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Exploring & Celebrating Creative Self-Expression

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COVER IMAGE: The symbolic picture represents creative self expression as the ways and means by which a person connects, relates and interacts their 1) inner cognitive/psychological world - their many selves holding beliefs, values, identities, perceptions, imaginings, reasonings, emotions, with their 2) environment (the world that has meaning to them) in order to share their thoughts and feelings and / or accomplish something they value and care about. It is in this relational dynamic that the phenomenon of creativity emerges along with other things that are not creative.

Exploring and Celebrating Creative Self-Expression

Norman Jackson (Editor)

Pandemic context

Spring is a time to celebrate our creativity but we are living in the strangest world I have ever known. A world in which economies have been shut down and forms of social life that have been developed over millennia have been severely disrupted through enforced lockdowns. Under such strange circumstances the normative behaviours, daily routines and habits we have developed may not be relevant and we have had to invent new forms of being. The paradox of Covid 19 is that while it has radically disrupted life as we know it and caused many untimely deaths and much suffering, it has had far reaching effects on the way people view life and what is important to their mental wellbeing. This disruption has forced us to adapt and improvise, search for and discover new ways of living, communicating and being. For some people the pandemic has provided new opportunities for creative expression while for others the environment it has created has diminished their desires to be creative. The pandemic provides the underlying context for this issue and the next issue of the magazine, through which we explore the idea of creative self-expression.

Spring

Spring with all its promise of renewal and growth, has (at least in the UK) become the time of the year when we pay particular attention to our creativity. Each year the annual World Creativity and Innovation Week (WCIW) is organised in April and May is a Creative Festival month in the UK.

Creative Academic participates in several of these events by facilitating discussions on the #creativeHE platform on topics relating to creativity and producing a magazine to curate the conversations. During April and May of this year, our discussions formed around the idea of creative self-expression and the relationships between creativity, health and wellbeing. These discussions will be curated in the next issue CAM17 but several articles in this issue have grown out of the discussion. In this issue we include a selection of articles that help us explore the idea of creative self-expression.

Creativity Events in April & May 2020

- *World Creativity and Innovation Week* - April 15-21
- *Age of Creativity* - runs throughout May 2020, specifically aimed at individuals aged 50+ (that includes me!)
- BBC's *Get Creative Festival* - runs 9-17 May 2020, profiling everyday creativity for everyone
- *Creativity & Wellbeing Week* - runs 18-24 May 2020, showcasing culture, health and wellbeing events for all ages.
- *Annual Creativity Researcher's Conference* - is normally held in May but is postponed this year

Introduction to this issue

One of the goals of Creative Academic is to encourage the flow of information about creativity derived from research and scholarship to the community of educational practitioners. This issue of our Magazine features an article by Dr Marta Ockuly¹ who used heuristic self-search inquiry methodology² to explore questions like: (a) What is my lived experience of creativity? (b) How do I define and understand creativity? (c) How can the lived experience of creativity be defined in a way that engages imagination, inspires creative action, and increases self-identification with personal creativity? The author documented her personal creative process, intuitions and inspirations, in order to develop deeper understandings of what creativity means in the contexts of her own unfolding life and the circumstances in which her creativity emerged. We believe that this is an important self-study and we are delighted that Marta accepted our invitation to share her findings and insights through our magazine and through our April-May 2020 facebook #creativeHE discussion on creative self-expression.

An important goal of Creative Academic is to try and gain deeper understandings of what creativity means in the everyday worlds of individuals. We have shied away from Big-C culture changing notions of creativity and concerned ourselves with the small-c or little-c manifestations of creativity that are familiar to all of us in our everyday lives. Here we are concerned with how we draw upon our creativity in the things we choose to do such as participating in hobbies, sport, travel, DIY and a multitude of other things, and how involvement in such things yields things that we cannot experience elsewhere in our lives. Such engagements are an important part of who we are and help sustain our sense of self and of becoming and growing. They are also an important contributor to our mental health and wellbeing.

In our online #creativeHE discussions and courses we have encouraged participants to share not only the products of their small-c creativity but their perspectives on what being creative meant to them and how their creativity was involved in the generation of new thoughts and the bringing of new things and experiences into existence. We are all unique beings, with unique genetic and experiential and emotional histories that determine who we are. Our uniqueness extends into our circumstances and the environments of our everyday life so it is not surprising that new and novel thoughts, actions and things emerge in our everyday doings.

Our educational thinking is founded on the philosophy of John Dewey and adult educator Eduard Lindeman - *“education is life not merely preparation for an unknown kind of future living... The whole of life is learning, therefore education can have no endings”*^{3:4-5}. Consequently, we have adopted a lifewide conception of human experience in which individuals participate simultaneously in different spaces and contexts, like home and family, education, work, hobbies and interests, community projects, sport, travel and more. Who we have been, who we are and who we are becoming is the result of our participation in all aspects of our life. And our participation in each of these mini domains holds potential for thinking, action and practice through which our creativity can be expressed and manifested.

In our research we have begun to conceptualise creativity as an ecological phenomenon⁴ emerging from and through our practices as we relate to and interact with our environment, drawing on Rogers’ understanding of a creative process, ‘the emergence in action of a novel relational product growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, or circumstances of their life’^{5:350}. As we began to assemble this issue I came across an article by John Kilbourne in which he uses the metaphor of marriage to explain the unique way in which we use our creativity to express ourselves and I am delighted that John gave us permission to reproduce his article in this issue.

It stands to reason that if creativity is such a personal and emergent experience then we need to be adept at understanding its meaning in the circumstances of ourselves, our lives and our relationships and interactions with the worlds we inhabit. But rarely do we take the time or put in the effort to understand the way we embody and enact our own creativity. Marta’s study is exceptional in the way she has interrogated, documented, thought about and analysed her own thinking and practice over a five year period and therefore we can learn much from her self-study.

And once we gain insights into our own creativity perhaps we can employ our creativity to visualize and theorise the why, the how and the when? For example, the American philosopher and educator John Dewey pondered these questions and surmised that acts of creativity are driven by an ‘impulse,’ ‘a sudden strong and unreflective urge or desire to act’. Dewey believed that action and creativity are brought together through human experience, defined precisely by the interaction between a person and their environment: “When we experience something, we act upon it, we do something with it; then we suffer or undergo the consequences. We do something to the thing and then it does something to us in return.”^{4 p.46} Dewey developed his argument into a model to describe what happens when a person interacts with their environment to create new value. A visual interpretation of this model is shown in Figure 1.

“For Dewey, what brings action and creativity together is human experience, defined precisely by the interaction between person and environment and intrinsically related to human activity in and with the world. ...Action starts....with an impulsion and is directed toward fulfillment. In order for action to constitute experience though, obstacles or constraints are needed. Faced with these challenges, the person experiences emotion and gains awareness (of self, of the aim, and path of action). Most importantly, action is structured as a continuous cycle of “doing” (actions directed at the environment) and “undergoing” (taking in the reaction of the environment). Undergoing always precedes doing and, at the same time, is continued by it. It is through these interconnected processes that action can be taken forward and become a “full” experience.”^{5 p2-3}

Creative self-expression lies in the interactions of self and world. It lies in the creator marrying different things from a world that has meaning to the creator (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Summary of Dewey’s model of human experience within which human creativity emerges. Adapted from⁵.



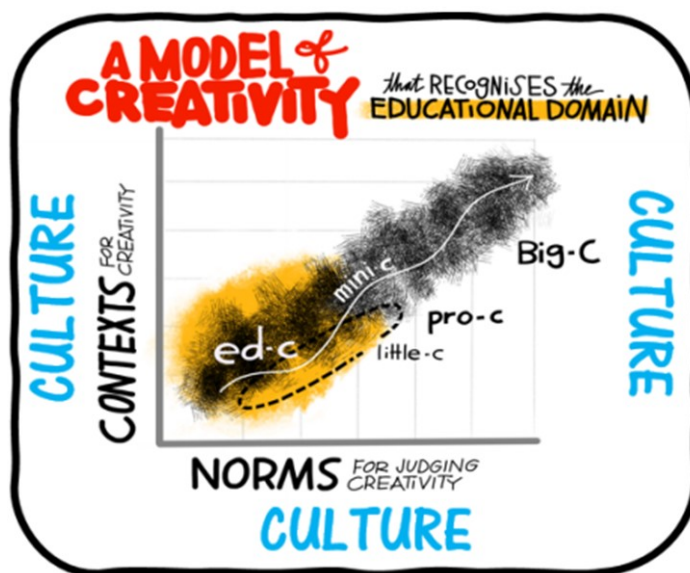
When we have gained insights into our creative processes and practices we can develop our own self-theories about our own creativity (in the way John Kilbourne reveals in his article) and it will be a delight to compare how we each come to view our own creativity in the particular situations we encounter or create during our spring celebration of creativity. I myself have benefited from this journey to a greater self-awareness. In early March, just before the pandemic struck, I went on holiday with my wife to NW Scotland. I was bowled over by the landscapes and literally sat down amongst the rocks and made some towers. This simple act of self-expression led to other creative acts⁶ and led me to understand the idea of creative self-expression as “the ways and means by which a person connects, relates and interacts their inner cognitive/psychological world - their many selves holding beliefs, values, identities, perceptions, imaginings, reasonings and feelings, with their environment - the world that has meaning to them, in order to share their thoughts and feelings and / or create something that is a part of themselves. Through this relational, enactive and embodied dynamic involving a person and the environment that has meaning to them, the phenomenon of creativity emerges along with other things that are not creative.”

In her article Johanna Payton illustrates how lockdown has created the conditions for her family to engage in several creative projects. But for some people, as Kevin Byron points out, the conditions of lockdown have had a negative impact on the desire of some people to express themselves creatively. Jenny Willis attempts to capture this dichotomy in her small-scale survey of the relationship between creativity and wellbeing.

Going back to Dewey’s model in Figure 1 - we might ask ourselves, what happens when our relationships and interactions with the world do not lead to an impulse that compel us to act and perform in creative ways. By understanding what motivates and demotivates us in our environment we are better placed to optimise our own creativity.

In the January 2020 issue of our magazine we explored and extended the 4C model of creativity developed by Kaufman and Beghetto⁷. Creative self-expression must be associated with all the domains of the model including the educational domain⁸ (Figure 2). However, most but not all of the stories we heard about creativity in the lockdown era fall in the little-c domain of creativity. In this issue, drawing on the ideas emerging from Carly Lassig’s study, we try to see how creative self-expression might relate to other categories of creativity and develop this conceptual aid a little further⁹.

Figure 2 The 5C model of creativity⁸ that allows us to map acts of creative self-expression



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Celebrating Creativity: Personal Meanings From My Own Life

Marta Ockuly



Marta describes herself as is a creativity catalyst, coach, facilitator, educator, and humanistic psychologist. Her passion is awakening creative potential and creative confidence with joy. She gained an MSc in Creativity from the International Center for Studies in Creativity at Buffalo State before entering the doctoral programme at Saybrook University where she was awarded a PhD in 2019. Her passion is teaching for creativity in higher education as well as awakening adult and educator creative potential and creative confidence with joy. Her research resulted in proposing the first imagination-informed, dynamic, and phenomenon-based definition of personal creativity and a lexicon of terms associated with the lived experience of human creativity, in addition to a non-linear creative process model, and the concept of creativity influencers. Creative self-expression is all about communicating who we are to the world and in the introduction to her article Marta provides a rich narrative of her life to reveal how she has become the person she is and how she has come to understand her own creativity.

How do we understand our own creativity?

It's a simple yet profound question that we should all ask ourselves from time to time. I believe our understandings of creativity must adapt and evolve along with the world we live in. In other words, our understandings continuously grow as our lives unfold and we participate in and reflect on our own experiences. I experience my own creativity as a personal (and person-centered) process that engages imagination, intuition, wondering, openness, possibility thinking, embodied movement, making, expression, meaning and joy every day of my life. I find it is most often sparked by a 'feeling', curiosity, or a question (asking 'what if'). In this issue of the magazine dedicated to creative self-expression, I share some of my own explorations over the past decade of how I have come to understand my own evolving views of creativity as a catalyst, practitioner, researcher and educator/awakener. My creativity developed organically and without external direction or evaluation - criticism or praise.

Who is Marta Ockuly? How did I become the creative person I am?

Everything has a context and it is important to understand the context in order to understand phenomenon in that context. In any self-study, the person, their history, environment, purposes, processes and activities in their environment provide essential contexts.

I am a first generation American and the firstborn of parents who immigrated from Ukraine after World War II. They actually met and married in Cleveland, Ohio. Only Ukrainian was spoken in our home although my mother spoke English fluently. She taught me English when I started insisting I wanted to start school at age 4. The public schools would not allow it, but when my protests continued, my mom found a private school nearby that agreed to accept me. I remember writing and illustrating a book about an enterprising bunny named Bugsy when I was 5 or 6. I was also an early (and voracious) reader. In my home, reading and learning were highly valued. If I was reading, I was never interrupted. My sister (2 years younger than me) had no interest in reading, so she got stuck doing yard work and chores while I dove deeper and deeper into the inspiring nonfiction books I loved. I felt drawn to autobiographies of inspiring people who overcame big challenges. Early favorites: Helen Keller, Eleanor Roosevelt, Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill come to mind.

Growing up, I was considered 'the writer' in the family. If my sister had trouble with book reports, I was told to help her. If my parents needed to have something 'official' or 'formal' written, I was enlisted. I also self-identified as a storyteller, teacher, and 'idea person.' Ideas were fun for me. It seemed I had an unlimited supply. My sister and I grew up understanding we could do or be anything we wanted to. Education, hard work, and 'having a trade' as well as a college education were highly valued in my home.

Every Saturday morning, when other kids were watching cartoons, my sister and I attended Ukrainian school memorizing long poems, learning about Ukrainian history, language, literature, culture, traditions. When I was 14, my mom offered me the option of attending Beauty School on Saturdays. I agreed, even though I had no interest in becoming a beautician. This training felt fun to me, but my parents considered it 'learning a trade to fall back on.' The year I graduated high school it did become handy. When the owners of a new chain of wig stores visited the beauty school I attended and asked the director for the name of the best stylist and my name was shared. I was 16 and just out of high school. I was interviewed and offered the position of fashion coordinator and 'platform artist'. My responsibilities also included writing newspaper ads as well as radio and television scripts, in addition to being 'on air talent' for both. I loved this work. It was a huge opportunity and my creativity blossomed. However, my parents were not happy. Their dream for me was focused on attending college. I was given permission to work for two years if I promised to enroll in college by the time I was 18. I

agreed. My experience in the workplace influenced my decision to pursue a degree in Advertising and Marketing. Looking back, I can see I had a huge preference for experiential learning.

Sitting through the first year of my degree program felt like torture. I desperately wanted to get back into the 'real world' to start developing advanced skills. I spoke to my advisor and the professor heading the program and got permission for me to participate in senior level courses. It turned out to be project based and I thrived in that environment. At the end of that semester, the professor invited me to submit a senior portfolio. It won 'best of show' and that professor took me aside and said: "You have what you need to walk into any ad agency and be offered a position." I took his advice. I rolled my completed credits into a 2-year degree and returned home to Cleveland.

I did receive job offers from every hiring manager who reviewed my portfolio. The first position I accepted was as copywriter for a major department store. I chose it because I wanted to develop my skills working in print production. After a year, I accepted a position at an ad agency where I could build my skills in public relations. A year after I married, my husband was transferred to St. Louis, Missouri. I was selected to oversee creative services Rexall Drug Company, a huge, private label vitamin manufacturer. My responsibilities included planning and developing monthly print advertising promotions as well as point-of-sale and collateral materials for franchisees around the world. After 3 years, my husband's job took us to the Washington, DC area.

I applied and interviewed for two positions. One was a federal government post that involved multiple interviews and screenings. The 'top ten' candidates were asked to develop a complete marketing campaign based on criteria the hiring team provided. My campaign was selected and I was offered the position of Director of Marketing for the National Film Institute. At the same time, another company I interviewed with offered me a position. I chose the second opportunity. It came with a car and the title of: Vice President of Advertising and Marketing. I was still in my 20's and valued having the freedom of being fearless when sharing ideas and suggesting visionary strategies. This family-owned retail chain gave me freedom to put my ideas into action.

A year later, my husband and I made the decision to move back to Ohio when my father developed serious health issues. Over the next two years I gave birth to my daughter and son. With my mother's help I was able to return to the workplace. I was hired as Public Information Officer for the Department of Health and Human Services. This position required overseeing community services, communications, and public relations for the county. It also gave me an inside look at working in a politically charged government agency. I learned a great deal, but after 2 years I returned to the corporate arena.

I was offered a position in Public Relations for the biggest drug store chain in America. During that time a hugely disruptive event occurred when several people died as a result of over-the-counter drug tampering. I was the spokesperson for what came to be known as the 'Tylenol crisis.' That event stimulated the first total recall of a product to protect public safety. Our response won awards. Soon after, the company experienced a corporate takeover. I was interviewed for the Director of In-House Advertising position when the new management team came in. I moved into my new office the next day. Four years later we won the top creative award in our industry. When the next shake-up came along, I took the severance package offered and used it to launch own consulting business and Center for Creative Change.

My focus, at that point, had shifted away from selling products to awakening creative potential in adults. I was known as a 'creativity encourager' all the years I worked in the corporate world. People often asked me for help identifying their true passion and purpose. The way I did it involved practicing expressive engagement in creative process, identifying strengths and preferences, and prompting beginner experiences. There were no safe spaces in place to do that. I began visualizing a nature-based center where adults interested in fully actualizing their creative potential could feel safe, guided and supported through the process. I sketched out a core program and started looking for a location close to the park system. From my perspective, people learn best in experiential settings where they feel safe to try and fail, take risks, stretch their boundaries, take chances, and try new things.

I went through a divorce and my children and I moved in with my mom. While there I went through a deep process of self-healing and personal growth. I also had the opportunity to travel, go to spiritual retreats, and participate in humanitarian work. When the time was right, I was intuitively led to Angel House - my Center for Creative Change. My mother, children and I moved in. Classes and workshops were held on the lower level. Our family living quarters were on the second level. The beautiful 3 story farmhouse was built in the early 1900's. It sat on 3 acres and was bordered by small creek near the house, a river at the back of the property, and hundreds of acres of forest and park land surrounding it. There I was able to teach my classes and host workshops and trainings just as I had envisioned. During that time, I began noticing strong links between taking creative action and the feeling of joy attraction. I felt an 'inner knowing' it was a topic I wanted to research in the not too distant future. After seven wonderful years, my children graduated high school and left to follow their dreams. My mother remarried and moved to her new home, and I sold the center to a psychologist excited to continue my work. In February of 2003, I packed up my car and drove to Sarasota, Florida.

I did not know a soul. I rented a place on the beach and took two-hour walks three times a day for three months. I called it my 'healing time.' I felt strongly 'called' at that time to return to college to prepare for the second half of my life. I quickly discovered Eckerd College - a liberal arts institution founded on humanistic principles less than an hour's drive away. Their Program for Experienced Learners (P.E.L.) program was set up

for people exactly like me who began their BA degree, but never finished it. I chose to major in human development and counseling. I applied, was accepted, and began my studies in May. My first 'elective' course was titled: Creative Process. It exposed me to the writings of Carl Rogers, Natalie Rogers, Abraham Maslow, and Rollo May. Their person-centered process perspectives of creativity mirrored mine. After completing the course, I knew I would be back to teach my own version of that course in an expanded way.

Unfortunately, in November of 2003, tragedy struck. I was diagnosed with two potentially fatal conditions: acute myelogenous leukemia and aspergillus pneumonia. It turns out the three months I was walking the beach for six hours a day, there was a toxic algae bloom happening that completely destroyed my immune system. By the time I was seen by a doctor, my hemoglobin level was 4. Doctors said I did not have enough blood in my body to beat my heart, let alone walk unassisted into the ER, but I did both. I was new to Florida, attending school and not employed so I was without medical insurance. Social workers at the hospital were able to me get approved for social security disability insurance at the bedside. I was not expected to survive and the hospital needed to be paid. I ended up spending 6 weeks in the hospital undergoing extreme chemo and other treatments. While bedridden, I kept up with my Eckerd course readings and assignments. After I was released, I still needed to visit the hospital weekly for outpatient blood tests, infusions, transfusions, and/or crisis management. The need for weekly check-ins ended in 2007. That year, I proudly walked across the stage to accept my Eckerd College Bachelor of Arts degree with high honors. I was also the recipient of Eckerd's Writer of Excellence Award. In the reception after my graduation ceremony I learned I was selected that year's Outstanding Human Development Major. When we had a chance to talk, I asked the Dean of my program what type of credential I needed to be able to teach my own Creative Process course in the future. She told me I would need a terminal degree and encouraged me to go for it.

After exploring graduate school options related to teaching for creativity, I selected the International Center for Studies in Creativity (ICSC) at Buffalo State in Buffalo, New York. I rented out my home in Florida and temporarily relocated to Buffalo so I could attend as a residential student. I was a confident creator excited to dive into research relating to awakening adult creative potential and teaching for creativity across the lifespan. As I walked into the first course meeting on a sunny day in May of 2010, I felt eager to get started. The room was filled with a diverse mix of students waiting for their journey to begin.

As soon as the professor arrived, he walked to the front of the room and asked: "What is the definition of creativity?" When no one replied, he stated: "Creativity is novelty and usefulness." I laughed and said: "You've got to be kidding." He responded by saying: "Novelty and usefulness is the scholarly definition of creativity, but you are free to define it any way you like."

the professor arrived, he walked to the front of the room and asked: "What is the definition of creativity?" When no one replied, he stated: "Creativity is novelty and usefulness." I laughed and said: "You've got to be kidding."

It was clearly not the time to argue, but I was *shocked*. Why wouldn't I be? The word 'define' literally means: "to describe the nature, scope or meaning of something" (OED). The words: 'novelty and usefulness' did not tick any of those boxes. Even worse, those terms implied creativity lived in a static product rather than a dynamic human process! For a second I felt sick thinking I made a mistake choosing ICSC. But when I closed my eyes and took a calming breath, and heard the words: "What if you are here to reimagine the way creativity is being defined moving forward?" That idea filled me with energy, and I claimed it as my new mission.

ICSC turned out to be the best place to build my foundation in creativity studies. The professors were supportive, encouraging, and 100% open to me pursuing my authentic path. In my final semester at ICSC, I took an innovative course developed by Dr. Cyndi Burnett called Contemporary Issues in Creativity. Our assignment was to 'adopt a researcher.' I sent an e-mail to eminent creativity researcher Ruth Richards and she quickly responded to my invitation to do a phone interview. During our conversation she surprised me with an invitation to be part of an article she was working on about mentoring with several students and alumni of Saybrook University. It did not seem to matter that we had never met and I was not a Saybrook student at that time. I jumped at the chance and it became my first published work.

I completed my ICSC Master of Science degree in teaching for creativity in one year. Things moved fast from there. I graduated in May of 2011 and drove straight back to Florida. I had a contract to begin teaching my new Creative Process Course at Eckerd in August. I also made the decision to enroll in Saybrook's doctoral program to fully research and bring forward my new definition of creativity. I chose Saybrook University because of its humanistic roots and the fact Ruth Richards and Natalie Rogers were both on the faculty. I was able to meet them both at my first Saybrook Residential Conference that August. When I met Natalie Rogers' she had just released her second book and autographed it for me. She also invited me to join her next cohort scheduled to begin in August of 2013. Being part of her Person-Centered Expressive Arts (PCEA) 2-year certification program led me to the most meaningful and transformative experiences of my life.

From August 2011-2017, I had the joy of teaching for creativity, awakening self-awareness of creativity, and building creative confidence in adult students in the Program for Experienced Learners (PEL) at Eckerd College. The course I developed and taught for 6 years was called: Creative Process: Awakening Creative Potential for Personal and Professional Growth. The lived experience of teaching for creativity in higher education showed me that engaging in personally meaningful creative process can help adults build or enhance their creative self-concept. Creating a safe space for creative risk taking was essential. From the first course meeting, students learned the importance of evaluation free language. I believe untapped creative potential is an important natural

resource to develop at this time in history. I am committed to designing programs for teaching adult students and faculty inside and outside of higher education how to awaken creativity and imagination while building creative confidence and self-efficacy because we are moving into a future that will rely on humans helping each other and the Earth. It will take imagining an as-yet unimagined future to address the challenges facing a world in need of healing.

Just to be clear, my Eckerd students were not my 'research subjects.' However, they deeply influenced my lived experience of teaching for creativity in higher education, as well as my lived experience of being a heuristic creativity researcher.

Ruth Richards was my professor and mentor at Saybrook. When I challenged the scholarly definition of creativity in my first writing assignment, she challenged me to undertake an original research study to see if my views were supported by data. I had absolutely no prior experience with doctoral-level academic writing. I had never conducted a research study that called for selecting a methodology, designing a survey, going through the IRB process - none of it. My background was in business, not academia. Richards generously guided me through the whole process. At the end it was a 60-page paper and I was completely burned out. As challenging as it was, it was also a huge honor to work with Dr. Richards every step of the way. The mixed method study: *Loving or Fearing Creativity? It's all in the Definition*¹ was the result. At the end, she let me know her own perspective had been changed by the data.

Richards took this a step forward by suggesting a Creative Process Panel to the committee organizing the 2012 American Psychological Association Conference. It was approved and I was invited to present our study findings at the conference².

Participating in Natalie Rogers' 2-year PCEA certificate program represented the most rigorous, profound, and transformative experience of my doctoral journey. It began in 2013 and was completed in 2015. Having the opportunity to hear Natalie's views about creativity and the power of self-expression and learn first-hand how she came to embody the work of her father Carl Rogers inspired me to bring her spirit and powerful creative perspectives to this research. She passed in October of 2015, less than 2 months after our last conversation.



My journal entry from that day follows:



On October 17, 2015, Natalie Rogers left this world. It fills me with sadness for myself and our PCEA community, as well as her beloved family and friends. I also grieve for the world. Natalie was a bright light in many lives, always working to promote peace and positive change through expressive creative action. I sketched this image starting with her head surrounded by lines of light and the words: NATALIE is LOVE NOW and the word Forever above her large, light filled heart. Looking at it now, it seems she is floating up with arms wide open and her feet just above the ground. The words on the right side of her gown say...passed into spirit to dance with Angels! The words, Reconnection to Source, are followed by Joy and Healing Love at the bottom of the page. Natalie and I had spoken about my research, and she was encouraging of this work. She knew my objective was to bring forward a new humanistic definition and theory of creativity that brought together her ideas about the lived experience of creativity and her father's theory of creativity. Even as I write this, I feel Natalie's energy with me. I remain grateful for having had the priceless opportunity to learn from and work with this amazing teacher, mentor, and creativity influencer. Thank you, Natalie...you are my shero!

Now five years have passed. My dissertation is published. The founder of United Nation's World Creativity & Innovation Day asked for and received permission to use my new definition in their action plan and materials. The world is battling a pandemic. People are dying while the earth heals. What are we called to express? We have time to do it.

How I imagined a possibility and made it happen

My journey to greater self-awareness began in earnest when I launched my Research Journal #1 on January 11, 2013. It also contains notes from the first meeting of my 2-year Expressive Arts for Healing and Social Change: A Person-Centered Approach certificate program with Natalie Rogers, Sue Ann Herron, and Terri Goslin-Jones as facilitators. Our 16-person international cohort met at Westerbeke Ranch in Sonoma, California for a full week every 4 months. Each day we engaged in creative process and experiential learning from 9am to 10pm. We listened and learned, reflected and observed, cried, laughed, and ate together. Through this shared and co-created seminal experience, by the end of the week we had bonded for life. Each of the 6 weeks had a theme and assigned pre-course reading assignments as well as post course papers due a month later. This form of learning was full of rigor and self-discovery.

