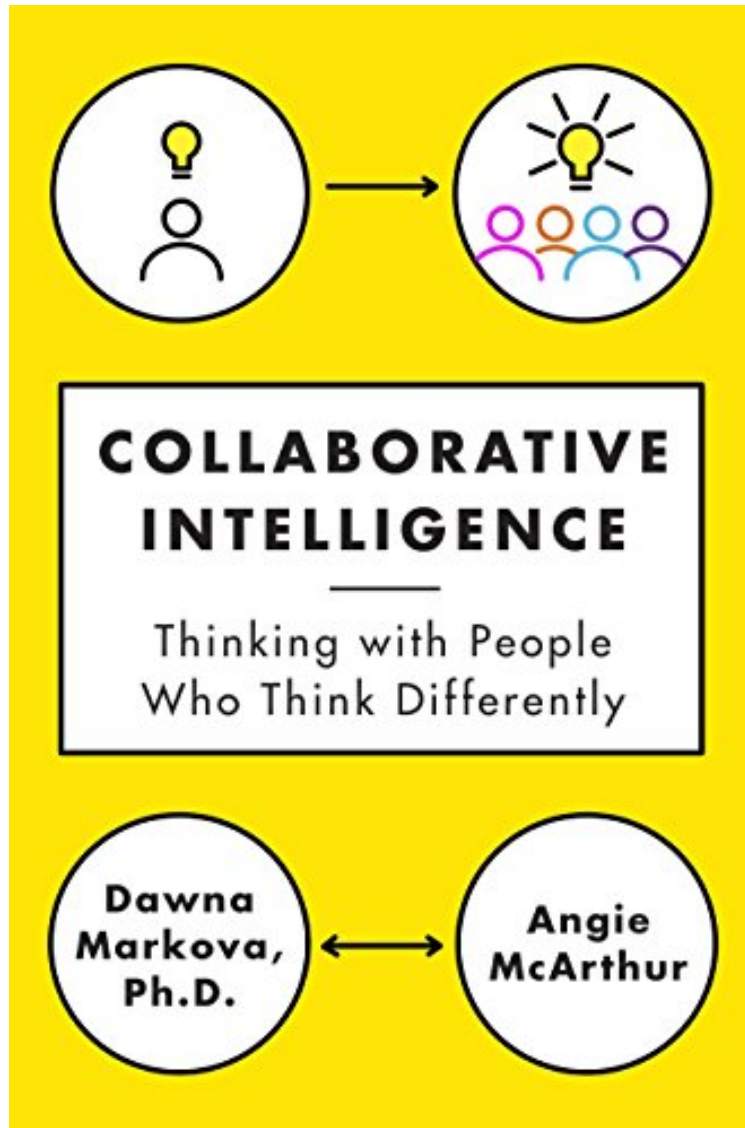


Collaborative Intelligence: Thinking with People Who Think Differently

Dawna Markova, Angie McArthur
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Dawna Markova, Angie McArthur : Collaborative Intelligence: Thinking with People Who Think Differently before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Collaborative Intelligence: Thinking with People Who Think Differently:

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A breakthrough book on the transformative power of collaborative thinking. Collaborative intelligence, or CQ, is a measure of our ability to think with others on behalf of what matters to us all. It is emerging as a new professional currency at a time when the way we think, interact, and innovate is shifting. In the past, "market sharer" companies ruled by hierarchy and top-down leadership. Today, the new market leaders are "mind sharer" companies, where influence is more important than power, and success relies on collaboration and the ability to inspire. Collaborative Intelligence is the culmination of more than fifty years of original research that draws on Dawna Markova's background in cognitive neuroscience and her most recent work, with Angie McArthur, as a "Professional Thinking Partner" to some of the world's top CEOs and creative professionals. Markova and McArthur are experts at getting brilliant yet difficult people to think together. They have been brought in to troubleshoot for Fortune 500 leaders in crisis and managers struggling to inspire their teams. When asked about their biggest challenges at work, Markova and McArthur's clients all cite a common problem: other people. This response reflects the way we have been taught to focus on the gulfs between us rather than valuing our intellectual diversity—that is, the ways in which each of us is uniquely gifted, how we process information and frame questions, what kind of things deplete us, and what engages and inspires us. Through a series of practices and strategies, the authors teach us how to recognize our own mind patterns and map the talents of our teams, with the goal of embarking together on an aligned course of action and influence. In Markova and McArthur's experience, managers who appreciate intellectual diversity will lead their teams to innovation; employees who understand it will thrive because they are in touch with their strengths; and an entire team who understands it will come together to do their best work in a symphony of collaboration, their individual strengths working in harmony like an orchestra or a high-performing sports team. Praise for Collaborative Intelligence "Rooted in the latest neuroscience on the nature of collaboration, Collaborative Intelligence celebrates the power of working and thinking together at the highest levels of business and politics, and in the smallest aspects of our everyday lives. Dawna Markova and Angie McArthur show us that our ability to collaborate is not only a measure of intelligence, but essential to solving the world's problems and seeing the possibilities in ourselves and others."—Arianna Huffington "This inspiring book teaches you how to align your intention with the intention of others, and how, through shared strengths and talents, you have every right to expect greatness and set the highest goals and expectations."—Deepak Chopra "Everyone talks about collaboration today, but the rhetoric typically outweighs the reality. Collaborative Intelligence offers tangible tools for those serious about becoming 'system leaders' who can close the gap and make collaboration real."—Peter M. Senge, author of *The Fifth Discipline* "I have worked with Markova and McArthur for several years, focusing on achieving better results through intellectual diversity. Their approach has encouraged more candid debate and collaborative behavior within the team. The team, not individuals, becomes the hero."—Al Carey, CEO, PepsiCo

