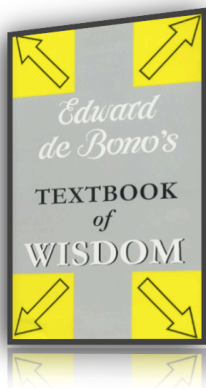


# 1 Wise about wisdom

2 From [Edward de Bono's](#) ▶ [Textbook of Wisdom](#)



## 3 # 165

4 It is time to be **wise about wisdom** and to **summarize this book**. ¶¶¶

5 'Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.' ¶¶¶

6 This well-known quotation is itself a useful piece of wisdom.

7 The 'wise' in the quotation refers to knowledge (awareness/  
information).

8 **There are times when it is better not to know everything**. ¶¶¶

9 The saying could be misinterpreted on the basis that it might indeed be  
better to be stupid and happy than wise and anxious.

10 The whole point about wisdom is that, **used effectively**, it  
**reduces your anxiety**.

11 The notion of 'stupid and happy' only refers to a **very stable world** in  
which **nothing ever goes wrong**.

12 If you are lucky enough to find such a world then stay there.

13 Otherwise **you need wisdom** to cope with difficulties. ¶¶¶

14 There is always a concern with confusion.

15 You cannot possibly remember all the points in this book.

16 Many of them you know already.

17 So there is the concern that you will get confused and be worse off than  
before as you try to 'be wise'.

18 There is also the **fear** of the **paralysis of analysis**.

19 You might analyze so much that you never make choices or decisions  
and never take action.

20 There is the concern that when you first learn to ride a bicycle it is  
difficult and you can fall off and hurt yourself. ¶¶¶

22 So wisdom may be painful in the beginning.

23 But wisdom is about 'simplifying' life.

24 The bicycle analogy is fine in terms of learning wisdom.

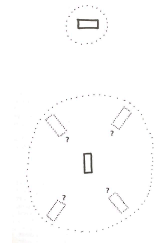
25 You have to make the effort and it may not be easy at first.

26 But the bicycle analogy is not appropriate with regards to falling off.

27 Here we are better off with the 'ice-cream' analogy.

28 You taste it and you like it.

29 You want more.



30

31 The richer and more complex the world in which you live, the more likely you are to be confused.

32 But it does not have to be so.

33

34 **# 166**

35 If you develop a gourmet taste for fine food but your finances only allow hamburgers, are you not going to be more disappointed than before you developed that taste?

36 If you do indeed become wise but your life is so dull and uneventful that there is nothing to be 'wise' about, are you not going to be frustrated?

37 **Traditionally, wise people have lived very simple lives.**

38 **Their wisdom** has allowed them to **choose simplicity.**

39 So a simple life does not exclude wisdom.

40

41 **# 167**

42 There may be a fear that a consciousness of wisdom will develop into yet another 'conscience'.

43 Like a nagging aunt there will be part of your mind that keeps telling you to 'wise up'.

44 This will be another super-pattern that comes in to advise on choices, decisions and reactions.

45 Do you want a nagging aunt? ¶¶¶

46 Since you are 'designing' this super-pattern you do not have to design it as a 'nagging aunt'. ¶¶¶

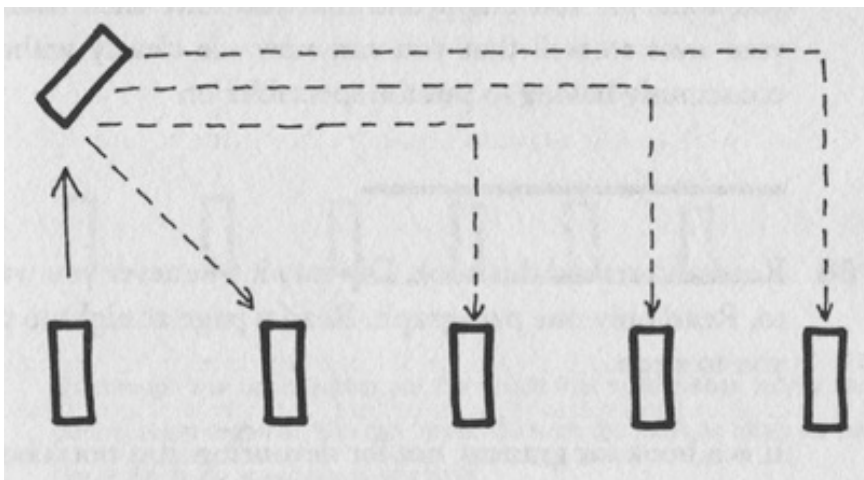
47 Far better to think of wisdom as a 'pair of super-spectacles'.

48 When you choose to put them on, the world becomes much clearer and all the details become more visible.

49 You choose to put on these spectacles whenever you want to.

50 You might find that you have then trained your eyes so well that you can now see clearly without consciously having to put the spectacles on.

51 A fear that conscience like a nagging aunt is forever observing, scolding and directing behavior ...



52

53

54 **# 168**

55 Read and reread this book.

56 Dip into it whenever you want to.

57 Read only one paragraph.

58 Read a page at night to put you to sleep. ¶¶¶

59 It is a book for grazing, not for devouring.

60 It is not a book you read through in a rush and then say: 'I have read it.'  
¶¶¶

61 You are supposed to integrate what you read here with your own  
experience and wisdom.

62 This integration takes time.

63 You are not standing looking at a picture – you are in the picture. ¶¶¶

64 There is no greater waste of time than to read through this book 'ready  
to disagree' with as much as possible of what is written.

65 That is just the childish self-indulgence that we too often esteem as  
criticism. ¶¶¶

66 We need to replace that traditional idiom of the Gang of Three with the  
analogy of a 'mine'.

67 You work the mine.

68 You get as much out of it as possible.

69 You may have to process what you get out of the mine.

70 It is up to you to find and make value. ¶¶¶

71 That there should be differences of opinion and different perspectives is  
to be expected.

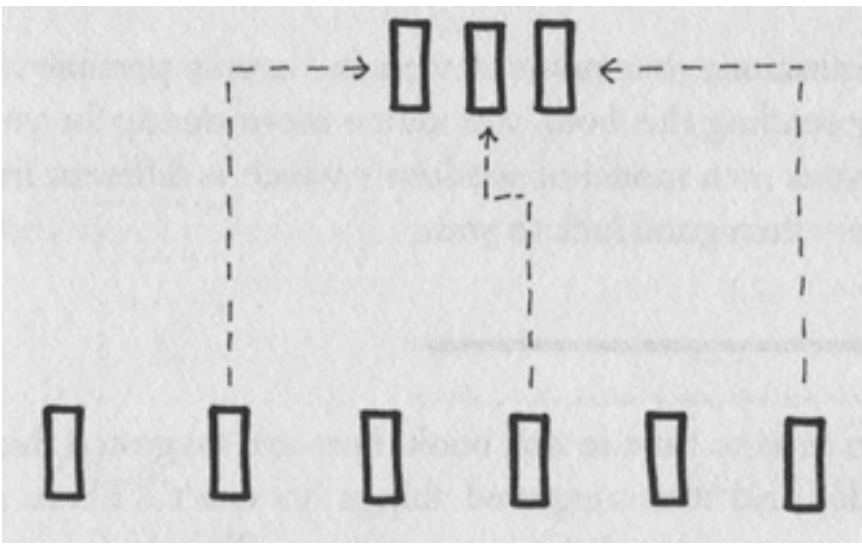
72 It is part of wisdom to expect plurality.

73 It is not part of wisdom to suppose that, by definition, your point of view  
is the only possible one.

74 If by reading this book you define more clearly for yourself your own  
model of wisdom – which is different from mine – then good luck to  
you.

