

C Contents

I have no doubt whatever that most people live...in a very restricted circle of their potential being. They make use of a very small portion of their possible consciousness... much like a person who, out of the whole body organism, should get into the habit of using and moving only the little finger. We all have reservoirs of life to draw upon of which we do not dream.

—William James, in *The Global Mind Change* by W. Harman

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Awakening, Amplifying, Teaching, and Transferring Intelligence

An Introduction to Multiple Intelligences Theory

So many things fail to interest us, simply because they don't find in us enough surfaces on which to live, and what we have to do is to increase the number of planes in our mind, so that a much larger number of themes can find a plane in it at the same time.

—Ortega y Gasset



Recent discoveries about the nature of human intelligence and its limits have blown the lid off all previous understandings of humanity and its potentials, including the following:

We have the ability to enhance and amplify our intelligence. No longer is intelligence believed to be fixed at birth. In the past, scientists believed that a person was born with a certain intelligence and was stuck with it for life. They believed that a person could do nothing about their intelligence level. Today, however, we know that the only limits to our intelligence are self-made and related to our beliefs about what is possible.

Not only can intelligence change, it can also be taught to others. At any age, and at almost any ability level, one's mental functioning can be improved. In fact, we can all become more intelligent by discovering how to activate perception and knowing on more levels than we usually use.

Intelligence is a multiple reality that occurs in different parts of the brain-mind system. There are many forms of intelligence, many ways by which we know, understand, and learn about our world. Most forms go beyond those which dominate Western culture and education and they definitely go beyond what IQ tests can measure.

While the intellect is pluralistic, at some level it is one. When we have a problem to solve or a project to accomplish, all of our intelligences work together in a well-orchestrated, integrated way. The stronger intelligences tend to train the weaker ones to do their part in solving the problem or accomplishing the project.

Try to solve the following problem (fig. 0.1) in *any way you can*. As you work, pay attention what you are doing to get an answer.

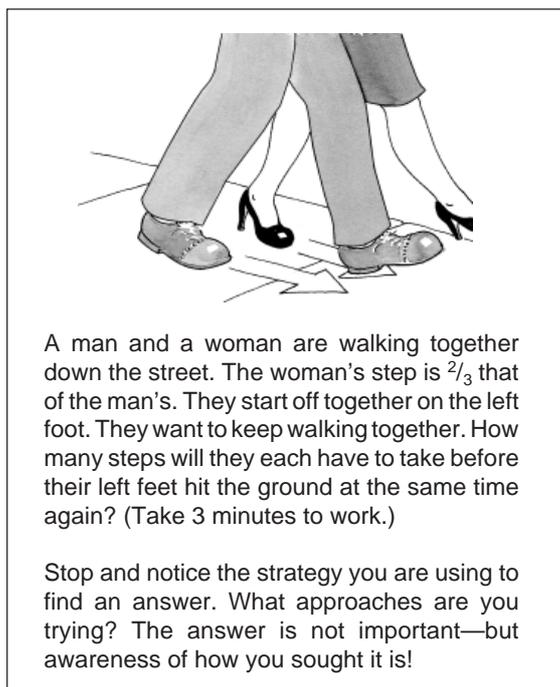


Fig. 0.1

I have used the above exercise with hundreds of people participating in various seminars and workshops. Without fail, people utilize a wide range of strategies when faced with a problem:

- Some close their eyes and try to imagine the man and woman walking.
- Some draw pictures or stick figures on their paper.
- Some want to get up with a partner and step it out around the room. (Although the con-

straints of the seminar situation usually prevent them from doing so!)

- Still others try various mathematical formulas, equations, and calculations, usually working with an x factor.
- Some have even tried to beat out the rhythm of the steps with their hands on a tabletop or in their lap.
- Others simply sit and meditate on the problem, hoping the answer will suddenly come to them from inside themselves. (And often it does!)
- Some simply cannot resist discussing the problem with their neighbors.
- And, others want to go out-of-doors and find the $\frac{2}{3}$ to $\frac{3}{3}$ pattern in nature.

When faced with a problem, we have various ways of approaching it to which we are naturally drawn. Maybe we try a learning strategy that has worked in the past. Maybe we simply use an approach with which we are comfortable or choose an approach that our experiences have taught us to trust.

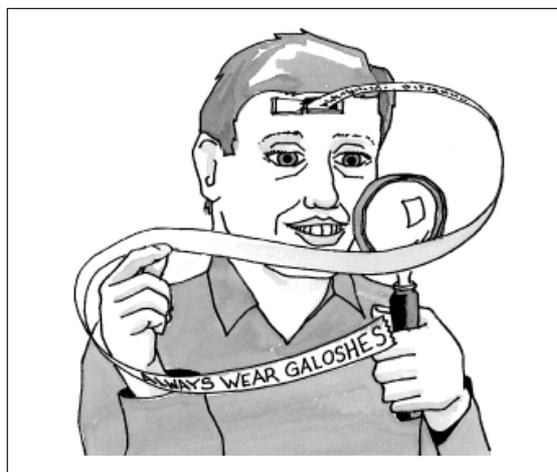
This exercise, and the various ways we approach it, lead us to discover the heart of current research on the nature of human intelligence—the mystery of how we know, learn, and understand ourselves and the world around us.

What Is Intelligence?

According to Dr. Howard Gardner, a pioneer in the contemporary understanding of multiple intelligences and director of Harvard's cognitive research effort Project Zero:

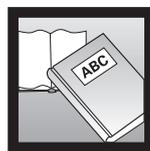
An intelligence entails the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular

cultural setting. The problem-solving skill allows one to approach a situation in which a goal is to be obtained and to locate the appropriate route to that goal. The creation of a cultural project is crucial to capturing and transmitting knowledge or expressing one's views or feelings. The problems to be solved range from creating an end to a story to anticipating a mating move in chess to repairing a quilt. Products range from scientific theories to musical composition to successful political campaigns. (Walters and Gardner 1995, pp. 3–4)



In other words, we call someone intelligent if they can solve the problems that face them in their lives and if they are able to produce things that are of value to our culture. It is the discovery of the wide variety of ways that the human brain-mind system approaches these tasks that has broken open multiple intelligences research, and with it, all of our previous assumptions about intelligence. Along with the discovery of intelligence as a multiple reality, whole ranges of potentials and capacities beyond anything we have previously imagined or dreamed have been opened to us. Gardner's research has identified eight intelligences—eight distinct ways that we learn and know about reality—and he believes there may be more (see fig. 0.2).

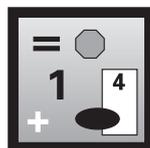
Multiple Intelligences Overview



Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence

Verbal/linguistic intelligence is responsible for the production of language and all of language's complex possibilities, including poetry, humor, storytelling, grammar, metaphors, similes, abstract reasoning, symbolic thinking, conceptual patterning, and of course, the written word. Verbal/linguistic intelligence is awakened by the spoken word; by reading someone's ideas or poetry; and by writing one's own ideas, thoughts, or poetry. To activate this intelligence:

- Read a story you enjoy and write your own sequel answering the question, What happens next?
- Listen to someone expound on their ideas and discuss your ideas with them.
- Learn the meaning of one interesting, new word each day and practice using it.
- Make a speech on a topic about which you have a great deal of interest and excitement.
- Keep a journal or log in which you write your reflections about events from the day.



Logical/Mathematical Intelligence

Logical/mathematical intelligence is often associated with scientific or deductive reasoning.