



Reference: Criticism of self help, Dr. De Bono and Lateral Thinking.

Version 1.0 rebuttal.

INTRODUCTION

Someone going under the name Reginald Firehammer wrote the following article and in ‘red’ I offer a rebuttal. The article is well written logically but is full of grave mistakes, and is therefore wrong. I do offer a preamble before the rebuttal so that the reader can judge a fuller understanding of Dr. De Bono, of Ayn Rand, of self help and even of me.

PRE-AMBLE

Firehammer criticizes the ‘self help’ industry and below he specific aim is Dr. Edward de Bono.

The irony is Firehammer is a cult follower of Ayn Rand, an original “self help” person. Ayn Rand is similarly excluded from almost every university (and definitely completely excluded by every reputable university on earth, such as the London Times 200) philosophy department and she is relegated to the umbrella of “self help” or “pop”. I point this out to demonstrate that just because someone (Ayn Rand) or something (Objectivism, the philosophy of Ayn Rand) is thought to be provocative, has a cult following or is deemed to be unreasonable, does not necessitate such as true.

The second ironic point is that I very much like the works of Ayn Rand and am very well versed in her works to a “black belt or

expert” level (similarly with others I mention below). I am a great supporter of individualism, capitalism, free trade and rational thinking. Therefore whereas the author criticizes de Bono believing himself, to be a hardened Objectivist, in contrast despite being a follower of Objectivism, I demonstrate Dr. De Bono and other people involved in self-help, and many of the thought-products within self help are equally brilliant (and non-contradictory to Objectivism).

The third ironic point is that Dr. De Bono is a rigorous individualist, and certainly not a “collectivist” (as the author accuses of him). A collectivist is someone with communist, Statist and/or altruistic thinking.

“Altruism” is used in Objectivism, the philosophy derived by Ayn Rand – as something “evil” because it means (forced) “sacrifice” such as a government that uses force (e.g. for of law such as taxation) to take property fairly acquired from the producer (e.g. business man) and redistribute wealth (and/or other items) to what she refers to as “parasites: those that leech from society from such handouts”. In contrast, she is a great supporter of “free trade” and “individualism”.

The individual is self-responsible for their life: for their (pursuit of) happiness. The individual must exercise liberty within reason: using their mind properly (rationality) in order to maintain their life and also to progress in life (e.g. productivity), and enjoy the pleasures of life (e.g. happiness, sex, justice). The individual is not “due” anything by anyone just for being alive. In altruism, the State “owes” the person and in return the individual is relegated to a part of “collectivism” with a forced “social contract” imposed upon them by the State.

De Bono is never an altruist (evil). He is an individualist. For instance, he charges for his personal services, and rarely is his work

offered for free. Even when it is offered for free is De Bono exercising “benevolence” is never “leeching” off the State in an altruistic manner.

Dr. De Bono is a brilliant businessman and in every other way embodies the “ideal” hero in Ayn Rand’s novels. He advocates good thinking (what Rand would call “the virtue of rationality”) so that one is able to indeed engage in the various virtues that Rand identified: rationality, productivity, individualism etc.

Dr. De Bono teaches individuals, corporations, governments (bodies) and children in schools, amongst many other groups. His methods “fit” like hand-and-glove with the vertical thinking of Ayn Rand. Like Rand, he is a veracious supporter of “rational” thinking. However, he does not use the word “rational” thinking per se. He does state that lateral thinking is “logic of creativity” (and he does go onto validate this in every single one of his 67 books).

It must be borne in mind that the word “logic” or “rationality” has 3 different (perhaps interlinked meanings) depending upon what context it is used. Logic means that which is “rational”. Logic also means a sequence of prioritized steps. Finally “logic” means “the art of non-contradictory identification of the truth” (Rand).

In order to avoid confusion, I will use “logic” in my rebuttal below to refer to the last point above (which was defined by Ayn Rand). Therefore, “logic” in this article is the same as “vertical thinking” (a phrase championed by Dr. De Bono).

The result of free trade is a free and fair society, with capitalism being the correct (moral) economic system. In order for individuals to think properly, they must think “rationally”.

The correct method of thinking, of being rational, is the method of “reason and logic”. Even before De Bono, Ayn Rand distinguished

“rationality” from the type of thinking almost all others (philosophers) engaged in, interpreting it more broadly and more specifically. She talked and wrote at length of about ‘concepts’ and ‘values’; and often used the word “context”. Dr. De Bono also talks and writes at length about ‘concepts’ and ‘values’ and often uses the word ‘context’. A very important distinction about Dr. De Bono (from Ayn Rand) is that he is not only descriptive (like Ayn Rand) but also ‘prescribes’ specific simple, practical (and therefore powerful) tools with which to think.

Dr. De Bono gives practical frameworks, tools and methods with which to create such ‘value’ (e.g. 6 value medals, OPV: other people’s values and views) and with which to identify and work with ‘concepts’ (lateral thinking: concept extraction, concept fan etc.). Ayn Rand wonderfully nails the meaning of concepts in a definite manner; and further develops the ideas. That is truly genius. However de Bono even further develops concepts with practical ways of identifying and using concepts for one’s purposes. That too is genius. Rand is descriptive and precise; de Bono is both descriptive but also prescriptive and practical.

Ayn Rand was quite famous for interpreting words in a way quite distinct from that perceived by the rest of society. Above I pointed out one such word: “altruism”. Other words that she championed include “selfishness”. She was very much an individualist, a capitalist (great earner and business woman), a hero, and deliberately provocative.

This is the same with Dr. De Bono: in similitude he invents ‘functional words’ (rather than interpreting or re-interpreting existing words like Rand), is ruggedly individualist and original with his thinking, is supremely successful, is provocative and has lasted the test of time.

Even more so than Ayn Rand De Bono has reached many more

people and as I state several times above and below, is often called upon by leaders in many different fields to train them. De Bono also has an unusually big popular following – so much so than Ayn Rand.

Dr. De Bono invented at least two different frameworks for “rational” thinking: lateral thinking and parallel thinking (including DATT/CoRt which the author mentions below and hats).

It must be emphasized very strongly that there is no antagonism between the two types of thinking (vertical and lateral thinking). Ayn Rand championed “vertical thinking: logic being the art of non-contradictory identification of the truth”. Lateral thinking is composed of conducting provocative operations with which to generate ideas that one may not otherwise have come up with”.

Parallel thinking is composed of 6 hats. One of the hats is green hat: lateral thinking. Another hat is “black hat”: critical thinking. But at no time is one ever engaged in “the art of non-contradictory identification of the truth” such as in philosophy or law. Therefore I re-emphasize here and several times through my article that both ‘de Bono thinking’ and ‘Ayn Rand’ thinking are complimentary and required.

Parallel thinking is an extremely powerful way of thinking (which as I have said, includes lateral thinking and it includes critical thinking) for generating ideas in a finite time (i.e. practical thinking) but without getting trapped/caught-up in vertical thinking (art of non-contradictory identification of the truth: logic). This makes parallel thinking extremely useful, simple (for all ages) and very powerful.

Vertical thinking is required to validate or prove conclusions reached by the above, from time to time. Parallel thinking (including lateral thinking) is required to generate ideas, develop

perception (and perspectives) and thereafter reach decisions.

I have spent 15 years becoming an expert in “self help”. I am uniquely very well versed in the works (and in fact lives) of various “gurus” including Ayn Rand, Dr. De Bono (whom I shall fondly refer to as “Edward” below), Tony Robbins, Stephen Covey, Brian Tracy, Peter Senge and many more. The above all “fit” very well together.

These people are leaders and captains of industry and most are cited by reputable business firms as some of the ‘top thinkers’ on earth today (except Ayn Rand who is cited elsewhere as a great thinker). The ones I’ve quoted above all ‘walk their talk’: have developed various businesses (not just personal improvement per se) and created vast wealth.

The author below curiously berates the creation of wealth. Ayn Rand was a great supporter of wealth creation and American capitalism. Wealth is created by offering that which is perceived to be of value to *another*.

The *other* therefore gives up their personal property (i.e. money) in exchange for what they believe to be of fair or lesser value than the property (i.e. payment, money) they give up in a fair legal transaction. In this case, people pay in order to improve themselves and hope to gain a much better “rate of return” by investing in themselves. The result of capitalism is the development of individuals and therefore of society itself. This is what free trade and capitalism is all about. The State is important to protect individuals from the use of force or fraud using such arms as the court system.

Over the years it has been my experience that the overwhelming vast majority of people that go to seminars by the above are very satisfied, often for life by having attended one or more seminars by

the above. This is in contrast to the author's subjective and incorrect feelings below.

The top-most companies on earth call upon Dr. De Bono regularly. He has worked with renowned corporate captains as well as heads of State. He has personally worked in the field of medicine at the foremost universities on earth and in a research capacity too such as Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard and so forth. Edward is distinguished from the other gurus, and certainly does not categorize himself as 'self improvement'.

My response (rebuttal) to the author is in 'red' to distinguish myself. I use the words 'self help', 'self improvement', 'personal development' and such like inter-changeably and it is emphasized "favorably". We are not born with such knowledge and often do not learn such knowledge neither from school nor from our parents. Self help literature [including Ayn Rand] and methods are both "memes" and apart from Rand, specific methods with which to become more effective and more efficient as a human being in every significant area.

I avoid any guru too heavy in the mystical area (i.e. magical thinking) like Deepak Chopra, Sylvia Browne. However there are some whose works I do rate up to a certain extent, such as "Jose Silva" of the "Silva method" is brilliant until he crosses the 'psychic barrier' that is to be avoided.

I want re-emphasis that de Bono's "parallel thinking" and "lateral thinking" is perfectly and brilliantly "rational"; and is very much needed because of the limitation of mind as a self maximizing memory system that takes in information from its surroundings to create but with an emphasis on entrenching and perpetuating (established) patterns. There is no adequate mechanism for "restructuring patterns".

Lateral thinking is therefore an intervention of sorts, and a method of playing by deliberately restructuring patterns with the methods of provocation, challenge or concept extraction. This is perfectly rational once one understands the nature of the mind as a self-organizing asymmetric patterning system.

Self organizing: there is no homunculus organizing information in the mind.

Information: Data that his various sense organs receive (e.g. sight, sound etc.) triggering neural signals and the flow of such patterns in the brain.

Pattern: regular sequence of neural activity. In practical terms this means regular concepts, ideas, images, thoughts and/or regular concepts that occur over periodic time.

Asymmetric: what is (logically and/or perceptually) obvious in hindsight was not obvious in foresight. We are often trapped in myth with many areas, akin to the blind spot in the eye: yet not aware of such myth.

Lateral thinking: a way to restructure such a pattern and allow the mind to use its power to (re) organize information into new patterns (as it snaps it together) in order to see if we generate new and useful ideas that we may not otherwise have had. Therefore we can overcome the disadvantages of the mind as a “cliché forming” mechanism; overcome the asymmetric nature of mind; overcome the fact that we get trapped by patterns that perpetuate, trapped by certain paradigms in our “logic bubble”.

Logic Bubble: the way we perceive any situation (or the word) based upon stated and unstated assumptions, expectations, beliefs, rules, attitudes, ego, emotions and values. This results in a habit of thinking and behavior of acting that is often habitual routine. The

advantage of such a system is efficiency. The great disadvantage is that in light of new information, we reject such, as it does not ‘fit’ to what we know to be true. We expect our ‘truth’ has dogma: such as in marketing, in science, in politics, in our relationships or conflict etc.

Parallel (including lateral) thinking compliments vertical thinking (the type of thinking championed by philosophers, by Rand, by Aristotle etc.). One type of thinking without the other is irrational.

Without vertical thinking, the conclusions of parallel (including lateral) thinking may in some contexts be phrased in an illogical and too broad a manner. On the other hand, with *exclusive* use of vertical thinking: it is too often relegated to a minority group (e.g. academics, philosophers, lawyers, etc.) and even then as all thinking starts with perception, the above groups and/or individuals end up entrenched in a never-ending quarrel with each other, each interpreting the so-called logic in a different way: applying their differing values and perception; each trapped within their own logic-bubble (unstated assumptions, expectations, beliefs, rules about how things should be, emotions and values).

The scientific method, with its emphasis on the “hypothesis” idiom came about to overcome the nonsensical argument that vertical thinking often produced. Now one could “test” one’s ideas and reach an experimental conclusion. One did not have to rely exclusively on the “word game” of descriptive logic (vertical thinking).

That said, both types of thinking is of great import: scientific thinking with hypothesis, and vertical thinking: using logic as the art of non-contradictory identification of the truth. Parallel

thinking enables one to hypothesize and go much broader. With hypothesis, the idea must be “reasonable” at first. With lateral thinking, one can deliberately seek out and use “unreasonable” ideas: not for its own sake (conclusion) but for its effect (to see where the idea will lead to, to determine if one can reach a solid solution using a different approach).

I will re-state that there is no conflict between these two modes of thinking, rather lateral thinking enhances vertical thinking and tempers the rigidity of its conclusions.

Above I pointed out a few problems when one exclusively relies upon vertical thinking. Below I will point out other problems. With *exclusive* use of vertical thinking:

1. perception is over-looked without Parallel thinking.
2. unnecessary wastage of time occurs in most areas, most of the time without parallel thinking.
3. the exclusive emphasis of vertical thinking will always produce conflict, even within a group (e.g. Objectivists: differing viewpoints between Branden and Rand; and other splinter groups all championing Objectivism) and is outright dangerous.
4. it is outright dangerous because people will always have different perceptions (logic bubbles), but always unwittingly argue their point of view with retrospective hindsight logic. It will appear very “rational” to the person putting forward their argument.

