

**Great thinkers inspire us to be helpful to ourself and to others.**

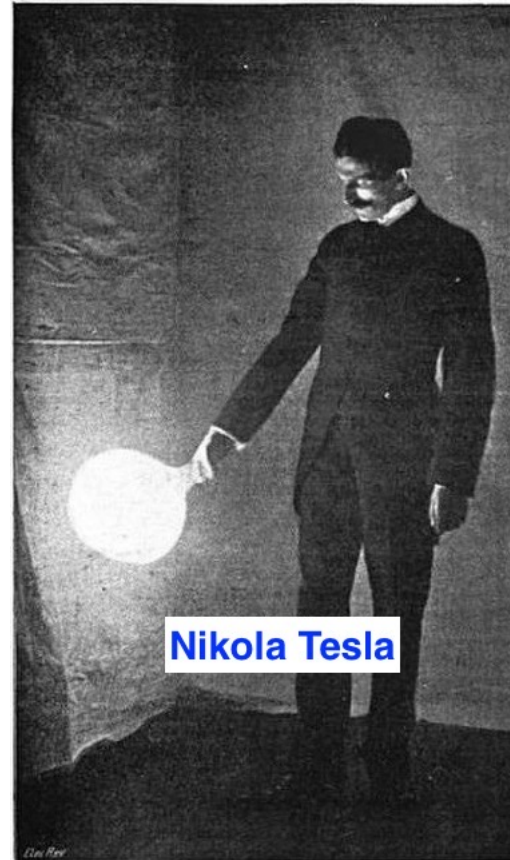
They teach us to focus on energies and qualities such as kindness, dignity, and wisdom.



Curiosity



Hope



Discovery



Enthusiasm

Creative thinking tools can help bring renewed energy to how libraries look at the future.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF – SIX THINKING HATS

### INDIVIDUALLY AND AS A TEAM

Examples of challenge questions for libraries using the Six Hats.

*As a team:*

How can we schedule more staff to participate in community outreach activities?

How can we attract more people to use and enjoy library services?

How can we overcome space limitations to create a play and learn center (or teen center or quiet space) in our library?

How can we reach more families with children birth to age five?

How can we increase the library's ability to develop creative and innovative thinkers?

*As an individual working in a library at any level:*

How can I improve morale in my library?

How can I balance too many projects and not enough time?

How can I gain confidence - and help colleagues gain confidence - serving challenging library visitors or community partners?

