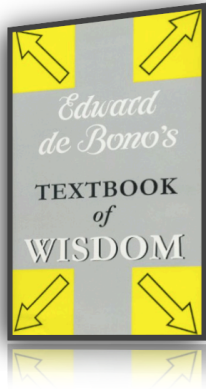


1 **Wise about wisdom**

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



3

4 *visual thinking*

5 Wise about wisdom 1

6 # 165 1

7 # 166 4

8 # 167 5

9 # 168 6

10 # 169 9

11 # 170 Awareness 10

12 # 171 Perception 13

13 #172 Broad 16

14 # 173 Logic Bubble 21

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18 # 177 Parallel Thinking 33

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21 # 180 Emotions and Feelings 44

22 # 181 Judgement 47

23 # 182 Design 51

24 # 183 A New Super-pattern → What would Merlin do?..... 57

25

26 **# 165**

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

- 28 'Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.' ...
- 29 This well-known quotation is itself a useful piece of wisdom.
- 30 The 'wise' in the quotation refers to knowledge (awareness/information).
- 31 **There are times when it is better not to know everything.** ...
- 32 The saying could be misinterpreted on the basis that it might indeed be better to be stupid and happy than wise and anxious.
- 33 The whole point about wisdom is that, **used effectively**, it **reduces your anxiety.**
- 34 The notion of 'stupid and happy' only refers to a **very stable world** in which **nothing ever goes wrong.**
- 35 If you are lucky enough to find such a world then stay there.
- 36 Otherwise **you need wisdom to cope with difficulties.** ...
- 37 There is always a concern with confusion.
- 38 You cannot possibly remember all the points in this book.
- 39 Many of them you know already.
- 40 So there is the concern that you will get confused and be worse off than before as you try to 'be wise'.
- 41 There is also the **fear** of the **paralysis of analysis.**
- 42 You might analyze so much that you never make choices or decisions and never take action.
- 43 There is the concern that when you first learn to ride a bicycle it is difficult and you can fall off and hurt yourself. ...

44 So wisdom may be painful in the beginning.

45 But wisdom is about 'simplifying' life.

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

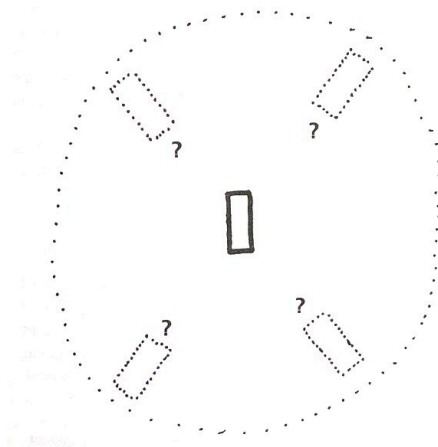
47 You have to make the effort and it may not be easy at first.

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

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

50 You taste it and you like it.

51 You want more.



52

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

54 But it does not have to be so.

55

56 **# 166**

57 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?

58 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?

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

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

61 So a simple life does not exclude wisdom.

62

63 **# 167**

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

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

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

67 Do you want a nagging aunt? ...

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

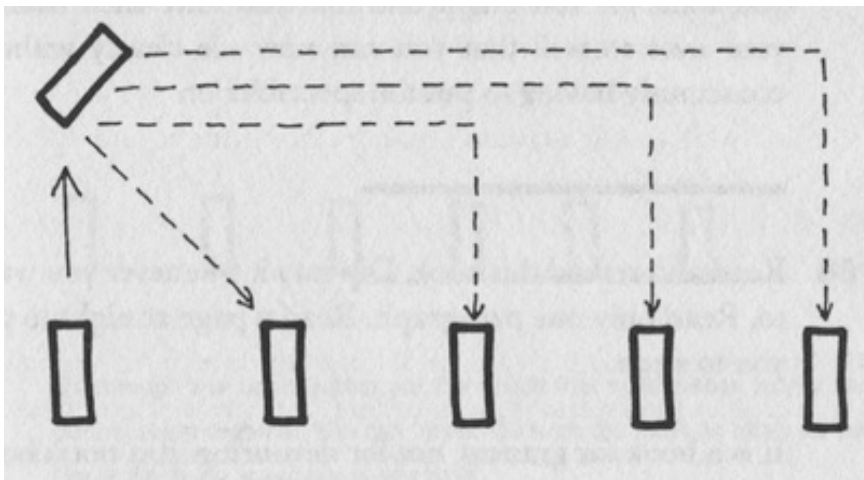
69 Far better to think of wisdom as a 'pair of super-spectacles'.

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

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

72 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.

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



74

75

76 **# 168**

77 Read and reread this book.

78 Dip into it whenever you want to.

79 Read only one paragraph.

80 Read a page at night to put you to sleep. ...

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

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

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

84 This integration takes time.

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

86 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.

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

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

89 You work the mine.

90 You get as much out of it as possible.

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

92 It is up to you to find and make value. ...

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

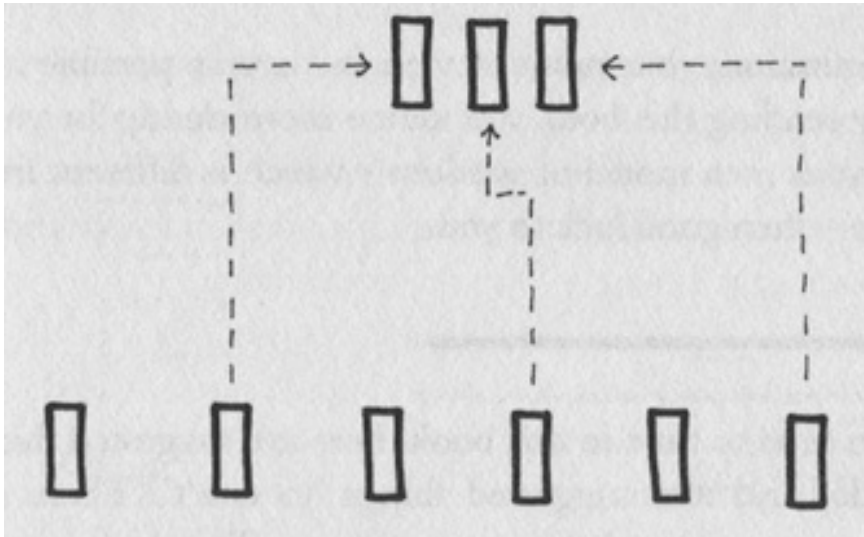
94 It is part of wisdom to expect plurality.