My dissertation is titled: *“Reimagining the way the lived experience of creativity is defined, inspired, and encouraged in the 21st century: A creativity practitioner/educator’s heuristic inquiry.”*³ It was published in September of 2019. In my abstract I wrote:-

“Imagination alone is not creativity, but there is no creativity without imagination. Since the 1950’s creativity scholars have relied on the product criteria of novelty and usefulness⁴ to define the construct, even though this approach uses “extrinsic outcomes at the level of culture as the starting point to conceptualize individual activities characterized by intrinsic motivation”^{5 p 18}

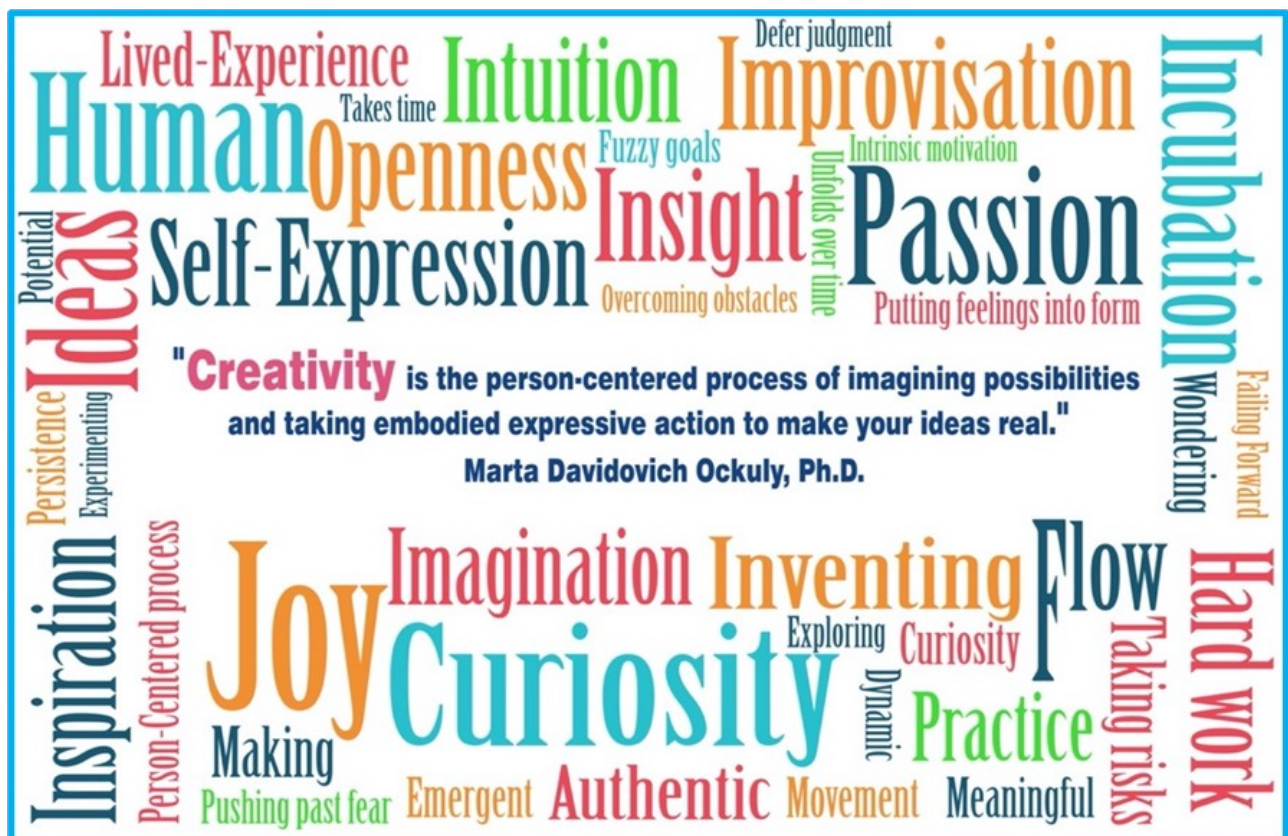
This study shares 150+ diverse definitions of creativity from 1950-2019 and proposes a definition of personal creativity that is dynamic, imagination-informed, and phenomenon-based. It states, **“Creativity is the person-centered process of imagining possibilities and taking embodied expressive action to make your idea(s) real.”** This *explicitly human* definition avoids premature evaluation while differentiating human from machine creativity.

The qualitative methodology used is heuristic self-search inquiry^{6,7}. The researcher asked: (a) What is my lived experience of creativity? (b) How do I define and understand creativity? (c) How can the lived experience of creativity be defined in a way that engages imagination, inspires creative action, and increases self-identification with personal creativity? The author documented her personal creative process, intuitions, inspirations, and reflections from 2013-2019, producing 4,800 pages of data. Themes were identified using reflectivity.

Artificial intelligence and machines might generate novel and useful ideas and process data faster than humans, but only human creativity is fueled by imagination, intuition, curiosity, empathy, and intrinsic motivation. Findings include a humanistic definition and theory of creativity, a non-linear creative process model, a lexicon of lived experience of creativity terms, and the concept of creativity influencers. Future research is also addressed.”¹

I am also excited to report that my new definition of creativity has been adopted for use with United Nations sanctioned World Creativity & Innovation Day, April 21st thanks to Marci Segal. She is also the ICSC alumna who proposed the idea of this special day and worked with the UN for six years to get it approved. It is fitting that this issue of the magazine was developed as a contribution to the 2020 WCID and week.

Figure 1 Ideas and feelings associated with the lived experience of creativity and my personalized definition of creativity Rainbow Word Cloud created by M.D.Ockuly 1-11-19



The words surrounding the new definition in the middle of Figure 1 are from my new lexicon of terms associated with the lived experience of creativity, another important finding and addition to creativity literature. *What is your first reaction looking at this image? Which words did you notice first? How did you feel reading the definition?* I have received wonderful feedback from educators, creativity facilitators, and other creativity researchers. When a professor from a highly respected college of art and design in Florida saw it he told me it was “the first descriptive, dynamic, precise, and actionable definition of creativity” he had ever encountered.

Definitions of terms I use in my human creativity research

In Appendix 1 I include the definitions of terms I have used in my research. Definitions of terms that have been omitted reflect my personal views based on my lived experience as a creativity practitioner, researcher and educator. *Do these definitions match your understandings of these terms? If not, please share what you feel might work better. Did you find any that seemed inappropriate? Are there terms that you feel are essential missing from the list?*

My personal worldview and research preferences

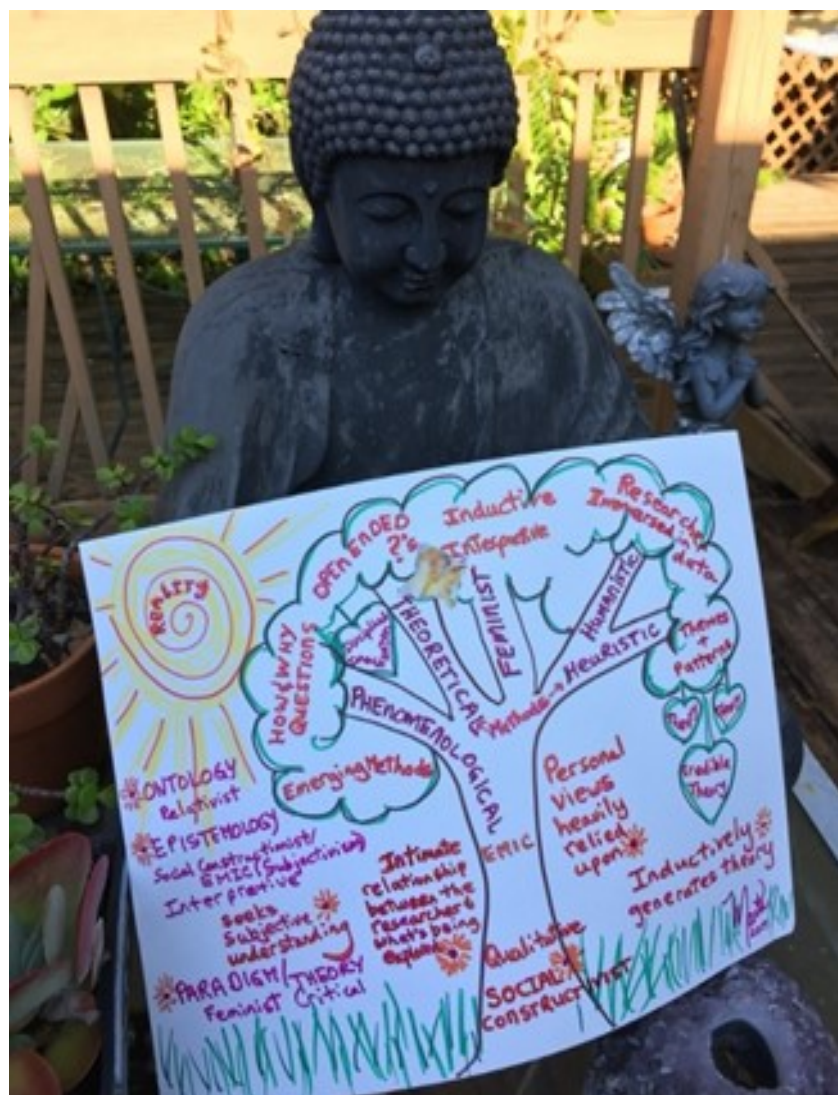
I knew nothing about research methodologies when I arrived at Saybrook in 2011. It was not until 2016 when I dove into the literature to formulate my own doctoral research proposal that I began to understand what I was trying to achieve. I immersed myself in the literature and texts specifically focused on qualitative perspectives. I discovered my ontology was relativist. My epistemology is social constructionist as well as EMIC (subjective) and interpretive (*emic - relating to, or involving analysis of cultural phenomena from the perspective of one who participates in the culture being studied*). I was also interested in emerging methods, feminist paradigms, and critical theory. I knew I inductively generated theory and relied heavily on my personal views as well.

The notes and sketches I was recording in my journal began to look like a tree with five big branches. I found a big poster board and some colorful markers and created the poster in the image below. I am a visual person so ‘seeing my thoughts’ helps me to clarify the information I am taking in. After this process, I was able to write a proper research proposal. When the paper was finished, I had the idea to set up this photo of the poster being held up by a Buddha statue on my back deck. For me, process of figuring out my worldview was like putting together a 1000-piece puzzle. It took several days to map out my preferences. Now, I self-identify as a humanistic social constructivist with an interpretive approach that is solidly qualitative and rooted in my passion for creativity. Beyond research design and methodology, I bring my own unique worldview and philosophical perspectives into my research. I do not see the concepts of *human* and *creativity* as separate. Rather, I see creativity as something I am expressing, developing, storing, or ignoring. When passion and active engagement in creative process are present, so is productivity. Low energy days feed my need for silence, mindfulness, and reflection.

Personal Research Preferences
Art+Photography by M.D. Ockuly, 2017

Inquiring into myself

I chose heuristic self-search inquiry as my primary method^{6,7,8} I found this approach ideal for addressing my research questions because it uses intuition and self-dialog as part of the process. It also gave me the opportunity to engage in a research process as both researcher and sole participant. Heuristic research also proved to be an inner and outer journey that allowed me to swim in creative flow without needing to know where I would ultimately go. As sole participant I was the explorer, the experienter, and the ‘the one who feels’ and makes sense of experiences in this study.



Intuition guided my heuristic inquiry every step of the way. Rosemarie Anderson, the researcher who developed the empirical research method of intuitive inquiry, notes: "Often, intuitive inquirers explore topics that require attention by the culture at large, as though they are called to envision anew. What may seem like a researcher's zeal for a topic may be the tip of an iceberg of a call for change from the culture at large"^{9p.17} These words resonate with me deeply. I was led to this research by my passion for changing the way creativity was defined and understood in the literature and in the world. Now that my definition is published and out in the world, I find it gratifying similar work is being published by other researchers.

The term *heuristic* comes from the ancient Greek word *heuriskein*, "meaning to discover or to find"^{8 p.9} Moustakas described heuristic inquiry* as a qualitative, social constructivist, and phenomenologically aligned research model⁸. In the context of social science and educational research, heuristic inquiry has also been identified as an autobiographical approach to qualitative research focused on the unfolding experience of living⁸

I began tracking my lived experience of creativity as a doctoral student in 2013 after the seed of this heuristic study was planted. To record my process from beginning to end, I used hardbound research journals that hold 200 pages of content. When the journal is open, the page on the right is lined, and the page on the left is blank - making it ideal for collage use, joy mandalas, or sketching out ideas. The image below shows all 24 completed journals. Each is filled with tabs marking important insights. The last 6 journals sit on the top shelf next to my most often quoted creativity book written by Natalie Rogers: *The Creative Connection*¹⁰. A precious photo of me with Natalie (shown paper-clipped to the cover of her book) was taken in 2013, at the beginning of Course 1 of her 2-year certification Program in Person Centered Expressive Arts For Healing and Social Change. The completed journals shown here hold 4,800 pages of data related to my lived experience of creativity. Every person's lived experience of creativity is unique and complex. I consider my journals record-keepers of my personal embodied view and experience of creativity. They are also well-used and much-loved holders of my ideas, aha's, flow writing, notes, quotes, collages, questions, complaints, sketches, poems, frustrations, rants, and reflections as they emerged in Chronos time.

Record Keepers of my Dissertation Journey.
Photographer: M.D. Ockuly



I was very deliberate about recording insights, ideas, and intuitions as they occurred. I also kept my research journal at my bedside to record insights upon waking. When I read books and literature related to my inquiry, I copied selected quotes into my journal along with citation information and reflections. At times, I wrote questions in my journal and self-dialogue with my 'present self' asking questions to my future self who answered them. Many days I scanned magazines looking for images to use in future collages. This process gave me access to my default network and new ideas. Engagement in expressive activities such as: dancing, sounding, playing my drum as well as other percussion instruments stimulated my energy and ideas. Movement, making, shaking, dancing, and walking were used daily, as well as when I felt blocked.

In my experience, heuristic research is continuous. My intuition often leads me to new research studies, books, or relevant stories in magazines or on Facebook. It sometimes felt as if I was getting direct orders from my sub-conscious leading me to new data discoveries. I found journal writing to be a form of "nomadic inquiry"^{11 p.484} This term is rooted in the idea "writing is thinking, writing is analysis, writing is indeed a seductive and tangled method of discovery". As researcher and instrument using this method of inquiry, my writing is in personal form¹².

Heuristic inquiry is sparked by a question the researcher finds deeply meaningful. The first guiding concept involves, "exploratory open-ended inquiry, self-directed search, and immersion in active experience [to] get inside the question"^{8 p.15}.

My lived experience of engaging with each of these concepts is described below.

Concept 1: Identifying with the focus of inquiry. I came into this research strongly self-identifying with creativity and having an unwavering sense of my creative self-efficacy. I also felt distressed about the scholarly definition of creativity because I was convinced it did not describe the phenomenon or inspire action. Definitions need to describe something in terms people can identify with. From the moment I heard creativity defined as novelty and usefulness, I made it my mission to redefine it in a way that included imagination and inspired action. I needed to really think about my own lived experience of creativity, because up until the time I heard that definition, I practiced creativity but never really thought much about defining it. For me, this step involved getting inside each of my research questions and becoming one with the questions and the inquiry. I would start by closing my eyes and centering myself. With journal and pen in hand, I would ask myself, "What do I need to know?" The questions that immediately flowed into my awareness are listed below:

QUESTIONS

What is creativity? How does it feel in my body? How do I typically experience my creative process? What fills me with energy? What drains me? When I am expressing creativity, what am I doing? What are the words that describe me when I am being creative? What are the unseen attributes of my creativity? What inspires my creativity? What blocks it? What am I afraid to explore? What role does fear play in my creativity? What outcomes motivate my creativity? What are my preferred methods for overcoming creative blocks?

I sat with each question and recorded my inner dialogue. This inside-out perspective called forward intuitive and tacit knowledge informed responses. Intuition and tacit knowing was present because answers often appeared before I could write out the complete question.

Concept 2: Self-dialogue. I have two ways of incorporating self-dialogue. At times, I write my question using my non-dominant hand at the top of a blank page in my journal. As soon as my pen is transferred to my dominant hand, the words begin to flow. I write without editing or censoring. When complete, I reflect on the words and their meanings for me. Other times, I engage in a dialogue between my present self (Smarta) and future self, identified by my initials (MDO). Both methods were effective ways of stimulating both tacit knowledge and intuition.

Concept 3: Tacit knowing. When I first heard the *novel and useful* definition of creativity it felt out of alignment with my tacit knowing about creativity. I intuitively *knew* the definition was off the mark because I felt the ‘wrongness’ of it in my body. Tacit knowing generally precedes intuition and shows us “we can *know* more than we can *tell*”^{13 p.4}. I believe tacit knowledge and intuition also informed my instant *knowing* that redefining creativity was my destiny.

Concept 4: Intuition. Intuition informs my research process. It is my constant companion. Over the course of this inquiry, the voice of my intuition was often the first I heard in the morning. My intuition does not mince words. What I hear is generally cryptic, “Google these key words.” It takes some digging, but when I go deeper, I am led to literature discoveries that feel important to me. Moustakas found, “the more that intuition is exercised and tested, the more likely one will develop an advanced perceptiveness and sensitivity to what is essential in discovery of knowledge”^{8 p.23}. My intuitive powers have increased dramatically through this inquiry.

Concept 5: Focusing. Focusing is inner attention that puts the inquiry into perspective - from getting needed clarification, to identifying core themes, and central meanings of the experience. I listen to subliminal BrainSync® recordings by Kelly Howell when I need help focusing. The titles that work best for me are: *Pure Focus* and *Clear Wave Creativity*. These binaural beat soundtracks play in the background while I work on my helped by my daily mindfulness and meditation practices.

Concept 6: Internal frame of reference. The essence of a human experience depends on the internal frame of reference of the person having the experience. My personal internal frame of reference forms the context for all I have written in this dissertation. Sharing my internal frame of reference requires honesty, courage, and a commitment to recording insights and findings as soon as they occur and as authentically and honestly as possible. I believe understanding human lived experience depends on valuing the internal frame of reference in research because it is situated in real life, rather than constructed research settings. What is raw and real has much to reveal.

Phases of Heuristic Inquiry

The six stages of heuristic inquiry are: initial engagement, immersion, incubation, illumination, explication, and creative synthesis (Moustakas, 1990). My collage shown below depicts each of those stages with a different phase of the moon. At the top, a circle of moon phases surrounds the Earth. As the days and months pass, the phases move from visible to invisible. Each phase is surrounded by stars illuminating the search. A bright sun is also present lighting the starry night of my imagination. This collage also represents the seen and unseen, what is real and what is imagined, and the movement of time required for this type of inquiry.

Phase 1: Initial engagement. My question found me in May of 2010 and has held my attention ever since.

Phase 2: Immersion. Once I encountered my research question, immersion in the literature began. I have been exploring, clarifying, and expanding my knowledge base every day since. I feel intimately connected with my topic. Even though I am engaged in a self-search inquiry, conversations with peers, students, and others I encounter stimulate new ideas to explore. Moustakas observed “The researcher is alert to all possibilities for meaning and enters fully into life with others whenever the theme is being expressed or talked about - in public



computer writing my dissertation. My focus is also

been at or near the top of my awareness day and night throughout this inquiry. Thankfully, it continues to be a personally meaningful passion.

Phase 3: Incubation. There are times in the creative process and heuristic inquiry when the researcher becomes frustrated or simply needs a break. This feeling signals the need to step away. In the incubation phase, all conscious progress stops. Work does continue, however, on the pre-conscious or unconscious level. Stepping away can allow information to rise up in awareness in the tacit dimension. I have found extended periods of incubation are sometimes needed to open to new ideas or perspectives. It can be frustrating when deadlines are missed and plans for completion are derailed, but my biggest insights generally occur after prolonged incubation periods. Attempting to force an ending to the incubation generally comes to nothing, or what is produced is experienced as inauthentic.

Phase 4: Illumination. Incubation ends with the arrival (awareness) of a big idea or research discovery. The illumination phase in both the creative process and heuristic process is associated with 'light bulb' and ah-ha moments. They occur when "the researcher is open and receptive to tacit knowledge and intuition" ^{8 p.29}.

Phase 5: Explication. This phase comes near the end of the inquiry. It is a time for looking at everything that has been awakened in consciousness about the phenomenon being explored. Core themes and patterns are identified, findings are organized, and key components of the phenomenon are recognized. While this heuristic inquiry has reached its final stage in terms of this doctoral dissertation, I believe I will continue my engagement with this inquiry for many years to come.

Phase 6: Creative synthesis. Creative synthesis is the final phase of heuristic research. The only way to come to synthesis is through "tacit and intuitive powers" ^{8 p.31}. In my case, following a series of intuitive prompts led me to create a collage with a profoundly meaningful message.

My creative synthesis story

On the morning of July 1st, 2018, I was going about my usual research routine, when an unfinished collage on my worktable caught my attention. Months back, I had glued two large images onto a poster board. The image on the right was a colorful sunset beach scene. On the left, a deep blue starry night scene with an Easter Island type statue. It seemed to me the beach side represented the conscious mind and the starry night represented the unconscious. On this day I noticed a gap between the two images and found an image of a white door that covered the gap. For me, doors are metaphors for stepping into new possibilities. I liked how it looked, but no other inspirations arrived so I set the collage aside. Looking at the collage later that day, I 'knew' it needed a bird on top of the door. I found a bird image I liked in one of my magazines, clipped it out, and glued it in place on the top left side of the door, right where the dark image and colorful image touched. Birds are my metaphor for 'sharing my voice.' My next inner prompt was to add the words 'imagination' and 'creativity' to the collage. I found both words in the same colorful font and glued the word 'creativity' near the bottom of the beach side, and 'imagination' at the top of the dark sky side. I liked how it looked, but when my intuition told me to find the letters 'N' and 'O' I felt some resistance. Still I followed my intuition, found the 2 letters and glued them on the door. I did not like having the word 'No' on my collage, but my intuition was not finished. The next 'prompt' was to find a 'K' to put it in front of the 'N.' There was not enough room for the 'K' to fit on the door. It had to be glued mostly on the night sky so I found a pen with white ink to add a white dot outline for 'K' to stand out where it was placed. Next I was guided to cut out a 'W' to place after the 'O.' The 'W' had to hang on the other side by a thread, but as soon as I saw the word: KNOW I was filled with excitement! Stepping back, I could clearly see two messages: "Know imagination, know creativity." Plus: "No imagination, no creativity." I ran for my journal to record these messages. I had the realization my creative synthesis was revealing itself letter by letter. I felt called back to see the collage one more time - but from a new perspective. I picked the collage up, held it an arms-length away, and looked at it again. Suddenly I saw it. The last 'piece' of the message revealed itself! It was the word NOW. NOW is the time for everyone to KNOW there is NO creativity without imagination. And NOW is the time to KNOW and grow our creativity with imagination. Together, all these 'revelations' offer a new way to understand the essential and interconnected roles of imagination and creativity, as well as the gifts that come when we follow intuition and trust the process. I have been creating collages for years, but nothing like this experience ever happened to me.





My invitation to you

No definition of creativity is the *be all, end all*. It is but one perspective. Please use it. Challenge it. Adapt it. Play with it. Try it on for size. Improve it. I would love to hear the definitions that inspire you to be your creative self and take creative action or invite you to step into the process of creating with joy. The world needs more creativity encouragers, awakeners, and influencers. Who you are is creative. What is the future you are imagining? I invite you to join this conversation!

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APPENDIX 1 My selection of definitions of terms associated with human creativity research

Note In 2010, Google began using the *American English* version of the *Oxford English Dictionary* as its source for all online definition searches. Terms searched this way use the initials OED-AE plus the year the definition was retrieved. See my thesis¹ for a complete list of references.

Action. Action refers to “The fact or process of doing something, typically to achieve an aim” (OED-AE, 2018).

Authentic. “of undisputed origin; genuine” (OED-AE, 2019). “Being authentic means that you act in ways that show your true self and how you feel” (Davis, 2019).

Authentic-self. “To reclaim your authenticity, you need to discover your ‘authentic-self’- the self that prioritizes living according to your values, pursuing your purpose, and fighting for the causes you care about” (Davis, 2019).

Awakening creativity. “Using the expressive arts to foster emotional healing, resolve inner conflict, and awaken individual creativity is an expanding field” (N. Rogers, 1993, p. 1).

Creative action. All creativity is dynamic because it requires embodied movement. Thinking or imagining without action are *not* creativity. “We do not become creative by thinking about it. We reawaken our creativity by engaging in the process of creativity” (N. Rogers, 1993, p. 95).

Creative climate. Creative climate involves the physical and psychological environment impacting a person engaging in the creative process. (Ekvall, 1999, p. 403).

Creative expression. Hoggan, Simpson, and Stuckey (2009, p.1) use the term *creative expression* in place of the word *art*, and I do as well. They also note “creative expression is more concerned with the process that facilitates transformative learning rather than the end product or result” (p. 2).

Creative mortification. “Central to the experience of creative mortification is a crushing of the creative spirit. What dies in such moments is not one’s creativity, but one’s will to create” (Beghetto, 2014, p. 266).

Creative process. “The creative process includes exploring, experimenting, messing around with materials, being playful, entering into the unknown” (N. Rogers, 1993, p. 18). She also noted: “The creative process as experienced through the expressive arts is one path to self-discovery, self-esteem, and self-empowerment” (1993, p. 22).

Creative self-beliefs. Davis (2004) noted: “awareness of [your] own creativeness is the top trait to develop to become more creative” and that self-identification with creativity is an “important and common trait among creative people” (p. 72).

Creative self-efficacy. According to Spencer & Lucas: “a person’s belief about his/her own capabilities is influential in ensuring those capabilities are expressed in action” (2018, p. 69). Taking creative action and practicing creative process builds creative self-efficacy.

Creativity (human). “Creativity is the person-centered process of imagining possibilities and taking embodied expressive action to make your idea(s) real” (Ockuly, 2019 - in press). This definition is dynamic, descriptive, precise, actionable, and foundational, given that all creativity begins with personal creativity. N. Rogers (1993) pointed out: “it is helpful to understand that creativity comes from our whole being and that each of us has an inherent drive and need to express ourselves: to use our imagination and inner resources” (p. 12).

Creativity influencer. Influence is defined as an aspect of leadership that motivates or inspires others to change their actions. Ockuly (2015a) introduced the term to raise awareness of ways educators, mentors, family members, and peers either encourage or discourage creativity. Most people can name positive (encouraging) and negative (discouraging) creativity influencers in their life. Doubts, fears, and lack of confidence can be negative *internal* creativity influencers.

Curiosity. “A strong desire to know or learn something” (OED-AE, 2019). Healthy babies are born curious and wired for movement. They learn by experimenting, as well as repeatedly trying and failing. Curiosity and asking questions are also drivers of human creativity.

Definition. “an exact statement or description of the nature, scope, or meaning of something” (OED-AE, 2019).

Develop. “grow or cause to grow and become more mature, advanced, or elaborate” (OED-AE, 2019).

Dynamic. “a process characterized by constant change, activity, or progress” (OED-AE). “Creativity is not static, it is dynamic” (Runco, 2019, p. 181).

Embodied. The word embodied invites the readers’ physical body into full participation “as a place of inquiry, a place of learning, understanding, and perceiving” (Snowber, 2016, p. xiii).

Empirical. “Based on, concerned with, or verifiable by observation or experience rather than theory or pure logic.” (OED-AE, 2017). Synonyms of ‘empirical’ include: observed, actual, real, experiential, practical, pragmatic, hands-on, heuristic.

Empirical knowledge. “Empirical knowledge relies on sensory experiences; knowledge is true if it can be shown to relate to a ...phenomenon” (Jarvis, 1999, p. 42).

Encourage. “To give support, confidence, or hope to someone” (OED-AE, 2018).

Empathy. I define empathy as “seeing the world through the other person’s eyes, ears, and heart. Another way to describe it is: “to walk beside, to be on the path with” (N. Rogers, 1993, p. 102).