75 Go through this book picking out the points that make sense to you and  
putting them together.

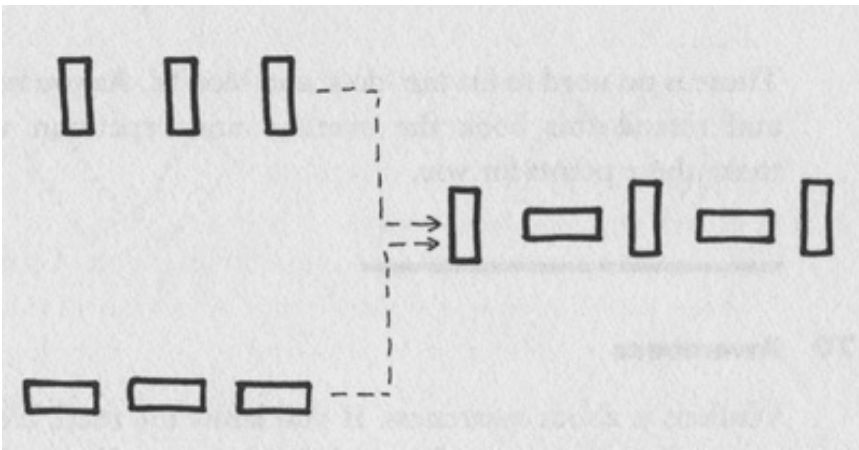
76 You can 'graze' through the book as often as you like or dip into it  
anywhere at any time



77

78 You are supposed to **integrate** what you read here with your **own experience**, rather than to choose one or the other.

79 **You use** what you find to be of value for you.



80

81 **# 169**

82 From time to time in this book there are suggested things 'to do' and also suggested things 'to don't'.

83 There are **things to avoid** and **things to seek out**.

84 There are **certain traditional habits** we have developed which **may make wisdom impossible**.

85 **Just reducing the dominance of such habits** is itself the use of wisdom.

86 There are other things, like '**possibility**', where we need to **develop new habits** or **encourage the ones we have**. ¶¶¶

87 Do you make harsh **stereotyping judgements**?

88 Perhaps you should be conscious of that habit.

89 Do you make an effort to generate and consider **alternatives**?

90 Perhaps you should seek to do this more often. ¶¶¶

91 There is **no need to list** the 'do's' and 'don'ts'.

92 **As you read and reread this book the overlays and repetition will make these points for you.**

## 93 # 170 Awareness

94 Wisdom is about awareness.

95 If you know the road, life is easier.

96 If you can see the road, life is easier.

97 If you can discover new roads, life is richer.

98 If you know you have a choice of roads, life is richer. ¶¶¶

99 Awareness can be applied to the outer world.

100 What is going on out there?

101 There may be times when the outer world is going to affect you, either as a threat or as an opportunity.

102 Seeing more clearly what is happening is always an advantage.

103 There are times when you are going to want to affect the outer world.

104 Seeing this world more clearly will enable you to design your actions more effectively. ¶¶¶

105 Awareness can be applied to the inner world.

106 How do we see the world?

107 What are our habits?

108 What am I doing right now?

109 You know what you look like in the mirror.

110 Do you have a mirror for your inner world? ¶¶¶

111 'The purpose of thinking is to arrange the inner and outer world so as to



serve and improve our values.' १११

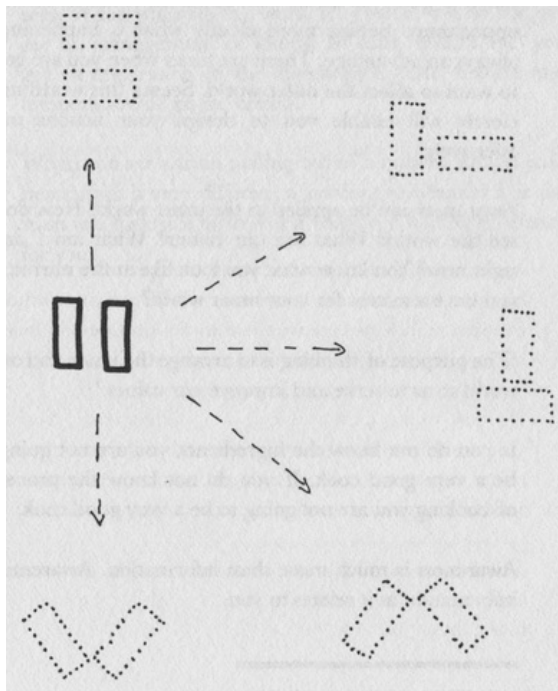
112 If you do not know the **ingredients**, you are not going to be a very good cook.

113 If you do not know the **processes** of cooking you are not going to be a very good cook. १११

114 Awareness is **much more than information**.

115 Awareness is **information as it relates to you**.

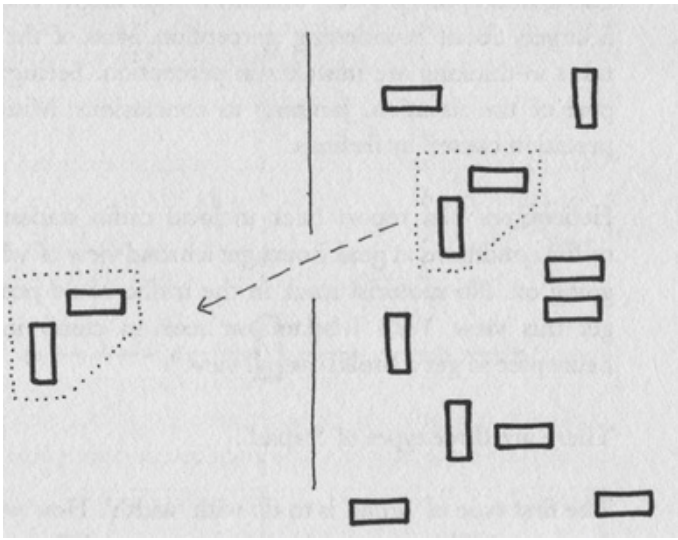
116 Wisdom is about awareness and possibilities: awareness of the world around; awareness of possibilities and choices.



117

## 118 # 171 Perception

- 119 Perception is not what the 'eye' sees but **what the 'brain' sees**.
- 120 When you read the word 'ice cream' you do not just see an arrangement of letters.
- 121 In your 'mind's eye' you get an impression of the appearance, taste, texture and temperature of an ice-cream. ¶¶¶
- 122 When you see a train pulling out of a railway station your perception is very different according to whether it is **the train you have just missed** or if that train had no relevance for you. ¶¶¶
- 123 I have often written that **we badly need a word** in our language for '**the way we look at things**'.
- 124 The nearest word is indeed '**perception**' but that is rather **too tied up with vision**.
- 125 We need a word to indicate '**the way we see things in our mind**'. ¶¶¶
- 126 **Wisdom takes place in perception**.
- 127 Within perception the **traditional rules of logic do not apply**.
- 128 We are dealing with the logic of 'flow', or 'water logic', and not the logic of 'identity', or 'rock logic' (see *Water Logic*, Penguin 1994; *I am Right - You are Wrong*, Penguin 1991). ¶¶¶
- 129 If our **perceptions** are **wrong** then no amount of logical excellence will give the right answer.
- 130 So it is a pity that almost the whole of our **traditional intellectual effort** has been directed at logic and so little at perception. ¶¶¶
- 131 Logic will not change **emotions and feelings**.
- 132 **Perception will**.
- 133 Perception is a matter of picking out the patterns that we have got used to seeing.
- 134 It becomes difficult to see things in another way unless we make the effort demanded by wisdom.



