



In my opinion...
DEAN SAYS:

**What will
you do?**

I've been doing quite a bit of reading in current psychological literature lately. This should not be strange since I graduated from college nearly 25 years ago with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Writing and Psychology.

Knowing this, you would be surprised to learn how little psychological material I've read since college. But lately—and I suppose this is due to the aging process—I've become less and less satisfied with my relationships with other people, and more and more interested in finding out why I have these little quirks, what my father called, "idiot-syncretasies," that keep me irritating those around me.

One particular book that is not all that new, but to which I have again been drawn, is entitled, *Please Understand Me*. This lively paperback by David Keirse and Marilyn Bates (ISBN 0-9606954-0-0), draws from some turn-of-the-century work by the German psychologist Adickes, as interpreted by both Adler and Jung in the 1920s. It offers a view that people have preferences in their circumstantial behavior. Under-

stand these preferences, and you can understand the likely behaviors.

I've learned, for example, that while I consider myself a person of even moods, others perceive me as a man of quite violent mood swings. I consider myself an extrovert, but my actual preference is to remain quite introverted and removed from those around me—even in a crowded room.

I have always felt that creativity was my thing, particularly expressed in activities that require both writing and graphic design—like this newsletter, for example. But my real preference, I've learned, is to administrate rules and regulations developed by others, where my creativity can best be utilized in the application. The question and answer section of this newsletter probably provides the clearest example of such an outlet for this preference.

Keirse and Bates offer a seventy question preference profile which gives four letter designators: either Extrovert or Introvert, either Sensation or Intuition, either Thinking or Feeling, and either Perceiving or Judging. Thus one person might be an ENFP, another an ISFP, or another an INTP, and so forth.

For years I have struggled to reach one of my top co-workers. He is a man for whom my admiration knows practically no bounds. And yet, I cannot reconcile his thought processes with my own. Can you imagine my surprise to learn that while I am an ISTJ, he is an ENFP. That means we are opposite in

every one of the four categories.

Well, with this insight has come a freedom that I can't imagine having lived so long without. Now when I approach my esteemed colleague, I can do so with some insight into how he is likely to respond. No, he will not always fit into a mold, nor will any of us. Our individualism still has full sway over what we do, what we say, what we think and how we behave.

But with some inkling of how he will react to my particular preferences, I can keep from responding to his "surprising" behavior, and concentrate on finding the common ground that has always existed. In the past, I couldn't get beyond my reactions to find that common ground. Now, I at least have a chance to do so.

No matter what aspect of fire protection engineering or fire alarm systems you work in, I'll bet you, too, have some relationships that you wish were better than they are. If so, I would suggest that you either stop by your local bookstore, or visit your nearest public library and pick up a copy of *Please Understand Me*. I have a strong belief that this book will help you get to the point where you understand some of the road blocks unique differences place between two people who really do want to get along well together.

Of course, once you've picked up some pointers, the question always remains, "What will you do?"

In some cases, you may decide to thoughtfully put your new-found knowledge to work. Or, in one or two cases, you may actually decide it is just not worth the effort. Or, once earnestly trying to apply your pointers and finding only ing failure, you may give up.

I would urge you to be quietly determined to make your relationships work. It is possible to be the one to turn a relationship around. Some modernists say "it takes two to tango." But let me suggest you subscribe to the wisdom of Edwin Markham:

*He drew a circle that shut me out—
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle that took him in. □*

The Moore-Wilson
SIGNALING
REPORT
March/April 1992
Page 12