



Designs For Strong Minds

D O N A L E E M A R K U S , P h . D . & A S S O C I A T E S

## Designs for Strong Minds

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**Designs for Strong Minds (DSM)** is an innovative program which will teach cognitive skills and motivate participants to apply newly learned operations and strategies to problem solving situations. The goal is to actualize individual creativity and empower the high performing adult.

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### Theoretical Framework

The program (DSM) is based on cognitive tasks which have been developed by **Professor Reuven Feuerstein**, an internationally recognized cognitive psychologist. Designed for executives and management personnel, this program can only be administered by a specially trained consultant. The intelligence quotient (commonly abbreviated as I.Q.) of an individual is based on his/her problem solving ability. Using content-free paper and pencil exercises, the mediator (trainer) creates a learning environment where the individual becomes aware of effective strategies for solving complex problems. **Equipped with new tools for thinking, the individual can respond with greater flexibility; and he/she can easily adapt to changing demands in and outside of the work environment.**

*“Learning disabilities are tragic in children, but they are fatal in organizations. Because of them, few corporations live even half as long as a person—most die before they reach the age of forth...problems in organizations originate in basic ways of thinking and interacting, more than in peculiarities of organization, structure and policy.”*

**Peter Senge, The Fifth Discipline**



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## Learning – Defined

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Learning is defined as the generation of or change in the behavior of an individual after exposure to stimuli.

Characteristics of learning:

- involve a dynamic view of the individual
- are concerned with processes rather than solely with the results or the product
- effect a positive habitual change in the individual
- produce changes that vary from individual to individual in areas such as range, permanence, and stability

***“Increasing cognitive functioning has implications that reach far beyond formal education. Without the necessary cognitive tools, the individual cannot carve a future that will enable realization of his/her potential for growth. Intelligence is plastic...cognition is modifiable at any age.”***

**Reuven Feuerstein**



## **Learning and Intelligence**

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Intelligence is defined as the ability to use prior experience, skills, and principles in a new situation. Learning or changing behavior in response to stimuli, is an essential component of intelligence. What is often called a lack of intelligence may, in fact, be inefficient use of stimuli. This inefficiency may stem from one or more of the following factors:

- Blurred perception
- Lack of focus
- Lack of need for precision
- Inability to categorize or classify available information
- Inability to see cause-effect relationships or formulated hypotheses

Using stimuli more efficiently can increase one's capacity to learn. Consider Isaac Newton. For centuries, people had seen fruit fall off trees, but not until the seventeenth century did anyone formulate a theory to explain why apples fell. Was Newton the most intelligent person ever to observe this phenomenon? Probably not. Was he the first to ask why apples fell down instead of up? Also, probably not. What he did was to respond to the stimuli in a unique way. Newton reorganized his observations and generated the hypothesis of gravity.



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DONALEE MARKUS, Ph.D. & ASSOCIATES

# INTROSPECTION

(The Variation of Cognitive Styles)

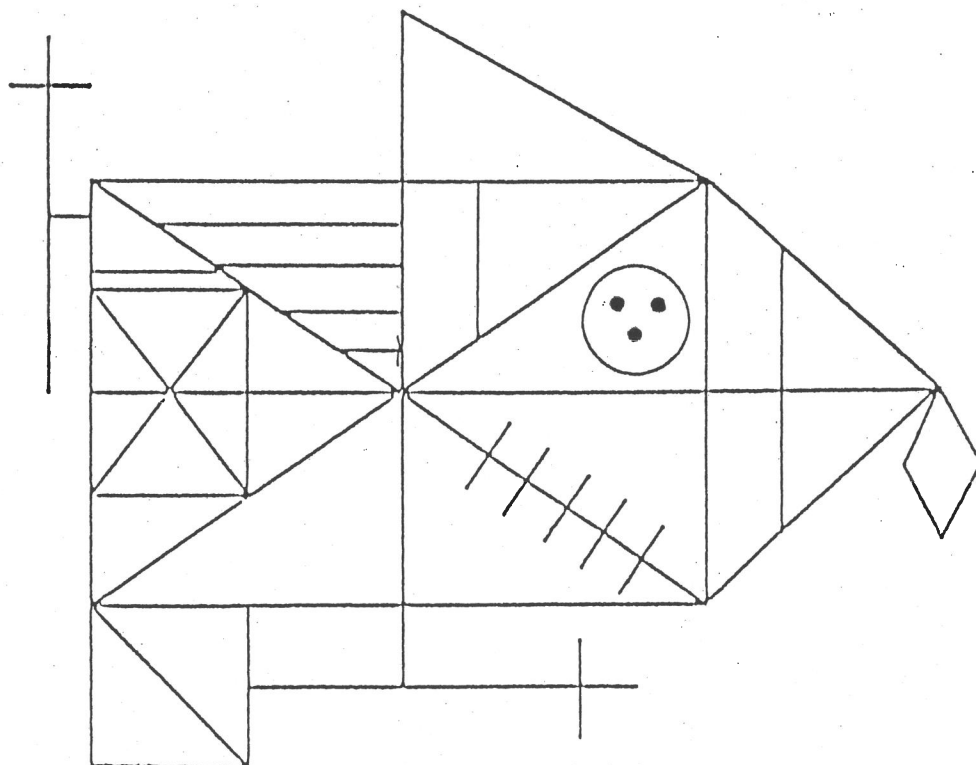
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## REY'S COMPLEX FIGURE

COPY THE COMPLEX FIGURE ON ANOTHER SHEET OF PAPER USING THE MARKERS PROVIDED.

EVERY 30 SECONDS YOU WILL BE REQUESTED TO CHANGE COLORS.

THIS IS NOT A TIME TEST. YOU WILL BE GIVEN PLENTY OF TIME TO COMPLETE THE TASK.





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## Teaching Intelligence

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The DSM mediator will present problem-solving tasks to effect permanent changes in the individual's capacity to learn. These cognitive changes include the ability to:

- draw cause-effect relationships, make inferences
- project an outcome and results from preliminary information
- solve problems with more precision and accuracy
- recognize the interrelationships between the whole and its parts (respond to the novel, manage multiple or confusing data rather than withdraw)
- respond to different perspectives
- organize and categorize information (cluster, map, or pattern, recognize similarities and differences)