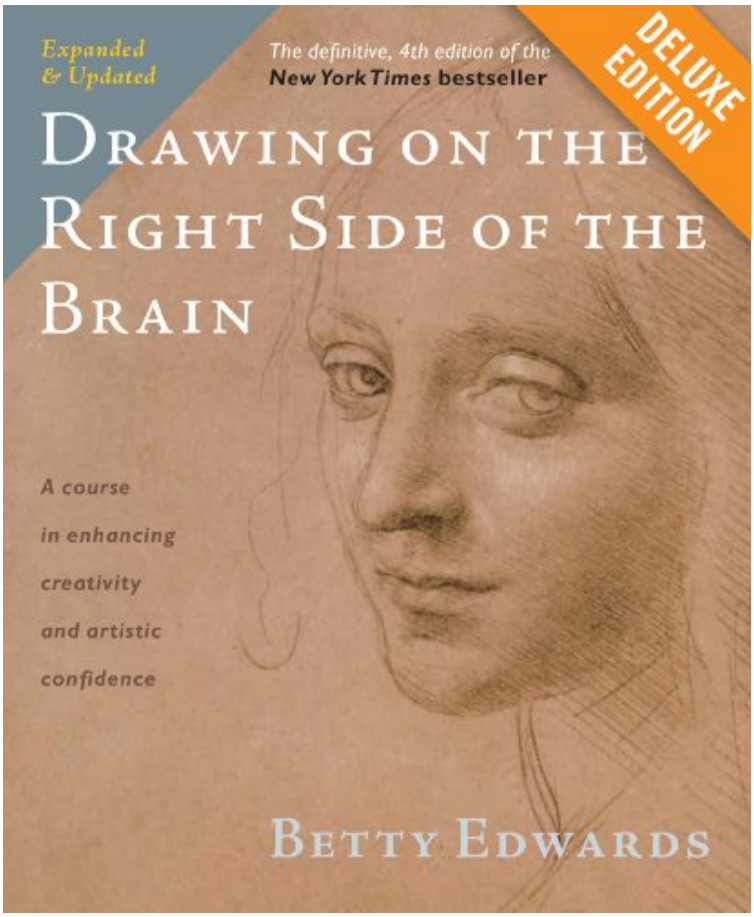
Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain Deluxe: The Definitive, 4th Edition



Par Betty Edwards
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Par Betty Edwards : Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain Deluxe: The Definitive, 4th Edition before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain Deluxe: The Definitive, 4th Edition:

Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurThis Deluxe eBook includes over 35 minutes of video featuring Betty Edwards illustrating the core techniques of her enduring classic.A revised edition of the classic drawing book that has sold more than 1.7 million copies in the United States alone.Translated into more than seventeen languages, Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain is the world's most widely used drawing instruction book. Whether you are drawing as a professional artist, as an artist in training, or as a hobby, this book will give you greater confidence in your ability and deepen your artistic perception, as well as foster a new appreciation of the world around you. This revised/updated fourth edition includes:a new preface and introduction;crucial updates based on recent research on the brain's plasticity and the enormous value of learning new skills/ utilizing the right hemisphere of the brain;new focus on how the ability to draw on the strengths of the right hemisphere can serve as an antidote to the increasing left-brain emphasis in American life-the worship of all that is linear, analytic, digital, etc.;an informative section that addresses recent research linking early childhood "scribbling" to later language development and the importance of parental encouragement of this

activity;and new reproductions of master drawings throughoutA life-changing book, this fully revised and updated edition of Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain is destined to inspire generations of readers to come.ExtraitIntroductionDrawing used to be a civilized thing to do, like reading and writing. It was taught in elementary schools. It was democratic. It was a boon to happiness. Michael KimmelmanFor more than thirty years, Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain has been a work in progress. Since the original publication in 1979, I have revised the book three times, with each revision about a decade apart: the ?rst in 1989, the second, 1999, and now a third, 2012 version. In each revision, my main purpose has been to incorporate instructional improvements that my group of teachers and I had gleaned from continuously teaching drawing over the intervening years, as well as bringing up-to-date ideas and information from education and neuroscience that relate to drawing. As you will see in this new version, much of the original material remains, as it has passed the test of time, while I continue to re?ne the lessons and clarify instructions. In addition, I make some new points about emergent right-brain signi?cance and the astonishing, relatively new science called neuroplasticity. I make a case for my lifes goal, the possibility that public schools will once again teach drawing, not only as a civilized thing to do and a boon to happiness, but also as perceptual training for improving creative thinking.The power of perceptionMany of my readers have intuitively understood that this book is not only about learning to draw, and it is certainly not about Art with a capital A. The true subject is perception. Yes, the lessons have helped many people attain the basic ability to draw, and that is a main purpose of the book. But the larger underlying purpose was always to bring right hemisphere functions into focus and to teach readers how to see in new ways, with hopes that they would discover how to transfer perceptual skills to thinking and problem solving. In education, this is called transfer of learning, which has always been regarded as di?cult to teach, and often teachers, myself included, hope that it will just happen. Transfer of learning, however, is best accomplished by direct teaching, and therefore, in Chapter 11 of this revised edition, I encourage that transfer by including some direct instruction on how perceptual skills, learned through drawing, can be used for thinking and problem solving in other ?elds.The books drawing exercises are truly on a basic level, intended for a beginner in drawing. The course is designed for persons who cannot draw at all, who feel that they have no talent for drawing, and who believe that they probably can never learn to draw. Over the years, I have said many times that the lessons in this book are not on the level of art, but are rather more like learning how to readmore like the ABCs of reading: learning the alphabet, phonics, syllabi?cation, vocabulary, and so on. And just as learning basic reading is a vitally important goal, because the skills of reading transfer to every other kind of learning, from math and science to philosophy and astronomy, I believe that in time learning to draw will emerge as an equally vital skill, one that provides equally transferrable powers of perception to guide and promote insight into the meaning of visual and verbal information. I will even go out on a limb and say that we mistakenly may have been putting all our educational eggs into one basket only, while shortchanging other truly valuable capabilities of the human brain, namely perception, intuition, imagination, and creativity. Perhaps Albert Einstein put it best: The intuitive mind is a sacred