

Dear Mr Roger Martin

I would firstly like to congratulate you on your remarkably wonderful publications: The Opposable Mind and The Design of Business. I have not got down to reading your 3rd book “Fixing the Game”, only because your previous two publications left me sleepless and searching for answers. I’m sure I will get to it, as I’m already a huge fan of your work, not to mention completely intrigued by the process of Integrated Thinking.

I have heard many wonderful things about you through our common friend Mr Bob Brett, who is not only an excellent tennis coach but an exceptional analyst and strategist as well. Having him close by to dissect my theories was probably the integral link to stumbling upon what I believe is the “missing component” in the process TO integrated thinking.

My field of specialty is Emotional Intelligence. For me, it is the foundation stone for everything we feel, think, and react to. I must admit up until a few weeks ago, the concept of Integrated Thinking was alien to me. But having said that, it has now grown on me substantially and I have no doubt that it will soon be one of the fundamental cogs I use. The process of Integrated Thinking has provided me with the elusive step that I needed to bridge the gap between Creative Thinking and Lateral Thinking using Emotional Intelligence. But although it provided some answers, it simultaneously left some areas very vague. This obviously lead me to question many of the fundamental points in the process, which has turned out to be ground breaking.

In the paragraphs that follow, I will try to explain to you my thought process and take you through a model I have developed. You are extremely experienced in this field and I would be honored if you would please take some time to read through it and provide any feedback you feel necessary.

Firstly, the process of Integrated Thinking for me is: $1 + 1 = 3$

Creative Thinking + Lateral Thinking = Integrated Solutions

Problem 1: After reading your book “The Opposable Mind”, I had a fairly decent grasp of the process of Integrative Thinking, but for some reason I could not transition that final step into actually forging a completely unique idea that was superior to each of my individual ideas. The reason for this was that each individual idea had separate emotional connotations. And in my endeavor to blend the salient points from each idea, I was completely over-whelmed by the emotions that formed part and parcel of each idea.

Problem 2: My emotions prevented me from accurately determining the salient points in each idea. I only considered points that were obvious and points that conformed to the norms of how society has been taught to think.

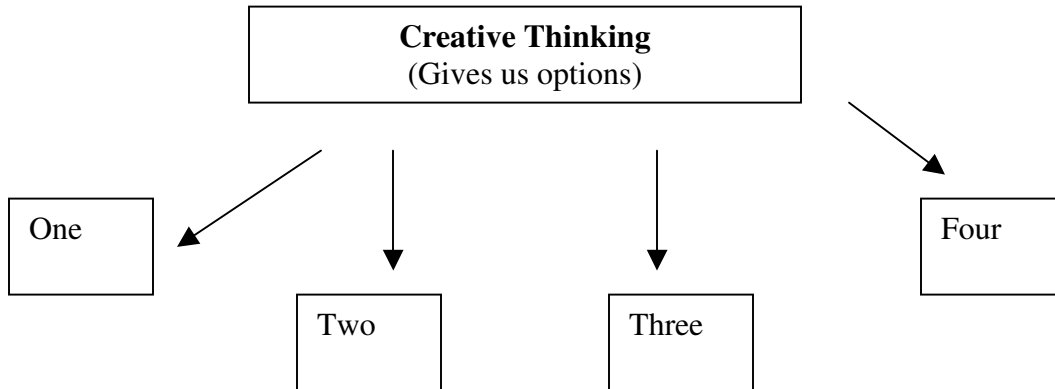
Problem 3: Were the two ideas I was trying integrate in actual fact the best options/ ideas???

These problems lead me back to the drawing board and the only thing I had to fall back on was my understanding of the principles of creative thinking and lateral thinking.

So.....

This is where my model started.

Step 1: Creative Thinking



Creative thinking is the process of maximizing the brains ability to generate new and unique ideas. This can be taught using exercises and drills that stimulate us to think of new ideas and prevent mental blocks. Creativity is an attitude that is developed from a willingness to embrace change. It is also most effect when one is in an “ideal state of mind”.

If we can approach a problem with a creative and analytical mindset, we will be able to generate viable, new and different ideas. This process is only here to provide us with options, so it’s important to not let our emotions intervene at all. In fact, outrageous and radical options/ideas are encouraged.