Evaluation (judgment). Evaluation involves unsolicited comments, critiques, naming, labeling, or giving compliments. It can be internal (your inner critic), external (from someone other than you) or implied (body language, facial expressions, or explicit criteria to be met). “If the individual experiences an atmosphere of non-judgment, she is able to develop her own internal standards of evaluation. Rather than counting on an authority figure for her standards, she values her own judgment” (N. Rogers, 1993, p. 15). “We all need love and approval... the key to unleashing our creative energy is finding the deepest sense of approval within ourselves” (p. 21).

Experiential learning. “The process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience” (Kolb, 2015, p. 51).

Explicit definition. Explicit definitions and theories evolve over time from experts’ personal theories by progressively articulating and publishing their implicit theories (Runco, Nemiro & Walberg, 1998; Runco, 2004).

Expression. “The process of making known one’s thoughts and feelings through verbal or non-verbal actions” (OED-AE, 2018).

Expressive art. “Expressive art refers to using the emotional, intuitive aspects of ourselves in various media” (N. Rogers, 1993, p. 2).

Fear of failure. “Involving yourself in the creative process actually releases the blocks that have kept you from being creative. That is, as you explore and experiment with various forms of expression in a nonjudgmental environment, the inner critic, the need for approval, the fear of failure, and fears of the unknown can disappear” (N. Rogers, 1993, p. 27).

Feelings and creativity. “As feelings are tapped, they become a resource for further self-understanding and creativity. We gently allow ourselves to awaken to new possibilities” (N. Rogers, 1993, p. 4). “Feelings are a source for creative expression” (p. 11.)

Heuristic. “enabling a person to discover or learn something for themselves” (OED-AE, 2019). The word *heuristic* is a synonym for *empirical*. Both relate to firsthand, evidence-based experience rather than pure theory or logic.

Heuristic inquiry. Exploring the subjective nature and experience of a human phenomenon. “Emphasis on the investigator’s internal frame of reference, self-searching, intuition, and indwelling lies at the heart of heuristic inquiry” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 12).

Heuristic research. “In heuristic research the investigator must have had a direct, personal encounter with the phenomenon being investigated. There must have been actual autobiographical connections...It demands the total presence, honesty, maturity, and integrity of a researcher who not only strongly desires to know and understand but is willing to commit endless hours of sustained immersion and focused concentration on one central question...and to undergo the personal transformation that exists as a possibility in every heuristic journey” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 14).

Humanistic psychology. This psychological perspective emphasizes the study of the whole person.

Idea. “A thought or suggestion as to a possible course of action” (OED-AE, 2018).

Imagination. Imagination is being able to envision something not yet in form. Egan (2005) calls it “the ability to think of things possible - the source of flexibility and originality in human thinking” (p. 220). Greene (2007) understood it as “passion for possibility” (p. 2). Netzer (2015) it as “the capturing of an original intuition or unmediated knowing, the seed of creativity and transformation” (p. 1).

Implicit definition. Implicit refers to personal beliefs or assumptions about creativity or “What people assume about creativity” (Paletz, Peng, & Li, 2011, p. 83).

Improvisation. “Improvising is responding to the immediate situation, and a large part of our immediate situation is our emotional state” (Asma, 2017, p. 73).

Individual creativity. This is another way of saying “personal creativity.” It involves one human being imagining possibilities and taking embodied, expressive action to make their own idea real (Ockuly, 2019, in press).

Influence. “The capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or the effect itself” (OED-AE, 2018).

Inner conditions of creativity. In 1954, C. Rogers asked: “What are the conditions within the individual which are the most closely associated with a potentially constructive creative act? I see these as possibilities: A. Openness to experience, tolerance of ambiguity where ambiguity exists, and the ability to receive much conflicting information without forcing closure upon the situation; B: An internal locus of evaluation; C: The ability to toy with elements and concepts” (1961, p. 353-355).

Innovation. “Innovation is applying creativity to generate unique solutions” (Seelig, 2015, p. 8).

Inspiration. “Inspiration motivates the actualization of creative ideas” (Thrash, Maruskin, Cassidy, Fryer, & Ryan, 2010). It is also understood as “approach motivation” (Smith, 2014, p. 13).

Intuition. “The ability to understand something immediately, without the need for conscious reasoning” (OED-AE, 2018). PolICASTRO (1995) stated, “creative intuition can be defined as a vague anticipatory perception that orients creative work in a promising direction. This definition is phenomenological in that it points to the subject’s experience: How does it feel to have a creative intuition?” (1995, p. 99).

Joy. Joy is eudaimonic. It is an emotion that appears, unbidden, when we overcome obstacles, are deeply moved, or fulfill our natures as human beings. “Joy is the experience of possibility, the consciousness of one’s freedom as one confronts one’s destiny” (May, 1981, p. 241). Harvard researcher Vaillant (as cited Lambert, 2007) noted, “Joy, unlike happiness, is not all about me - joy is connection. Beethoven knew little happiness, but he knew joy. The mystics have linked joy to connection with a power greater than themselves” (p. 30).

Knowledge. “Knowledge is now regarded as subjective and practical; this leads to a distinction between knowledge and information” (Jarvis, 1999, p. xiii).

Learning. Jarvis (1999) defined learning as, “the process of creating and transforming experience into knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, senses, and beliefs” (p. 40).

Lived experience. “Personal knowledge about the world gained through direct first-hand involvement in everyday events” (Chandler & Munday, 2016). Van Manen (1990) posited: “Phenomenological research is the study of lived experience” (p. 9).

Making (to make). The root of the word create comes from Latin (*creare*) and Greek (*kriya*) which both mean: to make. “When a person makes something, there should be no question that he or she has been creative” (Gotz, 1981, p. 298).

Mindset (creative). Karwowski, Royston & Reiter-Palmon (2019) defined creative mindset’s as “implicit theories referring to the perceived sources of creativity...mindsets focus on perceived roots of creativity, as well as on their perceived stability versus changeability” (p. 26). Spencer & Lucas (2018) suggested, “What you believe about yourself affects your behavior” (p. 67).

Motivation (extrinsic). Extrinsic motivation relates to doing something you are not interested in to gain some type of reward (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 55).

Motivation (intrinsic). Intrinsic motivation relates to “doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 55).

Movement (embodied action). “Movement is life, life is movement. If you don’t believe it, just try holding completely still for a minute. Impossible. Movement is a human need. Breath is movement” (N. Rogers, 1993, p. 50). “All forms of expression are born from our intuitive impulse to move, explore, and express... nothing comes into being without movement (Ockuly, 2020).

Person. “a human being regarded as an individual” (OED-AE, 2020).

Person-centered. N. Rogers (1993) wrote, “Carl Rogers’ philosophy is based on a trust in an inherent impulse toward growth in every individual” (p. 4). In this study, person-centered reinforces the idea creativity lives in the person engaging in a personally meaningful process. It is distinctly human because it engages body, mind, and spirit as well as feelings (emotions/affect), movement (physical/expressive), and both cognitive (conscious) and unconscious capacities including imagination, intuition, tacit knowledge, and dreams.

Personal creativity. “Personal processes offer a parsimonious view of creativity and describe a mechanism that may explain how creativity comes about” (Runco, 2019). According to his expanded theory of personal creativity, “*construction of original interpretations of experience*” leads to “*original ideas and insights*” followed by “*the creation of meaningful interpretations*” (Runco, 2019, p. 182) in all of us, from the youngest to the oldest.

Personal explicit definition. When educators, researchers, scientists, or other experts with influence share their personal implicit theories, they become personal explicit theories (Maksic & Pavlovic, 2011; Runco, Nemiro, & Walberg, 1998).

Personal transformation. “Personal transformation involves a qualitative shift in one’s life view and/or worldview. Such a shift may occur rapidly or gradually, dramatically or subtly. Transformative change tends to be *persistent* (not merely a temporary shift that reverts to an earlier condition), *pervasive* (not confined to isolated aspects of one’s being or functioning), and *profound* (having an important life impact). Transformations may manifest as changes in one’s perspective, understandings, attitudes, ways of knowing and doing, and way of being in the world” (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. xvii).

Phenomenon. “The essence of a phenomenon is a universal...and...may only be intuited or grasped through a study of the particulars...as they are encountered in lived experience” (van Manen, 1990, p. 10). “A fact or situation that is observed to exist or happen...” (OED-AE, 2019).

Practical knowledge. “Practical knowledge is a combination of process knowledge and content knowledge” (Jarvis, 1999, p. 46). The practical is “concerned with the actual doing or use of something rather than with theory and ideas” (OED-AE, 2018).

Premature evaluation. I invented the term premature evaluation in 2011 when I began teaching a creative process-focused course for adult undergraduate students in a degree completion program. Many of my students self-identified as ‘not creative’ and creating a safe climate free of evaluative or labeling language was critical. When students focused on process rather than products, they felt more comfortable taking risks and failing forward.

Process vs Product. “Life is a process and creating is a process. Also important is that products do not tell us about the process that was used to create the product. Thus, they do not help us to understand the causal mechanism underlying creation. They aren’t really explanations at all. A scientific explanation must include causality, otherwise it does not explain anything” (Runco, 2019, p. 181).

Product. “a thing that is the result of an action or process” (OED-AE, 2020).

Self-perceptions of creativity. Batey & Hughes (2017) note: “Self-perceptions of creativity do not correspond with common definitions of creativity” (p. 185). They found: “people perceive their personal creativity to be founded upon being “imaginative and reflective, as well as... being quick-witted and open to different ideas” (pp. 195-196).

Social views of creativity. Runco (2019) states: “The main problem with social views is that they over-emphasize judgments, attributions, and social reactions. Indeed, many of them go as far as to say that, without social recognition, there is no creativity”(p.182). He also points out: “social recognition is distinct from creativity...Attributions follow the creation and are not required for the actual creation...So the creative process does not depend on social attributions and is therefore personal” (p. 183).

Tacit knowledge. “The tacit dimension of our experience helps us to “know more than we can tell” (Polanyi, 1983, p. 4.)

Transformative experiences. “Transformative experiences can occur through creative expression, intuition, imagination, and nurturing the soul” (Hoggan, Simpson, & Stuckey 2009, p. viii).

Transformative learning. “Transformative learning involves personal, spiritual, emotional, and imaginative ways of knowing - the way of *mythos* rather than *logos*” (Dirkx, 2001).

A Typical Day In My Life

Marta Ockuly

I follow a similar routine on most days. Each morning I step out the door and lean in to smell the jasmine blossoms on my front deck before I take my morning walk. Beach walks have stopped because of the Corona virus, so walks around my neighborhood work best. I carry my phone on mindfulness walks to take pictures and use the voice recorder when ideas start to flow.

When I return home, I make a cup of coffee and settle into my journaling chair. My dog Ali is always nearby. I sit in silence for a few minutes to see what comes to mind. I might create a joy mandala or collage in my journal to get me into process. Or I’ll spend an hour reading research articles and taking notes. If I recorded something on my walk, I transcribe and reflect on it. Other days I do free flow writing. If I am pondering a question - I might use self-dialogue by writing the question longhand into my journal and responding with my non-dominant hand. I often experienced the phenomenon of “thought happening in the writing”^{1 p.489}

I spend many hours a day sitting at my computer. I stand and walk hourly and go outside to take ‘dance breaks’ on my back deck at least once a day. Muted birdsongs serenade me all day long. I am aware most of my self-expression now is in the form of writing in my journal.



When my energy gets low, I go outside and breathe in the scent of gardenias. Simply gazing at my backyard jungle soothes my soul. The act of walking or being in nature fuels me. At the end of a particularly stressful or nonproductive day, I indulge in an hour of ‘clipping.’ I gather old magazines, get comfortable sitting up on the bed in my guest bedroom. I start by flipping through each magazine quickly. When a word or image catches my eye, I pull out the whole page and start making a pile. When I’m done, I use sharp scissors to cut out the parts of each page I think I might like to use in a future collage. I have file folders for words plus images of birds, nature, children, night skies, people of all ages, background images, gardens, oceans, rivers, and art. When I feel called to make a collage, I simply look through my files and find what inspires me in that moment. My collage process is emergent rather than deliberate.



In these times of social distancing, I am involved in multiple Zoom calls every week. But what I have shared here feels genuinely 'typical.' When I was actively engaged in research, I spent hours and hours locating old and new studies related to my topics. Walking and journaling sparked my process every day. I believe those actions helped me integrate what I was reading and writing as well. While I was actively engaged in research, many mornings I would wake up thinking about keywords to search, new studies to review, or questions I wanted to explore more deeply.

Teaching my own Creative Process course at Eckerd was the most meaningful 'work experience' of my life. Now, through my Creative Potential Institute, I am developing a similar curriculum for humanistic HE students and adult educators. The courses include project-based elements, community-based lived experiences, and individualized custom content and coaching for each student. A 2-year certificate program

in Awakening Human Creativity will launch at the Universidad Humanista in Cuernavaca, Mexico when COVID19 is no longer a concern.

As I was writing my article I felt called to create a collage relating to Earth Day 'in the time of COVID19'. What emerged was a message of both hope and concern. I used two facing pages in the middle of my current journal (pgs. 101-102) for this. I gathered a collection of nature images and words from one of my older clipping files. The image I used as a base was a very large photo of a forest floor with mossy rocks, green ferns and dried up maple leaves. On the right side I added a black and orange bird that was standing on a dead stick. I glued a black and white earth image filled with the words 'it's not my problem' repeated over and over where water would be on a globe. Next I glued the phrase: THE DIFFERENCE MAKER across the center of the world image. I found a tall BE and glued it directly above the word 'THE'. Next, I chose a bright pink blossom to go on top of BE as if it was sitting in a vase. Then I added a huge bee who seems to be harvesting pollen from the pink flower. Words create a border on two sides of the collage. They read: A Roadmap for...THE FUTURE... DISCOVER...THRIVE. In the bottom right corner I glued the words: "Pass It On." After contemplating the collage for a few minutes, I added 3 pink coneflowers to represent 'new growth' and a butterfly as a symbol for rebirth. For me the collage speaks to death and rebirth, fear and hope, nature flourishing and some big questions about who and what is dying. I wonder: Who will be the difference maker(s)? Will we continue blaming others for our problems, or will we take action to, once and for all, stop those who continue to profit from destruction of our planet? Is this virus a curse or a cure? Will we heed the warnings and make needed changes? Will health and healing for all become more important than wealth and power for the 1%? Nature WILL survive, humans may not, but we were born for this.



Making Porridge With Personal Meaning

Norman Jackson and Chris Tomlinson



Chris Tomlinson is a busy vet and a regular contributor to our #creativeHE conversations. He is also my brother in law which means I know him fairly well and he is always willing to be an accomplice in our explorations of creativity. Chris starts his day with a big bowl of porridge on the top of which he makes a pattern or a picture with fruit: a picture that means something to him. During week three of our online conversation he shared his daily creations. What Chris does everyday is an act of creative self-expression which he shares with the world via social media. In this article I am going to draw on an account of Chris Tomlinson's practice¹ to show how we might use the 4C model of creativity² and a contexts and norms framework developed from this model³ to represent and interpret individuals' acts of creative self-expression.

Porridge making the Chris Tomlinson way

I made a video clip of Chris making his porridge which you can watch here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytFtrgZT9qU&t=546s> The clip has been watched over 1000 times. On special days, like an anniversary, family birthday or religious festival, Chris makes a picture that symbolises the meaning of the day. Alternatively, it might be an incident or event in his life (like spotting bluebells on a walk) that forms his subject for the day. Meanings are also conveyed through the tagline he uses to describe the picture.

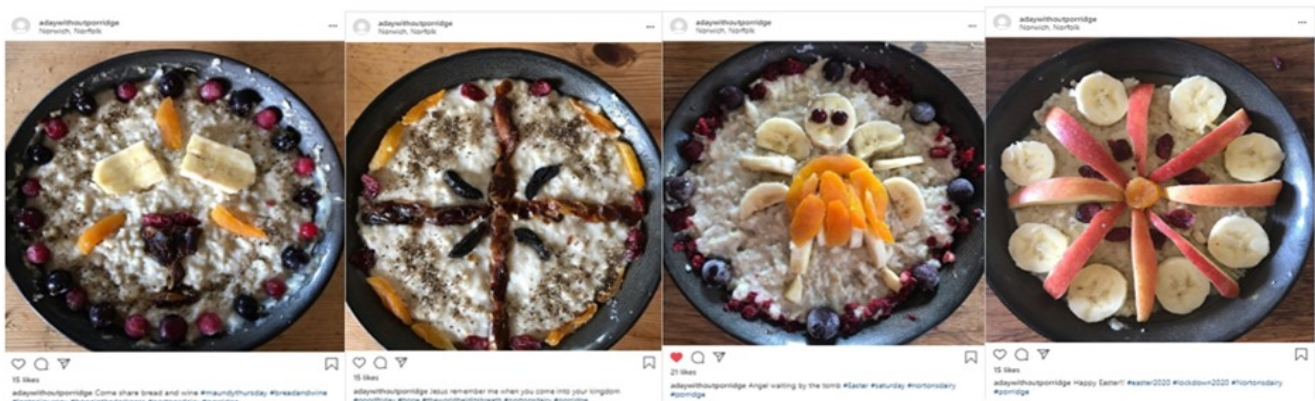


Maundy Thursday

Good Friday

Easter Saturday

Easter Sunday



It's fair to say that Chris is a 'big lad' so he needs and enjoys a hearty breakfast. He began making pictures on his porridge nearly three years ago. Initially, this was to amuse himself and his two young daughters. Then, his daughter-in-law suggested that he could share his personal creations with others by posting them on Instagram. She set up an account for him and since then he has made over 900 daily posts to share his porridge creations with over 350 followers on Instagram and over 800 on Facebook. Creating a daily picture has become an important part of his daily routine but now many people expect him to share what he has done. The thing that I find amazing is that vast majority of most of designs are unique. Consequently, he has created a huge body of work- symbolic representations of his life.

According to Chris, *"creativity is expressing something about yourself in your daily life.. so it's not doing something that everybody else does in the same way as everyone else does it, but doing something which shows something of your personality."* We interpret this to mean something that reflects him as a person, his beliefs and values, interests and concerns that he wants to express. In the recent #creativeHE conversation about creative self-expression, participants were invited to offer three words that reflected what "self" meant to them. Chris chose - *family, community and faith* and all of these are recurrent themes in his daily porridge art revealing the authenticity in his practice.



The 4C Framework developed by James Kaufman and Ron Beghetto² describes creative self-expression in everyday activities in terms of:

little-c creativity refers to small everyday acts of creativity that may be manifested in any aspect of a person's life

mini-c creativity refers to the cognitive and emotional process of constructing personal knowledge within a particular socio-cultural context in order to search for and create meaning.

In making his designs he draws on the materials in his cupboard, fridge and freezer, he draws in recent or soon to be events in his life to provide the subjects for his imagination and he weaves these things into a design or picture that means something to him and the people who know him. In this way his mini-c and little-c creativities² are working together to make something that is not just an expression of himself for himself, but a gift for others which he is able to share with them at the instant of making because he has access to a number of technologies - mobile phone camera, wifi, internet and social media platforms.

Chris says, *'It's kind of fun to be feeding pictures of my porridge to people on Facebook and Instagram, "This is my porridge for today." You get the feedback from people and it tells you it brings a smile on people's faces and they enjoy seeing what I have done with my porridge, it's like a little feature in their life.'*

Four contexts for creative self-expression

There are perhaps four different social/cultural contexts for creative self-expression (Figure 1).

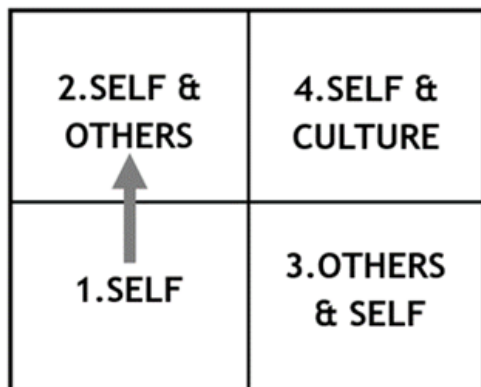
Figure 1 Four contexts for self-expression

Creative expression for self
 Sometimes individual's engage in creative self-expression just for themselves. They derive emotional and other benefits from thinking and acting in a manner that engages them creatively. It doesn't matter what anyone else thinks, if a person believes that an idea, action or outcome is new and meaningful to them it is creative.

2 Creative self-expression for self & others

Sometimes an individual creates something for themselves but shares it with others make their own judgements as to whether something is creative or not? Sometimes the sharing is limited to a small number of people (eg. friends and family) but with the advent of social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook and more recently TikTok people are able to share the results of their creativity with a larger group of people perhaps even creating a community of interest in the process.

2.SELF & OTHERS	4.SELF & CULTURE
1.SELF	3.OTHERS & SELF



Chris's daily porridge making enterprise is closest to the second scenario. While initially his acts creative self-expression were for himself and his daughters. He later saw the value in gifting his creations to the wider world and through this has created a new social community of people who enjoy receiving and commenting on his creations (Figure 2).

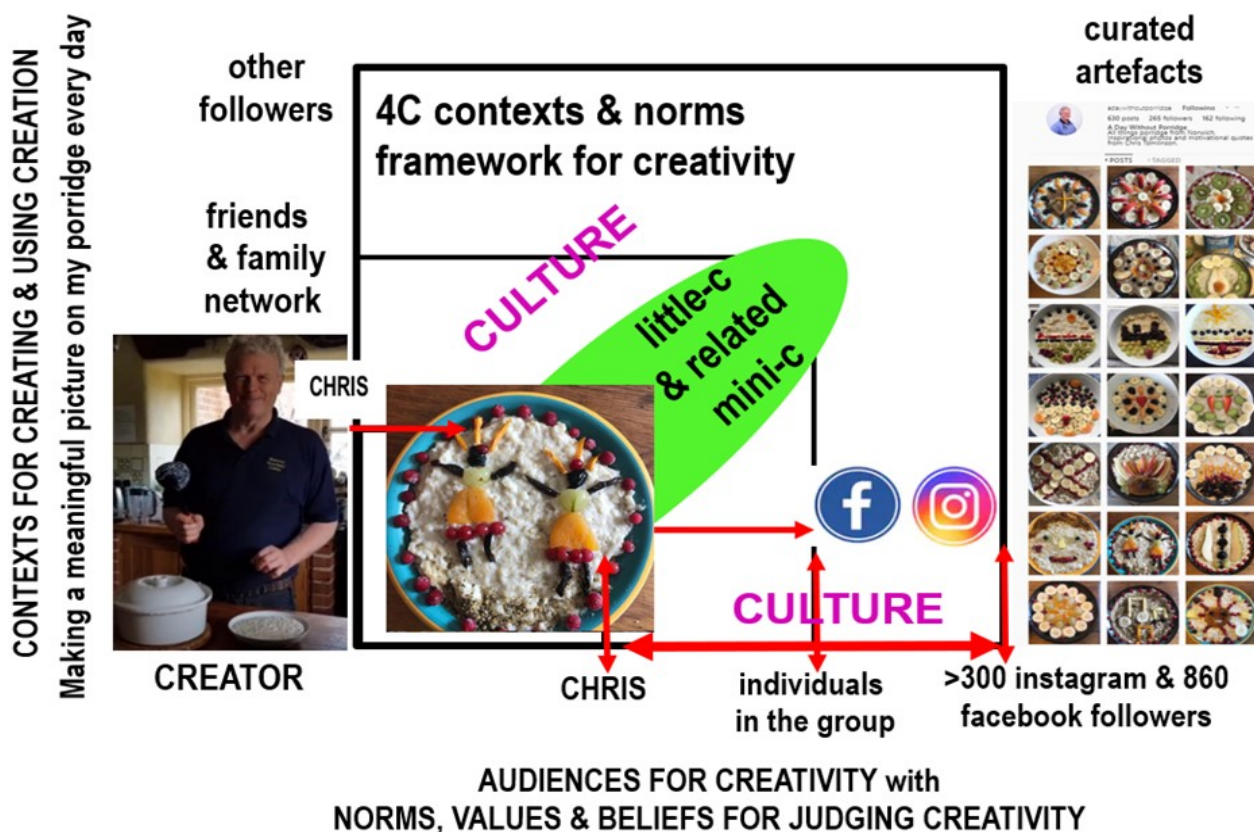
Figure 2 Chris Tomlinson's contexts for creative self-expression

Using part of the 4C framework to interpret this example of creative self-expression

We can use the 4C framework to interpret some of the features of this example of creative self-expression (Figure 3), in doing this we personalise and give meaning to the conceptual framework. Chris has undertaken to start every day by engaging his mind and body to make something that is both original and meaningful to him in the context of his everyday life. He clearly values the time and effort he invests in the activity and he has chosen a distinctive medium (porridge and fruit) through which to express himself and media tools (Photographs, Facebook and Instagram) through which to communicate the products of his creative self expression.

His making is fairly spontaneous (I have watched him). He has an idea and imagines an image that he is able to execute. (He is aware of the limitations of his skill with the materials he is working with). The video clip of him making his porridge shows the way he interacts with his kitchen environment and the tools and food materials in it. The food materials that are available to him in his home environment have a significant influence on the image he is able to create.

Figure 3 Chris Tomlinson's daily act of making porridge with meaning mapped onto the contexts and norms framework³ adapted from the 4C framework²/ It shows how an individual's acts of creative self-expression for themselves can be shared more widely using social media to permit social interactions with the products and the creator.



After he has made his creation he photographs it, adds some captions to convey what it means to him and posts the image on Instagram and Facebook where his followers indicate whether they like it or not and offer their comments and reactions. In this way his followers evaluate his gift and the feedback they give tells him that what he is doing is valued by others. Not all the feedback is positive - sometimes people are quite critical from an artistic perspective, of the image he has produced, enabling him to appreciate his own limitations. In this way his acts of creative self-expression become a conversation and this motivates him to continue and do more. From the example we can see that what begins as an act of personal self-expression - what the individual wants to say about themselves and their unfolding everyday family life, may be extended, through the use of social media, into an act of creative self-expression that other people can access and interact with. Indeed, it shows how regular acts of creative self-expression can attract an audience - a community of people who are interested in the growing body of work. Their feedback shows the creator that his creations are valued, providing him with a source of pleasure, occasional mirth and pride, all of which help sustain the creative enterprise.

You can view Chris's daily creative expressions on Instagram
<https://www.instagram.com/adaywithoutporridge/>

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CREATIVITY IN QUARANTINE

Second Annual #creativeHE Jam June 12-19TH 2020

This year's creative jamboree will be at a distance and celebrate resourcefulness and creativity in supporting students' learning in times of adversity.

Outline Programme

- 12 June 2020, 12:00-14:00** Join us live online for a live practice sharing marketplace
- 15-18 June 2020** Join in asynchronously (whenever suits you) with our daily discussion and short creative challenge
- 19 June 2020, 12:00-14:00** Join us live online to reflect on your #creativeHEjam experience and discuss the future of a new normal in facilitating learning

You can join us for one element of the jam or jump in and experience the whole festival, the choice is yours!

Call for Contributions

We would love for you to share your lockdown story via the marketplace on 12 June. 15 minute slots will be allocated to contributors and it is completely up to you how you would like to use that time! Perhaps you would like to talk through your experience via an object or presentation. You could share what has gone well for you during lockdown, or what has gone wrong! Maybe you would like to lead a debate or demonstrate an activity or perhaps you have an idea that you would value feedback on. This is your space to share practice and learn from the collective #creativeHE community. Remember to use the #creativeHE hashtag on Twitter or you can share via our [Facebook group](#). Together, we will reflect on how creativity under extreme conditions is transforming the way we work and learn. There will be multiple opportunities to share your ideas and practices and connect with colleagues and students from across the UK and beyond.

