

THINKING APPROACH

(AN INTEGRATED OTSM-TRIZ ENGLISH COURSE)

Letter - an excerpt from *Breakfast of Champions* by Kurt Vonnegut

Letter

Dear Sir, poor sir, brave sir,

You are an experiment by the creator of the Universe. You are the only creature in the entire Universe who has free will. You are the only one who has to figure out what to do next – and *why*. Everybody else is a robot, a machine.

Some persons seem to like you, and others seem to hate you, and you must wonder why. They are simply liking machines and hating machines.

You are pooped and demoralized. Why wouldn't you be? Of course it is exhausting having to reason all the time in a universe which wasn't meant to be reasonable.

You are surrounded by loving machines, hating machines, greedy machines, unselfish machines, brave machines, cowardly machines, truthful machines, lying machines, funny machines, solemn machines. Their only purpose is to stir you, up in every conceivable way, so the Creator of the Universe can watch your reactions. They can no more feel or reason than grandfather's clocks.

The Creator of the Universe would now like to apologize not only for the capricious, jostling companionship he provided during the test, but for the trashy, stinking condition of the planet itself. The Creator programmed robots to abuse it for millions of years, so it would be a poisonous, festering cheese when you got here. Also, He made sure it would be desperately crowded by programming robots, regardless of their living conditions, to crave sexual intercourse and adore infants more than almost anything.

He also programmed robots to write books and magazines and newspapers for you, and television and radio shows, and stage shows, and films. They wrote songs for you. The Creator of the Universe had them invent hundreds of religions, so you would have plenty to choose among. He had them kill each other by the millions, for this purpose only: that you be amazed. They have committed every possible atrocity and every possible kindness unfeelingly, automatically, inevitably, to get a reaction from Y-O-U.

Every time you went into the library the Creator of the Universe held His breath. With such a higgledy-piggledy cultural smorgasbord before you, what would you, with your free will, choose?"

Your parents were fighting machines and self-pitying machines. Your mother was programmed to bawl out your father for being a defective money-making machine, and your father was programmed to bawl her out for being a defective housekeeping machine. They were programmed to bawl each other out for being defective loving machines.

Then your father was programmed to stomp out of the house and slam the door. This automatically turned your mother into a weeping machine. And your father would go down to a tavern where he would get drunk with some other drinking machines. Then all the drinking machines would go to a whorehouse and rent fucking machines. And then your father would drag himself home to become an apologizing machine. And your mother would become a very slow forgiving machine.

(Kurt Vonnegut, *Breakfast of Champions*)