Step 2: Lateral Thinking

This step may in actual fact be the most important because it brings “rationale” into the equation. Lateral thinking will help us define and distinguish our salient points for each idea, thus allowing us to determine the most adequate and appropriate idea to pursue.

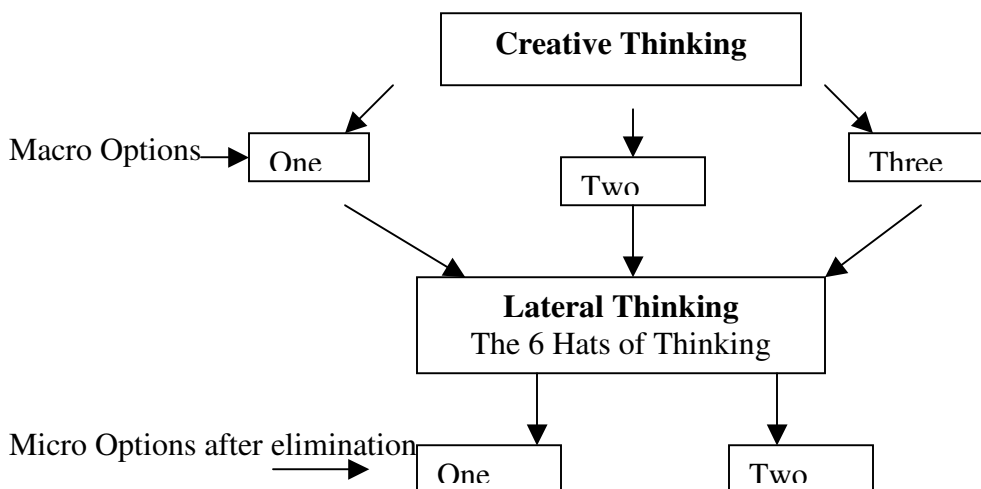
This however is easier said than done, simply because emotions will once again cloud our judgment and prevent us from actually determining “what are the salient points critical to the development of the idea?” and “which is the best idea to pursue?”

I decided to simplify this process by using Edward De Bono’s - 6 hats of thinking. This way I can successfully divorce emotion whilst determining what is actually salient.

Edward De Bono 6 Hats of Thinking are as follows:

1. *White Hat* – information known or needed – only facts.
2. *Yellow Hat* – symbolizes optimism – here we just explore positives and probe for value add and benefits.
3. *Black Hat* – stands for judgment - play devil’s advocate, spot danger or assume where things may go wrong.
4. *Red Hat* – symbolizes feelings and intuitions – here you can openly express your feeling, emotions, fears, likes and dislikes.
5. *Green Hat* – stands for creativity – think of the possibility of new ideas that can stem from each idea/ or alternates to each idea.
6. *Blue Hat* – used to manage the thinking process – this is your control mechanism and here you analyze to make sure the guidelines to the 6 Hats of Thinking were observed.

By the end of step 2, we would have been able to creatively think of new ideas/ options/ and alternatives. And then using the 6 hats, determine the strengths and weaknesses of each viable idea or option, thus making the process of elimination clear and unhindered by emotion.



Step 3: Emotional Intelligence

The definition of Emotional Intelligence is:

“The capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and others.”

The Emotional Intelligence Model has five dimensions:

- Awareness of the self
- Actions of the self
- Awareness of others
- Interaction with others
- Resilience

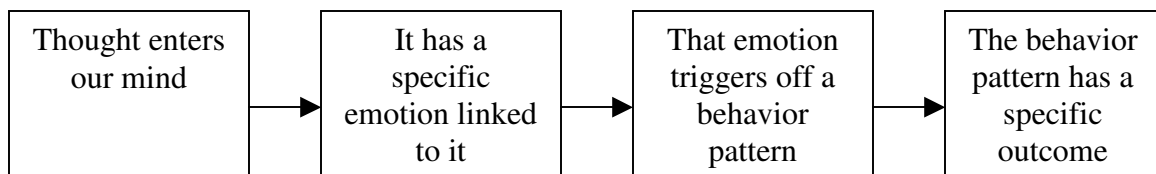
Definition of the five dimensions:

1. *Awareness of the self*: The ability to identify emotions in yourself and perceive the impact it has on others.
2. *Actions of the self*: The ability to manage your own emotions, especially in negative of stressful situations.
3. *Awareness of others*: The ability to accurately perceive and understand the emotional state of others.
4. *Interactions with others*: The ability to use the awareness of others emotions to build relations, teams and support networks.
5. *Resilience*: The ability to maintain equilibrium despite the inevitable changes that may occur.