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

96 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.

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

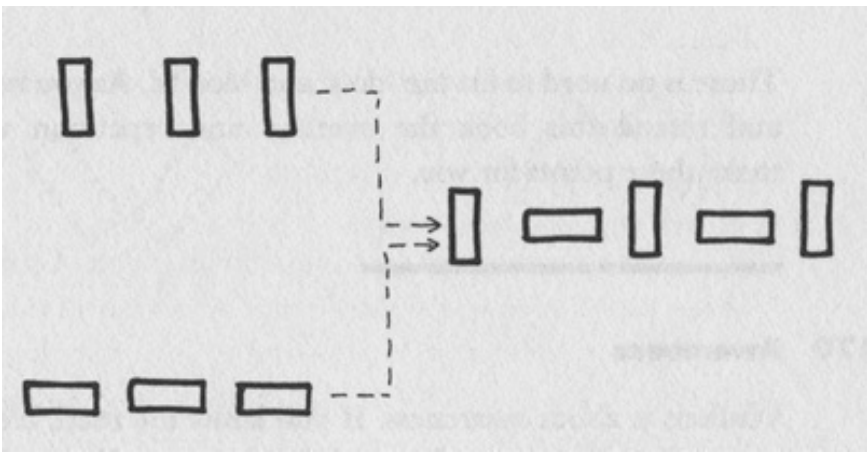
98 You can 'graze' through the book as often as you like or dip into it anywhere at any time



99

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

101 You use what you find to be of value for you.



102

103 **# 169**

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

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

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

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

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

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

110 Perhaps you should be conscious of that habit.

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

112 Perhaps you should seek to do this more often. ...

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

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

115 # 170 Awareness

116 Wisdom is about awareness.

117 If you know the road, life is easier.

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

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

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

121 Awareness can be applied to the outer world.

122 What is going on out there?

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

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

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

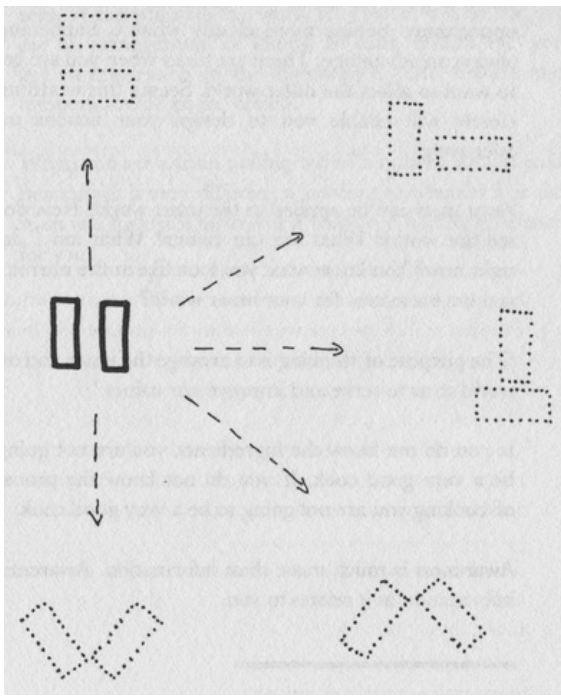
126 Seeing this world more clearly will enable you to design your actions more effectively. ...

127 Awareness can be applied to the inner world.

128 How do we see the world?

129 What are our habits?

- 130 What am I **doing right now**?
- 131 You know what you look like in the mirror.
- 132 Do you have a **mirror for your inner world**? ...
- 133 'The **purpose of thinking** is to arrange the inner and outer world so as to serve and improve our values.' ...
- 134 If you do not know the **ingredients**, you are not going to be a very good cook.
- 135 If you do not know the **processes** of cooking you are not going to be a very good cook. ...
- 136 Awareness is **much more than information**.
- 137 Awareness is **information as it relates to you**.
- 138 Wisdom is about awareness and possibilities: awareness of the world around; awareness of possibilities and choices.



140 # 171 Perception

141 Perception is not what the 'eye' sees but **what the 'brain' sees**.

142 When you read the word 'ice cream' you do not just see an arrangement of letters.

143 In your 'mind's eye' you get an impression of the appearance, taste, texture and temperature of an ice-cream. ...

144 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. ...

145 I have often written that **we badly need a word** in our language for '**the way we look at things**'.

146 The nearest word is indeed 'perception' but that is rather **too tied up with vision**.

147 We need a word to indicate '**the way we see things in our mind**'. ...

148 **Wisdom takes place in perception.**

149 Within perception the **traditional rules of logic do not apply**.

150 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). ...

151 If our **perceptions** are **wrong** then no amount of logical excellence will give the right answer.

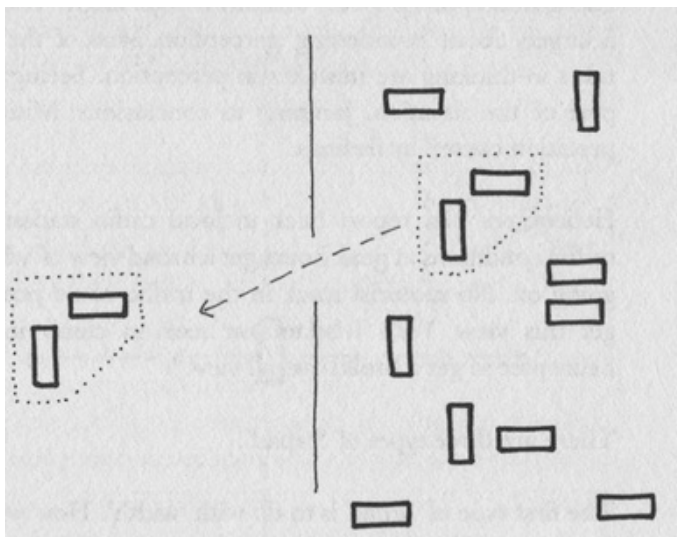
152 So it is a pity that almost the whole of our **traditional intellectual effort** has been directed at logic and so little at perception. ...