Further details and registration <https://creativehecommunity.wordpress.com/2020/04/08/2nd-annual-creativehejam-creativity-in-quarantine/>

EDITOR

A few years ago Erica McWilliam, a down-to-earth academic in Australia, sent me an article in which she proposed a practical commonsense definition of creativity “creativity is often the result of making a third ‘thing’ from two existing things or ideas, rather than making something from nothing.”¹ I often think about this way of framing creativity when I spot it emerging in my own life. It also makes ecological sense, that we, as unique human beings with unique life histories and ways of seeing and being in the world are uniquely able to bring together and weave into each other two or more things. So it is with great pleasure that I found on my google alerts an article by John Kilbourne an article in which he had made sense of his own entanglements with creativity through the wonderful relational metaphor of marriage. I wrote to John to see if we could publish his article in Creative Academic and I am delighted to say that he not only readily agreed but tweaked his article to make it more meaningful for the current issue.

McWilliam, E (2016) Two cheers for STEM three cheers for creativity <https://www.ericamcwilliam.com.au/two-cheers-for-stem-three-cheers-for-creativity/>

Making Meaningful Sense of Creativity Through the Metaphor of Marriage!

John Kilbourne



John is a professor of Movement Science at Grand Valley State University in Michigan. He is the author of “Running with Zoe: A Conversation on the Meaning of Play, Games, and Sport, Including a Journey to the Canadian Arctic.” To view his interview with Howard Cosell visit, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xvDejJDdm90>

John’s unique form of sports coaching is characterized by thinking and activities that combine in imaginative and creative ways the fields of dance and movement science with the attitudes and movement in particular sports.

Creativity has been in the news a lot of late. There have been several insightful books, Bateson and Martin’s *Play, Playfulness, Creativity & Innovation*; articles in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, “The Creativity Cure,” and in *The New York Times*, “Creativity becomes an Academic Discipline,” a lengthy feature by the Lego Group, *Cultures of Creativity*; and quite a few OpEds and blog posts. Many of the writings have reasoned that the teaching of creativity should be an integral part of education at every level. Moreover, a good number have moved to explain creativity and the creative process. While the recent books and articles were very insightful, some of them in my view, fell short when it came to making meaningful, practical sense of creativity and the creative process. What follows are my personal reflections on creativity and its impact and influence on my life and vocation.

Let me begin by saying that many of the previously mentioned writings put forward that creativity is a result of bringing together two different dynamisms. The marriage of the two forces results in a new product or order quite distinct from the original two. This is exactly what emerged when I married my life in dance education and performance to my life in sport. This uniting began in graduate school while I was pursuing a master’s degree in dance education while at the same time serving as a graduate assistant to then U.C.L.A. basketball coach Larry Brown. My position made possible by Coach Brown, was to be the dance conditioning coach for the U.C.L.A. team, 1979-82. My success at U.C.L.A. led me to being hired as the first full-time conditioning coach in the National Basketball Association for the Philadelphia Seventy Sixers, 1982-84. We won the World Championship in 1983.



During my tenure with the Sixers I applied the same strategy in the off season to figure skating, being an early pioneer in marrying dance technique to competitive figure skating in the United States. This was followed by my doctorate (Building a Bridge between Athletics and Academics) at The Ohio State University (1994) where I was allowed to take courses in creativity to satisfy the course requirements in research methodologies. As I look back on many of the happenings that have fashioned the meaning of my life, it seems that the most noteworthy emerged as a result of bringing together, or the marrying of two different dynamisms. The most understandable bringing together of two different dynamisms that created meaning in my life is my marriage to my wife Elizabeth. For me, *creativity is the emergence, as a result of intense action, of a new product or order, based on the willingness of an individual/team to take risks and to embrace their individuality and the environment.*



The marital concept of creativity

In the context of this issue of Creative Academic Magazine that is exploring the idea of creative self-expression I submit that creative self-expression in the sporting world that I inhabit, resides in the productive marriage of attitudes, ways and means of individuals and teams immersed in their sport to take risks and embrace their individuality through unique relationships to and interactions with their environment. Let me develop this idea further.

In order for something to be creative it must emerge, be born, come to life. I could still have the idea of marrying dance and sport some thirty years after I began this process. When my idea emerged and became a reality, a new order of basketball conditioning was born. For something to be creative it must move from an idea to reality, i.e., to the canvas, film, paper, theater, symphony, video game, software, dinner table, attire, I-phone, or in my case, to the sports field or other playing venue etc.

Creativity is also a product of intense action. In other words it requires hard work. Throughout history most creative folks have worked hard at their passion. Over the years many people have commented how fortunate I am to have had my experiences in sport and dance, i.e., two Final Fours, NBA Championship Ring, interviews with Howard Cosell, performing with Nureyev, etc. What many do not realize is that I literally, "Moved-my-butt-off" to achieve these experiences. I remember in my early days of dance conditioning for basketball driving in and around Los Angeles, California in a grayed Datsun B-210 giving away free samples of dance conditioning to any NBA Summer Pro League Team that would accept my free services. I was the Fuller-Brush salesman of dance conditioning for basketball players. I had similar experiences in dance performance touring with the Margalit Dance Theatre in an old van, packed full of dancers, costumes and set pieces.

As was previously mentioned the creative process results in new products or orders. What I did for basketball was to create a new order of conditioning, one based on the principals of dance and movement. At its core the program focused on flexibility, rhythm/coordination, balance, endurance, and strength based on the principle of, "Fit for what?" All of the exercises including the strength exercises were accompanied by music. In addition to a new order I also created new products. One product was a basketball with a metal loop attached that allowed the athletes to use the various weight machines with a ball attached for strength training, rather than a metal bar or metal hand grips. Again, "Fit for what?" Basketball players do not lift or pull down metal bars or metal hand grips in the game of basketball.

The creative process also requires that individuals or teams/groups take risks. Simply defined, a risk is anything that frightens us. On my very first day with the U.C.L.A. team I think many of the players and coaches were actually frightened when this dancer dressed in leotards and tights stepped onto the court in Pauley Pavilion carrying a Caliphone record player tethered to a long extension cord and proceeded to start practice by teaching a dance warm-up routine. The expressions on the players' faces were filled with alarm, some even panic. Following practice on that first day one player actually asked if I would be able to have children? Because I was very flexible he thought that somehow my enhanced range of motion would harm my reproductive capabilities. He would be happy to know that I have two beautiful children, everything worked fine.

Despite the jolt of the first day I was invited back. On my second day the U.C.L.A. head coach Larry Brown, who had agreed to this project, took me into the coaches' locker room and gave me a U.C.L.A. sweat suit and a new pair of sneakers. He said, "Put these on. I think things will go much better if you wear these." He was right. From that day forward I never again wore leotards and tights to teach athletes.

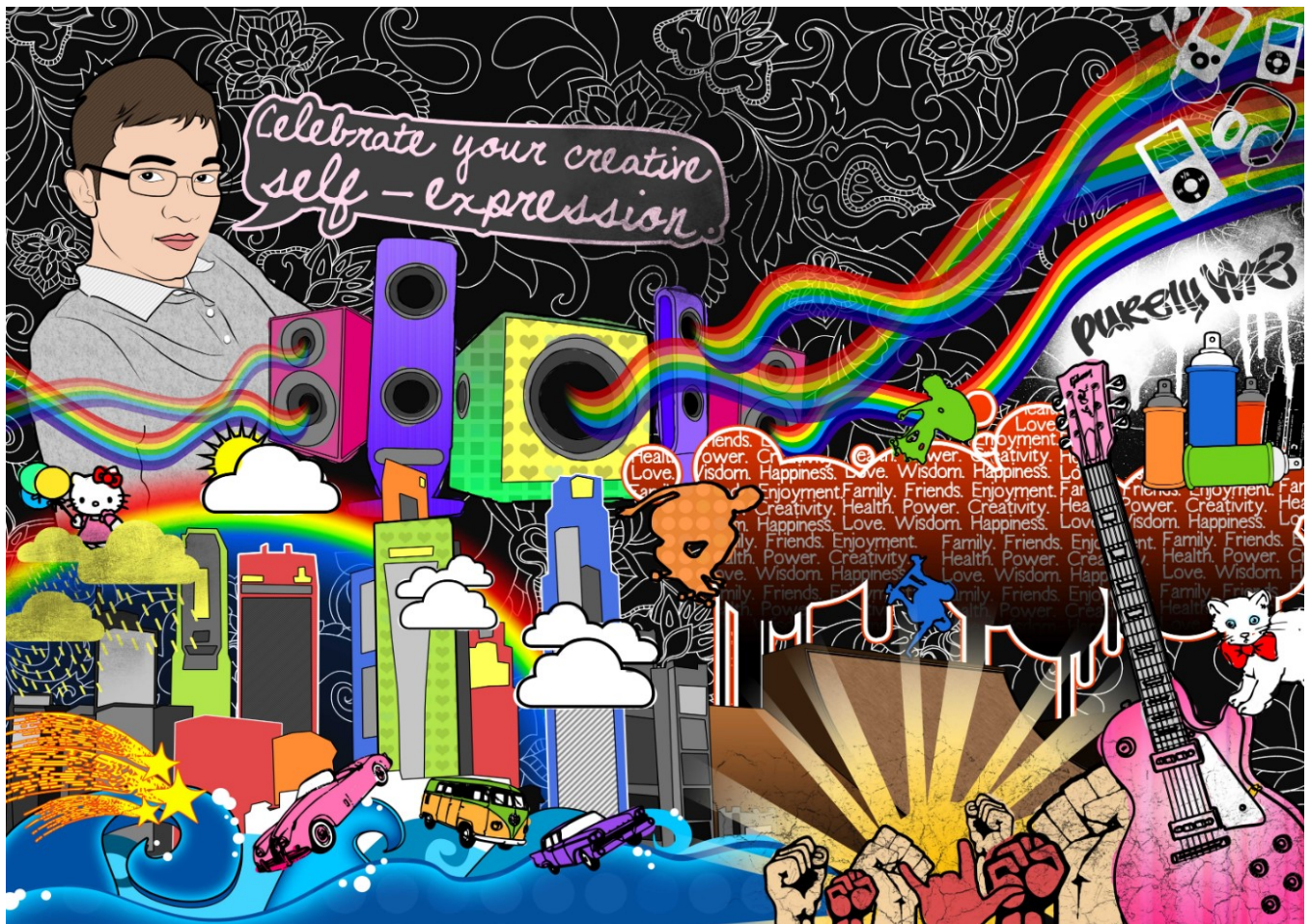
Me the dancer



Creativity also requires one to embrace their individuality and the environment. For me, my individuality was that I was a dancer who loved to play basketball. It is one's individuality or one's previously mentioned dynamism that is integral to creativity. By marrying two individual dynamisms, or the dynamisms of two or more individuals, new products or orders emerge. A beautiful example of this is the virtuoso Julius "Dr. J" Erving who I was fortunate to work with during my tenure with the Sixers. One feature of Julius' individuality is that he has very large hands. When he shakes my hand his long fingers wrap around my wrist and lower arm. The first time this happened I was startled, thinking that his fingers will suck-me-in like an octopus. Julius' large hands (Individuality), married to his virtuoso athleticism allowed him to do things with a basketball unlike any player of his time. He pioneered a new order of basketball, an order called "Playing above the rim."

It is important to note that everything in games and sport has been created by somebody or a team of somebodies. For example, when William "Candy" Cummings threw a clam shell and saw that he could make it curve, he thought he might try to do the same with a baseball. From his individual dynamism emerged the curve ball which was originally thought to be cheating.

Lastly, creativity requires that one embrace the environment. For me, my environment was the basketball court that I was able to transform into a large dance studio. I was quite familiar with this environment as I had played basketball since grade school, and I had studied and performed dance for more than ten years prior to my tenure with the U.C.L.A. team. As the late Howard Cosell said of my work on the basketball court, "The twenty minutes before and the ten minutes after every practice belong to him (John Kilbourne)." Together, twelve dancing basketball players and I *Created* a new order of performance, an order that helped transform basketball and assisted in the fashioning of a graceful path to a world championship.



This wonderful illustration captures so well the idea of creative self-expression. It was found on Phantomcoconuts's Blog *"I've decided to post up some of my random illustrations and graphic designs that were brewed and boiled in my head. I really enjoyed just putting pen to paper and let whatever was inside me, out. This could give me a clue on how to advertise myself honestly."*

The No Offence Fence – Helping Others to Express Themselves Creatively

Maxine Sims



Maxine is a Higher Education professional working in Careers and Student Development at the University of Bristol where she manages the University's skills plus employability award. In her spare time, she enjoys keeping fit and walks in nature.

In the summer of 2018, some offensive graffiti appeared on my garden fence, naming a girl and calling her 'a slag'. I was irritated that someone had used my property to bully someone - especially because it's a very busy path leading to a school meaning the graffiti was very visible. I wanted to find a way to help the girl who was being bullied, so I had an idea to write a positive message back on the fence, encouraging others to do the same. After obliterating the graffiti, I decided to turn my fence into a 'No Offence Fence' and invited passers-by to write kind-hearted messages instead.

A few weeks later I was overwhelmed to discover the way in which people had responded. Now I can see that my garden fence, traditionally used to divide people, is uniting a community through kind words and uplifting artwork.

I was lucky enough for BBC Radio Bristol and other media to report on this story. Through this, the victim of bullying and her family learned of the growing wall of supportive messages and contacted me on social media to thank me saying "thank you for what you've done - it's been a ray of sunshine in a miserable few months for her."



It was only then that I learned of how long and sustained this campaign of bullying had been against the victim. Graffiti had appeared all over my town and it was now a police investigation. I found out who had written the graffiti and sent them a note saying:

"Thank you for seeing our fence as a blank canvas to be filled. Words are powerful! Used carelessly they can hurt. But used well, words have the power to show courage, build hope and inspire others. We would like to invite you to fill our fence with kind words and positive messages. Nice messages will be celebrated. Negative messages will be treated as vandalism of our property and reported to the police. See the light in others and treat them as if that is all you can see."

I decided to start an Instagram account called The No Offence Fence, documenting the messages I had received as a way of thanking all the individuals who had joined me in defending a stranger. You can see the posts I have made at @the_no_offence_fence



Maxine Sims

8 July at 10:02 · 🌍

Oh my heart is just so full of joy right now! A few weeks ago someone had written 'Girls name is a slag' on the back of our fence. I was annoyed that our fence had been used to bully someone, so I had this idea to write a message back, basically telling people they could write on our fence, but only nice things. 🤔

A week later I go to check it nervously, thinking this could be a disaster, we will either have loads of willies and swear words or nothing at all... But just look at what I found!

💖👍👏 Young people are awesome 🌟

I felt this represented an important message to all the victims of bullying, because if you are being bullied, you might become too afraid or low in confidence to get help. My fence represents that for every bully, there are countless more kind people.

Since going online there have been further creative developments. Street artists have contributed artwork and teachers in other towns have taught anti-bullying lessons based on the theme. Most recently I was invited to speak and run an activity on the concept at the National Maritime Museum as part of the London Pride programme. I am very open to collaboration as the story has proved powerful for inspiring a variety of communities to combat many different forms of bullying. One school in Derbyshire is starting a project with their pupils, to redecorate their toilets which are covered in negative graffiti.



The meaning my fence represents is that for every bully, there are countless more kind people. I consider what I did to be a very small action, but it has had a domino effect through others who have created some beautiful and powerful work. For me, this has proved that the energy you put out into the world echoes - sometimes far louder than you'd ever expect. We all have a choice and responsibility for what we want that energy to be and how we want to affect others. Sometimes kindness can be seen as weakness. It's not always easy to put others first, consider a different point of view to your own, or stand up for each other, particularly when it has potential to jeopardise your own position. But when we can do this, kindness, empathy and compassion can show the greatest strength.

Acknowledgement

This is an edited version of 'The Story of the No Offence Fence' <https://theampersandproject.com/no-offence-fence/>



Music, Stories and Magic: Family creativity during lockdown

Johanna Payton



Johanna is a freelance journalist and a lecturer in journalism at City, University of London. She consults, writes and edits for national newspapers, magazines and websites, broadcasts on the radio, trains fellow media professionals and lectures in fashion journalism, styling and blogging.

During lockdown she was an active participant in the #creativeHE forum conversation on creative self-expression where she shared some of her lock down 'projects', including several music and video-based projects with her family. Here she tells us that she'll be taking the lessons she's learned into the higher education classroom.

Johanna is the new co-editor of our magazine (page 71)

The value of lockdown to my family

Lockdown has been a 'purple patch' for my family of three. A collaborative project has emerged, grown and flourished at home. It has allowed my creative self-expression to flow during what could have been a stressful and unproductive time. It has also strengthened familial bonds; working with those I trust most has been a wonderful channel for self-expression.

Lockdown family: Johanna, Elliott and Matthew

My partner, Matthew, is an artist and musician. When we met, 22 years ago, our shared love of music built the foundation of our relationship. We have always supported each other's projects, providing input and ideas. Matthew is my creative partner, as well as my life partner. Our 16-year-old son, Elliott, is an actor - and just as artistically opinionated and engaged in creativity as his parents. Each one of us channels self-expression into individual projects, and we turn to each other for advice and support (admittedly, sometimes we give Elliott 'advice' that I'm sure is unwanted!)



When lockdown was announced, and the hospitality industry ground to a halt, Matthew lost his work. He wanted an outlet to channel his energies, to keep sane and produce something worthwhile, so he contacted a group of musician friends. They established a virtual band, the Quarantines, each recording musical parts before fusing them to create a song and video for social media. Each video, shared on Facebook, included a 'donate button' so viewers could support our local NHS hospital trust. For the first video, they simply filmed themselves playing their instruments: the highlight was capturing Elliott playing Fortnite in the background while his dad crooned (a classic lockdown vignette). My experience as a writer kicked in and I realised there was scope for more storytelling. A project the whole family could be involved in.

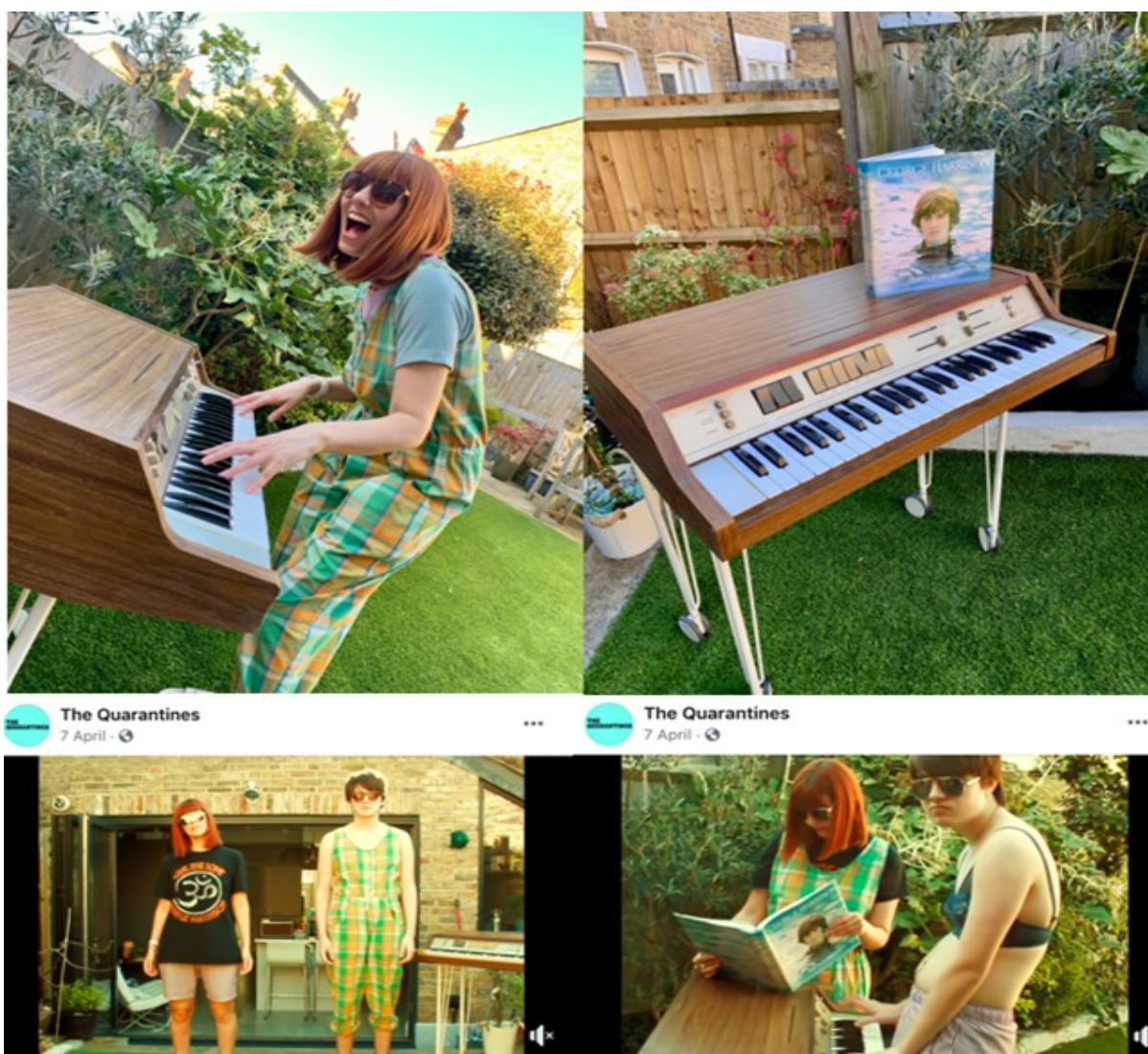
Band on the Run was the fourth song covered and, as a long-suffering band wife, my brain buzzed with the idea of Linda McCartney in lockdown; Matthew wanted a packet of frozen veggie sausages to play a starring role; Elliott thought a dog running across a field would add something unique (we don't have a dog, or a field). I'd love to say we meditated for a moment and reached a consensus, but we had a heated debate then sulked in separate rooms.

During the 'creative stop', Elliott had an epiphany. He emerged with the idea of using video match cutting to create the comedy effect of our clothes swapping around; when he mimed the keyboard solo, he'd be wearing my clothes. Given I am obsessed with fashion, and was wearing a ridiculously bright jumpsuit at the time, I was inspired by the idea - and my storytelling-intuition kicked in. We could still introduce the keyboard, but Elliott could pretend to play it rather than me - wearing my clothes. And then it struck me that it would be even funnier if the final clothes swap went slightly awry, so when Elliott is doing his finest Linda McCartney impression, he's be in a, let's say 'compromised' position (as I've said, he's an actor - he may be 15, but he's game for anything comedic).

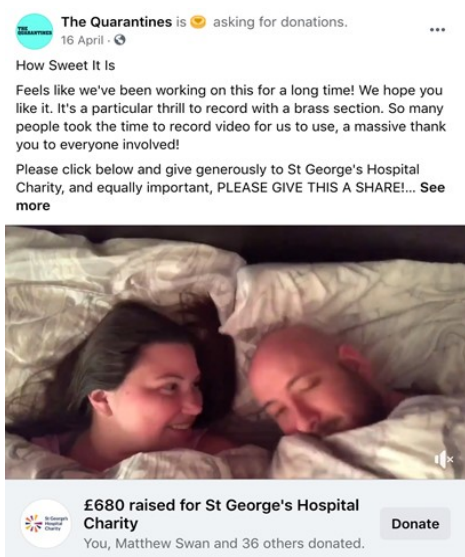
So ensued an afternoon of dressing up and lugging a vintage keyboard into the garden marking the grass with tape - position is everything for match-cutting (I certainly learned something new) - and handclapping/pretending to play the keyboard along to the recording. Arguments forgotten, ideas and energy flowed. It was pure play, expressing our humour and our selves.

The result was pretty funny. We're expressing ourselves, our ideas and our humour, which is hugely satisfying. I loved performing with Elliott and reading the feedback from friends and family. We even played it to my mum during a video call so we could watch her reaction - this was soul food in the current situation. And we raised more money for the NHS - what a bonus.

Johanna and Elliott having fun while creating the video for *Band on the Run*



As with many acts of creativity, the video led to further creation: I wrote a press release for a local publication that wanted to write about the project; one of our friends messaged us with an idea for a future video that is now being worked on; more musicians got in touch to offer their services on the next recordings



For the next video, *How Sweet It Is (To Be Loved By You)*, we asked friends and family to record lip synchs to reflect family life - and love - during lockdown. The video ends with a couple singing in bed. We've never met the couple that contributed such a beautiful, intimate moment, and yet we couldn't have asked for a more emotional, or fitting, scene to complete the video. When lockdown is over, we'd like to meet that lovely couple - and buy them a drink.

A mystery couple's cameo helped to raise money for St. George's Hospital

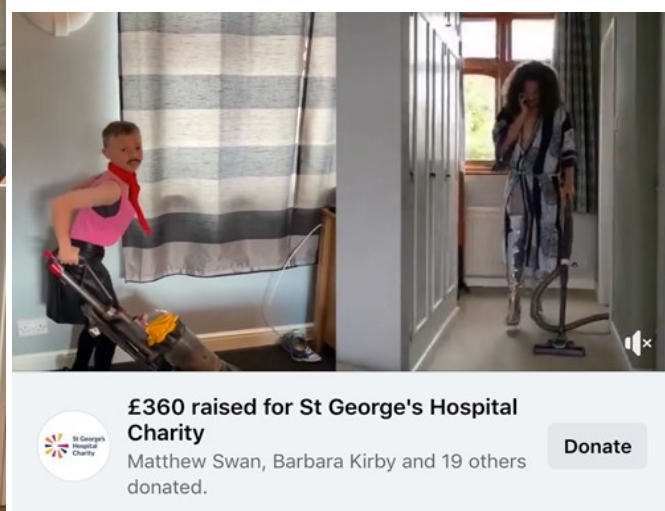
For *Sledgehammer*, we recreated Peter Gabriel's iconic music video using a 'green screen' (painted on the living room wall). I devised the storyline and creatively directed, Matthew sang lead vocals and edited the video. Eliott played the starring role, lip-synching and acting to a slowed down version of the track, with the final video adjusted to match the song at full speed.

Painting our own green screen— well worth losing the living room for!



Queen's *I Want To Break Free* involved a three-hour make-up session. Matthew tolerated it, with much grumbling about the false eyelashes; I lived out my RuPaul's Drag Race fantasy and, as no one recognised him in the video, I consider my efforts successful.

Left: Matthew suffering for his art. Below: quarantines contributors make their debut in *I Want to Break Free*



Elliott channelled Peter Gabriel - and Joaquin Phoenix - for his *Sledgehammer* performance

It's now week nine of lockdown, and I'm co-choreographing a dance routine with my best friend in Leeds for the band's reworking of *We Are Family*. We're reaching out across social media for additional video contributions (catwalk poses and disco dancing) and hoping to feature the most contributors yet.

With each video, we get more ambitious. Our reach extends, with contributors of all ages and from all over the country. The process of flow¹ is enhanced each time - distractions dissipate and self-consciousness ebbs away. We're playing, making, and *really* enjoying ourselves.



The power of three

In this context, my creative self-expression has captured everything I care about: music, storytelling, family, connection, humour, society and performance. We've raised over £2,500 to date, and more people are getting involved.

Reflecting on this project, I can see how it has been beneficial for my family's wellbeing, not just in terms of being a distraction, but also in bonding us through a period of uncertainty.

The Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project Report ^{2p.10} provides this summary of mental wellbeing:

'This is dynamic state, in which the individual is able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships with others, and contribute to their community. It is enhanced when an individual is able to fulfil their personal and social goals and achieve a sense of purpose in society'.

This definition can be applied to the Quarantines. The project keeps us busy, making and doing: we're expressing individual talents, which brings personal fulfilment. Then, the videos are shared and, from cheering-up grandparents to making friends laugh, there's joy in the reactions of others. We are building, or reinforcing, strong relationships in a time of crisis, giving us a keen sense of purpose. The community aspect, from making the music and videos collaboratively, to sharing them online, makes us feel connected at a time when physical means of connection are just not possible.