135



137 **#172 Broad**

138 Cleverness is **sharp focus**, wisdom is **wide angle**.

139 Wisdom is largely about **'broadening' perception**.

140 Most of the mistakes in thinking are mistakes in perception.

141 **Seeing only part of the situation**.

142 Jumping **to conclusions**.

143 **Misinterpretation caused by feelings**. ¶¶¶

144 Helicopters that report back to local radio stations on traffic conditions at peak hours get a broad view of what is going on.

145 No motorist stuck in the traffic could possibly get this view.

146 With wisdom we seek to climb into a helicopter to get a broad overall view. ¶¶¶

147 There are **three types** of **'broad'**. ¶¶¶

148 The first type of broad is to do with **'width'**.

149 How widely do we see?

150 This means taking into account different factors, different people, different values and different needs.

151 This is the closest to the helicopter analogy.

152 We look around in all directions, not just where we are next going to place our feet. ¶¶¶

153 The second type of broad is to do with **'depth'**.

154 This means **looking forward** and **looking backwards**.

155 We look **backwards in time to seek explanations** and reasons for **what is before us**.

156 We look backwards **to examine past experiences**, both our own and those of other people.

157 We look **forward** to see the **consequences** of what is before us.

158 This might be **prediction** in terms of what may happen.

159 It may also be **looking for the consequences** of **any action we are contemplating**.

160 We look forward from the immediate consequences to the long-term consequences. ¶¶¶

161 The third type of broad is to do with 'richness'.  
162 Here we open up alternatives and different ways of looking at things.  
163 We seek out the existing alternatives.  
164 We imagine the different viewpoints of other people.  
165 We make an effort to generate further alternatives.  
166 These are alternatives of perception and alternatives of action.  
167 We look for 'might be' and for 'possibly'.  
168 We go beyond 'what is'. ¶¶¶

169 So the aim of wisdom is to end up with a perception that is wider, deeper and richer. ¶¶¶

170 There is a considerable element of creativity in broadening perception.

171 We need creativity to direct our attention to areas we might have overlooked.

172 We need creativity to generate alternatives.

173 We need creativity to put things together in different ways.

174 We need creativity to link up with past experiences which are not so obviously relevant.

175 Creative perception is part of perception. ¶¶¶

176 One shoe salesman reported back that there was no market because no one wore shoes.

177 His companion reported back that it was a fantastic market because no one wore shoes.

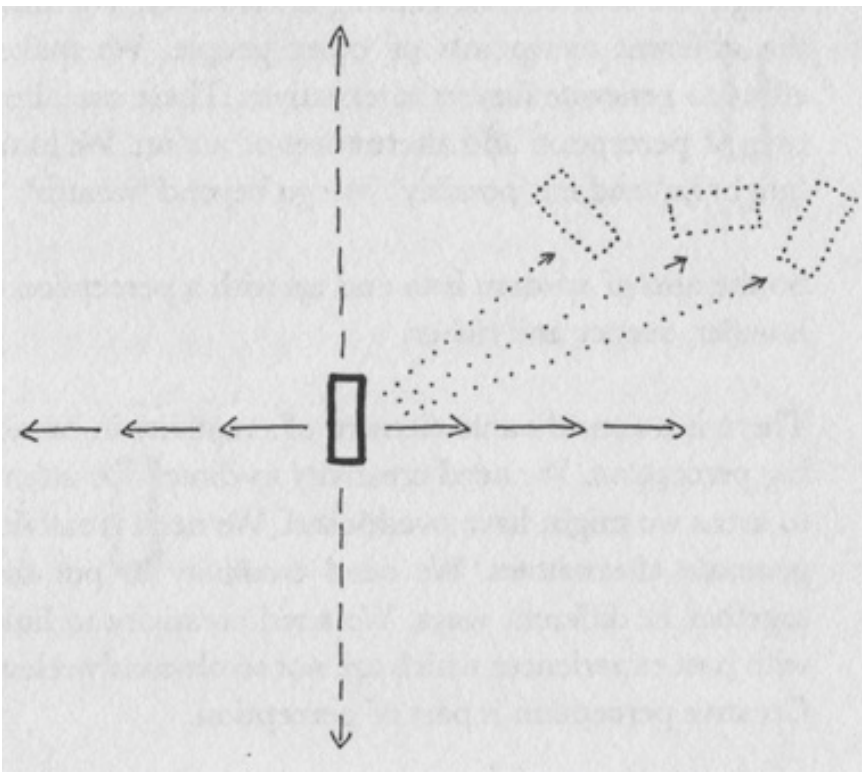
178 Wisdom is about breadth of perception.

179 There are three types of breadth.

180 1. How widely do we look? How widely do we see?

181 2. How deeply do we look? Forward, backwards and into detail.

182 3. How rich is our vision? This means possibilities, speculations, alternatives and different points of view.



183





185 **# 173 Logic Bubble**

186 'Everyone is always right – no one is ever right.' ¶¶¶¶

187 This quote comes from an earlier book (see *Future Positive*, Penguin  
1990).

188 What it means is that **at any moment** everyone is **acting logically** within  
his or her '**bubble**' of **values and perceptions**.

189 So **at that moment in time** that person is '**right**'.

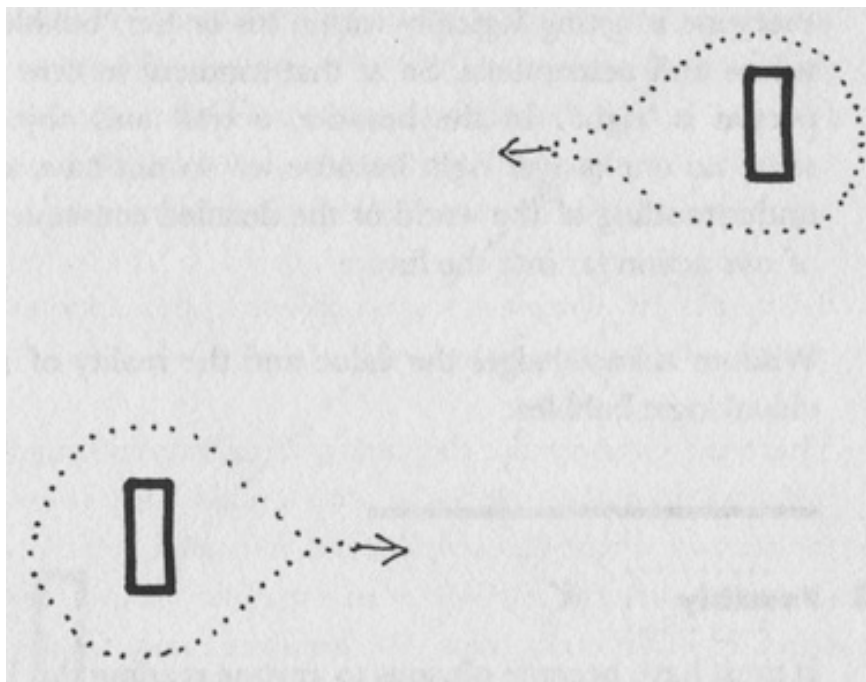
190 In the broader, overall and objective sense **no one is ever right**  
because we do not have

191 a **full understanding of the world** or

192 the **detailed consequences of our action far into the future**. ¶¶¶¶

193 Wisdom acknowledges the **value** and the **reality** of **individual logic**  
**bubbles**.

194 A logic bubble is that bubble of perceptions and values within which  
everyone acts logically.



195



## 197 # 174 Possibly

198 It must have become obvious to anyone reading this book that  
'possibly' and 'possibilities' are a **central part of wisdom**. ¶¶¶

199 'Possibly' is valuable in **two ways**. ¶¶¶

200 The first way is 'possibly' in **exploration** and **creativity**.

201 Just as the hypothesis is central to science, so **our ability to hold something in mind as 'possible'** allows us to **examine, explore, develop** and **check out** that **possibility**

202 Generating **'possible' courses of action** allows us to **choose between them**.

203 Considering **'possible' designs** allows us to **work towards them**.

204 'Possibly' is a **key driver** of **progress, change** and **human thinking**.

