

Art's Most Fun Aspect: Left and Right Brain Conflict

By: Rivky Shimon, December 29, 2006

Have you ever played the game where you had to read a list of names for colors? The key was that all of the words were represented in different colors? "Orange" was spelled out in blue. "Yellow" was spelled out in purple. "Green" was spelled out in red. Did you find it extremely difficult to read the list?

If you did, and I would venture to say that you did, it was because of the right-brain and left-brain conflict. Your right-brain and your left-brain work in two completely different modes and even in different dimensions at times. That's why your brain works so well. But, when you take something away from either side of your brain, that's where the fun begins.

For instance, your left-brain is extremely verbal. It communicates in words, names, definitions, descriptions...etc. It needs a name for everything. It needs to be able to put things in their proper category, in order, so that it can keep track of everything in an orderly fashion.

Your right-brain would have none of that. Your right-brain communicates with ideas. It can make hunches without having all the facts. It likes things out of order because it thinks that's the natural order of things anyway. It's comfortable with that. So, what was going on when you were reading the words and you didn't know what to say, you might have even felt a slight sense of paralysis?

When you were reading the list of names for colors, your left-brain saw the word. But, your right brain saw the color. You didn't know what to say for a second because you had to determine what the letters in the word represented, not what the color represented. Wow, that is fun stuff. And it gets even better!

If you take a nicely lathed leg of a chair and try to draw it, draw the left side of the chair leg with your left hand and the right side with your right hand. Don't do both sides at the same time. That's not what I'm saying. Just take the pencil in your left hand and try to draw all of the curves and edges you see as you draw the left side of the leg. Then put the pencil in your right hand. Now you know that the leg is symmetrical, so all you have to do this time is look at the left side of your drawing and follow it on the right side.

As you draw the right side using the left side as a reference, you encounter a series of problems. You don't know whether the curve goes to the left or to the right. You don't know whether the edge was pointing to the right or to the left. That's another right-brain, left-brain conflict. You'll have some trouble completing the picture with any degree of accuracy.

Don't measure it from an artistic standpoint. Measure it from a symmetrical standpoint. Is your drawing symmetrical? Does the right side curve in when it should curve out? Then it is not symmetrical. And that's not an artistic error. That's a left-brain, right-brain conflict.

The beauty of this discovery is that you need your entire brain to function. You need the mathematical, scientific side as well as you need your imaginative, creative side. You need your logical, analytical side as well as you need your spatial, intuitive side. In other words, art is just as necessary as anything else in your life, if not more so. It's not just a passion for some. Art is a need.

In a day, if you take time to do your finances and to get some exercise. If you go to work and accomplish the daily tasks, then come home and take some time for rest and relaxation with a good book or watching a movie. You also need to take some time to exercise your artistic side. It not only leads to a fuller life, but a fuller use of your brain. We all can use a little of that!