

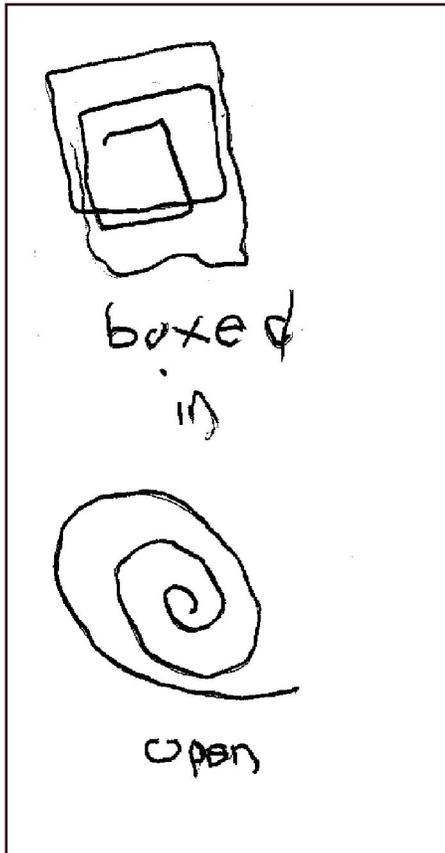


LESSON 2: The Non-dominant Hand

Everyone has a dominant and a non-dominant hand. Are you left or right handed? If you are left handed, your left hand is the dominant hand. If you are right handed, your right hand is dominant. If you are ambidexterous, you are comfortable using both hands, however, you probably favor one hand for writing. What matters here is that you use the hand that is least comfortable writing and drawing. I don't know how it works, but I do know that the non-dominant hand is the least controlled by your intellect and most open your heart and feelings.

Your non-dominant hand writes and draws slowly and is clumsy. That's okay. Remember this hand did not go to school and is seldom asked to write or draw. When we explore our inner landscape, we're definitely not interested in being perfect or in finishing quickly. We're attempting to connect with a part of ourselves that we mostly ignore. This takes patience and lots of willingness to just accept what comes.

Non-dominant hand drawing and writing is childlike. Look at the example on this page. It was created by Pam, a highly intelligent graphic artist, who was extremely distressed one morning. *"A situation at home is driving me over the edge!"* she cried. I gave her a pencil and paper and asked her to feel the distress in her body and notice where it was. Then I told her to hold the pencil in her non-dominant hand and *"imagine the distress flowing from where it is in your body, down your arm, into your hand and pencil and onto the paper."* She drew the square spiral in about ten seconds. I said, *"Give it a name."* She wrote with her non-dominant hand, **"Boxed in."** I continued: *"Now close your eyes and shift gears. Instead of feeling the distress, imagine that you are standing at the very center of your heart and feel the love that is there."* She did this for about five seconds. I continued, *"Now, imagine this love flowing into the same part of your body where the distressing situation is."* She stood still for another five seconds. Finally I said, *"Imagine this love flowing from your heart, down your arm, into the pencil and onto the paper."* She drew the bottom spiral. It took about five seconds. I asked her to name this mark and she wrote with her non-dominant hand, **"open"**.



Pam moved from controlled, angular, tight, and very distressed to fluid, open, relaxed and surprised in less than thirty seconds. Visual thinking can be very helpful in dealing with problems regarding the self. It's easy, accurate and fast.

Pam's thirty-second drawing exercise helped her to see her situation differently. Focusing on the solution related to the problem is very different from trying to fix the problem alone. The new understanding came from within Pam, through her own hands. How exciting this is! Your own inner wisdom will inspire you far more than any words coming from someone else. My playful and powerful non-dominant hand drawing exercises help you to draw out the unconditional love that lives beneath the hurt and fear. Remember, love runs deeper than hurt!

Non-dominant hand drawing has been used in art classes for many years as a way of loosening up. It helps you to relax and draw what you see and feel. Try it yourself!