Dr. De Bono explains in far more detail what happens with the exclusive emphasis of vertical thinking in “I am right, you are wrong”: indeed it is the reason why history is filled with

conflict, persecutions and outright killing in wars.

Mind-benders—The de Bono Brothers

The Mind-bender Series

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The more well-known of the brothers is **Edward de Bono**, " ... regarded by many to be the leading authority in the world in the field of creative thinking and the direct teaching of thinking as a skill," his home page says.

The less well known younger brother is **Peter de Bono** who is in charge of **Cavendish Information Products Ltd and Cavendish Training**, which distributes de Bono products and provides de Bono training courses.

What Do They Do?

Well, for one thing, **they make a lot of money.**

Yes. And this is fantastic. It is their right to make money. It is even better if they make a lot of it. And furthermore they make their money (ordinarily) from learned people and the very best corporations on earth.

Your portrayal of them making money is simply to berate them - as if there is something wrong with making money. Ayn Rand made money.

"The fee for the two day CoRT Programme course will be GBP 300.00 (\$492.96). The fee for the one day Six Thinking Hats Course will be GBP 200.00 (\$328.64). The fee for the three day 'de Bono Thinking' course will be GBP 400.00 (\$657.28). The fee will include lunch and refreshments on each of the days of the course and the appropriate certificate."

The fee they charge is in fact – in my opinion – horribly “low”. All other consultants and even self help gurus of repute charge much larger fees. Tony Robbins’ Mastery University starts at a low \$13,500 for 3 courses alone; where T.Harv Eker was over the \$20,000 mark. Other reputable consultants like Tom Peters or Kotler would be much more than de Bono.

If you give 25 3-day courses a year and average 20 students per course, that groces a little over \$350,000 a year.

Good for them! They should – in my opinion – be making much more and charging much more.

There are also **online courses**

"The first module costs GBP 150 (\$243.93) (excluding VAT) and GBP 180 (\$292.72) including VAT, the second module costs GBP 150 (\$243.93) (excluding VAT) and GBP 180 (\$292.72) including VAT, and the third module costs GBP 150 (\$243.93) (excluding VAT) and GBP 180 (\$292.72) including VAT- this avoids complications of discounts etc. Payment may be made by credit card - VISA or Mastercard, by cheque (UK only) or by International Money Order (by arrangement)."

There are also **Edward de Bono's books** (62 in all) as well as **CDs and Videos**.

Wild Claims

Incorrect. Edward's claims are very truthful – in the context that he has already maintained – for 30 years. Where he is provocative: he explains his reasoning so it is rational “not wild”.

Since then, his work has both been tested and validated by Nobel Prize winners such as Murray Gell-Mann. Edward de Bono was nominated for the Nobel Prize in 1995.

In my **introduction to the Mind-bending series**, itself a series of short articles about some Mind-bending concepts,

I described the entire field of self-improvement, personal development, and leadership training as, "thaumaturgy for success, wealth, happiness."

"Thaumaturgy means 'the working of miracles or magic feats,'

If that is what the above word means, then they certainly do not apply to many self help gurus (they do apply to some that tread with mysticism).

and the huge multi-million dollar business of, personal development, promises truly 'magical' results.

I have never to date seen anyone (except those to do with mysticism) promise 'magical' results. You provide NO evidence. You are wrong.

Every self improvement seminar I have been to over 15 years (which is a lot around the world particularly in the U.S) has always specifically stated in writing where I had to sign (legal binding contract) something the equivalent of the "opposite" of what you have incorrectly and fallaciously put down here.

In 'courses' ranging from a half-day to a week, these magicians

Neither are they magicians nor do they claim to be such. You are building up a fallacious straw man argument to further your nonsensical drivel. You show "no evidence" but use adjectives and adverbs (such as referring to these brilliant teachers as "magicians") to berate this wonderful field.

promise to turn mediocre individuals into innovative powerhouses, totally confused individuals

I have almost never met "confused individuals" in such seminars in the manner you put forth. I have been to Tony Robbins seminars with 13,000 people at the Excel Center in London, and 10,000 in Washington D.C with General Schwarzkopf, Donald Trump, Larry King amongst others – all hosted and friends of Tony Robbins and I have very rarely met the type of person you

are referring to. You speak “nonsense”. You offer “no evidence”.

into dynamic organizers

On this you are correct: they are dynamic organizers because they are brilliant entrepreneurs. Without these traits they could not fill up so many people in a seminar nor conduct so many things with their lives.

, and complete failures into phenomenal successes." There is no better example of this thaumaturgy than the de Bono business.

Here is **what is promised** to those who take the CoRT Programme course:

Not only are the following promised but every single one of them is indeed taught and can be taught often within 1 “business day” or 8 hours or even less.

"DATT trained employees will outperform others - they will learn 'How To':

- be a strong and confident decision maker
Tony Robbins’ method: get into a powerful state. He shows you how to do that, and then make a decision.

De Bono has a practical way to make a confident decision.

- quickly and accurately weigh risks against rewards
Correct. Without revealing de Bono’s tools; I will state that in business tools, such as a SWOT analysis can be used to “quickly weigh risks” and then come to a decision.

- consistently "make the right call"

I doubt they promise the above. But playing with the idea they do, then indeed if one takes a few minutes to think about something AS OPPOSED TO taking no time OR failing to make a decision: then indeed one will consistently make the right call.

However in more complex scenarios, indeed more time has to be taken. But still, it “Fits” with the promise here: consistently make the right call.

Furthermore, by “right call”: it must always mean making a decision (as opposed to sitting on the fence), and then “learning from the feedback and re-adjusting as appropriate”. Indeed this is what Robbins teaches and this is what de Bono’s entire system of self organization (feedback system) is based upon!

- reach optimum solutions more quickly than before

Absolutely correct and explained above. The word “optimum” does NOT mean perfect. Ayn Rand herself alluded to the human being making decisions but there is no “perfection” in this context.

- uncover the hidden opportunities in 'problems'

Correct. Instead of drowning with the problem, one can determine if there is in fact an opportunity there.

For example: an irate long term airplane customer is furious, writes in to complain and state he will never again fly with XYZ.

Instead of ignoring that nor even sending the person a mere

apology, a better (and lateral idea) would be to reward this ‘long term customer’ with a free flight, first class, to allow him to bring his partner and to also profusely apologize. In business, it is far better to “keep a customer” than spend time getting a new customer (although the latter must be done too).

A long term customers has spent and will continue to spend a lot of money. Furthermore, they will surely tell others of their bad experience BUT also of their GOOD experience. In fact, these others will also end up flying with the airline. The irate customers – it is hoped – will become a “Raving fan”.

The above is merely one example to demonstrate how a “problem” can have hidden “opportunities”.

- use 'what if' thinking to avoid costly mistakes

Absolutely. One can use the mind to project ahead, project consequences and conduct thought experiments. “What if...” Thinking is a wonderful (non-de Bono) way to do just that. That is what many greats like Einstein proactively engaged within, but same with the author Ayn Rand in order to think about how her novels would progress, and decide on some pathways whilst thinking about but editing out other pathways. In her case, such “what if ...” thinking paid off greatly with vast book sales and other fame.

- look beyond the boundaries of self-limiting perspectives

Absolutely. Often what prevents a person (and therefore a company) from moving forward is self limiting beliefs and

perspectives. These can be identified and then decisions can be made whether to go forward.

I have decided to leap ahead and argue further below instead of proving the following 4 points.

- remove obstacles with simple solutions
- be a visionary
- thoroughly judge a situation
- assess all angles of the big picture before making a decision"
- leap tall buildings in a single bound (I added this one.) **You have demonstrated ignorance.**

*All of that from a three-day course! **Incorrect. DATT is often taught in "one" business day: which means 8 hours or less (taking lunch breaks and other breaks into consideration).***

None of the following fantastic claims are ever documented, they are just asserted by de Bono himself.

That is incorrect. There are books written and testimonials given that "document" such success. Indeed it may be the law in the U.S. to keep such testimonial documents and make sure they are correct. De Bono has testimonials from Nobel Prize winners too, as well as leaders of industry. Tony Robbins has testimonials from former **PRESIDENTS OF THE USA** amongst other greats in sports, acting, and business leaders and so forth too. More information below.

For example, "Research has shown that The CoRT Thinking Programme improves performance in every other subject by between thirty and one hundred percent."

Another Fantastic Claim: "That is why teaching thinking for

just five hours to unemployed youngsters on the Government New Deal programme increased the employment rate five hundred per cent."

Correct: CoRt work has been evaluated by others such as the Harvard School of Education; and documented in academic tomes such as the Cambridge (university) Handbook of thinking, amongst others– and shown to be the “very best” way of thinking amongst other methods that have been tried (such as training kids with (non-Objectivist) philosophy, which came out weaker in terms of effective results in thinking)!

In other words, de Bono has been professionally vetted, and tested in statistically significant numbers. Over 100,000 people were trained in Venezuela. Research was conducted before, during and after work with many children and teachers. There were others trained by other similar methods developed at Harvard. De Bono’s methods produced the best results in terms of thinking and “lasted the test of time” when a follow-up study was conducted two-years after his courses were no longer conducted as mandatory (due to a change of government and government regulation).

And Another: "In fact human emotions and human behaviour can be greatly changed through the direct teaching of thinking: not logical thinking but perceptual thinking. In one mine, fights between the tribes working there were reduced from 210 a month to just four through the direct teaching of my thinking methods to totally illiterate miners."

Absolutely correct [both the first half and the second half of the paragraph: which can be treated as separate in my context to show the brilliance of de Bono methods]– and that mine in South

Africa is well known.

By re-directing one's focus/perception (such as asking different or better questions), one triggers different 'emotions'. On a different note, this is in fact the basis of psychotherapy! However de Bono's methods are very practice, simple and therefore powerful: and it is not even psychotherapy.

Thourough-going Collectivist

There is absolutely NOTHING COLLECTIVIST ABOUT DE BONO. He is a complete individualist – and great man, as I have pointed out far above.

Edward de Bono is very interested in education, which for de Bono means government-supplied education.

Here is one of **his ideas about education**:

"In education we are concerned with literacy and numeracy. That leaves out the most important aspect of all, which I call 'operacy'. The skills of action are every bit as important as the skills of knowing. We neglect them completely and turn out students who have little to contribute to society."

Who the "we"

It seems you do not have the cognitive faculty to grasp simple concepts. He is referring to the collectivist just like Ayn Rand refers to the Collectivist.

He means that society in general in almost all nations – in

education – focus on literacy and numeracy – and that despite great advances in knowledge about ‘operacy: deliberate, simple and powerful ways to use the mind for practical purposes’: very little has been done to train kids (or adults) on how to do just that. These things include such items as “how to learn better”, “how to think better: plan better, actively generate alternative ideas, look at all arguments; how to manage one’s time, set goals, priorities one’s activities and so forth.”

is that, "in education *we* are concerned," he never says. In fact, this collective use of "we" is ubiquitous in everything he writes.

Incorrect. Ayn Rand also demonstrated that higher level (broad generalized) concepts are very helpful in a “hierarchy of concepts”. De Bono’s wordings are wonderful – and that is further evidenced by 30 years of book sales, over 67 books and incredible number of sales. Therefore you are wrong, once again.

Though he never says how he knows things like, "skills of action," are not taught, he just asserts it. Even if this were a true omission in education, his reason for decrying it is because without it students, "have little to contribute to society."

Incorrect. You have not really read his work. This is in exactitude to those that criticize Ayn Rand (and selfishness) without really being aware of the fuller context of her philosophy and her work.

You are making the kind of error that Ayn Rand would be truly disgruntled with: citing quotes whilst dropping the context.

The source of all "values" and "purpose" in all of de Bono's work is society. He makes up a lot of words to obscure his real

purpose, or perhaps because he does not understand it himself.

Partially correct, but mostly incorrect. He does make up words, but above there are no words he has made up. [He has made up words like 'operacy', 'rock logic', EBNE etc. – and he goes onto loosely define such words]. The words “value” and “purpose” are clearly defined in the dictionary, and further de Bono elaborates upon these words.

He does not call it "social engineering" but that is exactly what he means: **Incorrect – you are fallaciously, mischievously attributing words to him that is nothing but your own devious attempt to berate this great man, and in an incorrect manner too!**

"Most of the world's major problems (poverty, crime, conflict, pollution etc.) will not be solved by yet more analysis and yet more information. We need to design ways forward - leaving the cause in place. Unfortunately, the traditions of education and the thinking culture of society make no provision for "design" - we see it as applying only to buildings, furniture and Christmas cards."

Absolutely correct. He is referring to “another kind of thinking” rather than “retrospective hindsight logic”: whereby one deliberately generates ideas. De Bono has always said that one can and must ALSO use conventional thinking – like switching gears in a car. Conventional thinking can develop and prove ideas generated by lateral and/or parallel thinking TM.

So what does de Bono want to apply "design" to? Why society, and world problems, of course.

Design thinking: can be applied to anything. It is a way of

conducting “thought experiments” to see where the idea may lead to. It is NOT magical thinking – nor is that ever claimed.

One more example to show it is "society" that is the ultimate end or purpose in the de Bono view:

"For people with high IQs are not necessarily good thinkers; in fact they are often poor thinkers. Less than ten per cent of what is taught in schools is of the slightest use to society in general or to the students involved. It is taught because it is there - and it is there because it has been there before. In effect, education is mostly expensive baby-sitting. It sets its own exams and criteria of success and is happy to satisfy these. *That these are of very little relevance to society seems to matter not at all.*" [Emphasis mine.]

That is absolutely correct. The famous Prof. Anders K. Erickson's works further establish how mastery is not the result of I.Q per se, but rather other factors to do with deliberate practice in many skills.

