THE MASTERY OF

LATERAL THINKING

DR MICHAEL HEWITT-GLEESON

Best-selling author of

Software For Your Brain

The Two Methods

1

logical thinking

inside the box

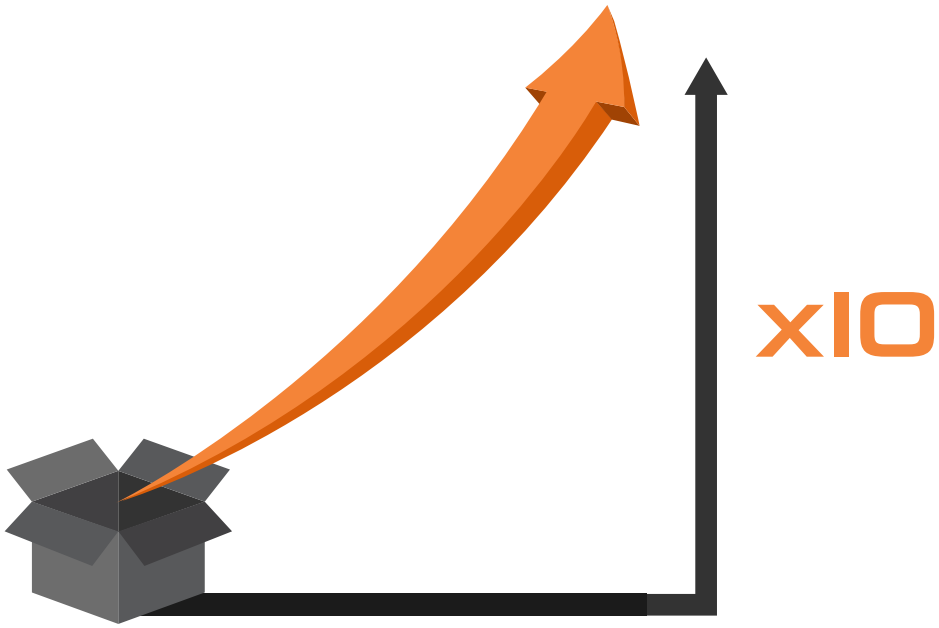
2

lateral thinking

outside the box

x10

x10thinking



"Lateral thinking is ten times faster than logical thinking!"

- Dr Michael Hewitt-Gleeson

About the author …

Dr Michael Hewitt-Gleeson is the world's first Doctor of Lateral Thinking (1980). He is a world authority and author of twelve titles on the subject of lateral thinking.

He is the Founder and Principal of the School of Thinking (SOT), which is the world's longest-running program for teaching lateral thinking skills online to members in over 70 countries.

He first published his invention of the lateral thinking brain software switch--cvs2bvs--in 1984 (*NewSell*, Boardroom Books, New York, 1984).

This is what I call a smartphone book.

It's designed to be easy to read on your smartphone and easy to pass on to your friends and colleagues.

By all means, go ahead!

With my compliments,

Michael.

By the same author

Michael Hewitt-Gleeson is the best-selling Australian author of books, lectures and articles on lateral thinking, selling and leadership …

- **WOMBAT Innovation: Creating very clever ideas that people talk about. (2016) ISBN 9780978319408**
- **BAD PHILOSOPHY: Aristotle's Boxes and How to Escape (2015), ISBN 9780978319405**
- **The Story of the Edward de Bono School of Thinking 1979-1984 (2012),**

ISBN 9780978319403

- **WOMBAT SELLING: how to sell by word of mouth (2006) ISBN 1740664280**
- **The x10 Memeplex: multiply your business by ten! (2000) ISBN 0724801111**
- **Software For Your Brain, Third Edition (1997), ISBN 1875857494**

- **THINK: An Action Program for Lateral Thinking (1993), ISBN 0947351515**
- **THINK AGAIN: A Brain Users Guide to Lateral Thinking (1993), ISBN 0947351515**
- **SELL: the lateral thinkers' guide to selling and leadership (1993),**
  ISBN 0947351639
- **Clever: A Coursebook for Clever Thinking (1993) ISBN 0947351671**
- **Software for the Brain 2: Handbook for Lateral Thinkers (1991), ISBN 0947351388**
- **NewSell 2 (1990), ISBN 0947351221**
- **Software For Your Brain (1989), ISBN 09473511088**
- **NewSell (1984), ISBN 0932648568**
- **Learn-To-Think: Coursebook and Instructor's Manual (Co-author Edward de Bono) (1982), ISBN 0884961990**
- **Career Acceleration Program (CAP Vols I, II, III) (NYC 1977).**

What they say

Sir Gus Nossal AC FRS, Chairman of Gates Foundation's Discovery Expert Group.

What an insightful, courageous, revealing book! Your experiences with the Catholic upbringing are so close to mine! Your analysis of Pope Francis is terrific. A scientist would be the first to say that most things are shades of grey.

Professor David Penington AC, former Vice-Chancellor, University of Melbourne.

Commendably 'sharp' and pointed.

Dr George Gallup, Founder of The Gallup Poll at Princeton (1980)

Michael's Newsell approach may be the first new strategy for selling in 50 years.

Larry Page, Co-founder of Google (2013)

I live by the gospel of x10 thinking.

Maria Deveson Crabbe, Telstra Business Woman – Community/Government, 2014.

So exciting. If we de-operationalise bad philosophy we would abound with x10 energy for fun and work-life balance.

Professor Edward de Bono, author of Lateral Thinking (1990)

Michael has a powerful new approach to the important subject of selling.

Professor German Spangenberg, Executive Director of AgriBio Victoria.

I loved it! I couldn't stop opening the file and reading it to the end on my iPad!

Jack Welch, Chairman of GE (1986)

Michael's x10 thinking is the value-added role in the management process.

Dedication

This edition is dedicated to Brigadier Ian Geddes, officer, gentleman and educator (1921 – 2007) who was the 'Father of Scheyville, Officer Training Unit' and whose ideas and training on leadership gave me the primary skills necessary to design and operate the School of Thinking since 1979.

CONTENTS

Introduction

You are now holding a brand new Fourth Edition of a book first published in 1989 under the title *Software For The Brain*. The Third Edition was published in 1997, twenty years ago. It has been a best-seller in Australia and has also been published in international and online editions. Since then content and copies of this book have already reached millions of people around the world from Melbourne to Manhattan. One famous company bought 6,800 copies for their employees.

A lot has happened in the past twenty years so this new book is completely rewritten with an additional 20,000 words. However the Lateral Thinking Brain Software – cvs2bvs – is still the main treasure in the book!

This book is also the textbook for the School of Thinking's Master of Lateral Thinking degree.

For a quarter of a century the lateral thinking brain software - cvs2bvs - in this book has been used by all kinds of people from princes and presidents to scientists, movie stars, writers, farmers, parents and teachers, professors and Olympic champions, salespeople, seniors, school and college students and captains of industry.

I started the School of Thinking in New York in 1979 with Edward de Bono when he was still a Professor of Medicine at Cambridge University in the UK.

For five years we worked together with a small but devoted team to launch the *Learn-To-Think* program in the USA and elsewhere.

The School of Thinking team also designed the original *Six Thinking Caps* method and other tools for the teaching of thinking in schools like the dedicated training of *'thinking instructors'*.

Edward and I then went our separate ways and both of us have maintained a full-time professional career in the development and teaching of thinking skills around the world for over 30 years.

In 1984 I was first to put forward the idea of the 'software for the brain' method for teaching metacognition and lateral thinking in my book *NewSell*. This was taken up by Jack Welch of GE and spread throughout the company and became part of their culture in the 1980s.

Jack wrote, *"This idea - cvsx10=bvs - is the simplest idea in the world".*

Since then many corporations have adopted the x10 lateral thinking brain software. Larry Page of Google says, *"I live by the gospel of x10 thinking".*

In 1995, I launched a pro bono program for teaching the method online.

The School of Thinking on the internet has become the biggest program in the world for the dissemination of thinking skills. Anyone. Anywhere. Anytime.

Of course, the sudden global disruption of the internet has changed everything in the last 20 years and so has the sudden growth of the modern economy of China.

I've been teaching School of Thinking methods in China since my first visit in 2000 and have watched as these two big game-changes have created a huge and growing demand for the English language.

But many English speakers are not yet English Thinkers. And, there is something special about English Thinking.

Whether you are a business thinker in a boardroom in Shanghai or a social marketing thinker in a design studio in Sydney when you sharpen and polish your thinking skills you give yourself a very big strategic advantage over your competitors … and we do live in a competitive world.

I've enjoyed writing this book in the State Library of Victoria. I wrote my first book in the New York Public Library in 1984 and although most of my work has been published online in the past few decades I do love writing in libraries and I'm hooked on the look and feel and smell of manuscripts and bound books.

I’m also inspired by the quiet but intense intellectual hum going on all around me in this magnificent white-domed Reading Room, the legacy of a gold rush long ago.

All kinds of minds are exploring all kinds of ideas. Melburnians, of all ages and interests. Some perhaps researching business opportunities, some their ancestors, their local history and who knows what curiosities they pursue in their mind.

This great library is also abuzz with scholars and students from the two nearby campuses of the University of Melbourne and the RMIT University. A very big minority of these students are from all over China, India and other parts of Asia.

They study for hours with their piles of books, earphones plugged in and iPhones at their side which they check habitually for text messages and

social networking on Facebook and Weibo. Now and then an energetic scrum of schoolies are being given a mandatory tour.

I'll be 70 next week and the rewriting of this work in this great repository has given me the opportunity to reminisce over the past 40 years since I first began sitting and reading in dozens of libraries around the world to explore the ideas and insights contained in this book—book-lined rooms in New York, Paris, London, Rome, Venice, Jerusalem, San Francisco, Washington, Canberra, Tokyo, Beijing, Monte Carlo, Athens, Madrid and Jeddah to recall a few.

So it's with a tender mixture of emotions that I sign off on this manuscript at last.

The satisfaction of looking back on a long and exciting journey that's been undertaken successfully, with good luck and a safe homecoming.

The restless envy I now have for these young students who are starting out on their own exciting journey and who have countless new discoveries awaiting their future arrival.

Thus, dear reader, I wish you would take this book and treat yourself to a visit to your favorite library.

Look around and smell the folios and spend a few hours sitting and reading in the midst of your fellow seekers and imagine where tomorrow can take you.

Happy trails to you and cvs2bvs!

Michael Hewitt-Gleeson,

Melbourne, May 2017

CHAPTER ONE

Can You Think in English?

English is the greatest thing that biology, civilization and natural selection has got to offer. Nothing else in 100,000 years has come close. It is the finest language ever coined. Not just by a little bit, not just by a couple of commas and a simile, but by volumes, by torrents of words, of meaning, of metaphors, of allegories and parables, of such nimble perspicacity, so exact and specific it can encompass a universe and split an atom. It is bigger than every god ever imagined. It is a thing not just of unparalleled power and accuracy but of peerless beauty and elegance. Heartbreaking poignancy and breath-catching loveliness.

It is heroic and mythic, has the strength to crack worlds, and is as delicate and subtle as dew on a web. All other tongues huff and puff in its wake, nothing has its poise, no other language come close to English in its vista or its vision and its yours. Yours for free. Yours for life. If you have English in your head you can already think things that people who don't have it don't even know they can't think … and no one can take it away from you.

- AA Gill, 'Pour Me: A Life'.

Yes, there is something special about English Thinking. Modern English is the first global decision language because it is the most widely spoken language across the world. The boardrooms of the world think in English.

English is the premium language of decision-making in communications, science, information technology, business, seafaring, aviation, radio and diplomacy.

English thinkers are the brains behind the global entertainment industry, gaming and the social networking phenomenon.

English Thinking is not a gift. It is a cognitive skill and the www is dominated by English Thinking … from unskilled amateurs to highly skilled virtuosos.

Where do you rate yourself?

There are two dominant methods of English Thinking.

In Chapter Two we will unpack these two methods because each method uses a particular brain software that has been developed over the past 2500 years.

A working knowledge of how to think in English is critical for advancement in a number of professions and occupations, from medicine to IT to fashion. In today's world more than a billion people can think in English to at least a basic level.

The world is now divided into those who can think in English and those who cannot. The former has an unfair advantage over the latter. When it comes to thinking in English my advice is: *catch up or miss out!*

Looking back we can see how English became the lingua franca of today's world.

English thinking spread beyond the British Isles with the growth of the British Empire, and by the late 19th century its reach was truly global.

Following British colonization from the 16th to 19th centuries, English became the dominant language in the United States, Canada, Australia and India.

In the latter half of the 20th century, widespread use of English was much reinforced by the global economic, financial, scientific, military, and cultural pre-eminence of the English-speaking countries.

Most profoundly, the economic and cultural influence of America, and its might as a global superpower since World War II, has significantly accelerated the language's spread across the planet.

Today, more than half of all scientific journals are published in English, while in France almost one third of all natural science research appears in English.

English has replaced German as the dominant language of science Nobel laureates.

It is now the lingua franca of international Air Traffic Control communications.

In international diplomacy during the 20th century and at the United Nations, English has surpassed French as the dominant language.

Because English is the global decision language in business and in other commercial enterprises there are many rewards and benefits for English Thinkers.

Today, there are far more opportunities for English Thinkers than ever before in history because when you become skilled at English Thinking you can be much more productive with your wealth, health, business and personal security.

You can:

- **Be able to see more opportunities**
- **Be better at solving problems**
- **Enjoy making decisions**

- **Be more effective at planning**
- **Get much better business results**
- **Find it easier to be innovative and creative**
- **Take advantage of changes in circumstances**
- **Get things done**
- **Think more efficiently and worry less**
- **Own a language for a higher communication with others**
- **See information in new and more useful ways**
- **Learn the skill of Quantum Leaping**
- **Generate better and better alternatives**
- **Raise the level of every thought-based skill you possess**
- **Apply these new skills to your personal and family life.**

For English Thinkers, there is also a bonus payback. There is a big return on your investment because you will also become much better at speaking English.

Because of the direct connection between thinking and speaking, there is growing cognitive research and evidence demonstrating that an increase in thinking skills leads directly to an increase in speaking and communication skills.

To become a much better English Speaker you will also need to become a much better English Thinker.

CHAPTER TWO

What is English Thinking?

English Thinkers need to know something about the 2500-year history and evolution of English Thinking. They need to understand the way English Thinking works as compared with, say, Chinese Thinking. In this book the two are compared for the benefit of insight and exposition.

Indeed, it would be an interesting field of research to go further and make a wider range of comparisons between the many other histories of thinking, for example, Spanish Thinking, Indian Thinking, Persian Thinking, Russian Thinking and even Artificial Thinking of the kind that computers use to conquer the Russian Grandmasters at Chess.

However, the scope of *The Mastery of Lateral Thinking* will be to help you to explore and utilise the two dominant methods of English Thinking.

Both of these methods use different software for your brain that has been used by English Thinkers and developed over the past 2500 years.

Each one is excellent, by itself, but not enough.

We need both:

1 - Greco-Roman Logic for thinking inside the box – logical thinking

2 - Scientific Method for thinking outside the box – lateral thinking.

Logical Thinking - inside the box

First, you will see how Greek logic came to be fused with Christian judgmental thinking and how the ideas of the Greek Thinkers - Plato, Socrates and Aristotle - were taken over by the Roman Church through the influence of Thomas Aquinas.

How these Greco-Roman ideas became the cognitive operating system of European thinking and were then spread virally around the world by centrally organized Roman missionaries.

They spread first to Britain and the continent and then later to countries like America and Australia 200 to 500 years ago.

More recently this ubiquitous education enterprise has been sent out across the African continent and into the ASEAN countries.

You will see how, even today, children in these countries are still taught Greco-Roman Right/Wrong, Black/White, Us/Them, Yes/No logical thinking. Western parliaments, legal systems, the media and religious institutions still use pre-Enlightenment dialectic thinking to prosecute their cases and reach their decisions. This Greco-Roman Logic method is colloquially referred to as: inside the box thinking.

Lateral Thinking - outside the box

Second, this book tracks how the great escape from these ideas led to The Enlightenment, to Darwinian evolutionary thinking and the Scientific Method–the combined cognitive engine behind the great march of Western science and technology–which has cracked the genetic code, put robots on Mars and wired the world for freedom of thought.

These lateral scientific methods are for thinking outside the box and they rely on the value of curiosity, hypothetical research, repetitive experimentation, innovation, measurement and observation and, most importantly, a strategic appreciation of the role of surprise, mutation and mistakes.

This kind of lateral thinking employs quite different but complementary methods and values to Christian Logic or judgmental thinking. These methods were introduced, developed and spread throughout Western society in universities and peer-reviewed scientific journals and catalysed by the rapid growth of the commercial publishing industry. Outside the box thinking is on the move at an accelerating pace around the world. *Lateral thinking is ten times faster than logical thinking.*

The day I was born, just after WW II in 1947, the US fired its first ballistic missile.

But, there was no television in Australia no polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox, contact lenses, Frisbees nor 'the pill'.

When I was born there were no credit cards, laser beams or ball-point pens.

Nobody had yet invented pantyhose, air-conditioners, dishwashers, clothes-dryers and Neil Armstrong had yet to walk on the moon.

I was born before gay rights, computer dating, dual careers, equal opportunity, heart transplants, the one-child policy, cognitive science, nipple-piercing, Google and Facebook.

Australians had never heard of cassettes, microchips, CDs, electric typewriters, space stations or bottled water. And, atheists went to Hell.

However, just recently, Pope Francis announced that atheists can now go to Heaven which only goes to show that even Saint Peter can now think outside the box!

Since WWII thinkers like Alan Turing empowered the invention of cognitive machines, machines that think, there has been an unprecedented tsunami of interest in computing, networking and the accelerating developments of cognitive science and lateral thinking.

This has led to much faster and more powerful models of thinking and innovation, and the more recent developments of software for the brain, in countries like America and Australia.

These apps and algorithms are being developed for both human and artificial intelligences.

They have now spread rapidly through big global corporations like IBM, Apple and GE via their enterprise training departments. These new methods have infected the world wide web and in the last few decades have become a permanent part of Western education systems, from primary schools to tertiary institutions.

This book of lateral thinking and software for your brain simply and clearly shows the reader how to

understand these two dominant methods and how to apply them.

It also contrasts them with the long-esteemed methods of Chinese and Confucian Thinking so as to make enlightening comparisons and to help you to better understand and exploit the differences.

Chinese thinking is different to Western logical thinking because they do not both share the same cultural evolution. Chinese thinking methods obviously did not evolve out of a medieval bellicose Roman church.

For example, a dominant strategy of logical thinking is to be 1st. This seems obvious to the Western mind because I-am-right-and-you-are-wrong.

But to the Chinese mind the preferred strategy is not to be 1st but to be 2nd.

In the words of the father of modern China, Deng Xiaopeng, *"Keep cool-headed to observe, be composed to make reactions, stand firmly, hide our capabilities and bide our time, never try to take the lead, and be able to accomplish something".*

There are some Western leaders who also understand the beneficial paradox of the #2 strategy and Jack Welch of GE was a good example.

Except in the very few situations, like boxing or poker when it's a zero sum game, 2 is often a far superior strategy to 1. Have a think about it. There is much that Western business can learn from Deng Xiaopeng's ideas.

My personal experience is that many Westerners, even in 2017, are still pre-Enlightenment logical thinkers.

While they may know about the Enlightenment and be able to describe some of its breakthroughs their default position is still logical thinking.

On the other hand, while it is true that the Chinese clearly have much to do and many issues of their own to work through and to improve and further

develop, my own observation is that they are largely post-Enlightenment lateral thinkers.

They deeply understand the lateral evolutionary approach compared with the West's logical revolutionary approach and this gives them a great advantage going forward into the many possible futures. It will be interesting to see where this takes them in the next few decades.

There are two big global game changes in just the last few decades that have pushed the demand for English speaking way out in front: the creation of the world wide web and the emergence of the modern China economy.

English is now the dominant language of the internet with its explosion of global ecommerce 24/7 and China has decided to accept this and has adopted English as a second language.

There is now a very big demand for English speakers and therefore an even bigger demand for English Thinkers because many English speakers are not yet English Thinkers. Helping to close this gap and to meet this demand is a useful purpose of this book.

CHAPTER THREE

Apps for Intelligence

Just imagine that you owned the latest iphone. Top of the range. Latest camera. Better speakers. Brighter screen. Tons of storage. Great design. etc.

Now, imagine you somehow had only a single solitary software app on your handheld device. Just the phone app. That's it. Sure you can still call friends and dial up the weather but no clips, no social networking, no GPS, no music, no googling, no *Angry Birds*, no tweeting, nothing. Just a very limited experience for you and your fancy iphone.

These same limitations face us when we boast possession of a powerful necktop computer –

a brain – yet only have one piece of thinking software … *logic*.

In your necktop computer, logic is useful enough for labeling and mail-sorting and dealing with the past but it's not nearly enough to help you cope with the challenges of the future. In other words, logic is excellent but just not enough.

We do need some more software for our brain to help us survive in rapidly changing environments and increasingly competitive and shrinking global markets.

We also need more brain software because we're not happy being stuck with what we have at present.

Brainpower is how you use tools, like software, to enhance your intelligence.

These tools are higher order cognitive tools that help us think about what we should think about.

Sometimes this 'thinking about thinking' is called, by cognitive scientists, *metacognition*. By positive psychologists it is called, *mindfulness*.

There are two main types of intelligences: Data Intelligence and Game Intelligence.

Data Intelligence is the role that information plays in thinking. We also call that White Hat Thinking.

Game Intelligence is *metacognition*. It's the role of strategies, clever moves, clever ideas, algorithms, ploys and tricks of perception that are the tools for thinking about and exploring the information. We also call that Lateral Thinking.

Data Intelligence is only necessary for the relatively dumb, unthinking reaction to situations – *'What do I do next?'*

Game Intelligence goes a step further where the individual asks himself, *'What do I think about next?'* before asking *'What do I do next?'*

Brain software is a mind tool which permits the brainuser to go even a step further by allowing him or her to ask*, 'How do I think better about what I should think about next?'*

Let's start with the second and most recent method of English Thinking, thinking outside the box.

Tools and apps are important for intelligence. Tools, like an iPad or iPhone with their expanding extravaganza of apps, are not just the result of intelligence but they actually ENDOW intelligence on the user.

When you give someone a laptop or an iPad app you increase or enhance their chance at escaping from

standard moves and arriving at more intelligent ones.

Anthropologists have long recognized that the advent of tool use accompanied a major increase in intelligence, observes the famous cognitive scientist and philosopher, Daniel Dennett, Director of the Center for Cognitive Studies at Tufts University and author of *Consciousness Explained*.

Commenting on the value of mind-tools in developing the user's intelligence Professor Dennett goes on to say:

Tool use is a two-way sign of intelligence. Not only does it require intelligence to recognize and maintain a tool, but tool use CONFERS intelligence on those who are lucky enough to be given the tool. The better designed the tool the more potential intelligence it confers on the user.

Since the explosion of the Information Revolution in the 80s and the rise of personal computers, we've become even more interested in the brain and how it works. *What is intelligence?* and *How can we improve it?* are questions being asked in a whole new field of science devoted to these things called – cognitive science.

Cognitive science is concerned with neuroplasticity and the processes of sensing (seeing, hearing, smelling); storing information (memory) and recall; reasoning, planning and intelligent action. It also includes research in areas like AI (Artificial Intelligence) and robotics. In other words it deals with – thinking – both in animals and machines.

Like all human traits – such as height, strength, sexuality and looks – intelligence is distributed unequally.

Some people have more intelligence than you do and some have less than you do and, of course, the same applies to me.

In this book you will get all 4 of the codes of the software for your brain – SDNT cvs2bvs QRH PRR – that have been developed by the School of Thinking (SOT) which you can google or visit anytime at schoolofthinking.org and you can immediately use these codes to get better personal results in business, at school, at home and also at sports.

You will acquire and be drilled in the Universal Brain Software also known as The Lateral Switch:

Current View of Situation (SWITCH TO) Better View of Situation

OR

cvs2bvs.

This is the basic brain software taught by SOT which can be stated in ten keystrokes as cvsx10=bvs and was once described by Jack Welch of GE as *'the simplest idea in the world'.*

Since 1979, School of Thinking (SOT) has disseminated over half a billion thinking lessons to over 50 countries globally.

There are four big reasons why so many people have taken the SOT training in lateral thinking:

Wealth: Better decisions = better bank balance. Your career, business, investment and commercial success is directly related to the quality of your decisions. Every day you make decisions that will either increase your wealth or decrease your wealth.

Health: Poorer choices = poorer health. Your physical, mental and emotional health cannot be separated from the pattern of choices you make.

Every hour of every day you are designing your future. If your designs are weak, your future cannot be strong.

Productivity: Faster strategies = faster productivity. The possibilities, options, strategies, tactics, pathways, connections, networks and environments that are available for you to ponder over will either accelerate or inhibit your own personal productivity and results.

Security: deeper thinking = deeper security. Your survival and growth, in a Darwinian sense, cannot be separated from how you make your decisions over time.

If you don't do your own thinking others will do it for you. These other people, institutions or authorities may not do it well at all or even in your best interests.

Which of these four reasons is most important to you right now?

Your wealth? Your health?

Your productivity? Your security?

With the deliberate use and application of lateral thinking brain software, you can choose from a dashboard of cognitive strategies to solve any problem that confronts you or to explore any opportunity you desire. A problem is a situation which may require a solution, a way out, an option, a cure or a new approach.

An opportunity is a situation that may need to be explored, a plan that needs to be worked out, an idea that needs to be developed, a possibility that needs testing.

Your problems or opportunities are often personal, business, family, recreational, academic, scientific, physical or philosophical.

When we ask CEOs and business people about their problem/opportunity areas they nearly always say: career or purpose in life, time and stress, getting a better balance between professional and personal life, money issues, personnel and recruiting, bringing more creativity, innovation and flexibility into their company.

Here are some of the situations SOT members have been working on during their brain training:

OPPORTUNITIES: To buy some land; to get a better job; to improve knowledge of South East Asia; to learn acting; to play the piano again; to grow their business; to go back to school; to raise their income; to give up smoking; to improve their golf.

PROBLEMS: To pay mortgage; to cope with a difficult boss; to save my marriage; to choose between academic courses; to overcome fear of using the telephone in selling; to speak in public; to make new friends; to lose weight.

If you wish to order take-out food but you only have a pizza menu, then your choice is limited to pizza. But if you have menus from 10 different restaurants such as sushi, health food, Spanish, seafood, organic, Thai, TexMex, French and Italian, then you can eat twice as well. The key is to keep yourself aware of a broader menu of options.

The brain software – SDNT cvs2bvs QRH PRR – (this code is to be introduced to you in this book) will keep you aware of strategic options you can use in daily situations that confront you.

Always remember, if you don't do your own strategic thinking then someone else will do it for you.

They may not do it well at all.

CHAPTER FOUR

Brainpower Audit

Here's a simple audit for you to rate your own brainpower. SOT has validated this checklist with thousands of members globally for over 30 years. It was designed by Dr Eric Bienstock, who Vice Principal of SOT in New York.

Eric holds a Master's degree in Mathematics from the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences, and a PhD from New York University where he researched Mathematics, Education and Learning Theory. Eric based this checklist on the SOT's *Learn-To-Think Coursebook and Instructors Manual* (Michael Hewitt-Gleeson & Edward de Bono, Capra/New 1982).

How Do You Rate Your Own Brainpower?

***Metacognition*, thinking about thinking, is all about the skilled management of attention. How well do you pay attention? Use these 20 questions to assess the quality of your daily thinking.**

INSTRUCTIONS: Answer each of the following 20 questions, scoring either 3, 2, 1, or 0 points for each answer depending on your objective estimate of how often you actually do what is stated. Use your best guess of the following criteria for scoring:

3 – 90% OF THE TIME (nearly always)

2 – 70% OF THE TIME (mostly)

1 – 40% OF THE TIME (often)

0 – 10% OF THE TIME (hardly ever)

NOTES: Please don't panic, this is NOT a scientific test. Self-rating can be notoriously unreliable so your ratings may be way off depending on your mood and other factors. However, time has proven this to be a valid audit to help you take stock of your thinking, raise your awareness of your attention skills, your own view of your cognitive engagement. It's hearty food for thought!

