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RETHINK THE WAY YOU THINK

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Can you draw one straight line through all the dots?
See page 45 for the answer.

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THINKERTOYS

SECOND EDITION

"Designed to change the way you think."
—*Wall Street Journal*



a handbook of creative-thinking techniques

MICHAEL MICHALKO

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I thank Charlotte Bruney, Parish Administrator of St. Vincent de Paul in Churchville, New York, for reawakening my faith and for reminding me of the single most important thing in life, which I had forgotten long ago. Charlotte reminded me that the real nature of human feeling is mostly the same from person to person, mostly the same in every person everywhere on earth. Of course there is that part of human feeling where we are all different. Each one of us has our own idiosyncrasies and our own unique human character. That is the part people are talking about when they are talking about feelings and comparing feelings. But that part is about ten percent of the feelings we feel. Ninety percent of all our feelings is stuff in which we are all the same and feel the same things. This shared universal human feeling has been forgotten by most people, hidden in the mess of opinion, conflicts, and personal differences voiced by governments, religions, politicians, academics, celebrities, and, of course, the omnipresent and omnipotent mass media. These voices of disharmony and disunity have disconnected us from each other and have rusted our hearts. We need to ignore these voices of discord and reawaken each other to honor and respect this huge ocean—this ninety percent—in which our feelings are all alike. Maybe, if we do that, we will have “heaven on earth.”

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WARNING: THIS BOOK IS FOR MONKEYS

Your business attitude determines your potential for innovation, creativity, even genius, and success in your field. There are two basic business attitudes, which I call the "kitten" and the "monkey," because of how each animal deals with stress and change.

If a small kitten is confused or in danger, it will do nothing but mew until its mother comes and carries it to safety. By contrast, a baby monkey will run to its mother and jump on her back at the first sign of trouble. The baby monkey then rides to safety, hanging on for itself.

This book can do little for people with the "kitten" attitude—those who cry for help when faced with a challenge or problem. Thinkertoys is designed for the "monkeys," who are willing to work on themselves, work to develop their business creativity, and work on coming up with innovative ideas . . . and are ready to enjoy the very real benefits of that work.

If you have the "monkey" attitude and want a wealth of original ideas to improve your business or personal life, this book is for you. I invite you to take these Thinkertoys and use them to create the ideas you need to change your life. Thinkertoys are solid, creative techniques that show you how to get ideas. The rest is up to you.

(Hope for those with the "kitten" attitude: If you want to change, you will find the help you need in Chapter One, Original Spin, with exercises and encouragement for developing the "monkey" attitude.)