gift, and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift.The hidden contentAbout six months after publication of the original book in 1979, I had the odd experience of suddenly realizing that the book I thought I had written contained another content of which I was unaware. That hidden content was something I didnt know I knew: I had inadvertently de?ned the basic component skills of the global skill of drawing. I think part of the reason this content was hidden from me was the very nature of art education at the time, where beginning drawing classes focused on subject matter, such as Still Life Drawing, Landscape Drawing, or Figure Drawing, or on drawing mediums, such as charcoal, pencil, pen and ink, ink wash, or mixtures of mediums.But my aim was di?erent: I needed to provide my readers with exercises that would cause a cognitive shift to the right hemispherea shift similar to that caused by Upside-Down Drawing: tricking the dominant left hemisphere into dropping out of the task. I settled on ?ve subskills that seemed to have the same e?ect, but at the time, I thought that there must be other basic skillsmaybe dozens of them.Then, months after the book had been published, in the midst of teaching a class, it hit me as an aha! that for learning to draw realistic images of observed subjects, the ?ve subskills were itthere werent more. I had inadvertently selected from the many aspects of drawing a few fundamental subskills that I thought might be closely aligned to the e?ect of Upside-Down Drawing. And the ?ve skills, I realized, were not drawing skills in the usual sense; they were rock-bottom, fundamental seeing skills: how to perceive edges, spaces, relationship, lights and shadows, and the gestalt. As with the ABCs of reading, these were the skills you had to have in order to draw any subject.I was elated by this discovery. I discussed it at length with my

colleagues and searched through old and new textbooks on drawing, but we did not ?nd any additional fundamental basic components of the global skill of basic realistic drawingdrawing ones perceptions. With this discovery, it occurred to me that perhaps drawing could be quickly and easily taught and learned not strung out over years and years, as was the current practice in art schools. My aim suddenly became drawing for everyone, not just for artists in training. Clearly, the basic ability to draw does not necessarily lead to the ?ne art found in museums and galleries any more than the basic ability to read and write inevitably leads to literary greatness and published works of literature. But learning to draw was something I knew was valued by children and adults. Thus, my discovery led me in new directions, resulting in a 1989 revision of Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain, in which I focused on explaining my insight and proposing that individuals who had never been able to draw could learn to draw well very rapidly.Subsequently, my colleagues and I developed a five-day workshop of forty hours of teaching and learning (eight hours a day for ?ve days), which proved to be surprisingly e?ective: students acquired quite high-level basic drawing skills in that brief time, and gained all the information they needed to go on making progress in drawing. Since drawing perceived subjects is always the same task, always requiring the ?ve basic component skills, they could proceed to any subject matter, learn to use any or all drawing mediums, and take the skill as far as they wished. They could also apply their new visual skills to thinking. The parallels to learning to read were becoming obvious.Over the next decade, from 1989 to 1999, the connection of perceptual skills to general thinking, problem solving, and creativity became a more central focus for me, especially after publication of my 1986 book, Drawing on the Artist Within. In thisbook, I proposed a written language for the right hemisphere: the language of line, the expressive language of art itself. This idea of using drawing to aid thinking proved to be quite useful in a class on creativity that I developed for university students and in small corporate seminars on problem solving.Then, in 1999, I again revised Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain, again incorporating what we had learned over the years of teaching the ?ve basic skills and re?ning the lessons. I especially focused on the skill of sighting (proportion and perspective), which is perhaps the most di?cult component skill to teach in words, because of its complexity and its reliance on students acceptance of paradox, always anathema to the logical, concept-bound left brain. In addition, I urged using perceptual skills to see problems.Now, with this third revision in 2012, I want to clarify to the best of my ability the global nature of drawing and to link drawings basic component skills to thinking in general and to creativity in particular. Throughout many cultures, both in the United States and worldwide, there is much talk of creativity and our need for innovation and invention. There are many suggestions to try this or try that. But the nitty-gritty of precisely how to become more creative is seriously lacking. Our education system seems bent on eliminating every last bit of creative perceptual training of the right side of the brain, while overemphasizing the skills best accomplished by the left side of the brain: memorizing dates, data, theorems, and events with the goal of passing standardized tests. Today we are not only testing and grading our children into the ground, but we are not teaching them