THE 20 QUESTIONS:

SCORE:

3_____ My judgments of ideas are based on the value of the idea rather than on my emotions at the time.

2_____ I judge ideas not just as 'good' or 'bad' but also as 'interesting', if they can lead on to better ideas.

2_____ I consider all factors in a situation before choosing, deciding or planning.

3_____ I consider all factors first, before picking out the ones that matter most.

3_____When I create a rule, I see to it that it is clearly understood and possible to obey.

3_____ I try to see the purpose of rules I have to obey, even if I don't like the rules.

3_____ I look at the consequences of my decisions or actions, not only as they affect me but also as they affect other people.

2_____ I look at a wide range of possible consequences before deciding which consequences to bother about.

2_____ On the way to a final objective I establish a chain of smaller objectives each one following on from the previous one.

2_____ The objectives I set are near enough, real enough and possible enough for me to really try to reach them.

2_____ In planning, I know exactly what I want to achieve.

3_____ I keep my plans as simple and direct as possible.

2_____ I know exactly why I have chosen something as a priority.

3_____ I try to get as many different ideas as possible first, before starting to pick out the priorities.

3_____ I will go on looking for alternatives until I find one I really like.

3_____ While most people look for alternatives when they are not satisfied, I look for them deliberately even when I am satisfied.

2_____ I am able to tell myself the real reason behind a decision I make.

2_____ Before making a decision, I consider the factors, look at the consequences, get clear about the objectives, assess the priorities, and search for possible alternatives.

3_____ I am able to see the other person's point-of-view whether I agree with it or not.

3_____ I am able to spell out the differences and similarities between different viewpoints.

50_____ TOTAL SCORE.

INTERPRETATION

Every day, the output of your brain is decisions. You make hundreds of conscious decisions a day, sometimes more.

The quality of these decisions has a direct impact on the quality of your personal life, your family, your business and your friends. If you can raise the quality of your decisions you can raise the quality of your life.

A trained thinker can direct his or her thinking and use it in a deliberate manner to produce an effect. To a trained and skilled thinker, thinking is a tool that can be used at will and the use of this tool is practical. This ability to use 'thinking as a skill' is the sort of thinking ability that is required to get things DONE.

If your total score in this test was between 51 and 60 points, you may already possess superior brainpower. If you scored between 31 and 50 points, you may have better than average brainpower.

If you scored between 0 and 30, you may possess no additional brainpower other than the natural thinking ability that most people have.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Lateral Switch

CURRENT VIEW SITUATION TO BETTER VIEW SITUATION

CURRENT VIEW SITUATION TO BETTER VIEW SITUATION

CURRENT VIEW SITUATION TO BETTER VIEW SITUATION

We can now turn on The Lateral Switch. Switch! From FLAT earth … to … ROUND earth, for example, just like Columbus.

The Lateral Switch is the Universal Brain Software known as cvs2bvs. The Lateral Switch is the simplest and fastest key to better thinking. cvs2bvs is a powerful perception switch. It's also popularly known worldwide, as CVS TO BVS. cvs2bvs allows you, the brainuser, to think outside the box. Outside your box.

The Universal Brain Software also allows the brainuser to switch from one parallel universe to another. It empowers you to explore the cognos, the multiverse of thinking. Just flip the Lateral Switch! cvs2bvs. cvs2bvs is the School of Thinking's premium brain software presented to you in this book. The brain software is represented by the code: CVS TO BVS, or cvs2bvs.

CVS TO BVS is also the most powerful of all brain software and is necessarily so. CVS TO BVS works well in both animal and machine brains. You can teach cvs2bvs thinking to your puppy, your toddler or your laptop.

In humans, for example, it enables the brainuser to upgrade from Greco-Roman logic, the current and traditional thinking software.

cvs2bvs is ten times faster than right/wrong logic.

The cvs2bvs switch enables you to change cognitive patterns on command. cvs2bvs allows you, when innovation is necessary, to go beyond critical, judgmental Greco-Roman thinking. From CVS to BVS. cvs2bvs is a new brain app or part of the second method of English Thinking.

Jack Welch, when Chairman of General Electric, was the most high-profile cvs2bvs business advocate in the US. Jack said, *'I would love to have a management team that really understood the cvs2bvs equation. It's the "value added" role in the management process'.*

More than 500 years ago Christopher Columbus set sail. The Talavera Commission reported to Queen Isabella on Columbus' idea – to reach Japan in the East by sailing West and to discover other lands en

route – that the adventure was 'uncertain and impossible to any educated person'.

They told the Queen that the proposed voyage would take three years. Even if the ships could return, which was highly unlikely, the commission reported Columbus' idea would be a wasted expedition, 'for God would surely not have allowed any uninhabited land of real value to be concealed from His people for so many centuries'. The experts scorned his project. But Columbus did set sail.

Thirty-three days later he discovered half the world!

I have always thought that Columbus was a very clever brainuser because he made a very big lateral switch. Based solely on their accumulated experience, the experts pointed out that the Admiral's mission was hardly a logical one because his mathematics was wrong.

So if his mathematics was wrong, therefore Columbus was wrong. They were convinced of the soundness of their logic.

Yet if all our thinking and actions were based only on the ‘unique rightness' of our own experience, then progress would be slow or impossible. There could be no room for insight, quantum leaps, outside-the-box-thinking, the Aha! moment, insight or the Eureka phenomenon. There could be no room for humor. There could be no room for humility.

Sometimes, experts use their experience not to explore the future but merely to protect the past. Many an expert arrives at a situation and forms an instant judgment. This quick judgment is based on his unique background, his personal expectations, his values, his mood, his agenda and other factors.

It seems that the more expert thinkers are, the better they are able to defend their point-of-view, so they get trapped in it by their own expertise. They cannot escape their CVS, their Current View of the Situation.

Now I know this never happens to you, dear brainuser, (wink!) but you've probably seen other people fall into this hole. And, it's a very dangerous one to fall into. To help you avoid this hole, we use a powerful but simple switch called CVS-TO-BVS. The lateral switch is simply a neuroware device for programming your short-term memory.

It takes just one second to use this switch, to say to yourself … CVS-TO-BVS.

Many thinkers around the world are using this switch today. If you practice this switch for ten days it will become a habit and become a permanent

piece of neuroware in your own necktop computer. After ten days, you'll have it forever.

The Current View of the Situation

can never be equal to

the Better View of the Situation.

Just think about that for ten seconds. This is the fundamental law of thinking. I know, because I made it up myself. See if it makes any sense to you and whether you can embrace this law or whether you can't.

Say it to yourself out loud and see how you react to it:

The Current View of the Situation (CVS)

can never be equal to

the Better View of the Situation (BVS).

Do you have any trouble with this law? This is really the most important law for thinking.

The more you can bring conviction into this, the more it will work for you. To simplify this, you simply say:

A CVS can never be equal to a BVS

or

cvs ≠ bvs.

CHAPTER SIX

The Skill of Measurement

Measurement is a very important skill for the brainuser to develop. Let's look at units of measurement.

It's very helpful, when trying to measure things, to have a unit of measurement. Having a basic unit of measurement means you can keep score and then compare one score against another.

For example, the whole metric system uses a number of units of measurement based on the decimal (or 10) system. We have meters, liters, dollars and grams.

So, if you want to measure how far you have to travel to work, you can do so, and the answer may

be 10 meters if you work at home or 10 kilometers if you don't.

You can use dollars to figure costs and overheads and to help control them and bring them down. You can also use dollars to figure revenues and sales results and help move them up.

The more you can bring metrics or measurements to aspects of your job, the more you can take control and the more interesting your job becomes. What things can you measure in your job?

- **Costs – eliminations, reductions or increases?**
- **Accidents/safety – lower or higher?**
- **Sales calls – more or less?**
- **Customer referrals – more or less?**
- **Delivery times – longer or shorter?**
- **Materials used – more or less?**
- **Industrial disputes – fewer or more often?**

In the last few pages, we've already seen that a CVS can never be equal to a BVS. So, what exactly is a BVS?

A BVS is a decimal of a CVS. A CVS is also a decimal of a BVS. In other words, they are related by powers of ten. Sometimes a BVS is ten times smaller than a CVS. Other times it is ten times greater.

From experience, it is usually the latter, but not always. By decimalizing (yes, it is a word) thinking we are introducing measurement into the brain software and we get more control. The Switch now becomes a more useful brain app.

Remember, the switch is decimal. In lateral thinking we use the number ten to digitize thinking.

The deliberate or habitual use of the number 10 is called *tenpower*.

The key to the practical use of this powerful perception switch – cvs2bvs – is the deliberate effort one makes to try to notice the BVS that is TEN TIMES better than the CVS.

BVS = CVS x 10

So, for example, if your CVS is $1 then a BVS might be $10 (or it could be 10 cents, if you owed someone $1). If the CVS is on one level, then the BVS can be found on a level TEN TIMES better than the CVS.

Ten times better may be ten times more, or ten times less, or ten units forward or ten units backwards.

It's the deliberate use of tenpower, as a provocation, to get you to escape from your current position, from your CVS.

With practice, the 'ten times' part of the switch just becomes easier and easier.

This is what tenpower is all about. Remember, mathematically, there are always millions of possible options (literally!) but you must deliberately look for them to see them.

Tenpower helps you to switch patterns of perception. That's all.

While it is not important that the number ten is always accurately used, its use is a powerful escape mechanism. Take a leap with tenpower.

In lateral thinking, rightness is not as important as movement.

Using tenpower, enables you to move through information at a rate never before possible with Greco-Roman logic.

And, in a rapidly changing world, movement to a better viewpoint is much more important to the thinker than defense of a current viewpoint.

The reason for tenpower is because there are always risks in thinking. It can be risky leaving the safety of a CVS to go out in search of a BVS.

But if the rewards are so great, so worthwhile – a true quantum leap, an order of magnitude – then the reward provides its own motivation.

You can now have the drive to escape inertia to move towards a BVS.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Tenpower

Lateral thinking is ten times faster than logical thinking and so I want to devote a separate chapter to tenpower, thereby giving it the importance it deserves.

If this book was just about theory, tenpower could be left out, but it's really about getting into action. You don't just want to know about the lateral switch and how it works, you also want to be able to DO it.

Practice, Repetition, Rehearsal.

That's the mantra of any A Team!

It was revealed to me during my army training lessons, in the late ’60s, when I was a 20-year-old national serviceman draftee during the American war in Vietnam, how amazingly effective was the strategy of REPETITION.

Because the bottom line in the military is so severe (life or death) the army drill instructors demonstrated the strategic power of repetition by always making us practice, repeat and rehearse the various combat skills.

I remember thinking it odd, at the time, that an ambush was actually rehearsed in detail in the field before being laid that night. But why not? Ambushing is a skill, and anything that is a skill can be dramatically improved with repetition and practice.

A pattern is something that is repeated more often than randomness or chaos. The architecture of a pattern is *repetition*.

That's why in a patterning system like the human brain system, repetition is the most powerful learning strategy you can use.

That's also why you'll notice a great deal of repetition in this book. It's not because I've forgotten that I've already discussed something with you. It's to help build patterns in your brain, so it becomes easier for you to remember and use the neuro-software.

IN A PATTERNING SYSTEM, LIKE THE HUMAN BRAIN SYSTEM, THERE IS NO STRONGER MAGIC THAT CAN BE USED THAN THE MAGIC OF REPETITION.

All this is critical when acquiring new skills. Repeating things ten times is an excellent way to exploit tenpower and broaden your own repertoire of skills.

Researchers at the University of Kansas Medical Center have also found evidence that learning a new language or studying a musical instrument, which requires years of practice and repetition, may create alternate connections in the brain that could compensate for cognitive decline as we get older.

The *neuroplasticity* of the human brain is finally being more widely understood not only in the military and the performing arts but also for gerontological well-being and successful parenting strategies. There are, of course, many things in life that are not worth repeating. So, try and focus your repetitions on those things that are.

Ever since you were born advertisers and religions have used repetition to program your brain. So, you may as well use it yourself to embrace the patterns that YOU decide are most useful for your own brain. Take charge!

What is Tenpower? Tenpower is the skill of using the powers of ten.

Tenpower is a booster mechanism for your brain software. Just like enzymes that boost up chemical reactions or rockets that boost space shuttles, so can tenpower boost your brain software and greatly empower your thinking skills.

Tenpower is all about using x10 thinking. x10 thinking is also called 'tentimes' thinking.

Alfred North Whitehead, the great English mathematician/philosopher, and co-author with

Bertrand Russell of the monumental *Principia Mathematica*, said about ZERO:

'The point about zero is that we do not need to use it in the operations of everyday life. No one goes out to buy zero fish. It is in a way the most civilized of all the cardinals, and its use is only forced on us by the needs of cultivated modes of thought'.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Put on a Zero!

A zero may not seem like much. If you add it to or subtract it from another number, it makes no difference at all. A zero barely exists … until … you put a zero on the end of another number and, mirabile dictu, that number increases tenfold!

That is Tenpower! Even the Egyptians had a symbol for tenpower and maybe that's why the pyramids are so big.

Lateral thinking is moving through think-space, the information universe, the cognos, by powers of ten. Tenpower can be used in any direction – moving out or moving in.

For example, with tenpower you can move from 1 to 10 to 100 to 1000 to 10000 to 100000 to 1000000 to 10000000 and so on. Or, from 1 to .1 to .01 to .001 to .0001 to .00001 to .000001 to .0000001, and so on.

The Official Number of the School of Thinking is 10. The habit of tenpower is the habit of using the number ten, the habit of adding a zero or the habit of multiplying by ten.

By using tenpower you will equip your necktop with a very powerful booster which will give you an unfair survival advantage over others when moving through the information environment.

You can use tenpower anywhere. There's no right place to use tenpower. Some people use tenpower to get started. Some use tenpower for fitness, practicing skills and doing repetitions.

You can use tenpower to solve problems, to create opportunities. Scientists use tenpower in computing to delve into the mysteries of genetics and human history.

Who else can use tenpower? Writers can use tenpower to escape writer's block. I use tenpower in teaching thinking skills. Business people use tenpower to plan ahead. NGOs use tenpower to advance social welfare. Students use tenpower to do their research. Parents use tenpower to help in family discussions.

Putting-on a zero is a powerful thing to do. It is the quintessential provocation. Its purpose is to provoke movement through the cognos, the universe of possible thoughts.

It allows you to escape, really escape, from your present position.

It's a bit like using a helicopter. If you wanted to climb a mountain you might start from the bottom but then, when you reach the summit, you say 'Boy! If only we'd come that way it would have been easier'. This is because the view from the top is different from the view at the bottom. If you had a helicopter you could fly to the top first, see the better way, and then go back and use it.

Tenpower helps you make quantum leaps in your thinking. It empowers you to escape from inside the box. Your box. It enables you to use orders of magnitude to change your point-of-view. Then you can use that information if you choose. When put on the end of a number, there's no limit to the power of a zero!

How many grains of sand on Sydney's famous Bondi beach?

How many raindrops fall in London each year?

What is the number of words spoken in Canberra or in Beijing in a year, or even spoken by every Chinese and Australian in history?

To cope with questions like these, mathematicians need to design very, very large numbers. For example, a trillion is a (million x million) or a 1 with 12 zeroes on the end. But that's still a relatively common number of the garden variety.

Going way beyond a trillion, the American mathematician, Edward Krasner, has used the zero to design his very large number called: the *googol*.

A googol is a 1 with a hundred zeroes put-on. A googol looks like this:

10,000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000 000.

How large is a googol? Well, the grains of sand on Bondi beach are about 100,000,000,000,000,000,000 – 1 with twenty zeroes put-on. Much smaller than a googol. Raindrops in London are also much smaller than a googol and so are the words of Australia and China.

A hundred million atoms placed in a row would only be this long __ , a centimeter. So what about the number of atoms in all of Mt Fuji or even the Himalayas? No, even they would not make a googol.

Einstein's theories make it possible for astrophysicists to estimate the number of atoms in the whole universe and even that is less than a googol. In fact, a googol is larger than the very largest numbers used in physics and chemistry.

When Larry Page and Sergey Brin started their famous search engine they wanted to name it after

Krasner's big number but they misspelt it and called it Google instead!

Nobody's perfect.

Can we use tenpower on a googol? And the answer is, of course, yes.

For example, the *googolplex* is a larger number still.

It's equal to a 1 with a googol zeroes after it: a googol with an extra trillion zeroes put-on.

Forgive me if I won't bother to show you what a googolplex looks like because if I were to try typing out a googolplex by adding zeroes to the above googol at the rate of three zeroes a second – 000 – and I never stopped to eat or sleep or do anything else, I would be dead and stardust long before I got anywhere near it.

Here are ten ways I can use the number 10:

- *I can give ten times more gifts to clients this week than last week.*
- *I can send ten times more postcards to friends this month than I did last month.*
- *I can call someone who would like to hear from me in ten minutes time.*
- *I can consult ten brainusers for their opinion on a matter of importance.*
- *I can visit ten web sites that I don't usually visit.*
- *I can connect ten people to discuss a matter of importance to all concerned.*
- *I can practice a new skill 10 times a day for the next ten days.*
- *I can go for a walk in the Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens at 10am.*
- *I can cut costs by 10%.*
- *I can spend ten minutes figuring out the first line of the next chapter.*

CHAPTER NINE

Let's Talk About Attention

Hardly any faculty is more important for the intellectual progress of man than ATTENTION. Animals clearly manifest this power, as when a cat watches by a hole and prepares to spring on its prey.
–Charles Darwin, The Descent of Man (1871)

Attention! Let's talk about attention. But first a small experiment.

INSTRUCTION: As soon as you have finished reading this sentence, turn your head around about 180◦ and describe something you can see that is colored green and does not belong to you.

OK. Here's the point. Once you look in a direction it's easy to see what is there. Here's how it worked: I gave you the cue above to turn your head and look for something specific. You turned your head and looked. You saw.

I don't know where you are right now but most readers would have been able to carry out this experiment successfully, once you decided to look.

Here's the special insight that I would like you to get now, as a result of this little experiment. It will help you get better use out of the lateral thinking brain software. It's this:

ONCE YOU MOVE YOUR ATTENTION IN A CERTAIN DIRECTION YOU CAN EASILY SEE WHAT IS THERE TO SEE. BUT, THE DECISION TO MOVE YOUR ATTENTION COULD TAKE TWENTY YEARS!

Many people feel that if there is an opportunity somewhere – a BVS – why, they'll see it and go get it. They assume the very presence of a BVS will make itself known to them, that it will attract their attention. But no, it doesn't work that way. You have to direct your own attention. So important it's worth repeating.

You do have to direct your own attention.

BVSs are there all the time, you're tripping over them all day long, literally hundreds of them, but you're not seeing them. The reason you're missing them is obvious: It's impossible to notice a BVS if your attention is on defending your CVS.

Attention is the gateway to consciousness.

Attention is the business of your mind.

Attention is the principal service provided by the management section of your brain which enables you to focus in and have a mind – for you to think about things.

How you move your attention around is very interesting. There are three distinct aspects of attention-directing in your brain:

- **Disengagement: escaping from your present fixation of attention.**
- **Movement: scanning and movement of attention through the cognos, the vast universe of possible thoughts.**
- **Engagement: attending to a new pattern or object out of a competition of an infinite multitude of possible candidates.**

The cvs2bvs brain software is designed as a lateral switch that helps you to control your attention and move it around, especially when your attention is habitually focused on your CVS and its logical defense.

cvs2bvs can help you disengage and move your attention away from your CVS and to engage it elsewhere on a BVS.

Pay attention! This is a command with which we are all familiar. We all heard it many times as children and we still hear it (if more subtly expressed) every day in business.

We know what it means to direct our attention even though it is something we do inside our head.

For example:

- **At a noisy cocktail party, you can hone in on one particular conversation.**

- **In a business presentation, while presenting to the room at large and doing justice to her presentation as planned, an account executive can shift the attention around in her vision to catch the expression on her executive client's face while still appearing to stare intently at her powerpoint.**
- **A marketing professional can show you how to deliberately shift your attention away from your product-driven strategy to a much better customer-driven one and then you can notice the way the information before you suddenly rearranges itself.**
- **A habit of attention may mean that the first thing a hairdresser notices about you is your hair while a dentist may notice your smile instead.**
- **On arriving at Kennedy airport, I can pick out my driver from the dozens of others waiting, even though my name is badly misspelt on his sign.**

- **An over-critical parent can pick out the one mistake in a child's work and not see that the child has accomplished a great deal of positive things.**
- **A shared goal, like Sir Bob Geldorf's Band-Aid, can cue a diverse group of individual and even competitive entertainers to give priority to a certain event where otherwise they would all be paying attention elsewhere.**
- **A team leader can pull back the attention of her team to a project-in-hand after a distraction had drawn attention away.**
- **A specific motion put before the board can focus the attention of the directors after a long and wandering discussion.**

Most languages have a word like Achtung! which focuses one's attention.

We experience attention as a filter that the management part of our brain applies to the flood of competing information that comes in from our senses.

Individuals who have suffered brain-damage can lose their ability to control their attention. Attention disorders are manifested in different ways, depending on the nature of the damage. It can take the form of an inability to escape from a particular fixation and so they remain stuck in a viewpoint regardless of the demands of their environment.

Let's now disengage our attention from 'attention' and move it along to engage on 'orthogonality'. In quantum physics there is something called orthogonality. Orthogonality means mutual exclusivity, that there cannot be two things in the same place at the same time.

A switch cannot be both OFF and ON at the same time.

If a flipped coin has landed as HEADS, then it cannot also have landed as TAILS at the same time. To get to tails requires at least one more flip of the coin, as anyone who visits a casino will soon discover.

Switches are useful because they have at least two positions. This means you can escape from one and move to the other. It only requires a flip of the switch:

Switch: HEADS TO TAILS.

Switch: OFF TO ON.

Switch: CVS TO BVS.

CHAPTER TEN

Future x10: An App for Ten Possible Futures

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

So, now we wind up with this simple, user-friendly, neuro-software. This powerful lateral thinking switch: from cvs2bvs.

QUESTION: How do we load this neuroware into your necktop?

ANSWER: Repetition. Repetition. Repetition.

Programming the lateral software switch into your brain, your necktop computer, is simple, it's just not easy. It requires an act of will. By exploiting the patterning system of your brain, it's simply a matter of repeating, 'CVS TO BVS'. You can just repeat the software code – cvs2bvs – one hundred times a day! For the next ten days! Starting today.

INSTRUCTION:

'Repeat cvs2bvs one hundred times per day for 10 days'.

(cvs2bvs) x 100pd

When I lived on Park Avenue in New York, I'd practice by walking along the sidewalk (American for footpath) and as my left foot hit the ground I'd say

‘cvs’ and as my right foot hit the ground I’d say ‘… to bvs’.

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs, et cetera.

Not out loud because Bellevue Mental Hospital wasn’t far away and they might think I was crazy!

It only takes a second to say ‘cvs2bvs’, so 100 repetitions each day takes you 100 seconds or 1 minute and 40 seconds. That’s all.

Some do their repetitions in the shower, others while commuting on the subway, bus or tram and others combine this brain exercise while exercising their body at their health club or gym.

Now what will happen if you do this?

It will mean that you’re constructing a new executive neuro-pattern in your brain. The more you practice, the stronger the pattern. The stronger the pattern, the more power it will have.

Instead of finding yourself locked into defending a CVS, you'll hesitate … and you'll look for … and you'll see … and then you'll switch to … a BVS.

And the wonderful thing is that if you paint the pattern strong enough it will work on every other skill you have. If you practice golf, that won't make you a good cook will it? Being good at golf doesn't TRANSFER to being a good cook.

But cvs2bvs does transfer. It is a process, and as such, it's designed to transfer to any situation, whatsoever. It's generic!

You can use the switch to get better (and 'better' means more clever) at golf, better at cooking, better at studying, better at listening, better at solving business problems, better at selling, better at creating opportunities, better at making decisions, better at handling family matters, better at dealing

with personal situations, better at getting better, better at anything!

The first step is to get started on your 100 repetitions each day of cvs2bvs. To get the full benefit of this brain software, the price is 1 minute and 40 seconds a day! Let's start now. Say this out loud once, it only takes one second.

INSTRUCTION:

Say: cvs2bvs.

Good. Now let's BVS that. We're going from 1 to 10. That simply means repeating the cvs2bvs switch ten times. It may feel a little silly at first but no one's going to hurt you for doing it, and you'll already be well on your way.

INSTRUCTION:

Say it now, ten times out loud:

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

If you think it's difficult to get you to say it out loud, imagine what it was like to get a Monte Carlo auditorium full of over a thousand IBM executives from all over the world, with five translators, to do it! But they did it, and now they can use it too.

cvs2bvs simply means that the current way is logical and may be fine, but there's always a better way, ten times better, if only we remember to deliberately look for it.

If you were to repeat a hundred of those switches each day (that is repeat cvs2bvs a hundred times), you would be keeping the lateral switch in your short-term memory so that the pattern can link up with the projects and situations that come up for you during the day.

Today!

cvs2bvs is Kangaroo Thinking. Sometimes I call cvs2bvs Kangaroo Thinking because we can experiment and we can innovate in leaps and bounds. We can hop from one bvs to another bvs. We can hop across parallel universes, sideways, from bvs to bvs to bvs.

cvs2bvs, the Universal Brain Software, frees the brainuser to hop across parallel universes with tenpower.

cvs2bvs also allows the brainuser to switch from one parallel universe to another.

A parallel universe is a possible future. At any particular moment you are heading to one possible future. But, you could escape from that possible future and head for a different possible future. We do this every day and every time we take a decision.

For example, right now I am writing this sentence about a very embarrassing incident that once happened to me in New York when I …

However, I have just decided to escape from that sentence and instead of finishing it I have decided to write this sentence instead. A quite different but possible sentence, a different but possible future.

There are, of course, a virtually unlimited number of possible futures facing us at any moment in time but so many futures may be too daunting to think about. So, let's just limit the options to ten. *Future x10* is the brain app which says that at any time you are faced with a decision there are always at least ten possible futures from which to choose.

Usually there is the most likely future which will turn out to be the decision you're most likely to take.

In this brain app we call the most likely decision choice: Future #10.

We do this to draw attention to the fact that there are at least 9 other options or possible futures that we could consider if only we made the metacognitive effort to do so. Just to spell this out we'll tag these options or possibilities or choices as follows:

Future #10

Future #09

Future #08

Future #07

Future #06

Future #05

Future #04

Future #03

Future #02

Future #01

The excellence and power of the Future x10 brain app is that at any NOW moment of the day you have an opportunity for cvs2bvs and to select any one of ten possible futures. For example:

- **You might get writer's block while preparing a scientific paper – cvs2bvs.**
- **You might find yourself being a space glutton in a family meeting – cvs2bvs.**
- **You might be trying to help your child solve a problem – cvs2bvs.**
- **You might be staring at your Facebook page – cvs2bvs.**
- **You might be worried and depressed about money – cvs2bvs.**
- **You might be about to decide what to have for lunch – cvs2bvs.**

- **You might be boring a client or customer – cvs2bvs.**
- **You might be being bullied by a friend or family member – cvs2bvs.**
- **You might be tweeting your constituency – cvs2bvs.**

Practise and repetition ensures that the cvs2bvs switch will pop up at a time when you need to use it. And when it does pop up, what then?

If you decide to look for a BVS, you will see it. Yes, you really will see it.

INSTRUCTION: What time is it?

(Check your watch and record the time here _____.)

Isn't it amazing! The time is always there, BUT you only see it when you actually look for it. Think about that for a moment!

Through training and practice, your brain learned (developed the cognitive pattern) to tell the time, long ago. One just needs to use the trigger question: What time is it? and Hey! Presto! … We get to see the time!

The same applies to a BVS. It's your attention that controls your behavior. You need a trigger to manipulate your attention from merely focusing on your CVS and to get it to switch to a BVS.

This is also called *lateral thinking* or creative thinking or x10 thinking.

You've done it many times before but you need to do it better and much more often – on command!