205 It is a pity that **traditional thinking** seems to have had little time for it, preferring the **temptation of certainty**. ¶¶¶

206 The second way that 'possible' is valuable is that it is the **best antidote** to **arrogance** and to **harsh judgements**.

207 Arrogance can assert that there is only one way.

208 'Possibly' puts forward other ways.

209 Once thought, **a thought cannot be unthought**.

210 **False judgements** can only be challenged by 'possibly'.

211 A judgement may be correct in terms of **chosen information, chosen perceptions** and **chosen values**.

212 So a logical attack on that judgement will not succeed.

213 But **'possibly'** shows **other possibilities of information, perception and values**. ¶¶¶

214 There may be **no proof** that **improvement** can be made **in an area**.

215 It is only our belief in **'possible' improvement** that gets us trying to make that improvement. ¶¶¶

216 Unless we become **skilled in 'possibly'** we shall always remain far behind the full use of our experience.

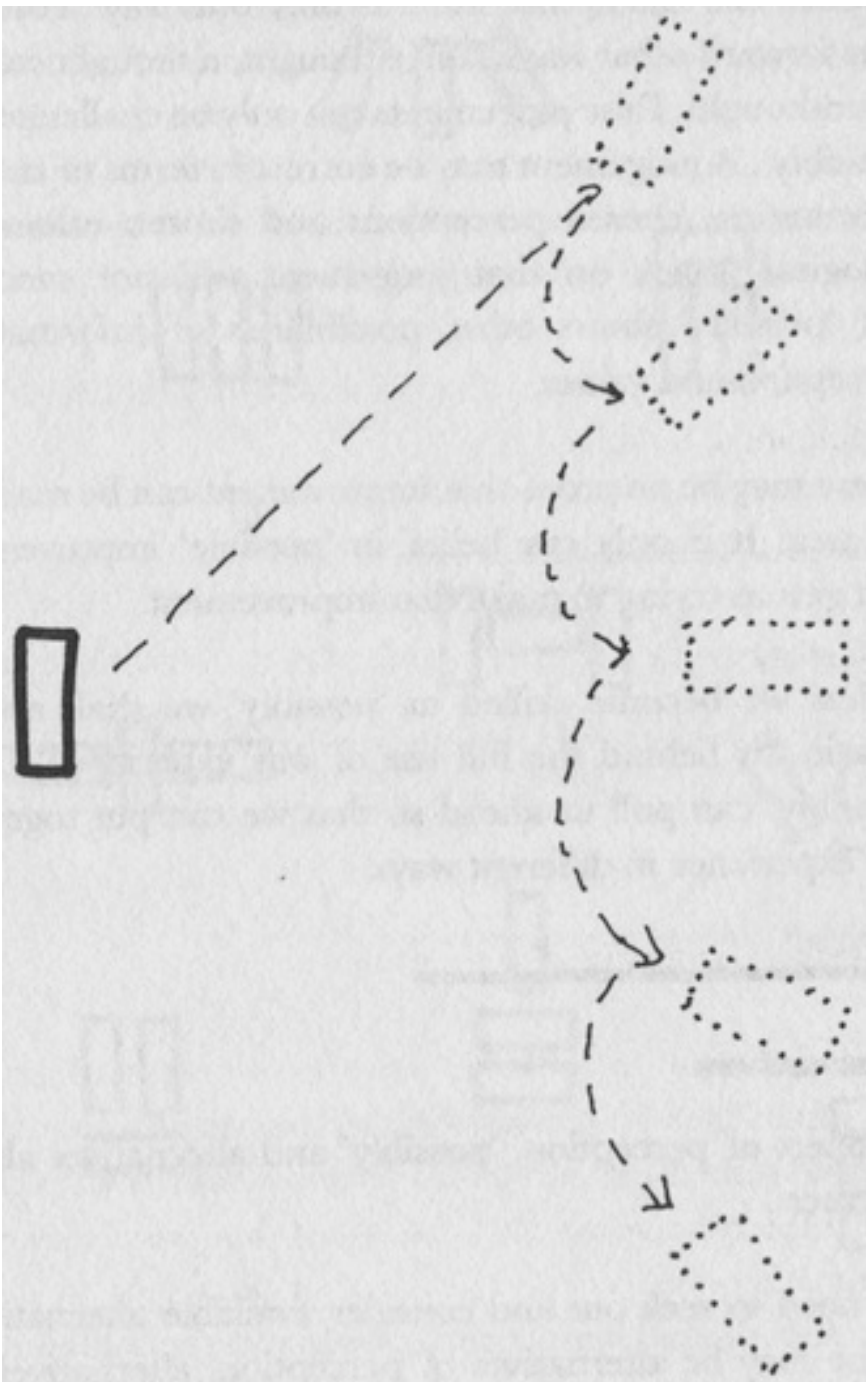
217 Only 'possibly' can pull us ahead so that we can **put together our experience in different ways**.

218 Possibility is the key to wisdom.

219 Possibility is the basis of creativity.

220 Possibility is the best antidote to arrogance.

221 Possibility drives exploration.





## 224 # 175 Alternatives

225 Richness of perception, 'possibly' and alternatives all go together. ¶¶¶

226 We need to seek out and consider available alternatives.

227 These may be

228 alternatives of perception,

229 alternatives of explanation,

230 alternatives of action and

231 alternatives of design.

