

Creativity in Consultation

Trip Barthel





Welcome

During this webinar there will be several times to respond to activities.

Please limit your responses to a few words and take time to read what others have to say.



Connect your
brains



The most difficult problems require the most creative solutions.

This session will connect the Writings, the science and the practice of creativity, and show how to apply it in consultation.

Man has also spiritual powers: imagination, which conceives things; thought, which reflects upon realities; comprehension, which comprehends realities; memory, which retains whatever man imagines, thinks and comprehends.

(SAQ, page 211)

The intermediary between the five outward powers and the inward powers is the sense which they possess in common—that is to say, the sense which acts between the outer and inner powers, conveys to the inward powers whatever the outer powers discern. It is termed the common faculty [or sympathetic nerve], because it communicates between the outward and inward powers and thus is common to the outward and inward powers.

(SAQ, page 211)

2 forms of creativity

- ◆ Meditation for creation
- ◆ Clash of differing opinion
for refinement





Man's mind, once stretched by a
new idea,
never regains its original
dimensions.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

It is through science that we prove
but through intuition that we
discover.

Henri Poincare

When are you most creative?

Please respond in a few words



Most people say they are
most creative -

Between sleeping and waking

In nature

Meditating

Einstein's marbles and nap

Isolation is the key to
creativity



From the RSA Animate video on iTunes
Brainstorming - the most widely implemented
creativity technique of all time

Group Brainstorming doesn't work and we have
known so since the 1950's

People working as group come up with fewer and
less original ideas than those people working
independently

We become less than the sum of our parts

Individual isolated reflection is 40% more effective

From the RSA Animate video on iTunes

Brainstorming - the most widely implemented
creativity technique of all time

Group work is best done once ideas have been
generated

A vigorous debate leads to 25 to 40% more ideas
and more original ideas.

Creativity Part 1

The following quotes are taken from
'Abdu'l-Baha in London, Sunday, January 12th,
1913

Jason Lehrer from the book *Imagine*



...the sign of the intellect is contemplation and the sign of contemplation is silence, because it is impossible for a man to do two things at one time—he cannot both speak and meditate.

Divergent thinking is generally associated with an inward focus and an inward focus is necessary for creative solutions.

It is an axiomatic fact that while you meditate you are speaking with your own spirit.

Dreams enable our creativity.

Divergent thinking trusts spontaneous epiphanies.

In that state of mind you put certain questions to your spirit and the spirit answers: the light breaks forth and the reality is revealed.

Subjects who dreamed during a nap resolved 40 % more puzzles.

You cannot apply the name 'man' to any being void of this faculty of meditation; without it he would be a mere animal, lower than the beasts.

Alpha waves direct our attention inward for insights.

The spirit of man is itself informed and strengthened during meditation; through it affairs of which man knew nothing are unfolded before his view. Through it he receives Divine inspiration, through it he receives heavenly food.

Steady rhythm of alpha waves is predictive of solving an insight puzzle up to 8 seconds before the insight arrives. Common faculty.

Meditation is the key for opening the doors of mysteries. In that state man abstracts himself: in that state man withdraws himself from all outside objects; in that subjective mood he is immersed in the ocean of spiritual life and can unfold the secrets of things-in-themselves.

Before we can have a breakthrough there has to be a block. Breakthroughs and blocks work together.

To illustrate this, think of man as endowed with two kinds of sight; when the power of insight is being used the outward power of vision does not see.

This faculty of meditation frees man from the animal nature, discerns the reality of things, puts man in touch with God.

30 seconds before the answer erupts into consciousness there's a spike of gamma wave rhythm. We know the answer before we realize we know the answer. Our common faculty is calling.

This faculty brings forth from the invisible plane the sciences and arts. Through the meditative faculty inventions are made possible, colossal undertakings are carried out; through it governments can run smoothly. Through this faculty man enters into the very Kingdom of God.

Source of every new idea is the same - a network of neurons shifts into an unfamiliar pattern.

The meditative faculty is akin to the mirror; if you put it before earthly objects it will reflect them. Therefore if the spirit of man is contemplating earthly subjects he will be informed of these.

Happy people are much better at guessing.

There is no human being untouched by these two influences [pain and sorrow]; but all the sorrow and the grief that exist come from the world of matter—the spiritual world bestows only the joy!

Paris Talks, November 22nd

Laughter happens when two formerly disconnected ideas come together.

Koestler, The Act of Creation

But if you turn the mirror of your spirits
heavenwards, the heavenly constellations and the
rays of the Sun of Reality will be reflected in your
hearts, and the virtues of the Kingdom will be
obtained.

More daydreaming scores higher on creativity.

Creativity Part 2

The shining spark of truth cometh forth only
after the clash of differing opinions.

Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, 41

...the light of reality becomes apparent when
two opinions coincide.

Promise of Universal Peace, 72-3

When are you most creative in a group?

Respond in a few words

- ◆ Most people say they are most creative in a group when there is laughter, vigorous debate, focused energy, full engagement.

Brainwriting Activity

- ◆ Take a blank piece of paper
- ◆ In silence, meditate on fireside
- ◆ What is the one best idea you would like to share about creating a memorable fireside?
- ◆ Pass it to the person on your right. How would you improve the idea?

◆ Brainwriting - Group Meditation

- generated 20% more ideas
- 42% more original ideas as compared to traditional brainstorming groups,
- there's not a single published study in which a face-to-face brainstorming group outperforms a brainwriting group,"
- the process leads to more diverse and candid ideas.

Clash of Differing Opinion

Discussion ... should only take place after the group has generated a variety of distinct ideas with which to work. Raw ideas rarely work. It's the permutation and combination of the outlandish and banal that lead to the best proposals. "Usually the best idea that is selected at the end isn't exactly what anyone came up with at the beginning; the idea has been edited," Nordgren added. from Creative Conspiracy

Native American example

Formula for creativity

Detach

Imagine

Debate

Decide



- ◆ Ken Robinson
- ◆ Imagination is random thoughts
- ◆ Innovation is imagination with a purpose

- ◆ In closing, from Imagine
- Two years of college is ideal for creative career.
- Intermediate levels of social intimacy produce the highest levels of creativity.
- More interactions leads to more creativity.
- Allow people to come up with ideas independently
- People are less likely to explore on their own when they are given explicit instructions.

- ◆ Thank you
- ◆ Please visit Association for Baha'i Studies website for webinar on Asking Better Questions.
- ◆ Please see "Dynamic Consultation 5 Expand" YouTube video for more on creativity.
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