The key to creativity is remembering to be creative at any particular moment, remembering to use the lateral switch cvs2bvs.

Remember: What time is it?

cvs2bvs will dramatically increase your odds of finding ideas, because you will be actively looking for them, habitually, as a matter of personal policy.

In New York, I once ran a 30-day campaign to get over 40,000 hospital employees in 23 hospitals to each look for a BVS in their own job that would save their hospital around $250 a year.

Not only were many thousands of ideas immediately found (totalling over $12 million dollars in savings) but employee engagement went way up. And, branding was enhanced because the campaign received international positive PR for New York hospitals.

The event was covered by TV, media and a full page in the New York Times. If you look you will find! There is always a BVS. You can get a good idea today, a better idea tomorrow and you get the best idea … never! There's always a BVS!

This means that you can have a perfectly valid CVS, but there must always be a better one because you always have ten options from which to choose.

And, for repetition sake, here they are again:

Future #10

Future #09

Future #08

Future #07

Future #06

Future #05

Future #04

Future #03

Future #02

Future #01

The difference between the way you use your necktop now, and the way it could operate, is up to the software you use. Each time you do your 100 repetitions of cvs2bvs, it guarantees that you are keeping yourself, your family, your school or company, on the road to a much better future, the road to a BVS.

Here are 100 repetitions of cvs2bvs:

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

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cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs cvs2bvs

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Brain Virus!

What if you had a virus in your brain? What if it was a cognitive virus, a kind of cognitive AIDS? What would it do to you? How would it affect your thinking? How did you get infected with the virus? What could you do to cure it or manage it?

Every technology has its hackers – those enthusiasts who enjoy exploring the intimate details of the system, cracking the codes and stretching and testing the capabilities of systems. There have been radio hackers and computer hackers and you've no doubt read about the security hackers who have ripped-off customers and banks for billions of dollars.

We've seen nuclear hackers who have designed DIY nuclear weapons for science projects and we have cyberspace hackers who roam the networks for fun and profit.

We can even see where the integrity of democratic elections are being hacked.

No doubt it won't be long before we read of genetic hackers who amuse themselves by playing around in our gene pool.

Hackers, perhaps driven by strong curiosity, often just start off by seeking amusement and showing off their skill but sometimes their antics lead to chaos, fraud and even … disaster!

In recent years, some computer hackers started out manipulating their systems for fun by designing viruses that replicate themselves into other systems.

Few hackers, however, are competent enough or even willing to fully comprehend the ongoing consequences of their antics.

Many of their viruses took off out of control and by now have infected millions of personal computers. These viruses are real! The malware causes real down time, real loss of capital, real damage to equipment, real destruction of databases and, sometimes, real loss of life. By 2017, state-funded hacking in Russia has risen to the level of cyberwarfare.

Shawn Henry, Assistant Director of the FBI's Cyber Division, told a conference in New York that computer attacks pose the biggest *risk 'from a national security perspective, other than a weapon of mass destruction or a bomb in one of our major cities'. Other than a nuclear device or some other*

***type of destructive weapon, the threat to our infrastructure, the threat to our intelligence, the threat to our computer network is the most critical threat we face'*, he added.**

US experts talk of 'cybergeddon', in which an advanced economy — where almost everything of importance is linked to or even controlled by computers — is sabotaged by hackers.

Michael Balboni, Deputy Secretary for Public Safety in New York State, described *'a huge threat out there'* against everything from banking institutions to municipal water systems and dams.

Daily cybertransactions that can be infected by computer viruses include:

- **Wall Street decisions involving the transfer of capital in the trillions.**

- **Credit card transactions between millions of traders and their customers.**
- **Ransomware viruses blocking hospital/patient medical records in national health systems.**
- **Airline reservations affecting many thousands of travelers.**
- **Maintenance and command decisions involving thousands of US missiles.**

The mind boggles at the havoc that can be caused if these viruses spread unchecked.

Yet, there is a virus, a brain virus, which already exists in the brains of many humans from preachers to presidents, that makes these computer viruses look wimps by comparison.

This brain virus – or *meme* – is real. It's seductive and it's very powerful. It's also highly destructive.

Just last century alone more than 26 million humans were killed in world wars, revolutionary wars, conflicts, pogroms, persecutions, genocides and racial cleansings.

It can be argued that many or most of these events were initiated by people infected with PTV and motivated to enforce their 'Truth' on others.

In the brain of a president or a terrorist it could unleash a missile that starts the unthinkable nuclear madness that threatens the very existence of humanity. In the brain of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), it can threaten the survival of the business. And, in YOUR brain???

This brain virus is the Plato Truth Virus (PTV) and chances are almost certain that you, dear brainuser, are already infected.

In this book you will come to understand the virus and how it affects your life and you will also find out exactly what you can do to contain it.

In my book, *The x10 Memeplex: Multiply Your Business By Ten!* (Prentice-Hall, 2000), I look at the concept of 'information brain viruses' like PTV.

The other scientific name for these idea viruses is 'memes', as coined by Oxford biologist, Richard Dawkins, in his legendary book *The Selfish Gene*.

When it comes to 'thinking', Plato was the ultimate hacker. At that time, playing around with thinking systems was as much the rage amongst an elite group of men in Greece, as playing around with software systems is the rage amongst the hackers of today.

Socrates, Plato and Aristotle were the most famous 'thinking hackers' of their day.

These hackers of 2500 years ago, designed fundamental thinking technologies, systems and viruses that have dominated the development of Western thinking right up to the 21st century, and who knows for how much longer?

Today's hackers have handles like AcidFreak and CyberSam. Plato's handle would well have been TruthFreak since it was he who invented his 'truth' concept – the strange yet unlikely notion that there is such a thing as 'absolute truth'.

Yet this bizarre suggestion has so side-tracked Western philosophers that even today, many great minds in Western colleges and universities have still not escaped from Plato's 'truth' idea, and their thinking remains infected with this dangerous virus.

It would be a difficult (but worthwhile) project to calculate the cost to humanity and the staggering destruction caused by PTV – Plato's 'truth' virus.

Needless to say, it's unlikely that Plato himself had any idea of the extreme consequences of his invention, any more than some of today's hackers will have of theirs.

He was just hacking around with thinking.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Problem and The Solution.

The coming chapters are about logical thinking and are organized into two main parts: The Problem and The Solution. The Problem is the deep cognitive pattern – the information virus – which we call PTV or the Plato Truth Virus. In these next chapters we'll take a careful look at the Plato Truth Virus:

- **What is PTV?**
- **How does it work?**
- **What does it do?**
- **What is the up side and down side of the virus?**
- **How did the virus become so virulent?**
- **Who spread it around?**
- **How did you become infected?**

- **What is it doing to your brain?**
- **Is there a cure?**

Following on from then will be The Solution. The Solution consists of the suite of codes of the SOT brain software – SDNT cvs2bvs QRH PRR.

My background as a military trainer has shown me that there is no need to dumb-down or soften training simply to spare the sensibilities of the trainees. This is just wasting their time. If the training is important, then a good trainer will not pull any punches. If the training is not important, then why bother with it at all?

So, this is my direct approach in this coursebook, which also includes the lessons for teaching thinking. This matter-of-fact approach may seem tactless from time to time but it has also been shown to be very effective.

But, let me make this clear at the outset – you will find no hidden agenda with this book or with the School of Thinking. There is only one mission: To help you to develop your own independent thinking skills. That's all.

There are those who find the material in the next part of the training to be too controversial for their tastes. These lessons trace the history of 'why we think the way we do' in Western culture. The dominant software we teach our kids at school is the RIGHT/WRONG software, which was developed by the Vatican and spread around the world with missionary zeal during the past 500 years. It's just a fact of history.

Even though the facts I refer to are well known to scholars and can easily be checked out, it is because I take such a critical approach to the role of certain

religious *ideaviruses* and how they have infected our thinking habits that many people feel uncomfortable, some even angry. Although less so these days, I still get mixed reactions from readers. Some want the material removed because they are offended by the religious criticism and others are simply bored because they don't see the relevance.

However, the big majority of readers applaud the chance to have these issues made transparent and openly discussed and others have acclaimed this section to be most liberating for them personally. In a School of Thinking, all viewpoints need to be considered, so I have left this section in.

A few years ago, books like *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown introduced a wide audience to many of these controversial matters and more recently, and

more factually, Professor Richard Dawkins' book *The God Delusion* has continued the discussion.

I wrote *Software For The Brain*, the first version of this book, a few decades before Brown and Dawkins wrote their books. Those who have now read Brown's or Dawkin's books may find these lessons much easier going than a small number of my previous readers who had been threatened or turned off by this information.

If you cannot stomach any criticism of religion or if you cannot see the influence that religion (especially the Vatican) still exerts over all our thinking today, then you can put the book aside at any time of your choosing.

But there are two main reasons for keeping this material in this book and why you should read and think about it: Welfare and Security.

The quality of your welfare – your productivity, your health, your professional success, will always be a direct consequence of the quality of your thinking. If you are to upgrade your thinking software, it is helpful to understand why your current software works the way it does and why you think the way you do.

This cannot be understood without examining the history of our thinking and how we came to be dominated by one dangerous idea from one ancient man – Plato's concept of 'TRUTH'. So, we examine this in the next few chapters.

You will explore Plato's idea of objective truth and you will see how this has led to the strong defense of The Truth which so diminishes the thinker's ability to escape from his current viewpoint to find a much better one.

You will understand how Aristotle later imbedded Plato's idea in his syllogism, which was then picked up by Thomas Aquinas and became the basis of logic, the dominant brain software pushed by the Vatican. Western education has made a god out of logic and the 'claim of certainty'.

The Western education system was set up by the medieval Church and spread throughout Europe and exported to other parts of the world with missionary zeal.

Even today, we still send our children to school to program their young brains with the logic operating system. Then, they are given the impression that all they have to do in life is ‘to get the right answer’ or ‘tell The Truth’. How could you abuse a child more than by misleading that child to think that life is simply made up of RIGHT and WRONG?

Only Microsoft's global export of DOS computer software has ever rivaled the Vatican's global export of the logic brain software.

In addition to your welfare, the second reason for being up front about all this has to do with your future security. Since 9/11, the world has become a more dangerous place and there is a direct link to this danger and to the excesses of certain religious ideaviruses.

Many scientists around the world are finally starting to speak up. This is unusual because scientists are thinkers and doers not talkers. They usually prefer to go about their business leaving the headlines to the chatterati of politics, religion and media. But not anymore.

The God Delusion **by Richard Dawkins was the #1 International Best-Seller in 2006.**

Other books like Dan Dennett's *Breaking The Spell* and Christopher Hitchins' book, *God Is Not Great* and *Letter To A Christian Nation* by Sam Harris have placed the debate about the problem of religion center stage in the public mind.

This is a very healthy thing, especially for independent thinkers.

This discussion has been catalysed by the peer-to-peer platforms of social media: Facebook, Twitter, Google, Wikipedia and their proliferating variations.

This threat to our security posed by the extremes of religious fundamentalism is one of the most legendary issues of our times.

Rather than politely glossing over these matters, I have encouraged exploration of these issues in an effort to draw attention to this threat and to help others who may feel inclined to do so.

I first published this discussion in 1984 and looking back over the past quarter-century of this discussion and the controversy associated with it, the most tiresome retort by my critics is that I am anti-religion.

This claim is meant to suggest that my thinking on this issue is so pre-determined by prejudice that it can therefore be dismissed.

Of course, as a person who values thinking, I am not anti-religion at all. I encourage many points of view. However, I am anti the very dangerous claim made by some religious fundamentalists that my-religion-is-the-one-true-religion-and-what-are-we-going-to-do-about-you. So, I'll take this opportunity to state once again that I am far from being anti-religion.

There are over 270 distinct religious groups in Australia.

This is evidence of the creativity, tolerance and goodwill of our nation, and it is made possible by *Section 116 of the Australian Constitution* which says ALL religions are equal under the Law of Australia.

No one religion is the one TRUE religion. It is also hopeful to see that the fastest growing group in the last Australian census is the group that says it has no religion at all.

But finally, the ultimate purpose of this book is to present to you the full suite of School of Thinking brain software – SDNT cvs2bvs QRH PRR – which has been the central offer of *Software For The Brain* since it was first published in 1989.

Thanks for persevering with the disclaimers in this section and I hope you will keep your mind open, keep questioning and keep exploring.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Cognitive Dissonance

In cognitive science, the term *cognitive dissonance* is often used. Cognitive dissonance is interesting because it refers to what happens in your brain when information is presented to it which doesn't seem to fit at all.

For example, just suppose your CVS, the current state of information in your brain (the balance of memes), was such that you believed the earth was flat. Just suppose your brain was a haven for a happy co-operative of flat earth memes filling your brain and dominating your outlook.

This, of course, seems naive to us now, but not long ago most smart people saw things this way.

Now, suppose someone called Fred comes along and says, 'No, the earth is round!', and tries to explain to you why you should change your view. You would begin to experience cognitive dissonance.

If, although you thought the earth was flat, you were not fundamentally committed to that view, you might only experience a mild case of cognitive dissonance. Then, as you followed the evidence Fred presented, you might find your view evolving from flat earth to round earth.

If, on the other hand, you not only thought the earth was flat but your PTV-infected brain believed your flat earth view was absolutely right, then you might have a dose of strong cognitive dissonance, so strong that it might be easier to burn Fred at the stake than to change your view from flat earth to round earth.

What happened to Fred is not just a silly story but actually did happen in the past, still happens today and will happen tomorrow in some parts of the world.

One of the most notorious examples was that of the Father of Modern Science, the brilliant Italian 17th century mathematician, Galilei Galileo.

Galileo had constructed his telescope to show how the earth revolved about the sun and not the sun around the earth. Since Copernicus advanced this hypothesis it had caused great controversy. Galileo now had proof.

When he demonstrated this, many highly intelligent people even refused to look through the telescope, so frightened were they of what they might see.

Some people had such a strong dose of cognitive dissonance that they forced Galileo to his knees and

made him withdraw his evidence and recant his discovery.

In 1633, Galileo, now 70 years old, sick and completely blind, was forced by the Pope to make the arduous journey to Rome to stand trial for 'heresy'.

Urban VIII, taking time off from cannibalizing the marble of the Colosseum to build his Barberini palace, accused Galileo of causing *'the greatest scandal in Christendom'* for daring to contradict the Scriptures.

Galileo thought of himself as a devoted Catholic. He argued that the Bible was not a scientific text and that we should not expect its 'scientific statements' to be taken literally. He argued that it presents no challenge to faith, that both nature and the bible are divine texts and cannot contradict one another.

On 21 June, after a long trial, he was found guilty of heresy, by the infamous Inquisition. Not only that, he was bullied and actually forced into covering up his evidence.

The Pope demanded that he be tortured if he did not obey: *'The said Galileo is in the judgment of the Holy Office vehemently suspected of heresy, namely, of having believed and held the doctrine which is false and contrary to the Sacred and Divine Scriptures that the sun is the center of the world and does not move from east to west, and is not the center of the world'*.

Weary and broken, the old scientist knelt before the Pope and made his confession*: 'I, Galileo, son of the late Vincenzo Galilea, Florentine, aged seventy years … must altogether abandon the false opinion that the sun is the center of the world and immobile'*.

His trial was a grave and solemn milestone in the violent history of the Church, perhaps only surpassed, in poignancy, by the trial of Jesus before Pilate.

Galileo was a brilliant mathematician and a pioneer of science, which tries to rely on curiosity and not on superstition. He advocated the idea that The Book of Nature is written in mathematical characters, a view which is enough to make him a founding father of the Scientific Method.

The universe which Galileo observed at the end of his telescope totally dwarfed the one that people were seeing with their ordinary vision. It was easily ten times better. He tried to show that it was important to consider the value of new observable phenomena, as a way of escaping from weak truths and moving to much better ones.

The 17th century, superstitious, ecclesiastical, Roman logicians experienced such cognitive dissonance from Galileo's discoveries that, to their everlasting shame, they chose to abuse and bully an old man rather than to simply change their mind.

The cognitive dissonance endured so strongly that it was only in 1993 (after a 12-year Pontifical Commission!) that, in a belated burst of Christian charity, the Roman Inquisitors finally forgave Galileo for letting the sun out of the closet. Better late than never, I suppose.

So, I would like to promote, seriously, the cause of the canonization of Galileo Galilei. If the Vatican really wanted to square the ledger with Galileo, they could not only 'forgive' him but also add him to the roster of saints. Perhaps Santo Galileo could become the Patron Saint of Science.

Surely, the x10 'miracle' of his telescope (actually x20!) and the objective revelations it has given to all mankind surpasses the small subjective miracles that seem to satisfy the Vatican to qualify most contemporary candidates for canonization.

It may be that some of the material in this book gives you a certain amount of cognitive dissonance. It is difficult to design the ideal dosage of dissonance. What is fine for some readers and is just enough to help them to open up their mind will, on the other hand, be too strong for others and cause them to shut down.

For example, earlier drafts of this book were more provocative in tone and probably too much so. So, I sought the opinions of a fairly wide range of thinkers – different ages, different cultures, different professions, different backgrounds.

After receiving the generous and valuable feedback of hundreds of readers (especially that of my father who was the fairest man I ever met) I completely rewrote the material and tried to find a better balance between the information I have left in and the information I have left out. Thanks to them, it's a more balanced book, but the faults and mistakes you may find are still mine.

At the end of the day, dear brainuser, my own goal for this discussion has always been to generate enough cognitive dissonance to make it interesting reading but not so much as to close your mind.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Plato's Theory of Absolute Truth

Plato's theory was that there IS such a thing as 'absolute truth'. Plato's 'truth' idea (like all his ideas) was a product of his imagination.

He was the younger friend of Socrates whom he admired greatly and who was also his mentor. It was Socrates who invented the interrogatory style of argument involving strings of questions seeking either a YES or NO response. It's an old dinosaur known as the Socratic Method but it still survives in our legal system and the Westminster system of parliament.

Both Socrates and Plato became two of the greatest thinking hackers in Western history.

To me, the most fascinating of Plato's works is *Symposium*, because it's an insightful account of how it all began at a typical dinner-party back in Athens, around 400 BCE, with Plato, Socrates and a few friends.

***Symposium* is witty, entertaining and shows how their discussions and banter, laced with much wine and bawdy gossip, produced a small collection of thinking ploys, concepts, software and viruses that, amazingly, have dominated Western thinking right up to the 21st century.**

Most destructive of all these inventions has been the Plato Truth Virus.

In the Western world, Plato is recognized as the one who put thinking on the map.

Plato figured that the more one thought about matters and the more one tried to discover and

understand their true essence or form, the more insights one could experience.

But he also decided (and this is the killer) that thinking was NOT an open-ended process. Plato figured there must be a finite end to a thinker's relentless search for meaning, an ultimate destination to a thinker's efforts, so he called that destination 'truth'.

Uh-oh! Big mistake!!

Today, 2,500 years later, much of Western society still behaves as though there actually is such a thing as absolute truth. Somehow oblivious to real world consequences, many Western universities and colleges are full of discussions about 'truth', 'right', 'wrong', 'good', 'evil', 'honesty', 'justice' and so on.

This all spills out into society, so that Big Government, Big Religion, Big Business, Big Media,

Big Brother and other control groups invoke these 'absolute truths' as the basis for their policies and the justification for their actions – so often with horrific consequences.

The trouble was that once Plato had invented his truth concept, it existed. Subsequently, when other philosophers or theologians came along, Plato's invention infected their ideas like a virus – and so we name the virus after him, the Plato Truth Virus or PTV.

Gradually the activity of thinking came to be subverted by the insidious truth virus. Some thinkers inevitably claimed to have found … The Truth.

The claim of certainty.

PTV, the truth virus, began to infect the thinker's set of intellectual claims and so we see a number of philosophies and doctrines and movements that claimed to have discovered absolute truth and gave notice of filing their claims: Stop looking! … We have the truth! … We are right, you are wrong! … We are good, you are evil! … Believe in the truth or be damned! … The truth is on our side! … We know what's right! Do what we tell you, or else! … Crush the infidel! … Kill the unbeliever!

The problem for the observer is the number of conflicting claims of owning absolute truth and unique rightness. The seductiveness of PTV is also what makes it so destructive and deadly: everyone wants to be the one who has The Truth. Therefore, everyone infected with the virus claims to be uniquely right and that's where the carnage begins.

From time to time, teachers like Buddha, Jesus and Confucius have emerged in the different cultures of the world. Most people are relatively free of PTV and so many have benefited from their teachers' messages of goodwill.

However, there are those who seek power over others. Sadly, these great teachers are often upstaged by greedy PTV-infected franchisees who claim to have exclusive rights on their teacher's intellectual property.

Who can blame the original teachers for the sickness of their followers? So often, in the name of peace and goodwill, infected followers fight with a sick rage and burning hatred. The brain virus so distorts the original message that it would be unrecognizable to the original messenger.

People have become more interested in the 'truth status' of the message than the message itself.

Perhaps it is more important to be an 'effective follower' than to be a 'true believer'.

Here is small sample of some rude, impertinent and possibly blasphemous PTV-infected claims which have long since upstaged those claims made by the original teacher:

Christian Science:

… is unerring and Divine outside of Christian Science all is vague and hypothetical, the opposite of Truth.

Seventh-Day Adventists:

The General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists is the highest authority that God has upon earth.

Jehovah's Witnesses:

Alone are God's true people, and all others without exception are followers of the Devil. At Armageddon all of earth's inhabitants, except Jehovah's Witnesses, will be wiped out of existence.

Mormons:

There is no salvation outside the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints everybody, unless they repent and work righteousness, will be damned except Mormons.

Christadelphians:

None but Christadelphians can be saved.

Islam:

Mohammed is the messenger of God … the last, and final exponent of God's mind, the seal of the prophets.

The Divine Light Mission:

The Guru Marahaj Ji alone has the key to the knowledge of the source of God.

The Unification Church:

Only the Lord of the Second Advent, the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, will be powerful enough to complete the restoration of man to God.

Krishna Consciousness:

Direct love for the Lord Krishna, in the form of chanting, singing and dancing, is the best way to rid the soul of ignorance.

Church of Scientology:

It is only through the exercise of the principles of Dianetics that there is real hope for happiness in this lifetime and the eventual-freeing of the soul from death.

The Children of God:

No power in the world can stand against the power of David.

(This refers to David Berg, the sect's leader.)

Catholic Church:

No one can be saved without that faith which the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church holds, believes and teaches … the One True Church established on earth by Jesus Christ … to whom alone it belongs to judge the meaning and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.

All these extravagent and greedy claims would be rejected by most experienced adults, along with similar claims made by door-to-door salesmen, politicians and others. The problem is that they are often programmed into the brains of very young children before their minds are sufficiently immune to reject them.

It may be that the scale of this kind of cognitive abuse makes other forms of child abuse pale into insignificance by comparison of numbers.

In spite of these corporate claims and the harmful consequences they have caused to millions, most members of these groups become less infected with PTV as they grow older. They get habituated.

Most of the faithful are people of genuine peace who quietly go about their business. They try to live by their creeds without bothering others at all. The moderate silent majority are not the villains, so often they are the victims, too.

If there were ever such a thing as absolute truth, by its own definition, there could only be one absolute truth. So, which truth is the 'true' truth? As a philosophical piece of gamesmanship, this coveting of the label of absolute truth is not limited to

religious doctrines, but spills over into political, business, sociological, and even economic theories, although the latter have fallen on hard times lately.

At first, adding PTV seemed to make a set of intellectual claims or doctrines superior to those that were not absolute, but time has shown the opposite to be the case. We know now that once the thinking effort switches to defense and support (as it must, if a doctrine is frozen as absolute truth), further growth and creative development is discouraged. The truth begins to lose its credibility as it begins to lose its relevance and its effectiveness.

PTV inevitably serves to undermine the doctrine it was originally meant to reinforce. Two people can, of course, have two different points of view. There's nothing odd about that.

But, if each viewpoint is infected with PTV, if each believes his viewpoint is uniquely right, PTV can keep them fighting and bullying each other for some time. Replace two people with two families, two communities, two groups, two religions or two nations and this pernicious truth virus can be passed on to each successive generation and the fighting and persecution can continue for hundreds of years.

It may be that Plato's Truth Virus has done more damage to Western civilization than any human thinking device ever invented. It has been estimated that just last century alone, more than 136 million Westerners have been killed by PTV.

This does not include similar truth viruses that may infect non-Western societies.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Myths, Theories and Hypotheses

It does seems to be a genuine, legitimate and universal need of the human mind to create myths, stories, theories and hypotheses, to explain and make coherent an unexplainable world. For example:

When frightened by a thunderstorm some thinkers explained it as a burst of Zeus' anger. Others later said it's an electrostatic phenomenon.

An illness can be seen by some as a voodoo spell or by others as a viral infection.

In an attempt to perform their function of making sense out of chaos, myths and scientific theories work on the same principle.

The view that we humans build of our world is always a product of our imagination. Inevitably, some explanations are backed by power and other explanations are backed by evidence.

Your own view of any situation is a cognitive phenomenon. In a situation, your experience of the situation is an electro-chemical event which takes place in your brain.

The phrase 'your experience of the situation' is important because it points to the uniqueness of your understanding of the situation. Others in the situation will also have their own unique experience of it. Which experience is 'The Truth'?

For example, I love movies. I am a regular movie-goer. I find movies to be great value. I've been going twice a week for the last 30 years.

In movies, thousands of talented people spend thousands of hours and millions of dollars to create a product that I can enjoy for around $20 (and since I turned 65 for $15). Where else do you get such enormous leverage of value?

But when I tell you about *Searching For Sugarman* a recent movie I have seen, am I telling you about the movie itself, or, am I telling you about my experience of the movie?

When a movie critic writes about a movie, is she writing about the movie, or, is she writing about her understanding of the movie? Note the distinction.

There IS a distinction and it is a crucial one. PTV is a problem because it can block the host brain's ability to make this distinction.

The virus-impaired brain may be unable to distinguish between its parochial experience and

that of other brains. The PTV-infected brain thinks its experience is uniquely right.

A sick brain can cause people to become bores or bullies, I'm not sure which is worse. The boring brainuser is one whose behavior is wearying to others because he or she cannot stop their tedious, enthusiastic talk about their own interests and experience, not because others are interested but because PTV makes them assume others are interested.

Many companies train their salespeople to become bores who annoy their prospects and so prevent them from ever becoming customers.

It would be interesting to measure the profits lost to shareholders who have no idea what they are losing due to management's archaic, PTV-infected sales doctrines.

For example, one large, multi-level soap company has so bored the marketplace with its PTV-riddled training propaganda and Nuremburg-style sales rallies, that it's now too ashamed to mention its own name to new prospects. Its sales agents are so embarrassed they won't even admit what brand they sell. It probably comes as no surprise that less than 2% of their sales agents ever make a profit. Can you imagine a company achieving a state of affairs where they are actually frightened of their own name?

Well, this company so contaminated the marketplace in America with its spooky tricks, that it's #1 competitor sued it for damages FOUR TIMES and won each time.

PTV can wreck a business like this. It can cause brainusers to automatically assume that other brainusers are aligned to their unique interests when they are so unlikely to be. It can assume others want 'to share' when they do not. The same kind of tiresome, time-wasting and boring intrusions can come from social networking enthusiasts who 'share' their PTV-infected conspiracy theories because they are 'right' and you need to know!

PTV can cause a brainuser to need, want, or demand others to share their 'uniquely right' experience of a situation.

The infected brain can cause behavior that even employs pressure, coercion or force to frighten or bully other brainusers to toe the line. So much time, effort, peace and productivity has been wasted by nagging bores and tiresome bullies.

Yes, the human brain is an explanation-manufacturing mechanism but that's not the same thing as explaining. Do notice the difference. By creating explanations to fill in the gaps when needed, the brain helps to keeps us mentally stable. This will always be a useful property of the human brain.

Thinking, being a thinker, having a healthy curiosity, is a normal part of the functioning of a healthy human brain. What is not healthy or normal but is a very dangerous cognitive disease is the condition of the True Believer. In pop psychology terms, thinkers are OK but True Believers are NOT OK.

