

LMC Scientific Article - CREATIVITY

What is Creativity?

There are many ways to define creativity but it can often be quite difficult to explain what is in reality a complex and abstract concept. Creativity is a process in which something 'new', 'innovative' or 'valuable' is produced. These 'products' of creativity are infinite and limited only by imagination. They include intangible things such as ideas, theories or musical compositions and physical objects such as inventions, literature or artistic works just to name a few. Creativity requires the ability to view things in new ways or from different perspectives and to generate new possibilities or new alternatives.

The 'need' to be Creative

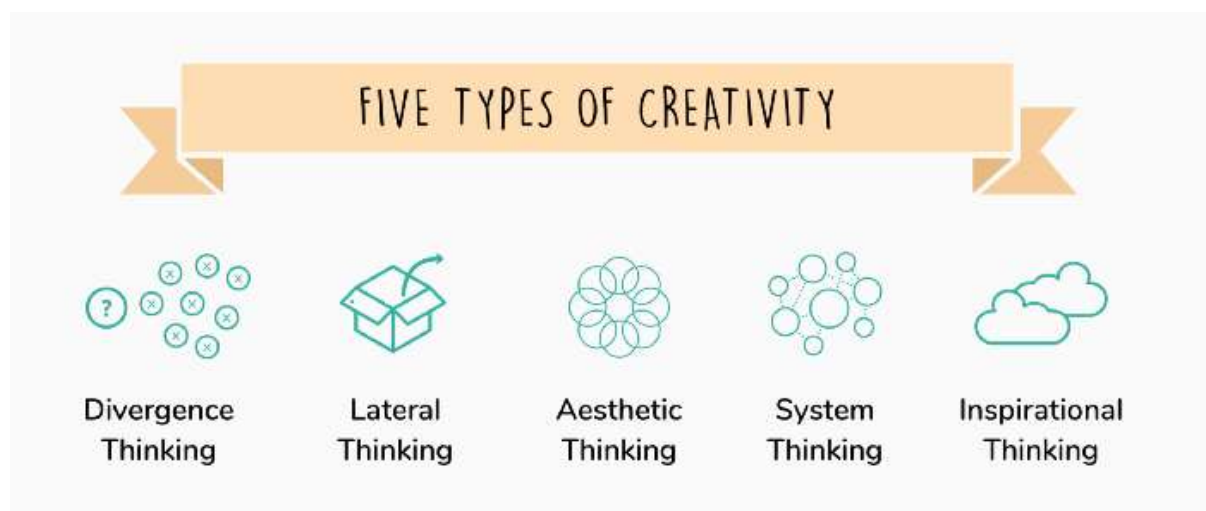
Creativity is a product of a tendency to generate or recognise ideas, alternatives or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, overcoming difficulties, experimenting or for self-expression. Creativity is not unique to human beings, however, it is a key component of the human condition and our ability to thrive in almost any environment.

The need to be creative comes from a variety of factors but it is rooting in several of our key 'needs', including:

1. The need for novel, varied, and complex stimulation (*e.g. inquisitiveness or curiosity*);
2. The need to communicate ideas and values (*e.g. Culture, Science, Religion or Art*);
3. The need to solve problems (*e.g. self-preservation, inventiveness or ingenuity*).

Types of Creativity

There are many ways in which an individual can display their creativity and it should be seen as a skill or competence that can be learned or developed with the correct strategies. However, different types of creativity require different 'types of thinking' in order for them to be effective.



1. Divergent Thinking - the exploration of many solutions
2. Lateral Thinking - the ability to come up with 'out-of-the-box', innovative ideas
3. Aesthetic Thinking - the ability to create art and beauty
4. Systems Thinking - the skill to synthesize several elements into one
5. Inspirational Thinking - the ideas that seem to 'pop into your head' from no where

Each of these types of thinking can be nurtured and enhanced using different techniques and strategies, this in turn this can increase the creative process linked to each. Some individuals will excel at certain types of thinking whereas some will possess the ability to utilise all of them.

Characteristics of 'Creative' people

Everyone has a level of creativic ability, however, some people exhibit far more creativity than others. It is very difficult to identify why an individual is more creative than another but we can identify 'traits' or characteristics of more creative people, such as:

1. Creative individuals have a great deal of energy, but they are also often quiet and at rest;
2. Creative individuals tend to be smart, yet also naive at the same time;
3. Creative individuals have a combination of playfulness and discipline, or responsibility and irresponsibility;
4. Creative individuals alternate between imagination and fantasy at one end, and a rooted sense of reality at the other;
5. Creative people seem to harbor opposite tendencies on the continuum between extroversion and introversion;
6. Creative individuals are also remarkable humble and proud at the same time;
7. Creative individuals to a certain extent escape rigid gender role stereotyping and have a tendency toward androgyny;
8. Generally, creative people are thought to be rebellious and independent;
9. Most creative persons are very passionate about their work, yet they can be extremely objective about it as well;
10. The openness and sensitivity of creative individuals often exposes them to suffering pain yet also a great deal of enjoyment. (*Creativity - Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi*)

References

- *Human Motivation, 3rd ed., by Robert E. Franken*
- *Creativity - Beyond the Myth of Genius, by Robert W. Weisberg*
- *Creativity - Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi*