

Edward de bono essay



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Edward de Bono thought to be one of the leading authority in the world in the field of creative thinking and direct teaching of thinking as a skill. A de Bonian thinker states, “ There are highly intelligent people who are poor thinkers. Intelligent people may use their thinking to simply defend a point of view.

The more skilled they are at mounting a convincing defense, the less they see a need to explore that subject, listen to others, or generate alternatives. This is poor thinking” (Wiesendanger, 1991, p. 73). He is the originator of lateral thinking. His other main ideas or developments are The Six Thinking Hats and the Cognitive Research Trust (CoRT). Lateral (Parallel) thinking is a system of thinking which considers all possibilities resulting in innovative thinking, rather than just the traditional solutions to the problem.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines lateral thinking as “ a way of thinking which seeks the solution to intractable problems through unorthodox methods or elements which would normally be ignored by logical thinking. It means thinking differently: thinking not only vertically or logically, but sideways too. It means being prepared to put forward unusual ideas to arrive at a new thought. Parallel thinking is designed to help an individual solving a problem, understand all aspects of the problem it focuses more-so on constructive and co-operative and co-ordinate thinking. De Bono’s six thinking hats use this lateral thinking technique.

All members of a group will focus on a single aspect of a problem at the same time, moving on to another aspect together once discussion of the current one is exhausted. For example the Black hat is for judgment, the

Green hat for creativity and the White hat signifies information needed or already know. This system is widely used for business' mainly in meetings, but also used in classrooms as well. is best understood in contrast to traditional argument or adversarial thinking. By wearing each hat you can effectively scan the entire situation and separate your thinking modes and ultimately embrace a more holistic or global perspective and approach to your problem or challenge.

This approach is simple but powerful. The last key concept and of major importance worth noting is de Bono's CoRT Thinking Program, which has been adopted around the world in several thousand educational institutions. " CoRT stands for Cognitive Research Trust. It can also be regarded as being short for CORTEX where all the thinking takes place in the brain" (de Bono, 1976, p. 11).

The CoRT Program is composed of six units, each of which contains several lessons intended to fit within a single class session. De Bono designed this program in order to teach creative thinking to school children at an early age that will help them assimilate other subjects and better prepare them for society. Unlike Lipman, de Bono does not locate philosophy as central to his teaching methods. Instead, he is more concerned with the practical operation of thinking or, as he puts it, the deliberate process of thinking. The main argument between Lipman's views and that of de Bono is the use of Socratic dialogue.

De Bono (1994) is somewhat critical of the Socratic Method. He claims that it " uses adversarial argument and refutation to explore a subject". He believes

that the adversarial aspect of debate and Socratic dialogue result in the promotion of egos, rather than ideas. Although, he does state that in some situations it can be useful but it cannot deal with the radical change which occurs in the modern world as the increasing complexity of contemporary societies requires more than the search for truth. It may be right to agree with Lipman who states that philosophy itself can incorporate generative and creative thinking.

Philosophy does not need to be adversarial and, therefore, is not necessarily a hindrance to creative thinking (MacColl, 1993). Both de Bono and Lipman believe that critical thinking can be learned through a curriculum which is not constrained by traditional subjects, as de Bono focuses on lateral thinking and Lipman on the Socratic Method. Although Lipman's major aspects of thinking include ' Bridging, Transfer and Translation' whereas de Bono's are factual analysis, emotional response, consideration of benefits, consideration of drawbacks, introducing new Ideas and control of the thinking process' (Glossary). In comparing the views of Lipman and de Bono, it can be argued that de Bono emphasizes the teaching of skilful thinking, especially in relation to practical decision-making, whereas Lipman emphasizes questioning strategies and improving student's reasoning abilities and judgment by having them think about thinking through the discussion of concepts of importance to the students themselves. Not unlike Lipman, de Bono is also concerned with improving the value judgments of students, but his approach seems to stress efficiency and economy, whereas Lipman is more concerned with building democratic or moral character.

There are many implications for teaching in early years using either de Bono's or Lipman's approaches.

Some of these include whether the whole school participants in the methods, especially for Lipman's approach, as if a child is involved with the philosophy for children approach for two hours a week for a year, then when the child moves up to the next year, they may not remember anything learnt, which would make one wonder if it would be worth it. Whereas de Bono's approach may be affective, as lateral thinking could be applied to many situations whether the class was following de Bono's approach or not. Another problem which may occur in early years (defined earlier) is the resources required to carry out the method of teaching children to think. Lipman's Philosophy for children scheme requires novels for the children and manuals for the teachers, obviously being expensive, especially as all old texts that the school previously used would have to be disregarded.

De Bono's Six Thinking Hats theory may require a book to be used as a manual, but would not require any additional new texts. One other problem which may arise is the trouble with teacher training. De Bono (1976) states that there isn't a problem with the knowledge and experience of teachers, but 'nevertheless there is probably a high wastage of teachers who would have been more successful had there been some basic training. In conclusion, I still support by initial argument that de Bono's methods of teaching children to think are best suited to an Early Years setting, as the Lipman-approach is in danger of reducing philosophy to a mere technique, to a pedagogical, educational strategy.

Although, there are some aspects of the Socratic method of philosophical inquiry which de Bono may have unduly discredited, such as the community of inquiry this offers much promise in overcoming the problems of traditional philosophy teaching. Bibliography de Bono, E. (1976). Teaching Thinking. London: Temple Smith. de Bono, E.

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