232 How else can we look at this?

233 How else can we do this? ¶¶¶

234 Without alternatives we remain trapped in one channel.

235 No matter how reasonable a position might be, we need to consider alternatives.

236 Is your view the only possible one?

237 Is this course of action the only possible one? ¶¶¶

238 Alternatives do not have to show themselves.

239 They do not have to 'put up their hands' like a child in a classroom who wants to be noticed.

240 Alternatives do not have to force themselves on your attention.

241 You have to go out and look for them. ¶¶¶

242 Something happens and the immediate response comes to mind.

243 But you pause in order to seek out alternatives. ¶¶¶

244 Sometimes you have to create alternatives.

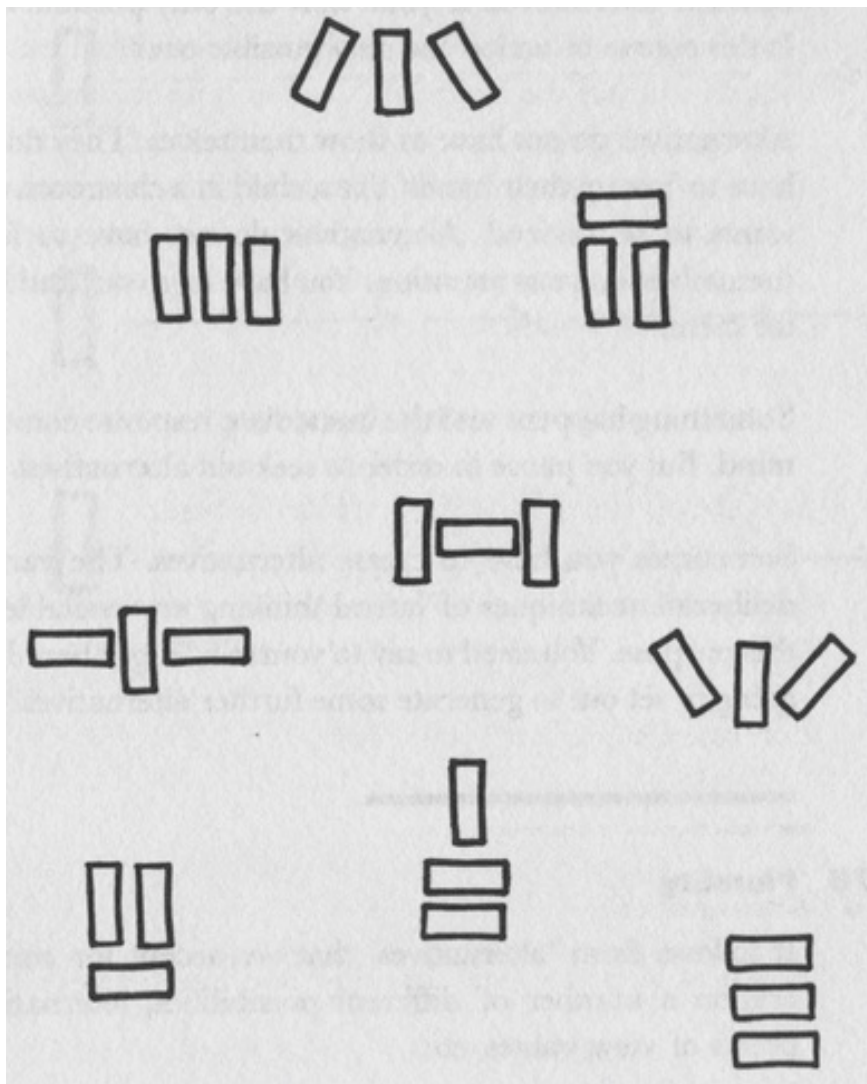
245 The various deliberate techniques of lateral thinking are available for this purpose.

246 You need to say to yourself

247 'Right here I am going to set out to generate some further alternatives.'

248 Richness of perception and design are based on alternatives.

249 So is effective action.







253 **# 176 Plurality**

254 It follows from 'alternatives' that we accept for consideration a number of **different possibilities, alternatives, points of view, values, etc.** ॥॥॥

255 Traditional thinking says:

256 'No, you cannot put that on the table unless you can logically justify its being on the table.'

257 There is a **judgement gateway**.

258 If something does not pass that judgement gateway it is **rejected**. ॥॥॥

259 Wisdom says:

260 'Put it on the table anyway and later we can see whether to use it, combine it with other things or not use it.' ॥॥॥

261 Wisdom encourages plurality in order to **get the 'richer' picture**. ॥॥॥

262 The Japanese word for yes is '**hai**'.

263 But when a Japanese says '**hai**' it does not mean that he or she is agreeing with you.

264 It simply means that the person is **awake** and has **heard** what you have said.

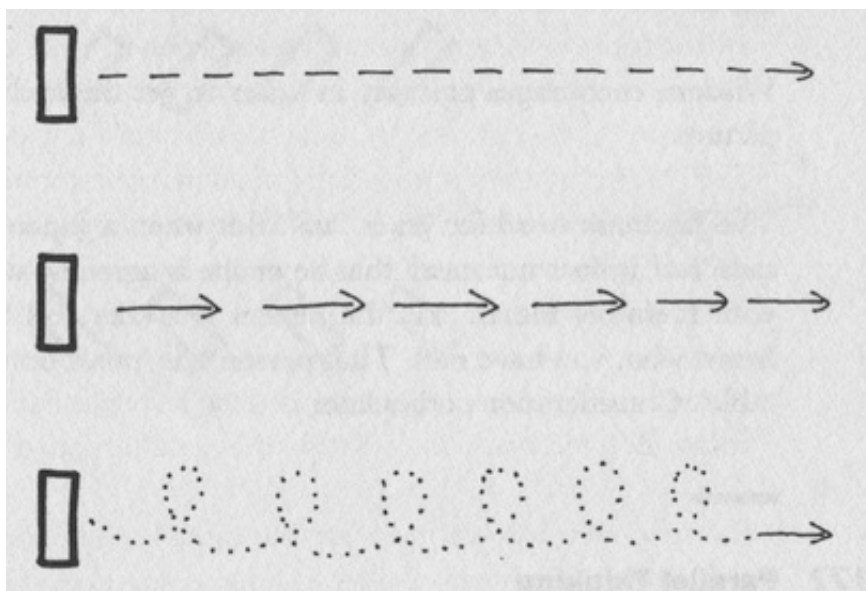
265 That person has '**put it on the table**'.

266 **Consideration comes later**.

267 Wisdom encourages different thoughts and different values.

268 This gives a richness of perception.

269 There does not have to be a choice of one and a rejection of the others





## 272 **# 177 Parallel Thinking**

273 This follows on directly from plurality.

274 **Parallel thinking** means **laying down different views, values and possibilities in parallel.** ¶¶¶

275 Parallel thinking is the **opposite of traditional adversarial thinking**, where each statement has to be judged before being accepted.

276 In adversarial thinking, the 'contradiction' is a very important and powerful tool.

277 Both sides of a contradiction cannot be right.

278 One or other must go.

279 Parallel thinking allows both sides of the **contradiction** to be laid down in parallel without interfering with each other.

280 **Later** on, in the design phase, things can be **sorted out.** ¶¶¶

281 Parallel thinking removes at once the **urge to instant judgement.**

282 You do not have to accept something as 'right' because you have not rejected it as 'wrong'.

283 You simply **accept it 'in parallel'.**

284 Sometimes you can accept it as 'possibly' but **even when you cannot accept something as 'possible' you still accept it in parallel.** ¶¶¶

285 Husbands usually complain that wives take far too many clothes on holiday.

286 Husbands say that wives should decide in advance exactly what is going to be needed and to reject what is not going to be needed.

287 Husbands complain that wives take six outfits with them so they can have the 'luxury' of choice at the holiday destination.

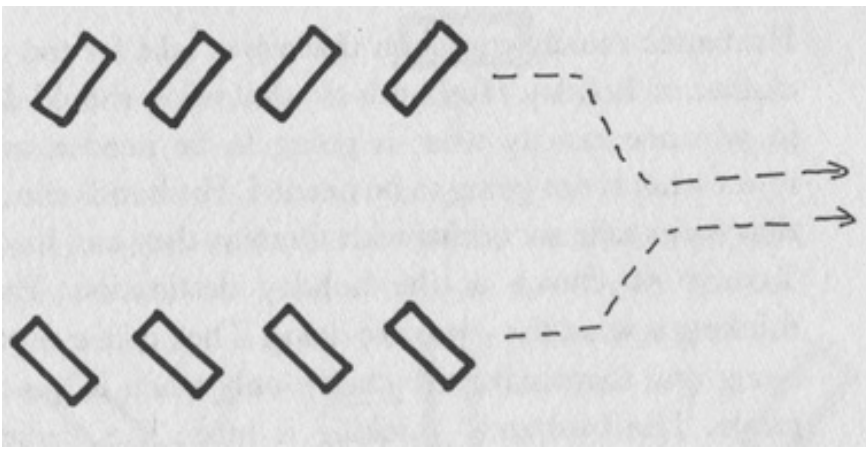
288 Parallel thinking is what the wives are doing.

289 They take everything along and then make the choice only when it has to be made.

290 The husbands' thinking is more like traditional Gang of Three thinking: accept or reject at this point before packing it.

