

The Secret to True Creativity



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Creativity is defined as “approaching a need, a task, or an idea from a new perspective.” Much has been said about the techniques of creative thinking – I would like to focus on what it takes to be a *creative person*. The techniques and methods are useless if it does not emanate from a person who *IS* creative – it is the spirit of the individual which will breathe life into the various thinking tools available out there.

A creative person is a person of security.

What do I mean by “security”? There is no such thing as a “Mister-know-it-all”, in fact, in today’s age, no one can be an expert in everything – that is why the need for teamwork is paramount because the mark of an effective leader is one who can synthesize the team’s thinking output to form an aggregated solution. In other words, a few heads are better than one. The trouble is we tend to think that our head is bigger than everyone else’s!

A creative leader is someone who is not afraid to work with others who are smarter than himself or herself. In fact, they thrive in such an environment because they focus on the *facilitation* of the thinking process rather than claiming individual credit for any ideas generated. No one can claim a monopoly of ideas! – In fact, creativity from others should be welcomed as refreshing showers! The combined effort is *always* better than the individual alone.

Here are the three disciplines of a truly creative person :

Discipline 1 - See the Big Picture

A creative person is not threatened by the ideas generated by others because he has his eyes fixed on the vision. Although he himself may not be generating the ideas, nonetheless, he works with others and would synthesize the ideas of other individuals to produce a cohesive solution. Because he listens to individual input, the overall outcome is something that solicits buy-in and personal commitment.

Discipline 2 – Own the Values

A creative person is also one with his or her sights set on what’s truly important. Ideas only make sense against a backdrop of right values and ethics. Think about it – even a bank robber needs creativity! So, what distinguishes the application of creativity – right values. Therefore, a creative person is not bothered that others generate more ideas than him as long as he ensures that the solutions do not undermine core, fundamental values leading to integrity and good conscience.

Discipline 3 – Practice Humility

We usually think of the creative individual as an ... individual! There is somehow this “superman” syndrome that it all comes down to just this one individual who will save the day. In real life, it is the collective effort of the team that produces the significant solution. However, there is one person who is able to coordinate and manage all the different creative inputs and make sure that the final result is in line with expected results – the person who is humble. The opposite of humility is high self-esteem i.e. someone who thinks too highly of himself at the expense of others. Face the fact : You do NOT have all the answers but you CAN work with others to get the answers. When we work with no regard on who gets the credit, then you have powerful teamwork indeed.

So, you still want to be a creative person? Then learn to accept the fact that the ideas are out there and not within yourself because the best type of ideas are those that are shared and owned. That’s why humility and security complements creativity very well indeed.

Think about it.

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