Finally, there is in the de Bono method a repudiation of true knowledge, both of facts and principles, as in this example:

"In OECD countries, an average of 24 percent of the time in school is spent on mathematics. Of the mathematics taught, probably less than five per cent is of use in life to most students."

I doubt very much if 24 percent of school time is spent on mathematics anywhere in the world today. I can not comment, as I do not know the percentage – but you can not just comment without offering more definite evidence – which you do not do at any time!

Perhaps he meant that amount of time is spent on environmentalism and socialization. In other places, not only the significance of mathematics, but history, geography, and literature are questioned. This is a huge and serious mistake.

All thinking, no matter what it is about, requires knowledge, real knowledge of the facts and principles that describe the nature of the real world.

You are correct above: but de Bono would agree with you. He describes good thinking (in one of his books) as “collecting information and making the best use of information”. Thinking is more than just this and he describes it in different words in other books.

His tools enable one to find the correct information, and then evaluate it to determine how good such information is. Secondly, knowledge is NEVER a substitute for thinking – one must use the knowledge and also outright design a way forward. Your limited understand of thinking is shown in your article because you do not even have the requisite knowledge to even berate de Bono.

There is nothing wrong with offering a critique of someone's works: but you are engaging in *ad hominem* argument and further with “context dropping” and a very poor understanding of de Bono's works!

Knowledge is the means by which all thinking is carried out, and knowledge is all there is to think about.

One very simple example is de Bono's emphasis on "creative thinking." If one does not know what has already been created, is not aware of the current state of science, technology, economic processes and methods, even literature, they are not going to be able to do much creating, and will most likely spend all their time reinventing the wheel.

No comment because I showed you above that de Bono's methods are strongly about finding out and modeling existing knowledge (by the way – this is what TONY ROBBINS is also about, but de Bono is doing it in a more definite way) and further de Bono's work is about synthesizing a way forward: creative and design thinking.

All knowledge is useful, if it is real knowledge. It does not matter if one does not, "use that knowledge," they will nevertheless gain insights directly and by analogy that will broaden the scope of all their thinking. What is more creative than the creative writer. What knowledge is not grist for the writer's mill. The repudiation of knowledge is a grave evil.

Bizarre Theory Of Brain Function. Incorrect, he was nominated for the Nobel Prize in 1995 for this; and this line of work has been publically given the thumbs up by 3 Nobel Prize winners. Furthermore he is qualified as a medical doctor that has held research posts in various hospitals and at the top most universities on earth in the U.S. and the U.K., amongst other places.

Edward de Bono seldom mentions consciousness (though he uses the term "perception" a lot, though incorrectly **incorrect. He uses**

it – perception - very well), and seldom, if ever, mentions the human mind. Incorrect, he uses the word human “mind” a “lot”. Furthermore de Bono does NOT have to mention the word “consciousness”. He is not offering a philosophy of mind per se. I agree that Ayn Rand nailed “consciousness” very well. The point is Rand and De Bono are complimentary and non-contradictory. For de Bono the "brain" is the mind

CORRECT – “Objectivism” is the same too with Ayn Rand (there is not mind/brain duality nor is it monism). Harvard’s Professor Steven Pinker states it well:

“The mind is what the brain does”!

. In fact, he bases his whole thesis on his own fantastic explanation for how the brain works, which is totally irrelevant to thinking. Incorrect, it gives a backdrop to the various tools of lateral thinking. Further it makes the entire subject “very attractive” to many people –and certainly to me.

It infuses the subject, which is full of specific practical methods with a wonderful sense of philosophy, but different to traditional philosophy of mind. De Bono gives ‘description of the process’ not just a ‘description of the result’ such as in ‘artistic creativity’.

Here are the basic assertions, which he calls "principles," he makes about the brain: Correct they are indeed principles.

- The brain is a self-organizing information system. Correct. This has resulted in others developing philosophy of mind subjects such as connectionism. Ayn Rand’s methods that pre-date de Bono are very similar and very good (on

concepts and epistemology).

-
- (1)
- Information organizes itself in the brain forming patterns.
- Correct: that is what makes the mind using neural patterns very effective. All the below is de Bono and correct.
- (2)
- The brain is an asymmetric patterning system. (2)
- The brain forms asymmetric patterns. (3)
- All patterning systems are asymmetric. (4)

Nor does he have to address how he came to know such things. He is an outstanding business man. What is known is that de Bono is correct!

How de Bono knows any of these things is never addressed, they are simply asserted. Incorrect – he goes to great lengths to explain how he reaches his conclusions by way of analogies.

He not only fails to explain how he knows them, he does not even explain what he means by them.

Incorrect. You are wrong because you have not read and are not versed in his works. You are simply dropping the context to advance your incorrect argument.

By information, he often (not always) means that which comes to be felt by our senses (e.g. sight, feeling of temperature etc.). By patterns, he has his own definition that he often explains. Patterns generally mean “regularities”.

What does he mean by, "information." What does he mean by "a

pattern?" How does information organize itself. Even if it's the brain that is organizing it, it is not "self-organized."

Before I explain what is wrong with all these assertions, here are examples of where he says these things.

- (1) Any consideration of **the brain as a self-organising information system** shows both the logical necessity for creativity and also the techniques we need to generate new ideas (provocation, random entry etc.).

Correct. De Bono goes onto explain the reasoning behind the above in every single one of his works.

I shall stop my argument at this point.

I have sufficiently and overwhelmingly demonstrated where you are absolutely wrong.

That is the basis of lateral thinking. We now know there is a mathematical necessity for lateral thinking. Any self-organising system stabilises as a local optimum. We need to upset the local optimum in order to move towards the global optimum.

- (2) There are at least two mathematical reasons why new ideas are essential. As **information organizes itself in the brain patterns are formed**. These are added to by new information. The process is solidified by language. All this makes it difficult to put information together in a new way. That is why processes like lateral thinking are essential in an **asymmetric patterning system**.

(3) 'lateral thinking' - which is also directly related to the way **the brain forms asymmetric patterns.**"

[**NOTE:** Apparently de Bono thinks the brain secretes thoughts the way a mammary gland secretes milk. Really! Consider this wildly impossible claim:

Incorrect. The following thought by de Bono has no correlation with your attempt to berate him by using the analogy of female breasts in your argument. Your logic (vertical thinking) is wrong.

"I once designed a computer model of a brain with just five neurons. This was capable of more than 50 billion thoughts."

(He obviously knows nothing about data processing or "information theory."

You are incorrect. He is often cherished as a champion for his theories to do with information processing by Nobel Prize winners, amongst others. These are all documented.

36 bits will give you approximately 64 billion combinations, but all 64 billion combinations would *not* even be data, much less "information," and definitely not "thoughts." If each neuron was capable of switching 8 bits--256 possible states, together, 5 such neurons might produce the number of different states de Bono imagines, but the real problem is, the state of a neuron, even five of them, *is not a "thought".*)]

(4) "Those of you who have been aware of my work will know that **there are three principles:**

1. "Self-organising information systems like the human brain are pattern making systems.
2. "All patterning systems are asymmetric.
3. "What is obvious in hindsight may be invisible in foresight."

If none of de Bono's assertions are looked at too closely they apparently seem plausible to many people. In fact, however, they will not bear even a casual examination. **Incorrect.**

There are what are called, "self-orgnaizing systems," and there is a **relatively new field** dealing with such systems. **Incorrect.** The field – as far as I know – was heavily discussed in the “Macy lectures” after the second world war. But de Bono independently found this field after making the simple yet brilliant analogy with homeostasis: the way other systems of the body self-organize themselves into stable states (e.g. the heart).

The field developed as an independent scientific field many years later, and championed by Nobel Prize winner Murray Gell-Mann that set up the Santa Fe institute with other Laureates and eminent people. Murray congratulates de Bono for being “ahead of the times” with his unique and brilliant insights!

The one, "self-orgnaizing system," that does not exist is a, "self-organising *information* system."

Incorrect.

There might be a system that organizes information (in computers an example is a data base) **Incorrect: there is no such**

system with computers “in contrast” to the use of this phrase with regard to de Bono and his use of the phrase with regard to the human brain.

De Bono in almost all his work (except one) describes other information processing systems like a computer as a passive one. In contrast the mind is an ‘active’ self organizing system. This means information – which I have elaborated upon far above – by way of neural patterns get organized into definite patterns based upon:

1. The state of the mind at present (various systems including biochemical, mood etc.);
2. The time and sequence of incoming information (input) and
3. Previous information that arranged the present pattern.

For example: a man that has been blind for life due to faults with the lens of the eyes, but who has corrective surgery will now be able to “see”. However, even after corrective surgery, there is a time period that the man will not be able to “see” properly despite the eye now being correctly because the brain must self-organize incoming data (information: neural patterns) to be able to “see” and “understand” what it is one is seeing.

Once such self organization has taken place, and the man is able to see then even a portion of a table will be recognizable to a man as a “table”. This seems natural but that would not be the case until the man has learnt what is a table (what does it look like). Therefore now the brain can take in “some information” (e.g. a corner of a table) and trigger other stored information (i.e. it is a table, what is a table, what is a table called, what does a table do, what kind

of table is this – dining room one for food or other for holding newspapers such as in a library etc.)

The brain is a self organizing information system.

, but they do not organize themselves, and information itself, doesn't *do* anything, much less organize itself.

Incorrect. Modernly it has been unequivocally proven that the brain takes part in whole-scale self organization. This means that there are changes in-between neurons (as was previously thought to be the only way) but also it means that there is neural re-connecting going on, and further there is even neuro-genesis. For example, a newly blinded man will have the “seeing part of his brain: occipital lobe” real estate used to process other senses in an even better way (such as touch). The brain takes part of active self organization (reconnection).

Here is what a self-organizing system is. The brain is not one. *A self-organizing system does not take external input:*

I have never come across such a system such as you are describing. However, assuming you are correct, then let it be known that the type of ‘self organizing system’ that de Bono is describing – a ‘self organizing information system’ does indeed take input from the surroundings and ‘self organizes such input into routine neural patterns’.

"The essence of self-organization is that system structure often appears *without explicit pressure or involvement from outside the system*. In other words, the constraints on form (i.e. organization)

of interest to us are internal to the system, resulting from the interactions among the components and usually independent of the physical nature of those components."

Unless de Bono is promoting some form of solipsism, the "information" the brain processes is information from outside the brain, which means it cannot be a self-organizing system.

Absence Of Mind

There is no discussion of the nature of the human mind in de Bono, because de Bono is obviously a physicalist who regards the mind and consciousness as attributes that "emerge" from the behavior of the brain.

Incorrect opinion. There is nowhere to suggest that de Bono is a physicalist such as a materialist (in philosophy) such as you attribute to him. I personally attribute Objectivism to de Bono. Ayn Rand validated that we have a 'mind' and I prefer the Dr. Steven Pinker phrase: "the mind is what the brain does".

Ayn Rand said the above is neither dualism (separation of the mind and the body as different entities in the same context as Plato's philosophy) nor monism (mere physicality/materialism), but rather it is Objectivism: the mind is definite, and we have free will and the ability to direct the mind. Indeed we must do that to exercise the virtue of rationality. De Bono's tools give methods with which to do exactly that: to practically, simply and therefore powerfully direct the mind in order to exercise such virtues as rationality, productivity, happiness etc.

I will repeat: both vertical and lateral thinking are required for some things. But for many other things, simply de Bono's lateral

(and parallel) thinking are sufficient on a day to day basis. Lateral thinking enhances vertical thinking. Vertical thinking can develop and validate the ideas produced by lateral thinking (such as in academia, law or logical argument). Vertical thinking here refers to the type of thinking advocated by Ayn Rand: using logic as the art of non-contradictory identification of the truth.

This is certainly the most popular view today. I do not intend to debate that point here, **You brought it up and therefore you should develop and debate it. You have failed.** however, but to show that even within that mistaken view of mind and consciousness, de Bono's assertions about thought are incorrect. **You are wrong.**

According to de Bono, "Our traditions of thinking are based on the logic of language and not on the way the brain works."

This is correct: based upon vertical thinking.

This is not the only place de Bono repudiates language **Incorrect: he thinks language is quite useful but he emphasizes that the exclusively use of vertical thinking methods is inadequate**

, though what he thinks, "thinking is," without language he does not say. **Incorrect. He states this in many or all of his books. In short, one uses 'functional operations' of mind using trigger words such as A.G.O, PO, OPV etc. in order to carry out generative thinking and/or lateral thinking. In other places, when referring to children he emphasizes that the visual form is a better way for younger children to represent their thought when conducting de Bono thinking, than the verbal because such**

children are not yet masters of the verbal language.

It will be noticed that language is the tool, which de Bono uses to put over all his ideas. If language is not the means of thinking **INCORRECT. De Bono NEVER said, “language is not a means of thinking”.**

, he should have used something else to write his books.

Whatever he supposes thinking is, however, it does not matter how the brain works, even if he knew that. **Incorrect. The brilliance of Dr. De Bono is instead of stating his knows everything about the brain, and even as far back as 1969 when we knew so little in contrast to today: he was able to abstract a very powerful general concept (namely the brain is a self organizing pattern system) and from this base develop brilliant practical tools of thinking.**

This has also meant that he very cleverly protected himself from inaccuracy or criticism – for it is highly likely that his analogical concepts will last the test of time despite our knowledge about the brain being distinguished over time. For example, in the future it may be found that the brain works on some sort of quantum computing principle (as some notable scientist advocate today) – but whatever may or may not be the case, the operations of thinking such as advocated by de Bono will remain the same – in my opinion based upon the manner that de Bono uses analogies and metaphors to explain the brain, and therefore reasoning behind the use of his tools.

How the brain works, and how we think are two distinct and different things. Thinking may use the brain, but the brain does not do the thinking.

