before. They were all eager to comply, but their tension showed when they requested permission to use Tipp-Ex.

I found the father to be rather withdrawn & guarded, yet accommodating. It seemed he preferred the mother & 2 younger siblings to "take over".

May 13th

The mother's demeanour caught me off guard today. I feel sorry for her - the raw emotions are still very clear. Everytime we gather around the table to conduct an assessment, she lingers, as if waiting for the younger sibling to join in... but she's not there?

The USB1 went smoother than the 16PF. I reckon the fact that they had done it before, made it less threatening.

I can't wait to get my hands on the results. This is crucial!

June 15th

It was supposed to be the youngest sibling's birthday earlier this week. I was concerned for the family's mental state & asked if we should reschedule. They assured me that the anticipation of the birthday is more saddening than the aftermath... after the fact, hope weans back to normal again.

The eldest sibling made an impression on me today. He is so reserved and private. It seems as if he is busy with his own thoughts the whole time. Yet, he is not rude. He is withdrawn but warm.

August 2006

I've received all 5 metaphors.
How interesting. The format, the
amount of expression, the
comparisons. How revealing.
I'm excited to see how
this will contribute to the
quantitative data.

The middle sibling was his
bubble self today. There is no
doubt that he is an Extrovert,
yet I perceive him more
"warm" than his 16PF would
have me believe. But the belle
of the ball is the youngest.
She is engaging, expressive and
aware of others' well-being. She
is forever on the run. I wonder
if she's ever able to complete
something: ideas all over!

December 1st

I'm stuck in a rut. I've attained the data, scored the assessments & tabulated the results. Now I don't know what to do with the metaphors. Where do I start? Which guidelines do I use? This is all so vague...

December is not the appropriate time to seek assistance. It is family time. I respect that.

For now I will just see if I can link the metaphors with the dimensions on the 16PF. Yet — how do I go about?

February 25th
2007

Two years since Gerhard died.
I have a personal calendar
stipulating "before & after"
dates in terms of my frame
of reference - the altered one,
post sudden loss.

I have started in a new
full-time position at a
Leadership Development Co.
I enjoy the stimulation &
learning ... at the detriment
of working on my dissertation.

Finally, my professor & I manage
to correlate our diaries. We
will meet face-to-face to
discuss the analysis & interpret.
of the data. Great!

March 2007

I've learnt so much from our conversation. It is astounding to see how links can be drawn if you have experience to rely on. Now I need to put pen to paper and capture what I've learnt.

It doesn't come easy. My writing style is not "researchy". I still have so much to learn. It feels as though my formulation & lay-out is long-winded. How come I can't just state the fact clearly, unambiguously?

2 May 2007

I'm 30 today. I miss my baby brother. I know he would've teased me endlessly. He should've been 21 this year. I miss him.

As I go through my own waves of coping with sudden loss, I do realise that there is a marked degree of personal growth, even though I still feel more comfortable keeping to myself. I witness some changes in me. I keep to myself more. I zoom in on the facts of the accident - trying to decipher exactly what had happened. I'm acutely aware of the permanent sadness in my family's eyes.

July 2007

No time for long stories. Time
has since become an issue
I have to attain additional
assistance if I am to
complete this dissertation
& attain my M. This
Introvert had to act.

August 2007

I am so grateful!

Dr Rosé Ferreira has come on board! I know from her various accolades in research that she will guide this process with an expert hand.

First, we have to find one another. This is a painstaking process. Her questions & line of thinking make me wonder about the steps I've taken & the focus my study has had. I come to the realisation that my literature study is too broad - a more focused approach would deliver more definite explanations. Cut. Cut. Cut.

October 2007

Ronél & I are on the same page now. The learning curve this has brought about is quite astounding.

A rethink on the focus of the study resulted in quite a bit of reshuffling in the first two chapters. Though time-consuming, it is sensible.

The major challenge right now is research methodology. I've come to realise it is quite an intricate process. One has to make an effort to understand exactly what every option implies — off with me... more reading!!!

December 2007

As this is the ideal time for me to make some legwork, I'm eternally grateful that Loné is willing to support my research throughout the December holidays - even though she has family obligations. Her determination to guide this project is commendable.

We mostly exchange changed drafts of chapters 1-3. I did not realise the extent of work that needed to be done here. It is quite hard to prove on paper what you understand abstractly. Take deductive reasoning for example. Now there's a challenge!

February 2008

I have not been able to reflect as often as I wanted because my time is focused on actual hands-on dissertation! Ronel now meets with me once a week to attend to my concerns, to answer my questions, to monitor my train of thought and to eliminate bias.

I'm astounded to be made aware of the detail required to successfully see this project through.

Hats off to all those who've attained their Masters & Doctorates. You deserve our recognition.

March 2008

Chapter IV is taking shape.

I'm learning so much.