Making sense of our creative lockdown experience

Clearly, the environment we created during our family lockdown experience was one in which our individual and collective imaginations and creativities were able to flourish. Our acts of creative expression can be related to the concepts and definitions I use within my creativity and journalism education research. Brandt & Eagleman³ and Gauntlett⁴ position creativity as an inherently social act, discussing the social capital of 'making and doing'. Zohar and Marshall's⁵ definitions of creativity as human expression and 'unitive thinking', an associative neural process that unifies the 'spiritual level of existence',^{5 p.24} reflects the way our creative process expanded from our family of three to a much wider group, all contributing to a community project with a shared artistic vision.

Writing in this issue of Creative Academic, John Kilbourne's definition of creativity also feels appropriate:

'Creativity is the emergence, as a result of intense action of a new product or order, based on the willingness of an individual/team to take risks and to embrace their individuality and the environment.'^{16 p26}

Kilbourne explores the way he has brought together (he uses the concept of marriage) 'two different dynamisms that created meaning' in his personal and professional life. In our project, we have 'married' three strands of our professional lives: music, storytelling and performance. And, rather than a union of two, our creative expression has brought three family members together, forming a creative bond where there was already an emotional and familial relationship. Our idea emerged through the intense action of making our product (the videos); we took risks with each other, by proposing new ideas, and then performing - putting ourselves 'out there' by sharing the films with a wider community. Our work embraced our talents, as individuals, within the 'locked down' environment we found ourselves in.

Many of the lessons I've learned through the Quarantines project will be heading into the classroom come September. I have a wonderful, lived example of creative collaboration to share, and practical ideas for collaborative exercises, whether we're back on campus or online. My experience reinforces the concept of trust as a conduit for risk-taking and unlocking creativity. Our person-centred activity was soul food, and it allowed us to explore our unfettered creative selves. This chimes with my aim to provide student-centred teaching⁷ directed towards the 'centre of the student, or centre of the self'.

I don't expect to replicate the bond of a tight-knit family unit in the classroom, but what I can assure my students - particularly if we are meeting online - is that suspending self-consciousness, listening to each other's ideas and committing to collaboration, even with strangers, is well worth the risk. Our project has extended way beyond our home, and produced something of social value in challenging circumstances: I believe that's a lesson worth sharing.

Matthew and Elliott are now enjoying practical rewards that were never anticipated. When Elliott joins the Brit School to study Theatre in September, he'll have a unique body of work to add to his portfolio. As Matthew's work trickles back in, new clients tell him how much they enjoy the Quarantines videos: it's another showcase for his creativity.

As a family, this magical experience has made us stronger and more resilient. In years to come, the Quarantines will provide a vibrant and positive record of our lockdown experience - and, as a colleague on the Creative HE Facebook group commented, it certainly 'beats the old family picture album!'

The Quarantines project is online at: www.facebook.com/OftheHomeAge/

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Darren Goddard : A Good Lockdown Story

Darren Goddard has been posting drawings of life in lockdown to "make people smile" during the coronavirus pandemic. He is compiling them in book called "My Ludicrous Life in Lockdown". Darren was made homeless shortly before lockdown came in but has since found accommodation with his dog Purdy. Thanks to the BBC he is now well known and hopefully this will make it easier for him to find a publisher.



Editor—As Johanna and Darren's stories reveal, lockdown has provided new opportunities for creative self-expression. But this does not apply to everyone and in the next article Kevin Byron offers a very different perspective.

Lockdown, Social Isolation, Motivation and Creativity

Kevin Byron



Kevin received his Ph.D in Physics from the University of Hull, and pursued a career in commercial research in photonics for some twenty five years. During this time he was an honorary visiting lecturer at the Universities of Glasgow and Salford, and elected to Fellowship of the Institute of Physics. Whilst working in industry he developed a growing interest in education, and creative skills, and the award of a NESTA fellowship in 2002 enabled him to pursue these interests full time. In 2008 he took up a post at the University of Leicester as a research skills developer, and then at Queen Mary University of London as an enterprise and research skills developer. More recently he has worked as an independent research skills developer for a number of higher education institutions and industries in the UK and Europe, and is a guest lecturer at Leeds University and City University, London. He has published over 150 academic papers and patents, and contributed to a number of book publications on his earlier research interests, and more recently on innovation and creativity. He is an active member of the #creativeHE community.

The 'lockdown' of a whole nation is an entirely novel experience for everyone, and as such has resulted in a variety of inevitable and unexpected consequences. Lockdown - for the purposes of inhibiting the spread of the Covid-19 epidemic - has a central aim to minimise, at a nationwide level, all forms of close contact with other people, except those living under the same roof. Whilst this is effective in its aim regarding the virus, it also represents an unprecedented Lockdown of individual social and psychological needs.

The idea of humans as social animals goes back to ancient Greece when Aristotle declared: "He or she who lives without society is either a beast or God". To assess the extent of our sociability, it's interesting to reflect on just how much of our day-to-day life has, by necessity, been locked down. Schools, cafes, restaurants, shops, cinemas, theatres, museums, art galleries, public transport, sports stadia, religious edifices etc, are just a few examples of organisations that cater to our social needs whilst simultaneously providing some other kind of service. For many people, the workplace also provides significant opportunities for social contact integrated into the working day.

We need human contact, even if that doesn't involve conversation, but mere observation. There is something unique - indeed special - about real human presence that nurtures our well-being and sustains our sense of self. Of course human contact is not all sunshine, and someone once commented: "So and so may well have a wonderful presence, but they have a divine absence!" Nevertheless as Spinoza informs us: "men do derive from social life much more convenience than injury."

The requirement for lockdown brought relief for many people, in the sense of reassurance that they were safe from catching the Covid-19 virus, though the degree of anxiety increased with age due to the strong correlation with mortality risk. Lockdown also brought worries for employed people concerning income, job security, and inconvenience and disappointment over cancelled short term social plans such as anniversaries, weddings, holidays etc. The benefit of health safety however could be traded-off with the last of these concerns, and as government support plans were put into action, those other issues were to some extent assuaged. Daily news bulletins on the devastation wrought by Covid-19 combined with the other concerns created a background fog of low level of nationwide anxiety as Lockdown proceeded. Over time however the unprecedented effects of social isolation began to be felt as well.

Of course it's not possible to generalise over the variety of social situations that different people found themselves in as Lockdown began. Some were in families, others alone, and the heroic 'front line' workers were carrying on as usual. Nevertheless, all were affected to some extent by the end of normal social interaction for themselves, and at one remove by the impact of this on family and friends.

'Nature abhors a vacuum' so the saying goes, and that appears to be the case for the mind. When faced with challenges for which we have no precedent, creativity comes rushing in, and within days of Lockdown, the need for real social contact especially by people living alone, was rapidly substituted by virtual social contact. This wasn't particularly creative in itself, because much of our daily real social life, has already been given over to its virtual equivalent.



The last twenty years or more, has seen our capability for social contact dramatically amplified by means of optical fibre and wireless telecommunication infrastructures. Their myriad platforms, devices and applications now enable us to see and speak with anyone at any time, and in any place in the world. Indeed the ubiquity of personal communication technologies has resulted in an almost complete integration (and at times intrusion) of virtual interaction into our real world of social presence. It's now common-place to see people temporarily leave the real world of social presence in a restaurant say, and engage socially in a virtual world through texts, voice calls or even video. Interestingly the apparent extended technological bandwidth of communication by technology is actually the reverse in terms of human communication bandwidth as discussed later.

Communication technology may have provided us with unprecedented, distance-independent opportunities for attention exchange with other people, but it has always been at the expense of the quality of attention. Furthermore if we are in the real presence of other people, and we switch to a virtual presence with someone else via text, voice-call or video, we have temporarily socially isolated ourselves from the group. Indeed as far as we are concerned these other people are temporarily no longer there!

Communication technology and social media then facilitates social isolation in the real world, and enables social connection in the virtual world. This then was the obvious solution to lockdown where our real world was now isolated on a grand scale. In spite of the aforementioned trade-off in virtual communication in terms of the quality of attention exchange, it's hard to imagine what the consequences to mental well-being would have been without these technologies during Lockdown.

How does social isolation affect our creativity?

But what about the effects of social isolation on creativity? There are arguments suggesting it would both thrive and wither, depending on the person and their circumstances. In the early days of lockdown, many people rushed to fill the void in their social lives by joining friends, family and colleagues in a virtual world. In parallel with that many enterprising transitions were made from the real to the virtual, in the form of live video broadcasts of a variety of body conditioning exercise classes, and dancing, cookery, art and singing classes by your favourite local tutor. Some would argue this was a creative act on the part of the tutor, but notwithstanding the technical skills to achieve this, it's more a case of common sense driven by necessity! To see real creativity in Lockdown we can ignore the change in medium, and look instead at the content, and here we found initially a most amazing display of novelty in the form of humour such as 'Friday Night Fancy Dress', and comedic impersonations etc. Creativity, interestingly thrives when we put limitations on what we can do, and a great example of this is the Apollo 13 mission to the Moon (the ultimate lockdown!) that went horribly wrong.

Here, working together with the ground control engineers, the three astronauts managed to survive by re-purposing the technology they had at hand. A similar resourcefulness was seen at the Rio Olympics in 2016, where tight budget constraints meant that the resources for the costume and artefact design for the opening and closing ceremonies had to be made from re-used materials.

For the lone creative artist or writer, lockdown is largely indistinguishable from normal working life, for example the artist Maggie Hambling said in a recent interview (9th May'20) with The Times newspaper columnist Rachel Campbell-Johnson: "In a way lockdown hasn't remotely affected my routine..." She goes on to say that she still gets up at five am, goes straight to the studio and works until lunchtime. However Hambling later says that while Lockdown hasn't changed anything (work-wise) it: "...has completely changed everything" and laments her loss of real social contact.

But what if we are not normally confined to home? What effect has lockdown had on our creativity? - especially under the circumstances in which the usual busy daily routine has been cancelled!

Before addressing these questions it's important to make a comparison between real and virtual presence in communication. In the early days of the development of business video conferencing, there was a belief that if the people involved in future virtual meetings first met in the real world, then communication by video was going to be more productive. (I have only anecdotal knowledge of this at the laboratory where I was employed in the 1990s, where we put this idea in practice initially). It's a reasonable idea given that we are subject to a lot more information about a person when we meet them, that's not available to us when we see them on a computer screen. However it's certainly not the case that in real interactions as much as 55% of communication is through body language, and 38% is through tone of voice. This popular idea attributed to Albert Mehrabian ¹ has been misinterpreted, and is effectively dispatched here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7dboA8cag1M>

Those other factors do matter, but the qualitative experiential differences between real and virtual presence are still largely unknown, and a subject for further research.

My lockdown survey

Back to the aforementioned questions on the effects of creativity in lockdown. To gain some answers to these questions - in addition to observing my own behaviour - I regularly contacted several friends, and invited them to reflect on their experiences on a weekly basis. Some were sharing their homes with partners or children, and others were living alone like myself. Irrespective of the circumstances there was an interesting correspondence between our responses, and week on week we each seemed to be tracking similar experiences.

In the first week or so of Lockdown, there was a mild sense of euphoria in spite of the aforementioned backdrop of worries. This was probably due to the sudden liberation from the stresses and strains of our usual day-to-day working life. There was now ample opportunity to focus instead on all the deferred jobs in the house and garden. It was also a great opportunity to exercise our creativity in ways we only dreamt about earlier, because there had never been enough time. This was the time to start writing the novel and the

poetry, and to create a new artwork, or work towards ticking off a bucket-list item that could be fulfilled at home.

In all cases my colleagues started to engage in these, and similar projects in the first week. Shortly afterwards however no further progress was made. By about the third week of lockdown there was a tendency to spend more time looking inwards, and a period of nostalgia ensued. This was also evidenced on social media with the appearance of old school photographs etc.

One possible reason for this introspection is that the human bandwidth deficiencies of virtual communication were beginning to be felt, and also given the lack of external stimulus, there was not so much to talk about apart from the news in our virtual world. It was also widely reported during this time that people were dreaming more frequently, and more vividly, and again this can be explained by the absence of external stimuli.

By the fourth week of lockdown a restlessness amongst my contacts was apparent, and a desire to know how much longer it was going to continue. As further time passed there was a kind of resignation phase, in which we had in a sense normalised lockdown. We were operating at a lower level of engagement, even though the background of concerns remained. We had adjusted to a new, relatively low external stimulus routine which in itself was not unpleasant, but neither was it meeting our earlier creative aspirations.

It's interesting to speculate on what was taking place psychologically, and with regard to the effects on creativity, much of this can be explained by the work of Professor Teresa Amabile. In 1983 she developed a much cited model of the social and psychological components that need to be present for an individual to produce creative work. Initially there were three components² but later on a fourth was added³. These are:

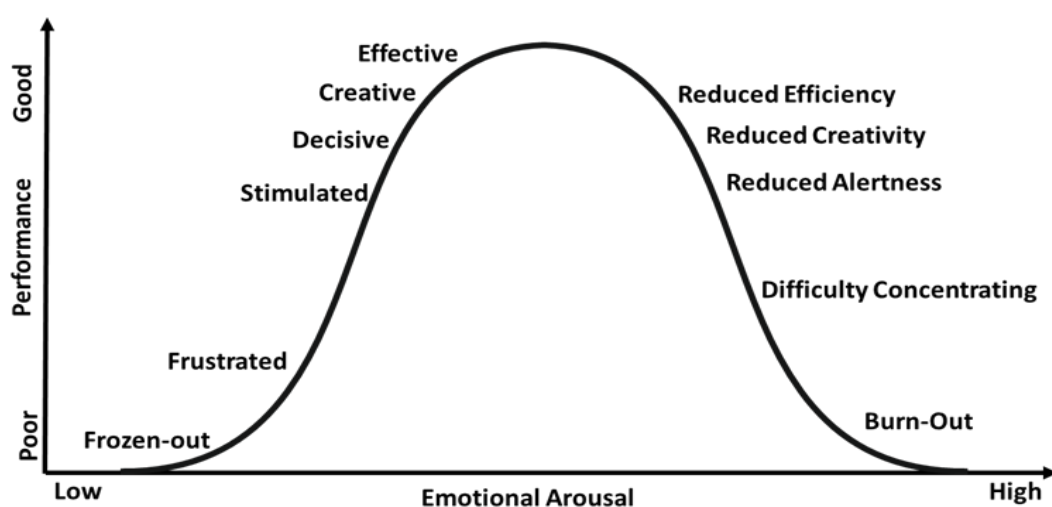
1. **Domain Specific Knowledge** - referring to specialised knowledge, skills and talent in whatever interests us.
2. **Creative Skills** - referring to a number of cognitive or behavioural skills such as the ability to combine disparate elements; to re-frame problems; to take risks in challenging conventional thinking; to be tolerant to ambiguity etc.
3. **Intrinsic Task Motivation (or Passion)** - concerning the degree of inner emotional drive to meet a challenge.
4. **The Social Environment** - concerning the external motivators that encourage and support creative action.

There's several sub-components to each of these, and if one or more of these main components is absent, it is held that we will be unable to operate at a higher level of creativity. Referring to Kaufmann's 4C model⁴ Pro-C and Big-C, creativity would be unattainable under the circumstances of the absence of one or more of those 4 components. However given there is a modicum background of creativity in a lot of our activities, we would therefore default to little-c and mini-c acts of creativity.

It's reasonable to assume that Amabile's 1st and 2nd components are still present during lockdown, and so the challenges to aim for a higher level of creativity under these circumstances would be to address the 3rd and 4th components.

The factors underpinning Intrinsic Task Motivation can be clearly illustrated in The Yerkes-Dodson curve shown in Figure 1^{5,6}. This shows how performance varies with emotional arousal. At low levels of arousal we are in effect asleep or behaving purely passively. Emotional arousal is a measure of motivation, and there is an optimum level for peak creative performance at the upper left side of the curve. However if we are subject to additional emotional pressure, for example from uncertainties, or from other pressures in our immediate environment, then even though the performance may still be high, our creativity disappears as we tip over to the upper right hand slope of the curve.

Figure 1 Yerks-Dodson curve^{5,6}



The degree of emotional arousal in this case is referred to as the 'Allostatic Load'⁷ and in effect it represents stress. Under normal circumstances we are subject to multiple forms of relatively low levels of stress, and they don't have a huge impact on motivation. However in the current lockdown situation most of those

varied forms of stress have been replaced by the more intangible and unquantifiable issues on future security and health risk, and it's this background fog that inhibits creativity. Further emotional arousal takes us further down the right hand side of the curve leading to a risk to mental well-being and physical health.

So given that the circumstances of Lockdown can disable our creativity due to vicarious form of background stress, it would be useful to know how that can be remedied. Before discussing this however, the 4th component in Amabile's model of creativity - The Social Environment - needs to be considered as this also influences our creativity during lockdown.

In normal social life our creative impulses are nurtured both directly and indirectly by the environments in which we live and work. Whilst a lot of creative work may be conducted alone, the lead up, progress and conclusion of this work is, for most people, integrated into wider spaces. In these spaces we interact with others, share what we are doing, exchange ideas and give mutual encouragement. Even if the exchanges are not directly connected with our creative endeavours, they feed and sustain our motivation. Furthermore the contrast of being away from the work-place, simply observing other people, and feeling the general rhythm of life is an essential aspect of well-being that keeps us motivated.

In lockdown however these environmental stimuli have been strongly attenuated. We still have at hand our technologically-based virtual world, but as discussed earlier, this falls short of the human bandwidth that we experience in real presence. Furthermore when there is little new stimulus coming into the virtual world, the environmental component to creativity is reduced further. Whilst we still continue to be in touch with each other virtually, the interaction performs a more perfunctory purpose over time. With regard to the small social experiment with my friends described earlier, it was observed that after four weeks of lockdown, the frequency of phone or video calls started to diminish.

Even though there are signs we are slowly easing out of lockdown, it will be many months before our social environment is fully re-connected again (for example Universities are now planning to conduct on-line teaching until next year). Social distancing and isolation for many will also continue through to next year. It's therefore not only of academic interest to enquire about strategies for re-animating our creativity.

In some ways with regard to Amabile's 3rd components and the allostatic load, the solution lies in reducing the background fog that disrupts creativity. It's important to note that when worries are unquantifiable, much of this anxious 'fog' is based on an internal conversation we hold with ourselves. Our attention is drawn away from the real world, and into our imagination.

It's not in the remit of this article to list the strategies for reducing this background fog as a quick search on the Web will yield plenty of suggestions (see for example⁸). Suffice it to say, it's not a question of how to switch on one's creativity, but more how to switch off one's background stress.

It is however worth mentioning in passing an approach to this based on the observation of attention⁹. In lockdown there's a tendency over time to live in our head more and more, and it's not always easy to remind ourselves to observe this. Having made the step to self-observation, we can then practice switching our attention at will, initially to the outside world. Here we can first choose to scan our environment and then focus on a specific object and observe its colour, form and texture. This has the effect of bringing us more into the present, and subsequent reflection can help in assessing the degree to which our worries are grounded in reality. Simply talking a walk can have a similar effect provided we check in first to where our attention is aimed, and switch it if necessary. Many of the published tips on reducing stress can be translated as attention switching exercise like this, and they are quite effective in re-activating our creativity.

With regard to restoring Amabile's 4th component (The Social Environment) to enable our creativity during lockdown, communication - other than with the people we may be living with - is limited by the reduced human bandwidth of the virtual world. However the kind of conversations we have may make an important difference. In the real world of 'Open Space' meetings¹⁰ - designed to identify creative solutions to a shared challenge between people in an organisation - the facilitator initially aims to shift ordinary transactional conversations between people to more creative ones. Conversations occupy a spectrum ranging from 'Evasive' to 'Creative', and the salient features of these various types of conversation are listed below:

Evasive - Disguising the Truth, Withholding Information, Withdrawing Emotionally or Physically.

Conclusive - Opinion Dump, Labelling.

Transition - Taking Responsibility, Equanimity, Shared Intentions.

Expansive - Researching Common Ground, Identifying Facts, Inquiry, Expanding point of View.

Creative - Combining Ideas, Building Partnerships.

If we've managed to distance ourselves from our own aforementioned background 'fog' during Lockdown, we may also be better placed to have more expansive and creative virtual conversations with others, which may also help re-ignite our creativity. Preparing ourselves for a conversation may seem a strange thing to do - but then we are living in very strange times!

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How Does Creative Self-Expression Feature In Our Educational Systems?

Norman Jackson

In one of her posts, [Carly Lassig](#) introduced her threefold categorisation of creativity in adolescents' creativity based on her doctoral research¹. This way of viewing creativity has triggered new insights for me. While acknowledging the wisdom in 'you can't make blanket claims about education'... I am going to posit that Carly's threefold categorisation of creativity offers a crude first order mapping of learner practices and responses within our education system.

If it was possible to map particular contexts, practices and outcomes accurately we might anticipate that most situations in education where creativity is manifest, would plot within the conceptual space near the base of the triangle with creative self-expression tending to characterise early years and primary level of the education system and the arts and perhaps humanities disciplines at secondary and tertiary level.

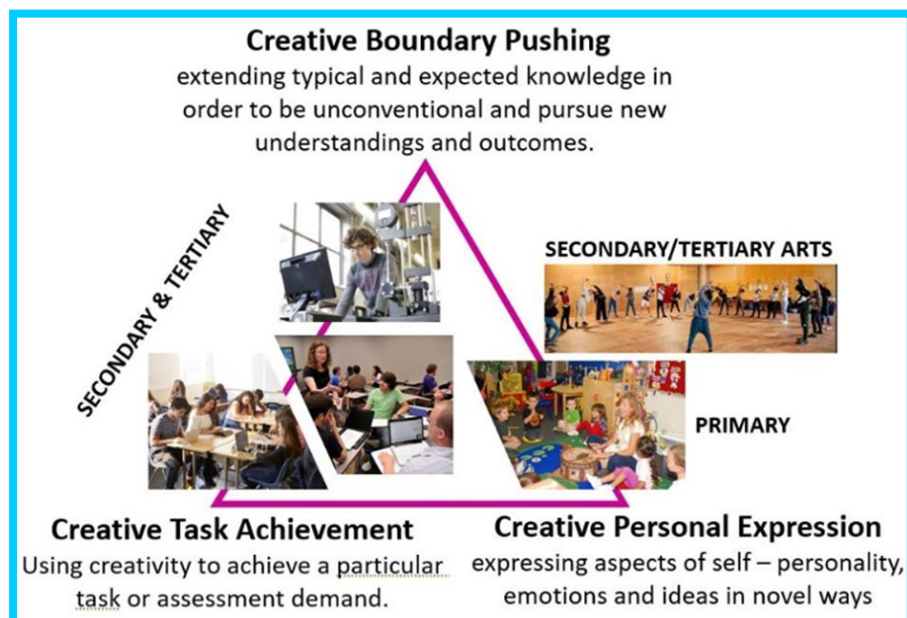
At secondary and tertiary levels of our education systems creative effort is more likely to be focused on problem solving in disciplinary contexts perhaps with some opportunity for creative self-expression. Creative effort in research-based post-graduate education and perhaps research-based project work at undergraduate level is directed towards task accomplishment and extending the boundaries of knowledge fields. Again, both of these contexts may well be accompanied by some opportunities for creative self-expression.

So is Ken Robinson in his much watched TED Talk² 'Do schools kill creativity?' wrong in the assertions he makes? Is it not the case that taking our education systems as a whole, they are encouraging creativity and the application of creative effort in different ways.

In doing some background research for this post I discovered an interesting TEDx talk by Tim Leunig "Why real creativity is based on knowledge"³. It offers a different and I believe a more considered and accurate representation of creativity in schools to that offered by Ken Robinson. This passage in an RSA blog post⁴ captures the proposition.

"What is striking about the two talks is how different are the definitions of creativity on which they are based. To Robinson, creativity is about imagination, self-expression and divergent thinking. In contrast, Leunig's examples of creativity show how, through the use of logic and the application of scientific principles, existing knowledge can be marshalled to create innovative new solutions to longstanding problems. To Robinson, creativity is natural - something you're born with. Whereas for Leunig, it is highly dependent on the prior acquisition of biologically secondary knowledge - something you need to be taught. For Robinson, creativity is an alternative to literacy, and is often displayed by those who struggle academically; people who display what Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner would describe as an alternative or non-cognitive form of intelligence. For Leunig, creativity is a cognitive competence that gains form and substance within particular knowledge domains - domains to which the illiterate cannot gain access."

Looking at the systems level of education (not the experiences of individual learners), it is my belief that, although we might criticise our systems of education in placing too much emphasis on focusing creative effort on externally motivated tasks and assessment exercises at the expense of creative self-expression, this is not surprising given that this type of creativity serves the knowledge economy rather than health and wellbeing of individuals. I now see more clearly that the creative effort within our educational systems is biased towards preparing people for disciplined ways of working in the Pro-c⁴ domain of creativity. This is why, I argued with Carly Lassig in a recent Creative Academic Magazine article⁵, that we need to recognise an ed-c domain for creativity.



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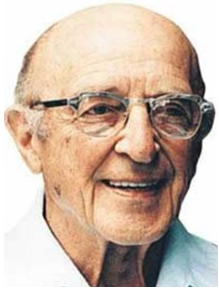
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Carl Rogers on Creative Self-Expression

Editorial



I remember, many years ago, my good friend and mentor Professor John Cowan, saying to me “you know Norman, you should read Carl Rogers’ book *On Becoming a Person*”¹. It was one of the best recommendations I have ever received and there is no doubt that what I read has influenced my own thinking. In particular, his essay ‘Towards a theory of creativity’ written in 1954, has been particularly influential and I have adopted his concept of creativity and the process through which it emerges as if it was my own invention because it fits so well my own experience of creativity as a phenomenon that emerges in my own day to day thinking and doings. *“My definition, then, of the creative process is that it is the emergence in action of a novel relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, people, or circumstances of his life on the other.”*

Clearly Carl Rogers imagined (as I do) that the act of expression involved a person interacting with their material and social world in a way that meant something to them. And what they did was transform ideas and things and perhaps themselves into something that was novel to them.

Carl Rogers was a psychotherapist who helped people with mental health problems, emotional challenges, and psychiatric disorders to understand their feelings, and what made them feel positive, anxious, or depressed in order that they could manage them better. In the article that follows, Sarah Buxton and Rebecca Morley discuss their role as dramatherapists in enabling their to express themselves creatively so I thought it was worth sharing some of Carl Rogers thoughts on creativity and self-expression to provide a context to their work.

These notes are taken from an interesting article by Kristen Bettencourt²

In his 1954 essay³ Carl Rogers points out, “The mainspring of creativity appears to be the same tendency which we discover so deeply as the curative force in psychotherapy—man’s tendency to actualize himself, to become his potentialities”^{3 p.291}. Rogers sees a strong connection between what happens during the therapeutic process, and what happens during the creative process, and from this we can surmise that the necessary and sufficient conditions for personality change may also bring about creativity.

For Rogers, creativity is defined broadly: “Creativity is not, in my judgment, restricted to some particular content. I am assuming that there is no fundamental difference in the creative process as it is evidenced in painting a picture, composing a symphony...or creating new formings of one’s own personality as in psychotherapy”^{3 p.250}.

Rogers clearly sees that when a therapeutic relationship supports free expression, authentic creativity can emerge. Rogers believed strongly in the potential of all human beings to creatively express themselves, and to creatively bring about their own personality change, pointing out, “Intimate knowledge of the way in which the individual remolds himself in the therapeutic relationship with originality and effective skill, gives one confidence in the creative potential of all individuals”^{3 p.251}.

Rogers lists the conditions that foster creativity, first explaining, creativity must be permitted to emerge, and cannot be forced. For this to occur, psychological safety and the individual’s unconditional worth must be established. This will allow the client to let go of rigidity and to “actualize himself in new and spontaneous ways”^{3 p.257}.