291 Parallel thinking is the opposite of traditional adversarial thinking.

292 Instead of judgement, both sides are laid down in parallel and then **a way forward is designed.**

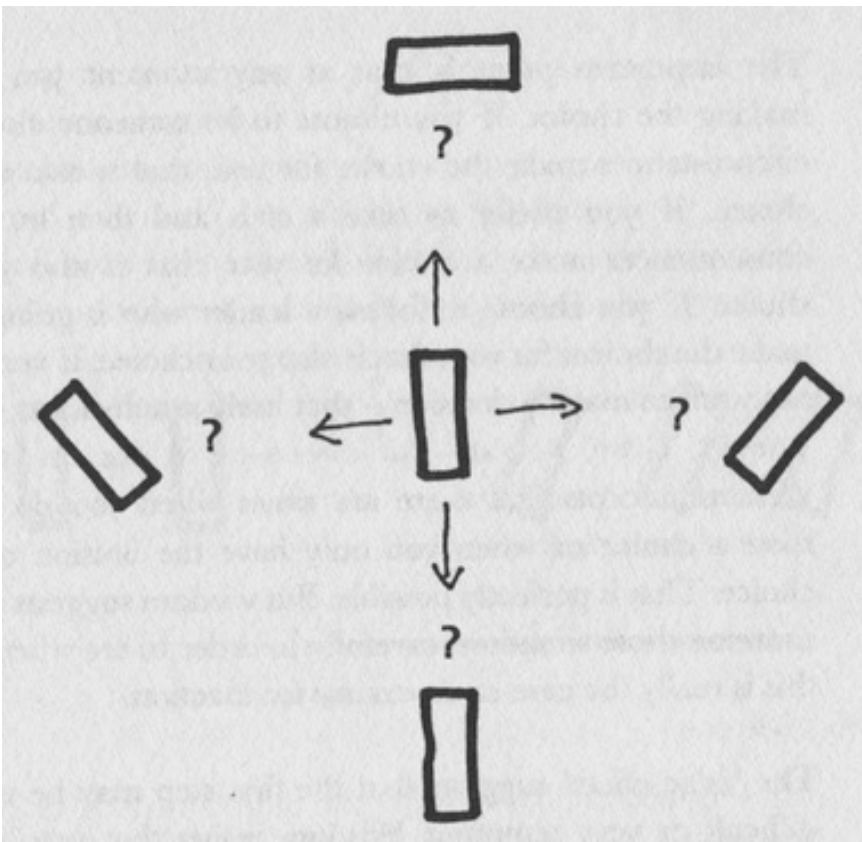


293



## 295 # 178 Choice

- 296 If you have a map showing the **different roads**, then you choose the road you want to take according to your **needs** and **values**.
- 297 You may want the **shortest** route.
- 298 You may want the route with **least traffic**.
- 299 You may want the **most scenic** route.
- 300 You may want the road with the **best surface**.
- 301 You may want the **fastest route** (not necessarily the shortest). ¶¶¶
- 302 It is **not** the **purpose of wisdom** to **choose** your **values** for you or to **change** your **values**.
- 303 Different readers of this book will have different values.
- 304 The **purpose of wisdom** is to allow you to **apply your values effectively**.  
¶¶¶
- 305 It is possible that over time **wisdom** may get you to **alter your values**.
- 306 **Wisdom** may suggest that a **value** you **now hold high** is really rather **superficial**.
- 307 But changing values is your task. ¶¶¶
- 308 The important point is that **at any moment you** are making the choice.
- 309 If you choose to let **someone else** or **circumstances** **make the choice for you**, that is also **your choice**.
- 310 If you prefer to take a step and then **let the consequences make a choice for you**, that is also your choice.
- 311 If you choose to **follow a leader** who is going to **make the choices for you**, that is also your choice.
- 312 If you **do not want to make a decision** – that itself **is a decision**. ¶¶¶
- 313 Wisdom accepts that **there are times** when you **do not have a choice** or when you **only have the illusion of a choice**.
- 314 That is perfectly possible.
- 315 But wisdom suggests you **examine those situations** carefully in order to see whether this is **really the case** or an **excuse for inaction**. ¶¶¶
- 316 The '**edge effect**' suggests that the first step may be **very difficult** or **very tempting**.
- 317 **Wisdom insists** that you **look forward into the future**.
- 318 If the first step is tempting, wisdom may find the **later consequences** to be **not so attractive**.
- 319 If the first step is difficult, wisdom may find that the **later consequences are very beneficial**. ¶¶¶
- 320 The **whole purpose of wisdom** is to **lay out** the **inner world** and **outer world in such a way** that you can make choices.
- 321 Because wisdom encourages alternatives and possibilities, wisdom also encourages choice according to your values.







## 324 # 179 Values

325 The **purpose of wisdom** is to **serve**  
326 **your values**,  
327 **the values of your local community** and  
328 **the values of the world.**

329 So **values are central.**

330 See Values chapter in *Teach Your Child How To Think*

331 You can **explore your values** with **wisdom.**

332 You can develop a **'broad' sense of values** in terms of **width, depth** and  
333 **richness.** ¶¶¶

333 There are the **positive values** which you seek and the **negative values**  
334 **which you seek to avoid.** ¶¶¶

334 **In any situation** there are the **values**  
335 **of the actor** (usually yourself),  
336 **of the people directly affected by your action** and  
337 **of those indirectly affected** (perhaps through the environment).

338 A **broad map of values** is what wisdom **tries to draw.** ¶¶¶

339 There are the **obvious values** that are easy to remember.

340 Then there is a **wide range** of **less easily noticed values.**

341 These are often to do with **relationships, position, status,** etc.

342 Being given **attention** and **recognition** is a **high positive value.**

343 **Boredom** is a **high negative value.** ¶¶¶

344 **Not all values are equal.**

345 Some have a **higher priority** than others.

346 Values may need **sorting out.** ¶¶¶

347 There can be **contrary values**, either within the same person or between  
348 different persons.

348 We can seek to **accommodate the contrary values**, **combine** them  
349 together or **alternate** between them.

349 We can **'trade off'** values, giving up some in order to enjoy others. ¶¶¶

350 It is the **role of the 'design' process** **to take the values** and the **broadly**

perceived situation and to design the way forward.

351 This may be a **single design**, or the result may be a **set of alternatives**.

352 **You then have to** choose between **the alternatives**, using your **values and priorities again**.

353 Design may involve **working forward** with the **key values** and then seeking to **fit the other values in**.

354 Design may involve trying to work forward with **all values** at the **same time**.

355 The **elements of design** are:

356 What is desirable?

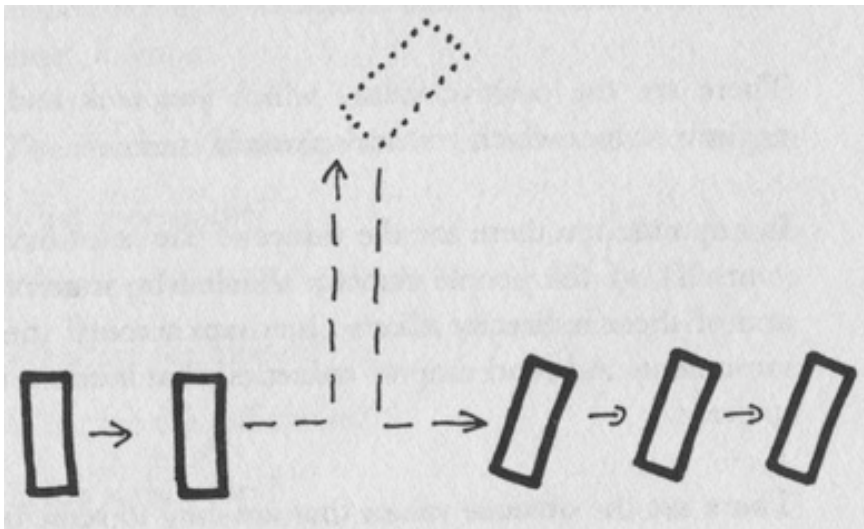
357 What is possible?