153 Logic will not change emotions and feelings.

154 Perception will.

155 Perception is a matter of picking out the patterns that we have got used to seeing.

156 It becomes difficult to see things in another way unless we make the effort demanded by wisdom.



157

159 **#172 Broad**

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

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

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

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

164 Jumping **to conclusions**.

165 **Misinterpretation caused by feelings**. ...

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

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

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

169 There are **three types** of **'broad'**. ...

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

171 How widely do we see?

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

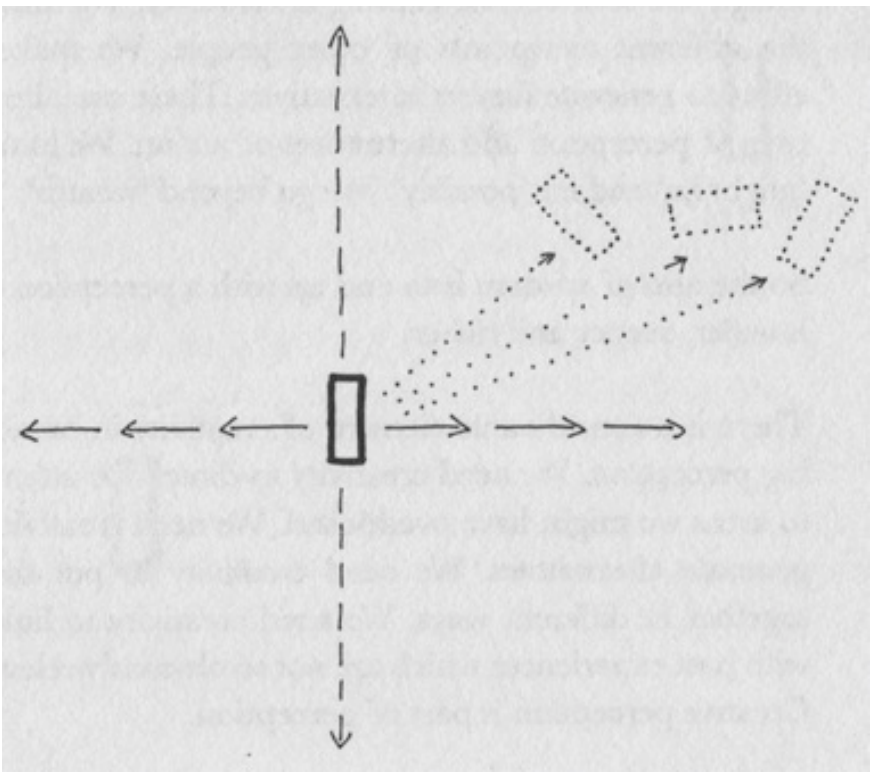
173 This is the closest to the helicopter analogy.

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

- 175 The second type of broad is to do with '**depth**'.
- 176 This means **looking** forward and **looking** backwards.
- 177 We look **backwards in time to seek explanations** and reasons for **what is before us**.
- 178 We look backwards **to examine past experiences**, both our own and those of other people.
- 179 We look **forward** to see the **consequences** of what is before us.
- 180 This might be **prediction** in terms of what may happen.
- 181 It may also be **looking for the consequences of any action we are contemplating**.
- 182 We look forward from the immediate consequences to the long-term consequences. ...
- 183 The third type of broad is to do with '**richness**'.
- 184 Here we open up **alternatives** and **different ways of looking at things**.
- 185 We **seek** out the **existing alternatives**.
- 186 We **imagine** the **different viewpoints of other people**.
- 187 We **make an effort** to **generate further alternatives**.
- 188 These are **alternatives of perception** and **alternatives of action**.
- 189 We look for '**might be**' and for '**possibly**'.
- 190 We go beyond '**what is**'. ...
- 191 So the **aim** of wisdom is to end up with a **perception** that is **wider, deeper and richer**. ...

- 192 There is a considerable element of **creativity in broadening perception.**
- 193 We need creativity to **direct our attention** to areas we might have overlooked.
- 194 We need creativity to **generate alternatives.**
- 195 We need creativity to **put things together in different ways.**
- 196 We need creativity to **link up with past experiences which are not so obviously relevant.**
- 197 Creative perception **is part of** perception. ...
-
- 198 One shoe salesman reported back that there was no market because no one wore shoes.
- 199 His companion reported back that it was a fantastic market because no one wore shoes.
- 200 Wisdom is about breadth of perception.
- 201 There are three types of breadth.
- 202 1. How widely do we look? How widely do we see?
- 203 2. How deeply do we look? Forward, backwards and into detail.
- 204 3. How rich is our vision? This means possibilities, speculations, alternatives and different points of view.

205



207 **# 173 Logic Bubble**

208 'Everyone is always right – no one is ever right.' ...

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

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

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

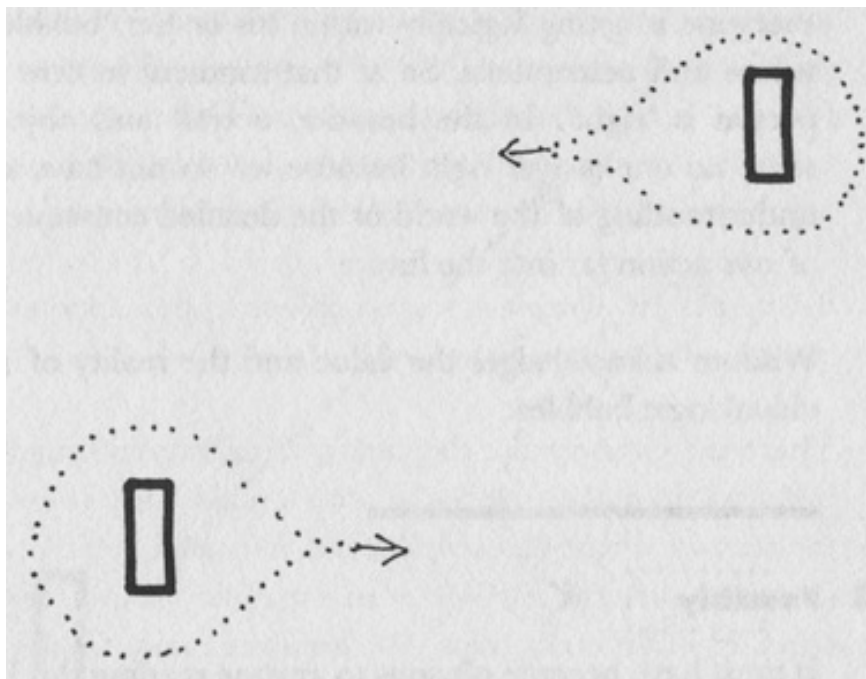
212 In the broader, overall and objective sense **no one is ever right** because we do not have

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

214 the **detailed consequences of our action far into the future**. ...

