

Intuition

How we think and act

Tony Bastick



JOHN WILEY & SONS

Chichester · New York · Brisbane · Toronto · Singapore

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data:

Bastick, Tony

Intuition: How we think and act

1. Intuition (Psychology)

I. Title

153.4'4

BF311

80-42060

ISBN 0 471 27992 7

Typeset by Photo-Graphics, Yarcombe, Honiton, Devon.
Printed at The Pitman Press, Bath, Avon.

This book is dedicated to my family
who made it possible; and necessary.

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Introduction

Creativity is the quintessence of man; and the spark of inspiration, the insight, the intuitive understanding on which our creativity depends is fundamental to both the fulfilment of the individual and the progress of humanity. This book includes an investigation into that fundamental intuitive process. But the investigation also leads to an encompassing description of how we think and act. This description includes a Theory of Intuitive Thought which develops from the investigation and explains the phenomenon of intuition. This description of how we think and act shows that intuition is a product of accepted psychophysiological processes of thought and behaviour that occur under particular conditions of personality, environment, and experience. These conditions are not mystical; rather they are conditions with which we are all familiar. The encompassing description is a fundamental organization which synthesizes many and varied phenomena of thought and behaviour, including the phenomena of intuition and creativity.

It has been usual for other descriptions of integrated thought and behaviour each to have been open to many interpretations; mainly because their key words have slightly different meanings for readers from various backgrounds. These implicit, ambiguous interpretations have reduced the practical use of such descriptions. In order to increase the usefulness of this description of how we think and act, the terms used are closely defined; terms such as empathy, projection, and creativity, which in Chapter 9 are formally defined by probability statements. The investigation also reviews numerous experiments related to intuition showing how and why their methodology may be used by readers whose studies include the phenomenon of intuition; for example studies of creativity, of teaching, or of problem-solving.

We first consider how the words 'intuition' and 'insight' are used, in order to find a consensus meaning of these words. However, we find that the literature contains no precise definitions. For example some 'definitions' used by

philosophers are metaphysical and some are even mystical; some even 'define' intuition as something that one cannot define. Generally 'definitions' from the literature are just descriptions in terms of associated properties which are themselves only loosely defined. From these descriptions we identify twenty properties commonly associated with intuition; properties such as empathy, creativity, etc. We then investigate how these twenty properties are associated with intuition. The phenomena of thought and behaviour that involve these properties are very varied and their interrelations are most complex. However, the fundamental organization presented in Chapter 9 synthesizes simply the findings of this investigation.

The range and variety of phenomena synthesized by this organization enable the organization to describe thought and behaviour in general and to include a Theory of Intuitive Thought which explains the phenomenon of intuition in particular.

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