My Premise:

I have always believed that Emotional Intelligence is foundation to all learning. Everything we do in life stems from a thought that invokes a feeling that in turn triggers off a sequence of events that are specific to that emotional state. It is my belief that the end result of each specific emotion, although unique in each individual, is set and ingrained into our personality at a very early stage of development. Trying to re-program the end result of an emotional state is not possible.

The Sequence of Events:



Example:

If a person is aggressive towards you, it may make you angry. That anger in you will trigger off a sequence or pattern, such as: You may over-react, not think clearly, or be aggressive in return, etc The end result of those patterns, if negative, will always be negative.

Hence, in this case, anger is an emotion that will inextricably always end up with a negative result.

Similarly, people have positive emotional states that will trigger off positive patterns of behavior. These positive patterns will always have positive end results.

As an Emotional Intelligence specialist, I help people identify, understand and track these emotional states. Once they can achieve this, I can mentally re-program the human psyche to change these negative or neutral mental or emotional states to positive ones. This is the fundamental premise that I have used very successfully with athletes at the highest level of competitive sport.

The Game Changer:

Following on from above, I strongly believe that the birthplace of creativity lies in an ideal state of mind. That state, as unique as it is in each individual, lies somewhere between our conscious and sub-conscious minds.

Up to this point in the model, we have only tapped into our conscious minds to search for alternatives/ options/ and ideas. This process, as calculated and specific as it is, is a key component of the information generating stage, which is imperative. Without the adequate knowledge from this stage, we will not be able to allow our sub-conscious minds to take over. If we do not process enough information through conscious deliberation, the sub-conscious mind will not be able to synergise the information and create that unique idea.

The key question is “How do we transport the mind to that “ideal state” somewhere between consciousness and sub-consciousness?”