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

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



217

219 **# 174 Possibly**

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

221 'Possibly' is valuable in **two ways**. ...

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

223 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**

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

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

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

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

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

229 Arrogance can assert that there is only one way.

230 'Possibly' puts forward other ways.

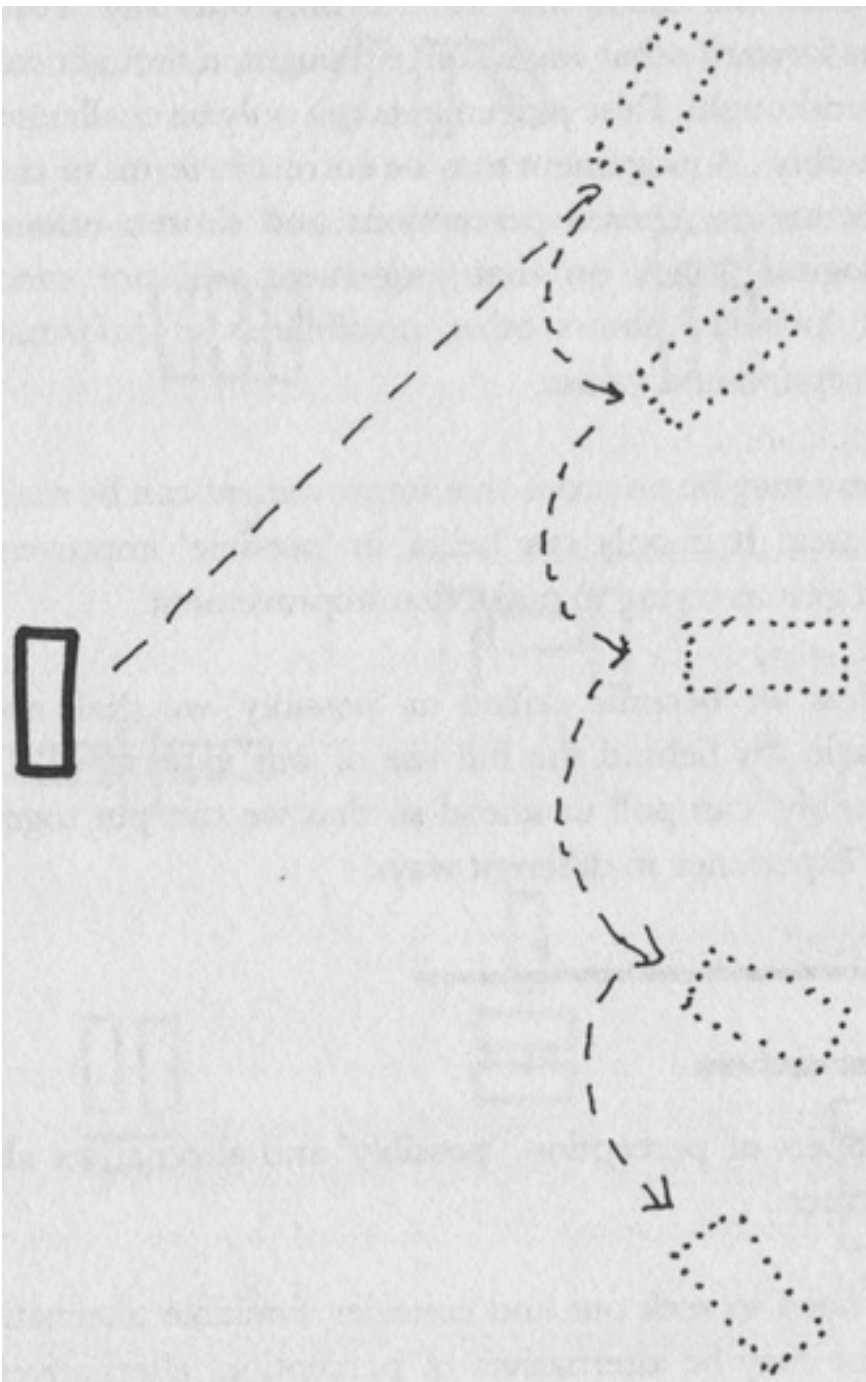
231 Once thought, **a thought cannot be unthought**.

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

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

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

- 235 But 'possibly' shows other possibilities of information, perception and values. ...
- 236 There may be no proof that improvement can be made in an area.
- 237 It is only our belief in 'possible' improvement that gets us trying to make that improvement. ...
- 238 Unless we become skilled in 'possibly' we shall always remain far behind the full use of our experience.
- 239 Only 'possibly' can pull us ahead so that we can put together our experience in different ways.
- 240 Possibility is the key to wisdom.
- 241 Possibility is the basis of creativity.
- 242 Possibility is the best antidote to arrogance.
- 243 Possibility drives exploration.



246 **# 175 Alternatives**

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

248 We need to seek out and consider available alternatives.

249 These may be

250 alternatives of perception,

251 alternatives of explanation,

252 alternatives of action and

253 alternatives of design.