358 What are the models?

359 What are the difficulties?

360 Is this satisfactory?

361 If we determine our values then those values can determine our choices and behavior.



362



## 364 # 180 Emotions and Feelings

365 Wisdom **acknowledges** the **validity** and **powerful reality** of **emotions** and **feelings**.

366 Wisdom **attempts to use them for their value** and to **avoid their negative effects**.

367 **Overreaction** is one **obvious negative effect**.

368 So is **biased perception**. ¶¶¶

369 **Imagine** a square tray suspended by a spring at each corner.

370 In the centre of the level tray there is a motionless ball.

371 A simple channel in the surface runs from the ball to each of the sides.

372 Which of the four channels will the ball follow?

373 You put some weights on the tray in one area.

374 The tray tilts in that direction.

375 The ball rolls down the channel that benefits from the tilt. ¶¶¶

376 In a **similar way** our **feelings and emotions** alter the chemical balance in the brain so that certain areas are more **sensitized** and therefore **ready to be activated**.

377 Our perception then follows this **sensitization** or 'biasing'.

378 **It is not that we 'choose' to see things** in a way that fits our emotions.

379 That is the **'only' way we can perceive at that moment**.

380 We therefore need to recognize this **biasing property of emotions** and make a **deliberate effort to bring to the surface some alternative perceptions**.

381 They will not just occur by themselves. ¶¶¶

382 Logic is unlikely to **change emotions and feelings**, but **changed perception can**. ¶¶¶

383 Emotions and feelings **overlap with values** but are not always the same thing.

384 Your **material value system** may tell you that you have done well to sell your house at a large profit.

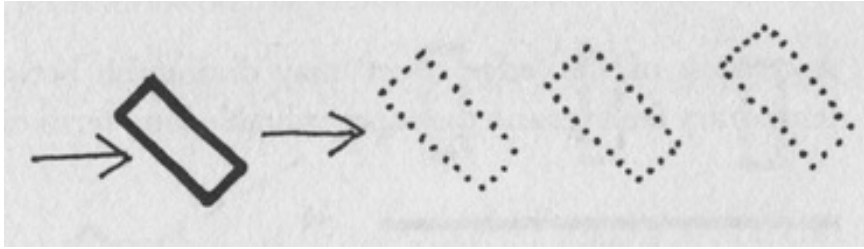
385 Your feeling may be one of sadness as you move out of the house.

386 You may even feel delighted when the failure of your business frees you up to do other things that you have always wanted to do. ¶¶¶

387 **Awareness of the 'edge effect'** may distinguish between temporary feelings and the more valuable long-term ones.

388 If our emotions come first then they determine our perceptions.

389 We only see things the way we want to see them.



390



## 392 # 181 Judgement

393 We can only **move through life** because the **judgement of 'recognition'** tells us at every moment

394 what things are;

395 what things to seek;

396 what things to avoid;

397 what things to use as means to get other things.

398 **Without judgement we could not proceed at all.** ¶¶¶

399 The **danger** lies in the **harsh, quick and rigid judgements that we require of ourselves** and that are **required by our traditional thinking habits.**

400 Too often we **use stereotypes** to ease our judgement.

401 Too often we put up **false either/or choices to force** ourselves, or others, **into a certain position.**

402 All this is an integral part of the Gang of Three thinking system, with its emphasis on:

403 rejection of the 'untruth'

404 the search for absolutes

405 and an inclusion/ exclusion box type of logic with the avoidance of contradiction.

406 This is an **excellent system for many purposes** but it has its limits and its dangers.

407 In a changing world the **'boxes' derived from the past may no longer be adequate to describe** a changed present. ¶¶¶

408 The dangers of judgement lie both in the **rejection aspect** and in the **acceptance aspect.**

409 Something **rejected** drops out of attention and perception.

410 It is **no longer an ingredient** in our thinking.

411 Something accepted may be **accepted too wholeheartedly**, when acceptance should be

412 **milder,**

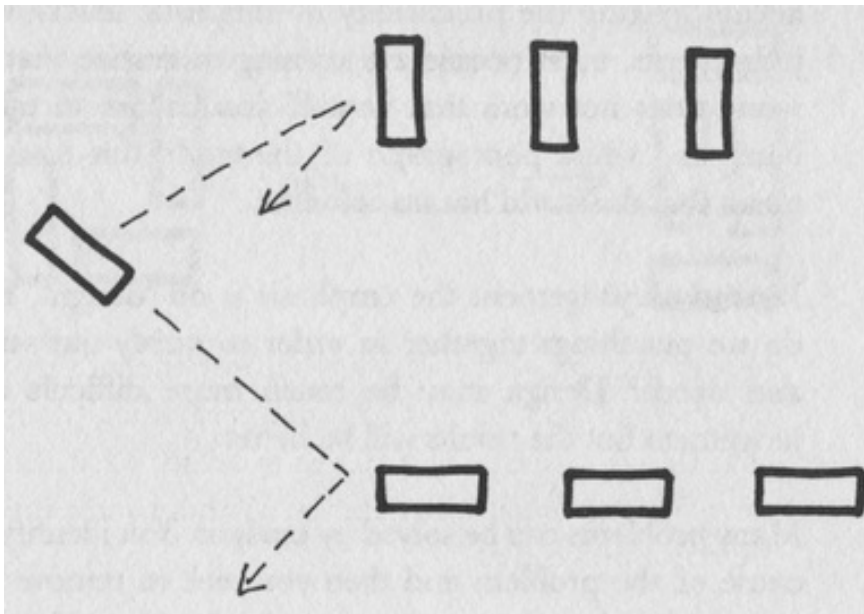
413 **doubtful** or

414 **related to circumstances.**

415 While acknowledging the **practicality of simplistic black/white judgements**, most people are coming to realize that the world does not work that way.

416 If you choose to take a black and white photograph of the world this does not mean that the world has no colors. ¶¶¶

- 417 Instead of judgement the emphasis is on 'design'.
- 418 How do we put things together in order to satisfy our values and needs?
- 419 **Design** may be much more difficult than judgement but the results will be better. ۱۱۱۱
- 420 Many problems can be solved by analysis.
- 421 You identify the cause of the problem and then you seek to remove that cause.
- 422 But when the cause cannot be found or, if found, cannot be removed, then we are paralyzed because more and more analysis will not solve that problem.
- 423 We need to be able to 'design the way forward', leaving the cause in place.
- 424 While we are excellent at analysis we are not nearly so expert at design – because **design requires creativity**.
- 425 We need judgement to find our way through life.
- 426 The danger is an excessive emphasis on rigid acceptances and rejections, and not enough attention to design.



427





## 429 # 182 Design

430 How do you design a meal?

431 How do you design a dish?

432 **People are designing things every day.**

433 Design is not something which only architects and dress designers do.

434 There are times when design may be **complicated** and **difficult** but **most of the time it is relatively easy.**

435 How do you **put things together** to achieve what you want? ¶¶¶

436 It is true that in traditional thinking you may seek to put together the **'thesis'** and **'anti-thesis'** in the process of **'synthesis'**.