The symptom of the True Believer is the colloquial and very crippled viewpoint that says*: 'I have the truth' … 'My policy is the true policy' … 'My doctrine is good and your doctrine is evil'*, or perhaps,

'Wasn't I lucky to be born into that True Religion and now what are we going to do about you, unbeliever?' **It is difficult to imagine a more dangerous mental condition.**

Some believe that religious extremism is an even greater disease than political extremism. Commenting on the damage being done by religious extremists to the Australian Labor Party, Ben Chifley, a much-respected former Prime Minister of Australia, once said, 'The religious fanatic is far worse than the political fanatic'.

In the Preface of his book, 'The True Believers', (Methuen, 1986) Peter Bowler warns:

Here they come, the True Believers, wide-eyed and earnest; here they come, the devotees, the fanatics, the evangelists, the pilgrims, the worshippers, the contemplatives – clutching their hymns and invocations, observing their holy commandments and taboos, performing their sacrifices but, above all, believing.

Believing in God, or in several gods, or even a goddess or two. Believing in the soul, in demons, in eternal forgiveness, in eternal punishment, in life after death, in assorted varieties of heaven and hell, in the power of faith to heal, to move mountains …

They are and always have been, the idealists of humankind. Seeking something beyond the material, something intangible, something to explain the unexplainable, something to assuage their fear of the uncontrollable, something to compensate them for the unacceptable, something to offer them a kind of dignity and power in the midst of indignity and impotence.

Let us not mock the True Believer for their idealism. But watch out for them – they can be dangerous. Combative people, they are, by nature; crusaders rather than compromisers. Because they are right, others are wrong. The sinful must be punished, and who more sinful than the unbeliever?

The more intolerant and warlike among them seek to punish the unbeliever in this life, with holy wars and inquisitions; the more benevolent and tolerant leave it to their God to punish the unbeliever with eternal torments after death.

From time to time history has thrown up a sect that is gentle and moderate and peace loving, like the Quakers or the Baha'i; invariably these sects are singled out for the most ruthless persecution at the hands of the True Believers. When two religions are so similar as to be almost identical in every significant respect then take cover, because the conflict between them will be truly murderous. Buddhists and Presbyterians get along famously, but if you are selling insurance you would be ill-advised to set up shop in Palestine or Belfast.

The number of Europeans who died or were killed as a result of the Crusades is put at approximately four million.

The victims of the Inquisition, in Spain alone, included:

- **30,000 – burned at the stake**
- **17,000 – burned in effigy**
- **290,000 – punished by torture, prison or financial ruin.**

Of all these victims, most were women, 'heretics' and Jews. That's all very sad, of course, but those medieval days are gone now, aren't they? Today we live in the Age of Aquarius, the new millennium. Isn't all that truth virus stuff rather old hat and even slightly alarmist to us cool, laid-back, dudes? 'Fraid not!

When the world's headlines were filled with horror stories about a group in Japan their ideas were very much infected with the truth virus. Time magazine's cover story (April 3, 1995) was about a group that poisoned 3,000 Tokyo subway commuters with nerve gas. Time magazine reported:

In what could only have been a carefully coordinated, painstakingly planned atrocity, an apparently diluted form of nerve gas called sarin, a weapon of mass killing originally concocted by the Nazis, was placed simultaneously in five subway cars at morning rush hour, killing 10 victims and

sickening thousands more. … (Later at the suspect group's compound) policeman in protective suits with canaries emerged with ton after ton of chemicals – sodium cyanide, sodium fluoride, phosphorus trichloride, isopropyl alcohol, acetonitrile … enough to kill 4.2 million people.

Later, it was reported that police found containers of a biological toxin called botulinum, one of the world's deadliest. They found enough to wipe out the whole planet! Presumably this would be justifiable, all in the name of truth.

As a result of this atrocity 'the Japanese have lost their trust in society," says sociologist Kenichi Tominaga of Keio University. "It will never be the same."

And the name of this post-modern group of the 1990s? Aum Shinrikyo which means – Supreme Truth!

Since then we've had September 11 in New York and Bali and Norway and Sydney and Nice and London etc etc. We have the war crimes in Syria and almost daily examples of PTV-infected brains causing havoc and devastation in the name of 'The Truth'.

PTV is not just a medieval curiosity. Today, PTV is still very much alive and may even be living it up in your brain.

Just listen!

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Aristotle's Silly Syllogism

On reading these chapters about PTV, readers often ask: 'But, aren't these very chapters in your book presented as The Truth?'

I usually answer something like: 'No. These chapters are not presented as The Truth. They are presented as "a more likely truth" and that's not the same thing.'

The different views offered in this book may not be the ones pushed by many of the mainstream authorities but they are researched and presented in good faith.

The facts stated can easily be checked out with your own research and I encourage you to do so.

Libraries are free and Google makes it much easier for you to do this.

Where readers have found faults or where mistakes have been brought to our attention they have been rectified in subsequent editions, and there are, no doubt, many more flaws in this imperfect book.

Although these matters may be presented somewhat tactlessly, they have value in the provocation they give to those who are willing to explore them. Since we are exploring the subjects of 'truth' and 'thinking' we cannot avoid exploring the history of religion and science.

Discussing religion without deference sometimes seems tactless and is too much for some people but refreshing for others. The individual thinker must make up their own mind on this.

This book is certainly not The Truth to be believed in. That would be exactly the opposite of the purpose of this book. The value lies in the thinking you do about this discussion and the effort you take to form your own opinions based on the evidence you can find.

Always remember, if you don't do your own thinking, someone else will do it for you.

Whoever undertakes to set himself up as a judge of Truth is shipwrecked by the laughter of the Gods.

–Albert Einstein, Thinker and Scientist.

Anytime someone says something with great confidence, check to see whether or not it's true!

–Noam Chomsky, Cognitive Scientist and Activist.

Wide and independent reading – self-education is what matters.

–Patrick White, Australian Novelist, 1973 Nobel Prize for Literature.

Now let's continue our exploration of Plato's Truth Virus or *meme*. If Plato was the hacker who invented the truth virus, Aristotle was the first to package it into a powerful cognitive operating system or thinking software package.

Aristotle started off as a student in Plato's academy and remained there for twenty years until Plato, his mentor, died. By the time Plato died, Aristotle was thoroughly infected with his mentor's truth virus and did much to establish 'the search for certainty' as the basis of all intellectual endeavors.

Aristotle became a passionate and obsessive truth freak. Plato only went as far as saying that truth was what lay at the long end of a thinker's search, an ultimate destination. That was not enough for Aristotle. No sir! Aristotle said 'I want truth! I want it here! I want it now!'

Aristotle went on to insist that the ordinary fuzzy jumble of our daily reality was just not tidy enough. So, to bring order to the world he imposed a kind of truth template over everything. Aristotle's medium was language. He assumed that the certainty of words could give certainty to the ineffable flow of experience.

The untidy chaos of reality offended Aristotle's ordered, PTV-infected mind, so he decided to break everything up into pigeonholes and categories – kind of like mail sorting and labeling.

This goes here, that goes there, stick this label on this and that label on that! Let's just tidy everything up. Yessir. A place for everything and everything in its place was Aristotle's motto.

In his classifying fervor Aristotle made up pigeonholes and sorted our daily reality into them.

He tried to invent slots for everything. For example, he set about sorting 'government' into categories like: 'constitutional', 'tyrannical', 'monarchy', 'aristocracy', 'oligarchy', 'democracy'.

He then got busy breaking everything up into subjects like: politics, ethics, rhetoric (speech-making), metaphysics, physics, biology, meteorology.

Finally, he invented his very own thinking software called *logic*.

Aristotle's thinking software was already infected with the Plato Truth Virus from day one.

For logic, Aristotle invented his silly syllogism. I say it's silly because it lacks wisdom and sense.

The syllogism starts with the so-called 'truth' as its premise.

Then one simply matches up items that come along and out pops your conclusion.

Simple really … and very silly.

For example:

TRUTH: All swans are white.

ITEM: This is a swan.

LOGICAL EXTENSION: Therefore it is white.

Or,

TRUTH: Salespeople tell lies.

ITEM: Amy is a salesperson.

LOGICAL CONCLUSION: Therefore Amy is lying.

Or,

TRUTH: Our church is the right church.

ITEM: You are not a member.

LOGICAL CONCLUSION: Therefore you are wrong.

Or,

TRUTH: The earth is flat.

ITEM: Therefore it has an edge.

LOGICAL CONCLUSION: Therefore you will fall off the edge if you go too far

from the shore.

Or,

TRUTH: The President is the law.

ITEM: The President did something.

LOGICAL CONCLUSION: Therefore it is legal.

(Aristotle's Logic software caused Nixon to believe this was so.)

Or,

TRUTH: A boss's opinion is best.

ITEM: You are not a boss.

LOGICAL CONCLUSION: So when we want your opinion we'll give it to you.

For Aristotle, just thinking wasn't good enough. No, you have to think logically.

Logic is obsessed with hunting down contradictions. In logic, a thing cannot be in box A and box NOT A at the same time. No, it must be sorted and classified into the 'correct' box.

Although human perception is full of contradictions and paradoxes (is the glass half full or half empty?), this was just not good enough for our man Aristotle. Things must be cut up into pieces like a jig-saw and then sorted into their 'true' categories.

Life, according to Aristotle, is a matter of sorting things out into 'right' and 'wrong'. Judgment is the key activity. This is right. That's wrong. I'm right. You're wrong. This is black. That is white.

This is American. That's un-American. This is good. That is bad. This is the right answer. That is the wrong answer.

Greyness? Fuzziness? Uncertainty? Open-endedness? Contradiction? Paradox? Discernment? Well, we cannot have that sort of thing around here. You've got to sort things out! Obey the rules! Clean up your act! Get things right!

In Aristotle's *Lyceum*, everything was covered by rules, rules, rules. The living arrangements, the study courses, the timetables were all dominated by rules and regulations. Aristotle craved order.

He loved the order that his classifications brought to his ideas and thoughts.

He assumed that the same order that he found he could impose on words and language could also be imposed on the real world.

Many have made the same mistake.

Aristotle's cognitive operating system, logic, has dominated Western education for far too long. How come we still think this way 2500 years after he joined Socrates and Plato on Mount Olympus?

How come this ancient software has survived so long? Who kept it alive? Who spread it around? Who programmed it into your brain? We will discuss this in the next few chapters.

Having said all this, rather provocatively to make our point, let's now be fair.

Of course, Aristotle made a great contribution to thinking that was needed at the time. My aim is to point out how the use of logic has been subsequently distorted by people, institutions and societies.

What I am contriving to do in these chapters are a few things:

- **Being deliberately provocative.**
- **Balancing some of the obsession with 'logic' by attacking its 'mystique'.**
- **Referring to the less precise 'common usage' of logic not the 'academic precision' of logic as Aristotle himself set it out.**

Often when the average person says 'salesmen tell lies', they behave as though they really said 'ALL salesmen tell lies' and this is the kind of mindset that leads to some of the problems of logic.

One way to go beyond our obsession with logic is to introduce the subject of thinking into schools and colleges and universities.

Let's explore thinking, let's understand the history of thinking and let's design better tools to develop much better skills of thinking.

In 1979, it was the School of Thinking which introduced the idea of 'teaching thinking as a skill' into schools in the US and then helped develop the model for teaching thinking in Australia and other countries around the world.

By 1983, SOT thinking lessons had already reached over 70 million people worldwide and this was long before the internet. This all began with SOT's *Learn-to-Think Project* which I started with Edward de Bono in New York.

To facilitate this social enterprise, Edward and I co-authored a pioneering textbook, *The Learn-To-Think Coursebook and Instructors Manual* (Second

Edition). 1982. Capra New. Santa Barbara), in which Edward wrote the following:

What would I expect from a member of the School of Thinking? I would expect a trained person to possess a great deal of wisdom and common sense. This arises from an ability to see any situation in a broad perspective. Wisdom is quite different from the sort of cleverness that is taught in school. Cleverness may be alright for dealing with puzzles but wisdom is required for dealing with life.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Vatican Enterprise

In the last few chapters we looked at PTV – the Plato Truth Virus. We saw how the 'thinking' hackers of ancient Athens – Socrates, Plato and Aristotle – fooled around with 'thinking' software and how they developed and packaged the concept of 'absolute truth'.

In these next few chapters we'll explore how PTV was picked up and spread throughout the Western world, infecting millions of minds and killing millions of human beings, and how it's still flourishing 2500 years later.

In tracking the spread of a virus, we can try to find our way back to the identification of its Patient Zero.

Who was the first patient who really got the virus going? Who was the one to spread it around enough to let it take hold?

Well, when it came to the spreading of Aristotle's Logic Software (already infected with PTV) no one was more successful than a young Italian nobleman called Thomas Aquinas.

Born in 1225, into powerful nobility near Naples, Aquinas outraged his family when he decided to become a Dominican friar. When it comes to truth freaks, Thomas was one of the greatest ever. He was Doctor Truth himself!

Thomas discovered a new translation of Aristotle from the Greek and so he set out to synthesize Aristotelian ideas in such a way that it was useful for defending The Truth.

Of course, as far as The Truth was concerned, there was never any doubt for our Fra Thomas. No need to look around. No need to search. He already knew exactly where and exactly what The Truth was. There was no further search required for The Truth as far as Aquinas was concerned. Just a matter of defending it and preserving it from any attempt to change it. The Truth, proclaimed Thomas, was the teachings of the Church.

And whose church might that be, Thomas? The Muslims? The Buddhists? The Jews? Picture Thomas opening the envelope, 'And the winner is … The Roman Catholic Church'. That's it! Nothing else. Stop looking. Here it is. The lucky winner!

Well, now, the winning True Church also happens to be YOUR church, Thomas old chap. What a coincidence! What a stroke of luck!

As it happened, Thomas' Church was an information monopoly. All European universities were run by the Church with corporate head office in Rome. Rome literally owned all of knowledge and was busily exporting its corporate education system.

The powerful but flawed thinking software, *logic*, was the cognitive operating system they used, courtesy of Aristotle via Aquinas.

This educational enterprise amounted to programming brains with what the church taught – verbatim – and repeating it back again. Scholarship was reduced to mere defense of Vatican teachings, which were known collectively as – The Truth.

Only Microsoft's global export of Bill Gates' DOS has ever rivaled the Vatican's export of Thomas Aquinas' PTV.

I just asked SIRI on my iPhone how many personal computer users there are in the world. The answer was more than 2 billion. When they switch on their desktop or laptop computer the first thing many of them see is 'Windows'. This is an amazing accomplishment for Bill Gates and Microsoft, in less than 30 years.

This is only beaten by the fact that all 2 billion PC users are also necktop brainusers. And, most of the Western brainusers are using a Vatican-exported logic operating system to work their necktops computers, so they can work their PCs!

In the original Thomist Aristotelian neuroware, the logic operating system worked like this:

TRUTH: Vatican teaching is The Truth.

ITEM: Using Aristotle's logic to match things up, we are meant to ask:

Does ITEM match TRUTH?

LOGICAL CONCLUSION: If YES, then it is RIGHT and it is TRUTH.

If NO, then it is WRONG and it is HERESY.

Even people with the most superficial knowledge of history know what happened to heretics. I was recently in Amsterdam and paid a second visit to the notorious Inquisition's Torture Museum. This popular tourist spot features a collection of the 'truth machines', an extraordinary array of macabre machines, skullcrackers, racks, bastinados, tongs, garottes, thumb screws, and spikes.

These and other implements of torture were used by the Inquisitors to 'purify' the heretics.

One could only marvel uneasily at the cold-blooded ingenuity that went into the design of these instruments of truth.

The Inquisitors, invariably, were Fra Thomas' fellow Dominicans. They were quite willing to inflict unspeakable horrors on thousands upon thousands of fellow human beings just for disagreeing over minor academic issues about the nature of life and the universe and all in the name of Truth and Virtue. And, they kept creepily meticulous records of their violent punishments, torturings and murders.

Thomist Aristotelian doctrine could show up any contradictions. It could show if a point-of-view did not exactly match The Truth and so therefore they were heretics.

Cut out their tongues! Crank up the rack! Get me the branding iron! Off to the stake! It still sends shivers up my spine.

In the fourteenth century, the 'Angelic Doctor' was canonized for his great contribution to the defense of truth and Saint Thomas Aquinas became a kind of god in the church.

There is the famous painting by Zurbaran called 'The Apotheosis of St Thomas Aquinas' which shows Thomas, resplendent on a cloud in heaven, in those frightening Dominican Inquisitorial robes, with sundry popes and scholars at his feet. And below on earth, more popes and cardinals look up and pray to him in ecstatic admiration.

John XXII said that to deny Aquinas was tantamount to heresy.

Later, in 1879, Pope Leo XIII proclaimed that Thomist Aristotelian doctrine should be accepted as 'the official doctrine of the church'.

Since Aquinas imbedded Aristotle's logic into the Vatican's education system, it has become the main thinking software of Western civilization, wherever it has been exported. Since then, 'The Truth' has been carried to all parts of the world with missionary zeal. In fact, the Western education system may be medieval Europe's most successful export.

Australia is a good example. Although Australia is geographically in South East Asia, it has culturally been in Europe for the past 200 years.

At that time, along with rabbits, the Western education system was imported into Australia.

Since World War II, however, Australia has become less Eurocentric and more Euro-Asian. Australia is now one of the world's most successful multi-cultural societies.

Accordingly, 'unique rightness' has become a less useful cognitive asset to Australians than 'tolerance and plurality'.

Today, Aussie kids are less interested in defending a medieval European truth and more interested in designing new Aussie truths that are useful and relevant to life in the in the Third Millennium.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Are You a Sovereign Thinker?

Anyone who consciously and wantonly attacks known truth, who arms himself with falsehood in his speech, his writings, or his conduct in order to attract and win over less learned men and to shape the inexperienced and impressionable minds of the young to his own way of thinking, takes advantage of the inexperience and innocence of others and engages in an altogether despicable business.

– Saint Pope John XXIII (*Ad Petri Cathedram*)

I am aware that when even the brightest mind in our world has been trained up from childhood in a superstition of any kind, it will never be possible for that mind, in its maturity, to examine sincerely, dispassionately, and conscientiously any evidence or any circumstance which shall seem to cast a doubt upon the validity of that superstition.

– Mark Twain, American thinker and humorist.

When thinking about thinking, there are two contrasting approaches we can bear in mind: Authoritarian and Sovereign.

The Authoritarian approach is all about someone else doing your thinking for you. That's where THEY say: Do what you are told! Trust us. We know what is best for you. We are the chosen ones. We are right and you are wrong. You wouldn't understand. Do not question our authority. When we want your opinion we'll give it to you. And so on.

The Sovereign approach is all about you doing your own thinking for yourself. That's where YOU say: Why? Why should I do as you say? Where do you get your authority? Why is this so? Why? What have you not told me? What bits have you left out? What proof do you have to offer?

I'll think about your proposition and I'll let you know what I have decided. I reject your claim to authority over my mind. I abhor your attempt to bully me. I assert my individual sovereignty as a thinker. And so on.

It is important to emphasize here that it is the right of a sovereign thinker to think what they like and to believe what they wish, as long as they do not prevent other sovereign thinkers from doing the same for themselves.

A thinker respects the right of individuals to believe in any of the wide variety of human belief systems.

This religio-diversity is a testimony to the richness and imagination of human thinking.

In Australia, for example, there are 270 distinct religious groups.

Many people say they derive benefits from believing in devils, UFOs, angels, gods and goddesses, supreme beings, trinities, earthly incarnations or heavenly reincarnations, stars, gurus, fortune-tellers, dreams, scientific discoveries, miracles, snake-handling and so on.

One respects these believers in the way Voltaire found he could respect others without having to agree with them. What a thinker does not respect but fears, is PTV.

For example, one respects the sovereign right of a Christian to believe in Jesus or a Muslim to believe in Allah or an Atheist to believe in nothing.

One does not respect an authoritarian Christian or Muslim or Atheist, infected with PTV, who feels that their belief is 'The Truth' and others should be made to 'toe the line or else'!

A truth may be right enough for the person who uses it but not right enough to force another person to use it.

In the past few chapters we've been looking at some of the consequences of the authoritarian approach to thinking, proceeding from the ideas of Plato, Aristotle and Aquinas. But the richness of human thinking has produced other alternatives and now we can examine the ideas of some who have given their support to the sovereign approach to thinking.

There are many, of course, but let's meet one of my personal heroes.

This man, like Thomas Aquinas, was also a monk. He was only a peasant German monk yet he defied the greatest authoritarian power in history.

***'It is not safe to act against your own conscience'*.**

So said Martin Luther and with those words began the world's biggest movement away from authoritarianism towards individual sovereignty of thinking.

Luther's rebellion against the authority of the Pope provided the trigger that set off a chain of events which went on long after he died. His challenge to authoritarianism led on to the splitting of the Church, the destruction of the Pope's temporal power, the bursting of the Church's monopoly on The Truth and a greater freedom of people to question things without automatically being treated as heretics.

Those of us who cherish personal freedom owe a lot to Luther.

What Kind of Man Would Defy a Pope?

Martin Luther was born in 1483, into a peasant mining family in Germany. At fourteen he showed sufficient promise to be prepared for university. By then his father had risen to be manager of a group of smelting works and could afford for his son Martin to read Law.

So Martin went to Germany's top University of Erfurt and graduated in Law, second in his class. Everyone knew that he had a promising law career ahead of him. But no, Martin changed his mind and one day he suddenly decided to join an Augustinian monastery and changed his direction from Law to Theology.

He began to absorb the predestination ideas of Saint Augustine, that men are sinners (Original Sin) and are therefore predestined to whatever God has in store for them. Such a point-of-view reduces the

role the Church plays in mediating a person's salvation.

At that time, Rome claimed that it, and it alone, had the only ticket to salvation. If you wanted to get to Heaven then you bought your ticket from its agents on the only flights scheduled to get there. 'You fly with us. You buy our ticket or you don't go to Heaven at all! That's it. Take it or leave it. You're in or you're out.'

The Pope, the Roman Curia and bishops feathered their nests (amassing huge fortunes) by selling to the True Believers tickets to Heaven in the form of indulgences. This is how they pulled it off.

In all their Holy Authority, the popes and clergy would draw up long lists of activities relating to everyday human behavior and position them as 'sins'.

So, every day when you committed your 'sins', you attracted debit points that prevented you getting into Heaven.

Then, cleverly, Rome drew up a catalogue of indulgences. Indulgences were credit points you could collect to wipe out the debit points you had in your account from your daily 'sins'. And, if you collected enough credit points, well, the Church could get you into Heaven.

Recently, on a holiday in Bali, I came across this extract which has a similar view on indulgences, in a very amusing book by Anthony Bourdain called 'Kitchen Confidential'. He writes:

The crusaders of yore, it is said, used to stop off at the local church or monastery before heading off to war; where they were allowed to purchase indulgences. This was sort of like a secured pre-paid credit card from heaven, I imagine, and negotiations probably went something like this …

“Bless me, father, for I am about to sin. I plan on raping, pillaging and disembowelling my way across Southern Europe and North Africa, taking the Lord’s name in vain, committing sodomy with all and sundry, looting the holy places of Islam, killing women and children and animals and leaving them in smoking heaps … as well, of course, as getting up to the usual soldierly hijinks of casual eye-gougings, dismemberment, bear-baiting and arson. Given this sinful agenda, padre, how much is this gonna cost me?” ‘

“That’ll be a new roof for the vestry, my son, perhaps a few carpets from down there. I understand they make lovely carpet where you’ll be goin’ … and shall we say fifteen per cent off the top, as a tithe?”

“Deal.”

“Go in peace, my son.”

This was a brilliant scheme! Through indulgences, Rome had invented a kind of Holy Currency of its own.

There were vouchers for Heaven Points, which members needed to collect to pass through the Pearly Turnstile into the 'Members' Only' enclosure in Paradise. Just like winning FlyBuy points to get a weekend at Crown Casino. This became the world's first loyalty marketing or frequent flyer program and has subsequently built The Vatican into the most powerful, multi-national, private enterprise in human history.

As a member, how did you collect the credit points? Why, you bought them, of course. The Handbook of Indulgences listed matching Heaven Points for even the wickedest crime. Murder had its price-tag and could be absolved for 20 crowns. An assassination could be absolved for 300 livres.

But mostly, it's just the humdrum everyday human activities like gossip, smoking, masturbation or

telling lies which are proscribed as sins and still today attract ongoing debit points.

The 'Indulgence Scheme' with its Handbook of Indulgences meant that members had to make regular purchases of Heaven Points. These credit points (known as Sanctifying Grace) were the currency you needed to save to buy your permanent condo in Paradise just like you need to save your Aussie dollars if you want to buy a condo in Surfer's Paradise.

'Step right up folks. Pay your money. Collect your points. Step right up sinners! Get your Heaven Points here. How many do you want? How much money have you got? Don't push, there's plenty for everyone'. As a profit-maker product, Amway's 'special soap powder' trails a very long way behind the 'sanctifying grace' product of Vatican Inc.

Brother Martin was already dissatisfied with the Church's claim to being God's exclusive 'travel agent' and so on his visit to Rome he was deeply depressed and revolted upon seeing the spoils of the indulgence scheme that had been collected from the faithful, and displayed in the decadence and opulence of the court of Pope Leo X.

Today we are used to modern popes who are required to live in a much more tolerant and multi-cultural world.

A lot has changed since a fourteenth century John XXII said that to deny Aquinas was tantamount to heresy. Could you ever imagine a twentieth century John XXIII saying such a thing?

The papacy is no doubt an extremely difficult job, yet papal prestige is now at an all-time high.

Most modern popes appear to have been men of goodwill who seem to have tried very hard to balance the enormous burden of their office with the exigencies of a free society.

That they have done so with such popular success is an extraordinary example of modern leadership. For example:

- **John XXIII, said 'I am not infallible' and called Vatican II to prove it.**
- **Paul VI showed great compassion to clergy opposing celibacy, releasing them from their vows.**
- **John Paul I wanted to clean up the Vatican bank for which some, like investigative journalist, David Yallop, say he was murdered.**
- **John Paul II was a popular leader. Like Ronald Reagan he was an actor and gifted media performer and was tireless in his global travels. His support of**

Solidarity was instrumental in helping his native Poland evolve towards democracy.

- **Benedict XVI is a gentle and intelligent man and a thinker whose teaching of his first encyclical is *Deus Caritas Est* (God Is Love). In his first official teaching as Pope, Benedict says: *God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. In a world where the name of God is sometimes associated with vengeance, or even a duty of hatred and violence, this message is both timely and significant. For this reason, I wish in my first Encyclical to speak of the love which God lavishes upon us and which we in turn must share with others.***
- **In 2016 Pope Francis said: *Not everything is black over white, or white over black. No! The shades of grey prevail in life.* Pope Francis is changing things in the Vatican. For nearly 800 years, since Thomas**

Aquinas, the Vatican has taught judgment. However, if Pope Francis has his say, the Vatican will now teach discernment. Wow! This is a very, very BIG transformational change in global policy. In my view, this disruption is enough to make him the greatest lateral thinker in the world today. It's also easily enough for him to deserve the Nobel Peace Prize! If he does nothing else during his pontificate but switch the Vatican from judgment to discernment then this will be enough to make him one of the greatest popes of all the 266 who ever lived!

Pope Benedict said "God is love". Although I'm an agnostic if ever a religion were to authentically and inclusively claim that 'God = love and love = God', then I could easily support such an enlightened movement.

It would be difficult to deny the central value of love and compassion for the welfare of human society. However, so often it is the righteous hatred of the faithful with their cruel and wicked abuse of the infidel, the gay, the unwed mother, the orphan child, the refugee, the woman priest and all the others they persecute that so offends many non-religious humanists. Where is the love?

While it is true that today's popes are popular superstars who draw huge crowds wherever they go this was not always so. In the past, why did so many men, on securing the papacy, become corrupt?

Many have written about the extremes of papal corruption throughout history. Lord Acton wrote on the papacy that 'power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely' and it may explain the long

history of the papacy's *libido dominandi*, its insatiable lust for power.

