

INTERRUPTION AS ASSAULT

By
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Interruption is assault. There is violence in it. Interruption is a slice made into the guts of an as yet unfinished idea. Interruption is arrogance masquerading as efficiency; it is efficiency massacred. It stops the thinking of one person in favor of another. It is the politics of the aggressive laying waste to the brilliance of the respectful.

The world needs every good idea it can get. But the world also perversely, and unawarely, does everything it can to keep people from thinking. Each time we are interrupted, our thinking is once again stopped, snapped in two, left to dangle. It is not unlike being physically slapped, shoved, made to lose our balance, made to defend ourselves from the onslaught and from the next anticipated onslaught. Instead of thinking, we have to position ourselves for protection on the one hand and attack on the other.

Our thinking is fragile as ideas are being formed. Interruption weakens ideas further and keeps them from forming sturdily. We would be never agree to crumple and rip apart new bean shoots and as a way of progressing their maturation. But that is what we do to human thinking when we interrupt a flow of ideas as a way of progressing a discussion.

Interruption is a statement that the other person talking does not matter as much as we do. This is self-absorption; it is usually desperate. It is in error. It harms.

It is uncomplicated: the thinking process is violated by interruption. That is what we should keep in mind as we interrupt so that we will stop it the way we would decide

not to hit, not to slander, not to spit into the face of an artist. The human being thinking, forming ideas, is surely, quintessentially in fact, just that.

Our minds are creating when they are thinking. They are more gifted at this than they usually have any opportunity to demonstrate. Surely it is time in our organizations and our relationships to see what new and useful, accurate and ingenious ideas would form, in less time, if the thinking process were freed from the threat of assault and promised the ground of respect.