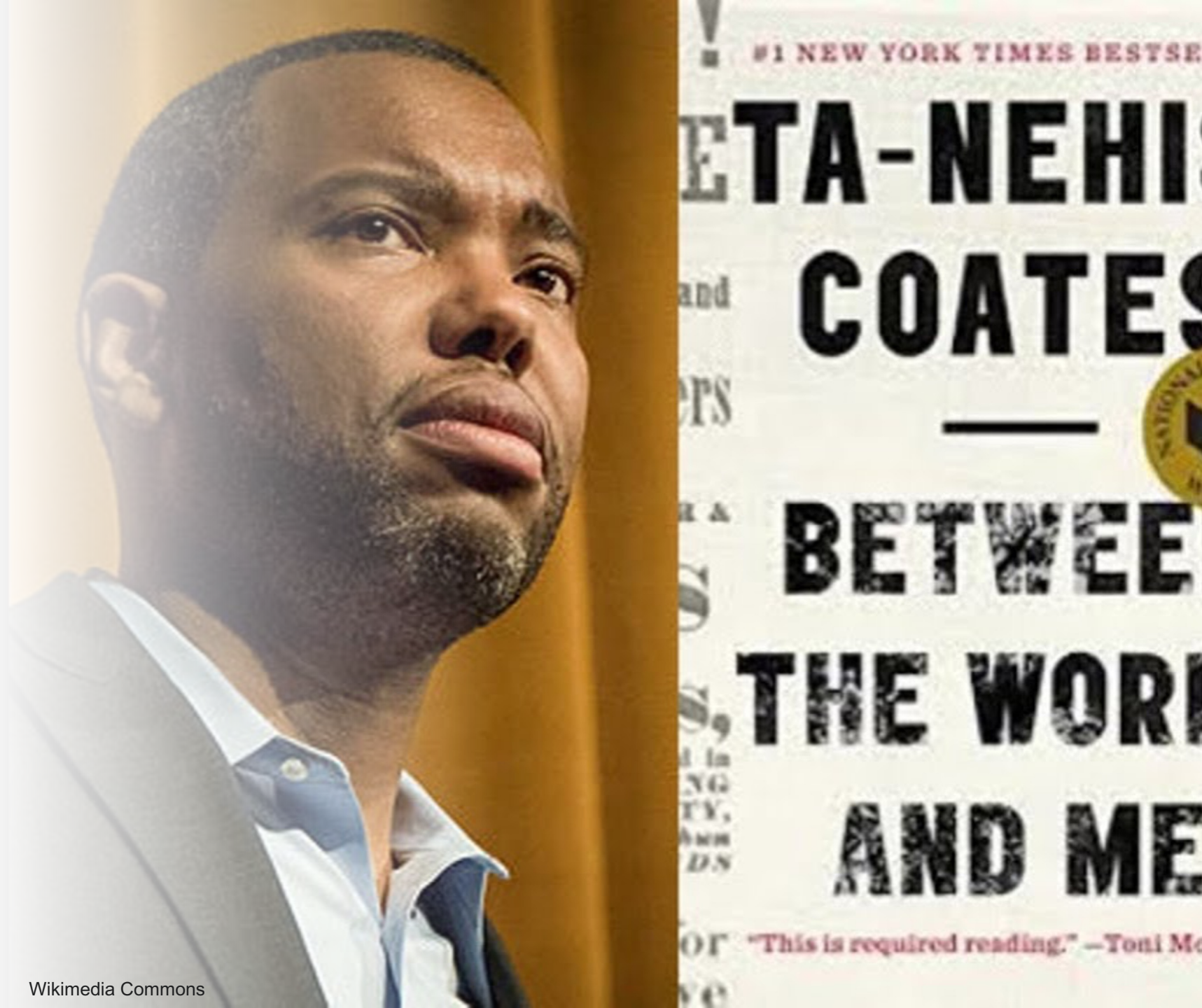
How can I create more learning opportunities for my community on media literacy, digital navigation, and tech learning?

## Public Facing Programs

NOTE: Consider using the *Six Thinking Hats* as one way – among many ways – to approach a book discussion on *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates.

Join us as we use *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates as a springboard to discuss the big idea of unity and how to put it into action each day.

*How can I bring out the best skills for applying patience, respect, and goodwill in myself and others to promote unity?*



Example of challenge for students using the Six Hats.

## How can you get along with someone after they annoy you?



### **Green Hat Thinking (new ideas, possibilities):**

- Ask if anything is wrong (compassion)
- Give them space and start fresh the next time you see them
- “Try not to let it bug you”
- Use humor to help deflate tension

### **After using the Hats, engage in additional conversation:**

- Look for the good qualities in others despite someone annoying you
- Friendship
- Forgiveness
- Goodwill



## Tips for designing challenge statements and questions

Create your challenge statement with a focus on the affirmative. Instead of asking, “How can I reduce my library’s weaknesses?” ask “What are my library’s strengths and how can I use them to improve services?”

Other examples of challenge statements:

- ***How can I demonstrate to stakeholders that my library and/or library activities are causing a positive impact – educationally and economically?***
- ***Although the mayor’s new million-dollar early learning initiative does not include the library, how can we best showcase current library services for families with young children and demonstrate a cooperative spirit with the mayor?***

## EXAMPLES of WHAT HAS WORKED

- ***How can we best reach more families for Storytime?***
  - *Scheduling, “open invitation,” outreach to drive business into branches.*
- ***The library can be a remarkable place to follow Buddha’s “noble middle path” for informal and formal conversations on topics of interests, but few people are using my library in this way.***
  - *The Six Hats was used as a tool for facilitating community-wide book discussions in the library.*
- ***How can we touch more people in the community promoting library services, especially to those who may not be using the library?***
  - *Outreach department increased the number of people reached during festivals, town events by 50% in one year (10,000 people to 15,000).*

