

Inspired Leap

Inspired Creative Thoughts: How to Generate Them Even in Pressure-Packed Situations American Creativity Association Conference Friday, March 24, 2006

The Creative Imperative

- At the 2006 World Economic Forum (WEF), the theme of the meeting was “The Creative Imperative,” and the meeting opened with a “call for leaders to harness creativity to provide new answers to the world’s problems.”
- The Founder and Executive Chairman of the WEF, Professor Klaus Schwab, said, “It is imperative for leaders of all walks of life to **develop new capabilities** if they expect to be successful and to maintain relevance.”
- Worldwide competition is increasing the need for businesses and business professionals to develop and strengthen their creative abilities.
 - *The World is Flat* by Thomas Friedman
 - *A Whole New Mind* by Daniel Pink
- Do businesses know how to create a culture of creativity and innovation?
 - *“How do you go beyond giving lip service to creativity, which is where 95% of all U.S. corporations are today, to enabling managers and employees to truly innovate on a regular, sustained basis? The truth is, very few top managers have a realistic idea of just how much it will cost them to shift from a culture of cost and quality measurement to a culture of continuous innovation.”*
—Bruce Nussbaum, *Business Week*, January 11, 2006
- It’s difficult for many business professionals to easily develop a creative, or innovative, mindset, as the emphasis in schools and in the corporate world has been on developing, strengthening, and using the talents of the left hemisphere of the brain.

Use Your Whole Mind: Create and Innovate From Both Sides of the Brain

LEFT HEMISPHERE VERSUS RIGHT HEMISPHERE

Characteristics of the LEFT Hemisphere	Characteristics of the RIGHT Hemisphere
<p style="text-align: center;">Logical</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Analytical Verbal Sequential</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tends to dominate Right Hemisphere Reductive in thinking Corresponds to right side of body Males tend to be more Left Brain dominant</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Intuitive</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Nonlinear Spatial (ability to visualize in 3-D) Holistic</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tends to let Left Hemisphere lead Inclusive in thinking Corresponds to left side of body Females tend to be more Right Brain dominant</p>

- Because of the elevation of, and reverence for, “left brain” thinking in schools, labs, and boardrooms, **many of us have negative beliefs associated with being “creative;”** therefore, we resist efforts to develop (or re-create) creative neural pathways. We need to re-program our minds.

Inspired Creative Thoughts: Ah-Ha Moments

The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift.

—Albert Einstein

- The definition of *Inspired* is “to breathe or to infuse life,” and when it comes to creating ah-ha thoughts, the definition is: “to have an animating effect upon; influence or impel, **especially to stimulate or impel to some creative effort**” [*Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*]
 - To stimulate creative effort, we must be able to freely access our intuitive intelligence and activate our imagination.
 - ***We must be willing to be illogical!***
- Our Intuitive Intelligence is the source of the initial “ah-ha.” It is a “knowing” that comes from our nonconscious mind or that taps into a higher level of intelligence without the conscious use of reasoning.

- Your intuition is there to support and enhance your thinking and reasoning mind. It is not meant to replace logical or analytical thinking.

Why is Intuition So Critical to Creativity?

Intuition tells the thinking mind where to look next.

—Dr. Jonas Salk, discoverer of the polio vaccine

- It serves as the conduit between your nonconscious brain and its wisdom, as well as the contact to the knowledge of the collective unconscious or universal mind.
- Your brain is estimated to be approximately 1/6 conscious and 5/6 nonconscious. That means you only have conscious access to 1/6 of your brain power! This 1/6 is the part of your brain that sleeps when you do. Tests show that the other 5/6 is active and working while you sleep.
- Your intuition is one of the key ways your nonconscious mind communicates its knowledge with you. Scientists estimate the 100% of our memories and information taken in over the years are stored within our brains and/or our bodies. So your nonconscious brain holds data and wisdom you are no longer consciously aware of. If you're not using your intuition, you're ignoring the brilliance and wisdom contained in 5/6 of your brain.

How Do We Re-activate Our Creative Abilities?