254 How else can we look at this?

255 How else can we do this? ...

256 Without alternatives we remain trapped in one channel.

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

258 Is your view the only possible one?

259 Is this course of action the only possible one? ...

260 Alternatives do not have to show themselves.

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

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

263 You have to go out and look for them. ...

264 Something happens and the **immediate response** comes to mind.

265 But you **pause** in order to **seek out alternatives**. ...

266 Sometimes you have to **create alternatives**.

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

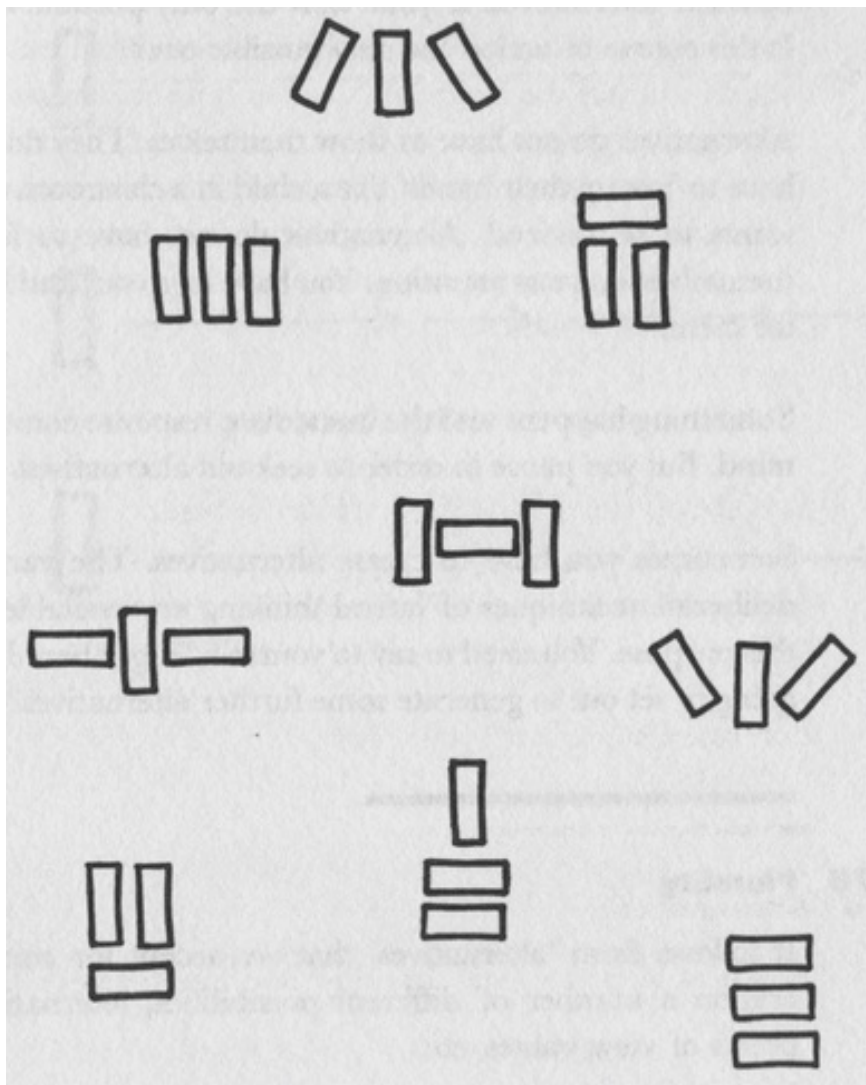
268 You need to say to yourself

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

270 Richness of perception and design are based on alternatives.

271 So is effective action.

272 The design of alternatives is a key element in wisdom.



273

275 # 176 Plurality

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

277 Traditional thinking says:

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

279 There is a **judgement gateway**.

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

281 Wisdom says:

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

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

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

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

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

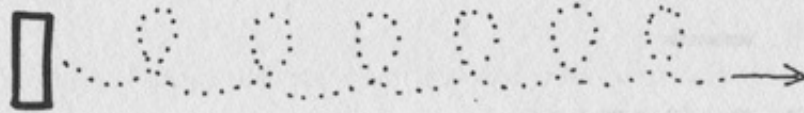
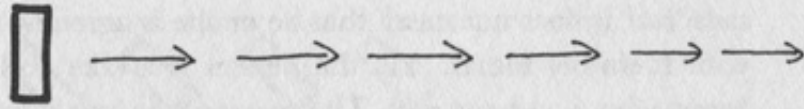
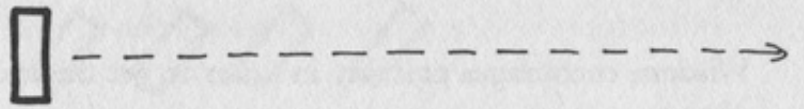
287 That person has '**put it on the table**'.

288 **Consideration comes later**.

289 Wisdom encourages different thoughts and different values.

290 This gives a richness of perception.

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



292

294 # 177 Parallel Thinking

295 This follows on directly from plurality.

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

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

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

299 Both sides of a contradiction cannot be right.

300 One or other must go.

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

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

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

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

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

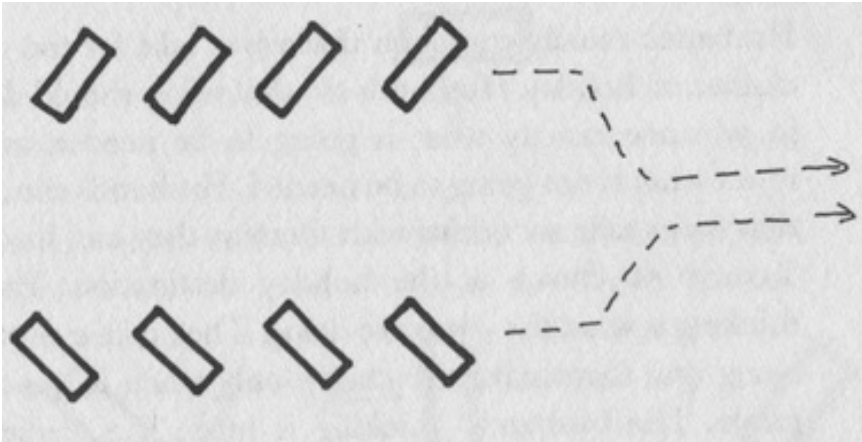
306 Sometimes you can accept it as 'possibly' but **even when you cannot accept something as 'possible' you still accept it in parallel**. ...