**Individually or in a group setting.  
Formally and informally.**

**How can we best transform the underused, lower level of the Westminster Branch to help fulfill community needs for creativity, innovation, and collaboration?**

# Exploration Commons – Carroll County (MD) Public Library

**Yellow** – logical positive – focus on optimism, benefits, constructive thinking, making things happen

**Black** – logical troubleshooting – clarify potential obstacles and risks; be cautious, careful [avoid overuse of this hat]

**Green** – draw on creative thinking, new ideas and approaches to assess risks and overcome obstacles; what happens next



Photo credit: Baltimore Sun



Photo credit: D. Stoltz



Photo credit: Carroll County Public Library



Photo credit: Baltimore Sun



Photo credit: Baltimore Sun



# Activity

practice designing a challenge statement or question for the Six Hats

**Think about a challenge that you would like to solve.**

It doesn't have to be limited to libraries.

**Formulate an affirmative question.**



## SIX THINKING HATS EDWARD DE BONO

THE INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER  
that has changed the way the world's  
most successful business leaders think  
"WE DO NOT HAVE A SOLUTION FOR CONSTANTLY REMINDING US THAT  
THINKING IS A SKILL AND CAN BE IMPROVED"  
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## The Six Thinking Hats® for schools and families

*Inspiring Children and Young People  
to think for themselves*

Suitable for a wide age range

Originator: Dr Edward de Bono  
Updated by: Karen Draper and Caspar de Bono

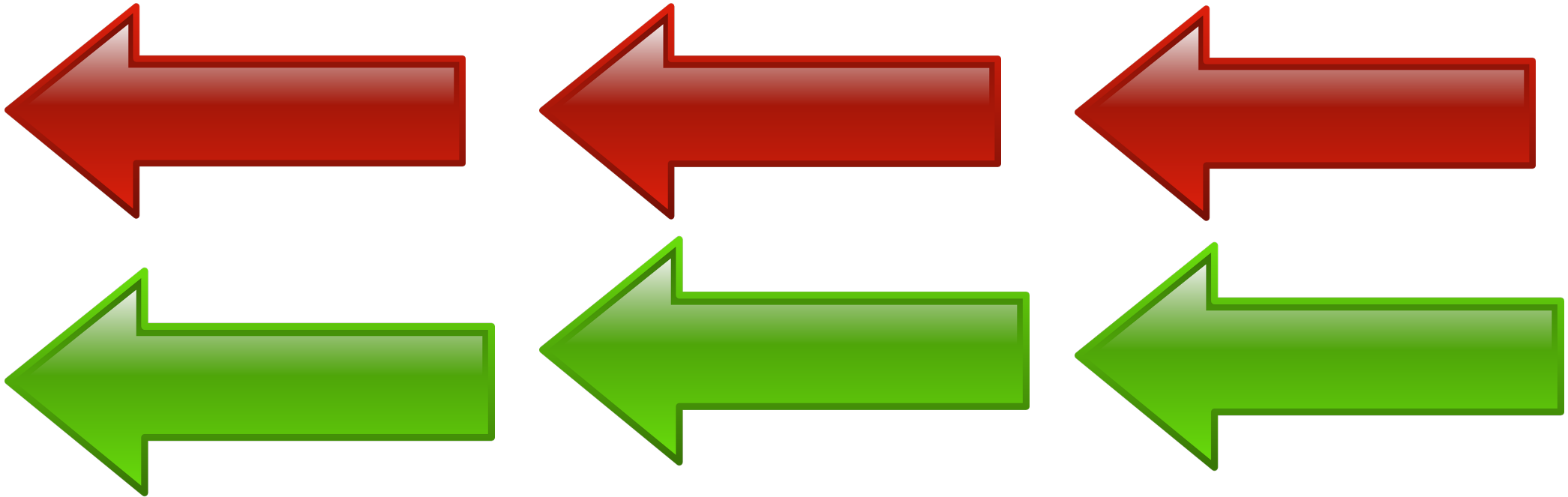
A guide  
for teachers,  
parents and  
guardians