Though I am certain the brain does not work like a computer,

That is what de Bono said in the 1969 with his first publication

we can use the analogy of a computer to understand how the brain functions and how we think are totally independent of each other.

In our analogy, we can compare thinking to a computer program.

That is what de Bono said in the 1970s .

A computer program is based on what the program is required to do, not on how the computer that will run it functions. Different computers, functioning quite differently, can run the same programs. Just as a computer cannot do, "word processing," but a program can use a computer to do word processing, the brain cannot do, "thinking," but human consciousness can use the brain to think. It does not matter how the brain works, so long as it can be used by volitional consciousness to think, learn, and choose. The brain cannot do any of these things, only consciousness can do them.

The concept, "consciousness," is conspicuously absent in de Bono's writing. **As I have stated above, there is no need for de Bono to address what is consciousness for the purposes of his work, just as there is no need for Ayn Rand to describe neurons**

for the purposes of her work, despite the fact she tackles such words as “consciousness” and the “mind”!

The closest he comes to recognizing consciousness is his misuse of the word, "perception," which ought to mean consciousness, but in de Bono means something quite different (addressed below). Though he claims to be "**the leading authority in the world in the field of creative thinking**,"

Not only does he claim to be this, and not only is this mostly true but many others including Nobel Laureates claim that this is true.

he has no idea what thinking actually is. "Neural networks in the brain," do not produce thoughts anymore than hardware logic gates in a computer produce words or images.

“The mind is what the brain does” – Pinker. It is highly likely that neural networks in the brain (alongside other systems of the brain such as the biochemical system, amongst others) work in unison to produce thoughts. Whatever may eventually be the case, it is for certain that neural networks in the brain are a significant part of what produces thoughts – and this is sufficient for de Bono to explain and further develop his thinking frameworks and tools to take positive advantage of this: to use the self organizing system for one’s purposes (such as designing a way forward, creating value, strategy, goals, business, competition etc.)

Asymmetric Patterns

There are three assertions about patterns and asymmetry: 1. "the brain is an asymmetric patterning system," 2. "the brain forms asymmetric patterns," and 3. "all patterning systems are

asymmetric."

How de Bono knows these things is not even suggested,

Incorrect or even what they are supposed to mean. **Incorrect.** I have shown you what he states and/or means, and my knowledge primarily came from his work but it was followed up by further work including the state of knowledge, as it exists today about the working of the brain itself; but also knowledge from Ayn Rand about the mind.

He never says what the patterns are patterns of. **Incorrect and I talk about patterns far above.** Perhaps we are to assume, since he claims the brain is an information processing system, it is information that is patterned. **Correct: information by way of neural firing is collected and re-organized as patterns.**

But what is a pattern of information? For that matter, what does de Bono mean by information? **I explain this far above. It is very easy to grasp if one reads his works and reflects upon what he is talking about. This is called the process of reading and understanding. This is required for all reading including philosophy.**

Let's look at the claims. "All patterning systems are asymmetric." This claim is just not true. **I do not recall de Bono stating that ALL patterning systems are asymmetric (and if he does state that then I can guarantee that you are dropping the context: because he was no doubt referring to brain patterns). What I can state with definiteness is that patterns in the brain are asymmetric and I explain the meaning behind this far above.**

There are many patterning systems, both natural and man-made

that are symmetrical in both their operation and the patterns they produce. One example from nature is the patterning system in butterflies and fish, which is symmetrical, and is actually called the "**symmetry system**." The formation of crystals is another.

Though it is asserted, "the brain forms asymmetric patterns," what those patterns are patterns of is not even hinted at, he simply asserts, "the brain is an asymmetric patterning system," but does not explain if that means its function is asymmetric, or only that the product of its function is asymmetric.

"As **information organizes itself in the brain patterns are formed**. These are added to by new information. The process is solidified by language. All this makes it difficult to put information together in a new way," he writes.

Why or how patterns that have been formed would make it difficult to put information together in a, "new way," is not explained. **Incorrect.**

The mind/brain self organizes information into routine patterns. The use of tools such as "random word input" to provocatively disrupt cliché patterns works because the mind/brain thereafter "self organizes" a broken concept pattern back into a "package". The result of this is "insight": whether useful or useless. The point of doing such a thing is called "thought experimentation". There is no harm (e.g. we have no spent money per se to conduct thought experiments BEFORE we conduct actual experiments). By a series of thought experiments over time we may create new hypothesis, that can thereafter be tested in actual experimentation (which may involve expenditure of serious time, money and/or other resources).

It sounds very much as though de Bono thinks of information as some kind of building blocks that one can assemble in any way one likes but once assembled in one fashion it is difficult to reassemble into another. **CORRECT. YOU ARE SPOT ON , because that is exactly what he states.**

On what basis does he assume this? No answer. **Incorrect, he explains the reasoning behind this in almost (or all) all of his works.**

Are there any principles of a correct assembly of the blocks? Is just any assembly the correct one or is there a rational basis for a correct assembly? Of course, de Bono never says. **Incorrect.** He never uses the word "rational." **Correct for reasons I put far above. I will repeat, the word rational can mean different things to different people in different contexts.**

Whereas to someone versed in Objectivism such as you or me: there is a definite meaning; to others it suggests just using vertical thinking. Lateral thinking is just as a definite way as vertical thinking – but a very different way. Therefore it is imperative for De Bono to distinguish lateral thinking.

The use of the word “rational” in his work would – in his and in my opinion – end up confusing many readers both now and in future.

Instead what de Bono does write suggests at all times that lateral thinking is ‘just as rational’ (it suggests this, when one is using rational in the same perspective as Ayn Rand). De Bono states with definitiveness that ‘lateral thinking is the logic of creativity’.

De Bono is not a philosopher nor is he trying to be one. Ayn Rand – in similitude – is not a scientist nor was she trying to be one. To accuse Ayn Rand of fallacy because she never refers to neurons is an error just as it is to berate de Bono for not using words like “consciousness” or “rationality”.

Rational means by use of reason, but de Bono does not teach that reason is the right method of organizing information. **Incorrect for reasons I have stated at several places such as far above.**

He is a strict determinist. **Incorrect, you are now placing fallacious labels upon him – and the labels are wrong!**

What available **information we choose to take in** and organize is determined by how we have been "programed by culture, experience and upbringing." **This is partially correct and “fits” exactly with what de Bono says about the working of the brain as a self organizing system. Much earlier above I stated 3 ways information organizes itself and one of those ways is dependent upon information that arrived on the brain in the “past”! My knowledge comes from de Bono amongst others.**

The intention of de Bono is not to teach people how to reason correctly and effectively **Incorrect. The intention is to teach people how to think practically and think well. The intention is NOT to teach vertical thinking; although de Bono does state one needs skill in BOTH lateral and vertical thinking.**

, his intention is to reprogram people's minds to work the way he thinks they should **But that is the intention of anyone proffering any information [!]; his intention is to bend peoples minds to his collectivist society-oriented views. Incorrect as no collectivism is ever applicable to his work**

Enemy Of Truth And Reason **Incorrect: de Bono is a champion of rationality for reasons I have stated far above.**

If we give de Bono the benefit of the doubt, he may just not understand the nature of truth and reason. **Incorrect, he describes the nature of truth and of reason in many places such as the book "parallel thinking". He states it within the historical context, within the context of philosophy and within the context of how the individual perceives the truth to be based upon how the mind/brain works.**

I'm going to assume he doesn't, because to assume he does would make him guilty of an intentional and vile attack on the nature of the human mind and intellect. **Incorrect. This is your fallacious reasoning which is wrong.**

In his brief **explanation of the meaning of "lateral thinking," and "parallel thinking,"** both of which are variations of what is called, "**non-linear thinking,**" **INCORRECT.** Lateral thinking is non-linear thinking (but I do NOT think de Bono EVER states that). de Bono completely distorts the nature of correct thinking. **Incorrect. He demonstrates both theoretically and experimentally (and it is easy to demonstrate for oneself too) how correct, practical and proper thinking can work and does work.**

He says, "Lateral Thinking is for changing concepts and perceptions." **Correct.**

I will describe his confused and confusing use of the word, "perception," in the next section. **INCORRECT. His use of the word is very good.** As for the word, "concept," de Bono never

explains what he means by it. **Incorrect. He does explain what this means by way of a metaphor: “concepts are the lens through which we perceive reality”. His aim is not to be a philosopher and his metaphor is VERY good for both the general public and the intellectual. HOWEVER, I agree Ayn Rand nails it. That is fine, but de Bono does NOT HAVE TO NAIL it in the same way. Similarly Rand does not describe how to think laterally nor was that her job/aim to do so.**

Since a concept identifies a fact of reality, if one's concepts are correct, changing them could only lead to a dangerous loss of comprehension of reality. **Incorrect. The aim of changing concepts is to conduct thought experiments to determine if one gains any useful insight into other (better) ways to do things. This is very useful in industry for example: finding ways to simplify processes, to challenge established “good practices”, to improve safety standards; to find ways to create profits in light of competition and constantly changing times, etc.**

I suspect de Bono has no idea what a concept is, it is certain he has no idea what reason is: **Incorrect for reasons I show you above.**

"With logic you start out with certain ingredients just as in playing chess you start out with given pieces. But what are those pieces? In most real life situations the pieces are not given, we just assume they are there. We assume certain perceptions, certain concepts and certain boundaries. Lateral thinking is concerned not with playing with the existing pieces but with seeking to change those very pieces. Lateral thinking is concerned with the perception part of thinking. This is where we organize the external world into the pieces we can then 'process'."

This is a complete distortion of the nature of thinking. **Incorrect.**

Thinking is not logic. **Correct! Thinking is not exclusively vertical thinking.**

Correct thinking will be logical, because logic is just the formalization of the principles of correct reasoning or thinking, but people do not think by following the rules of logic, the rules of logic are the principles by which one may check their thinking to ensure they are not making mistakes. **You are describing vertical thinking and as de Bono I have repeatedly stated above: vertical thinking is important to validate the ideas generated by lateral thinking.**

His analogy of "pieces" being what "logic" starts with is very deceptive. **Incorrect. His analogy is very apt for reasons he states above.**

"In most real life situations the pieces are not given, we just assume they are there," he writes. "We assume certain perceptions, certain concepts and certain boundaries." This is a flat out lie. **Incorrect.**

In all real life situations *all* the pieces *are* given, **Incorrect. If all pieces were given, then as humans we would not have to do much thinking. We can get a computer to put the pieces together to give us an answer to everything.**

In reality, indeed we do get computers to give us answers to MANY things because of this modernly (e.g. price of a stock based upon the aggregate result of buyers and sellers and what prices they are willing to buy or sell the stock for, and the quantity of stock available etc.). However for MANY other

things, thinking is required whereby despite having certain pieces, we can generate other pieces, we can design a way forward – despite not having pieces.

We can also find pieces that exist but which we do not have (information). We can identify what pieces we may need, and how reliable such pieces are (when looking for information). De Bono thinking frameworks help us to do all of these and much more such as six hats.

they are all the facts of the present real situation, that is, the facts of reality of the present context. They are never "just assumed." One must never just "change the pieces," which can only mean, "distort the facts." **Incorrect. You begin (perhaps) to notice how you have not really understood the broad nature of thinking. May I recommend immediately signing on to de Bono courses?**

One does not carry out “thought experiments” and use one’s imagination to “distort reality” per se. One does it to generate different possible scenarios, to select ideal visions, to select the best method to make it happen, and then use logic to validate the pathway and execute the plan. This occurs in every field from sports (e.g. basketball player or their coach planning a strategy) to military, to business, to one’s own personal happiness (e.g. how to make one’s partner happier; how to even get a partner etc.)

He states again, "The brain as a self-organizing information system forms asymmetric patterns," which nonsense I've already addressed. **You have addressed it incorrectly.**

Then he writes:

"In any self-organizing system there is a need to escape from a local optimum (?) **Correct. Your use of the symbol “?” demonstrates you do not understand the physiology of a homeostatic self organizing system...** in order to move towards a more global optimum (?).

The above phrase by de Bono means that whereas locally (in our immediate perspective) we think we are right (such as those that followed Newton as absolute truth), in reality, we are wrong when a wider context is taken into account (this won Einstein the Nobel Prize). Therefore “locally” Newtonian physics is very useful but for large or very small distances (atoms) Einsteinian physics (relativity: special theory or general theory) is very effective. I have used just one example to demonstrate what de Bono means. De Bono’s meaning applies in every area of our lives.

As a man one must scold one’s partner because the partner is criticizing us. A man may think this is perfectly (locally) appropriate even though women will agree that this is “beta” male (weak) behavior. A “global optimum” [wider wiser perspective in many, not all contexts] is to grab the woman and love her especially and particularly when she (one’s partner) is suddenly criticizing one! That is to think laterally, to think RATIONALLY.

The techniques of lateral thinking, such as provocation, are designed to help that change."

"This is another technical definition. It is important because it also defines *the mathematical need for creativity*." [Emphasis mine.] This is just rhetorical hocum and bunk! **Incorrect.** There is indeed a mathematical need for creativity because logically we get trapped in a paradigm in many things that appear appropriate and therefore correct to us. However, by using deliberate methods of lateral thinking, we may see a better approach.

In the movie "Pretty Woman", the nature of Richard Gere's character was to tear apart companies for the exclusive profit motive regardless of what it did to other people. By the end of the movie, Gere is still profit driven, but find an alternative approach by teaming up with a particularly company (who has an aged and experienced founding executive and his son). This approach makes both him and the target of his affection (Julia Robert's character) very happy.

In real life: Warren Buffet unusually lets founders of companies that Buffet buys out, still run the company, and still own huge quantity of shares and still treat the company as their own: so that there is a win-win situation, and Buffett greatly profits from it. It is a different approach to the way that other business people take over companies!

