

## BOOK REVIEW

# Book review: *More Time to Think: The Power of Independent Thinking*

Sam Farmer<sup>1</sup>

**Title: More Time to Think: The Power of Independent Thinking**

**Author: Nancy Kline**

**Place, Publisher, Date of Edition: London, Octopus Publishing Group, 2015**

**Paperback: 304 pages**

**ISBN-10: 1844037967**

**ISBN-13: 978-1-84403-796-4**

**Price: £9.99 (Paperback), £2.99 (Kindle Edition)**

## Corresponding author

Sam Farmer  
Director, Enhance Facilitation Ltd,  
PO Box 32-360, North Shore City  
0744 New Zealand  
Email: sam@enhanceltd.co.nz

## Affiliations

<sup>1</sup> Enhance Facilitation Ltd

## Copyright

© 2018 National Wellbeing Service Ltd

## Funding

None declared

## Declaration of conflicting interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest in respect to their authorship or the publication of this paper.

## Acknowledgments

None declared

Nearly a decade after its first edition, Nancy Kline's second book on her Thinking Environment® Model continues to remind us that "the quality of everything that humans do ... depends on the quality of thinking we do first – and how we think is influenced by the behaviour of the listener" (p16).

Compared to her first book<sup>1</sup>, which outlined a step-by-step introduction to the model, the Contents page of *More Time to Think* signals that Kline will be focusing more strongly upon how "the mind works best in the presence of a question" (p100). Consequently, within the five sections (*In Theory, In Practice, In Progress, and In the End*), each subtitle is a question, such as: "What do you think?"; "Why do I do this?"; "Not even assumptions?"; and "Who is the expert?".

Initially reminding us of the core elements of The Top Ten Components® of the Thinking Environment®, Kline then expands upon her approach to creating a psychologically safe space for speakers (Thinkers) and Listeners to think constructively. Loosely using a Bibliography rather than a Reference section, she briefly acknowledges the clear influence of Socrates and Carl Rogers upon her concepts of Incisive Questions™ and Positive Philosophical Choice, respectively.

Although the terminology might sometimes sound like re-coined concepts<sup>2</sup>, Kline writes to her strengths as she exemplifies excellent open questions for Listeners to engage Thinkers. For instance (from p131): Untrue Assumptions (e.g. What are you assuming that is stopping you from (figuring out how to do the right thing)?); Liberating Assumptions (e.g. If it is

not true, what are your words for what is true and liberating?); Incisive Questions™ (e.g. If you knew (that the Liberating Assumption is true) how would you (do the right thing)?). She also provides examples of how the model can be utilised within group contexts. It is unfortunate that these key concepts are referenced in the Index, rather than the Contents section.

Some readers may consider that the amount and extent of Kline's assertions in extolling the benefits of the Thinking Environment® – to the exclusion of other forms of intervention and communication – go beyond her own “sign of enough” (p258). And she misses the opportunity to: reference the application of the Good Lives Model (e.g. Ward & Brown, 2004) in eliciting pro-social thinking from offenders; and signal similarities with Motivational Interviewing (e.g. Miller & Rollnick, 2002) and Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (e.g. Duncan, Miller, & Sparks, 2004) which all prioritise the thinking, perspective and expertise of the client.

Notwithstanding some reservations, this enthusiastic reminder of the importance of creating time and psychological safety for people to think through and resolve many of their own problems should not be under-estimated. There is much that professionals, including leaders, seeking important and meaningful human interaction and change can learn from applying the ideas in this book to their own listening, and thinking, habits. It has certainly prompted me to ask myself: “How far can [the Thinker] go in [their] own thinking

before [they need to hear] mine [and] how much further than that?” (p100). What else can I do to ask better questions? What more might I learn from attending a Time to Think™ course? ■

1 *Time to Think – Listening to Ignite the Human Mind* (1st Edn 1999)

2 Kline acknowledges the respective similarities between the Untrue Assumptions and Liberating Assumptions of her model and the concepts of Limiting Beliefs and Re-framing from Cognitive Restructuring Theory

## REFERENCES

**Duncan, B.L., Miller, S.D, & Sparks, J.A.** (2004). *The heroic client: a revolutionary way to improve effectiveness through client-directed, outcome-informed therapy*. San Francisco: Wiley.

**Miller, W.R., & Rollnick, S.** (2002). *Motivational Interviewing: helping people change (2nd Edn)*. New York: Guilford Press.

**Ward, T., & Brown, M.** (2004). The good lives model and conceptual issues in offender rehabilitation. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 10 (3), 243-257.

## Citation

**Farmer, S.** (2018). Book review: More Time to Think: The Power of Independent Thinking. *European Journal of Counselling Theory, Research and Practice*, 2, 5, 1-2. Retrieved from: <http://www.europeancounselling.eu/volumes/volume-2-2018/volume-2-article-5/>

## Biography

**Sam Farmer** is Director of Enhance Facilitation Limited and a coaching psychologist. Based in Auckland, New Zealand, his areas of specialism are in leadership coaching, professional supervision and psychosocial support – particularly in high emotional impact contexts. His practice is influenced by Acceptance and Commitment Training and other strength-based approaches.



<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9217-7046>