12.7: Patterns of Thinking

Instead of one thought process, we can take advantage of five different patterns of thinking.

**Emotional Thinking Process** occurs when you make a decision based on sympathy, passion, or prejudice. This pattern of thinking stresses the heart over the mind and is dominated by one’s emotions. The motto of these people is, “If it feels good, do it.” In this pattern of thinking, decisions are arrived at using emotional criteria.

The **Logical Thinking Process** happens when you make decisions because the facts of the situation dictate or justify the decision you are using. This pattern of thinking attempts to ignore emotional considerations in favor of one’s ability to use reason. This stresses that humans dominate other species because of their ability to reason, and, therefore, decisions should be made first on logical criteria.

The **Vertical Thinking Process** uses a step-by-step procedure to make decisions. You cannot go to step two until you have first completed step one, and step three is dependent on steps one and two. The vertical thinker, also known as a linear thinker, is dependent on clearly written and organized instructions to get a task accomplished. This is the way recipes are followed or the method computers think. If an instruction is missed or an error is made, work on the task comes to a halt until the error is corrected. This pattern stresses conventional, rather than unique or creative outcomes.

The **Horizontal Thinking Process** is more creative, unconventional, highly innovative, using “off the wall” ideas. Popularized by Edward de Bono, this type of thinking, or processing of information, stresses creativity. Decisions are based on one’s ability to select from a wide variety of choices developed from many angles and approaches to the situation.
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