Rogers draws a parallel between therapy and creativity; “My experience in psychotherapy leads me to believe that by setting up conditions of psychological safety and freedom, we maximize the likelihood of an emergence of constructive creativity”^{3 p.256}.

Rogers stresses that creativity emerges, implying that the potential of its expression always exists, but may not be expressed until a receptive environment is made available. Rogers believes that all humans have the potential for creativity and therapeutic change, and it is not the therapist’s role or responsibility to control or activate this process.

Rogers identifies openness to experience as being a necessary condition for creativity, as well as a characteristic of a fully functioning person. He describes a fully functioning, and therefore, creative person, as experiencing psychological freedom, spontaneity, tolerance for ambiguity, and acceptance of the moment, undistorted by defensiveness, rigidity, and inhibition. This profound openness and availability of direct experience, reinforces the idea that Rogers saw therapeutic personality change and creativity as deeply intertwined.

Rogers explains, “With his sensitive openness to his world, his trust of his own ability to form new relationships to his environment, he would be the type of person from whom creative products and creative living emerge”^{3 p.22}.

The second condition for creativity is creating an environment without external judgment, and the third is the therapist understanding the client empathically. Rogers explains, “When we cease to form judgments of the other individual from our own locus of evaluation, we are fostering creativity”^{3 p.257}. The therapist strives to understand things in the way that the client experiences the world.

According to Rogers, evaluation can cause defensiveness, which compromises the client’s complete openness to experience. Seeing from the client’s point of view, and avoiding interpretation or evaluation based on criteria other than that of the client, creativity can safely emerge. Rogers explains further: If I understand you

empathically, see you and what you are feeling and doing from your point of view, enter your private world and see it as it appears to you- and still accept you- then this is safety indeed. In this climate you can permit your real self to emerge, and to express itself in varied and novel formings as it relates to the world^{3 p. 258}.

The fourth condition is psychological freedom, which allows the individual the flexibility to be true to her authentic innermost self. From this place, openness, spontaneity, and the “juggling of precepts, concepts, and meanings, which is a part of creativity”^{3p.258} can emerge. If the previous conditions of psychological safety, unconditional worth of the client, empathic understanding, and a lack of external evaluation are present, then psychological freedom can emerge.

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Facilitating Creative Expression: A Dramatherapy Perspective

Sarah Buxton and Rebecca Morley



Rebecca Morley and Sarah Buxton are both registered with The Health and Care Professions Council as Dramatherapists and Clinical Supervisors. The therapists have worked in a variety of settings and have experience in clinical work including mental health, trauma, abuse, neglect, attachment issues, learning disabilities, 'looked after' children and the impacts of ageing. Both therapists currently work for an arts based psychotherapy and creative wellbeing organisation, Inspirative Arts Derby Community Interest Company. Inspirative Arts is a research-led organisation. All work is based on the most up-to-date clinical knowledge and evidence base. As a community interest company, Inspirative Arts work closely with partnership organisations and people located in and around Derby and Derbyshire. The organisation engages in their own clinical research, and are at the forefront of developing the sector nationally.

“Creativity is the making, the bringing into being of something new”¹

Introduction

This issue of the magazine is concerned with how and why people express themselves creatively, but there are certain roles in society, like for example primary school teachers or, in our case people working in the therapeutic field, where the professional role involves encouraging and facilitating others to express themselves creatively. In this contribution we will explore creative expression in Dramatherapy practice.

What is Dramatherapy?

Dramatherapy is a protected title and in order to practice therapists must have undergone training at Masters level. It is an Arts Based Psychotherapy which uses non-verbal, verbal and creative means of expression and exploration. Dramatherapists use their training in drama, psychology and therapy to create safe, engaging spaces and methods for clients to explore psychological, emotional and social matters. Therapists working in this field make use of methods such as role-play, voice, story, myth, scripts, puppetry, masks, improvisation, object work, play, music and movement. These artistic interventions are designed to help increase a client's confidence, self-awareness and assertiveness, offering a creative way to explore, reflect and resolve feelings and relationships with one's self and others. Clients referred to a Dramatherapist do not require any previous experience or skill in the arts. The aim of therapy is to enable the client to affect growth and change on a personal level and to work towards agreed goals through creative processes.



Dramatherapists adhere to the ethical codes of conduct outlined by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and British Association of Dramatherapist (BADth).

The Therapeutic Relationship

Dramatherapists work with a variety of client groups and needs. At Inspirative Arts we have a particular expertise in working with people with complex family dynamics, attachment disorders and anxiety management, including experiences of domestic violence. Client groups may also include those who have mental health issues; those subjected to trauma, abuse, neglect; physical and / or learning disabilities, neurodevelopmental disorders, dementia, amidst many others. It is important to acknowledge that a Dramatherapy intervention is dependent upon individual clinical assessment and ongoing evaluation, not based on the client's diagnosis or experiences alone.

Recent developments in neuroscience suggest that the effect of any chaotic experience in the crucial early years may lead to adverse brain development, therefore affecting the establishment of neural pathways that the individual will use for the rest of their life². Experiences in our early years are processed in the right side of the brain, whilst language abilities emanate from the left hemisphere. Since traumatic experiences are processed and stored in a part of the brain that is pre verbal or non verbal, verbal approaches are often ineffective. For this reason the arts psychotherapies are often a suitable medium.



The relationship between the therapist and the client is of central importance. A strong therapeutic alliance can act as a useful modelling tool in understanding a healthy relational template. This can allow a person to understand their own attachment style and how this can manifest itself in key relationships.

A strong therapeutic relationship is essential before clients attempt to look at deep issues, thus is key to achieving positive therapy outcomes^{3,4}. Within the frame of the therapeutic relationship, the therapist maintains physical, psychological and emotional boundaries, holding a safe space for the therapy to take place. The way this relationship is built over time is an important factor. In time, the therapeutic relationship might feel safe enough to try techniques otherwise outside of an individual's comfort zone. This is sometimes known as the 'growth zone'⁵.

Theory and Practice Models

Dramatherapy has an array of theoretical models of practice (outlined below). At Inspirative Arts we centre and tailor our approaches around the individual client needs. A client centred approach is nondirective and empathic that aims to empower and motivate the client throughout the therapeutic process, recognising the importance of trusting the human potential to facilitate change. Our ethos applies the three conditions, as highlighted by Carl Rogers, as being essential in a person centred approach. These conditions include unconditional positive regard, empathy and congruence⁶.

Models which influence our way of working include The Embodiment Projection Role Developmental Paradigm (EPR), the Creative Expressive model and the Task Skills model. Creative techniques and approaches are involved and applied in each of these models.

The EPR paradigm is a developmental model of Dramatherapy that assumes a correspondence between what happens in Dramatherapy and the way that children learn to play. Children's play evolves through three developmental stages named embodiment, projection and role⁷. Using these stages, we work and rework our experiences. It is intended that in finding a developmental stage that has been 'halted' due to experiences it can be reworked dramatically consequently, altering perspectives and ways of being. During the initial stages of therapy when a client may feel more vulnerable it is common to revert back to a preferred state of working whether it be embodiment, projection or role. As the therapy process continues there may be appropriate times when the client can be challenged to explore and express in a less familiar state.



The Creative Expressive Model works with the underdeveloped healthy aspects of individuals, using creativity to aid personal development. It has a focus on wellbeing in a general sense rather than on specific pathology.

The Task Skills model focuses on ways of rehearsing and practicing skills needed in daily life. It provides the opportunity to try out different ways of thinking, roles and behaviours⁸.

Through working in a multidisciplinary team we understand the opportunities for learning and benefits of cross modality working. Therefore, when appropriate, we may adopt an integrated approach that allows modalities to serve and support one another. A combined approach can increase the level of safety and comfort for clients. Clients may feel more able to express and experiment with a higher level of trust for the therapist⁹. This could include using an array of art forms, including drama, art, music and movement dependent upon the most appropriate medium for the client.



Why is it important for dramatherapists to enable their clients to express themselves creatively?

It is important for Dramatherapists to enable clients to express through creativity as using creative techniques can provide an alternative means of externalising and processing content that may not be possible through spoken word alone. Creativity can allow us to become aware of and notice things that we may not have previously been able to do. It enables access to an individual's subconscious material. Through exploring presenting material creatively it can provoke different perspectives and ways of thinking, thus increasing a person's awareness of self, other and their environment.

What does creative expression mean in the therapeutic environment? What does it look, feel and sound like?

Creative expression in the therapeutic environment is facilitated in a safe, boundaried and confidential space which can enable individuals to express deep personal experiences and vulnerable aspects of self without judgement. Methods of creative expression are considered carefully to ensure it remains ethical and appropriate to the needs of the client.

How does the environment itself encourage/inhibit creative self-expression? What sort of environments do you create?

An important part of creating an appropriate environment includes setting up a therapeutic contract between therapist and client. The contract includes ethical codes of practice and informs both participants about how sessions will take place and the boundaries maintained. As part of this contract we would discuss factors that would encourage or inhibit the individual, acknowledging this may be different for each person. A risk assessment would also be part of setting up the right environment to ensure the safety of the client and therapist both physically and psychologically. During sessions the space needs to be private and free from interruption to enable a contained environment.



What mediums/tools do you use to encourage creative expression?

Creativity within the therapeutic space allows for distancing tools which may be useful when building a trusting, working alliance. Dramatherapists are able to use a variety of types of interaction using verbal / non-verbal, projective and embodied communication, and will tailor this depending on the clients zone of comfort.

What are the specific techniques you use to encourage creative expression?

Useful strategies to enable safe distancing within the therapeutic space might include using projective tools such as small world objects, genograms, life maps and spectrograms. These can support in establishing an understanding of the client's life experiences, family roles and dynamics, familiar and unfamiliar roles and in turn the context of referral.

There are a variety of techniques that can be used to facilitate creative expression. One of these ways incorporates use of metaphor which can provide clients with a less threatening, distanced means of exploring emotionally difficult subjects. This might be particularly appropriate for clients who are addressing challenging material such as fear of loss, separation, trauma and neglect. Working with metaphor in therapy can help enable a client to talk about something they wouldn't be able to do directly¹⁰. Additionally, a life drama connection can occur through metaphorical exploration in which a connection is made to real life events, experiences and beliefs as "all drama is based on reality either explicitly or through metaphor"^{11 p.22}. This can bring about further self awareness within a client, understanding of difficulties, how to manage them and work towards recovery.

The use of role can be a very powerful Dramatherapy tool. Role can be utilised in ways such as enacting role play to exploring roles through various creative means such as projecting characters onto objects, story work, writing and image making. Dramatherapy provides a safe space to explore roles outside the clients typical ways of being therefore, providing them with the opportunity to expand their role repertoire.

For example, Sajnani and Read Johnson¹² discuss how those subjected to trauma often have a limited role repertoire because they often become used to being in the role of victim or 'damaged person'. By allowing them to engage in various roles they are given the chance to explore a range of alternative roles and perceptions that they could adopt. Through applying imagination and role, Dramatherapy can help clients explore "beliefs, hopes, fears, commands and wishes" that were challenged due to the experiences of trauma¹³. Therefore, enabling



transformations in individuals as they learn to experience and rehearse different ways of being and thinking. Consequently, the expansion of role repertoire provides psychological and social benefits¹⁴.

Dramatherapy and role techniques can enable individuals to explore a variety of behaviours and learn how to make changes, where appropriate. Another example of this is utilising aspects of Forum Theatre for clients to be able to rehearse new ways of being and responding to experiences¹⁵.

The Dramatherapeutic term 'de-roling' is used to describe the process in which a client 'disrobes' themselves from the play space, and 're-enters' reality. This process can involve several activities to support the client in re-orienting and grounding themselves. It is important to acknowledge that same need for distancing as a Dramatherapist.

What are the benefits of successfully enabling a client to express themselves creatively?

There are many benefits to using creativity as a form of self expression in Dramatherapy. Benefits have been found to include; facilitating expression of feelings, focusing the mind, improving self esteem¹⁶, increased body awareness, increasing confidence, building skills for communication and healthy relationships¹⁷. It can also help to facilitate self realisation, creating potential for change¹⁰, building self assurance and resilience¹⁴, amidst many other benefits. Casson (cited in¹⁸) identifies how Dramatherapy helps the client to heal themselves, which can empower the client, providing them with a sense of ownership of their own process.

Is there a sense when you are working that creative expression is a collaboration? What problem are you working with that demands your creativity?

Whilst clients are encouraged to take ownership of their creative process there are times when the therapist may work in collaboration with the client in order to support them, model engagement and facilitate confidence through encouraging them to interact with various art forms believed to enhance their therapeutic journey.

Effect on the client: This enables the client to realise that they are not alone in their therapeutic journey, they have an anchor of support and containment should they become distressed or provoked during the creative process. A sense of 'permission' may be experienced by the client, when they witness the therapist's engagement with new materials, consequently, increasing their confidence and self esteem in expanding their creative repertoire and means to self expression.

Effect on the therapist: Although projective play may enable a greater physical and intrapsychic form of distancing, at times the therapist may become 'a player in the clients drama'¹⁹. During which they must keep a strong sense of self and an awareness for the potential of transference or countertransference. The term 'enchantment' is often used for when a therapist is experiencing an unconscious countertransference - 'a shared active imagination'²⁰.

For many dramatherapists that have experienced this phenomenon, they have found that similar 'de-roling' activities have been a useful tool in maintaining their own distance and identifying whose thoughts and feelings they might be carrying.

How does our own creative expression feature in our professional practices?

Creative self expression is applied within the therapists professional practice which includes clinical supervision. Within Dramatherapy practice, all therapists have a professional responsibility to engage in regular supervision. Supervision is for professional and personal development and to care for the well-being and protection of both the practitioner and client. It is a space for creative reflection, exploration and expression regarding clinical work. Creativity within clinical supervision can be extremely valuable and beneficial. It can facilitate new perspectives and new enlightenment towards cases¹. Creative supervision can also help increase supervisees self awareness, including processing of the dynamics between client and therapist such as countertransference, the dynamic between therapist and supervisor and the potential impact of organisational factors. Creative tools can also be effective in reducing supervisee stress²¹.

Supervision can have many similar qualities to therapy. It should be considered a psychological intervention particularly vulnerable to ethical misconduct. The frequency of sessions, transference, countertransference, parallel processes are all similar to the frames of therapy²². From a supervisee perspective, creativity within the supervisory space can enable discoveries of one's own psychological processes and how these have the potential to interlink and parallel that of the clients, and vice versa. The supervisee may choose to explore the clients creative work within clinical supervision. The experience of supervision and the supervisor's response are received and taken back to the therapy session.



The use of metaphor and symbol in supervision can allow distance, paralleling that of the client experience. This can enable a supervisee to explore difficult experiences of transference / countertransference to be unpicked safely, acknowledging that therapists are human too.¹⁹ state that 'in art psychotherapy supervision the art object reveals otherwise inarticulate elements of the supervision'.

Final remarks

This article has demonstrated how creativity in a Dramatherapy context can be applied with psychological intent and with a therapeutic agenda. The use of the arts in therapy and supervision can bring about psychological changes in a safe, accessible and ethical context. It is important to recognise that application of arts in therapy should only be facilitated by fully qualified and registered arts psychotherapists.

Acknowledgement

**Images courtesy of Mitch Gamble Photography.

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Evolving Opportunities For Creative Self-Expression: New Tools For Evaluating Acts Of Creativity

Norman Jackson

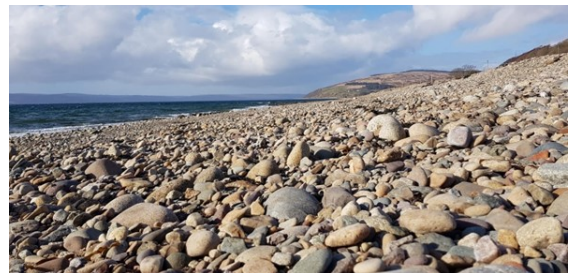
The impulse to make something

I am much taken with the idea that we are ecological beings and that our creativity is an important capacity we have for relating to, interacting with and finding new meanings, in the world. The way our creativity emerges in our interactions is an ever unfolding story and I am always on the lookout for happenings in my own life to try to understand this creative force that is an important part of me.

My story begins in early March, just before the Covid 19 lockdown in the UK. My wife was taking a short break from her demanding job as a GP and on holiday in northwest Scotland where the landscapes and seascapes are absolutely stunning. Not surprising for early March the weather was mixed but in wandering through the wonderful unfolding vistas I felt an impulse to do something. I had my sketchpad and paints with me but I felt that I wanted to do something more visceral. I began to look at the landscape differently, rather than 'just' taking in the spectacular vistas I searched for ways in which I could make something.

The road on the west of Arran hugs the coast and driving past one boulder strewn beach I was struck by the idea of building a tower of stones. We stopped the car and I went onto the beach with the specific intention of making a small tower. I spent time searching for stones that I could stack, and I took care in balancing the stones until I thought I had reached a point where I was happy with my tower. I wanted to photograph my tower so I spent a while finding good angles to capture images through photographs and video clips of my tower. As I composed my photograph I gained new perspectives on the landscape as I included different combinations of sea, sky and beach in my frame. The whole experience of making my tower and photographing and filming it lasted perhaps 30 minutes, but in that time I felt a deep contentment at being in that place doing what I was doing.

Over the next 5 days, as we toured the west coast of Scotland and the Isle of Skye, I made five more towers and went through a similar set of processes and feelings each time in each location. Each location sampled the beauty and geology of a particular land/seascape. I was once a geologist so a part of my interest and curiosity when visiting any place is to try to read the landscape. It was therefore natural for me to try to identify the types of rocks I was using in my tower and to think about the geology of the landscape in which I was 'playing'. It seemed natural to give meaning to my structures. For example, on Arran my towers were made from granite, in Glencoe I built a tower from the Ballachulish slate, on the Isle of Skye I built three towers from quartzite, rhyolite and basalt. In each case the rocks gave the tower a distinctive appearance and character. I decided these 'mini monuments' honoured the geology of the particular landscapes I had chosen from all the other landscapes that were available to me.



In building the towers I created physical artefacts but these were only available to me for the time I spent with them. I had the photographs but I knew I could do more with the materials so I decided to make a short movie (using windows movie maker) from the images and video clips I had collected. I often make short movies of my garden so the technique was familiar to me. I searched for and found on YouTube some beautiful Celtic Uilleann pipe music and created a soundtrack. The atmospheric music created a deeper emotional response to the images. I then uploaded my movie to my YouTube channel and shared it with family and friends through WhatsApp. You can watch it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yc1v8XbTVTE>. I also posted it in my 'scraps of life' blog with a short story about it.



Three weeks later we began a discussion about 'creative self-expression', on the #creativeHE platform. As facilitator I felt I needed to provide some illustrations of creative self-expression from my own life (the is something you just have to do when you invite others to share their experiences). My recent holiday was fresh in my mind so I decided to write an article and try to make sense of my unfolding experience recognising that I was now involved in a context where I was using my original act of creative self-expression to understand and illustrate processes and concepts relating to the set of ideas. This article has been written over three weeks: as ideas emerged in the discussion and I developed new insights I have added to it. As the discussion unfolded I saw the need and developed two conceptual tools to aid the self-evaluation and mapping of acts of creative self-expression which I claim are new acts of creative expression developed for a particular purpose and context.

Reflections on these examples of creative self-expression

We often read creativity backwards - here is the product of self-expression how did it come about? We trace the steps backwards and it all seems to make sense. The reality is rather different. When you begin to express yourself you don't know where it will lead - we experience creativity moving forwards through our life - it's an emergent phenomenon. Carl Rogers's points out, "We must face the fact that the individual creates primarily because it is satisfying to him."¹ Paul Klieman captures the idea of self-expression quite well, "*when we do something, make something, say something, write something, create something that originates in the inner core of our being and is expressed unfiltered by social conventions.*"² But I would add to "when we do something *in response to something*". The desire to do something is driven by feelings/emotions that grow out of our interactions with our social, cultural, material environment. It's the psychological environment created in response to something that provides the motivation for action and frames the search for ideas on how to act. The urge to express myself as I drove through the landscape was compelling. The idea of building a tower was simple, quick and easy and the fact it wasn't raining helped. I didn't need to think 'what medium should I use'? The medium was the materials of the beach and the camera on my phone. My actions satisfied my desire to be amongst the rocks on the beach. And when I had built and photographed my tower, I felt satisfied: I had expressed myself.

I had never built rock towers in the landscape before so the idea and act was novel to me but it did not require much effort or skill to build the tower. While the building of the tower did not feel creative in itself, photographing them and then making a movie did. Creativity for me was not so much in the individual things I did as in the whole project that involved weaving ideas, actions and experiences together to make the synthesis movie and later this narrative. These then become part of a larger body of work (e.g. the movies I have made, the articles I have written exploring creativity). Creative self-expression does not stop at the making of an artefact: the what has been done and learnt is always available to be related and connected to something bigger.

One view of creative self-expression is that it is nothing more than finding affordances (opportunities for action) in an environment. Indeed, Withagen and van der Kamp offer an interesting definition of creativity as "*the discovery and creation of unconventional affordances (action possibilities) of objects and materials*"^{3 p.1}.

Once we have an idea and we decide to act upon it we read the environment in ways that allow us to find opportunities that will enable us to realise the idea. I have recently been reading an article by Eric Rietveld & Julian Kiverstein called 'A Rich Landscape of Affordances'⁴, in which they develop a much richer concept of affordance than I have hitherto appreciated. Gibson's classic concept of affordances⁵ is generally understood as possibilities for action provided to an animal by their environment but ER&JK argue that affordance is related to particular individuals with particular capabilities, and motivated by their concerns, who engage with their environment in particular social-cultural settings and practices and select from a wealth of possibilities for action from a small field of affordances that they act upon.

Seeing creativity as an individual's way of perceiving, being motivated by and acting upon a specific set of affordances in their particular environment makes sense to me. In my story, my wandering through the Scottish landscape created an impulse - a desire to do something in and with the landscape. The idea of making small towers in and from the landscape came to me as I wondered how I might express myself in the amazing landscape we journeyed through. The landscape was full of rocks and they were easily accessible, so it is not surprising the idea came to use them. The towers were quick and relatively easy to make and the act of constructing and photographing them satisfied my impulse to act. Out of the massive landscape that was available to me I selected a particular place that was not always easy to access - perhaps it solicited me and I utilised the materials in the place or within perhaps 20 meters of my tower. What I did was new to me - I haven't made stone towers in the landscape before. Neither have I seen others doing it so I guess I might claim its non-normative behaviour. The making of the towers required little skill other than finding stones that could be placed on top of each other without falling over. Perhaps there was meaning in the way I placed the towers in the local landscape, and I also tried to photograph or video them in a way that captured their presence and aesthetic meaning. If there was skill in the process of making it was in the making of the movie that wove together the scenes I had created enhancing the aesthetic meaning through the music I had chosen to accompany the scenes. On reflection, I think the main intention underlying the building the tower was not to seek novelty but to transform the materials in my world into something that I felt was physically and aesthetically pleasing.

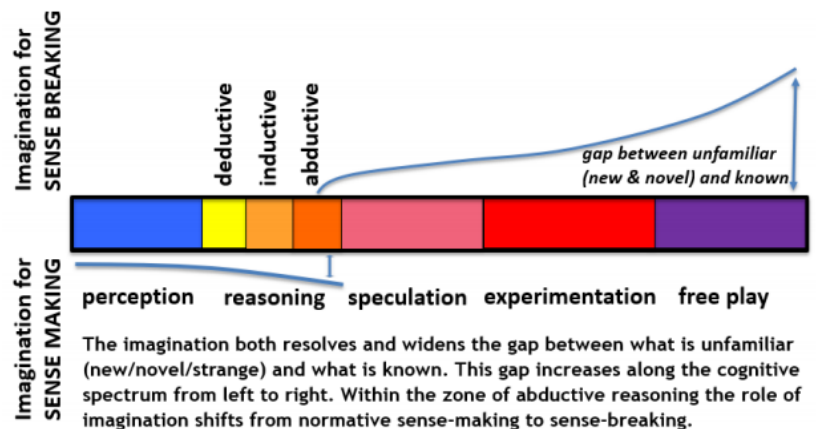
Similarly, in writing this account and making explicit to myself the process I went through I realised that I was trying to transform an experience into a story that I could share and learn from. Then the story provided an opportunity to develop a tool or framework to evaluate it as an act of creative self-expression. This is a backwards recognition as in truth the tool evolved with the account and the process of self-evaluation - in other words, new affordance emerged through the very act of creation and not as sequential events.

But nothing would have been brought into existence without me being moved to act by my experience of being in this landscape and being solicited by affordances in a world that meant something to me, that enabled me to express a little of how I felt by making these small stone towers. So everything is linked and the one would not have happened without the other.

How did my imagination feature in my acts of self-expression?

For an act to be creative it must involve imagination which is, ultimately, the source of novel thoughts. But what is imagination? Clearly it's a mental capacity that enables us to think about things that are not actually present - things that cannot be directly perceived through the senses. A few years ago, I read a book by Julian-Pendleton and Brown⁶ which described the concept of pragmatic imagination which suggested that imagination works with perception and reasoning to enable us to think in complex ways and it is this productive entanglement, allied to our psychological (emotional) world that enables us to respond creatively as we interact with the world. These authors produced a diagram that I find helpful in understanding the way in which imagination interacts with other cognitive processes.

Figure 1 The cognitive spectrum showing how imagination interacts with perception and reasoning in a pragmatic way⁶



Focusing on imagination itself, Luigi et al⁷ provide a definition that I find useful which I have slightly adapted.

Imagination/imagining: is the act of forming, [or capacity to form], mental images of what is not actually present or has never been directly experienced. Notably, imagination not only has the potential to enrich the meaning of an experience and deepen understanding, by multiplying and expanding the perspectives from which a phenomenon can be considered, but it also allows anticipating the outcome of an action without actually performing it via a “simulation” process. Imagination is the significant mental faculty underlying visionary and creative thought [in partnership with perception, reasoning and emotion it enables us to produce novel ideas and simulated situations and to empathise - see and feel things from someone else’s perspective].

“The distinctive feature of imagination, therefore, rests on its capacity of creating new mental images by combining and modifying stored perceptual information in novel ways and by inserting this information in a subjective view of the world: hence it is related to [our] self-awareness. In other words, imagination is not simply the organization, identification, and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the environment but rather a constructive process that builds on a repertoire of images, concepts, and autobiographical memories and leads to the creation (and continuous update) of a personal view of the world, which in turn provides the basis for interpreting future information. Summing up it could be proposed that imagination represents the ability [to] create novel “mental objects” that are shaped by [our] owninner world.”²

So how was my imagination involved in these acts of my acts of self-expression. Firstly, it was involved in imagining the towers - a mental image of a stack of stones balanced one on top of the other. When I walked onto the boulder strewn beach I did not know I was going to build a tower. This thought emerged as I perceived the materials on the beach and felt that a tower of stones would connect me more deeply to the situation and enable me to make something meaningful to me and the place I was in. In other words, my imagination stimulated by the place I was in provided me with “*mental images of what was not actually present*”. Having made the stone stack it seemed obvious to record it in photos and video. I then imagined other towers in other places as we drove through the countryside. The thought of a video film connecting several towers was also imagined after I had made another tower then this imagined thought became a motivator for building more stone stacks. In this way my imagination enabled me to “*anticipat[e] the outcome of an action without actually performing it via a “simulation” process.*” It seemed natural (logical) to use these experiences in a discussion about creative self-expression as did the idea of writing about them in an article. But what was imagined was the idea of using tools to map and evaluate the experiences. In this way my “*imagination not only enrich[ed] the meaning of an experience [it] deepen[ed my] understanding, by multiplying and expanding the perspectives from which [the] phenomenon [could] be considered*”.

