

# Hard News Magazine, 2. July 2010 (India)

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## HARDNEWS

FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO KNOW

Mehru Jaffer  
I was thinking.

Edward de Bono thought that is an excellent thing to do but it is not enough. Called the first 'professor of thinking' ever since he published *Lateral Thinking* in 1967, I was introduced to the 76-year-old authority on creativity at the second IncredibEurope Summit in Vienna, where his keynote speech knocked many an imagination to wake up.

For de Bono, thinking is not enough till the thoughts are so creative that they can help resolve real life problems.

Dressed in a black suit, red tie and a pair of parrot green socks, de Bono talked of the need for new ideas and new perceptions. What most think is thinking is usually a habitual reaction to the obvious, which invariably leads to the same old predictable conclusion. Most thoughts today are simply a recycling of what the brain has already been fed by others, crushing imagination and creating a dearth of creative thoughts and ideas.

The lateral thinking of the Greek Gang of Three, also known as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, had revolutionised the world. But that was 2,400 years ago. Those ideas do not necessarily help us in solving problems of conflict resolution and economic development today.

The world needs brand new, creative ideas of its own that will help resolve new problems faced by human beings here and now. The proposal is to study the power of lateral thinking to create new ideas and new possibilities that are of value to the self and to society. What will help is a little less logic and a lot more learning to look at reality from different aspects to face the challenges of the day in a more imaginative way. De Bono recommends that lateral thinking should be taught early in life and at university, to encourage many more people to come up with fresh, valuable ideas that will change the world.

The building of many temples of thinking is yet another suggestion and so is the immediate appointment of a minister of thinking in every government worldwide. De Bono dislikes leaving matters that matter to mere luck, chance or fate. He is convinced that with learning, more and more people can graduate to realising their genius.



BRAINWORK



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The Brainswork Institute in Vienna is in complete consort with the ideas of de Bono who claims that it is not enough for people to think creatively but also to have institutions that formally acknowledge, respect and receive creative ideas. Founded in Vienna by Selma Prodanovic, Brainswork is an internationally recognised boutique consultancy today for sustainable new business development. The focus is on eastern and south-eastern Europe, which are promoted as the continent's most dynamic and fastest growing regions.

Brainswork is a European network for innovation, creativity, research and future studies. The idea is to tap into Europe's diversity to address complex questions like responsibility and financing. Every aspect of Vienna's enormously creative scene can be summoned for success in the global market. With that purpose, Brainswork hosts the IncredibleEurope Summit, bringing creatives and businesses together as equal partners for an interdisciplinary discourse.

The summit itself is a brave, new idea born in 2009 in the thick and thin of the economic crisis. In June of the same year the first summit attracted 250 change-makers from 23 countries to increase understanding for Europe's incredible potential in innovation and creativity in every sector of human activity and thought. It is nothing short of a deliberate, tireless attempt to strengthen Europe's position as a global player with fresh ideas, new partnerships and innovative concepts. It is an attempt to help Europe reclaim its place in the world as the continent of countless inventions and home of hectic creativity in the past. The spirit of the summit this year was to imagine Europe in 2049 but to act now.

Most of our problems are due to faulty thinking and perceptions. The most optimistic thing about Europe today, according to de Bono, is the bad thinking on the continent. For that gives him hope that to become creative, all that the continent has to do is to improve the way its population thinks. At least one person is seen to already think differently. Born in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Selma left her war-shattered country to educate herself in Tunisia and Madrid. The award-winning global networker came to Vienna in 1991. Ever since, Selma is engaged in facing up to her own prejudices and mindset in a conscious effort to think beyond the box and in the bargain, inspiring everyone around her to do the same.

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BRAINSWORK