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

308 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.

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

- 310 Parallel thinking is what the wives are doing.
- 311 They take everything along and then make the choice only when it has to be made.
- 312 The husbands' thinking is more like traditional Gang of Three thinking: accept or reject at this point before packing it.
- 313 Parallel thinking is the opposite of traditional adversarial thinking.
- 314 Instead of judgement, both sides are laid down in parallel and then a way forward is designed.



315

317 **# 178 Choice**

318 If you have a map showing the **different roads**, then you choose the road you want to take according to your **needs** and **values**.

319 You may want the **shortest** route.

320 You may want the route with **least traffic**.

321 You may want the **most scenic** route.

322 You may want the road with the **best surface**.

323 You may want the **fastest route** (not necessarily the shortest). ...

324 It is **not** the **purpose of wisdom** to **choose** your **values** for you or to **change** your **values**.

325 Different readers of this book will have different values.

326 The **purpose of wisdom** is to allow you to **apply your values effectively**.
"

327 It is possible that over time **wisdom** may get you to **alter your values**.

328 **Wisdom** may suggest that a **value** you **now hold high** is really rather **superficial**.

329 But changing values is your task. ...

330 The important point is that **at any moment you** are making the choice.

331 If you choose to let **someone else** or **circumstances** **make the choice for you**, that is also **your choice**.

332 If you prefer to take a step and then **let the consequences make a choice for you**, that is also your choice.

333 If you choose to **follow a leader** who is going to **make the choices for you**, that is also your choice.

334 If you **do not want to make a decision** – that itself is a decision. ...

335 Wisdom accepts that **there are times** when you **do not have a choice** or when you **only have the illusion of a choice**.

336 That is perfectly possible.

337 But wisdom suggests you **examine those situations** carefully in order to see whether this is **really the case** or an **excuse for inaction**. ...

338 The '**edge effect**' suggests that the first step may be **very difficult** or **very tempting**.

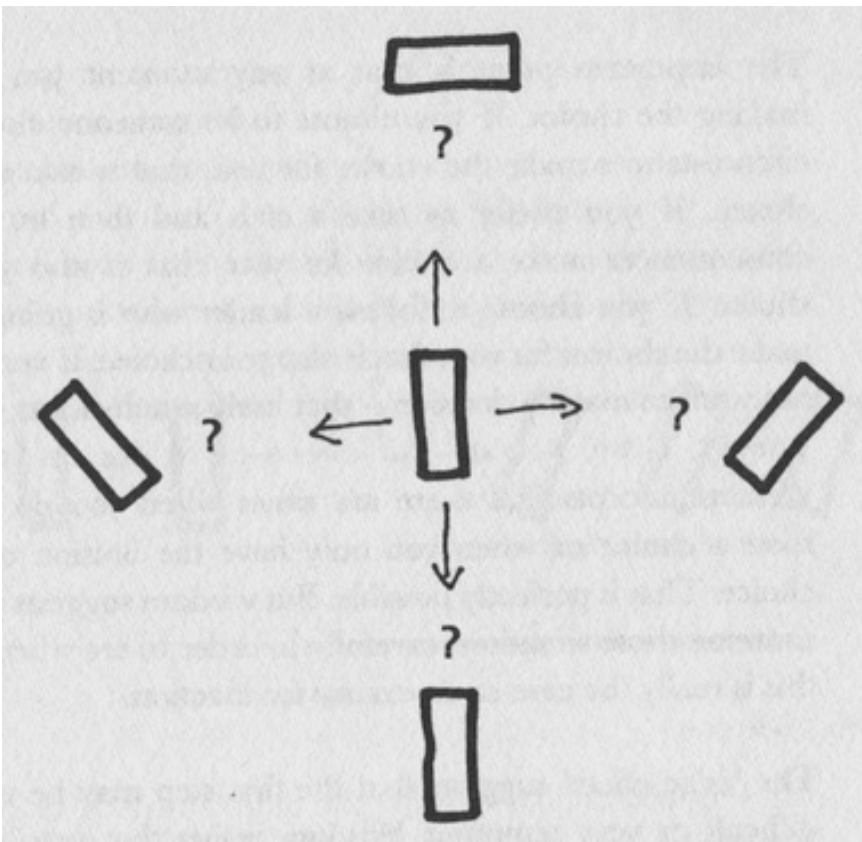
339 **Wisdom insists** that you **look forward into the future**.

340 If the first step is tempting, wisdom may find the **later consequences** to be **not so attractive**.

341 If the first step is difficult, wisdom may find that the **later consequences** are **very beneficial**. ...

342 The **whole purpose of wisdom** is to **lay out** the **inner world** and **outer world in such a way** that you can make choices.

343 Because wisdom encourages alternatives and possibilities, wisdom also encourages choice according to your values.



344

346 **# 179 Values**

347 The **purpose of wisdom** is to **serve**

348 **your values,**

349 **the values of your local community and**

350 **the values of the world.**

351 So **values are central.**

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

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

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

355 There are the **positive values which you seek** and the **negative values which you seek to avoid.** ...

356 **In any situation** there are the **values**

357 **of the actor** (usually yourself),

358 **of the people directly affected by your action** and

359 **of those indirectly affected** (perhaps through the environment).

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

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

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

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

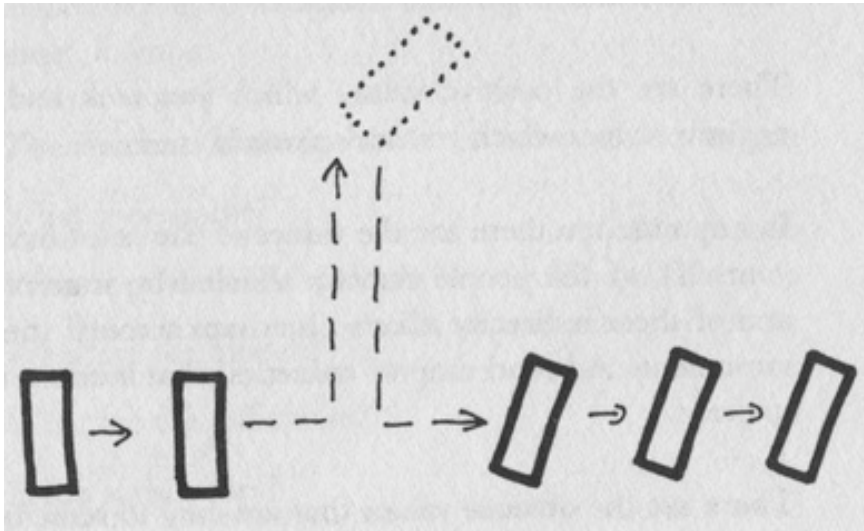
364 Being given **attention** and **recognition** is a **high positive value.**

365 **Boredom** is a **high negative value.** ...