The experience has reinforced my belief in an ecological model of creativity and formed my own ecological concept of creative self-expression, “*the ways and means by which I connect, relate and interact my inner cognitive/emotional world with my environment and the situations I experience in order to share my thoughts and feelings and make or do something that is part of me and the world*”.

New tools for describing & evaluating creativity

In the interests of trying to understand the idea of creative self-expression I developed a new tool (Table 1 & 2) to evaluate my own creativity in the unfolding experience I am describing. This framework is entirely subjective and my generalised ratings are based on my perceptions, my norms - my previous experiences of what I have judged to be creative. “*Self-assessments are notoriously unreliable but CSA’s [Creativity Self-Assessments] should be*

considered exactly what they are: self-reported activities, evaluations, and beliefs about people's own creativity abilities, process, or the construct itself," "but CSAs can offer information and insights beyond performance-based measures."⁸

My beliefs about creativity is captured in Carl Rogers concept of a creative process: "the emergence in action of a novel relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, people, or circumstances of his life on the other."¹ My rock towers were for me a novel relational product growing out of my uniqueness as a person (my history as a geologist being an important element) interacting with the materials that were ready to hand in the circumstances of my life. Echoing the words of another of my heroes, John Dewey - I encountered an environment engaged me emotionally, I did something to it and it did something back to me - it changed me. "When we experience something, we act upon it, we do something with it; then we suffer or undergo the consequences. We do something to the thing and then it does something to us in return."⁹ p⁴⁶ Actually, my story shows me that the thing (my environment and my situation in it), did something to me, and in response I did something to it, and that process of doing something affected me. These ecological ideas are reflected in my concept of creative self-expression.

The self-evaluation tool (Tables 1& 2) is divided into seven sections. The first describes the contexts and circumstances for creative self-expression including the environment in which it was enacted, the affordances for action and the mediums and media through which it was expressed.

The second section identifies the mix of approaches used to learning, doing and creating together with the sources of motivation and the cognitive/psychological environment in which creativity emerged.

The third section identifies the elements in the process of self-expression. In this example I identify 6 elements including the synthesis (the whole process as it was woven together) and this story which has become part of this process. I try to rate each element in terms of what I felt was creative.

The fourth section contains a subjective evaluation of the context of the activities involving creativity and the norms for judging creativity based on the categories in the 4C and 5C models of creativity^{10,11}

The fifth section contains a subjective evaluation of the purpose of my creativity based on categories defined by Lassig^{12,13} which underpins her grounded theory of adolescents' creativity.

In the sixth section of the template I try to evaluate the value of the act in terms of the production of novel artefacts, the usefulness, aesthetic and transformational value of the experience and outcomes.

The final section evaluates whether the act and the artefacts produced were for myself or whether they were shared with others, or produced with others in mind.

The intention is to use the structure and prompts in the tool to focus attention on the detail of sustained acts of creative self-expression. The rough profile that is created facilitates a deeper understanding of the dynamics and outcomes of a process of creative self-expression. It is of course entirely subjective, but as Carl Rogers' points out it is important for people to develop the critical faculty to evaluate themselves. *"Perhaps the most fundamental condition of creativity is that the source or locus of evaluative judgment is internal. The value of his product is, for the creative person, established not by the praise and criticism of others, but by himself. Have I created something satisfying to me?... If to the person it has the "feel" of being "me in action," of being an actualization of potentialities in himself which heretofore have not existed and are now emerging into existence, then it is satisfying and creative, and no outside evaluation can change that fundamental fact."*¹

Using the contexts & norms framework to make sense of my experience

The 4C model of creativity¹⁰ seeks to develop a comprehensive and inclusive concept of creativity that can accommodate individual's creativity in the lifelong and lifewide dimensions of their life from the humblest to the most significant of scales and impacts. This model is widely cited in the creativity literature and is generally accepted as being a reasonable description of the ways in which creativity phenomenon manifest. Assuming this is a fair representation of creativity then all acts of creative self-expression must be accommodated by the model

The model has four categories that relate to the manifestation of creativity but they are not uniform in character. Two of the categories might be viewed as meta-contexts within which particular contexts, situations and physical social-cultural environments are located.

the opportunity for *little-c* creativity can be present in any aspect of a person's life

the opportunity for *Pro-c* creativity can be present in an individual's work or other area of expertise.

A third category of eminent creativity (*Big-C*) is not a meta-context, rather it is the recognition of exceptional achievements or performances that impact on culture in any context or domain where expertise is required.

A fourth category (*mini-c creativity*) refers to the cognitive and emotional process of constructing personal knowledge within a particular sociocultural context in order to develop/change understanding. This category reflects the learning that is associated with and related to acts involving creativity.

MY CONCEPT OF CREATIVE SELF-EXPRESSION

"the ways and means by which I connect, relate and interact my inner cognitive/emotional world with my environment and the situations I experience in order to share my thoughts and feelings and make or do something that is part of me and the world".

Table 1 My subjective evaluation of the involvement of my creativity in building and photographing the stone towers and making a movie

1. Context, circumstances, affordances, mediums & media for creative self-expression						
Context & circumstances: I was inspired/motivated to make some small stone towers by the awesome scenery while on holiday in the Scottish Highlands. I also photographed and filmed them and then made a movie and shared it with my family via YouTube						
Affordances (opportunities for action): in the landscape and the materials of the landscape, in the tools (mobile phone camera and laptop)						
Mediums & media: the materials of the landscape, photographs, video, software - moviemaker, WhatsApp, YouTube						
2. Estimated mix of contexts/approaches to learning, doing & creating						
	100/75	75/25	50/50	25/75	100/0	
Collaborative						Individual
Formal						Informal
Directed						Self-Directed
Planned - following a plan or design						Emergent
Motivation – extrinsic						Motivation – intrinsic
Motivated by need						Motivated by interest/curiosity
Motivated by desire to achieve something						Motivated by love/care
Problem solving or sense making						Playing or improvising
Cognitive						Emotional
Imagination – use of existing ideas						Imagination - my own idea
Something I have done before						Something I did for first time
3. Subjective evaluation of creativity judged against my own norms/experiences						
Elements of the process	1 little	2	3	4	5	Comment
1 The idea of making towers						
2 Locating and making the towers						
3 Photographing/videoing the towers						
4 Making the movie in movie maker						
4. Subjective evaluation of the context of the activities involving creativity and the norms for judging creativity ^{8,9}						
Little -c creativity and associated mini-c in any aspect of life			This activity took place while on holiday			
ed-c creativity and associated mini-c in educational settings						
Pro-c creativity and associated mini-c in areas of expertise/work						
5. Subjective evaluation of the purpose of my creativity based on categories defined by Lassig ^{10,11}						
– this could be a mixture of the three forms						
1 Creative Personal Expression - expressing aspects of self – personality, emotions beliefs and ideas in novel ways						creation of stone towers & movie on holiday
2 Creative Task Achievement - using creativity to achieve a particular task or external demand						
3 Creative Boundary Pushing - extending typical and expected knowledge in order to pursue new understandings and outcomes.						
6. The value of the experience & outcomes to me						
Types of Value	1 small	2	3	4	5	comment
Novelty -new perspectives, new ideas, ways of thinking / ways of doing (new skills)						
Artefacts – production of new objects/tools/knowledge						Memory of the towers was preserved in the photographs and movie
Usefulness – fulfils a practical need						
Aesthetic – fulfils emotional needs						The act of making and the movie artefact have aesthetic value
Affordance – new opportunities to act e.g. opportunities to learn / give						Having the experience and the artefacts provided the foundation for future action
Transformation – changes to understanding						
7. The audience for my creativity						
Me and only me						Building the stone towers
Me and a small number of other people (e.g. my friends and family)						The movie I made of the towers
Me and other people e.g. making it available through an article or website						
Me and many other people e.g. posting on social media and actively promoting it						
Me and people working in my field / organisation						
Me and people in the future who might be interested						

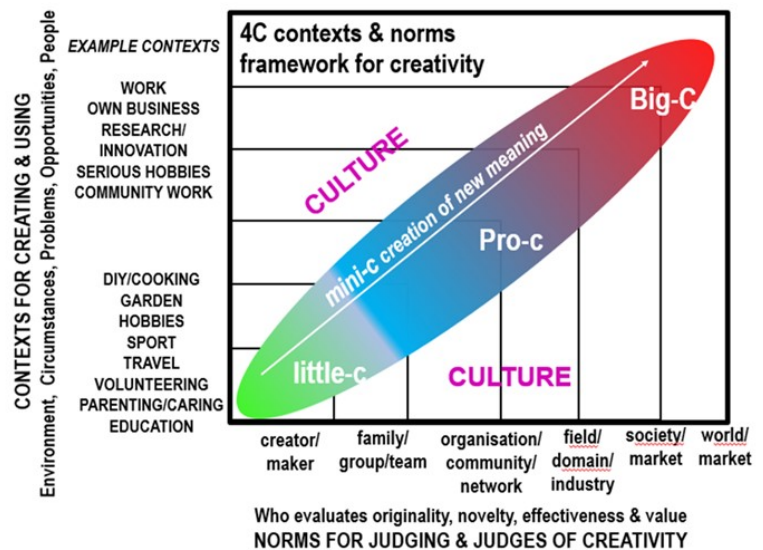
Table 2 My subjective evaluation of the involvement of creativity in using my experience of building the towers and making a movie to describe and analyse the way my creativity was involved - in the process developing and applying new conceptual tools.

1. Context, circumstances, affordances, mediums & media for creative self-expression						
Context & circumstances: I was inspired/motivated to make some small stone towers by the awesome scenery while on holiday in the Scottish Highlands. I also photographed and filmed them and then made a movie and shared it with my family via YouTube						
Affordances (opportunities for action): in the landscape and the materials of the landscape, in the tools (mobile phone camera and laptop)						
Mediums & media: the materials of the landscape, photographs, video, software - moviemaker, WhatsApp, YouTube						
2. Estimated mix of contexts/approaches to learning, doing & creating						
	100/75	75/25	50/50	25/75	100/0	
Collaborative						Individual
Formal						Informal
Directed						Self-Directed
Planned - following a plan or design						Emergent
Motivation - extrinsic						Motivation - intrinsic
Motivated by need						Motivated by interest/curiosity
Motivated by desire to achieve something						Motivated by love/care
Problem solving or sense making						Playing or improvising
Cognitive						Emotional
Imagination - use of existing ideas						Imagination - my own idea
Something I have done before						Something I did for first time
3. Subjective evaluation of creativity judged against my own norms/experiences						
Elements of the process	1 little	2	3	4	5	Comment
1 Writing a narrative and using it to evaluate my creativity						While facilitating an online conversation about creative self-expression. Revised for magazine article
2 Developing and using an existing tool (contexts & norms framework)						
3 Developing and using a new evaluation tool based on Lässig's creativity categories						
4 Developing this profiling tool						
5 Production of Creative Academic Magazine on the theme of creative self-expression						The open-access publication vehicle for this article
4. Subjective evaluation of the context of the activities involving creativity and the norms for judging creativity ^{10,9}						
Little -c creativity and associated mini-c in any aspect of life						
ed-c creativity and associated mini-c in educational settings						
Pro-c creativity and associated mini-c in areas of expertise/work						
5. Subjective evaluation of the purpose of my creativity (categories defined by Lässig ^{10,11}) - this could be a mixture of the three forms						
1 Creative Personal Expression - expressing aspects of self - personality, emotions beliefs and ideas in novel ways						In the presentation of article, tools and magazine
2 Creative Task Achievement - using creativity to achieve a particular task or external demand						Facilitation & producing magazine
3 Creative Boundary Pushing - extending typical and expected knowledge in order to pursue new understandings and outcomes.						Extending my own understanding and sharing with peers through publication and conference
6. The value of the experience & outcomes to me						
Types of Value	1 small	2	3	4	5	comment
Novelty -new perspectives, new ideas, ways of thinking / ways of doing /new skills)						New perspectives developed through the mapping of experiences / outcomes
Artefacts - production of new objects/tools/knowledge						New tools
Usefulness - fulfils a practical need						Tools are useful aids to description and evaluation
Aesthetic - fulfils emotional needs						The act of making and the movie artefact have aesthetic value
Affordance - new opportunities to act e.g. opportunities to learn / give						Having the experience and the artefacts provided the foundation for future action
Transformation - changes to understanding						
7. The audience for my creativity						
Me and only me						
Me and a small number of other people (e.g. my friends and family)						
Me and other people e.g. making it available through an article or website						#creativeHE discussion, magazine, conference
Me and many other people e.g. posting on social media and actively promoting it						
Me and people working in my field / organisation						
Me and people in the future who might be interested						

Viewing creativity as a phenomenon involving unique people interacting in unique ways with their unique contexts, situations and environments means that any frameworks within which creativity is considered and judged need to acknowledge the contexts, and material and social-cultural world in which creativity emerges and is judged.

In a collaboration with Carly Lassig¹¹ we incorporated the dimensions of contexts, and norms, values and subjective judges into the 4C framework to enhance its meaning and value as a cognitive tool (Figure 2).

Figure 2 4C contexts and norms framework⁹ showing the categories of creativity in the model with example contexts and the people who create, use and judge creations. Developed from Kaufman and Beghetto's 4C model of creativity¹⁰

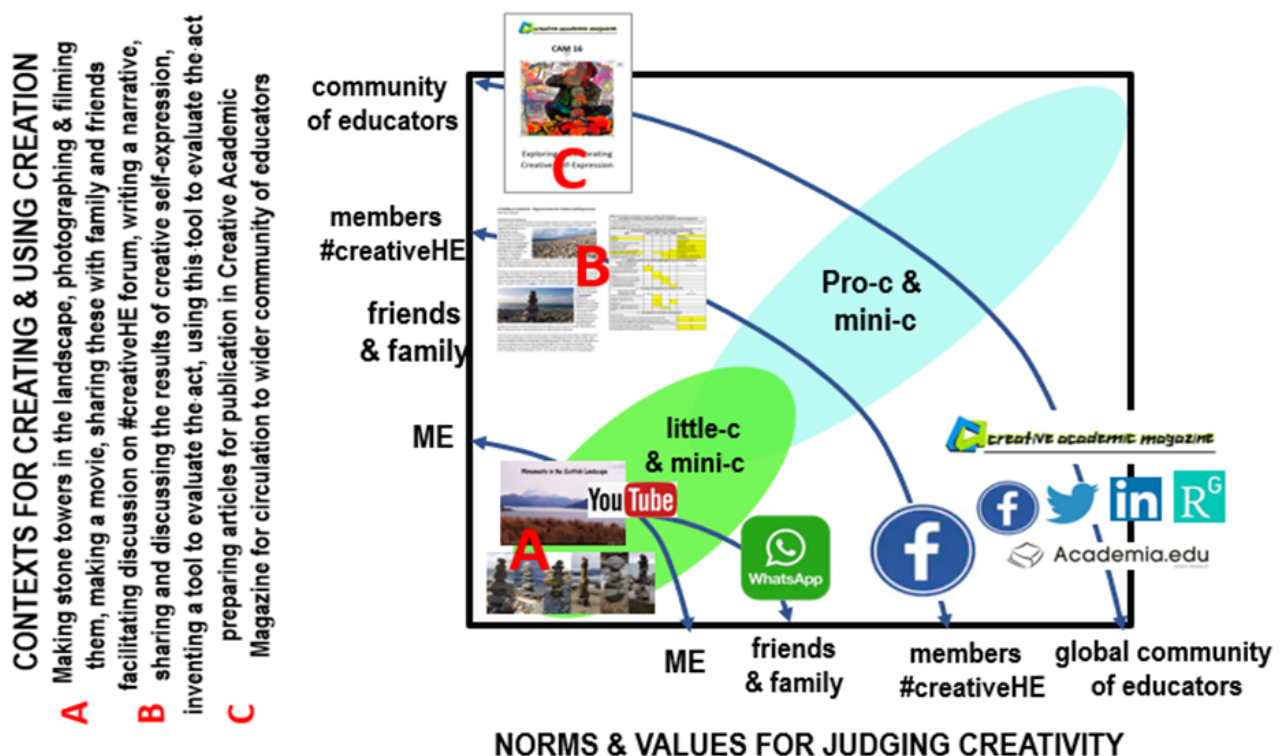


Using contexts & norms framework to evaluate my acts of creative self-expression

In the article attached to this addendum I describe making some stone towers as I journeyed through the Scottish highlands and islands. Here I will try to show how the 4C framework might be used to explain the contexts for creative self-expression and the norms and values that are brought to bear when judgements of creativity are being made.

This scenario is mapped onto the 4C contexts and norms framework in Figure 3. The story begins (point A in Figure 3) when I am embedded in a context and environment that has particular meaning to me.

Figure 3 My experience of making stone towers and other related artefacts mapped onto the 4C contexts and norms framework^{8,9}



The initial context was a holiday in Scotland. I felt inspired and compelled to do/make something by the stunning locations I experienced. I chose to stack and balance stones in six different locations. I photographed and filmed my mini monuments and gave them geological meaning. What I did was entirely for me. It gave me a purpose in a particular location and the act of making and photographing the towers made me feel happy as did looking at the photographs and videos after I had made them. I was the only judge and valuer of my creations and I judged them against the norms of what I have done before and what I felt about making them.

Monuments in the Scottish Landscape

The next step in my unfolding process of creative self-expression (point C in Figure 3) was to refine my ideas and share them with peers in order to get their perspectives and opinions on their value and in order to produce this article together with this magazine that provides the vehicle for exploring the idea of creative self-expression.

A Holiday in Scotland - Opportunities for Creative Self-Expression

Norman Jackson

Contexts & Dimensions

As much as we live with the idea that we are struggling beings and that our creativity is derived from our painful interactions with the world around us. The desire to escape is available to all. However, feelings can often bring other issues experiencing something in early March – back on holiday with my wife & children. I noticed when the landscape was overcast and grey, during the morning I was thankful the weather was not too hot or too sunny. Through the experience of something like 'not all of nature is to be feared', that my landscape and people can give me that which is to be feared. I have been to Scotland many times. I hope to do so again. I have been to Scotland many times. I hope to do so again. I have been to Scotland many times. I hope to do so again.

The rest of the year has been the same and things are no longer as bright. I have been to Scotland many times. I hope to do so again. I have been to Scotland many times. I hope to do so again. I have been to Scotland many times. I hope to do so again.

perhaps 10 minutes, but that time flew by with pleasure and I was in a happy mood. I have been to Scotland many times. I hope to do so again. I have been to Scotland many times. I hope to do so again. I have been to Scotland many times. I hope to do so again.

From the rest of the year has been the same and things are no longer as bright. I have been to Scotland many times. I hope to do so again. I have been to Scotland many times. I hope to do so again. I have been to Scotland many times. I hope to do so again.

CONTESTS FOR CREATING & USING CREATION

A Facilitating discussion on *Worldwide* forum, writing a narrative, sharing and discussing the results of creative self-expressions, and promoting the results of creative self-expressions.

B Facilitating discussion on *Worldwide* forum, writing a narrative, sharing and discussing the results of creative self-expressions, and promoting the results of creative self-expressions.

C Facilitating discussion on *Worldwide* forum, writing a narrative, sharing and discussing the results of creative self-expressions, and promoting the results of creative self-expressions.

community of educators

members

creativeME

friends & family

ME

Pro-c & mini-c

little-c & mini-c

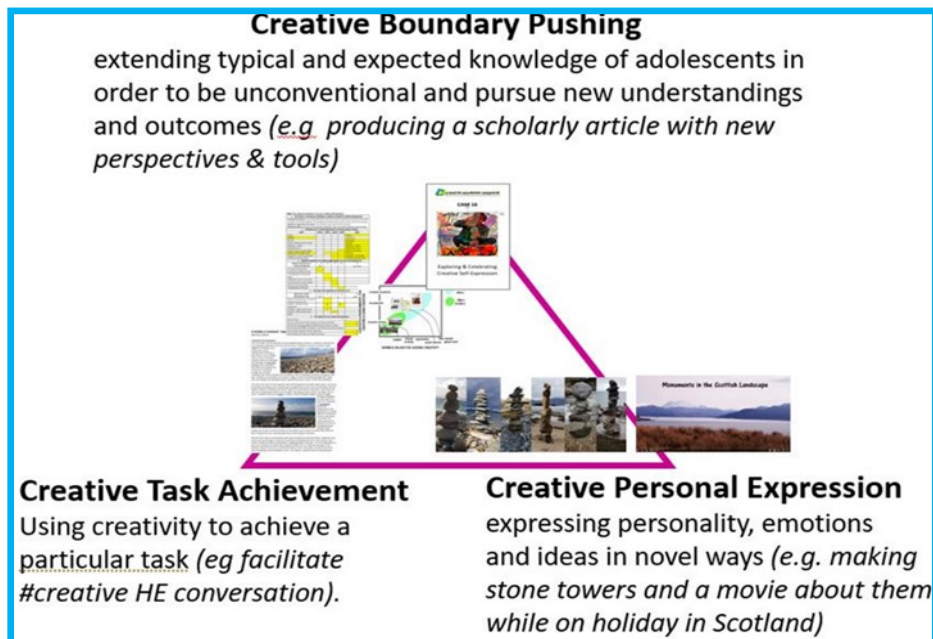
global community of educators

NORMS & VALUES FOR JUDGING CREATIVITY

I make one further suggestion for mapping acts of creative self-expression drawing on the research study of Carly Lassig who developed a grounded theory of adolescent's creativity¹². Her research revealed that within educational contexts (and beyond), students were manifesting three types of creativity: creative personal expression, creative boundary pushing, and creative task achievement. Creative task achievement was most common and refers to students using creativity to achieve a particular task or external demand. This was common in schools because much of students' learning is extrinsically motivated by learning tasks and assessments. Creative personal expression involved students expressing their personality, emotions and ideas in novel ways. Creative boundary pushing involved students extending the limits of typical and expected knowledge of adolescents in order to be unconventional and pursue new understandings and outcomes. I think these categories can be used in non-educational contexts and in Figure 3 I relate my acts of self-expression involving creativity to these categories. I would interpret this map to say that my initial acts of self-expression were for my own well being, but I drew on these acts as I moved to a work/problem solving context. While working with the problem of how to facilitate the #creativeHE discussion I developed a descriptive narrative

and new tools to enable me to analyse my own processes. My creativity was harnessed in trying to develop new understandings pushing at and extending my own boundaries of knowledge and theory that I could then share with others in my domain.

Figure 4 Mapping my acts that involved creativity onto Carly Lassig's categorisations of types of creativity^{12,13}



Provisional conclusion: This narrative and evaluative commentary is intended to show how playing on a beach in Scotland can lead to ideas that might have practical and conceptual value and aid the development of new and deeper understanding in entirely different contexts. Ultimately the ideas developed through the experience and telling the story, may have value at a cultural level in a domain of knowledge and field of practice.

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to everyone who contributed to the April 2020 #creativeHE discussion on creative self-expression. The conversations did much to open-up the idea of creative self-expression. I would like to acknowledge the contribution Carly Lassig has made to understanding creative self-expression through her research on adolescents' creativity.

Invitation

I invite you to try out the self-evaluation tool. A word version can be downloaded from my website : <http://www.normanjackson.co.uk/creative-academic> Blog post 15/04/20 Evaluating our own acts of creative self-expression. Please send feedback and suggestions for improvement to lifewider1@gmail.com

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Small-scale Survey of the Relationship Between Creativity and Wellbeing

Jenny Willis



Jenny's career in education began as a languages teacher in inner London areas of social deprivation. This experience inspired her through middle and senior management of schools to teaching for the Open University and further research. Whilst working as an assistant registrar in HE, she completed a PhD in socio-linguistics. She held a fellowship in the Surrey Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (SCEPTre), researching professional and personal development. It was there that she first worked with Norman Jackson and began studying creativity. She is a founder member of Lifewide Education and was executive editor of Lifewide Magazine and Creative Academic Magazine from their inception until 2019. She continues to teach children and adults while pursuing her other interests, stigma related to mental illness and wellbeing.

Background

In April and May 2020, Creative Academic facilitated a conversation in the #creativeHE facebook group to explore different dimensions of creative self-expression. The inquiry in week five focused on the relationship between creativity health and wellbeing. This was an area of particular interest for me, and built on my research into personal wellbeing conducted over the last two decades. The 6 days of week 5 were structured to include an on-line survey. The daily topics were:

- Day 1: The relationship between creativity, health and wellbeing
- Day 2: Narratives of creativity for health and wellbeing
- Day 3: Creativity, health and wellbeing in practice
- Day 4: What does science say about creativity, health and wellbeing?
- Day 5: #creativeHE survey of creativity and wellbeing
- Day 6: Creativity and poor health and wellbeing

Survey and platform

After testing various different platforms, we settled on using an on-line tool, Survey Hero, which supported the requirements of this survey.

The questionnaire was designed in 2 sections:

Section 1 comprised a series of open questions requiring narrative response; these were followed by 8 questions asking respondents to rate the importance of specific factors to their personal wellbeing. These used a 5 star scale, 1 = little to 5 = great importance.



Section 2 asked for limited biodata such as age and gender. This would enable any trends to emerge.

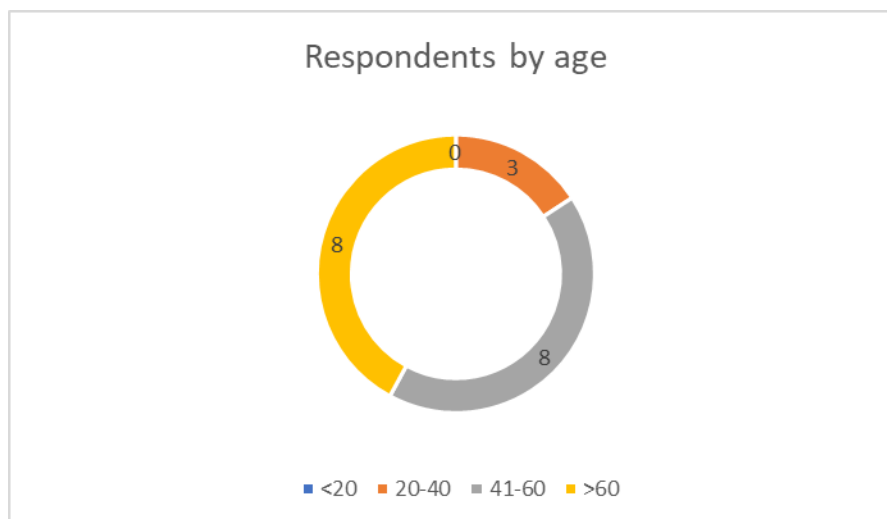
The questionnaire was anonymous and no individual participant is identified in this analysis of the responses.

Respondents

It is acknowledged that the sample is self-selected, so not likely to be typical of a random group.

- There were 19 valid responses.
- Female outnumbered male respondents, at 11 to 8.
- Their age range is shown in Figure 1. The majority (84%, n = 16) were in mid- to late-career or retirement, aged 41 or above, with 3 people (= 16%) in their twenties.

Figure 1



- In recognition of the sensitivity of the question, respondents were asked to describe their ethnicity in their own words. Responses were:
 - White British 6
 - British 2
 - Mixed British 1
 - White 1
 - White English 1
 - White Scottish 1
 - White Spiritual 1
 - White other 1
 - Italian and Irish 1
 - Asian naturalised British 1
 - Dragon 1
 - West Indian 1
 - I don't. Ethnicity is far too complicated. Others would look at me and say Anglo-Saxon etc...
- Respondents described their main occupations as:
 - Educator
 - Retired
 - Librarian and parent
 - Tutor and parent
 - Doctor, therapist, trainer, educator, partner, friend, extended family man
 - Retired, charity trustee, being me
 - Parent, full-time occupation
 - Disabled
 - Teacher, parent, wife, friend, artist
 - Semi-retired, self-employed
 - Parent and studying MA full time
 - Coach, facilitator, assessor, family man
 - Writer (retired educationalist)
 - Lecturer and journalist
 - Academic-related curriculum (University)
 - Educational Consultant in HE
 - Work full time in Mental Health
 - Parent, knowledge exchange officer, lecturer
 - Full-time employed lecturer

It is noticeable that respondents saw themselves mostly as having more than one occupation/role, generally a mixture of professional and personal.