Roni's grasp of the subject
& her experience with research
is certainly to my advantage.
She doesn't hold back. She
shares. I learn.

The integration of the results
is challenge #1. I have to
stick with the facts. No
elaboration. No explanations.
Just facts. There. I'm getting
there.

Then - the great test. Can I
integrate my literature
review with my findings?
Only the number of drafts
will tell.

April 2008

The final stretch. The hours we now put in goes beyond what I expected at the onset. Most astounding aspect. we. I'm not alone. Roni guides me through every rewrite, every rethink, every deadline. She over-delivers. I'm eternally in her debt.

The final product requires some nitty gritty ... but as the content grows, so does my excitement ... and my belly. Yes, we are so thankful that we will be blessed with our first son, Charles Gerhard Marcus, by the time this dissertation is concluded. What a prospect.

23 April 2008

It is 4 in the morning
& I'm handing in my
final draft today. Bless.

This would not have been
possible without the
incessant support & guidance
of my devoted teacher,
Roné Ferreira.

Furthermore, my husband, mom
& dad - you supported & kept
the faith throughout. Jani,
you jumped right in, at all
hours, at any cost & delivered
hands on assistance & laughs.

My darling Dupie - you prayed &
phoned & listened & gave hope -
relentlessly. I treasure you.

ADDENDUM H
CONTRIBUTION BY DR NAUDÉ

CONTRIBUTION BY DR NAUDÉ

I hereby acknowledge the valuable contribution Dr Drienie Naudé made in the following areas of my study:

- Conceptualisation of the study;
- Formulation of the initial research focus;
- Supporting me in planning my research;
- Guiding me in my initial literature review;
- Guiding me with the analysis of the quantitative measures I employed;
- Assisting me in finalising chapter I.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*My sincere gratitude and appreciation is hereby expressed
towards those who supported me in my journey...*

- Dr Ronél Ferreira, my supervisor, for her knowledge and guidance. Ronél, you have no equal. You seem to have an altruistic devotion to help others succeed. Without your motivation, patience, encouragement and relentless support, this study would not have been possible. Please accept my sincere appreciation.
- My beloved husband, Desmond. You are my inspiration and my pillar of strength. Desmond, your prayers, example, encouragement and love inspired me. I cherish you.
- To our unborn son, Charles Gerhard Marais. Thank you, dear little one, for your gentle reminder that you are with me while I am burning the midnight oil. I pray that you will be blessed, my son.
- My nuclear family: my parents, Kok and Elsa, my sister, René, and my brother, Johan. You gave me the confidence to reach for this dream. I sincerely appreciate your support, concern and relentless “being there for me”, not just in this endeavour, but throughout the last thirty odd years... I thank God for you.
- My Marais parents, Charles and Louwin. You lovingly accepted me in your home and supported me, especially with this dissertation. Thank you for believing in me. I sincerely appreciate you.

The effect of a nuclear family's sudden loss on the personality structures of individual family members.

- Jani, my other sister. Your “hands on” assistance has been invaluable. Thank you for your unconditional assistance at all hours in terms of typing, editing, contemplating and encouraging. I treasure the laughs we share.
- To my friends, Karen, Berna, Bianca, Yvette, “Tannie” Ansie and my dear granny, Ouma Ella – for boosting me at the times when it mattered most.
- The participating nuclear family in my study. Thank you for trusting me within the private world of your loss. Without you, this would not have been possible.
- My employer, Mignon Botha. Thank you for your understanding and for accommodating me with my studies.
- Louine van der Vyfer. Thank you for your professional language editing of my dissertation and your willingness to do so on such short notice.
- Dr Drienie Naudé. Thank you for your valuable contribution in various areas of this study (please refer to Addendum H).
- My Heavenly Father. Thank you for providing me with the necessary ability, insight and support required to succeed with this journey. Your guidance allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of myself.

*“For My grace is enough for you;
for My strength and power are made perfect
and show themselves most effective in weakness.”*

II Corinthians 12:9

DEDICATION

“Sometimes the loss is so great, you need a larger platform”

(Kübler-Ross & Kessler, 2005:65).

How unbearable the realisation that your death allows me to endeavour attaining a greater understanding of the gravity of life lessons learnt through loss.

You made such an inconceivable difference. You still make a difference because your legacy fondly lives on in the hearts of those who adore, admire and cherish the essence of you. If only my words could do you justice.

Ours is not without hope...

Until we meet again, I proudly salute you, my darling, Gerhard.

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

*THE EFFECT OF A NUCLEAR FAMILY'S SUDDEN
LOSS ON
THE PERSONALITY STRUCTURES
OF INDIVIDUAL FAMILY MEMBERS*

I, Adéle Marais, declare that all the resources that were consulted in this study are included in the reference list and that this study is my original work.

Adéle Marais

Date