One could say Buffett is the richest man in the world because of his use of both vertical thinking (rigorous use of logic and math) and his use of lateral thinking (unusual strategies in contrast to the way that many others take over businesses).

The expression, "mathematical need," has no meaning.

Incorrect. If one plots a mathematical graph of the heart beat (or uses a EEG monitor), then one can see how the heart beat –

regardless of whether the person is running or walking or sitting – attempts to reach a local optimum, and a regular pattern. If this were not the case then the person would have a heart attack.

Similarly the brain/mind reaches definite states of certainty. But in so doing, the brain will reject information that does not “Fit” with one’s current perspective of reality. The mathematical need for creativity arises out of provocatively triggering the brain/mind to break out of cliché concept patterns in order for the pattern to self organize again in a new way: to see if it leads to useful insight. This is called a “thought experiment”.

The necessity of using lateral thinking arises by the limitation of the mind as a self organizing patterning system.

The reason for a mathematical need arises out of the fact that the mind/brain stabilizes mathematically like the heart into routine pattern – but unlike the heart – we must provocatively disrupt such as pattern.

He then describes his so-called "parallel thinking:"

Correct. Parallel thinking involves different modes of thinking, used independently like critical thinking for a finite time. This way instead of spaghetti thinking whereby one’s mind wanders through different modes haphazardly, instead one can deliberately think:

Positively to see if there are benefits behind an idea, even behind an idea assessed to be negative;

Critically and negatively to determine the bad points, sticking points, limitations, risks (and so forth) behind an ideas, even behind what is perceived to be a good idea.

Thinking creatively [i.e. tools of lateral thinking], particularly useful for overcoming the bad points of any ideas, to see if there is still a way forward and upwards.

And so forth. I do not intend to reveal all of his methods here but point out how Parallel thinking is very useful and distinguished from conventional thinking.

In Parallel thinking whether as an individual or a group: one generates ideas in a specific mode (e.g. positive thinking), and lays out the ideas side-by-side (without YET attacking the ideas). Then one prioritizes the ideas. THEN one can use the idea OR ATTACK THE IDEAS for a finite time too; and so forth. There is a definite structure; a finite time; a definite method. The use of such a way saves enormous time and is of great use in any group situation. It gives an individual a brilliant framework with which to think – not just simple mental meandering nor simply sticking to any particular (good or bad) habit (such as always being negative/critical for the sake of it like what Rand calls a “paralyzed skeptic: Skepticism”).

"Parallel thinking is best understood in contrast to traditional argument or adversarial thinking.

"With the traditional argument or adversarial thinking each side takes a different position and then seeks to attack the other side. Each side seeks to prove that the other side is wrong. This is the type of thinking established by the Greek Gang of Three (Socrates, Plato and Aristotle) two thousand four hundred years ago.

"Adversarial thinking completely lacks a constructive, creative or design element. *It was intended only to discover the 'truth' not to build anything.*" [Emphasis mine.] Correct, as stated above the chess pieces are there before one in traditional thinking. Whereas with lateral thinking (part of parallel thinking) one seeks to design a way forward – even when the pieces are not there, one seeks to design pieces to one's advantage. IN practical terms – this means more profit in business, or a better opportunity to out-compete others in a tough marketplace.

In practical terms in a romantic relationship, this means finding and/or outright designing new and varied ways to please one's lover – which is ever so important in the age of freedom where a bored lover may leave or outright cheat [with marriage being at 67% divorce rate]!

But NO DE BONO THINKING ever means MAGIC. There is NEVER ANY GUARANTEE neither with vertical nor lateral thinking that one will ALWAYS AND FOREVER achieve one's outcome. PERFECTIONISM is a myth according to Ayn Rand. The aim is to do one's best within reason and that is what de Bono's practical thinking tools enable one to do and to be.

The purpose of correct thinking, which logic formalizes the principles of, is to ensure that one's own reasoning does not lead to mistakes—to ensure one's own knowledge and understanding is true and non-contradictory. You are correct about vertical thinking but not complete.

It has nothing to do with winning arguments. You are incorrect in the sense that in practice, all too often the game is played to “win”. This means most people when engaging in argument – due to the nature of ego and the brain – omit information that

goes against their argument, “select information” in order to deliberately pulverize the other side (even one’s spouse or an opponent in court or the boardroom), and satisfaction comes from “winning” – even if one is wrong!

To call "traditional" thinking "argument or adversarial" is both a straw-man **Incorrect**. The traditional thinking system is fashioned upon argument. This started with Socrates (who deliberately sought to prove others wrong, or less wise*), and continues to this day. With “good traditional thinking” both in essay form and/or actually between two or more people/groups, the objective is to argue one’s point of view and also defend one’s argument from potential attack, and in so doing to “win” – even if one does not overtly come to realize this.

This is the basis of a good essay at university or a good paper at a PhD., graduate or other peer reviewed journal article.

[* A different and highly unlikely interpretation that portrays Socrates as a humble man: is that Socrates was told he was the wisest man of all by the Oracle of Delphi. Socrates wanted to know if this was really true and doubted it. Therefore he sought to demonstrate the weakness in other people’s arguments to see if he could err: thereby defeating the Oracle.]

(a fictional description which was never true) and false dichotomy (the only alternatives are argument and "adversarial thinking" or de Bono's "parallel thinking.")

It is not a dichotomy. Parallel thinking itself is composed of 6 different modes of thinking, 6 different ways to look at

information and also to design a way forward.

When Newton was working out the principles of the Calculus he was using traditional Aristotelian thinking—who was his adversary? who was he arguing with? Your argument is good but out of context with de Bono's argument. Above de Bono is advancing the idea that traditional thinking particularly outside math is about advancing one's argument.

Within the context of math, indeed one is seeking to advance one idea – in a non-argumentative manner, but it must be proven by a series of valid steps. With higher math, even if it is proven by a series of valid steps, because the starting point is a matter of arbitrary perception: the “adversarial” method or the “parallel method” of thinking still applies. For example: with “string theory or multi-verse theory”, it is alleged that this can be demonstrated mathematically. However, Ayn Rand argued against such a proposition – name the starting premises are based upon false philosophy.

Above I have shown you that you have advanced De Bono out of context; but also shown you that even within correct math, at higher levels argument still applies: because one's starting points are a matter of perception. Lateral thinking works on perception that is wholly outside the framework of vertical thinking, math and conventional logic!

As for creation, what good is physics? When Edward Jenner was working out the principles of vaccination he was using traditional reasoning&mdashhow is that adversarial or argumentative?

This is incorrect – at least in the context you are putting it. If you look at the way many of the great ideas of invention, theory

(including philosophy) are begotten then you will see that whereas:

1. It can be proved by retrospective logic (else it would not be a valid theory) – i.e. vertical thinking;
2. One has to generate particular ideas [whether that is by play like Einstein, or by induction like Ayn Rand; or idea play and/or induction like Newton thinking about gravity, etc.] – and then formulate a hypothesis that is indeed tested with vertical thinking.

Jenner – by chance and not by deduction – found something unusual and curious, undoubtedly generated different ideas, reaching a valid conclusion: an induction. Then he tested this idea by using it as a hypothesis in order to reach a valid conclusion. Now he could and did advance his conclusion using vertical thinking (hindsight logic).

Therefore your assessment that it was purely logic is incorrect. This applies to almost all discoveries. To grasp this one must understand:

- a. The self organizing process of the mind, and how the mind reaches insight;
- b. And/or research how the ‘greats’ distinguished/distinguish themselves from the many others (highly educated people) for whom oftentimes equal information is available, but who – despite great logic – fail to reach the valid conclusion/insight.

- c. If vertical thinking logic was enough then we could simply get computers to solve all the world's and all other scientific problems because the computer will very rapidly crunch through logical steps – with pinpoint accuracy.

Of course *it was only a discovery of a truth, and did not create or build anything*, except the whole field of immunology.

When John Dewey worked out his philosophy of pragmatism and socialist views of education he used the very kinds of non-objective, "just change your concepts to what you like" thinking proposed by de Bono.

I agree that when any eminent philosopher develops their unique viewpoint that becomes vogue, there has been a change of concept. This applies to Ayn Rand who inducted [and/or gained insight] about many of her principles in a unique way and different to the plethora of other intellectuals throughout time – and therefore used vertical thinking to prove it. Such insight was not at the time (nor is it today) so “obvious” to many other people like Professors that are the masters of vertical thinking (logic) – because perception plays such an important part of the mind.

I repeat: vertical thinking, logic and math is outside the reach of perception. This is the exclusive province, the eminent domain of lateral thinking. Instead of “magical thinking”, today we can do something deliberate about it.

When B. F. Skinner worked out his theory of behaviorism he used the kind of non-traditional thinking that agrees with de

Bono's view that human thought as "programed by culture, experience and upbringing." And of course everyone knows what these two geniuses "created."

What B.F. Skinner formulated was and is extraordinary and genius. However like any area of psychology it was not wholly correct, was not wholly generalizable, and has since been distinguished. "Conditioning" in an animal or with humans still applies in many ways, but not whole-scale generalized nor just limited to simply conditioning in the way that B.F. Skinner thought at the time.

What is very good is that B.F. Skinner was able to get definite results in the province of therapy with many people.

Prior to B.F. Skinner (though not immediately prior), there were the ridiculous and provocative theories of medical doctor Sigmund Freud. Freud too was brilliant in getting definite results with many people – in helping or 'curing them'.

Although Freud's theories are now known to be wrong, nevertheless then and now one can get definite results in psychotherapy using this or many other methods. The patient/client is often after just that "results" (cure) and the theory.

I have shown you that in psychotherapy what is of great import is

Whether a method gets "results" or not. I have also shown you that each of the above men (Skinner and Freud) inducted theories and methods, which were perceived to be great but either wholly, or partially they are now known to be wrong. Nevertheless they begot results for many clients.

With de Bono, his theories are very likely to be correct and he has formulated in such a way that even with growing and distinguished knowledge about the brain, it is my opinion his theories will last the test of time. What is of even more import perhaps is that the results of using his thinking tools have been proven, have been proven to be the very best way experimentally when tested against other educational thinking methods, philosophies and techniques – de Bono wins outright! I have given you some definite sources far above.

I have also stated that de Bono is not a panacea for humanity nor does he ever claim such. Similarly nor is Objectivism a “cure all”. Each person must think and apply what they believe to be rational, and determine what works and what does not work (e.g. in a romantic relationship, in generating profit in business; in overcoming daily or major problems; in reaching goals as efficiently and as effectively as possible etc.)

So exactly what does "parallel thinking" do? **Explained above.**

"With 'parallel thinking' both sides (or all parties) are thinking in parallel in the same direction. There is co-operative and co-ordinated thinking. **Correct in a group situation.** The direction itself can be changed in order to give a full scan of the situation. **Correct.**

But at every moment each thinker is thinking in parallel with all the other thinkers. **Correct.** There does not have to be agreement. **Correct.** Statements or thoughts that are indeed contradictory are not argued out but laid down in parallel. **Correct.** In the final stage the way forward is 'designed' from the parallel thought that

have been laid out." De Bono is correctly quoted.

There is everything wrong with this. **Incorrect.** Here are six of them:

1. Thinking does not involve sides. **Incorrect.** Individuals only do all thinking. **Correct.** It is de Bono who confuses thinking with "adversaries. **“Incorrect: he explains the context – namely traditional thinking is adversarial in nature – this is the way it is at university and in business. Good correct thinking may be done by any individual Correct, and that thinking does not require anyone else's agreement or approval. Correct with parallel thinking. If one wishes to advance the conclusions of one’s thinking in a particular field such as in science (or within a corporations unless one holds top most power) then it must be peer reviewed and agreed or attacked by others.**
2. This is "group-think." **Incorrect.** In group think situation, everyone by and large gets stuck in one paradigm, and ironically omit information that goes against one’s or the group’s paradigm. In six hats, although the people are thinking in a group, each person quietly generates ideas thereby preventing group think; and further with the “back hat” there is an outright “non adversarial” attack on ideas so one can generate and evaluate weak ideas, risks and so forth. Further with green hat (lateral thinking), one can thereby compensate and/or outright design a way forward – to see if that is possible.

What is being put over here is called, "group think"—a

- method suitable to gangs and mobs, not correct thinking.
3. "There does not need to be agreement," but argument is not allowed. If someone presents a view that contradicts another view—that *is* argument. Correct and hence traditional thinking is to be avoided. In Parallel thinking, even if someone presents an idea that is contradictory to either THEIR OWN "OTHER IDEAS" or another ideas, it does NOT result in conflict. Instead one (e.g. team leader) and/or the group (e.g. in a vote) then decide (by way of voting or other means) which is the best idea and in what order of priority. At no time is there conflict. At all times, there is a full scan (idea generation and evaluation) of all key ideas and the point is never "Thinking for the sake of thinking, but thinking for the sake of achieving some practical results that is identified in advance (with blue hat)".
 4. What is really intended here is suppression of real objective disagreement. Your context is wrong. What is intended is a 360 degree thorough examination of existing ideas and information (knowledge) as well as generating ideas that had not previously existed in order to reach decision in a very quick and powerful manner.

The truth to the above has been proved many times experimentally in many top-most companies and in government. Therefore de Bono and/or his licensees are constantly invited back; and he has lasted the vast test of time over 30 years, and to this day despite being near 90 years old, he is constantly travelling the planet from corporation to corporation, from world leader to leader, from being the lead speaker in top conferences to being awarded the highest accolades, chairs and outright speaking at (some) universities (lesser so).

5. Contradictions are allowed. **Correct.** Where two views contradict each other, either one or both of them are wrong. **Incorrect!** Certainly in vertical thinking – what you put across is apparently correct. However often times in the context of practical thinking, two idea that apparently contradict each other may be correct IN A DIFFERENT CONTEXT.