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learn how our differences in individual thinking—our intellectual diversity—can be turned into our collective strengths by fostering real collaboration in thinking. Simultaneously filled with insight and application, Collaborative Intelligence is engaging, relevant, and valuable. In an increasingly collaborative world, this is a remarkable book for our time!—Stephen M. R. Covey, author of *The Speed of Trust*

The methods in this eye-opening book have taught me how to locate my strengths and access the traits where my potential remains dormant. As a result, I have learned to harness my potency and to become more productive and effective—and I'm able to inspire others in a way I could only imagine of a few short years ago.—Suzy Amis Cameron, co-founder, Muse Schools

This book is filled with essential questions, commonsense answers, and stories that illustrates how to magnify one's intelligence by drawing on the intelligence of others. It's a manual for clarifying objectives, then realizing them.—Dee Hock, founder and CEO emeritus, VISA International

About the Author Dawna Markova, Ph.D., is the CEO emeritus of Professional Thinking Partners, an organization that teaches collaborative thinking to CEOs and senior executives around the world. Internationally known for her research in the fields of learning and perception, she is a former senior affiliate of the Society for Organizational Learning, originated at MIT's Sloan School of Management, and the co-author of the international bestseller *Random Acts of Kindness*. She lives in Hawaii.

Angie McArthur is the CEO of Professional Thinking Partners and co-founder of SmartWired and the Smart Parenting Revolution, organizations dedicated to helping youths and the adults who support them. As an expert in communication and learning styles, she has developed strategies for authors, corporations, CEOs, and the ongoing Executive Champions' Workshop. She also spearheaded the Worldwide Women's Web, a 2001 research initiative to support developing and retaining women in corporate leadership roles. She lives in Park City, Utah.

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The Monkey Trap On an island not so far from here, the local people became very annoyed at the pesky monkeys who lived in the trees surrounding their village and wreaked havoc on their orderly gardens. A clever village elder created a small bamboo cage and placed a banana inside it, then hung it on the edge of his property. Late that afternoon, a monkey reached in and grabbed the banana. When he tried to pull it out between the narrow ribs of the cage, his hand was stuck. All he had to do to get free was to release the banana and slide his little hand out. But that evening, when the elder came to check the trap, the monkey was hanging from it, still clutching that banana, even though it meant the loss of his own freedom. Many of us are just like that monkey. We grasp on to something that tantalizes us, and even when we realize that to be free we have to let go, we hold on nonetheless. One of the things that most commonly trap us is the habitual pattern of our own thinking—the limiting stories we tell ourselves about who we are and what our capacities are.

Strategy 1 Mind Patterns Thinking about Thinking Recognizing How Your Mind Works Each mind has its own method.—Ralph Waldo Emerson

