



We all have it!

CREATIVITY

When asked how long it took him to invent the theory of relativity Albert Einstein answered, "Two minutes to write it down and 45 years to unlearn everything I had been taught." This is the secret to creativity — being willing to unlearn all the "right" ways.

To be creative is to have no preconceptions. To be creative is to be judgment-free. To be creative is to ask questions. (Jules Verne asked "What if?" 100 years before a person walked on the moon!)

Creativity is *not* limited to the stereotypical "creative person;" the ability to be creative in business and in life is simply the tapping into a natural wellspring which is inside all of us.

Creative thinking is non-linear thinking. It is organic, it is natural. Albert Einstein said, "The really valuable thing is intuition. I believe in intuition and inspiration; at times I feel certain I am right while not knowing the reason."

Amy Lowell said, "The idea dropped into the subconscious is like a letter in a mailbox." Creativity is closely aligned to instinct and intuition. Every man and every woman has a masculine and feminine side. Intuition comes from the feminine side of all of us. That female part is often restricted by our culture, as well as our own internal arbitrator. We have for too long stifled our own feminine sides. Creativity comes from our universal female self. Honor it, get to know it, trust it.

A former Harvard M.B.A. boss of mine was a brilliant creative thinker. He could problem solve a business issue from a non-judgmental angle with aplomb, creativity and spontaneity. His solutions were his canvas.

Anita Roddick, president of Body Shop International, P.I.C., turned her creative instinct about making natural products, sold in refillable containers, into a multi-million dollar business.

In my private practice I often rely on intuition to help guide me in helping my clients. In my personal life with my husband, we rely on creative problem solving to help manage the complexities of a good relationship. Here are six easy steps to being more creative in your professional and personal life:

1.) No judgment. Criticism is the quickest way to inhibit creativity. Be judgment free and establish an environment where any idea has merit.

2.) Trust your instincts. Many times it is the very first thought that crosses your mind that is the answer. Trusting your instinct is opening the letter that has been dropped in your mailbox.

3.) Brainstorm. Brainstorming is one of the most effective ways for groups to work as a team to find creative solutions. In a judgment free environment, write all ideas and objectives on a large sheet of paper so everyone can see. Allow ideas to piggyback off each other.

4.) Cluster. By yourself, write down, from your left brain, your linear side, the issue or the problem. Then on a separate piece of paper let your right brain run free, write down and *cluster* all words that come to you. However illogical they may seem, remember . . . no judgment. Allow words to ricochet off one another.

5.) Visualization. One of the most vital of all techniques is the ability to picture in your mind's eye something in reality. If a person can visualize something in her mind, she can experience it in her life. Transfer what is in your head into reality.

6.) Allow yourself to be playful. Creativity is a wellspring inside all of us, young and old. Learn to recapture the inner child in yourself. Learn to hear it, value it, respond to it, play with it. This is true wisdom.

Creativity is not only for the inventor and the scientist. It does not come solely to the composer melodiously charting her musical scores. It is not only for the C.E.O. with vision. It is for the accountant, the lawyer, the manager. It is for all of us. Creativity is *in* all of us and in the boardroom, classroom, living room.

— Adair Heitmann

Adair's professional life has encompassed work in corporate and creative environments, as a consultant, artist and designer. She is currently writing two books and as a MariEL Healing Practitioner has a small private practice.