Argument  
Adversarial Thinking



Conflicting Styles of Thinking  
Moving in Different Directions



## Parallel Thinking One Thinking Quality at a Time

- Everyone focused on using the same thinking tool at the same time
- Encourages the sharing of information
- Promotes a group to pool all their ideas rather than defending one point of view

Benjamin Franklin:  
*What good can I do today?*





Benjamin Franklin:  
*What good have I done today?*





[de Bono Thinking Lessons Link](#)

for schools and families



The purpose of the "**Points of View Thinking Lessons**" is to broaden perception. How we choose to frame or look at a situation is as important as how we then apply judgement. The benefits are more considered and therefore better decision making, an improvement in empathy, being able to balance creativity and critical thinking. [More](#)

The purpose of the "**Six Thinking Hats for schools and families**" is a colourful and engaging way to become a better thinker. Better at exploring and developing ideas rather than arguing about them. It is a tangible framework and language for learning about and understanding the different aspects of thinking. Planning, information sourcing, evaluation, critical thinking, emotion and intuition, creativity, concluding, summarising. [More](#)

Feedback

If you have benefited from using the de Bono methods, [we would love to hear from you.](#)

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## The Six Thinking Hats



**Blue Hat: The Conductor's Hat. Thinking about and managing the thinking process**

The blue hat is the control hat. It is used for thinking about thinking. The blue hat sets the agenda, focus and sequence, ensures the guidelines are observed and asks for summaries, conclusions, decisions and plans action.



**Green Hat: The Creative Hat. Generating Ideas**

The green hat is for creative thinking and generating new ideas, alternatives, possibilities and new concepts.



**Red Hat: The Hat for the Heart. Intuition and Feelings**

The red hat is about feelings, intuitions and instincts. The red hat invites feelings without justification.



**Yellow Hat: The Optimist's Hat. Benefits and Values**

The yellow hat is for a positive view of things. It looks for the benefits and values.



**Black Hat: The Judge's Hat. Caution**

The black hat identifies risk. It is used for critical judgment and must give the logical reasons for concerns. It is one of the most powerful hats.



**White Hat: The Factual Hat. Information**

The white hat is all about information. What information you have, what information you need and where to get it.

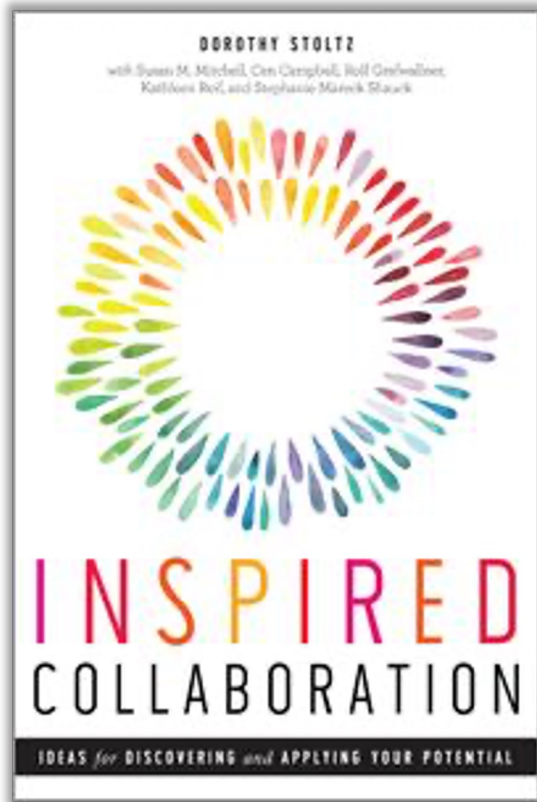
### Important points to note

- The hats can be used on your own or in a group.
- In group discussions, it is essential that everyone uses the same hat (style of thinking) at the same time. This is to avoid personal preferences and conflicts between styles of thinking.
- The black hat is essential. It is a necessary part of thinking but is often overused.
- Training in the use of the hats includes how to structure the hats into sequences to address different situations.