I never heard my father say, "I love you." He said many things to me in his lifetime, but never that. My mother collected newspaper clippings that chronicled his journey from inner-city street fighter to CEO of a major Chicago corporation. He often said he regretted never having a son who could inherit the knowledge he'd gathered as he climbed the corporate ladder. My father lacked one skill, however, and it was his greatest secret and most profound shame. Every day after school I would go to his huge office. My feet would leave prints in the plush burgundy carpeting as I approached his immense mahogany desk and pulled myself up onto the leather swivel chair. The only things on the shining desktop were a large reel-to-reel tape recorder and a very thick pile of documents held in place by a crystal paperweight carved with the company insignia. Day after day, I pushed the button on the tape recorder and began to read the papers, one by one, into the microphone. Then, when I had finished, I slipped my hand under the big black-and-green blotter and found the quarter my father had left me so I could buy a hot fudge sundae on the way home. No one ever found out about this ritual. It was our secret. No one ever found out that he couldn't read a word. During the ten years I read and recorded for my father in his office, our conversations grew deeper and more engaging: We actually became thinking partners. He loved my questions, and I loved learning how he managed to inspire so many people. He explained to me that in a leader, no quality was more important than the ability to recognize and develop the capacity of each person, the particular way he or she brings value to the world. As I write this, his words still resonate: "Remember this secret, Dawna: Talent attracts capital far more than capital attracts talent." I knew my father was intelligent in specific ways. As I became increasingly curious about why my father—a man who could stand before a thousand people and deliver a speech, who could read—the gifts of all of his employees—couldn't read, I was driven to understand how his mind worked. The notion that we use different "operating systems" to think has been at the center of my work for the last fifty years. I uncovered it in the 1970s while I was shuttling back and forth from graduate school at Columbia to a classroom in Harlem, where I was teaching forty kids, many with rat bites on their cheeks and folders full of labels about how they were disabled. I adored these children. Each one was a precious riddle that asked, "What can be possible for this child?" Then I met a lanky researcher at NYU named E. Roy John, who was measuring certain brain-wave frequencies associated with general psychological processes. He originated a field of study called neurometrics, which used a computer and an EEG to monitor what was going on in the brain while a person was thinking. Meanwhile, I was searching for the best reading method to use with my students: the sight method, phonics, or an experiential

approach. I brought several children to his lab and connected them to his equipment. What I observed, to put it simply, was that if I gave Johnny written information to look at, his brain produced more beta waves, indicating he was concentrating. But when I gave Jimmy the same information, his brain produced more alpha waves, which indicated a daydream state. Even more confusing was that when I presented the same visual information to Jason, his brain produced more theta waves, which is a very spaced-out state. How could this be? The kind of input was determining the kind of attention that each student's brain was producing. I brought in more children and shifted to auditory input—sounds and verbal words. When she was listening or talking, Jenny's brain got very focused, but Jessi's daydreamed, and Juli's spaced out completely. Now my confusion opened up into curiosity. I tried kinesthetic input, having the kids play with clay and move around. For some children, this produced more beta waves; for others, more alpha waves; and for still others, more theta waves. What I hadn't realized until that point was:

- 1) Input from the outside caused the children's brains to shift from focused attention to a daydream or creative state. Their different states of attention were being produced by the different kinds of input they were exposed to.
- 2) There is no one way of "paying attention." The brain uses all three states to learn and think. Through this and other experiences, I became convinced that the question is not "Are you smart?" but "How are you smart?" This awareness, coupled with the work I was studying on shifting states of attention in clinical hypnotherapy, led me to create a system for understanding different patterns of thinking, learning, and communicating, which I call "mind patterns." Tens of thousands of individuals around the world now use this model in education, business, and family relationships to learn and collaborate more effectively. The first strategy of CQ is recognizing mind patterns. This chapter and the next are the planks you will lay to help bridge differences between you and your intellectually diverse colleagues. Initially, you need to learn how to recognize the unique and specific way you process information. Knowing this will make learning, unlearning, digesting, and expressing information more natural. It will also help you design a working environment and develop new habits that evoke your best thinking. This understanding will challenge you to open your mind and grow your natural curiosity and capacity. This information is meant to increase your curiosity about and your awareness of how you are affected by different experiences and how you can be most effective with others. It is based on what is called "theory-in-use and action research," meaning that neuroscientists haven't yet definitively pinpointed how the brain processes information, but we can make observations and hypotheses based on extensive experience in the field. This knowledge will increase your awareness of the conditions that maximize how you think, learn, and communicate. It does not describe personality (although many of the characteristics of a person's mind pattern are often incorrectly attributed to that). Identifying the particular sequence your mind uses to shift attention will enable you to notice how your and other people's thinking is affected by different kinds of input. At the back of the book, there is an appendix with more-detailed information on how to use your mind pattern in many work situations and a guide for how you can best interact and communicate with other patterns. As thinkers, all of us are stuck in our own ruts and habits, and we are reluctant to move beyond them. You need to know how to create the conditions where you can let go and open up to what can be possible. You need to learn—and unlearn—with others constantly. This can be more challenging than it seems. One thing that distinguishes a boss from a leader is the ability to suspend belief and disbelief so that innovations and new processes will have a chance to emerge. In the beginning, all of our clients identified themselves as open-minded people, but not one of them understood the specific combination of conditions that was necessary to open his or her own mind.

How Do You Pay Attention to Attention?