437 This means that you **seek** to **combine opposing views.**

438 But this is only **one small aspect of design.**

439 There may be **alternatives** which are **not present in either point of view.**

440 There are times when the combining of opposing views is enough, but in general **design is a much broader process.** ¶¶¶

441 **With wisdom** we **seek to design the way forward** rather than 'judge' the way forward. ¶¶¶

442 What is the **purpose of design?**

443 To **satisfy** our **own** and **other people's values**, in a **practical** way. ¶¶¶

444 Traditional education systems put far too little emphasis on design.

445 There is a belief that the 'lawyer-type' search for the truth of the Gang of Three is sufficient.

446 Arguments around this matter make use of exactly those habits which the argument is trying to change.

447 It is like speaking French to teach the French to speak English. ¶¶¶

448 Design is the **necessary final stage** of **parallel thinking.**

449 We **lay things down** in **parallel** in order to provide the **ingredients for design.**

450 Sometimes the **outcome** is **obvious** and **reveals itself**.

451 At other times a **more deliberate design process** is **required**. ¶¶¶

452 **Does this mean that design is always better than judgement?**

453 **Not at all.**

454 That would be contrary to the spirit of wisdom.

455 There are **times** when **judgement is required**.

456 There are times when judgement is **faster** and **better** than design.

457 There are times when judgement is needed even **within the design process**.

458 In the end judgement is required to **assess** and **choose** the **outputs from design**.

459 We come back to the 'salt curve'.

460 No judgement is bad.

461 Some judgement is good.

462 Excessive judgement is bad.

463 What do we mean by 'excessive'?

464 The belief that judgement is sufficient by itself.

465 It is only that **arrogance** which needs challenging. ¶¶¶

466 Just as we need a better word for 'perception', we also need a **better word** for '**design**'.

467 The word 'design' has strong connections to interior design, graphic design, dress design, etc.

468 All these suggest **visual appearance** and, perhaps, something added on to the essentials.

469 **In its broadest sense design means 'putting things together to serve our values'**. ¶¶¶

470 Consider two architects.

471 The first architect sits in his office with a great folder of standard designs.

472 The client goes in and explains his or her needs.

473 The architect pauses.

474 Then, like the doctor diagnosing measles, the architect says: 'It is design number 71 that you will be wanting.'

475 So the architect opens the file at page 71 and shows the client what he or she will be getting. ¶¶¶

476 The **other architect listens carefully** to what the client wants in terms of living space, use, access, working environment, storage, cost and appearance, and then asks the client to come back at a later date.

477 The architect then sets out to design a house.

478 It is true that this design may resemble other designs.

479 It is true that the designed house may contain sub-elements that are standard.

480 Nevertheless, there is a design effort. ¶¶¶

481 We have got far too used to considering only the 'doctor model' of the first architect, who seeks to recognize standard patterns, instead of considering the 'architect model' of the second architect.

482 The reason we have done this is that the historic tradition of thinking in the Western world was concerned with '**discovering the truth**' (as required in theology) rather than in '**designing for value**'. ¶¶¶

483 One of the difficulties of design is that we feel **compelled** to '**design for perfection**'.

484 How can we get this absolutely right?

485 This makes design very much harder than judgement.

486 As a general policy it is best to **aim for** a '**simple and practical**' design.

487 **Then** you seek to **improve this design**.

488 **If you cannot improve** the design then **use it as it is**. ¶¶¶

489 Knowing that a 'judgement' is right is **almost an emotion**.

490 The brain is **set up to make judgements**.

491 **When we recognize something**, the processes in the brain provide a **sort of 'click'**, just as humor generates a laugh.

492 **Occasionally** this happens with design.

493 At other times our emotions start to come into play.

494     We get to **like the design**.

495     We **like it more and more**.

496 At other times we are left to make the **practical choice** between designs, **none of which inspire us**. ¶¶¶

497 Not all **meals** have to be **memorable experiences**.

498 Most meals are designs for a **practical purpose**.

499 They achieve that purpose.

500 This does not exclude excellence but it **does not demand excellence on every occasion.**



502 **# 183 A New Super-pattern → What would  
Merlin do?**

503 If you find wisdom a 'plus', then use it.

504 If you believe that you are sufficiently wise already then congratulations  
either on your excellence or on your self-deception. ¶¶¶

505 Wisdom is **not** instead of logic.

506 Wisdom is the **operating system of 'perception'**.

507 Logic only begins **when perception ends**. ¶¶¶

508 **How are you going to put wisdom into practice?**

509 You can read this book and reread it.

510 You can integrate some of the thoughts and suggestions into your own  
habits of thought.

511 What is put forward here is based on more than twenty-five years' direct  
involvement in the teaching of thinking to schoolchildren, adults and the  
senior executives of some of the world's largest corporations  
(employing up to 400,000 people). ¶¶¶

512 As a practical step you may even wish to design for yourself a **new  
super-pattern**.

513 Just as King Arthur of the Round Table was always rushing off to the  
wizard Merlin for wisdom, so you can create your own Merlin.

514 **What would Merlin do here?**

515 **What would the 'wise person' do here?** ¶¶¶

516 You would then **use this super-pattern as you wished**, just as you use  
the gears as you wish when driving a car.

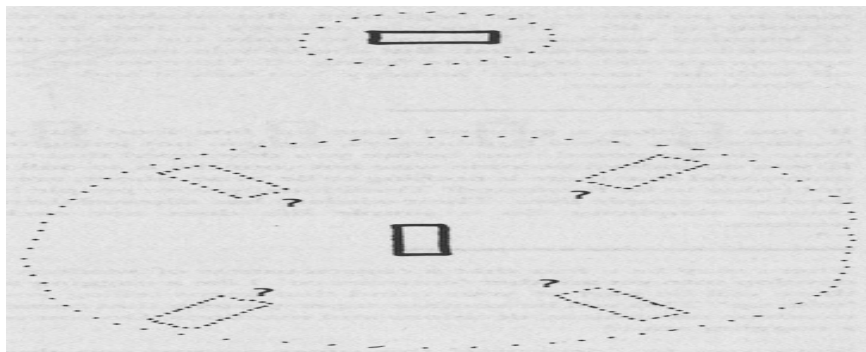
517 Perhaps, in time, you will progress from a manual gear-shift car to an  
automatic one.

518 Wisdom will now become part of your behavior. ¶¶¶

519 If you find that wisdom has no value for you, give this book to someone  
who needs it as much as you do.

520 Design is a matter of putting things together to achieve an objective  
and to serve our values.

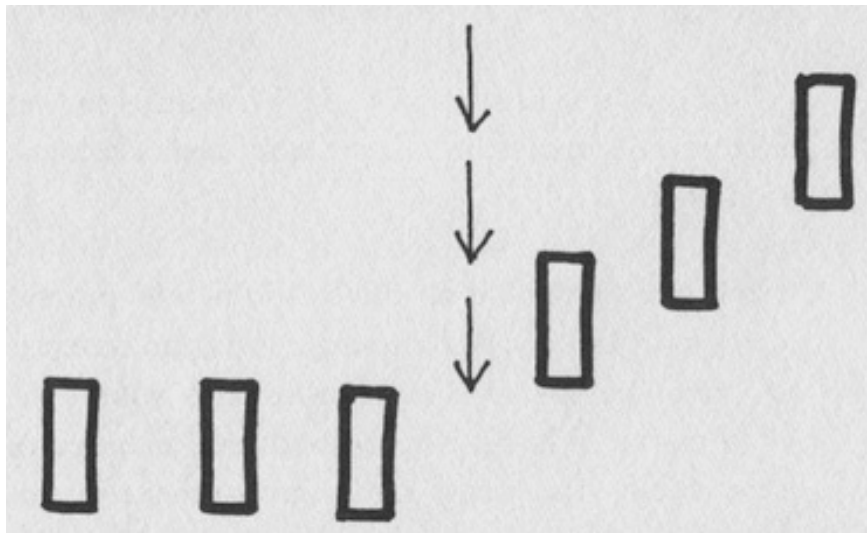
521 Instead of searching for the standard solution we design a way forward.



522

523 Wisdom comes with growth.

524 But wisdom is also the fertilizer for growth.



525