Luther's pope was one of the most infamous. He was the youngest cardinal ever. Given a Red Hat for his thirteenth birthday, he became Pope when he was 38. It is recorded that as the triple tiara hit his head, Pope Leo X turned to his illegitimate cousin, Giulio de' Medici, and exclaimed, 'God has given us the Papacy, let us now enjoy it!'. And he did! Leo took papal greed to new heights that trivialize the worst excesses of the 1980s. Instead of giving everything up for Christ, Leo grabbed everything he could, in Christ's name.

History records the following:

- **Leo had 683 courtiers on his payroll, an orchestra, a theatre and a menagerie of wild animals including a White Elephant that would bow to Leo three times.**

- **Leo gave Bacchanalian banquets of 65 courses featuring such delicacies as peacock' tongues, nightingales flying out of pies and naked boys jumping out of puddings.**
- **Defying Canon Law, Leo planned hunting trips for weeks on end.**
- **His Roman brothels, with 7,000 registered prostitutes in a population of 50,000, still didn't bring in enough income for Pope Leo.**
- **He was a gambler and big spender borrowing vast sums from bankers at 40% interest.**
- **Although simony – the buying and selling of sacred things – was a crime, Leo invented 2,150 papal offices and positions and auctioned them off. Cardinal's Red Hats went for around 30,000 ducats. And so on.**

In recent years we have seen some rogue property developers in Australia and how they have created scams to rip off people and take their savings. But this was nothing compared to the avarice of Pope Leo. It was Leo's ultimate act of obscene greed and blasphemy that finally pushed our hero Luther into action.

In 1517 Pope Leo X, in cahoots with Prince Albert Hohenzollern, pulled a major scam on the long-suffering German people.

Leo offered to sell Albert the See of Mainz and the Primacy of Germany for 30,000 ducats. But, since Albert didn't have the money, they conspired to raise the cash by selling indulgences to the German people, saying the money was going into a property development and building fund for St Peter's in Rome.

Luther fought back with a new weapon. Luck was on Luther's side. Gutenberg had only recently invented the printing press and Luther not only officially submitted his arguments in Latin to ecclesiastical authorities but also wrote them in his native German tongue and published his pamphlets for general distribution to the German people.

This general distribution was a major new development, the importance of which cannot be over emphasized.

In one of his pamphlets he described Leo's papacy as: ***… more corrupt than any Babylon or Sodom ever was … It is a distressing and terrible thing to see the Head of Christendom, who boasts of being the Vicar of Christ and successor to St Peter, living in a worldly pomp that no King or Emperor can equal; so that in him who calls himself most holy and most spiritual there is more worldliness than in the world itself.***

Distribution of Luther's pamphlets to the general public broke the Church's monopoly on information and his arguments directly challenged the Pope's authority.

The people and the local German princes had enough!

They stood behind Luther and protected him from the wrath of Pope Leo who, of course, excommunicated him. When Luther received his copy of the Pope's Bull of Excommunication, he simply burnt it in defiance. Luther said, 'The die is cast. I despise the fury and favor of Rome. I will have no reconciliation with the Pope for all eternity'.

Like most of us, Martin Luther was himself deeply flawed. Sadly, like many Christians of his day he was ambiguous towards Islam and a rabid anti-Semite and did a great deal of harm to his Jewish brethren. Professor Lyndal Roper, Regius Professor of Early Modern History at Oxford, says, 'Martin was a coarse, aggressive man who said: *"Women have narrow shoulders and broad hips to sit upon, so they ought to stay home, keep house and raise children" and he was in many ways repellant'.*

But even with his flaws, I still feel his courageous words above are enough to make Martin Luther one of the greatest sovereign thinkers in history and his example of defiance, but not his intolerance, can be emulated.

Using the new technology of the printing press to spread his ideas, Luther became the first thinker ever to bring his argument to the general public.

His example, soon followed by others like Calvin, began the unraveling of the authority of Rome that led to the Reformation.

2017 is the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation and has given historians a chance to further study and reappraise Luther, a complex and polarizing individual.

Even Pope Francis has said, *"I am particularly happy to know that this commemoration has offered scholars from various institutions an occasion to study those events together. Serious research into the figure of Luther and his critique of the Church of his time and the papacy certainly contributes to overcoming the atmosphere of mutual distrust and rivalry that for all too long marked relations between Catholics and Protestants".*

If Gutenberg was the inventor of the printing press, perhaps Martin Luther can be considered the inventor of the media, free speech and the right for individuals to think for themselves.

To my mind, there are many modern day 'Martin Luthers' who are willing to defy the Pope. Yes, there are the highly publicized Madonna's and Sinead's of

the world who may simply be more interested in publicity than defiance.

But there are many also, like Brother Martin, in the clergy of the church.

There are the many nuns who stand up to authoritarianism and the theologians and priests like the Australian priest, Father Paul Collins, who has defied the Pope in his exposé on modern day *Papal Power*, which is the name of his book, wherein he says:

Just as the model of the absolute monarch or dictator places the ruler not only above the state and its laws but above society itself, so the papalist interpretations of primacy and infallibility [make] the Pope into some type of solo guru and intermediary between God and the church.

For these and other words, Father Collins has already suffered at the hands of the Vatican's authoritarian Inquisitors and his Australian Constitutional rights may have even been illegally contravened.

Perhaps the Internet is the next biggest leap for sovereign thinkers, since the printing press.

Perhaps the www is becoming the new medium that will provide a fresh hope for individuals who wish to think for themselves and who, like Brother Martin, wish to defy the authoritarianism that still exists in many of today's institutions, in Big Government, Big Religion, Big Media and Big Business.

I am often told by people in this kind of discussion that, with all its flaws and faults, we still need the Church 'otherwise we'd all be selfish savages and no-one would ever think of his fellow man'.

Yes, of course, much good is done by people in the Church and *Caritas*, in my view, is deserving of a Nobel Peace Prize. These humanist efforts are a great and worthy contribution to society. However, this view that we must have religion to be civilized ignores the fact that cooperation was one of nature's most effective survival strategies, and evolved genetically many times in plants and animals millions of years before the Church was invented.

It's an interesting footnote that Bill Gates and his wife Melinda are raising US$60 billion to help the sick and the poor worldwide. The Gates Foundation is the greatest philanthropic organisation in all of human history.

Much of this money was generated as a result of the growth of the internet.

Because people who buy PCs are not poor, it means that this gift from the Gates' comes from 'the haves' and is being passed on to 'the have nots'. Contrast this with the Vatican which has collected much of its vast wealth from the 'have nots' – selling 'salvation' to the poor.

I was invited to help with the strategy for designing a global enterprise that will provide contraception products and services to address the unmet needs of over 200 million women in Africa, China and other countries who cannot access the family planning services they want.

This proposal is currently being considered by Melinda Gates (herself a Catholic who is against abortion but in favor of contraception) who has decided personally to make family planning her signature issue.

In her TED talk Melinda Gates says, *"My goal is to get this back on the global agenda, "This is about empowering women to be educated and to make a choice that they want to make".*

It's a curious quirk of fact that the Gates family has now given more money to the sick and the poor of the world than all of the 265 popes of history put together!

They are challenging many others to do the same and hope to generate ten times that – 600 billion dollars!

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Uncertainty of Science

If we all worked on the assumption that what is accepted as true is really true, there would be little hope of advance.

– Orville Wright, Pioneer of Human Flight.

I formerly thought that when a tendency to produce the two sexes in equal numbers was advantageous to the species, it would follow from natural selection, but I now see the whole problem is so intricate that it is safer to leave its solution to the future.

–Charles Darwin, Biologist and Author, The Origin of Species.

‘THE TRUTH’ does not exist in science.

There ARE truths in science but there is no such thing as THE one ABSOLUTE truth.

Many people who are still pre-Enlightenment thinkers are unaware of this fact. They assume that science, like religion, claims ownership of The Truth. It does not. It never has. It never will.

In science, there are only truths that are more likely than other truths.

You cannot prove anything in science (in the absolute sense) because science is based on evidence. And, as time passes, there is always more and more evidence.

In science, at any particular time, the balance of evidence supports one point-of-view or ‘truth’ as being more likely than any other ‘truth’.

But, as history has shown, new generations of scientists soon find new evidence, have new ideas and design new paradigms – new ways of looking at the world.

This phenomenon is so well understood and respected by scientists that, as Darwin said in the quote above, they can rely on it happening. Three generations later, Sir Ronald Fisher, the geneticist and father of modern statistics, solved the problem that Darwin, understanding the unfolding Scientific Method, had deliberately procrastinated.

So, science then updates itself by displacing the previous truth with the new 'more likely' truth. This is the scientific process – the search for more likely truths – that continues and continues like a spiral, into the future.

This uncertainty of science accounts for its steady rate of progress. Science is all about thinking outside the box. It is the relentless search for better and better truths (lateral) and compares differently with the judgmental defense of the truths we already have inside the box (logical).

As mentioned earlier, the prevailing truth before Galileo was Aristotle's view that the earth was the center of the universe. With the telescope that he invented, Galileo was able to produce evidence that the earth was not the center but was in orbit around the sun. So, science updates itself and replaces Aristotle's truth with Galileo's new heliocentric 'sun truth'.

Another more recent example is that of cosmologist George Smoot.

He and his COBE satellite team received worldwide recognition for providing evidence of the 'wrinkles in time' that now prove the big bang theory to be a fact. So science is now updating itself.

Competing truths are now giving way to this new 'more likely truth' because of the weight of evidence provided by the COBE satellite. We now see scientists like David Spergal, the proponent of a competing theory (the textures version of topological defect theory), declaring after the release of the COBE evidence 'We're dead'. (It's possible his comment was a little more graphic.)

Even noted physicist Stephen Hawking was willing to admit the COBE discovery *'was the most important of the century, perhaps of all time'*.

That today's entire universe has grown out of a particle, smaller than a proton, as the result of a big bang 15 billion years ago, is no longer a theory.

It's a relatively new scientific truth. Watch this space! It may soon be updated.

It has often been said that Einstein's accomplishment (the Theory of Relativity) is the greatest feat of thinking ever performed by a human brain.

It's also said that 'two heads are better than one'. If that is so, then perhaps the greatest feat of thinking ever performed by any two human brains was in 1953, when two young scientists, Francis Crick of England and James Watson of America, got together and cracked the code of codes for which they jointly received the Nobel Prize.

During the war, after a German bomb blew up his physics laboratory, a young physicist joined the Royal Navy.

After the war, Francis Crick changed to biology. He was around 30.

Crick was an atheist. He wanted to expose the 'mysteries' of the illusion of vitalism. He later said:

My own motives I never had any doubt about; I was very clear in my mind. I chose what we now call molecular biology, though the term wasn't common then, certainly I didn't know it – but I would have said the borderline between the living and the non living. That was the phrase I had in my mind.

Horace Freeland Judson's excellent comprehensive history, *The Eighth Day of Creation* (Penguin, London. 1979), quotes Crick in his application for his research grant as having written:

The particular field which excites my interest is the division between the living and the nonliving, as typified by, say, proteins, viruses, bacteria, and the structure of chromosomes. The eventual goal, which is somewhat remote, is the description of these activities in terms of their structure ie the spatial distribution of their constituent atoms, in so far as this may prove possible. This might be called the chemical physics of biology.

He won his grant for research at Cambridge University's famous Cavendish Laboratory.

In 1944, a short book called *What is Life?* was published by the famous physicist, Erwin Schrodinger. In it, Schrodinger, a founder of quantum mechanics, speculated on the physical basis of the gene, its atomic and molecular structure.

As a result of reading this book, James Watson once wrote, *'I became polarized towards finding out the secret of the gene'.*

James Watson was a young Indiana University biology postgraduate. He was also a member of a group of American research scientists who gathered each summer at Cold Spring Harbor on Long Island, an hour out of New York. As his work progressed, Watson became convinced that to find the structure of the gene he had to learn X-ray diffraction techniques. So, he sailed to England to study there.

In October 1951, Crick and Watson met at Cambridge. Crick, 35, was just a research student and Watson, 23, just a visitor. They instantly hit it off and became intellectual mountain-climbers, each helping the other up and up.

They could be seen everywhere in animated conversation, having tea, in hallways, in laboratories, in the local pub – so eventually they were given a room to work in together, so as not to disturb the rest of the researchers.

Says Crick, *'We must have got the reputation by that time of rather talking together a lot'*.

Watson and Crick launched two separate attacks, in parallel, on the discovery of the structure of DNA. The first ended in disaster. The second was a success beyond anything they had hoped for. The project required an enormous amount of intellectual effort and research, involving many critical contributions by a number of other researchers including Rosalind Franklin, another participant in the discovery.

Finally, Crick and Watson cracked the genetic code.

They published their ideas in the first of three articles in Nature, on 25 April 1953. It was a three-page article entitled *Molecular Structure of Nucleic Acids*.

The article included the first published diagram of the molecular structure of their, now-famous double helix, (which looks a bit like a ladder you might find in Escher's closet).

The universal system of all life on this planet is based on a fundamental code and that code was broken by Francis Crick and James Watson in 1953. Since these men unraveled the molecular structure of the gene, our world has undergone a continuing and exploding series of revolutionary insights.

These scientific developments show no sign of slowing down and nothing can ever be the same.

Prior to 1953, one could still, credibly, hold on to the belief that life itself was ultimately a mysterious thing. One could still, as a thinker, speculate about the origins and 'mysteries' of life.

To do so today, it may be argued, is an admission of ignorance, laziness or both.

We now know that genes are digital. They are long strings of pure digital information. Like CDs and computers, the code of life – all life – is mighty digital in its internal structure. Whereas the binary code of computers has two symbols, in life, the genetic code is quaternary with four symbols. Otherwise they're digitally the same.

What, then, is the essential difference between the machine code of a computer and that of your genes?

The answer is: none!

Building on Crick and Watson, the famous Oxford Darwinist, Richard Dawkins, has explained that *'life results from the non-random survival of randomly varying replicators'*.

And these replicators, these genes, are digital. Our genetic code is so digital to the core that you could encode, with word-for-word accuracy, the whole of the Bible in those parts of the human genome that are at present filled with junk DNA. In his book, *River Out of Eden*, Dawkins illustrates the strong digital nature of genes with characteristic clarity and wit:

The following science-fiction plot is feasible, given a technology that differs from today's only in being a little speeded up. Professor Jim Crickson has been kidnapped by an evil foreign power and forced to work in its biological-warfare labs. To save civilisation it is vitally important that he should communicate some top-secret information to the outside world, but all normal channels of communication are denied him. Except one.

The DNA code consists of sixty-four triplet "codons," enough for a complete upper- and lower-case English alphabet plus ten numerals, a space character and a full stop or period.

Professor Crickson takes a virulent influenza virus off the laboratory shelf and engineers into its genome the complete text of his message to the outside world, in perfectly formed English sentences.

He repeats his message over and over again in the engineered genome, adding an easily recognisable "flag" sequence–say, the first ten prime numbers. He then infects himself with the virus and sneezes in a room full of people.

A wave of flu sweeps the world, and medical labs in distant lands set to work to sequence its genome in an attempt to design a vaccine. It soon becomes apparent that there is a strange repeated pattern in the genome.

Alerted by the prime numbers – which cannot have arisen spontaneously – somebody tumbles to the idea of employing code-breaking techniques.

From there it would be short work to read the full English text of Professor Crickson's message, sneezed around the world.

In June 2000, at a White House ceremony, President Clinton proclaimed, *'Today we have learned the language in which God created life'*, as he declared the multi-billion international race to map our genetic make-up to have been won.

The entire map of the human genome shows a string of 3 billion letters – 750 megabytes of digitized information – that would fit on a single CD.

Decoding the human genome – the text of life – is another great consequence of Crick and Watson's work. It has been compared with the invention of the wheel and landing on the moon.

So, if life is digital and knowable, the 'mystery of mysteries' has evaporated. What effect does that have on us as sovereign thinkers? In what way has the feat of Watson and Crick helped to free us from authoritarianism?

In what way has the work of these two scientists added a quantum leap to our freedom as sovereign thinkers?

One of the themes of this book is the connection between knowledge and power.

Knowledge is power and thinking is the source of knowledge. Thinking is also the source of power. Like Luther's use of the media, the genetic revelation of Crick and Watson is another huge victory for knowledge over authority.

A thinker no longer needs a 'priest of the knowledge' with special mystical powers to explain 'the meaning of life'. It is now readily explicable and easily understandable by the individual, without any need for an intermediary who retains special 'supernatural powers' for himself. To the sovereign thinker, this is a huge dividend of personal freedom.

No powerbase likes to surrender its power. It would be naive to think so. However, the old supernatural powerbases, still operating in today's world, have lost most of their temporal power.

What little remains is rapidly disintegrating at an astonishing rate of acceleration.

It some ways, it is ironic how the uncertain truths of science have so overtaken the certainty of The Truth. Even the highest claims of occult certainty seem thin and puerile compared to the demonstrable achievements of science. Perhaps the ultimate claim of occult certainty was in 1950. Around the same time that Crick and Watson were heading for Cambridge, a mystical methodology was producing a fresh discovery in Rome.

There has only been one infallible claim ever made by a pope since Pius IX proclaimed the doctrine of papal infallibility in 1870. An Italian priest, Eugenio Pacelli, as Pius XII, suddenly, in 1950, asserted his doctrine of *The Assumption*.

Speaking *ex cathedra* and claiming powers of infallibility, he exclaimed that Mary was physically assumed into Heaven, whatever that means. He professed that not only was Mary's physical body actually taken into Heaven but also that this claim was the supreme statement of certainty that only a Supreme Pontiff could make.

He even added that his recondite discovery was so certain a 'fact' that if any Catholics ever wished to automatically excommunicate themselves from the church, they only had to willfully doubt his declaration and they were out. *Finito*.

In his anathema, Pacelli said: *'If anyone, which God forbid, should dare willfully to deny or call in doubt that which We have defined, let him know that he has fallen away completely from the divine and Catholic faith'.*

This means Pius XII has provided any defiant or dissatisfied Catholic with an instant unsubscribe option of auto-excommunication. Anyone who wishes to do so can now simply unsubscribe from the Catholic Church by saying, *"I don't believe in The Assumption of Mary into Heaven"*. Unsubscribe. Leaving aside the impertinence of his assertion and the total lack of any evidence to support it, Pius XII's aeronautical invention is relatively tame compared with those of scientists in the field. By contrast, for example, a fallible, uncertain Swiss mathematician, Daniel Bernoulli, discovered the principle of the

aerofoil that today enables a pope to fly around the world in a 747, faster than a bullet, along with the entire College of Cardinals! Throw in a movie, a reasonable meal and some French champagne and it beats riding around on a cloud any day.

Also, there are no threats of excommunication involved in international air travel, just the occasional loss of baggage.

More and more brainusers are turning to science for answers to questions that were once the exclusive domain of the supernatural powerbases. In Australia, the latest Government census has confirmed this accelerating rejection of religions, sects and cults. Having left the Mystical Millennium we see the superficial, childish mythologies of the truth-merchants and medieval magicians are being left behind.

The information-rich revelations of science are empowering more thinkers than ever before to choose sovereignty over authority.

1953 is important because it was the definitive end of the Mystical Millennium. It was the last of the big 'mysteries' to be explained.

Though there may always be many interesting questions to be asked and answered, after Crick and Watson, no thinker need ever delegate her or his authority to a supernatural magician, ever again. If she or he CHOOSES to do so for some other reason, that is their right and privilege.

Francis Crick and James Watson are two of history's greatest intellectual superstars. Never have two thinkers explained so much.

Their discovery of the digital gene has cleared away many veils of mystery.

When is it comes to lateral thinking there were many other scientists, like Rosalind Franklin, who worked with Crick and Watson and a lot more work will be done on their ideas in the future.

But, as a contribution to the freedom of individual thinkers, Crick and Watson's achievement dwarfs those of the logical 'truth hackers' like Aristotle and Aquinas, and provides a major blow to PTV.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Effects of PTV

So far we have looked at the Plato Truth Virus, PTV, how it arose and how it spread via the medieval church into the Western education system.

We saw how this truth-driven education system with its emphasis on 'the search for certainty' was exported to Australia and around the world, and, how your own brain may have become infected. If this is so, how does PTV work to inhibit your abilities as a sovereign thinker.

Well, as a cognitive disease, PTV in your brain can produce a number of deleterious effects. Let's look at just four manifestations of PTV:

- **Brain Vain (opinion pride and conceit)**
- **Righteous and Sightless (consequence blindness)**
- **Space Glutton (output mania)**
- **Lazy Critic (mistake-phobia).**

Brain Vain. A brain vain thinker is one who is suffering from opinion pride. This PTV-infected brainuser is unable to see a better way of looking at things. Because the brain vain thinker is so proud of her or his own opinion, they find it difficult to do any other kind of thinking but to defend it. The more intelligent the brain vain thinker, the more they may suffer from this kind of cognitive conceit. Very bright thinkers who are PTV-infected may be only using their brainpower to defend their opinion. They are unable to escape from their viewpoint to look for a much better one.

Righteous and Sightless. The righteous brain is blind to consequences. PTV may have so incapacitated a True Believer that he is unable to see the results of his actions. In the belief that they are 'morally right', any action is justified by the Righteous and Sightless, regardless of what follows. This is a very dangerous condition and so often fatal. Millions have rushed headlong into death because 'God is on our side'. Millions have been killed because they are 'infidels', 'Jews', 'Catholics' or 'Protestants'. 'I-am-right-and-you-are-wrong' is the hallmark of the Righteous and Sightless condition. In 1994, John Paul II urged all Roman Catholic Cardinals to reflect on this aspect of the Church's history. He wrote to them asking them to seize the unique beginning of the new millennium to recognize the 'dark side of its history'.

He asked: *'How can one remain silent about the many forms of violence perpetrated in the name of the faith – wars of religion, tribunals of the Inquisition and other forms of violations of the rights of persons'.*

Space Glutton. In a meeting, the space glutton always takes up considerably more than his or her fair share of airtime. Space gluttons may suffer from output mania, the inability to shut-up. Gathering input by listening to the opinions of others is an important cognitive skill which is crippled in the space glutton. PTV may allow the thinker to wreak such enthusiasm for his or her own ideas that he or she is quite unable to listen to others. In business, much creativity and productivity is lost in meetings due to those suffering from this condition.

This condition is disastrous for those in sales, management or leadership roles.

Lazy Critic. Lazy critics suffer from mistake-phobia, the morbid fear of ever making a mistake. The PTV-infected brain has an aversion to ever being wrong. It comes from our medieval habit of looking at the world through the pre-Enlightenment concept of 'right' and 'wrong' (not shared as much by other cultures like the Chinese who are often post-Enlightenment thinkers). When a sovereign thinker is about to try something new, he never really knows what will happen. There is always risk and uncertainty. This risk is enough to keep the mistake-phobiac hiding in inertia. As an effective disguise, the mistake-phobiac often assumes the role of 'the critic'.

Taking pot-shots from the relative safety of his bunker of reluctance, the lazy critic simply waits for another thinker to make a mistake and then the whinging and whining begins.

These are a few of the cognitive conditions caused by PTV. There are many others.

The purpose of the School of Thinking is to help brainusers deal with these conditions by designing and offering tools they can use.

Since 1979, SOT has developed a number of tools and strategies including:

- **‘thinking caps’**
- **‘brain software’**
- **‘memeplexes’**
- **‘x10 Thinking’**

Let’s proceed now to the Lateral Thinking Brain Software.

It consists of a dashboard or suite of four apps for your brain. This lateral dashboard contains 15 mind-tools. These mind-tools can be used by the brainuser in an ever-widening repertoire of combinations to produce a virtually unlimited number of effects. In fact the total number of combinations is more than a trillion! 1,307,674,368,000 to be exact. I'm showing off now. The lateral thinking neuro-software is a four-part code: SDNT cvs2bvs QRH PRR Each code or acronym stands for a specific app of brain software which will be dealt with in the following chapters. Once it is programmed into your brain, the neuroware helps to neutralize or by-pass PTV by giving you, the brainuser, a simple way to increase your awareness of the thinking strategies that are available to you in any situation that comes your way.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Summarizing 'The Truth'

The idea that there is an objective truth was invented by Plato.

Strong defense of The Truth diminishes the thinker's ability to escape from his viewpoint to find a much better, or, more likely truth. This cognitive condition, or meme, is called PTV, Plato Truth Virus.

Aristotle imbedded PTV in his syllogism. This was picked up by Thomist doctrine and became the basis of Greco-Roman logical thinking. Western education has made a god out of logic and the 'claim of certainty'.

The Western education system was set up by the medieval Church and spread throughout Europe and

exported to other parts of the world with missionary zeal. Even today, children are sent to school, their young brains programmed with the logic operating system, and then they're given the impression that all they have to do in life is 'to get the right answer' or 'tell the truth' and logically think inside their box.

Only Microsoft's global export of Bill Gates' DOS has ever rivaled the Vatican's global export of Thomas Aquinas' PTV.

PTV is ubiquitous. Manifestations can be annoying like in Space Gluttons and Bores or fatal like in Bullies and Righteous and Sightless thinkers. Over 26 million humans may have been destroyed last century directly due to the actions of PTV-infected brains.

It is only with the unfair advantage of hindsight that one is able to look back on the evolution of our thinking habits and consider the consequences that they may have produced.

Did Plato ever realize what might happen as a consequence of the ideas that emerged from those Bacchanalian dinner parties he attended on those hot Athenian summer nights?

Did Saint Thomas Aquinas ever anticipate how rigorously later popes would prosecute his ideas and make them the core doctrine of the greatest education enterprise in history?

To be fair, I don't see how they could. Plato and Thomas were not villains. I imagine they were just doing what interested them most at the time and hoping for a modest amount of success.

Could Bill Gates ever have known he would become the richest business man in the world when he first developed DOS?

In his book, he says he once remarked to Paul Allen that a million dollars was a huge amount of money, and he could never imagine having more than that. Hmmmmm.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

More Software for Your Brain

The past ten chapters or so were devoted to exploring The Problem: PTV (Plato Truth Virus) and some of its consequences.

Now, once again, we come back to The Solution: some more software for your brain.

What is Cognitive Science? 'Cognitive' means how the brain, as an organ of the body, secretes thinking – how it 'minds'. 'Science' has to do with the search for a much better truth.

The first time I saw a complete and viable model of how the brain could do this was in 1971. I was given a copy of Edward de Bono's book *The Mechanism of Mind*.

Although one of his first books, I personally think this was his most interesting work.

I studied this book carefully as part of my PhD in Cognitive Science. Professor de Bono was my academic tutor.

At that time we disagreed about one main thing. In those days I argued that the brain is a digital processing system, and the metaphor of the human brain as our *necktop computer* was valid and useful because it suggested the need for much better brain software.

On presenting these ideas to Edward de Bono I was surprised that he was not at all supportive of the 'necktop' idea.

At the time, Edward was Professor of Investigative Medicine at Cambridge University, and he felt strongly that the behavior of the brain and that of

computers was so different that he said, 'there seems little point in comparing them'.

In *The Mechanism of Mind* he elaborates on his viewpoint in detail, *'The behavior of the electrical system in the brain is fundamentally different from that to be found in computers' and 'even on a functional level there are considerable differences'*.

Edward was arguing that because he saw that brains and computers were different in structure he therefore rejected my 'necktop computer' metaphor. But, I was convinced of the value of 'necktop software' and persisted with the concept.

My own view was that, whatever the structural differences, brains and computers were both deeply digital environments for information-processing and that there were useful comparisons to be made, not only metaphorically (as desktop personal computers

were becoming ubiquitous in the ‘80s) but also functionally.

I remained committed to the idea and developed it further. In 1989, I published the first edition of *Software For The Brain* which became an international best-seller.

This ‘brain software’ method for teaching thinking skills has also become one of the most widely used around the world – in schools, in sports and in business.

Twenty years later, in 2005, Edward de Bono changed his mind and announced that he is now an advocate of the ‘brain software’ strategy for teaching thinking which, itself, is a nice example of him achieving a cvs2bvs. In subsequent books, Edward has acknowledged my ‘necktop computer’

idea as being valid and has also argued for the development of software for the brain.