For example 1: in vertical thinking a pen can not be both long and short WITHIN THE SAME CONTEXT. In parallel thinking we do NOT get into word game arguments and we CAN welcome the pen being long AND BEING short as ideas that are put side by side. Then the person and/or group must decide which idea to choose. Now this is all theoretical and therefore confusing, so let's use practical examples of how the above can come to be so.

Wright Brothers and flight. Either you move the wings or you do NOT move the wings (like a paper airplane) are conventional thinking.

The Wright Brothers were able to gain insight (over time, due to thinking and experimentation) that one could do BOTH in a NON-CONTRADICTORY manner IF one kept the wings largely immobile but instead use 'FLAPS'!

EXAMPLE 2: If senior people have erectile dysfunctions EITHER you give them VIAGRA or because that causes higher blood pressure (or other unwanted risky side-effects), you DO NOT give them Viagra.

But a parallel way out of the apparent dichotomy of vertical

thinking logic, could be any one of these:

- You give them Viagra whilst also training them using other methods (e.g. conditioning) to gain and sustain erections, until they can be weaned off the Viagra
 - You allow them to take Viagra some of the time if they do not get an erection and not those times when they can get a natural erection: so they have choice. Also you can get them to reward themselves (with inner pride) when they CAN sustain natural erections so it is hoped it results in conditioning this natural state
 - You give them lower dosages of Viagra so see if that results in some erection and some natural erection without the full flood of side effects
 - You give them a sugar pill and tell them it is Viagra and monitor their feedback
 - You test out other pharmaceutical or organic methods to see what results it produces
 - You give them Viagra **ALONGSIDE** blood pressure control/reduction pills so see if they can get an erection without the resulting higher blood pressure at the time OR after the effects of Viagra wear off (for the second type of pill)
- Etc.

Above, I do not know too much about Viagra, its side effects and so forth. “Therefore” it was a wonderful way to demonstrate raw parallel thinking; whereas the Wright brother example is wonderful too but there is the bias that I, and many can manufacture such examples all too easily to justify my argument.

The aim of giving both examples and even showing off raw Parallel thinking is to demonstrate that instead of

getting trapped in contradictions, we can lay ideas side by side and ultimately make a decision.

Say we decide to use Viagra with blood pressure reduction pills. Then we must use VERTICAL THINKING and/or scientific thinking to determine firstly by way of thought experiment whether this is possible or would lead to “worse side effects” and secondly if it is determined to be a good idea, then “test it out” [presumably on animals first].

6. Allowing contradictions necessarily means the acceptance or allowance of wrong ideas. **Incorrect.** The aim of thinking is to generate and entertain all ideas BUT THEN one must reach a clear conclusion. In so reaching a clear conclusion, it does NOT therefore mean the continued acceptance of a rejected WRONG idea. In conclusion: we temporarily hold contradictory and even outright apparent nonsensical ideas on a tray and then reach a decision. We then throw away or put aside the tray of other (wrong) ideas. [Note: The contradiction that a system cannot be both "programmed by culture, experience and upbringing" and "self-organized" is never noticed by de Bono. It's OK though, because contradictions are allowed in de Bono's system.]
7. A rehtorical smuggling in of two bad concepts: compromise and consensus. **Incorrect.** The fact that everyone is thinking in parallel does NOT MEAN that there has to be compromise at all times. Sometimes a group leader will make the final decision. Other times the group will make a decision by vote (BUT NOT COMPROMISE).

Other times, indeed a compromise will be deemed to be the

BEST way forward. For example in American politics, modernly for Obama to advance some of his ideas – can only be gotten by reaching a tit-for-tat compromise with the other party. Therefore instead of stalemate and nothing getting done, BOTH PARTIES can demonstrate they are indeed getting some things done. Therefore it depends upon the nature of the thinking, the group and the situation at hand.

Where two statements contradict, if one of them is correct, but both are allowed to stand, the good (true) statement loses to the bad (false) statement. The result is like a mixture of food and poison, and the poison always wins. Food has nothing to gain from being mixed with poison. I've addressed **consensus** elsewhere.

8. Supposed to be creative thinking, but is the opposite. Creation is an entirely individual affair. No collection of individuals creates anything. You are again putting forward a skewed argument. This is because in Parallel thinking, as I have said each individual is indeed putting forward his or her individual idea on paper. They may then see what ideas OTHERS have put forward and this will give some individuals further insight (or trigger) to generate even further ideas by themselves. This is how group ideation process works.

Therefore, notice how you have – without any experimental knowledge – put forward a fallacious argument, thinking that mere description without experiment is/was sufficient for you to be “right” and the great de Bono to be “wrong”. Do you see how you trapped yourself within your own paradigm? This is EXACTLY the type of thinking to be avoided – and Parallel thinking and/or Lateral thinking enables JUST THAT!

The author/philosopher Ayn Rand eloquently described the nature of the truly creative individual. You can be sure the two things they never use are "lateral thinking," or "parallel thinking."

Your argument is fallacious. It is like stating that you can be sure a good cowboy used a gun to put down evil doers. That the use of the gun is wonderful. But just because someone used a gun does not therefore mean that one should not learn martial arts and/or use other weapons. Indeed in modern society one may not have a gun when confronted by evil (even if you are a licensed to have a gun, it may not be allowed in your State or carry it around in all places and even if it is, you may be on vacation or visiting another State where it is not allowed for you to carry the gun around – which means martial arts skills would be very helpful against adversary.

The main point: although what you describe with Ayn Rand is correct about creativity – it does not “therefore” follow that Parallel thinking (including lateral thinking) is to be discarded! Your logic is wrong.

"From the beginning of history, two antagonists have stood face to face, two opposite types of men: the Active and the Passive. The Active Man is the producer, the creator, the originator, the individualist. His basic need is independence—in order to think and work." [For the New Intellectual, "The Fountainhead, The Soul Of An Individualist."] This is a wonderful quote and it describes exactly the ideal hero – Dr. Edward de Bono: producer (evidenced by great wealth, continuing production of books due to high sales worldwide, etc.); the creator is de Bono with his unique methods and explanation; the originator is de Bono; and the individualist is de Bono: who dared to go against “conventional good thinking” in 1969 to present day!

"Men have been taught that it is a virtue to agree with others. But the creator is the man who disagrees. This is stated in the context that one can have their independent idea. One does NOT therefore have to be DISAGREEABLE AND ARGUMENTATIVE by necessity. In Parallel thinking one can INDEED disagree, putting one's contradictory idea with another SIDE-BY-SIDE, in parallel!

Men have been taught that it is a virtue to swim with the current. But the creator is the man who goes against the current. I must not forget your aim is not just to attack de Bono but "self help" in general. This is a wonderful quote – in exactitude with self help. Tony Robbins often says something equivalent to this!

Men have been taught that it is a virtue to stand together. But the creator is the man who stands alone. You are dropping the context of Ayn Rand. Rand NEVER advocates the LONE WOLF and outright criticizes such a person such as an anarchist. The creator is one that stands alone means that many others may not believe in your idea, but it is up to you to prove it and/or get funding and/or to market it.

In fact UNLESS you are able to advance your idea such an invention: whereby OTHERS believe in your idea and therefore engage in a transaction with you – you will produce nothing of "value"! " [Ayn Rand, For The New Intellectual - The Fountainhead, "The Soul Of An Individualist"]

Though it is only a book review, this article, "**Is Lateral Thinking Necessary for Creativity?**," is an excellent critique of the idea of "lateral thinking" Incorrect. The critique is abysmal and nonsensical. You have demonstrated that you criticize without knowing much about that which you criticize; and

further by quoting another yet dropping the context, the type of grave error that Rand would never tolerate. Further you have also engaged in ad hominem argument; and stated things that are contradictory to your own values (that I deem from Objectivism) such as attempting to berate the “de Bono brothers” for creating a (wonderful) business and cash flow!

de Bono has been pushing for 40 years. As it turns out, the ideas may not even be his, as this debate between **Michael Hewitt-Gleeson** and **de Bono** suggests. (I don't understand why they do not use just use "parallel thinking" to solve their disagreement.)

You are mis-quoting the debate too. Gleeson only states that he firstly formulated the six thinking hats framework. He does not state he is the originator of parallel thinking at any time. In fact de Bono is the originator, because Cort/Datt is parallel thinking too. Gleeson never states he “alone” formulated six thinking hats. In fact if one researches then one will see that it was de Bono that invented similar methods (“use your hand!”) but then Gleeson re-adapted it with “Thinking caps”. De Bono re-adapted that further with “hats”.

Darwin had a unique insight into evolution. Sir Alfred Wallace ended up independently arriving at the same conclusion (although undoubtedly with much less knowledge and probably no way to prove it). Darwin on the other hand had 20 year worth of knowledge by way of experimental data. This example is in similitude with the above, but still above clearly it was de Bono that first formulated parallel thinking, that eventually became hats (but started out as other very similar frameworks: hand).

The **truth is despised by de bono**:

That would be but natural. There are almost always competitive rivalries between people within a department, companies, nations etc. "We have emphasized truth and not possibility and yet progress can only arise from possibility. ...

"We have emphasised 'truth' which is a very dangerous joke - especially the belief that there is only one truth."

I'll come back to the false conflict between truth and possibility. To call truth a, "dangerous joke," is one of the most evil things de Bono has ever written.

You are once again dropping the context. De Bono has repetitively emphasized that it is the "Exclusive" emphasis of truth that is a GREAT DANGER.

This morning my lady friend savagely criticized her mother. When asked later why this lady friend was so brutal with insults, the lady friend calmly and honestly said, "because it was the truth". In fact, what she said was not an Objective truth, but she perceived to be "the whole truth". Too often too many people, including scientists fall into this trap. The history of science and ideas are full of example like this such as:

1.

- There are people that think that "I.Q" is everything and "therefore" one must avoid different individuals from different nations immigrating to the U.S.A – particularly as only "whites" are determined to have the highest I.Q.

The above argument is wrong on many counts. Firstly immigration is about the individual (individualism).

Secondly, it has been proven that as long as one has above a minimum I.Q., they can go onto achieve great things: this takes practice, courage, action etc. – See evidence by Prof. Anders K. Erickson on “Mastery”.

Thirdly immigration is not merely about a person’s intellectual contribution to U.S. society: the person may contribute in other ways such as being an elite sportsman or janitor etc.

2. Herbert Spencer interpreted Darwin incorrectly to mean that one tribe must exercise survival of the fittest against another. Therefore conquering and butchering other people is OK. The Nazi party readily accepted this. It was thought to be completely “kosher” by millions of educated westernized European men and women: Germans, amongst other nations.

The above is an example **yet again** of a “logic bubble”. At the time it seemed perfectly reasonable – but what is overlooked is the starting perception was wrong. The above resulted in the conquest and butcher of so many people, and years of warfare.

Well, Mr. de Bono, there is only one truth, because there is only one reality, and truth is whatever identifies and describes it. **You** are taking about Objective truth. However outside the field of Objectivist philosophy: all truths (e.g. in science) are proto-truths. We must accept it a “truth” but there may be something much better. This is how huge and wealthy companies’ fall (with

your thinking: they are stuck in a paradigm, thinking they can never go down) and other companies rise because they believe their truth is better. The joke is on those who think they can live successfully in this world in defiance of the truth. This is a paradoxical statement by you because it is you that defies the meaning of truth! If you know the whole truth about everything then why aren't you supremely rich or supremely famous? Why do you not have any original idea like de Bono?

There is a lot of what I call "slight of mind" rhetoric in de Bono. Yes, you've been stating that above too – but have failed to prove it in any way. It's a common method of putting over a falsehood by means of plausible sounding language.

Here's an example:

"We have always been obsessed by 'truth'. You can have truth about the past but only possibility about the future." If this means anything, de Bono has to be referring to the fact we can know what happened in the past, but cannot know what will happen in the future, but truth pertains to much more than historic facts. **Incorrect.** He ignores principles, though he describes some of his own ideas as such. **Incorrect.** Does he think his own ideas cannot be known to be true in the future? **Incorrect understanding.**

I have explained above the danger with truth. I have demonstrated the “truth idiom” by using:

- Nazis an example;
- Scientists (elsewhere) as another example
- Businesses that get trapped by a paradigm as another example
- And brilliantly using “you” as the absolute finest

example – a person trapped by false reasoning yet extremely confident despite putting forward a fallacious argument

If taken literally, this is the absurd position de Bono's statement must imply: 2 plus 2 has equaled 4 in the past, but it's possible it will equal 14.5 in the future. **Incorrect. You are also incorrectly using the analogy of math to equate it with de Bono.**

De Bono is stated that we can know many things from the past, but there are many other things we do not know, and yet have to design in the future. We cannot EXCLUSIVELY rely upon the past. The PRACTICAL APPLICATION for this is in EVERY AREA: from romantic relationships to business (big and small), from one action/reaction to the economy (E.g. to continue to save money in the U.S. or not?) to one's own job/career (e.g. do I stay with XYZ company despite the fact that their shares are tanking? Or do I start to canvass the market place for other jobs, so if XYZ tanks, I am able to make the jump faster and ahead of others?)

The force of gravity decreased by the square of the distance in the past, but it's possible it will increase by the square of the distance in the future. Cyanide was poisonous in the past, but its possible it will make a lovely Kool Aid drink in the future. ??

What can possibly be the intention of someone who **despises the very nature of truth**? De Bono has never stated he “despites” the nature of the truth. What has he stated?