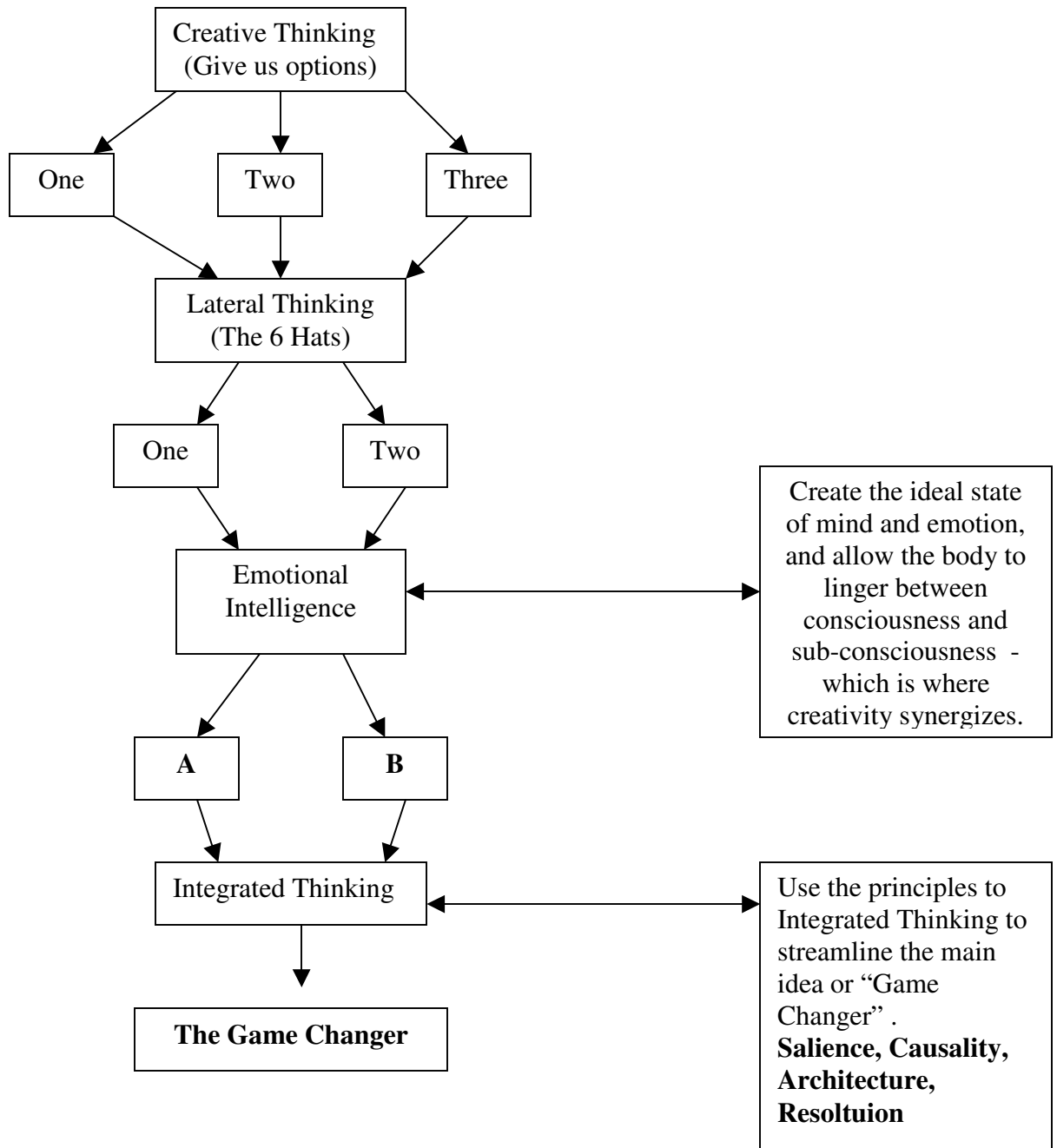
Thomas Edison, the inventor of the light bulb, had a brilliant method of transitioning between consciousness and sub-consciousness. He would sit in what he referred to as his ‘thinking chair’ with a metal ball in his hand. On the floor directly beneath his hand, he would place a metal pan. Edison would then allow his body and mind to completely relax. At some point between consciousness and sub-consciousness, his hand muscles would relax involuntarily, allowing the metal ball to fall onto the metal pan. He would then wake up and note down whatever he was thinking about. This process allowed him to activate and create thoughts that were unhindered by his conscious mind. But having said that, the only thoughts or new ideas one would generate would inevitably stem from some source of information processed by the conscious mind through creative thinking, lateral thinking and research.

The next question that needed answering was in actual fact the key to the entire puzzle.

If one's emotions are directly correlated to specific outcomes, like anger making people over react or compassion making someone vulnerable, then why can't a specific emotion or state of mind be the birthplace of creativity for each individual (given that they have done the necessary conscious deliberation required)?

Personally, I sincerely **believe it can be done!!!**

Hence, my model for what I call **“Definitive Thinking”**



The Process of “Definitive Thinking”

Step 1: Creative Thinking

- Use exercise and drills to stimulate the mind. The brain like every other muscle needs exercise to stimulate it. The more we train our minds, the greater will be our ability to think creatively.
- This process should be used to generate options.

Step 2: Lateral Thinking

- Using Edward de Bono’s 6 Hats of Thinking, we will be able to accurately ascertain the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in each idea. (SWOT Analysis)
- This will then allow us to make educated and calculated decisions on which ideas to whole-heartedly pursue.

Step 3: Emotional Intelligence

- Use EQ training to understand our emotional strength and weaknesses. This platform will then allow us to determine our “ideal state of mind” conducive to creativity. If you spend enough time in this emotional state, when you start to linger between your conscious and sub-conscious minds, you will start to synergize information which will be the birth place of new unique ideas.

Step 4: Integrated Thinking

- Using the process of Integrative Thinking (Salience, Causality, Architecture and Resolution) in combination with your Tools, Stance and Experience – you will be able to develop that new unique idea into a commercial, saleable commodity.

This model is a rough description of the process I am training to investigate. I have taken some key elements from different schools of thought and combined them into a model that is measurable and viable.

Please feel free to dissect this model and my theories.
Any and all feedback will be most appreciated.

Thank you once again, for inspiring me to re-create.

Regards

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