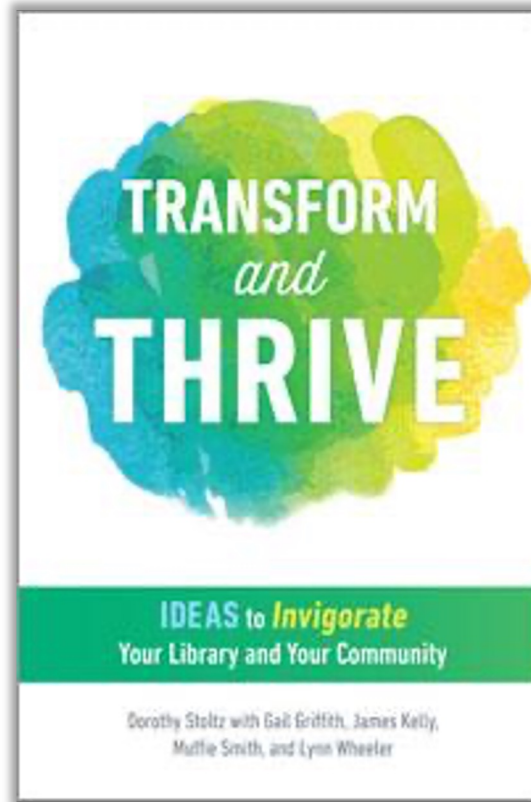
# Six Thinking Hats Handout







**Inspired Collaboration:  
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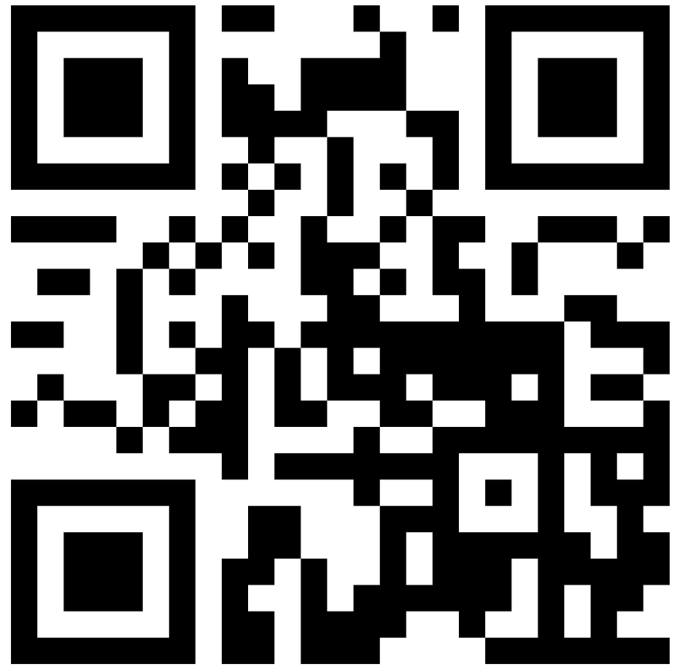