how to see and understand the deep meaning of what they learn, or to perceive the connectedness of information about the world. It is indeed time to try something di?erent.Fortunately, the tide seems to be turning, according to a recent news report. A small group of cognitive scientists at the University of California at Los Angeles is recommending they call perceptual learning as a remedy to our failing educational practices. They express hope that such training will transfer to other contexts, and they have had some success with achieving transfer. Discouragingly, however, the news report ended: In an education awash with computerized learning tools and pilot programs of all kinds, the future of such perceptual learning e?orts is far from certain. Scientists still dont know the best way to train perceptual intuition, or which speci?c principles its best suited for. And such tools, if they are incorporated into curriculums in any real way, will be subject to the judgment of teachers.I would like to suggest that we already have a best way to train perceptual skills: it has been staring us in the face for decades, and we havent (or wouldnt, or couldnt) accept it. I think it is not a coincidence that as drawing and creative arts in general have steadily diminished in school curricula since the mid-twentieth century, the educational achievement of students in the United States has likewise diminished, to the point that we now rank behind Singapore, Taiwan, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Sweden, the Netherlands, Hungary, and Slovenia.In 1969, perceptual psychologist Rudolf Arnheim, one of the most widely read and respected scientists of the twentieth century, wrote:The arts are neglected because they are based on perception, and perception is disdained because it is not assumed to involve thought. In fact, educators and administrators cannot justify giving the arts an important position in the curriculum unless they understand that the arts are the most powerful means of strengthening the perceptual component without which

productive thinking is impossible in every ?eld of academic study.What is most needed is not more aesthetics or more esoteric manuals of art education but a convincing case made for visual thinking quite in general. Once we understand in theory, we might try to heal in practice the unwholesome split which cripples the training of reasoning power.Drawing does indeed involve thought, and it is an e?ective and e?cient method for perceptual training. And perceptual knowledge can impact learning in all disciplines. We now know how to rapidly teach drawing. We know that learning to draw, like learning to read, is not dependent on something called talent, and that, given proper instruction, every person is able to learn the skill. Furthermore, given proper instruction, people can learn to transfer the basic perceptual components of drawing to other learning and to general thinking. And, as Michael Kimmelman said, learning to draw is a boon to happinessa panacea for the stultifying and uncreative drudgery of standardized testing that our schools have embraced.Our two minds and modern multitaskingToday, as research expands and the information-processing styles and proclivities of the hemispheres become ever clearer, respected scientists are recognizing functional di?erences as evident and real, despite the fact that both hemispheres appear to be involved to a greater or lesser extent in every human activity. And there remains much uncertainty about the reason for the profound asymmetry of the human brain, which we seem to be aware of at the level of language. The expression I am of two minds about that clearly states our human situation. Our two minds, however, have not had an equal playing ?eld: until recently, language has dominated worldwide, especially in modern technological cultures like our own. Visual perception has been more or less taken for granted, with little requirement for special concern or education. Now, however, computer scientists who are trying to replicate human visual perception ?nd it extremely complicated and slow going. After decades of e?orts, scientists have ?nally achieved facial recognition by computers, but reading the meaning of changes in facial expression, accomplished instantly and e?ortlessly by the right hemisphere, will take much more time and work.Meanwhile, visual images are everywhere, and visual and verbal information compete for attention. Constant multitasking linked to information overload is challenging the brains ability to rapidly shift modes, or to simultaneously deal with both modes of input. The recent banning of texting while driving illustrates the problem of the brains di?culty in simultaneously processing two modes of information. This recognition that we need to ?nd productive ways to use both modes perhaps explains why replicating right hemisphere processes is only now emerging as important and even, perhaps, critical.A complication: the brain that studies itselfAs a number of scientists have noted, research on the human brain is complicated by the fact that the brain is struggling to understand itself. This three-pound organ is perhaps the only bit of matter in the our universeat least as far as we knowthat observes and studies itself, wonders about itself, tries to analyze how it does what it does, and tries to maximize its capabilities. This paradoxical situation no doubt contributes to the deep mysteries that still remain despite rapidly expanding scienti?c knowledge. One of the most encouraging new discoveries that the