- i. He has demonstrated how people get trapped by their paradigm, thinking it is the truth, the whole truth and

- nothing but the truth;
- ii. He has shown the need for lateral thinking by using the brain and practical examples (e.g. the history of invention or science) as examples;
 - iii. He has asserted that we should regard all truths as proto-truths. He NEVER asserts that we live as paralysed skeptics (philosophy of Skepticism) but instead that we CAN proactively CHALLENGE things that we believe at present to be the RIGHT WAY, THE ONLY WAY, THE TRUTH.

For example: many that rise entrepreneurially do so because they defied conventional wisdom – and your very own Ayn Rand quote about the individualist, the creator is apt here! If Herb Kellerher had not dared to start Southwest and persist despite 5 years of FAA restrictions and other legal issues; had an ex-employee of Southwest not DARED to start JETBLUE to outcompete others; had Schulz not dared to start Starbucks without the franchise model (etc.) then many great giants (people and companies) would not be around today.

We can challenge the TRUTH in many areas. We MUST/CAN do this by way of THOUGHT EXPERIMENTS using lateral thinking. BUT THEN we must VALIDATE AND DEVELOP IT USING YOUR THINKING: vertical thinking.

That means we can REJECT [select] many ideas produced by lateral thinking. For example: we may find that despite challenging METAPHYSICS as proposed by AYN RAND (it should be challenged) that ultimately we DECIDE it stands. That is fine!

Alternatively for many: her metaphysics does NOT stand. The first principle “existence exists” only stands if we accept a

Logical contradiction! But her argument is avoiding the fact it is a logical contradiction by advancing the argument that “as alternative” can never be validated, in logic, it stands to reason that this is correct, the primacy of existence.

Gödel (and de Bono) would dispute this, stating that the premises of any model are a matter of arbitrary perception. Rand would and did “argue” against Gödel’s theorem, because to entertain it would mean her philosophy would collapse, as the primacy of existence is the foundational pillar to it all! And if you knock out this foundation, then everything collapses like a house of cards!

However, many (like me) accept it as the truth. Many do NOT accept it because of various reasons, one of which may be Gödel; another may be the fact that surely neither a philosophy nor any logic can stand on an overt “logical contradiction”!

An Objectivist may even argue it is not a contradiction because to accept the other premise (non existence) would indeed be a contradiction! However accepting neither premise? Perhaps mostly a de Bono thinker would be able to generate “something more”. Perhaps a de Bono thinker would be able to say, I do NOT know what else it could be, but nor does anyone else! It is the starting point and very stumping point of all philosophy! However, as for me: putting on the vertical thinking hat, I accept the Rand premise of the primacy of existence.

[For all other models I accept Gödel’s theorem].

I also accept that Objectivism is a “model”: one that agrees with

me. This enables me to understand that other people have “other model” instead of becoming combative that they do indeed have other models. That does not mean I’d vote for their model (e.g. socialism/altruism due to Kant] but it means I can discuss and/or live side by side with others, and appreciate their model from their vantage point without embracing their model as “my model”.

"Children grow up with the idea of right and wrong, true and false, things you can do and things you cannot do. There is no opportunity for them to develop the concept of 'possible'. Maybe their young brains could not hold such a concept. Education reinforces the basic true/false dichotomy. This is a huge handicap to a thinker. 'Possible' is a much more important part of thinking than we have ever acknowledged. This goes beyond hypothesis which is just one form of the possible." **??? Confused, is this your writing or another's? As I am confused: no comment.**

The kind of damage done to someone's mind by convincing them that "possibility" excludes or stands apart from right and wrong, true and false, what can and cannot be done is inestimable.

De Bono never said the above. I repeat: de Bono starts off with perception and possibility thinking (as a attitude and habit of thinking). Therefore and thereafter we can generate ideas that are reasonable AND “apparently” unreasonable. After we reach a conclusion using lateral thinking: we can NOW TEST IT WITH VERTICAL THINKING, so we can SELECT OR REJECT the idea.

I know some Objectivists have generated the idea of “home

steading” (creative thinking, without de Bono): setting up their artificial island home in the high sea. To me, this is creative AND for now RIDICULOUS! It is ridiculous for various reasons such as [for now] it is now easily or economically possible to live out in the high seas whereby one has sufficient land area, satisfaction, a security team (army) to protect one’s steady or floating land without a nation state etc. However, it is of value to other people. Due to de Bono tools: OPV (etc.) I can appreciate how it is of value to others.

What is possible is determined by reality itself, **this is true**, but from the limited area of philosophy, you do NOT know what is that reality in full!

For example, you do not know what invention or website would generate great income tomorrow. Possibility thinking is ideating what “Could be”. Then testing it. With feedback one will determine now or over time whether one’s idea (e.g. specific website or invention) is value producing/money making or not.

and whatever is correctly known about reality is "truth," and what is thought incorrectly about reality is "false." *Until one knows the truth, nothing is possible to them.*

For de Bono, **truth is a social concept**. Incorrect. You have a fallacious and completely incorrect understand of Dr. De Bono. And as I have said, paradoxically perhaps (perhaps not), you are the ideal example, the very best – about “why” lateral thinking is required, why “vertical thinking” is dangerous and insufficient by itself! You are trapped by your perception which IS CURIOUSLY NOT OBJECTIVISM (even though you believe it

to be) – and then using the concept lens of Objectivism you incorrectly judge de Bono and his works! Yet you are completely wrong! This is very interesting to me, because I am very well versed in Objectivism too!

"But we are over obsessed with 'truth'. This is because early thinkers needed to show that they were superior to others. They also needed to prove others to be wrong."

This kind of statement is only possible to a thorough-going collectivist or anti-individualist. **Incorrect:** and notice your use of the word “only”. You are wrong. This is possible for an Objectivist such as myself too: people are SUBJECTIVELY trapped within their logic bubble”s” at all times in the many millions or billions of ideas. Not all logic bubbles are myths. It is true that many are obsessed with the truth: i.e. they believe their perception/perspective to be wholly correct, even though they are wrong! It takes self awareness of one’s thinking and a thinking attitude of mind to realize one can be confident but many be incorrect – and that one can play with one’s ideas to determine if it stands or not. That one can apologize to another if one is wrong.

For example: in quarrel between two romantic partners, both walk away thinking they are uniquely right and the love of their lives must necessarily be wrong! It is the lateral thinker that may have to determine whether one is right or wrong, and **EVEN IF ONE IS RIGHT** then (sometimes) apologize to their partner because having a happy, loving partner is a better “win” than proving one to be right. This does **NOT** apply in all things all the time! It certainly applies much of the time particularly with minor things that become big quarrels between two lovers! I give this example to demonstrate how lateral thinking is quite distinct

from vertical thinking, from getting trapped in the “Truth meme/paradigm”. I also restate that BOTH types of thinking are required: vertical and lateral in many things.

Truth has nothing to do with convincing others. Not wholly correct. There are situations where you are correct but there are many situations where truth has to be advanced such as in peer-reviewed journals. There are times when one’s peers will strongly disagree and one may be professionally marginalized but one must persist and find a way to prove one’s idea. There are other times when one is simply wrong and must state that are so, but continue onwards (like the founder of electro-magnetism did: he was absolutely set against the idea that electricity and magnetism could exist as parts and parcels of each other; until he accidentally discovered that he was wrong!)

A desire to demonstrate one's supposed superiority is the opposite of seeking truth. Truth is not a social concept. You are right some of the time- and certainly completely right from within the Objectivist framework: that ultimately each person is an individual, not a collectivist and therefore must come to his or her own unique conclusion).

In other contexts (outside the framework you put forth indirectly) -You are wrong some of the time. You may vigorously believe the truth is that Ron Paul must be President (or Blogavich must be moral man and the State was out to get him). Hilary strongly believed that Bill was always faithful. People are wrong. The evidence against Bill came out. Who is the best man for President is decided by a national vote – and that becomes the truth. A scientific truth is determined by peer-reviewed journals. This filter will determine whether the “truth” as perceived by an individual scientist is universally accepted or not. Sometimes a

truth is accepted without such a filter or despite such a filter, such as the ‘placebo’ effect (a myth).

Truth is the quality of all statements that correctly identify or describe facts of reality. Well put, but whether the fact or statement is ultimately correct is a **matter of perception**. And perception is the province of lateral thinking!

There are many that strongly believe in homeopathy or the placebo effect. I do not believe in either of these nonsensical items. **The main point: though your statement is correct it is useless in many situations and overlooks ‘perception’.** De Bono thinking is all about perception. It is also about understanding others’ perception/perspective: believes and values.

I must understand that others love “alternative medicine” and must not be combative even though I think it is fallacious nonsense. But to them, it is the whole truth: and many can strongly swear (belief) that alternative medicine cured them in the past. It MAY INDEED be that alternative medicines put them in better MENTAL states during their ailment in the past EVEN THOUGH IT DID NOT technical cure them per se! But they strongly believe.

It is the absolute necessity of all correct reasoning and choice in every individual's life, and one who knows the truth knows it,

Is that “you” who know the truth (about everything in the universe)? Let’s see you patent one earth-shattering invention this week. Only one! You are trapped in your idiom in exactitude to someone that vigorously believes in the horoscope, sincerely believes they know “the truth”. I am here to tell you

that you are incorrect. You have overlooked “perception” in advancing your argument. Your argument is wrong. It assumes that – even outside the boundary of philosophy) – that simply vertical thinking is sufficient. I can prove you wrong with the above simple challenge. In contrast, let’s say you challenge me to invent something this week. I would respond by saying:

- i. I have never claimed to know the whole truth about everything;
- ii. I have never claimed lateral thinking is magic; in fact it is the opposite of magical thinking, it is “rational thinking”
- iii. Therefore whereas I can show how you are wrong, you have failed to show how “I” /De Bono is wrong.

and never needs to convince anyone else of that truth or that they know it.

Perception

I have already addressed the gross and common misuse of the word, "**perception**." **Incorrect:** it is a wonderful use of the word by de Bono. I have demonstrated above how you are trapped by your own perception when talking about a simple word such as “the truth”. You overlook perception. You even describe what is the truth: and I quote you “Truth is the quality of all statements which correctly identify or describe facts of reality.’. **I have shown you that whereas a person that vigorously believes in homeopathy may very much feel it is “the truth”, nevertheless they are wrong.**

Here I want to address de Bono's uniquely confusing and deceptive use of that word.

First, **he blames mistakes in thinking on perception**. Correct, and Harvard Professor David Perkins also argue that most mistakes “outside technical matters” are not mistakes of logic but mistakes of perception. One can see this when eminent scientists were ultimately shown to be wrong in some of their papers.

"We have emphasized logic and not perception and yet ninety per cent of the errors of thinking are errors of perception."

Then **he introduces his "made-up" concept**, "perceptual thinking."

De Bono uses the word perceptual and conceptual thinking interchangeably. I am guessing your problem lies with the fact, that in a different context: Ayn Rand describes consciousness and refers to the distinction between precepts and concepts, between conceptual faculty of mind and perceptual faculty of mind.

Whereas I find her argument brilliant and correct – I appreciate that she is so within her contextual frame of reference. I accept de Bono's use of the words interchangeably, realizing that they fall under “conceptual thinking – if one puts on Rand's hat”.

You have failed to realize this. This is because you fail to understand the changing nature of words when the context is change. De Bono thinking is about understanding how the meanings of words (and many other situations) are different under different contexts. This does not necessitate a logical error, because even within the dictionary the meaning of words varies in different contexts.

SELFISHNESS - word championed in Objectivism – is said to be the worst moral idiom in other contexts such as in a romantic

relationship. I recently learnt from Tony Robbins - the 3 levels of a romantic relationship. LEVEL 1= SELFISH: it is about me. LEVEL 2: tid-for-tat: I will give if I receive (love and/or other things). LEVEL 3= UNCONDITIONAL LOVE.

But as a advocate of Ayn Rand, I understand that if I put on HER HAT, then LEVEL 3 is SELFNESS= rational; whereas LEVEL 1 is “IRRATIONAL EGOISM”, what OTHERS (like Tony Robbins describes as selfish).

Because of de Bono, I am more easily able to ‘perceive’ [and even appreciate] that others may use words known to me in a very different (and even opposite) manner! I understand that in society generally that the word “selfishness” refers to being “irrational”. However, I also understand when I WILL NOT accept this word used in a derogatory manner – such as if someone believes that I must “give to them or to charity– e.g. money” just because I am a money-maker! I know they are wrong –and I am selfish and that is all right!

The point of the above is to demonstrate that I am able to perceive and change perception. The point is to show how de Bono thinking is brilliant, without being trapped by the nature of words, what he calls “rock logic” or vertical thinking.

I must emphasize: I do NOT compromise Objectivism though, but do retain flexibility in perception. I understand that with the Rand hat, selfishness is a moral virtue and it means, “seeking one’s RATIONAL self interest”. That which is “rational” is determined from the long term perspective: the life of man, an abstract vantage point.

"Perceptual thinking is extremely important. Research by David

Perkins confirms what I have been saying for years. His research showed that ninety-percent of errors in thinking were errors of perception. Yet we have made no effort in education to teach perception. We have believed that teaching logic was enough and this would ensure good perception. This is totally false. Gödel's theorem shows that from within a system you can never logically prove the starting points. The starting points are arbitrary perceptions and values. The CoRT programme which has been in use since 1972 in some schools is now spreading rapidly around the world because it teaches perception directly by providing perceptual tools.

It is unlikely you would know who **David Perkins**, a senior professor of education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education is. At the time de Bono made his claim about David Perkins research showing, "that ninety-percent of errors in thinking were errors of perception," Dr. Perkins was still at MIT where he earned his doctorate in mathematics and AI (artificial intelligence).