The first step in recognizing your mind pattern is noticing your attention and then coming to understand its three different states and what triggers each one. Attention literally means how we attend to things, what we notice in the world we inhabit and the people we encounter. It regulates the flow of information within and between us. It is fluid. We can all aim it, follow it, or shift it, but each of us does that in a different way. Attention, like water, has several different "forms" or states. It can be "focused," or solid as a cube of ice. This is a state where you give your attention to only one thing and ignore the rest of what is going on around you. Attention can also be in a "sorting" or mediating state, shifting from inner awareness to outer and back again, sorting and digesting information. You may experience this as confusion or weighing two options, such as, "On the one hand ... but on the other hand ..." Attention can also be "open," creative, daydreaming, and diffuse, where you get in touch with memories, images, and ideas and transform them into new patterns, thoughts, or insights. For instance, think of a time when you were in the shower and an idea just "popped" into your mind, or you had an "ah-ha" moment.

Let's explore each state in more detail:

1. **Focused Attention** This describes the conscious state of mind where your brain is producing more beta waves. Your thoughts become certain and form into solid beliefs. You are very directed; you concentrate on what is in front of you: your computer screen, the other person's voice, the hammer in your hand. This is the state of attention best suited for:
 - Concentrating on accomplishing tasks.
 - Decision-making.
 - Attending to details and timelines.
2. **Sorting Attention** This describes the subconscious state of mind, where your brain produces more alpha waves. Your thoughts wander back and forth, sorting through information, comparing one thing to another. In this state of attention you are:
 - Trying to understand.
 - Digesting information or experiences.
 - Thinking through confusion.
 - Weighing multiple choices.
3. **Open Attention** This is an

unconscious state of mind, where your brain is producing more theta waves. Your thoughts are very wide and internal, as in a daydream. In this state of mind you are:

- Imagining possibilities, new ways to approach old problems.
- Exploring different options by seeing things in a new way.
- Associating to past experiences, stories, and people: "Oh, that reminds me of this."

Our minds are constantly shifting quickly between these three states of attention— from focused to sorting to open, and from open to sorting to focused, often without our awareness. You might have experienced this when, driving on the interstate at night, you passed by exit 15 and then suddenly found yourself at exit 18. You were unaware of passing exits 16 and 17. Your attention shifted from the cars around you, to a song on the radio, to your own internal thoughts. What happened, in fact, is that your "thought" was changing form, shifting from focused to sorting to open attention. Your mind became like a loom, weaving different ideas in a new way, or making associative leaps between past and present. We call this way of thinking "relational logic" because your mind is creating new connections between thoughts. We shift between these three states all the time. Each one is a stage of "mental metabolism" where your mind is taking in information, organizing it, digesting it, evaluating it, eliminating it, arranging it into new patterns and ideas, storing it, and then sorting it again to decide how to express it.

Why Don't We Value All Three States of Attention?

When somebody does not respond to us verbally, when he stares out the window, jiggles, or paces, we often assume he is not "paying attention." This is not necessarily true. These may be indicators of different states of thinking and different ways of paying attention. Exploring, wondering, imagining, reflecting, sorting, are all different stages of effective thinking. They are all natural aspects of paying attention— each useful for different things. However, most of us have been taught to consider only a focused state of attention as being valuable, and we assume that sorting and open attention are a waste of time. We refer to these states negatively as being confused, being distracted, or spacing out. When most of us sense our thoughts wandering, we jolt ourselves awake, grasping for the old habit of finding a quick answer or the next action step. We have been taught to analyze our way out of any problem as quickly as possible. Thus, when our minds are confused and sorting information, we panic and reflexively attempt to use logic to "get to the point," to focus. In Western cultures, when someone looks pensive or lost in thought, we think of it as a perfect opportunity to interrupt them. When someone is working through confusion, we jump in to help, as if confusion is something to be quickly cured. We are habituated to giving answers, taking swift action, and deciding something now. However, unless we are willing to spend time not knowing, with our minds wide open in wonder, we won't generate the kind of innovative thinking we so desperately need. In the recent past, numerous cognitive neuroscientists have conducted studies that reveal that, like the tip of an iceberg, only a very small percentage of our cognitive activities (decisions, emotions, actions, behavior) involve conscious attention. The vast majority of remaining mental activity is beneath the surface of our awareness, where our minds explore relationships and make unconscious connections. You may not think of this as "work," but your mind is in fact working in this state of open, relational thinking. It may be, in fact, that the challenges you face have a greater chance of being resolved when you are in an open state of attention without interference. This is where ingenuity can arise, grand symphonies and great inventions can be imagined, ruptured relationships can be repaired, and solutions to sweeping systemic issues, such as climate change, can emerge.