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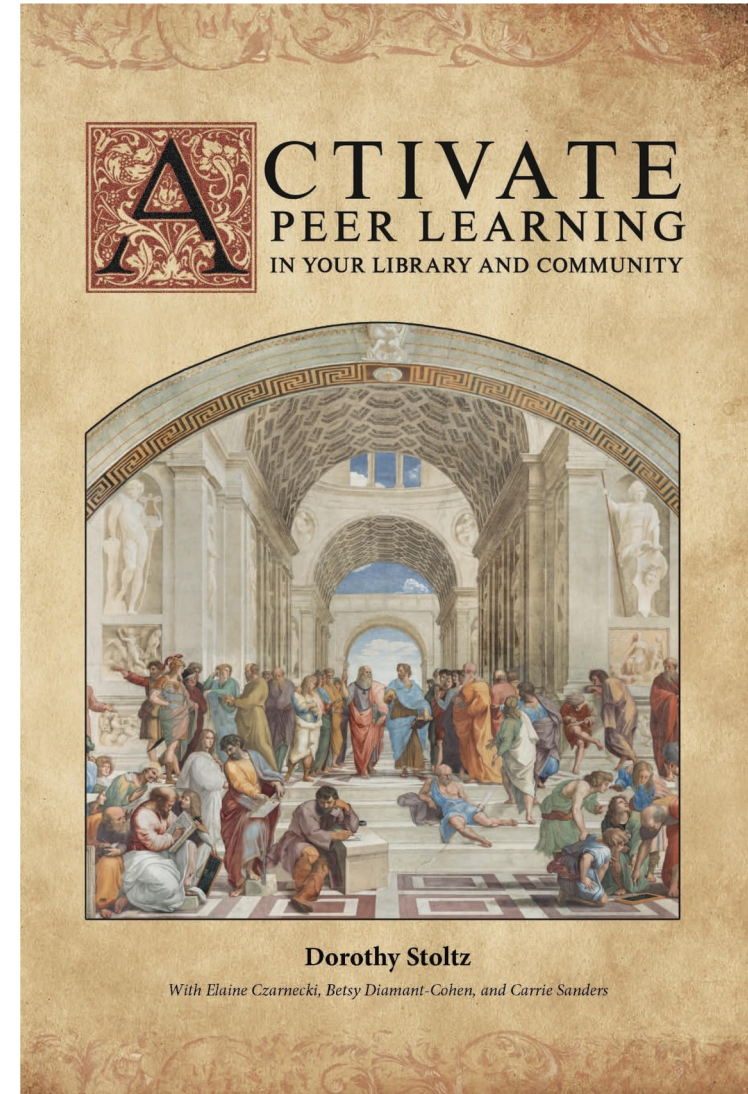
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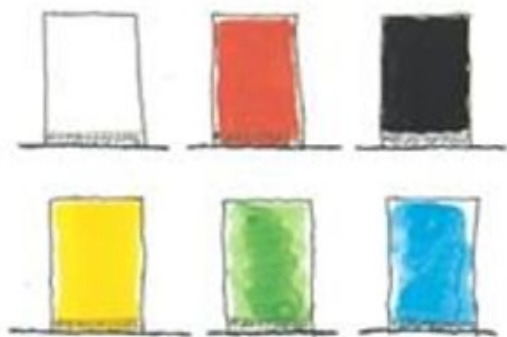
# Activate Peer Learning: in Your Library and Community