- 366 Not all values are equal.
- 367 Some have a higher priority than others.
- 368 Values may need sorting out. ...
-
- 369 There can be contrary values, either within the same person or between different persons.
- 370 We can seek to accommodate the contrary values, combine them together or alternate between them.
- 371 We can 'trade off' values, giving up some in order to enjoy others. ...
-
- 372 It is the role of the 'design' process to take the values and the broadly perceived situation and to design the way forward.
- 373 This may be a single design, or the result may be a set of alternatives.
- 374 You then have to choose between the alternatives, using your values and priorities again. ...
-
- 375 Design may involve working forward with the key values and then seeking to fit the other values in.
- 376 Design may involve trying to work forward with all values at the same time. ...
-
- 377 The elements of design are:
- 378 What is desirable?
- 379 What is possible?
- 380 What are the models?
- 381 What are the difficulties?

382 Is this satisfactory?

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



384

386 # 180 Emotions and Feelings

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

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

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

390 So is **biased perception**. ...

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

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

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

394 Which of the four channels will the ball follow?

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

396 The tray tilts in that direction.

397 The ball rolls down the channel that benefits from the tilt. ...

398 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**.

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

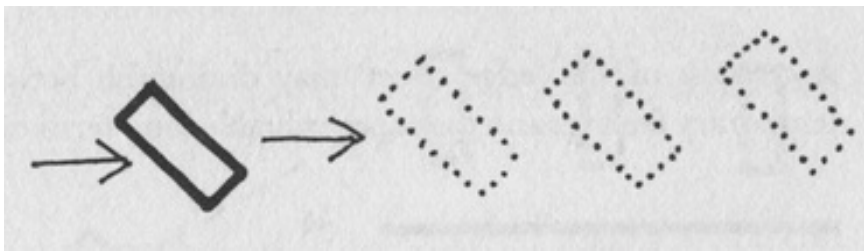
400 **It is not that we 'choose' to see things** in a way that fits our emotions.

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

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

403 They will not just occur by themselves. ...

- 404 Logic is unlikely to **change emotions and feelings**, but **changed perception can.** ...
- 405 Emotions and feelings **overlap with values** but are not always the same thing.
- 406 Your **material value system** may tell you that you have done well to sell your house at a large profit.
- 407 Your feeling may be one of sadness as you move out of the house.
- 408 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. ...
- 409 **Awareness of the 'edge effect'** may distinguish between **temporary feelings** and the **more valuable long-term ones.**
- 410 **If our emotions come first** then they determine our perceptions.
- 411 We only see things **the way we want to see them.**



412

414 # 181 Judgement

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

416 what things are;

417 what things to seek;

418 what things to avoid;

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

420 **Without judgement we could not proceed at all.** ...

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

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

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

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

425 rejection of the 'untruth'

426 the search for absolutes

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

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

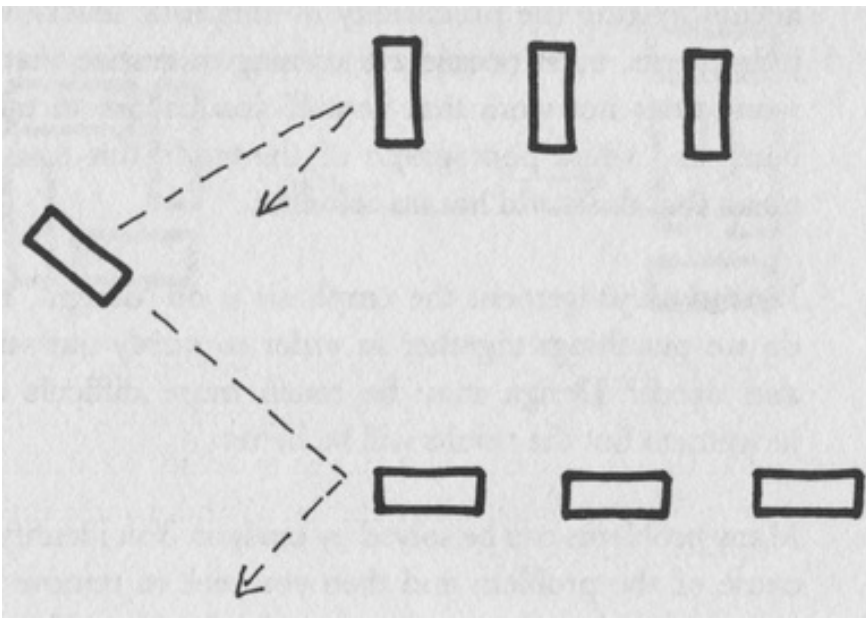
429 In a changing world the 'boxes' derived from the past **may no longer
be adequate to describe** a changed present. ...

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

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

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

- 433 Something accepted may be **accepted too wholeheartedly**, when acceptance should be
- 434 **milder**,
- 435 **doubtful** or
- 436 **related to circumstances**.
- 437 While acknowledging the **practicality of simplistic black/white judgements**, most people are coming to realize that the world does not work that way.
- 438 If you choose to take a black and white photograph of the world this does not mean that the world has no colors. ...
- 439 Instead of judgement **the emphasis is on 'design'**.
- 440 **How do we put things together** in order to satisfy our values and needs?
- 441 **Design** may be **much more difficult** than judgement but **the results will be better**. ...
- 442 Many **problems** can be solved by **analysis**.
- 443 You identify the **cause** of the problem and then you seek to **remove that cause**.
- 444 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.
- 445 We need to be able to **'design the way forward'**, leaving the cause in place.
- 446 While we are excellent at analysis we are not nearly so expert at design – because **design requires creativity**.
- 447 We need judgement to find our way through life.
- 448 The danger is an excessive emphasis on rigid acceptances and rejections, and not enough attention to design.