Today, the idea is widely accepted in cognitive science.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Your Own Necktop Computer

Apparently I was the first to coin the term *necktop computer*. In the early eighties, while on the lecture circuit in the US and Europe, I was invited to give the keynote address to a series of IBM executive conferences in Monte Carlo. I introduced cvs2bvs as 'software for the brain' and referred to the brain as a necktop computer.

It highly amused the executives in the audience, so I kept it in my talks for a laugh.

By 1989 I had written it up in a best-selling book entitled *Software For The Brain*; and now it's a common meme.

There are over two billion PC users worldwide. Today's PCs are more than 500 gigabytes where a byte is just a single storage unit of information (at eight bits) or about one printed character. 500 gigs is 500 million kilobytes or 500 billion bytes. So, two billion PCs multiplied by 500 billion bytes is … Wow! That's a lot of personal computer power.

How many necktop users are there? There are presently around 7.5 billion necktop users on planet earth. This number is increasing at the rate of 3 necktop users every second or 1.7 million every week.

In your brain, a byte is, say, the strength of a synapse but your necktop has rather more than 500 billion. It has 1000 trillion. It is a vast parallel computing matrix.

1000 trillion neurons multiplied by 7.5 billion necktops equals … Whew! That's a lot of brainpower on the planet.

Professor Jacob Schwartz of the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences at New York University put some figures together to give some idea of the capacity of your brain. He says that *'rough quantitative guesses lead us to estimate that the long-term memory available to the brain is about 10,000 trillion bytes' and that 'the computing rate needed to emulate the entire brain on a neuron-by-neuron basis may be as high as 1,000,000 trillion arithmetic operations per second'.*

Dr Schwartz goes on to say that: … it is interesting to compare these exceedingly coarse estimates with corresponding figures for the largest supercomputer

systems likely to be developed over the next decade.

These will probably not attain speeds in excess of 1 trillion arithmetic operations per second which is about one-millionth of the computation rate that we have estimated for your brain.

More recent research says that the total computing power that all the world's computers can do in a second is about equal to what ONE HUMAN BRAIN can do in a second!

You and I, with our human brains are so preposterously over endowed with thinking hardware that it's almost impossible to comprehend. But let's try.

What if you were the major shareholder of the world's most intelligent enterprise, a network of ten billion computers linked together as parallel

processors, producing a vast intellectual output of global messaging? Well, you are!

Take a closer look. The atoms of your brain are called nerve cells or neurons. Each neuron is your fundamental intellectual unit – an information-processing system. The basic product of these units is: messaging.

Neurons are perfectly designed messaging systems. They have two ends: a receiving end and a transmitting end (or an input end and an output end). At the receiving end each of your neurons has a convenient tree-like system of dendrites. Dendrites are input wires which can receive information from other neurons. A neuron may receive messages in from thousands of other neurons and may, in turn, send its messages out to thousands of other neurons.

Suppose we call a message in, a MI. And, a message out, a MO. So we have MIs and MOs.

A neuron receives MIs (messages in) from other neurons. It then sends a MO, a brief electrical pulse lasting about a thousandth of a second along its output wire, the axon. Axons are like 'telegraph wires' that transmit electrical signals along their own length. At the end of its wire the axon's electrical signal is transformed into a chemical output – a neurotransmitter.

A neurotransmitter is a package of chemical information which has an effect on the neuron that receives it in much the same way that a tweet or an SMS text message or an email is a package of information which has an effect on you when you receive it.

The way this chemical package effects the neuron receiving it is by causing a change in its electro-chemical activity.

Just as you may or may not respond to a tweet or text you receive, your neuron behaves the same way. Sometimes a neuron responds to a MI. Sometimes it doesn't. When a particular cell sends out its own MO signal it's because it has received enough MIs from other cells to exceed a threshold amount.

Thus each of your nerve cells acts as a tiny decision unit. If the incoming messaging is above a certain level, it responds with a MO. If not, it stays silent. If your neuron does respond to its incoming messages, we say it is excited, if it stays silent, we say it is inhibited.

You have more than a 100 billion neurons of these tiny molecular computers. Like other computers, they have a broad selection of MOs that they can send out.

Each of your neurons acts as a unit of control receiving MIs and sending MOs within the distributed network you call your brain and nervous system. Each of these units is processing its inputs/outputs at the same time as are all the other units, so they achieve 'parallel computation'.

Your brain is the ultimate parallel processor! Its billions of parallel processing units are constantly taking in information MIs. These messages are processed and changed. Then new information MOs are sent out all over the global network. Your brain is the supreme intelligent enterprise.

And guess what, YOU are the major shareholder!

LATERAL BRAIN SOFTWARE

SDNT: Scientific Method

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CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

S = START

Taking a new step, uttering a new word, is what people fear most.

- Fyodor Dostoevsky

It can be very difficult to start things. Once you get started there is momentum and feedback but getting started can be difficult. Most races are lost not at the finishing line but at the starting blocks. Why? Because most people never even enter the race! They just never get started. Wasn't it Lao-Tzu who pointed out that all epic journeys begin with a single step?

In business, for example, the start of the sale is: Customer Attention.

Before a customer can say YES or NO, their attention must be on your offer. Fred Herman, author of 'KISS: Keep It Simple Salesman', used to say, 'First, you've got to get the customer's attention! Yet, most of the time the vast majority of customers' attention is not focused on your offer at all. Whenever, at any particular moment, the customer's attention is not on your offer then there can be no hope of doing business, no chance of a sale.

To manage customer attention, I designed a new unit of measurement which I called: *check*.

I first published it in my book *NewSell*, which became a best-seller in Australia. A *check move* (taken from the game of chess) is simply a customer contact of any kind.

This has all been revised and updated in my book *WOMBAT Selling: How To Sell By Word of Mouth*.

For years, it's been a philistine belief in selling that most sales were lost at the close. In other words, salespeople were missing sales because they were not 'closing' them.

Our research showed that this is a common and costly illusion. In fact, quite the opposite is true. The whole issue of 'closing the sale' is nonsense and I have offered a reward of $100,000 to the first person who can prove the salesperson closes the sale.

FACT: The decision to buy is an electro-chemical event in the brain of the customer and the salesperson does NOT control that event.

FACT: 99% of sales are not missed at the close at all but at the start.

FACT: It's the failure to start the sale – to contact a customer by phone, by post mail, by email, by Twitter, by Facebook, by Renren, by Weibo - or especially in person – which is the source of most lost business.

FACT: most of the time most of the customers are in uncheck (no customer contact). 99% of check moves have never yet been made.

Escaping from uncheck and focusing on their check moves helps salespeople keep a measurement of how much energy they are putting out into the marketplace.

Focusing on their check moves helps them to raise their energy level and avoid wasting time, and to stop their obsession with 'the close' and all the archaic manipulation tactics that customers hate,

and which have given the selling profession such a bad image and poor ethical reputation.

Focusing on 'the start' (check) rather than the close, (checkmate) reduces the rejection and disappointment salespeople feel which so affects their energy levels. Check allows them to initiate many more customer contacts.

This, of course, always leads to better sales results, because the only move that can turn a prospective customer into a client is CHECK, which is enough to make it the most important move in business. As Woody Allen said, '80% of success is showing up'.

Most plans are full of details on how to get to the finishing line but contain little or nothing about how to get to the starting blocks. Yet nothing happens until someone STARTS something.

For many years in business we have had MBO or Management By Objectives. Perhaps we also need MBS or Management By Starting.

Many management gurus write books about 'Goal-Setting'. Maybe they should also write books about 'Start-Getting' since, most of the time, most people never get started.

To Start - is the fundamental creative act. To change a switch from the OFF position to the ON position is to start something and means something has now been created. It has been said that the most important skill in writing a book is sitting down at the keyboard – getting started.

Strategy is about control. If you are in control you are in a strategic position, if you are out of control, you aren't. Starting is a strategic act because we can control starting but we cannot control finishing.

Once we start, many other factors come into play: other people's reactions, the weather, consequences and the unexpected. These may prevent us from finishing. But if we are good at starting then we can always start again, and again, and again. It may be that finishing is simply the repetitive act of starting, and starting again, and starting again, until we declare that we have 'finished'.

Some people are good at starting. Others are good at the follow-up. Some are good at both. What are you better at? Do you see starting as a skill?

How can you improve your starting ability? Is it worth it?

What would be a better skill to develop than starting? How do you start to start?

To start or not to start? To flip the switch or not to flip the switch? To start is to be! I start therefore I am. He who hesitates to start is lost. Start before you leap. Etc.

Why Start Things? When you start you begin to overcome inertia. Inertia is the enemy of starting, with its lack of feedback and momentum. Once you escape from the spell of inertia you begin to get feedback. Feedback is the food of decision-making and the food of design. You can assess feedback and react to your assessment. Do I like it? Do I not like it? Do I want more? Do I want less?

We are much better at reacting than at proacting. By creating feedback it gives us something to react to and so we can make a decision and proceed.

A simple way to create feedback is to start something … anything.

When to Start? There is really only one time to start and that time is the moment called … Now! We need to create as many Now! moments for starting as possible. Ten times more. Just suppose a Now! moment is one second. In other words, let's define the time it takes to start something as one second. Here are some examples:

- **How long does it take to pick up the telephone? One second.**
- **How long does it take to press 'send' on an email? One second.**
- **How long does it take to start to get up and go for a walk. One second.**
- **How long does it take to start a Google or Baidu search. One second.**
- **How long does it take to say 'No'? One second.**

- **How long does it take to start to call your mum? One second.**
- **How long does it take to start to contact a customer? One second.**

There are an unlimited number of things you can start to do in the quite comfortable space of one second. How many Now! moments are there in a day? I'll save you the trouble of the maths. It's 86,400.

Unfortunately we waste most of our Now! moments because we squander most of our time immobilized by inertia because of our Western fear of making 'mistakes'.

Mistake-phobia is the morbid fear of making a mistake. It's an aversion to ever being wrong. It comes from our medieval habit of looking at the world through the concept of 'right' and 'wrong'

which is not shared so rigidly by other cultures like the Chinese, for example.

Compared to the Chinese, our mistake-phobia causes us to lose countless opportunities on a daily basis in Western countries like Australia, Britain, France and America, and may be one of the biggest single blocks to our increased productivity and potential economic success.

One way to cure mistake-phobia is to accelerate our willingness to have a go, to get started and get busy.

When you have a go, one of two things happens:

- **You make a mistake.**
- **You make an un-mistake.**

To the brainuser, both these types of feedback are useful.

If you are not afraid of mistakes, if you are not a mistake-phobiac, then you simply assess the

feedback and start again. If it was a mistake you try something different. If it was an un-mistake then you can keep going. These are like loops that can be called:

IF (mistake) THEN (start again) ELSE (proceed), or

IF (un-mistake) THEN (proceed).

Both these outcomes are useful results of starting, they just have different values. Inertia may have no value at all.

This is how we have taught computers to acquire intelligence. They keep doing something. Anything. Trial and error multiplied by a trillion loops. They keep busy going through the loops and learning.

This is how we learned as children until we were taught to dread making a mistake. If computers were as afraid of making mistakes as we are, then

they would take as long as us to learn. But they don't.

Computers are not afraid of mistakes and are rapidly catching up. Today's cars have more computing power than the whole world had 50 years ago. They are becoming less 'computer-assisted cars' and more like 'drivable computers'. The Chinese robot market is leading the world with spending on robots that will more than double to $60 billion in 2020 from $25 billion in 2016. Where will computers and robots be in the next 50 years? In the next 500 years?

Lazy critics suffer from mistake-phobia. The PTV-infected brain will turn the most amazing cognitive somersaults to avoid being 'wrong'.

When a brainuser tries to create something, s/he never really knows what will happen.

There is always risk and uncertainty. Risk is enough to keep the mistake-phobiac hiding in inertia.

But, remember, nothing happens until someone STARTS something.

Soren Kierkegaard said, *'To dare is to lose one's footing momentarily. To not dare is to lose oneself'*.

Do you prefer the starter or the critic? How do you feel about mistakes? Are you comfortable with them? Or do you fear mistakes? Can you take a risk? To ask is one way to start.

Mrs Robert Lee Kidd started something simply by walking into the office of the San Francisco Examiner on May 2, 1962, and placing her advertisement which asked for the following:

I don't want my husband to die in the gas chamber for a crime he did not commit. I will therefore offer my services for 10 years as a cook, maid or

housekeeper to any leading attorney who will defend him and bring about his vindication.

Her husband had been tried and convicted of the murder of an elderly antiques dealer, Albert Clarke. Mr Kidd's bloody fingerprints were found on the murder weapon, an ornate sword. But Mrs Kidd had insisted her husband was home with her on the night of the crime.

One of San Francisco's most eminent attorneys, Vincent Hallinan, responded and proved in court that the sword was not the murder weapon after all. Subsequently both husband and wife went free.

Hallinan graciously refused to take up Mrs Kidd's offer of 10 years' service. Ask and receive! Asking is one way of starting.

Every day, thousands of people start something by putting their ad in the paper or online, asking for

something, such as a job, a house, a vote, a sale or a friend. By asking, there are literally an unlimited number of ways of getting started.

Ask and receive. The Chinese version of eBay/Amazon is called Taobao. By 2010 Taobo transactions were already USD$60 billion. That was equal to the total trade balance between China and Australia. Currently China's online retailing market will grow to $1.7 trillion by 2020 compared with $750 billion in 2016, according to a recent report from China Internet Watch.

Ask and receive. When did you last put an ad in the paper or on eBay or Taobao? What happened?

What other ways can you ask?

What did you ask for yesterday?

What will you ask for today?

What will you ask for tomorrow?

The hardest part about getting started is … getting started! This is a circular trap that is difficult to get out of. The way I get started is to write down a list of 10 things I can do to get started. Then, I just choose the ones I like. When it comes to the power of STARTING no-one said it better than the German thinker, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who said:

Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings and material assistance which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

D = DO

Knowing is not enough. We must apply. Willing is not enough. We must do.

– Bruce Lee

If we knew what we were doing, it wouldn't be called research.

–Albert Einstein

We should do more, and talk less.

–Deng Xiaoping

In science, you DO an experiment not because you know what will happen but in order to SEE what will happen.

Outside science, there is often a reluctance to do an experiment in case it doesn't work. But no idea is of any real value until it gets used. If an idea never gets used, why even know about it?

There's a huge gap between knowing and doing. I have called this gap – The Impossible Barrier – and written at length about this in *NewSell*. The reason for this is because, so often, knowing something prevents doing it.

We have something repeated to us and we say 'Yes, I already know that!' and we turn our attention away. Yet it is the repetition of things we already know that gets us closer to doing it.

It has been said that too often the knowers are not the doers and the doers are not the knowers.

One of the reasons that the global climate change programs have been delayed and slowed down (at great cost to the next few generations) is because the focus has shifted from the doers to the talkers. The focus has moved away from the scientists, technologists and problem-solvers to the politicians, media and the *chatterati*.

We need to get into action. Once we move from thought into action we immediately create feedback. Our actions have consequences and it is these consequences that enable us to evaluate the effectiveness of our behavior. Thinking is not an escape from action it is simply the basis for it. When in doubt, do something.

Anything.

You may already have noticed that the recurring themes running through this book are ESCAPE and MOVEMENT. To the thinker, a creative approach to life means a questioning approach.

I was a kid that was always asking, 'Why, why, why?' I think I'm even worse now. It constantly challenges me to find out more, so I improve and continue to improve.

–Ian Thorpe, Olympic Champion and Sports Thinker.

The skilled thinker, the thinker of action, is a skilled questioner. Who? What? When? Where? How? Why? Why? Why? The only silly question is the question you don't ask. But what is a question?

According to Rochelle Myers, who ran the famous Stamford University Graduate School of Management course, Creativity in Business, questions are the following:

- **A question is an opening to creation.**
- **A question is an unsettled and unsettling issue.**
- **A question is an invitation to creativity.**
- **A question is a beginning of adventure.**
- **A question is a seductive foreplay.**
- **A question pokes and prods what has not yet been poked and prodded.**
- **A question is a point of departure.**
- **A question wants a playmate.**

If you can develop your questioning skills you will immediately begin to expand your options, you will have more alternatives.

You will also generate extra possibilities, you will have more choices. All these things will lead you into action, to DO things.

Your new questioning skills will enable you to become less of a knower and more of a doer. You

will annoy authorities and astound your friends. This alone, can be a good enough reason to ask more questions.

In the 1980s my friend and agent, Leslie Buckland, was President of *Caribiner Inc* in New York, the world's largest producer of big business meetings. Leslie often used to say, 'If something is worth doing it's worth doing badly'. Why? Doesn't this seem a contradiction for a man who was known internationally for setting the high standards of quality in business meetings? A Caribiner production team could go into a hotel ballroom anywhere in the world, turn it into a circus or a theatre in 24 hours, stage, for one performance only, the business equivalent of a Broadway show – original music, dancers, actors, fireworks – and then strike the set leaving it as they found it 24 hours later.

They staged multi-million dollar productions all over the world for companies like IBM, McDonald's, and Mercedes-Benz where quality was the absolute key. Yet Les often said, *'If something is worth doing it's worth doing badly'*. Why?

This is the paradox of action, of decision-making, of getting things done. The mistake-phobiacs are so afraid of doing something badly they get nothing done at all! *'Our doubts',* said William Shakespeare, *'are traitors and make us lose the good we oft might win by fearing to attempt'.*

Very often there's no 'right way' to do things. Les, and other people of action, like trauma surgeons or astronauts, know that one has to get started and do something, get the process moving otherwise you'll just get overtaken by the unfolding of circumstances.

Even if you make a mistake or do it badly, get going. You can always change things, make adjustments and corrections. That's what computers and robots do. You can make it work and make it work well, but first you have to get it up and running.

Bad can always be changed to good. Sitting back and waiting for perfection often means inertia and failure.

For an experiment (that is, to try out and see what happens) try asking questions like these:

- **How does this company make a profit?**
- **When you swim, how do you breathe?**
- **Why does this shop close at 6pm?**
- **Can I work longer hours?**
- **Why was my request refused?**
- **Can I have a money-back guarantee? Why not?**
- **Why shouldn't I be with someone I enjoy?**

- **What's so good about always being busy?**
- **What are my skills?**
- **What is your authority? Why?**
- **What is missing here? What else?**
- **How are board members selected?**
- **Who determines the directors on the board?**
- **How was this decision made? Why?**
- **Why is this rule necessary? Can it be improved?**
- **Am I needed here?**
- **How can this be more fun?**

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

N = NOTICE

The Scientific Method prefers thinking based on feedback. In this method the reason you think is so that you can NOTICE the feedback created by your thinking and action. This feedback then becomes the stimulus for further thinking.

Thinking ... Feedback ... Thinking ... Feedback ... Thinking ... Feedback, and so on.

The basis of all science is observation and measurement--noticing things. A clever brainuser is a clever noticer and a clever noticer is objective. The skill of noticing is the skill of objectivity. Detachment is also important in noticing things.

With detachment you can have a broader, clearer view of the situation.

For example, when pouring a glass of champagne you notice feedback. You notice when the champagne level is nearing the top of the flute and so you begin to stop pouring the wine. If you didn't notice this then you might continue pouring and it will spill and run out of control.

In fact, noticing things is the basis of controlling things. This champagne situation is an example of a 'feedback system'. Noticing and measuring feedback in systems, in order to control those systems, is what cybernetics is all about. Noticing the feedback created by your thinking, in order to control it is what this book is all about.

During WWII, Dr. Norbert Weiner (Professor of Mathematics at MIT – Massachusetts Institute of

Technology) invented *cybernetics*, as a body of mathematics to help anti-aircraft technology.

The main problem with an airplane as a target was that it moved and kept moving. Cybernetics worked by noticing the 'degree of miss' between an ack-ack shell and the airplane target, and feeding back that information to the weapon so that an immediate adjustment could be made and then firing another shell.

This loop would be quickly repeated many times, allowing the weapon to 'educate-itself' and close in on its target.

This gave the weapon its characteristic ack-ack-ack-ack-ack-ack-ack-ack firing sequence … fire feedback fire feedback fire feedback fire feedback fire feedback fire feedback etcetera etcetera … until it closed in on its target.

This kind of technology, as with many other advances, has been largely developed by the scientists working with the military. Missiles work the same way, wiggling to their target by using heat sensors to locate the target's engine and noticing the feedback in order to make a rudder or rocket adjustment. Noticing the feedback is the central activity that allows the missile to reach its goal.

Later, the Patriot missiles used in Iraq showed how this technology had been developed to such an extraordinary degree by the USA's Star Wars project. The Patriot's ability to catch Scud missiles in the air was roughly equivalent to you driving along at 100kph and plucking a single blade of grass, previously painted red, as you go by. Today the military use drones of all shapes and sizes, alone or

in swarms, to do reconnaissance, monitor covert activities and carry weapons.

This kind of advanced Star Wars cybernetic technology is also being considered to shield our planet from meteors, which are an increasing worry to scientists. Meteors remain just as serious a threat to life on the planet today as they were to our Jurassic ancestors.

Cybernetics is all about servo-mechanisms, goal-seeking behavior, feedback loops, positive and negative feedback systems, self-stabilizing systems, homeostasis and the control of systems, and how they might apply to biological or mechanical systems.

THINKING ... FEEDBACK ... THINKING ... FEEDBACK ...

THINKING ... FEEDBACK ... THINKING ... FEEDBACK ...

THINKING ... FEEDBACK ... THINKING ... FEEDBACK ...

George Gallup founded the Gallup Poll at Princeton, New Jersey, which became the world's first system to objectively and scientifically measure – that is, to notice – public and customer opinion. He was also the inventor of market research and the ultimate savior of the customer.

The very existence of the Gallup Poll has changed forever the future of the human race. The Gallup Poll makes it increasingly difficult for individuals to claim 'I-am-right', to claim they alone 'know what's best' for the public, now that accurate scientific measurement of the public/customer/elector viewpoint is possible.

As inventor of market research and the Gallup Poll, Dr George Gallup has so empowered the public viewpoint that I believe his invention may be the

greatest invention for the support of democracy ever discovered by any scientist.

Gallup research has covered the fields of: Health; Religion; Politics; Journalism; Advertising; Entertainment; Business; Education and Human Thinking. It can be said that no other person in history has ever had the opportunity to notice and record the views of so many humans on so many aspects of their existence, and in so many parts of their world!

A lesser known side of Dr Gallup was his interest in humans, and the factors which influence their opinions, attitudes, thinking and aspirations. He once told me, 'teaching people to think for themselves was the most important thing in the world to do'.

He was a great supporter of the School of Thinking and one of the wisest and kindest gentlemen I've ever had the pleasure of knowing.

Born in Jefferson, Iowa, in 1900, he attended the University of Iowa and spent ten years as a teacher there and at Drake, Northwestern, and Columbia Universities.

He had a strong interest in education and what could be done to improve it. He had more than ten honorary Doctorate Degrees from colleges and universities around the world. George died at his Switzerland home in 1984.

As my deeply respected mentor, Dr Gallup helped with the design of my universal brain software by impressing upon me the need to measure or notice the CVS (Current View of the Situation) as a basis for

moving to the BVS (Better View of the Situation). We will explore this further in coming chapters.

Dr Gallup's work, along with that of Weiner and others, stands as one of the first great examples of the practical application of the new field of cognitive science.

It can cost around $US20,000 to have a Gallup Poll conducted on just one question. If you could have a Gallup Poll conducted, what one question would you ask? Why would you ask this question?

The main point about noticing is this: try to notice those things that you have NOT YET noticed.

It's easy to notice the information that supports our CVS, our Current View of the Situation. It's difficult to notice the information that falls outside our CVS and so that's exactly why and where we must make a contrived attempt to notice things.

Suppose you're looking north. Once you become aware of the fact, once you notice it, then you can deliberately choose to look south.

Looking in the opposite direction is one place to notice things. Try looking in those directions in which you are not yet looking.

Where are you looking now? Where else could you be looking now?

Mistakes are a useful thing to notice.

Mistake-phobiacs are so afraid of mistakes that they can't bear to notice them.

They can't see that a mistake is an opportunity to make an appropriate adjustment. They can't cope with mistakes.

Mistake-phobiacs are always ‘right’.

Francois Jacob, winner of the Nobel Prize for Medicine wrote:

‘Nothing is more dangerous than the certainty that one is right. Nothing is potentially so destructive as the obsession with a truth one considers absolute. All crimes in history have been the result of fanaticism of one type or another. All massacres have been carried out in the name of virtue, of true religion, of legitimate nationalism, of proper policy, of right ideology: in short, in the name of the fight against somebody else's truth."

–The Logic of Life, Penguin, 1989.

It's important to be able to notice mistikes in order to be able to explore them, or to use them, or to correct them and move on. (OK, move on.) To do this effectively, one needs to be objective rather than reactionary, to be creative rather than judgmental.

Try noticing mistakes that you have not yet noticed. Correct them, if that's what is needed, and move on. Future consequences can be the most difficult things to notice especially in advance, which is one of the best times to notice them. This is a bit of a paradox. How can we notice a consequence that has not yet happened? How can we notice the future? How can we notice those unforeseen consequences?

Actually we do it every time we ride a skateboard, apply make-up, play a game or use a chain saw.

By noticing potential consequences we can avoid them in advance, if we wish. The biggest problem to overcome here is short-termism. Our narrow focus on too short time frames. The most difficult consequences to notice in advance are the long-term ones. If I do such-and-such what will happen in ten years? In twenty years? In a hundred years?

As the many possible futures hurtle towards us at an ever-increasing rate, we will have to get better and better at noticing long-term consequences, so that we can choose the futures we want to be in.

We are currently destroying the world's forests at the rate of an acre per second. In the foreseeable future, most of the earth's oxygen producing forests will be gone if we don't notice the long-term consequences and make some big changes.

We have already destroyed more than three-quarters of Australia's tropical rain forests and about two-thirds of the rest of our forests. We have a hole in our protective ozone layer already the size of Mount Everest.

Canadian scientist, David Suzuki, Professor of Genetics at the University of British Columbia, says,

'We are the last generation who will have any say on the future of our planet, because after our lifetime it will all be gone'.

If we are to make the necessary adjustments to our current behavior, to ensure a safe future, we will have to get much better at noticing the future consequences of our current behavior. Try noticing future consequences that you have not yet noticed.

Why Notice Things? What would happen if you didn't notice things?

Usually when we don't notice something we make a mistake. When we don't notice the mistake, we make another mistake. And so on. However when we do notice the mistake, then we can adapt or adjust in some way and then proceed.

You have two ears and one mouth so use them in that proportion – so the saying goes.

And yes, ears are certainly good for input, for noticing. Eyes come in handy too. The tongue and the nose work well together. And, an assortment of fingers and toes play their part. We do have around five input senses, we are told, and these are all useful for noticing. Our experience, patterns built up over the years, can help us to notice things and, of course, they can also hinder us in noticing things.

START-DO-NOTICE-THINK.

This is the SDNT Scientific Method for lateral thinking.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

T = THINK

What is thinking? This question could keep a room full of philosophers happy for a hundred years. But in the School of Thinking we are not concerned with thinking as contemplation, philosophical discussion or academic description, we are concerned with thinking as an operating skill – the kind of thinking that gets things done. The definition we use is: Thinking is the skill of using intelligence to get things done.

To many people THINKING is the opposite of DOING. They set these two activities up as mutually exclusive opposites in their mind.

With practice, however, you can eventuate your ability to use thinking as a skill, just like you can develop cooking, golf, leadership, painting, acting, singing or aikido.

All human skills have enormous potential to be learned or developed through training and practise.

Paul MacCready, inventor of the Gossamer Albatross and the father of man-powered flight, once wrote to me from Pasadena:

When first watching a School of Thinking class in action, I was amazed that something so simple and so much fun could be so quick and effective in developing a person's "thinking muscle". We all, as individuals and as caretakers of our precious earth, need these thinking skills.

Dr MacCready's metaphor of thinking as a 'muscle' is a good one.

It's better than the old-fashioned idea of thinking as a 'gift'. If thinking is only a gift, there's not much you can do about it.

But, if it's more like a muscle then there's a lot you can do to develop your thinking power.