David Perkins is the only source de Bono ever gives for this wild assertion about errors in perception. **Wrong. David Perkins is a source that de Bono often quotes but is not the "only source". De Bono gives many examples, analogies and metaphors spread over his books.**

It is very easy to demonstrate this too – this area is not rocket science. Let's take simple math as an example. Say you or I am adding up numbers: there are 5 digits per row and 20 rows, and unlimited time. It is highly likely that we know how to add up numbers, that we would not take unreasonable amount of time, and are not stupid when it comes to simple addition.

It is likely many people will make mistakes despite knowing simple addition. If they make mistakes, then were their logic wrong? It can be argued that indeed that is the case if they make a mistake else the answer would be correct.

HOWEVER, the above argument overlooks perception. It is almost absolutely certain that for the vast majority of erudite people that if their final answer is wrong then at some stage whilst doing the requisite calculation (using a combination of paper and very simple mental math), they made an error in perception, which manifested itself as the wrong answer, and can therefore be stated in words as either/both:

“Error in logic” and/or “error of perception, even though globally there is no doubt the erudite person can easily add 5 columns with 20 rows of single digits using paper and unlimited time!”

What about a child doing the above who was fairly new to addition? It is highly likely that the child’s logic was “not logic, it was illogical, it was wrong”. One could – in this case – also argue that the child’s perception is wrong. This is correct. But the emphasis here would be on the fact that a child learning to add, would most likely have erred in their use of logic.

As far as I know, Dr. Perkins never did any research on perception itself, You are wrong. Perkins has studied and written books on those that are deemed genius (such as scientific geniuses: eminent people throughout history) and pondered why some reached the invention or great theory whereas others had missed it? Why was Einstein able to notice and think about the erroneous data relating to light coming from the Sirius Star? Why

did other eminent people ignore the data thinking it to be erroneous?

Einstein focused his attention and played with the idea that the data was largely correct! This change of perception/perspective followed by thought experiments resulted in insight phenomena. He thereafter formulated a hypothesis that was rejected as being ridiculous by others. Nevertheless he went onto prove his hypothesis and eventually won the Nobel Prize.

Others were wrong in light of the new information because they had not redirected their perception, did not conduct (nor have reason to conduct) such thought experiments. De Bono thinking is a practical (and powerful) way to do exactly this in relations to many items in one's life. This is because we all have myths/errors in relation to many things in many logic bubbles. This is of great importance in one's career and business.

Finally, let us not forget that if it was simply a matter of logic, then a computer could be programmed to find the answer to everything. Indeed a computer modernly can find the answer to many things, and certainly with many items within math; however it is the human being that uses perception that must feed the computer the correct information for the computer to use logic.

and I am convinced no research is possible that would lead to the conclusion de Bono claims. If Dr. Perkins ever did such research, I could find no published papers on that research, and de Bono never references any.

[NOTE: I have written Dr. Perkins to ask him if he can varify de Bono's claim, and he very kindly responded.

As I suspected David Perkins never actually said that. As he politely put it, "Edward quite understandably likes to put things in simple terms. The spirit is right, but it's a little more complicated than this. ... The problem, in other words, was not so much logical error as simplistic envisioning of situations and events. I suppose one could call this "errors in perception."

Perkins therefore ends up confirming what de Bono states – yet you still continue to berate de Bono! Do you notice how trapped you are in your logic bubble, and that despite overt evidence that proves you are wrong: nevertheless you reject that and confabulate it into your incorrect perspective?

That is again exactly why lateral thinking is of the greatest import! You are living evidence for this – and that is the paradox!!

Well, yeah, you "could call it anything," but de Bono specifically claims that's what Dr. Perkins called it...and he didn't. Dr. Perkins politely calls that a "simplification;" I call it a lie.]

Incorrect. You have distorted what Perkins allegedly has said to you. In the nature of communication people often “quote” others. The quote does NOT have to be in exactitude (except in academia, philosophy and such like). It certainly is not in exactitude in court. Perkins admits and I can clearly see that de Bono CORRECTLY puts forward the “spirit” of Perkins’ interpretation. De Bono was therefore not “lying” as you grossly malign him with. You insult a great man. You engage in ad hominem argument. You are wrong.

The real problem is, de Bono never identifies what he means by perception. **You are wrong. Perception is the way you see reality, as you believe it to be. It is your perspective upon things.**

As I suspected, you are using the word perception correctly but in a technical and different context to de Bono. What you state below is correct, stemming from Ayn Rand. What you constantly fail to grasp is that the vast majority of people will use words in a different context to Rand and you. There is no “absolute reason” that they too must use the word ‘perception’ in the exact same way as Ayn Rand.

The essential meaning of perception is our immediate awareness of the world by means of what are mistakenly called, "the senses," that is, our direct consciousness of the world we see, hear, feel, smell, taste, as well as the direct experience of our internal states. Perception, in that sense, is involuntary and continuous. We will see whatever is there to see in the direction we are looking, and we will hear whatever sounds are present, and feel whatever we are touching. Except for the fact we can look in another direction, or shut our eyes, turn on a radio, or turn it off, or change what we are touching, we have no choice about what we perceive or how we perceive it. **Correct!**

It is essential to understand percepts are not thoughts. **Correct!** What we perceive at any moment is determined entirely by whatever as at that moment available to be perceived. The moment we turn our head, or a new piece of music starts on the radio, what we are seeing or hearing immediately reflects those changes. Perception does nothing else but perceive (be conscious of) what is.

Even I understand that de Bono like many others use the word perception interchangeably with conception/conceptual faculty of mind. You are being a gadfly like Socrates. If de Bono means perception in this essential sense, there can be no mistakes in perception. If there is an apple on the table where I am looking I'll see an apple. I cannot be mistaken about it. I cannot mistakenly see a peach, for example. I might be mistaken in my thinking about what I perceive. I might think it's a peach, when it's actually an apple, but that is not a perceptual mistake.

It is obvious de Bono means something else by perception. Correct –and well done for finally admitting the truth. Therefore it is not him, but YOU that is a liar. You always knew the truth and admit it here. Instead you set up a false argument with nothing but the intention of berating the great man.

Since it is not possible for there to be mistakes in perception, but there can be mistakes in what we think about what we perceive, it must be thoughts that de Bono means by perception. There is, of course, another loose vague meaning of perception Correct. De Bono enjoys using vague meaning and it wonderfully serves his purpose. I fully support that. He uses “abstract concepts” in order to advance his brilliant argument. Rand, in a different context was also a supporter of “abstract concepts” – and in fact her whole philosophy when applied to the “realities of life” is an example of just that.

that refers to how people evaluate or feel about things, understand things, or interpret things.

If it is this meaning of perception de Bono intends, his assertion that ninety percent of errors in thinking are errors in the way people evaluate, "feel" about, understand or interpret things is absurd.

Except for feelings, which are non-cognitive, everything else *is* thinking and all he saying is that ninety percent of errors in thinking are caused by errors in thinking.

1. For you “feelings” are non-cognitive. But most people would disagree with you. All decisions – it has been proved by neuroscientific studies – are based upon how someone ultimately “feels”. They simply “rationalize” it using (correct or incorrect) logic.

2. This is your circular reasoning, and amazing that you try to pass that onto Dr. De Bono.

Let me explain in a different way: people who make mistakes outside technical matters, think they are right at the time (just like you above), think they are acting rationally. Later if they are found to be wrong, then often times (not all the time) their mistake was a matter of perception.

The head of Western Electric dismissed Alexander Graham Bell and his telephone invention calling it a “toy”. Yet this head was not stupid. He fully grasped the importance of communication and as a head of a corporation, fully understood the value of profits. His error was a mistake of perception, thinking that people would not use the “tele-phone” but stick with the

telegraph.

Florence Nightingale was a nurse that noticed that many British soldier during war were dying due to unhygienic conditions rather than merely their wounds. Her idea was thought to be preposterous (“what does a nurse know? She is not a doctor!”). However with persistence he convinced the establishment to test her idea and they found that indeed hygiene resulted in more soldiers – despite wounds – living and recovering! The people who rejected her were not stupid, but their perception was not the same as hers. They thought that the wounds in and of itself resulted in the death of the soldiers rather than the effects of poor hygienic conditions upon the wounds.

If that's what he means, the estimate needs to be revised upward to one hundred percent.

Neither definition of perception, however, can be what is meant by "perceptual thinking." It cannot be the first meaning that is intended, because perception in that sense is entirely involuntary. It cannot be the second meaning that is intended either, because perception in that sense already means thinking, and would make perceptual thinking mean "thinking." My guess is what de Bono really intends is some method of changing how people evaluate, "feel" about, understand or interpret things, though his obscure language does not make that clear if that is what he intends.

NOTE BELOW how you contradict what you said earlier, arguing that de Bono does NOT state what he means by perception. Once again in this article you have mischievously set up false arguments to berate Edward de Bono – and prove how it is you that is absolutely wrong and contradictory in your argument!

[NOTE: **In one place**, de Bono does say what he means by perception is, "the way you choose to look at things in different ways," which of course is thinking, not perception. He also says in that place, "... there was a need for the term 'lateral thinking' - which is also directly related to the way the brain forms asymmetric patterns." He is either implying thinking is determined by brain patterns, denying volition, or his reference to brain patterns is irrelevant.]

I have told you several times above what he means. The brain forms asymmetric patterns: meaning what is obvious in hindsight was not obvious before. Therefore it stands to reason that when we perceive anything, it is the result of brain patterns and such patterns themselves are asymmetric.

I demonstrated the above with examples such as Florence Nightingale and the head of Western Union. I also stated that when we make decisions it is always due to how we feel even though we do not acknowledge that if we think we are logicians; but we justify/rationalize our decisions using retrospective logic.

I remember I met a Greek guy at university that was in his 20s. He had grown his hair long. People asked him "why he had done that". He stated "one day he would grow old and lose his hair. So why not enjoy long hair at present whilst he is in his youth?" What is the truth? The truth is his reasoning is retrospective. The truth is he "felt" like growing long hair. Perhaps it resonated with him because others known to him (like a role model or another) had had long hair; or one of many reasons such as he wished to distinguish himself and attract members of the opposite sex.

But the above example applies to all of us in different contexts. We ALL justify things, often forget it is due to our emotional

feeling and then rationalize it using logic. Above even you continuously make the error of attributing error to de Bono (e.g. like saying he never defines perception, then build up a huge argument, but then admit he has described what he means by perception after all!)

Creative Thinking

Teaching thinking as a skill and promoting creative thinking are de Bono's claimed area of expertise. They are not merely claimed, many people, organizations and I know they are indeed his areas of expertise, not merely a claim as you put it.

He regularly repudiates logic, truth, and language Incorrect, he states that there is a great danger in the exclusive use of vertical thinking (words games), in one's dogmatic adherence to what one believes to be true [but which may be false, and I gave you examples relating to the head of Western Union amongst others above], and he states that the nature of descriptive language such as in philosophy is dangerous and wrong.

Indeed Ayn Rand would agree that all other philosophy is wrong. But few people believe that she is right! Therefore no reputable university teaches any course to do with her to my knowledge! This further demonstrates that unlike science with the hypothesis where one can practically show whether one is correct or not; with philosophy – and the nature of word games: “perceptions” is often (or all the time) overlooked.

If Rand's philosophy were “logically correct” then all Professors, by all logicians, would universally accept it certainly by all reputable universities. But that has not occurred “at all”!

I can state the above despite accepting her philosophy, realizing that it resonates with my values and beliefs but understanding it is my perception – such as my perception of accepting her primacy of existence!

, But knows the danger of out-right rejection of objective reason (which he refers to as traditional thinking) so claims he does not oppose Aristotelian thinking, but just wants to add his own versions of thinking.

Correct. Similarly a coffee drinker may not oppose drinking tea, but may wish to add coffee. There is nothing inherently wrong about that.

There are no different kinds of thinking; there is only correct thinking, or incorrect thinking. **If that was the case, I repeat then:**

1. Ayn Rand would be accepted at every reputable university;
2. Capitalism (not mixed capitalism) and free trade would be put into the U.S. constitution as an amendment and taxation would be outlawed as a crime against man;
3. You may even win the Nobel Prize!

Outside of the rhetoric and deceptive pseudo-concepts his kind thinking is supposedly based on, what de Bono provides are a series of gimmicks and tricks, none of them truly original and mostly common sense that might help a few people think more creatively or, "imaginatively," but will for most people be a waste of time and effort that can only frustrate and disappoint them. **You are wrong both descriptively and actually. De Bono therefore generates huge income, is often travelling and heard by**

a plethora of erudite people, leaders of industry, government, military and nations.

Misc. Notes

1. "**This method** [parallel thinking] is now rapidly being taken up by corporations such as Du Pont, IBM, NASA, Prudential, Texas Instruments, NTT, Statoil, Shell etc."

2. "**Over the years** my instruction in creativity has been sought by many organizations including: IBM, Microsoft, Prudential (USA), Shell, Exxon, Nokia, Ericsson, Motorola, Bank of America, Citibank, British Airways etc."

3. **These scams all feed each other:**

"People like a defined sense of identity. Who am I? What is my psychic shape etc.? So there is interest in the signs of the Zodiac, Myers-Briggs classifications, learning styles, multiple intelligences etc. These have many advantages. You may know that if you are not good at one thing, you might be good along a different dimension. You may feel you know how to deal with other members of your team."

Peter de Bono **strongly supports Graeme Allan:**

"Graeme Allan, The HOD of Social Sciences of Burnside School in Christchurch New Zealand, has been using the CoRT materials since 1978. He is a Master Trainer in 'de Bono Thinking' for Schools and has been responsible for the training of many teachers in his country. We are grateful for the material he shares with us - thank you Graeme."

As does **Edward de Bono:**

"Graeme Allan in South Island, NZ, has done a marvellous job introducing CoRT Thinking to over 100 schools with excellent results. ..."

I will be doing a report on Greame Allan as well.

—Reginald Firehammer (05/17/11)