- We create new neural connections or pathways by practicing a few **simple** activities again and again until they become habit.
- Simple activities can be dismissed as too easy or not challenging enough; yet, the simple steps are often the most powerful and the most likely to be implemented in order to create a new habit.
- Don't over-think the need to create a new culture of innovation: that leads to complicated processes and programs or paralysis.

Practices for Developing Inspired Creative Thoughts and Intuitive Intelligence

(All of these practices may be done individually, or as part of a team)

- **Pay Attention.** Practice paying close attention to your body, feelings, and thoughts. The better you understand how your body sends you signals, the feelings that correspond to those signals, and the thoughts or mental dialogue that flow through you, the easier it will be to know when your intuition is trying to speak to you.
- **Do Nothing.** Set aside five to 15 minutes a day—**at work**—to spend sitting quietly. Close your eyes and concentrate on your breathing. If closing your eyes is too uncomfortable at the office, then focus your eyes on an image. Notice the thoughts running through your head. Then, use all of your senses to also tell you what is going on with your body and emotions.
- **Visualization.** Yes, it's been talked about for years, but many of us still don't do this regularly. New brain research supports what many have intuitively known: our nonconscious brain interprets our visualizations as literal; therefore, our brain will do whatever it takes to bring about the visualization that is repeated, especially one with emotion. See yourself receiving an award for "best idea," "creatively solving a major challenge," or "successfully completing a project." Come up with the best visualization for inspiring you to access your creative potential and practice it regularly.
- **Ask Questions—Make Your Intuition Work for You.** Whatever your question or problem might be, just ask your intuition. Then, thank it for giving you the answer quickly and clearly. Sit quietly and see what pops into your head. If worries start coming in, just bring your focus back to your breathing or to the image you normally look at. If nothing comes to you, still say thank you and that you expect the answer shortly. Take one last deep breath and go about your business for the rest of the day. No matter how foolish you feel initially, you will soon notice more ideas "popping" into your awareness.
 - **Write a letter to your nonconscious mind asking it for help with a problem. Ask for the answer within 48 hours and look and listen for the answer.**
 - **Simply ask out loud or in your head.**
 - **Ask before you go to bed at night and expect the answer to be in your mind when you wake up.**
- **Walk It Out.** Take a walk to get rid of negative energy and get your mind out of the way. There is something about walking—especially in nature—that gives your soul and intuitive intelligence a chance to be activated. As you start your walk, silently ask a question, ask for help, or pray for support or guidance—whatever you feel a need to

do at that moment—and just start walking. Give yourself 20 minutes to do this and you'll find it much easier to “hear” what your intuition is trying to tell you.

- **Limber Up Your Right Brain. Music** (drumming, Mozart, and Brazilian are a few forms of music known to activate the right brain) , **Movement** (especially movement that gets you working the opposite arm and legs at the same time – right arm crossing over chest while left leg crosses over right), and **Games** to get you to shift your perspective.

Inspired Creative Thoughts Even in Pressure-Packed Situations

- When we are stressed or “under the gun” to come up with a creative solution to a problem or to generate the “winning” idea, our creative well can quickly dry up.
- Keep it simple. Find a few quick techniques that you can easily incorporate into your daily routine, so they are a habit even when high pressure moments come along.
- Trust and *Know* that the “ah-ha” moment or thought will come, take a deep breath, and see, hear, or sense its arrival. When we expect the answer to come (and visualize it coming), our nonconscious mind delivers!
- Practice before the tense moments come.
 - Take the attitude of a business athlete (from the great work of Tony Schwartz and Jim Loehr, *The Power of Full Engagement*)
 - And be alert and self-aware: ready for the challenges when they come.

Be Alert! Be Self-Aware!

Remember the words of physicist David Bohm and use your intuitive intelligence to be ready when opportunity (the next big challenge) strikes!

You're on the verge of a creative movement. Just go with it. You cannot be fixed in how you're going about it any more than you would be fixed if you were setting about to paint a great work of art. **Be alert, be self-aware, so that when opportunity presents itself, you can actually rise to it.**

—David Bohm, as quoted in *Synchronicity* by Joseph Jaworski