

## FINE POINT

Compartmentalisation is Fantasy

Thinking Environment

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### COMPARTMENTALISATION IS FANTASY

Nothing is only itself. But we act as if it is.

Humans compartmentalise. Language makes us do that. We can think without drawing lines, but we cannot speak thoughts that way. Language is one of the reasons we can think conceptually at all. But the price we pay for this godlike trait is the fantasy that ideas are separate from each other, and that we are, too.

And that is not true. We are all connected, and so are all of the ideas in the world. People in my courses often ask: Is it a thought or a feeling? Is this coaching or therapy? Is that true or untrue? Is it original or derivative? Are we good or bad?

Yes.

This issue of compartmentalisation is not just an idle philosophical peek into reality. I think it is central to the conditions for independent thinking. Let's take the distinction of Thinking Sessions vs therapy vs counselling, etc. People ask me about this on a regular basis.

The Thinking Session, and the Thinking Pair, and even the Time To Think Council could be confused with some kinds of therapy and counselling, and certainly can look and seem like, and even be, a kind of coaching. Therapy can be confused with each of these, too, and so can all of the others. Actually, so can friendship, and even some moments on the bus when a person starts talking and we don't stop or interrupt them and they say they feel better, can even think better, as they leave the bus.

The fact is that the human mind flowers in the presence of presence, and it does a better and better job of flowering when the presence is promised and easeful and based on equality. The fact that we call this flowering one thing does not mean it is not all of the other things, too.

The professional, and usually competitive, world cares about these distinctions, protecting one and warning against the others, qualifying in one and not the others. But I think that the distinctions are arbitrary and disturbingly self-serving. The compartments also obfuscate the fact that what matters is what happens for people in the session, not whether or what it is labeled.

Yes, we need expertise. But what we call it does not matter. And seeing this seamless process of the mind's flowering as cramable into named compartments can distract us from noticing formerly unseen pieces that are floating around. And that can prevent us from improving the process, I think.

So in a Thinking Session I relax about these distinctions and know that there is none. I relax, also, because the Thinking Session process is the safest known version of all of these 'modalities', while having its unique qualities that produce such impressive results.

We could call it agriculture or George for all it matters. :-)