

Book review

How to have a Beautiful Mind

62 exercises to develop the mind

Category: Book Reviews / Non-fiction

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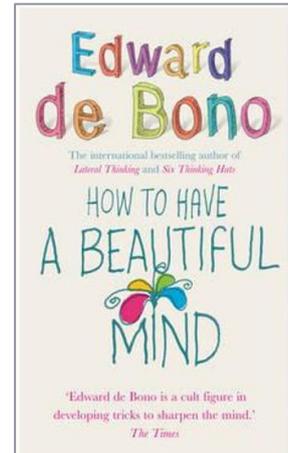
Year: 2008

Publisher: Edward de Bono

ISBN: 9780091910488

Audience: Supporting Myself

Summary: A guide to working on our conversational skills which will make us more interesting and attractive



An arresting title, a colourful, enticing cover, a respected and interesting author: all this makes an easy choice for my book review. The back cover blurb entreats readers to “use the power of creative thinking to become more attractive with a makeover for your mind!”

Edward De Bono speaks of beauty as being “something that can be appreciated by others”, and sets about showing the reader using simple concepts and clear writing in bite-sized chunks how working on conversational skills can make us appear more interesting and attractive.

From conversation to problem-solving

The chapters range across basic conversational skills - how to listen, how to respond, how to agree or disagree - through the use of concepts or values in conversation, to looking at the range of attitudes commonly encountered when interacting with others.

De Bono also touches on lateral thinking and six hats problem-solving - concepts on which he has written at length elsewhere, but which contribute to developing a beautiful mind.

Everyone can learn something here

You may think: what is new in this? I have heard this before! Some of it, yes, no doubt you have. Maybe your conversations are seasoned with these ideas, in which case people probably already enjoy discussions with you. I am convinced however, that even the most confident conversationalist can learn something of value from this book.

Those who lack confidence in social settings, who doubt their ability to hold a conversation, or who feel that they have little to offer will find themselves willing to test some of these skills in meetings or social situations.

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Great skills to learn

Here are a few gems:

- Being interesting is more important than winning an argument.
- Feelings can control perception. But without feelings we would not be interested in perceiving anything at all.
- You can be using a concept without being aware of the concept you are using.
- A really skilled conversationalist can create interest from any topic whatsoever.
- You bother to make your appearance attractive. Why not bother to make your conversation attractive?

So, does this little book live up to its promise? If you believe that for a mind to be beautiful it ought also to be a thoughtful mind, an enquiring mind, an others-focussed mind, a creative mind - then yes, reading this book will help you on your way to having a more beautiful mind. I heartily recommend it, and am off to buy my own copy.

Review by Miriam Millson, part of the team at Beth-Shean Trust respite

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