That's why we look at thinking as a skill. We want to help you enhance your skill and develop your intellectual capital. The goal is to reach an alternating balance between thought-based action and action-based thought.

Thought-Based Action: THINK-START-DO.

Thought-based action is the kind of action that's based on thinking. For example, suppose you are reading a book and you read about a story set on the island of Malta. You start to think about that tiny historic island with its strategic harbour set in the Mediterranean and you decide you want to

actually go there and see it for yourself. You figure out a plan, you find out about costs for fares and so on, you set a date and you finally go and visit Malta. You thought something out, got started and then did it – thought-based action: THINK-START-DO. This is how I came to visit Malta in the summer of '84.

Action-Based Thought: DO-NOTICE-THINK.

Action-based thought is the kind of thinking that's based on action. For example, a customer walks into a store and the storeperson says, 'Can I help you?'. The customer then says, 'No thanks, just looking', then pirouettes and walks out of the store.

Most storepeople keep making the same mistake day-after-day, week-after-week, year-after-year.

But the thinking salesperson might consider something like this: *'Hmmmm. Whenever a customer walks into a store and I ask if I can help them I notice that usually drives them back out of the store. Maybe I can think of some other thing I could do that would not have that effect. What could I do instead?'*

Action-based thought: DO-NOTICE-THINK.

The skilled thinker can alternate a balance between thought-based action and action-based thought, between THINK-START-DO and DO-NOTICE-THINK.

This is what SDNT Scientific Method thinking is all about – action based on noticing feedback plus feedback based on noticing action.

SDNT = START-DO-NOTICE-THINK, continuing in a continuous series of loops or a kind of spiral on into the future, exploring the *cognos*, the vast universe of possible thoughts.

The SDNT Scientific Method

START DO NOTICE THINK

START DO NOTICE THINK

START DO NOTICE THINK

START DO NOTICE THINK

START DO NOTICE THINK

START DO NOTICE THINK

START DO NOTICE THINK

START DO NOTICE THINK

START DO NOTICE THINK

START DO NOTICE THINK

START DO NOTICE THINK

spiraling on into the cognos.

Start Do Notice Think, or its trigger code SDNT, is a powerful search engine for your necktop that will enable the brainuser to approach any situation, any problem, any opportunity, with confidence.

To be doubly negative, there is no situation that cannot be managed by SDNT:

1. **First you START. This is like switching the necktop from OFF to ON.**
2. **Then you DO … something … anything.**
3. **Then you NOTICE the feedback from your actions, carefully and objectively.**
4. **Then you THINK. What happened? What were the consequences? What did I like about them? What didn't I like about them?**
5. **Then repeat 1 – 5.**

This is a scientific method of exploring, and off you go again:

SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT SDNT … on into the future, exploring the cognos.

One of the most famous users of the 'what if …?' type of thinking was a young thinker, a lad of sixteen, called Albert Einstein. At that age, Albert wrote to his uncle wondering what he would see if he was sitting on a light beam. By the time he was twenty-six, in 1905, he had solved that problem and changed forever the laws of physics and the way future generations would understand the world.

This 'what if …?' thinking he called a *gedanken* or 'thought experiment'.

One of the great thinker's most quoted sayings is, *'Imagination is more important than knowledge'.*

Science acknowledges Einstein's thought experiments as among the greatest triumphs ever produced by a Western human brain.

His thinking feats made him famous, not just in the scientific community, but amongst the public at large. He, in effect, became science's first superstar! Until he died in 1955, he was always at the center of much publicity and public interest.

At first he was the eccentric, the genius who never wore socks. Then he became a leading pacifist and opponent of re-armament, his traditional education leaving him with a lifelong suspicion of all forms of authority.

As the Nazis spread across Europe he advised President Roosevelt that it would be possible to

make an atom bomb. However, when the bombs were actually used on Japan he immediately sought the establishment of a world authority that would control these weapons. Today, posters of Albert Einstein are best sellers.

It's encouraging to know that these posters of the scientist, humanitarian, inventor, Nobel prize winner and thinker, are stuck up on the walls of many a teenager's bedroom along with their other heroes of rap, sex, movies and sport.

Like Einstein, we all have some pretty awesome hardware in our twin-hemispheric, necktop, personal computer.

Our problem, however, is that we are very short on software. The traditional Western approach to thinking is simply reactive, logical judgment – the slapping on of the 'right' and 'wrong' labels.

This has always led to extravagant, destructive clashes throughout history and is hopelessly inadequate for designing a safe future in a rapidly changing world.

If you would like to get a 'feel' for the difference between Greco-Roman Logic and the Scientific Method both of which are software systems designed to handle information in the brain, you can try the following simple exercise:

EXERCISE:

There follows two sets of words which help describe the cognitive process involved in the two types of brain software named above.

Relax for a moment and take a nice deep breath, then repeat the words in capitals slowly and evenly over and over until you get the 'feel' for the way

each of the two different neuro-software codes characteristically handles its information.

Do it first for Greco-Roman Logic (repeat about 10 times):

RIGHT … WRONG

RIGHT … WRONG

RIGHT … WRONG

RIGHT … WRONG

RIGHT … WRONG

RIGHT … WRONG

RIGHT … WRONG

RIGHT … WRONG

RIGHT … WRONG

RIGHT … WRONG

Do it now for Scientific Method (repeat about 10 times):

START … DO … NOTICE … THINK

START … DO … NOTICE … THINK

START … DO … NOTICE … THINK

START … DO … NOTICE … THINK

START … DO … NOTICE … THINK

START … DO … NOTICE … THINK

START … DO … NOTICE … THINK

START … DO … NOTICE … THINK

START … DO … NOTICE … THINK

START … DO … NOTICE … THINK

You may have noticed that logic uses a kind of labeling or 'mail-sorting' approach to dealing with information.

Logic reacts to information using judgment based on historical experience. If it fits, its right; if it doesn't fit, its wrong.

Judgment has served us very well. It is excellent but not enough. It is very useful in a secondary way and for looking back at static, theoretical, situations. By itself, however, it's totally inadequate for dealing with most of the fluid, forward-looking situations in real life.

With the Scientific Method, you may have noticed a quite different, open-ended, spiraling effect as movement is created (START … DO) and then feedback is evaluated (NOTICE … THINK) and further movement, with adjustments based on the feedback, is then continued.

There is no 'right' way to think. The key to thinking is movement.

Movement through the cognos, movement through think-space, movement through the ideosphere, movement through the multiverse of possible thoughts.

Whether you move out or in or up or down, sideways, backwards or upside-down reverse pikes, it doesn't matter. Whether you take great leaps, use stepping-stones, random provocations, lateral thinking, flip-a-coin, or fantastic images, it all works. Whether you use intuition, alpha-visualizations, TM, tarot cards, I-Ching, runes, prayer, auto-suggestion, hypotheticals, scientific method, professional counseling, googling or 'ask your uncle'– it all adds up to movement.

The essential key in thinking is movement and the *escape* from your CVS.

Once you have movement, you get feedback and, as we have seen, it's this noticing feedback which is the essential ingredient for further thinking, which is to say, exploring the cognos, the universe of possible thoughts.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

Q = QUALITY

QUALITY RECOGNITION HUMOR

QUALITY RECOGNITION HUMOR

QUALITY RECOGNITION HUMOR

QUALITY RECOGNITION HUMOR

QUALITY RECOGNITION HUMOR

QUALITY RECOGNITION HUMOR

QUALITY RECOGNITION HUMOR

QUALITY RECOGNITION HUMOR

Fashion passes. Style remains.

–Coco Chanel.

Styleware is new. It's a brain software package devoted specifically to helping the brainuser choose a world-class style that is compatible with being a PTV-free thinker.

When it comes to thinking and behavior, what's more important than style?

A style is a strategy for behavior. A person's style determines not only what that person will allow himself or herself to do, but also the way he or she will do it.

***'It's nice to be important',* says Roger Federer, Tennis Champion of the World*, 'but it's more important to be nice'*.**

And, it is.

Style is that intangible quality about behavior that leaves a more lasting impression than the behavior itself.

Leaders, like Coco Chanel, Sun Tzu, Queen Elizabeth II, Julius Caesar, Pope Francis, Eva Peron, Jacqueline Kennedy and Nelson Mandela are remembered as much for their personal style as for their specific actions.

Style provides a framework for daily thinking and daily behavior. Your personal style shows the way you have positioned yourself in life, reflects your personal life strategy, and makes it quite possible to predict the way you are likely to behave in situations. It can also create trust.

A loving, kind and gentle woman who treats herself and others with respect, is unlikely to begin suddenly and inexplicably behaving like a mad Ranavalona. A Scrooge is unlikely to start suddenly playing ball with the kids or to join Big Brothers — but, even a Scrooge can change!

You can’t hide your personal style. A single action may or may not go unnoticed but your patterns of behavior are impossible to hide. Repetition attracts attention. Your pattern of behavior is an exhibition of your personal style, just as the pattern of your personal opinions is a loud advertisement of the state of your mind.

But, if you’re not happy with your personal style, there is no law that says you have to live with it. You can simply change it. People are doing this every day. Style is a matter of personal refinement, once you come of cognitive age. By the time you are 10 the style you choose can be independent of background, education, or income; it has much to do with thinking the way you choose to deal with information, in order to deal with situations.

You can choose the personal idiom within which to live your life, just as you can choose the social media to engage in, the TV programs you wish to watch, the friends you wish to mix with, the clothes you wish to wear, the attitudes you wish to adopt and the things you choose to say, or not, on your blog.

Changing is simple once you make the decision. Yet, making the decision could take 20 years! It requires an act of will. Not changing, of course, is the decision to stay as you are, to keep the style you currently have.

The style of the English Thinker can most readily be described by QRH which stands for the balance among these characteristics: Quality, Recognition, Humour. The QRH style is contemporary and cool but has a distinct taste of what the French used to call 'noblesse oblige'.

When it comes to changing your style, it is very useful to have a clear view of the changes you wish to make and just how you'd like to see yourself. Changing is easier if you have a model or a picture or a coach – someone to give you guidance. For my own guidance, I use my personal group of virtual mentors, my Virtual Board of Directors.

To my Virtual Board (which is happy to meet in my mind whenever I want them to meet), I am free to appoint, as a non-paid Director, anyone I choose. I've had members from the present or from the past or from a future not yet a reality. I choose board members for different reasons. I've had them for speech coaching, for dress, for conversation, for decision-making, for wit, for compassion, for courage, for looks, for stimulation, for provocation.

Also some for encouragement, for opposition, for sentimental reasons and often for inspiration.

For example, at different times over the years, seats on my Virtual Board have been held by Cicero, Klaus Kinski, Jean de la Valette, Major Terry Hayes DFC, Julius Caesar, Saki, Audrey Hepburn, Kongzi, Professor George Gallup, W.C. Fields, my father, the Prince of Wales, Dame Elizabeth Murdoch, Professor George Gallup, Fra Martin Luther, Antonio Carlos Jobim, my grandmother, Prince Talleyrand, Pope John XXIII, Brian Ferry, Albert Einstein, Oscar Wilde, George Costanza, Toni Collette, Professor Richard Dawkins FRS, Musashi, Roger Federer, Pharrell Williams, Lady Gaga, Ben Roberts-Smith VC and many others whose names I needn't mention.

I've even had to do the occasional excommunication which was a solemn and satisfying kind of fun.

These have been some of my personal favorites and from whom I have received much advice, support and guidance – free of charge and on-call anytime, any place. You can operate your Virtual Board along the lines of a thought experiment.

The point, of course, is to choose your own directors because you admire some aspect of their style and you want to emulate that aspect, in your own way, so you need their advice to do so. Other people have told me they use similar strategies and have chosen mental advisers for their own development.

If you wish, you can simply read a good biography of your potential style directors and if it satisfies you, you can appoint them to your board. It's also great fun to do!

In the QRH style software, Q = Quality.

When it comes to the subject of style, the clever brainuser is one who is inclined to positively upgrade a situation from its current state to a better state. In other words, one is making a deliberate effort to improve the quality of the situation, the quality of the way in which the information is arranged.

Quality is important. As a clever brainuser you're concerned with adding value to the situation. The point is not whether at any particular moment in time you are successful. What is far more important is the overall style, that is, the deliberate policy of being concerned with improving the value of the situation. The quest for quality.

Contrast this with the dumb 'whatever-I-can-get-away-with' attitude. Quality is a matter of choice, a matter of style.

Only by understanding the process of adding value will we be able to understand the key to productivity and solve what appear to be 'economic' problems.

Quality is better. Quality is improvement. Quality is generous. Quality is excellence. The habit of quality is the habit of finding a better way, a better possibility, a better view, a better choice, a better alternative, a better outcome, a better attitude, a better opinion, a better life.

If you cannot find a better alternative in a situation then you cannot add value to the situation. That's why cvs2bvs, the switch to a better way of looking at a situation, is a skill or strategy that is central to the habit and style of quality.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

The Way of Confucius

As we have discussed earlier, the celebrated Greek thinker Plato lived in ancient Athens around 2500 years ago. At around the same time, in ancient China, lived another thinker, Kongzi.

This ancient Chinese master started one of the world's most successful schools of thinking and his memes have spread around the world and infected even more people than those of Plato.

Kongzi is Master Kong or Confucius as he has come to be known in the West. The great man developed positive memes on ethics, behavior and relationships, and devoted his thinking to finding better possibilities in the world.

He was a great master and teacher of CVS to BVS thinking.

Confucius had an insatiable thirst for knowledge of antiquity. In his sayings, he rarely used negative prohibitions but preferred to offer positive memes on how to find a BVS if you wish to behave as a chun-tzu or gentleman. What moved him was no lust for power but the will to attain true mastery. If you seek 'self x10' then understand your strengths and develop them with practice and mastery. But he was no abstract philosopher. He saw the need to be both a man of thinking and a man of action. He was a doer.

I hear and I forget. I see and I believe. I do and I understand. **– Confucius**

His nature strikes us as smiling, open and natural.

He was a man of the world and of the street who was driven to find ways to help improve the human condition. He founded a school for future statesmen. He edited the classics.

And, most significant of all, he is credited with beginning China's great explosion of thinking in all its breadth and potentiality. As a teacher, Kongzi was always encouraging his students to learn. He also believed in the importance of daily training and practice. The Master said: Is it not pleasant to learn continually and then to put it into practice?

Regardless of how the world treated him, Kongzi, or Confucious, could still maintain a positive attitude and go on learning and teaching. Both Jesus and Confucius, as two of history's most famous teachers, have some interesting things in common.

Yeshua ben-Joseph (Jesus) eventually became known by his followers as The Lord. We are told that he left no account of his life or his teachings in his own hand. His sayings, which he spoke in Aramaic, had to wait for many years after his death to be eventually written down in Greek and Latin.

Hundreds of years later they were again translated into German by Martin Luther. Then in 1611, they were translated again into the old Shakespearean English of the King James version of the Bible and its descendants (Protestant).

And again into the Douay-Rheims version and its variations (Catholic).

More recently, in the 20th century, there has been a wave of contemporary English translations, like the New International Version (Evangelical).

What we are left with today are those sayings of Jesus that have been told in stories, edited and translated over the millennia by his disciples and his disciples' disciples, so we can only make educated guesses about the true authenticity of his original sayings.

It is interesting to note that many English-speaking people are not even aware that the original languages of the Bible are Hebrew (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament).

A similar situation applies to Confucius who became known to his followers as The Master.

Confucius is the romanized version of Kongzi which means Master Kung. Like Jesus, Confucius left no writings of his own and so we also have to rely on the accounts handed down by later generations of his disciples.

Books alleged to be written by him (*Book of Odes, Book of Ritual, Spring* and *Autumn Annals*) were actually only edited by him. Confucius wrote no works of his own.

Even the *Analects of Confucius* was written by a disciple or disciples who wrote down a collection of The Master's sayings which they began with the, now famous, phrase 'Confucius says ….'

In addition to these similarities, there are also some interesting differences between these two great teachers. The Lord emphasized the Judaic tradition of The Father in Heaven as quoted in Jesus' dying words: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit. By contrast, The Master focused on man in today's world. In particular, the relationship between man and other men. He placed no importance at all on the spirit world.

He was concerned about the real world and the obligations inherent in 'the five relationships' between (which today would not be gender specific):

father and son.

husband and wife,

older brother and younger brother,

friend and friend, and

ruler and subject.

Although power was hereditary in China, Confucius stressed that the ruler should lead from the front by setting a good example to his people. This has become known as The Golden Rule or the 'Do unto others as you wish done unto you' philosophy.

The Master's ideal was the chun-tzu or what Westerners would call 'the gentleman'.

The chun-tzu practiced daily to attain excellence in the following noble memes:

chih or integrity,

i or fairness,

chung or loyalty,

shu or cooperation,

ren or compassion.

If a ruler exemplified these virtues in all of his 'five relationships' then his rule would be a success and his people would be happy.

This is a very interesting political model and quite modern because the relationships are personal ones, not organizational ones. Of course, it is retrospectively sexist and would apply to both (or all) genders today. But the main point of the model is that behavior is governed by a bottom-up approach rather than imposed by a top-down one.

At that time, young people were to become infected with these noble memes by imitation and the good example set by the ruler, the father, the older brother and the husband. These ideals were to become internalized, and if the individual practices these memes then this spreads out in a vast word-of-mouth network to infect the state as a whole.

It's an organic model and seems to have been very successful. Throughout history, foreign visitors to the vast Chinese state have noticed and commented on its familial organization.

In China, before The Master, the state was ruled by force. Power was seized by warriors who struggled among themselves for supremacy.

They ruled the other three classes – merchants, artisans and peasants – by force.

After Confucius, there was a paradigm shift to ethical rule. The same three classes were now ruled by scholars and the Confucian ethic showed that indeed the pen can be mightier than the sword.

As we have explored in previous chapters, Western thought has been dominated by the Platonic ethic: the importance of The Truth. Eastern thought has been dominated by the Confucian ethic: the importance of The Relationship.

In the context of what we have been exploring about information viruses (or memes), about how ideas spread by word-of-mouth and about how cultures become infected by ideaviruses and memes, we can identify the following Platonic and Confucian memes:

PTV – the Plato Truth Virus, and

RMC – the Relationship Meme of Confucius.

It is interesting to understand and appreciate the different thinking strategies that have evolved out of the Plato Truth Virus and the Relationship Meme of Confucius.

In my experience, with teaching thinking across cultures, when one better understands the quintessential thinking style of a different culture it makes it easier to appreciate the unique elements of one's own.

PTV places the emphasis on having the truth, on being right. To demonstrate that one is right, in this tradition, it has turned out that the best way to do this is by showing others to be wrong.

As a result of PTV we have seen the rise of dogmatism, intolerance, arrogance and persecution. This is not what Plato intended, of course, but it is a consequence of PTV.

Our own parliamentary behavior, based on the Westminster system, is a regularly televised example of 'I-am-right-and-you-are-wrong' in action. It is often deeply embarrassing to the electors.

RMC places the emphasis on the interaction, the interchange, the connection. This fits in with contemporary media-driven trends in psychology, sociology and philosophy, where the accent is on understanding the relationships and defining the roles.

Behavior is governed less from external laws and more from internalized concepts like 'the gentleman'.

More recently are concepts of the yuppie, the Millennial, Mars/Venus, being cool, greenies' etc, and identification with brands and lifestyles.

In summary, the main difference between the Confucian ethic and the Platonic one is this:

- **The Confucian ethic is more concerned with manners and appropriate behavior. It doesn't matter so much whether you are 'right' or 'wrong' as long as you behave well.**
- **The Platonic ethic is concerned with 'truth' and whether you are in the 'right' or not. If you are 'right', then that can excuse your bad behavior because 'truth' is on your side.**

In today's shrinking world there is an overlap of PTV and RMC, as the cultural boundaries are becoming more fuzzy with globalization.

Yet the differences are still there and the 2001 US/China incident regarding the spy plane is a clear example of how the two cultures have different views of the situation.

It appears that China felt the Americans did not behave well regarding their lost pilot and protocol required an apology. While, on the other hand, America felt they were in the 'right' so they did not need to apologize.

No doubt these things are more complicated than that but it does help to get an overview if you can.

CHAPTER THIRTY

R = RECOGNITION

Recognition: an instance of acknowledging the existence, validity, character and claims of another.

–Oxford English Dictionary

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and unalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world …

–Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948.

Mammal intelligence is not the only one to discover the strategic benefits of co-operation and of mutual recognition. To make a living, other animals, plants and even bacteria play various games of cooperation and mutual recognition.

Mutual recognition is the obvious realization that what is important to me must also important to you, so let's cooperate.

No man is an island!

You're not Robinson Crusoe!

Join the club!

What goes around comes around!

Live and let live!

All for one and one for all!

Tit for tat.

E Pluribus Unum.

What does it all mean? It means I'll acknowledge your existence and the matching valid claims that arise from your existence and, in return, you'll do the same for me. Mutual recognition.

Many people have talked about the value of recognition. It's nothing new. Here are some of them:

- **Seneca:** ***He that does good to another does good also to himself.***
- **Confucius:** ***He who wished to secure the good of others, has already secured his own.***
- **Hindu Proverb:** ***Help your brother's boat across, and lo! your own has reached the shore.***
- **Richard Dawkins:** ***Nice guys finish first.***
- **Western Proverb:** ***You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours.***

- **Zig Ziglar:** ***I believe you can get everything you want in life if you just help enough other people get what they want.***
- **Marcus Aurelius:** ***Men exist for the sake of one another.***
- **Albert Einstein:** **Without deep reflection, one knows from daily life that one exists for other people.**
- **Jesus of Nazareth:** ***There was a man going from Jerusalem down to Jericho when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him, beat him up, and went off leaving him half dead. Now by coincidence a priest was going down that road; when he caught sight of him, he went out of his way to avoid him. In the same way, when a Levite came to the place, he took one look at him and crossed the***

road. But this Samaritan who was traveling that way came to where he was and was moved to pity at the sight of him. He went up to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring olive oil and wine on them. He hoisted him on to his own animal, brought him to an inn, and looked after him. The next day he took out two silver coins, which he gave to the innkeeper, and said, Look after him, and on my way back I'll reimburse you for any extra expense you have had.

Recognition can be a trading commodity which can be of value to us all. There are the three recognitions:

1. **Self: recognition of one's self.**
2. **Others: recognition of the selves of others.**
3. **System: recognition of the selves of systems.**

If we treat recognition as a commodity, then it can be earned, traded, and invested in, as are other commodities.

Recognition of one's self is a legitimate recognition of the fact of one's existence, and a creative interest in the quality of one's existence and the preservation of one's existence.

Each person recognizes the unique view that he or she has of situations, the unique way in which he or she selects and arranges information according to his or her unique experience.

Self-recognition includes the right and willingness to change the way we look at things, to seek fresh and better arrangements of information, to build a better individual world in which we can live. Valuing recognition of one's self automatically carries with it a value for the recognition of the selves of others.

We recognize their reciprocal rights; their right to a unique view of situations; their right to the way they select and arrange information according to their unique experience; their right to live in their own worlds, as we live in ours.

Recognition of others includes the right and willingness to help them change the way they look at things, to help them seek fresh and better arrangements of information, to help them build better individual worlds in which they can live. Better, of course, in THEIR view. This is not merely the imposition of our view with the claim that since our view is 'right' for us, then it should also be 'right' for them.

Recognition of others is the valuing and appreciation of plurality and of a variety of opinions. Live and let live.

Recognition of the system means realizing that, on balance, if we are all to enjoy the maximum recognition as individuals, give goes along with take. System recognition means understanding the paradox of structure and freedom.

It is only with the structure of the bridge that we enjoy the freedom to cross the ravine.

This paradox also means the freedom of productivity that comes with an electronic structure like the internet; the freedom of a higher income that comes with the structure of acquiring new and more useful skills and strategies; the freedom of competence, confidence and performance that comes with the structure of discipline, practice and repetition.

Recognition of systems makes possible the optimal recognition of others, which in turn multiplies the recognition we can enjoy for ourselves.

Example:

Imagine there are ten people in a spaceship hurtling through space. First, if every individual passenger decides to recognize himself or herself, then each can enjoy the recognition of one person, his or her own self. Second, if every individual passenger decides to recognize the other passengers, each can enjoy the recognition of ten people, his or her own … PLUS that of nine others. Third, this spaceship is really a classic social system; if each passenger decides to recognize the system, then the system can continue to provide safety, progress, happiness, cooperation, and a feeling of self-importance or self-worth for all on board.

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

H = HUMOUR

Q. How many Surrealists does it take to change a light bulb?

A. A butterfly!

Humour involves the appreciation of oddness. In humor there is the willingness to enjoy seeing the OTHER SIDE of things, the willingness to see fresh points of view, to see them and appreciate them without necessarily feeling the need to adopt them as one's own.

Oscar Wilde suggested: *Selfishness is not living as one wishes to live; it is asking others to live as one wishes to live.*

Selfishness always aims at uniformity of type. Unselfishness recognizes infinite variety of type as a delightful thing, accepts it, acquiesces in it, enjoys it. Humour, includes flexibility in the way we can look at information, the humor of creativity and the humor of insight. Humour means seeing things in a different way. Appreciating the value of differences. Not just trying to make everything conform, not trying to force star-shaped pegs into box holes.

To do this, we have to cut off the star bits and often, by doing this, we lose the biggest added-value that the star shape has to offer. While conforming has its value, starring has its added-value. You'll remember we discussed earlier that the 'habit of adding value' is what Quality is all about. Humour also embraces exploration and experiment and the willingness to create 'mistakes' and to be surprised.

It also encompasses the ability to enjoy oneself, as well as humility. Humour allows freedom from arrogance, self-righteousness, hypocrisy, and false morality.

Humour is also freedom from self-bullying and the bullying of others.

There's the humor of wisdom, the humor of balance and tolerance, the humor of plurality. The enjoyment of surprise, chance and variety. The good mood, the sound of laughter, good humor and good health.

Humour involves the appreciation of surprise. That's why it's said that God mustn't have a sense of humor. The argument goes that if we define a God as omniscient (knows everything) then that God cannot be surprised. So, He/She cannot have a sense of humor. Whether or not this is true, God knows!

What is true is that we're not gods, we're not know-it-alls. We are humans and we are most human when we are surprised.

For this reason, one of my TV favorites when I was a kid was those vignettes from shows like *Candid Camera*. I've never failed to laugh heartily and never failed to shed a tear at the wonderful mix of cleverness, vulnerability, surprise and laughter.

In 1918, George Meredith, literary critic, wrote in *An Essay on Comedy* that the 'Comic Spirit' is like a social guardian angel to help us whenever men *'wax out of proportion, overblown, affected, pretentious, bombastical, hypocritical, pedantic; whenever it sees them self-deceived or hood-winked, given to run riot, planning shortsightedly, plotting dementedly'.*

DH Munro in his *Argument of Laughter* (1951) says that delight in what is new and fresh and a desire to escape from boredom and monotony are important aspects of what is meant by a sense of humor.

Arthur Koestler, in *The Act of Creation* (1964), compares the creative insights of humor to be similar to the insights of poetry and science. The logical pattern of the creative process is the same in all three cases, says Koestler and that laughter is what follows when two incompatible or incongruous frames of reference are joined.

For example: He was an old lion-killer. The problem was there were no more old lions left to kill, so he started killing young lions, with a club. The problem was there were fifty of them in the club.

Or, Father Cannibal: Sorry I'm late, have I missed dinner?

Mother Cannibal: Yes, everybody's eaten.

Or, A prisoner is playing cards with his guards. On discovering that he's been cheating they kick him out of jail.

Cognitive scientists like Piaget and Chomsky pay a lot of attention to the subject of humor, and their findings are contributing both to our understanding of human language and human behavior. As humor is so uniquely a human phenomenon, the more we understand about it the more we understand things like CONTRADICTIONS and PARADOXES and human thinking in general.

Recently, interest in humor is developing among mathematicians who see connections between pure mathematics and catastrophe theory and the

patterns of humor. An account of this is presented in John Allen Paulos' *Mathematics and Humour* (1980). And also, in physics and science, the similarities between the structure of humor and the structure of scientific breakthroughs have also been observed (Thomas Kuhn in *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 1970).