449

451 **# 182 Design**

452 How do you design a meal?

453 How do you design a dish?

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

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

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

457 How do you **put things together** to achieve what you want? ...

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 466 Traditional education systems put far too little emphasis on design.
- 467 There is a belief that the 'lawyer-type' search for the truth of the Gang of Three is sufficient.
- 468 Arguments around this matter make use of exactly those habits which the argument is trying to change.
- 469 It is like speaking French to teach the French to speak English. ...
- 470 Design is the **necessary final stage** of **parallel thinking**.
- 471 We **lay things down** in **parallel** in order to provide the **ingredients for design**.
- 472 Sometimes the **outcome** is **obvious** and **reveals itself**.
- 473 At other times a **more deliberate design process** is required. ...
- 474 **Does this mean that design is always better than judgement?**
- 475 **Not at all.**
- 476 That would be contrary to the spirit of wisdom.
- 477 There are **times** when **judgement is required**.
- 478 There are times when judgement is **faster** and **better** than design.
- 479 There are times when judgement is needed even **within the design process**.
- 480 In the end judgement is required to **assess** and **choose** the **outputs from design**.
- 481 We come back to the 'salt curve'.
- 482 No judgement is bad.
- 483 Some judgement is good.

484 Excessive judgement is bad.

485 What do we mean by 'excessive'?

486 The belief that judgement is sufficient by itself.

487 It is only that **arrogance** which needs challenging. ...

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

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

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

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

492 Consider two architects.

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

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

495 The architect pauses.

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

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

498 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.
- 499 The architect then sets out to design a house.
- 500 It is true that this design may resemble other designs.
- 501 It is true that the designed house may contain sub-elements that are standard.
- 502 Nevertheless, there is a design effort. ...
- 503 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.
- 504 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'. ...
- 505 One of the difficulties of design is that we feel **compelled** to 'design for perfection'.
- 506 How can we get this absolutely right?
- 507 This makes design very much harder than judgement.
- 508 As a general policy it is best to **aim for** a 'simple and practical' design.
- 509 Then you seek to **improve this design**.
- 510 **If you cannot improve** the design then **use it as it is**. ...
- 511 Knowing that a 'judgement' is right is **almost an emotion**.
- 512 The brain is **set up** to **make judgements**.
- 513 **When we recognize something**, the processes in the brain provide a **sort of 'click'**, just as humor generates a laugh.

514 Occasionally this happens with design.

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

516 We get to like the design.

517 We like it more and more.

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

519 Not all meals have to be memorable experiences.

520 Most meals are designs for a practical purpose.

521 They achieve that purpose.

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

524 **# 183 A New Super-pattern → What would
Merlin do?**

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

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

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

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

529 Logic only begins **when perception ends**. ...

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

531 You can read this book and reread it.

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

533 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). ...

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

535 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.

536 **What would Merlin do here?**

537 **What would the 'wise person' do here?** ...

538 You would then **use this super-pattern as you wished**, just as you use

the gears as you wish when driving a car.

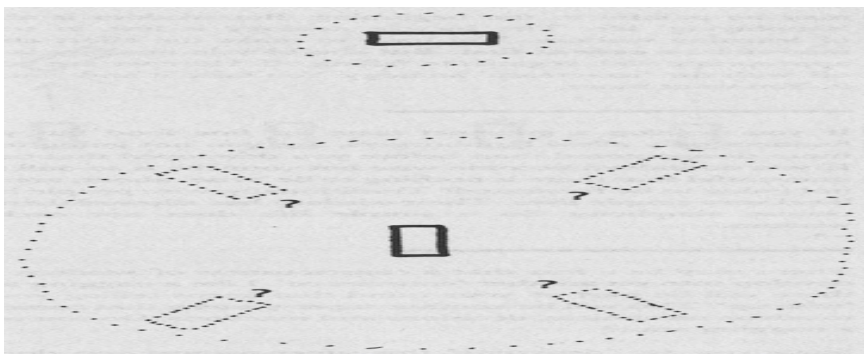
539 Perhaps, in time, you will progress from a manual gear-shift car to an automatic one.

540 Wisdom will now become part of your behavior. ...

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

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

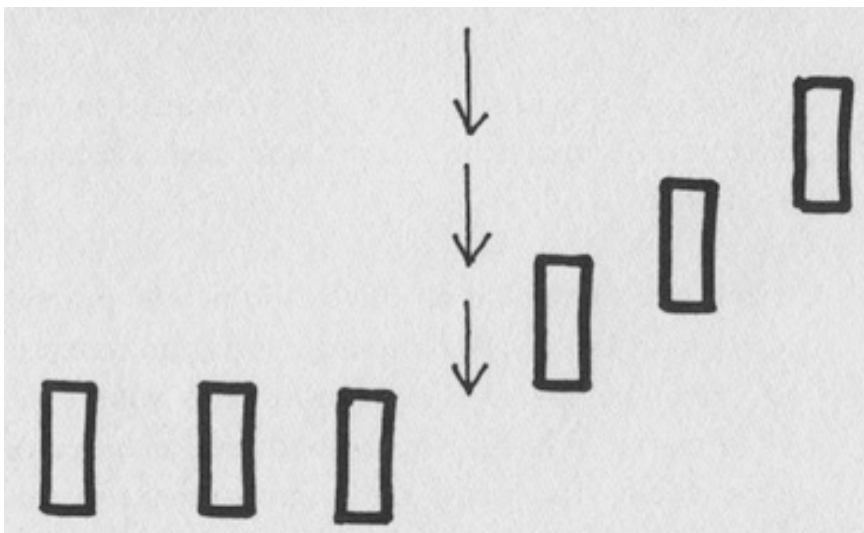
543 Instead of searching for the standard solution we design a way forward.



544

545 Wisdom comes with growth.

546 But wisdom is also the fertilizer for growth.



547