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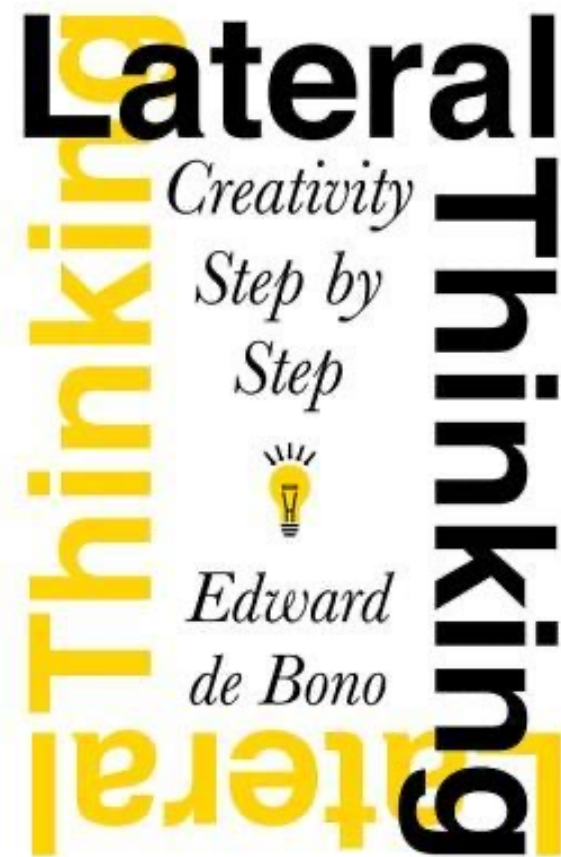
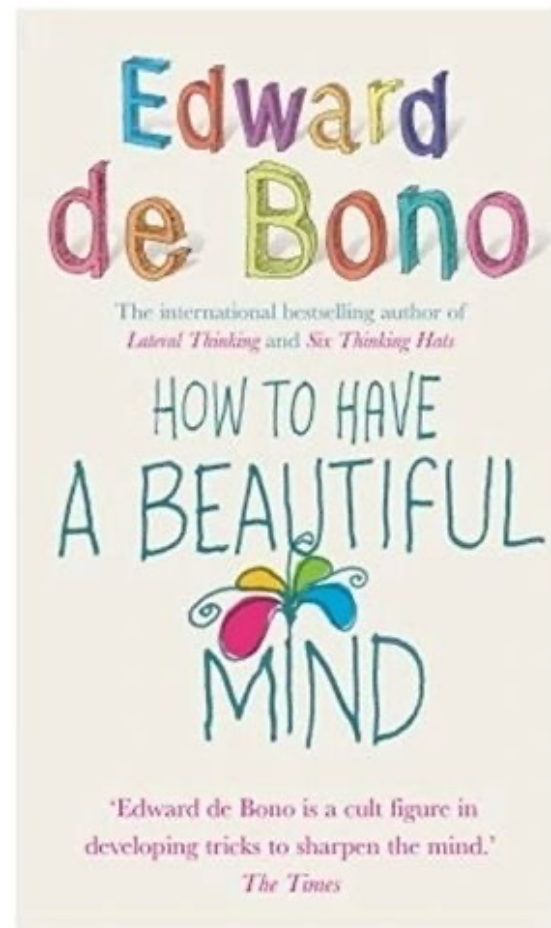
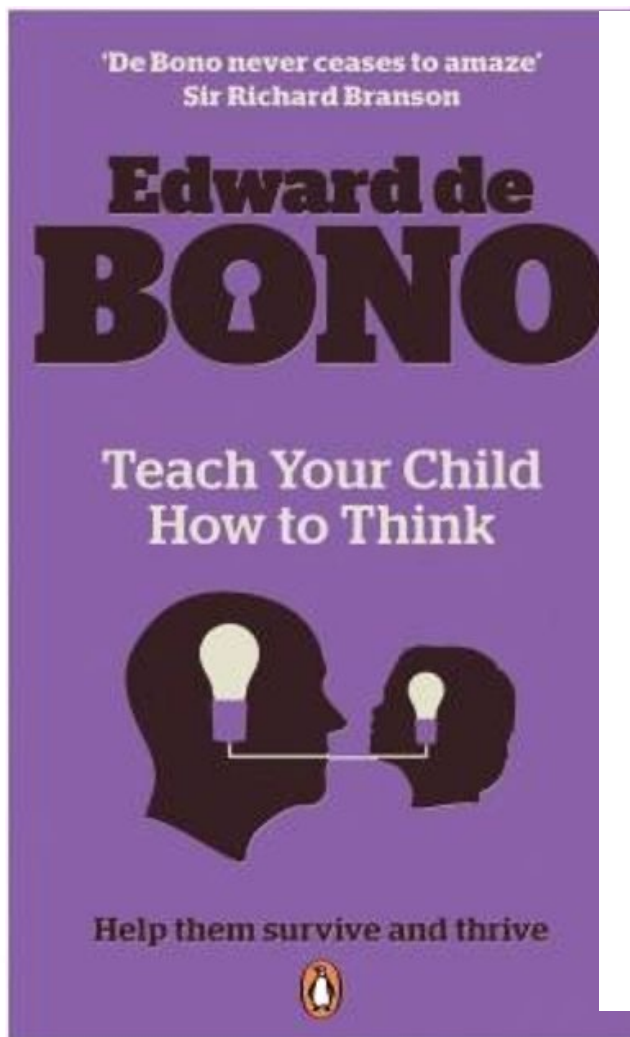




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REVISED AND UPDATED





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