Sometimes things change. They say the only thing that doesn't change is change itself. Change can be sudden and cataclysmic, like the Kobe earthquake, or slow and unnoticeable like a friend's weight loss program. But change is change and sometimes things may never be the same again.

When I think of change in this way, I'm often reminded of the TWTTIN phrase – That Was Then … This Is Now! – and of the humor that often accompanies this kind of change in circumstances.

About thirty-five years ago in Pasadena, California, Edward de Bono and I were having a meal with a couple of famous scientists who had become interested in the work of the School of Thinking and had invited us to lunch.

One was Paul MacCready, who invented the Gossamer Albatross which had won the prize for man-powered flight across the English Channel. The other was Murray Gell-Mann who had won a Nobel Prize for his discovery of the quark.

We came to discuss the role that creativity plays in scientific discovery.

This led to a discussion about sudden insights like the Aha! phenomenon and then, inevitably, to the subject of humor. Murray Gell-Mann began to laugh and then he told us his dog story.

At that time, Murray explained that he had two Doberman dogs and a fruit-laden avocado pear tree. One of the dobermans liked to eat the avocados when they fell from the tree, the other doberman didn't care for the avocados at all. Murray's problem was to stop the first dog from eating his avocados. He tried a number of things but to no avail. But being the scientist that he is, he didn't give up. Then he had an idea … Aha! Murray sprinkled cayenne pepper on an avocado to see if the dog would still eat it, the dog wouldn't touch it.

So, triumphantly, he then sprinkled cayenne pepper on all the avocados that had fallen on the ground to teach the dog a lesson that avocados are for humans who are smarter than dogs, anyway.

The change in circumstances worked, more or less. The avocado-eating dog never ate another avocado.

However, the other dog now began to eat all the avocados. He liked them now that they were laced with cayenne pepper!

…

Question: But, how is all this helpful to you, as a clever necktop user, in a practical way, today?

Answer: Productivity!

Whether you're in the factory, at school, at home, in sport, in the laboratory or on the stock market the structure of humor is identical to the structure of quantum leaps, paradigm shifts, changes of mind, CVS TO BVS, innovation, risk-taking with their subsequent rise in productivity.

Above all, the clever company must have a sense of humor. The business enterprise must have a culture that encourages surprise, experimentation, learning and the continual search for a BVS.

This is what is meant by QRH, the balance between the virtues of Quality, Recognition and Humour.

If a company cannot learn to escape from its own experience, then it's stuck with it. There's either moving ahead or falling behind. Moving ahead with leaps of productivity is fun to do. Falling behind, failing and laying-off people is no fun at all.

How would one describe the style of a clever brainuser? … QRH.

How would one describe the environment of a clever family? … QRH.

How would one describe the culture of a clever company? … QRH.

How would one describe the policies of a clever country? … QRH.

QRH Styleware is another mind tool. If it becomes a habit of thinking it will help you develop your necktop to its fuller potential. Oh! and by the way, it's a great antidote to PTV.

PTV can't cope with QRH.

STYLEWARE

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CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

PRR Personal Trainer

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PRACTICE REPETITION REHEARSAL

In my business I often get asked in media interviews and seminars questions like, 'What is the ultimate strategy for success?'

Everyone, understandably, wants a quick fix, a secret passage, a short-cut.

If there really is a short-cut. If there really is a secret passage. If there really is a genuine answer to such a question, I think it is what I have called PRR, which stands for Practice-Repetition-Rehearsal.

A pattern is something that is repeated more often than random chance. To develop new patterns of thinking your brain needs repetition to build the new pattern.

This is such an important strategy for your personal success that we will devote this whole lesson to it.

I had the pleasure of advising Jack Welch when he was Chairman of General Electric and he used to say,

'You've got to be out in front of crowds, repeating yourself over and over again, never changing your message no matter how much it bores you'.

In a patterning system, like your biological necktop, PRR (pronounced: 'pee double-are') is the ultimate strategy for building the deep executive patterns that you choose to override the weaker ones.

PRR is like your own personal trainer. When you use the PRR necktop software, you always improve. What new insights are you developing on the subject of PRR? Do you understand the strategic relationship between PRR and skill development?

Do you understand that when it comes to acquiring virtuosity in any human skill the #1 strategy is PRR?

The most successful people in the end are those whose success is the result of steady accretion. It is the one who carefully advances step by step, with his mind becoming wider and wider – progressively able to grasp any theme or situation – persevering in what he knows to be practical, and concentrating his thoughts upon it, who is bound to succeed in the greatest degree.

–Alexander Graham Bell.

I first learned about the real power of PRR in the Australian army in 1967.

During the Viet Nam era the Australian army established the Officer Training Unit for national service (draftee) officers at a place called *Scheyville*, west of Sydney.

It cost the Australian Government millions of dollars to train these men (regrettably women weren't invited then) as officer cadets and to put them through the country's top leadership program for 22 weeks.

On my very first night there we had Leadership Lecture Number One and it was held in the theatre for the combined classes of intake 3 of 67 consisting of a total of 123 new officer cadets.

This inaugral leadership lecture at the Officer Training Unit was given by one of the most impressive Australian soldiers I was ever to meet in my two-years as a national service soldier and Vietnam veteran.

He was subsequently to become the most important leadership mentor in all the 45 years of my career,

both military and professional, although I hardly realized it at the time.

This was Colonel Ian Geddes, the 'Father of Scheyville'. He was the founder and Commandant of the Officer Training Unit for national servicemen and others during the Vietnam War.

Geddes was not only a distinguished officer and a gentleman but also an educator *par excellance*.

His distinguished career as a leadership educator in the ADF later earned him the Brigadier position of Chief of Staff of the Army's Training Command by the time he retired in 1976.

The first thing Commandant Geddes told us was that we were special, maybe in the top 1% of all army recruits.

Then he explained his first lesson about leadership that I've come to call 'The Geddes Pipeline'.

The Geddes Pipeline is a fundamental lesson about commitment: about making a promise and then keeping that promise even (especially) when you no longer want to do so. He said I would be entering a pipeline of specialised leadership training that had cost the Australian taxpayer a big investment of many millions of dollars. The Colonel explained that the personal benefits of this leadership training were something that I could only evaluate after the fact, after at least a month of practise, repetition and rehearsal and not before. So, if I choose to enter the pipeline I couldn't leave before the 30-day pipeline of PRR was over. After then I could ask to leave at any time.

This leadership training idea is one of the cleverest in any kind of training program I've ever encountered.

Today we still use the 30-day Geddes Pipeline in the School of Thinking's leadership training.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

The Rehearsal

October 19, 1986. Driving from Manhattan to upstate New York on that late-autumn Sunday, I remember thinking, 'Well, this may be my last day alive but it certainly is a gorgeous one!' I was headed for New Paltz, orchard country, and wherever you looked there were trees all ablaze in the fall colors of reds, ochers, browns, citruses and the bluest sky I could ever recall seeing. Or perhaps it was simply fear that had heightened my senses.

On arriving at the farm, my friend and host, Carl Zatz, met me with a hearty welcome telling me how pleased he was that I actually showed up.

‘Since you're here, you should do an AFF!’ says Carl, and before I could ask what an AFF was, he launched into the introductions of the group of about ten ‘first-timers’ waiting for the commencement of the morning's instruction. By lunchtime we had covered everything and the instructor said, ‘OK. You can all break for lunch now and wait for your turn. Oh ... not you Michael, you're going to do an AFF!’

I was immediately escorted off by two new instructors who suddenly emerged and as I looked, a little startled, back at my classmates, they waved at me with a blend of curiosity and relief as I was led away. I knew then, that I should have made much stronger inquiries as to the meaning of AFF.

‘Well, you can forget everything you learned in this morning's class because you will be doing an AFF – Accelerated Free Fall.

I'm Brendan Kennedy, your Main Side Jumpmaster, and this is your Reserve Side Jumpmaster' **… and in the fearful apprehension that blocked out my hearing I never did catch the other fellow's name.**

My understanding had always been that, for a first time parachute jump, you went up to around 3000 feet, jumped, and a static-line opened your chute automatically as you left the plane. However, an AFF, as I was now being told, meant going up to 12,500 feet and jumping from the plane, free-falling for 50 seconds and then popping your own chute, all on the first jump. The two jumpmasters would also jump with me on either side ... just in case.

It's difficult to adequately describe the lack of enthusiasm that I was now feeling for the whole idea of jumping but since I had committed myself to

the AFF, I was even less enthusiastic about canceling out.

There were some background reasons as to why I felt this way but it's enough to say that I found myself deep in a dilemma. And I made the decision that the only way to go was ... up.

This is exactly how I thought through the decision. First, I'll complete the training they plan to give me. That may make me feel better as I'll understand what's involved. Second, I presume these guys (both qualified US Parachute Association Jumpmasters) know their job and if I follow meticulously everything they tell me, then I should be OK. Third, in addition to the training they give me, I will do ten more rehearsals of my own, before I go up.

The training took about two hours after which they asked me to wait for my turn.

Mine would be the last jump of the day because of the extra height to 12,500 feet and they wanted to do all the others before me.

It was 1430 and I would go up around 1700 feet. So, I went behind the barn and started to rehearse the drill they had taught me, ten more times.

The drill was called a Circle of Attention. It involved focusing one's attention around a circle which included the horizon, focused eye contact with the jumpmasters on either side of me, the altimeter for height, and the drill for popping the chute.

During the 50 seconds of my free fall, I was meant to do the sequence twice as a practice, and on the third time to actually pull the handle on the rip-cord and pop the chute. All in all, not a terribly difficult thing to do ... in theory.

The only distraction was that I would be hurtling to earth at maximum speed and, for obvious reasons, needed to do it right the first time.

So I rehearsed the sequence ten times. I did this quite deliberately as a practical application of the PRR strategy we have been talking about this past few chapters.

I did these extra rehearsals knowing from military experience that they would make me very proficient at the drill and much more likely to be able to do it well, even in the highly emotional situation of my free fall.

After kitting up in the suit and parachute, we boarded the plane. I sat on a bench on the left side of the plane, opposite the special jump door on the right side. My two jumpmasters sat very close to me, on either side.

They were very hyped up and there was a great deal of ‘Let's go do it!’ and ‘You look great, Mike’.

Presumably this was to keep my spirits up, keep me occupied and stop me from pulling out, something that I very much would have liked to have done if the cost to my self-esteem hadn't been so prohibitive.

Eventually the plane reached the final circuit and leveled off at 12,500 feet. They opened the jump door and it seemed the whole side came off the plane. Now the sound of the cold air rushing by was roaring in my ears, arcing up the fear threshold, and as I peered out, the earth seemed just like a map. It was really, really high. You couldn't make out cars or houses just the geometric shapes of the fields and the long silver snake of a river reflecting the rays of the setting sun.

Then the Main Jumpmaster said something that really threw me.

Something that I hadn't rehearsed and something that sent an ice cold wave of panic throughout my body. He said, *'Get into position!'*

This entailed getting up off the bench, moving across to the other side of the aircraft and sitting on the edge of the plane with my legs outside the door, ready to jump. If I could have spoken at all, I would have said 'No!' but the terror that gripped me was overwhelming. I knew I would jump, but the thought of falling out accidentally while getting into position really got to me – I hadn't rehearsed getting into position and that was what scared me the most. I only hoped I was not showing the anxiety I felt and tried to look reasonably cool.

Somehow I managed to get into position.

Now I was sitting with legs a-dangling, 12,500 feet above the earth, cold air rushing past, about to jump out of a perfectly good airplane. I was so cross with myself for putting myself in such an unnecessary position, but the time had come. The Main Jumpmaster, now sitting tightly to my left, looked at me for positive eye contact. The man on my right then did the same.

With a thumbs-up signal we began the drill: lean forward, lean back, then forward again and out of the plane.

I lost it for the first few seconds. The sheer quantity of new information being presented to me made me brown out. But then I snapped to again and continued the drill: check the horizon ... now, positive eye contact with the jumpmaster on my left. Wow! Look at his face.

His skin is flapping and rippling just like the astronauts. I suppose mine must be doing the same. He looks me right in the eye and acknowledges my consciousness with a grin and a friendly thumbs-up sign.

Drill: I then do the same with the man on my right. He makes me feel good with a firm acknowledgment that I'm OK and doing fine ... check the altimeter - 1000 feet ... and then, repeat the drill, just like I rehearsed it.

Well, I just can't adequately explain the thrill that came with knowing that I was flying through the air like a bird, that everything was going just as planned, that I was in control and ... no fear. And it was exquisite. The sun was setting to my left and the colors were vibrating in their atmospheric intensity.

Ultra blues and pinks and shafts of solar lasers streaking here and there.

As I continued the drills, the sheer ecstasy of flight became a euphoric high that bathed my whole being, replacing the cold panic that had been there only seconds ago. After 3/4 of a minute of free flight and approaching 5000 feet it was time to pop my chute and break from formation with my 'guardian angels'. I found the steel handle of the rip-cord with my right hand and, as I balanced out by holding my left hand straight ahead, I pulled the handle. Whoosh! Everything suddenly changed. Not flying ... hanging. Not fast ... slow. Not watched ... alone. And now I could see what I'd done. Wow! ... I'd really done it and I was very pleased with myself.

Now, the radio on my shoulder strap began to crackle.

The ground controller began to give the instructions for me to fly the chute towards the landing zone.

The next few minutes consisted of left turns and right turns and 180◦s, as I manipulated the controls of the chute. Finally, pull both hands down and a stall for the landing. I landed fine on both feet and it was all over. As my jumpmasters and others ran towards me yelling and whooping and taking photographs, I began to feel myself grin and grin and grin and grin.

Whether the grin lasted five days or only four is a detail which wasn't officially recorded. What was recorded in my USPA Log Book was a rating of 'Excellent' and recommendation to the next jump level, thanks to the strategy of ten rehearsals!

There must be something coming up for you soon that's really important for you to try and get an excellent result for yourself.

It may be a chance for you to use PRR to plan a rehearsal and increase your own chances of getting the result you want.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

Heads in the Cloud

Who are you? Are you an entrepreneur, a knowledge-worker, a propeller-head, a scientist, a working mother, a researcher, an academic, a sex-worker, an engineer, a grandparent, or maybe a salesperson or an actor?

Perhaps you're in business or still at school or an undergraduate? Are you retired, a politician, in the media, the military or a member of a religious order? Are you a neuro-surgeon, an engineer, a retiree or perhaps a croupier in a casino?

The point is this.

Whoever you are, whatever you are doing, wherever you live in today's world, your life, your

options and your future is being determined today, tomorrow and every day, in one unique environment. The boardroom.

More than ever before in history, decisions that are being made in the boardrooms of multi-national corporations today are producing the world you will live in tomorrow.

Political systems are becoming obsolescent. War, an extension of politics, is also becoming less viable. Today's world is being powered more by profit than by dogma. In the 21st century, more battles will be fought in boardrooms than on all the battlefields of human history.

Whether this is better or worse remains to be seen but it is a fact that needs to be understood. As always, if you don't do your own thinking, others will do it for you.

So what does all this mean to you? How do you fit in? Where do you get to have an input? What can you do? What do you need to know? What skills do you need to develop? Let's start at the top ...

How does a CEO make a strategic business decision? How does an executive form an opinion on the balance between a return on an allocation of resources and the potential risk involved? How do bankers or investors decide to invest their capital and how do they weigh up the balance between the hoped for Return On Investment (ROI) and the possible loss of their capital? How do they 'see' a business?

On what basis is their 'perception' of the business formed? How do they get a map of a business?

Amazingly, most of today's investment and business decisions are still based on an invention that has not yet been updated for over 500 years!

In Venice in 1494, Fra Luca Pacioli invented double-entry bookkeeping, and published the world's first textbook on accounting principles and practice. Ever since, this has been the basis of investment decisions. Double-entry bookkeeping shows a map of how money and goods flow through a business.

This allowed investors and business people to 'see' a business, evaluate risk and return and then form an opinion on whether or not to make an investment.

In those days, even on through the industrial revolution, a business consisted of ‘things’.

Things are tangibles like property, buildings, inventories, cash in the bank and so on.

So the double-entry bookkeeping system seemed like a useful way of organizing one's view of the ebb and flow of these tangibles and one simply accepted this way of looking at things and then went on to make one's investment decision.

That was then, this is now. Since the knowledge and information revolutions, it's hard to imagine how young business people could be misled more than to be given the impression that this is what today's businesses are still made up of – tangibles.

Yet we find that in business colleges and MBA programs around the world the medieval measurement, the 'double-entry' view of a business, is still being taught as though it were enough.

We are now well into the new millennium and we all have smartphones and iPads that can do a billion computations a second and we are still using pre-

Enlightenment methods to make our business decisions. In the next few years, this will have to change.

In knowledge-based companies what does the traditional accounting system capture? Hardly anything. The old accounting system is blind to knowledge-based assets and is often limited to just considering labor and material costs. In today's fastest-growing, market-responsive businesses, the cost components of many products are intellectual capital like R&D and customer-service.

As clever companies increasingly recognize their intellectual assets, they will increasingly direct their attention to developing these IC assets and raising the innovation intelligence of their enterprise.

These 'far-seeing enterprises' will be exploiting, managing and measuring the primary ingredient of their economic performance. Their IC assets of information, knowledge and skill will be formalized, captured and leveraged to produce higher-valued assets, higher performance and a more profitable enterprise.

Also, hi-tech manufacturing companies of today and tomorrow will derive most of their value added from knowledge and skill. This will have to be accountable. Those businesses that are not accounting for their intellectual capital will be under-valued and left behind.

That’s why, in business, people are now becoming more important than money. IC is becoming the most valuable asset of many corporations.

IC accounting is how a modern business gets a more accurate view of its people assets when knowledge is its chief resource.

Suppose you are an investor. You can form a more useful and realistic perception of companies like Apple, Facebook and Google by accounting for their 'soft' IC assets than you can by merely accounting for their 'hard' assets like their office buildings, cash and equipment.

FACT: The value of the tangible (money) assets on today's balance sheet is exceeded many times by the value of the IC (people) assets of the enterprise.

FACT: The intellectual capital of the enterprise is the raw material from which all financial results are derived.

FACT: The intellectual capital owned by the enterprise can be measured, managed and

developed, along with the financial capital and tangible assets currently recorded on the balance sheet of the enterprise.

And so, it is probably a good place to end this book on this note about the value of people, of knowledge-workers, and the future development of their innovation intelligence. Because at this time in 2017, and from here on, the future looks very promising.

When it comes to human productivity, two heads are always better than one and that means networking in the Cloud.

Humans have been good at cooperating socially for a very long time and we've always developed tools to maximize these skills, from smoke signals and message-sticks to email and social networking. These have all been tools for our head.

Knowledge tools and communications tools and cooperation tools. Now we have the Cloud for the next big leap forward.

Cloud computing makes it ten times easier for everyone to optimize their cooperation with one another. Cloud computing means that instead of needing to have all the products for networking, you now only need the service – which is provided in the Cloud. There is no need to buy and install expensive software.

Many cloud platforms, like Wordpress, aWeber and Weibo, are offered free of charge. The need to pay for extensive disk space is also removed.

With cloud computing, you subscribe to the software, rather than buying it outright. You only pay for it when you need it, and it can be quickly scaled up and down according to demand when

there are temporary spikes such as Spring Festival or Christmas, for example.

In the early days of the internet we used to call it Cyberia or cyberspace. Today, you can access the Cloud (internet) with your smartphone or tablet or PC. Cloud computing offers the 3As. Anyone, anytime, anywhere … can have their head in the Cloud.

For the business enterprise it offers a big opportunity to raise the innovation intelligence of the enterprise.

Because it means that staff can access the information they need to do their knowledge work from home, on the road, from a client's office. They can work collaboratively on documents, discuss business and make decisions in real time, even when they are not together at the office.

The Cloud provides these opportunities more flexibly, much faster and for much less cost and labor than ever before in human history. Cloud computing is going to play a significant role in job creation. Research predicts that cloud-enabled innovations may generate nearly 14 million jobs and $1.1 trillion in revenue across industries around the world. About 1.4 million of those jobs could be in the banking industry alone.

Because cloud computing offers so many efficiencies the IC resources resulting from these efficiencies can be applied to projects, innovation and job creation in other areas, such as sales, finance, production and marketing.

As enterprises create innovations with cloud technology, they will be free to reappropriate capital to higher growth areas which will allow them

to expand their business and hire more knowledge-workers.

More knowledge-workers, that is, with much more powerful apps for intelligence and much better software for their brain!

THE SOFTWARE FOR YOUR BRAIN

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Glossary of the Brain Software

SDNT

Start Do Notice Think

cvs2bvs

current view of the situation TO better view of the situation

QRH

Quality Recognition Humour

PRR

Practise Repetition Rehearsal

x10

tenpower is the skill of using decimals to disrupt information patterns, in or out

CASE STUDY:

GE x10

Larry Page lives by the gospel of 10x. Most companies are happy to improve by 10%. Not the CEO of Google. Page says a 10% improvement means you're basically doing the same as everybody else. But Page expects his employees to create products and services that are 10 times better than the competition.

- (Steven Levy, WIRED magazine. Cover story, February 2013).

The now famous WIRED cover story was about how Larry Page 'lives by the gospel of x10'. But how did Larry Page first hear about x10 Thinking? Larry Page got x10 from Jack Welch of GE.

Here's the story which I'm often asked to relate. I tell it because it's a hopeful story of how things CAN actually change.

At the beginning of the 80s in the USA I co-founded the School of Thinking and designed the Learn-To-Think Project whose mission was: to get thinking placed on the curriculum as a school subject. With my co-founder, Edward de Bono, we worked with many government bodies, foundations and school districts while we developed programs for the direct teaching of thinking as a skill. We developed the Six Thinking Hats method for teaching thinking. This method is still being taught in many schools around the world. Continuously since then School of Thinking has been responsible for the global distribution of more than half a billion thinking lessons.

In 1982 I co-authored, with Edward de Bono, *The Learn-to-Think Coursebook and Instructors Manual* (ISBN 0884961990).

Within a year our book became the cover story of an international *Readers Digest* special edition which reached 68 million readers worldwide!

In New York in 1984, I first published the x10 thinking brain software in my book *NewSell* (ISBN 0932648568) which was later said to be twenty years ahead of its time.

Although it was provocative and heretical it was also well-received. IBM was the first of the Fortune 500 to take it up. IBM Europe then sent a corporate jet to New York to fly me to Monte Carlo for two weeks to present x10 thinking to all their senior executives and R&D leaders.

I was even invited to give a private presentation to HSH Albert, The Crown Prince of Monaco.

Then IBM invited their executive clients from around the world to my x10 presentation along with 12 translators. It was like a mini-UN meeting!

After that, the word got around: *The New York Times. The Wall Street Journal. USAir Magazine*. Radio, TV etc.

More presentations were sought by Fortune 500 corporations like Borg-Warner senior executives in Bermuda, by State Farm Insurance in Las Vegas and also by the YPO HQ in Texas and their various chapters around the USA.

Because the *Readers Digest* story was also featured in the Arabic edition, Saudia Airlines invited me to lecture to their senior executive team for four days in Jeddah.

Soon after, I was invited by Jack Welch, Chairman of GE, to present to his senior managers at a GE Leaders Conference on Marco Island in the Gulf of Mexico.

Immediately after my *GE x10* presentation Jack jumped up and took the floor. He said to his team: *"x10 is the simplest idea in the world. But, it's not easy. We've gotta reach, we've gotta stretch, we've gotta go for the x10!"*

From the beginning, Jack became very enthusiastic about x10 thinking. He was a great lateral thinker. I found him to be an open-minded CEO of great discernment.

After the conference I flew back to New York with Jack in his big jet. Together we planned a project to expand *GE x10* and teach it to his wider GE leadership team.

The plan was to spread x10 thinking throughout GE via two GE resources: the GE Leadership Meetings, and the GE Leadership Academy.

Over the next 4 years (with a theatre quality produced, 30 slide-projector multi-media show) I travelled the GE world far and wide from Greenwich to Acapulco.

To GE leadership conferences and to the GE Leadership Academy at *Crotonville* giving presentations and masterclasses on x10 thinking.

Even today, 30 years later, I'm delighted to be contacted by former GE executives who google x10 and track me down to tell me things like: *"x10 thinking changed my life, my career and my golf game. I even taught it to my kids".*

It's a real buzz.

Now, looking back since the 1980s we can see the viral spread of the x10 meme and it's worth noting: Jack Welch of GE was a master of x10 thinking. He nicknamed it 'boundaryless thinking" and also "boundarylessness'.

By the time he left Jack had grown the company from a market value of $14 billion to a market value of $410 billion making it the most valuable company in the history of the world.

Our dream for the 1990s,"* Welch wrote in GE's 1990 annual report, *"is a boundaryless company where we knock down the walls that separate us from each other on the inside and from our key constituencies on the outside.

In his book about his time at GE *Jack: Straight From the Gut* (2001) he wrote about the x10 software code, cvs2bvs, that *"it would make each of us wake*

up with the goal of "Finding a Better Way Every Day". It was a phrase that became a slogan, put up on the walls of GE factories and offices around the world. It was the essence of our boundaryless behaviour, and it defined our expectations".

Famous for the little handwritten notes he would send to people, Jack sent me several and the one I prized most said simply: ***"Michael, you are a friend of our company".***

Since then, thousands of companies in the US and around the world have used ideas from the GE Model. Scores of Fortune 500 companies emulated the leadership example and transformation model set by Jack Welch at GE.

In 1999, Fortune magazine named him "Manager of the Century".

A library of business volumes, Harvard Business Review articles and other media have been written about Jack's *value-driven* transformation of his company.

Using his cutting-edge strategies, like Six Sigma, Work Out, and Boundarylessness. Jack has helped to develop more leaders than any other CEO in business history.

That I know of, the Jack Welch era at GE produced CEOs for Honeywell, 3M, Boeing, Intuit, Symantec, Home Depot, Chrysler, Siemans and Merck.

According to USA Today the top three companies for producing CEOs of other Fortune 500 companies are GE (26), IBM (18) and McKinsey (16).

Today, Larry Page of Google is the best proponent of x10 thinking and today Google is the most valuable company in the world.

Page says he *"lives by the gospel of x10"* (WIRED, Feb 2013, Cover).

Like Jack Welch, Larry Page has also nicknamed x10 thinking. He also calls it *'moonshot thinking'*.

Today, the x10 memeplex continues to spread virally around the world.

Recently on January 12, 2016, President Barak Obama announced the establishment of a *Cancer Moonshot* to accelerate cancer research and to be led by Vice President Joe Biden. President Obama has directed the Cancer Moonshot Task Force to consult international scientsts. In Melbourne, July 2016, Vice President Joseph Biden personally attended the opening of the Peter Mac Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre. His visit included an agreement between Victoria and USA to join forces in the Cancer Moonshot initiative to cure cancer.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF THINKING

- **Since 1979, School of Thinking (SOT) has disseminated over a half a billion worldwide. Today, SOT lessons are exported to members in more than 51 countries … 24/7/365.**
- **School of Thinking is a private institution of higher education for the public understanding and mastery of metacognition and lateral thinking.**
- **This school is pro-science, pro-business and pro-family. It operates in a non-sectarian, non-partisan, non-political precinct in the cloud of cyberspace.**
- **School of Thinking (SOT) is an independent school for the direct teaching of thinking, creativity, innovation, thought leadership and cognitive science.**

- **School of Thinking (SOT) offers the world's first Master of Lateral Thinking degree. Click for offer document: https://tinyurl.com/k3e63wh**
- **The four main benefits to members are better: wealth, health, productivity and security.**
- **You are welcome to visit the school anytime, anywhere: www.schoolofthinking.org**

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This is what I call a smartphone book.

It's designed to be easy to read on your smartphone and easy to pass on to your friends and colleagues.

By all means, go ahead!

With my compliments,

Michael.

x10

x10thinking

Escape from CVS

The First Law of Thinking

The Current View of the Situation (CVS)

can never be equal to

The Better View of the Situation (BVS)

CVS ≠ BVS

CVS2BVS

The Law of x10 Thinking

The CVS multiplied by ten is equal to the BVS

CVS x 10 = BVS