human brain has made about itself is that it can physically change itself by changing its accustomed ways of thinking, by deliberately exposing itself to new ideas and routines, and by learning new skills. This discovery has led to a new category of neuroscientists, neuroplasticians, who use microelectrodes and brain scans to track complex brain maps of neuronal communication, and who have observed the brain revising its neuronal maps.Brain plasticity: a new way to think about talentThis conception of a plastic brain, a brain that constantly changes with experience, that can reorganize and transmute and even develop new cells and new cell connections, is in direct contrastto previous judgments of the human brain as being more akin to a hard-wired machine, with its parts genetically determined and unchangeable except for development in early childhood and deterioration in old age. For teachers like myself, the science of brain plasticity is both exciting and rea?rmingexciting because it opens vast new possibilities, and rea?rming because the idea that learning can change the way people live and think has always been a goal of education. Now, at last, we can move beyond the ideas of ?xed intelligence limits and special gifts for the lucky few, and look for new ways to enhance potential brain power.One of the exciting new horizons that brain plasticity opens is the possibility of questioning the concept of talent, especially the concepts of artistic talent and creative talent. Nowhere has the idea of the hard-wired brain, with its notion of given or not-given talent, been as widespread as in the ?eld of art, and especially in drawing, because drawing is the entry-level skill for all the visual arts. The common remark, Drawing? Not on your life! I cant even draw a straight line! is still routinely announced with full conviction by many adults and even more distressingly, by many children as young as eight or nine, who have tried and sadly judged as failures their attempts to draw their perceptions. The reason given for this situation is often a ?at-out statement: I have no artistic talent. And yet we know now, from knowledge of brain plasticity and from decades of work by me

and many others in the ?eld, that drawing is simply a skill that can be taught and learned by anyone of sound mind who has learned other skills, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic.Drawing, however, is not regarded as an essential skill in the way the three Rs are viewed as necessary life skills. It is seen as perhaps a peripheral skill, nice to have as a pastime or hobby, but certainly not indispensable. And yet, somehow, at some level, we sense that something important is being ignored. Surprisingly, people often equate their lack of drawing skill with a lack of creativity, even though they may be highly creative in other areas of their lives. And the importance of perception often shows in the words we speak, phrases that speak of seeing and perceiving. When we ?nally understand something, we exclaim, Now I see it! Or when someone fails to understand, we say the person cant see the forest for the trees, or doesnt get the picture. This implies that perception is important to understanding, and we hope that we somehow learn to perceive, but it is a skill without a classroom and without a curriculum. I propose that drawing can be that curriculum.Public education and the artsDrawing, of course, is not the only art that trains perceptual thinking. Music, dance, drama, painting, design, sculpture, and ceramics are all vitally important and should all be restored to public schools. But Ill be blunt: even if there were the will, there is no way that will happen because it would cost too much in this era of ever-diminishing resources for public education. Music requires costly instruments, dance and drama require staging and costumes, sculpture and ceramics require equipment and supplies. Although I wish it were otherwise, high-cost visual and performing arts programs that were terminated long ago will not be reinstated. And cost is not the only deterrent. Over the last forty years, many educators, decision-makers, and even some parents have come to regard the arts as peripheral, and, lets face it, frivolousespecially the visual arts, with their connotation of the starving artist and the mistaken concept of necessary talent.The one art subject that we could easily a?ord is drawing, the skill that is basic to training visual perception and is therefore the entry-level subjectthe ABCsof perceptual skill-building. Among people who oppose arts education, drawing doesnt escape the frivolity label, but it is a?ordable to teach. Drawing requires the simplest of materialspaper and pencils. It requires a minimum of simple equipment and no special rooms or buildings. The most signi?cant requirement is a teacher who knows how to draw, knows how to teach the basic perceptual skills of drawing, and knows how to transfer those skills to other domains. Of all the arts, drawing is the one that can ?t into todays rapidly shrinking school budgets. And most parents are very supportive if their children acquire real, substantive drawing skills as opposed to the more usual expressive manipulation of materials in vogue in recent decades. At around ages seven to nine, children long to learn how to make things look real in their drawings, and they are well able to learn to draw, given appropriate teaching. If educators would ?nd the will, there would be a way.Revue de presse2013 Nautilus Books for a Better World Silver winner as Best Creative Process Book