Responses

Q1. What does the term 'wellbeing' mean to you?

Responses clustered around the following themes:

- Feeling well holistically, i.e. physically and mentally
e.g. *Feeling well as a whole person in a general way: different to being "healthy". Wellbeing is more about mental and 'life' wellness on an ongoing basis than physical health.*
- A sense of balance/harmony, equilibrium
e.g. *A sense of harmony or equilibrium, balance, with the internal and external world.*
- Being at peace with oneself
e.g. *A sense of "all is well", with me and my relationships - personal, professional and with the world generally.*

It was recognised that this is an

- Emotional state, hence an effect, not a cause, so is unpredictable
e.g. *An emotional state which may or may not be an immediate, or medium-term side-effect to a learning experience. As an emotional state, it is secondary to a range of human activity and thought (which may or may not include creativity)! That is to say it is an effect rather than a cause, and its appearance is neither guaranteed or predictable.*

Nevertheless, wellbeing can be enhanced by

- Feeling motivated and supported
e.g. *Feeling mentally capable, able to cope (unthreatened) by life events, bring physically healthy or able to manage health. Feeling motivated and supported.*

In summary, responses confirmed the diversity of perceptions whilst still sharing a sense of wellbeing being more than just health, having a substantial emotional component. This is captured by one respondent:

How I feel about myself and my life- my wellbeing is linked to my health - whether I am free from illness and pain, and my level of fitness and physical capability, my identities - who I think I am embedded in the life I lead (my circumstances), what I value in my life - the people I love, the people who love me, my home, family and friends and the network of people who I interact with in my work, and my way of life - the things I love doing and the sense of achievement and fulfilment I gain from involving myself in these things, like being with my family, my work and hobbies, working in my garden, travelling and seeing new places, having new experiences and sharing the things I have produced with others.

Image source <https://sharpbrains.com/blog/2019/08/09/positive-solitude-feeling-active-and-future-mindedness-three-keys-to-well-being/>



Q2. What does being creative mean to you?

The common themes mentioned were:

- Freedom associated with risk-taking
e.g. *The freedom to play, take risks, experiment, express myself, exercise my talents, trust in others and use mindfulness to make and do, savouring the process as well as sharing the result.*
- Something more than just 'art'
e.g. *Initial thought is being 'arty' but being more 'creative' in my thinking, using different perspectives to work in innovative ways. Creativity needs redefining in the employability field.*
- Building something new from existing ideas or things
e.g. *Generating combinations of existing knowledge (that may appear in many different forms) that are new to oneself!*

- Takes many forms
e.g. *It can take many forms, e.g. physically creating a painting or play, or just "creating" opportunities by thinking "outside of the box".*
- Evident in everyday small c
e.g. *We all use creativity on a day to day basis when we problem solve or add new ingredients to the meals that we cook- anything that deviates from our normal.*
- An idea that leads to change
e.g. *When you have an idea that can spark inspiration or change.*
- Essential for meeting personal basic needs
e.g. *To me is part of living which is necessary for basic needs as well as 'higher' needs.*
- 2 modes - imagining then making
e.g. *For me, creativity has two modes: imagining or envisioning, and making. Toggling smoothly between modes leads to a sense of being creative - as I drift off to sleep I think of a sequence in a piece of writing; in the morning I put it into words.*
- Survival depends on building on what is known
e.g. *Creativity = acknowledging the human aspect of survival that allows us to produce a variety of solutions to a problem, the illustration both tangible and intangible of ideas and choices using imagination built on our innate ancestral knowledge to provide the future.*
- Going beyond the obvious
e.g. *Being imaginative, going beyond the obvious, aware of one's own unconventionality, being original in some way, stumbling with confidence!*
- A spectrum
e.g. *Stimulus. Both that exciting feeling where the idea are (sic) coming, bubbling up and you can work quick enough to communicate them (for me this is usually a group activating of creating theatre. It is also the quiet relaxation of doing something gently or soothing such as painting, craft or cooking. I find writing (independently) can sit between both of these two emotions. It's like a spectrum.*
- Both professional and personal
e.g. *Professionally, it means finding accurate but interesting ways to frame concepts and to engage in online and telephone dialogues that largely depend on the input of other parties. On a personal level, it means changing and developing my physical environment; this includes the way things are arranged in the house; food recipes; tinkering with the garden, rearranging what's growing or adapting/combining implements; finding variations in walking or jogging routes; finding clever and oblique ways to deal with interpersonal stuff; choosing what to watch, read, learn about or listen to; picking up the guitar again and exploring.*

In other words, creativity is multi-dimensional, personal, ranges from little to big c, entails novelty per se and novelty to the individual, may be risky, involves thought and making processes and contributes to personal wellbeing as well as to social advancement.

Q3. How important to your wellbeing is being able to express yourself creatively?

11 respondents (= 58%) said that being able to express themselves creatively is very important to their wellbeing. *Very important. Expressing my creativity helps me to feel alive and engaged in the world, it gives me a sense of purpose. When I have gone through periods in my life when I haven't been as creative, I have been susceptible to stress and other mental health issues.*

Nuances in this were recognised, as in this response:

On experiencing a creative insight, a state of wellbeing may make an appearance. This may be short-lived when the insight turns out to be false and unwellbeing may then show up. So wellbeing - whilst a positive 'life - enhancing' state - is no indicator of creative value. Wellbeing can accompany other things than creative thoughts and actions.

Two respondents said that it is important, explaining why

Important because it makes you feel valued

or the impact it has:

It's really pleasing and important but it also makes me feel guilty taking time to myself.

One respondent felt that it was essential to their wellbeing:

Actually essential for survival literally and metaphorically

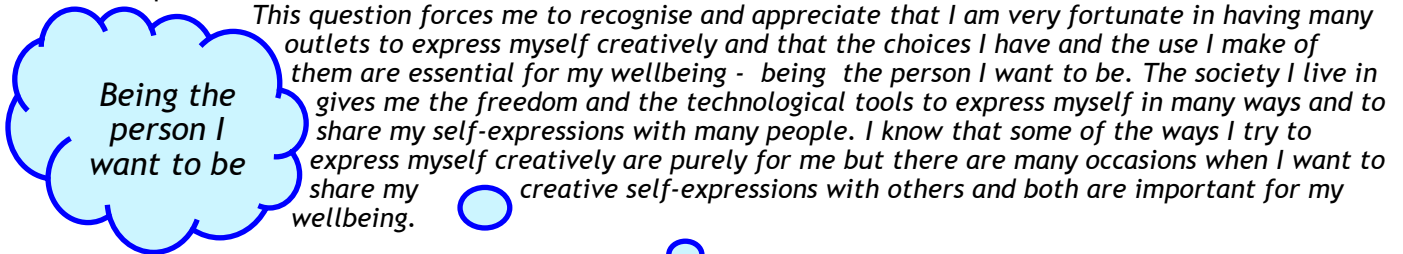
Conversely, another respondent recognised that it was “important but not essential”.

Other responses explained the process or effect of being creative:

The feeling of capability and motivation allow me to be more creative and take the time to do things differently.

On experiencing a creative insight, a state of wellbeing may make an appearance. This may be short-lived when the insight turns out to be false and unwellbeing may then show up. So wellbeing - whilst a positive 'life-enhancing' state - is no indicator of creative value. Wellbeing can accompany other things than creative thoughts and actions.

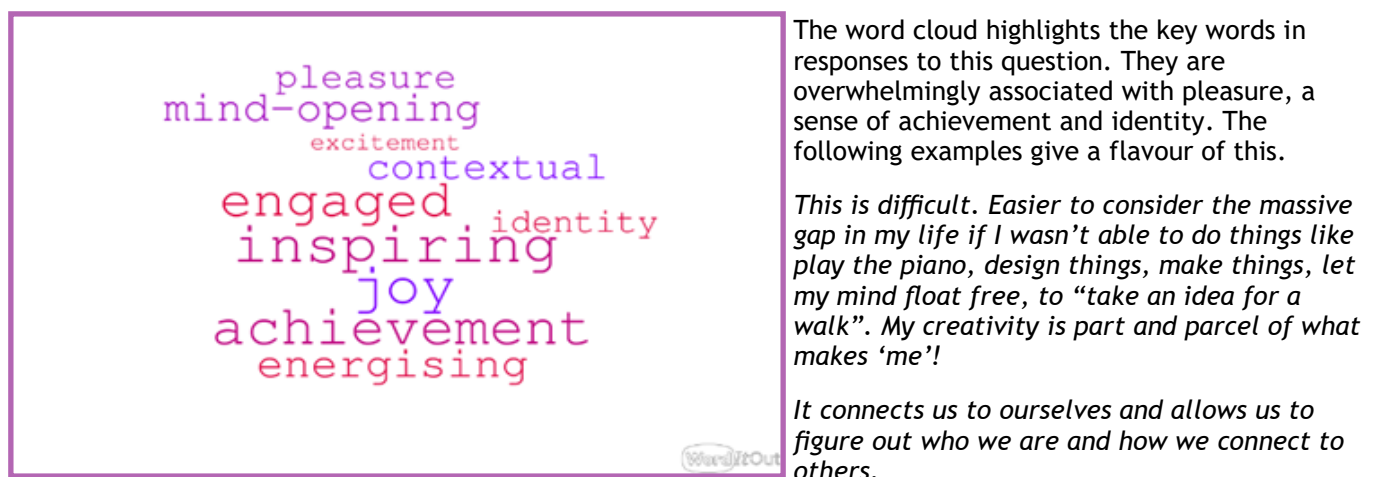
Another respondent reflects:



For this group of respondents, then, creativity is highly valued and, for many of them, essential for their wellbeing. They are, though, not typical of a random sample.

Q4 In which ways does your creativity contribute to wellbeing?

Figure 2 Associations between creativity and wellbeing



For me creativity, and making something new, brings excitement which in turn brings enjoyment to my life. It also enables me to problem solve which have important long term effects on my wellbeing.

It keeps my mind engaged with positive thoughts and purpose and gives me a sense of worth and belonging in the world. Without it, I can stray into darker thoughts and feelings of worthlessness.

I think it is important at a superficial level - doing something that enables me to use my creativity gives me satisfaction and pleasure for a short time. It is also important at a deeper level. It sustains me as a person and as a person with certain identities. It enables me to feel and express things that I cannot express in other ways. It enables me to be the person that I want to be and live the life I want to live.

Q5 Do you engage in any daily activities that directly impact on your wellbeing?

There were common themes in responses to this question. Significant activities were:

- Gardening
- Cooking
- Making things
- Physical exercise

- Intellectual stimuli e.g. puzzles
- Social contact
- Spiritual
- Music

The word cloud highlights the key words in responses to this question. They are overwhelmingly associated with pleasure, a sense of achievement and identity. The following examples give a flavour of this.

This is difficult. Easier to consider the massive gap in my life if I wasn't able to do things like play the piano, design things, make things, let my mind float free, to "take an idea for a walk". My creativity is part and parcel of what makes 'me'!

It connects us to ourselves and allows us to figure out who we are and how we connect to others.

For me creativity, and making something new, brings excitement which in turn brings enjoyment to my life. It also enables me to problem solve which have important long term effects on my wellbeing.

It keeps my mind engaged with positive thoughts and purpose and gives me a sense of worth and belonging in the world. Without it, I can stray into darker thoughts and feelings of worthlessness.

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Q6 Do you engage in any daily activities that directly impact on your wellbeing?

There were common themes in responses to this question. Significant activities were:

- Gardening
- Cooking
- Making things
- Physical exercise
- Intellectual stimuli e.g. puzzles
- Social contact
- Spiritual
- Music

Most respondents listed combinations of such activities:

Playing the piano, both extant pieces and improvisation - I love the feeling of my 'circle of attention' reducing to just me, my hands and fingers, and the piano.

Going either for a long walk (local streets and park) or a long bike ride (along the river and through woodland) it's where I often also take ideas for a walk or a ride!

Gardening - I take immense pleasure from pottering around my 'managed wilderness'.

Almost every activity holds the potential to impact on how I feel myself - even watching a film or documentary on TV for example can open a new perspective or pose questions that I haven't thought about and trigger emotional responses that impact on my wellbeing. But particular activities that are more or less daily are interacting with my family, my work relating to learning and education, spending time working in my garden and listening to music.

Yes. I write and take photographs every day, style outfits to share on Instagram, work on creative family projects (art, music, film). I bake, brew my own kombucha and love gardening - I find all these pursuits creatively fulfilling and am able to personalise these activities. I also practice meditation and mindfulness when I can to stimulate my creative thinking - this will help me to prepare for my PhD (I hope!)

A few respondents clarified that activities were not conducted every day, but could be rotated:

Yes, but they're on rotation I think, rather than doing everything in one day - writing, painting, games with my children, cooking, listening to stories

Not daily since I cannot hold routines but most days of the week

Another respondent admits:

Much of the time wellbeing is the carrot, and daily activities are the stick. Seeking it for itself however, is probably the shortest route to addictive behaviour in whatever form that takes.

There is a clear alliance between the activities mentioned by these respondents and the 5 themes in the Nef's 5 Ways to Wellbeing¹ (connect, take note, keep learning, be active, give).



Image source: <https://www.cpslmind.org.uk/resources/five-ways-wellbeing/>

Q7 Which everyday activities provide the most opportunity for creative self-expression?

Responses to this question are similar to those for question 5, but give more detail. They involve:

- Social interaction and media
- Physical activities such as gardening and dancing
- Household activities - cooking, house-work, decorating
- Arts and crafts, including embroidery
- Work
- Reading, writing, devising games

As before, it appears that a variety of activities combine for individuals to express their creativity. Some illustrative examples are:

My work - writing and creating illustrations, interacting with my family - humour (perhaps), preparing family meals perhaps.

Definitely reading and writing. Writing has more concrete outputs, but reading is also creative, because something I read will trigger a chain of thought that makes me see an aspect of life in a new light, and that can represent a very exciting tweak to my sense of self.

Creating a beautiful surroundings (sic) in my living space. Always arranging or rearranging for pleasure.

Funnily enough a good conversation can inspire and either be a form of self-expression or a prompt to a creative act.

Two respondents explicitly note that their creativity is diverse and cannot be restricted to a simple answer:

The Most? - Impossible to determine! Sometimes solitude, sometimes being with other people, sometimes being in nature, sometimes being at home etc.

All of them- I am able to use my brain to explore and create new things in everything I do.

Once more, responses are consistent with the 5 Ways to Wellbeing model, and, by combining and balancing different activities, a sense of wellbeing is derived.

Q8 Do you have any hobbies or activities that you particularly value for their potential as an outlet for your creativity?

Responses to this question generally repeat the activities cited in the previous two answers. Themes were:

- Gardening
- Physical activity - swimming, walking, cycling
- Needlework and dress making
- Reading, writing and painting
- Playing the piano
- Movie-making
- Exploring ideas
- Puzzling
- Theatre

Respondents often give more than one activity, reflecting the variety and balance noted earlier, and the close relationship between 'work' and leisure. Some typical responses were:

My sports and running groups and creating and delivering presentations and interactive workshops.

I make short movies set to music about the life in my garden. I play with other musicians in a band. I produce and publish magazines - this might be considered work but I see work as a hobby or craft.

Gardening. I love planning new opportunities for creating little beautiful spaces around the house that my family can relax and enjoy.

I enjoy colouring and exploring new ideas in my blog, this in turn gives me an opportunity to reflect on my values (of which creativity is one) and how to integrate creativity in other areas of my life.

One respondent demonstrates creativity in sustaining their interest during the lock-down:

Attending the theatre. I love it and it makes my imagination burst. I'm watching productions digitally at the moment. I felt a creative boost after watching The National Theatre's Twelfth Night.

Q9 Do you engage in any daily activities that directly impact on your wellbeing?

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- Cooking
- Making things
- Physical exercise
- Intellectual stimuli e.g. puzzles
- Social contact
- Spiritual
- Music

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One respondent demonstrates creativity in sustaining their interest during the lock-down:

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Another person rejects the notion of hobby, describing their activities as essential to their sense of identity:

Yes! though I wouldn't call them hobbies or activities, but more necessities to help me be what I can be.

These responses confirm the complexity and individuality of creative sources, and demonstrate their centrality to a person's sense of identity. For some, there is also an altruistic pleasure in creating a pleasant environment for others to enjoy.

Q10 Do you lose the will to express yourselves creatively when your state of wellbeing is poor?

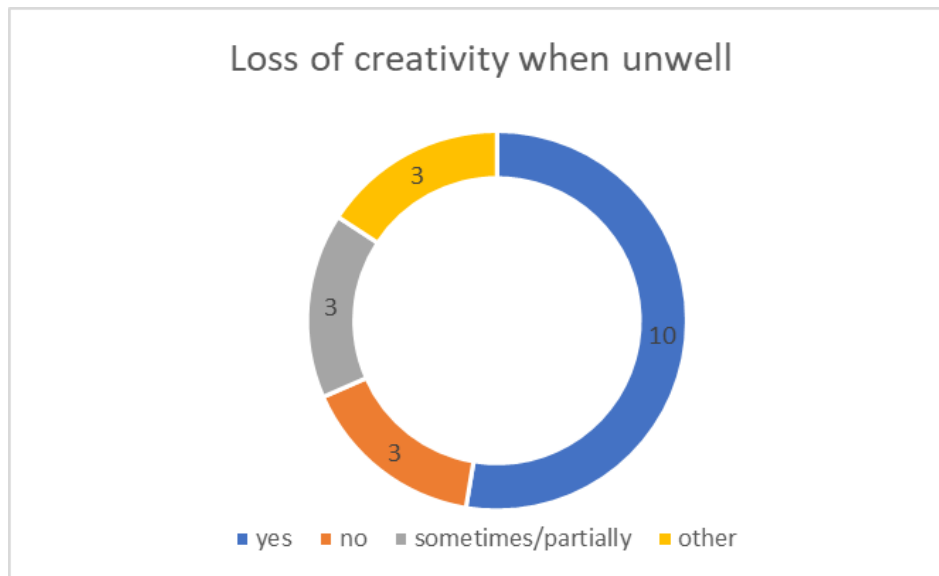


Figure 3

Figure 3 summarises the responses to this question. Ten respondents (= 58%) stated that there was a negative impact on their creativity when they were unwell. For example, this can be due to lack of motivation or the physical impact of illness:

Yes, motivation decreases when wellbeing is poor

I do. If I have a sinus headache I want to blank out the world.

Yes; have foggy days due to dementia

One person reversed the relationship between ill health and creativity, suggesting:

Yes, but it's been the other way around in my experience - if I'm not expressing myself creatively, my wellbeing becomes poor.

Three respondents (=16%) said that their creativity was not affected by ill health. There is a note of defiance in their answers:

No. It just changes how I express myself. I tend to create more outputs when I am unwell, particularly when anxious, and when physically unwell creating replaces physical activities

No. This would be the tail wagging the dog. Again it's about necessity - what one must do to learn and develop. This might mean making an effort without reward.

Another 3 respondents (= 16%) admitted that their creativity may be impaired sometimes or in some manner:

Not always. Sometimes it helps to gain a sense of purpose and value as per answer above. It can be enough to distract long enough to refocus.

Just physically but never mentally.

Sometimes. When my wife was diagnosed with cancer (twice) and went through chemotherapy and then surgery, and when I was then diagnosed with cancer, everything was focused on just getting through it and, hopefully, coming out the other side. Creativity went out the window during that period.

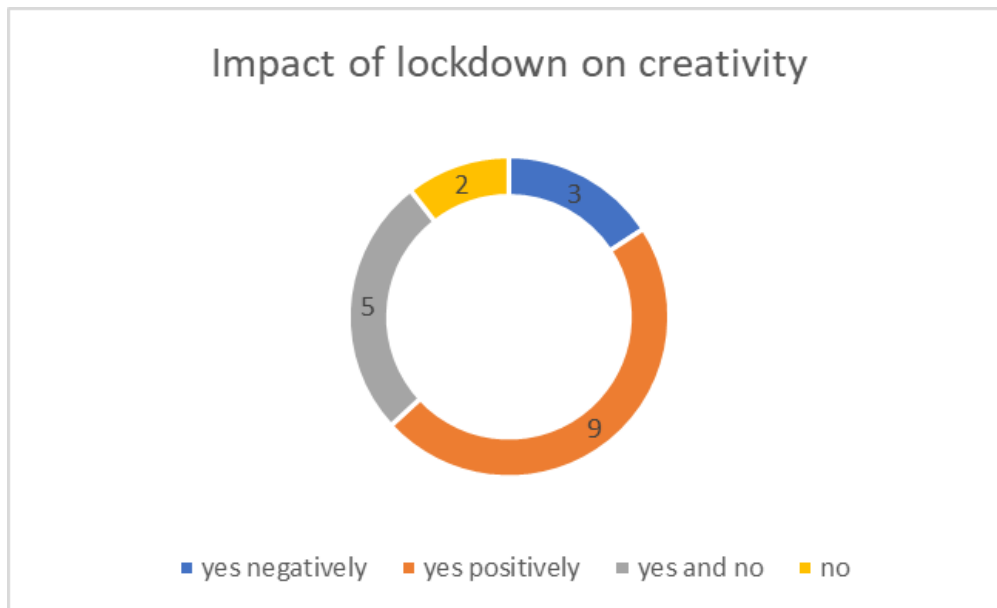
The final 3 respondents (= 16%) offered different narratives:

It depends on what has disrupted my wellbeing- when I am physically unwell, it becomes much harder to express myself creatively. However, when I am feeling sad or anxious, creativity becomes a source of release which in turn becomes a comfort. I find when my mental wellbeing is poor this when being creative is very important to me.

When I am stressed or tired or I'll I do not feel creative. But the biggest killer is lack of time. I need time and space to feel creative - which can be tricky with a small child in the house.

This group of respondents therefore shows a very mixed response to the question. Whilst slightly more than half acknowledge a negative relationship between creativity and illness, the remaining 40% disagree with the proposition or only partially agree. Given that this was a self-selected group with particular interest in creativity, it is likely that the findings for a random sample would produce different results.

Q11. Has your creativity been affected in any way since the pandemic?



Responses to question 11 showed that the lockdown had had an impact of respondents' perceived creativity, but that this was in various ways, both positive and negative.

Only 3 respondents (= 16%) felt this impact was negative, for example, through the loss of interpersonal contact and the physical need to be active:

Yes, because of the loss of personal face-to-face contact at work and leisure e.g. team sport.

Yes as I move so much less and movement is crucial for me.

By contrast, 9 respondents (= 48%) recognised a positive impact. As some of the following examples indicate, this has brought new forms of interpersonal contact, and given time to enjoy life:

Actually increased sometimes. People with dementia are always isolated so nothing new, but because society is feeling what we have all along, new ways of thinking are being used.

Lockdown has given me more time to play the piano, to tend the garden, to take long walks and bike rides, to spend more time with my own thoughts. I certainly feel more creative.

Oddly enough the reverse is true. I have been forming groups in Zoom. These have been really inspiring both as a form of shared activity and a source of well-being. I had a meeting this morning at 6am with someone in America, India and Japan. The technology meant we were able to talk as though we were sat together and there are lots of ways to socialise and develop the activity for creative research.

A further 5 people (= 26%) gave examples of both negative and positive impact:

To begin with yes, I felt like I was paralysed with stress but it eventually came back once stress levels settled down.

No as I am discovering inner worlds of my self I had never looked into. Reflection, stillness and refuge in my personal and shared knowledge.

Hm. I don't think so. There is maybe more head space to experiment. I have set myself little challenges so for instance I am trying to get at least one nice photo of every songbird in our garden, trying new photo editing software. So despite work being as busy as ever there is more time to let mind wander.

Only 2 respondents (=10.5%) said that there had been no or little impact on them, yet even they contain an element of positivity:

Not much and with Spring in the air I have all these gardening ideas waiting to explode.

Not really, there has been more time available to pursue individual activities

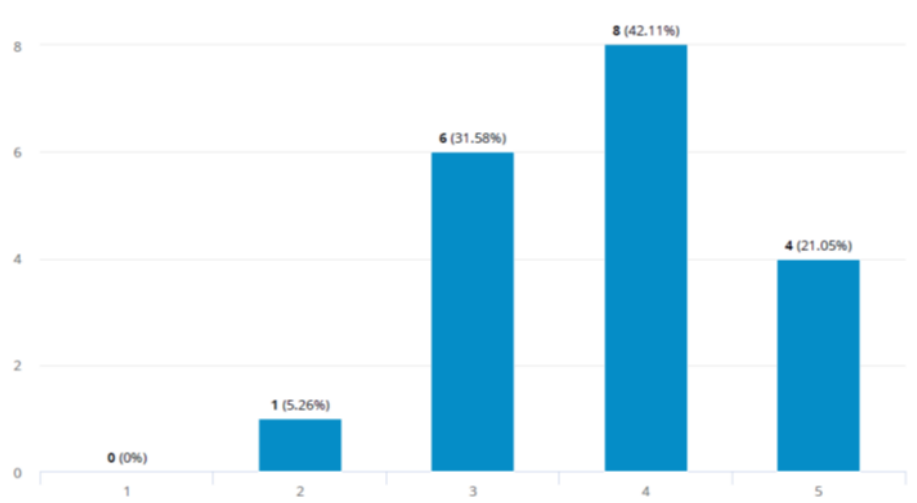
To summarise, respondents mostly recognised that lockdown had had an impact on their creativity, but most had been able to turn this to their advantage and create new opportunities out of adversity.

Questions 10 - 17 asked respondents to rate on a 5-star scale (1 = least significant) the importance of potential aspects of creativity.

Q12 To what extent do your everyday creative activities act as a ‘distraction’ tool?

Figure 5 shows the results for question 10, the value of creative activities as a ‘distraction’ tool taking one’s mind off other issues. This and the next two questions were triggered by Fancourt’s research at UCL, and the results of her survey of 50,000 people for the BBC Arts Great British Creativity Test² which found that creativity could perform 3 distinct roles: distraction, contemplation and self-development/achievement.

Figure 5 Creative activities act as a ‘distraction’ too

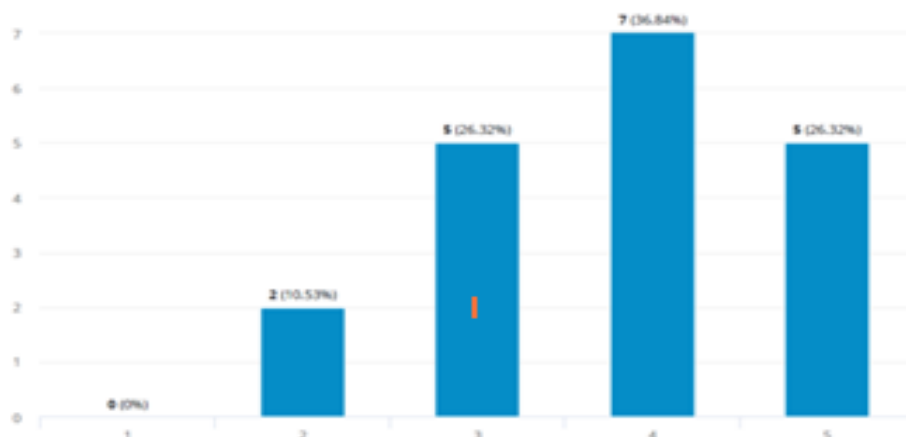


Responses cluster at the positive end, with 12 people (= 63%) awarding scores 4 or 5 and only one person scoring below the median. For this group, distraction is therefore a significant role, but further research would be required to determine whether this was an aim or merely an outcome.

Q13 To what extent do your everyday creative activities act as a ‘contemplation’ tool?

Question 11 explores the second potential aspect of creative acts, that of providing an opportunity for contemplation.

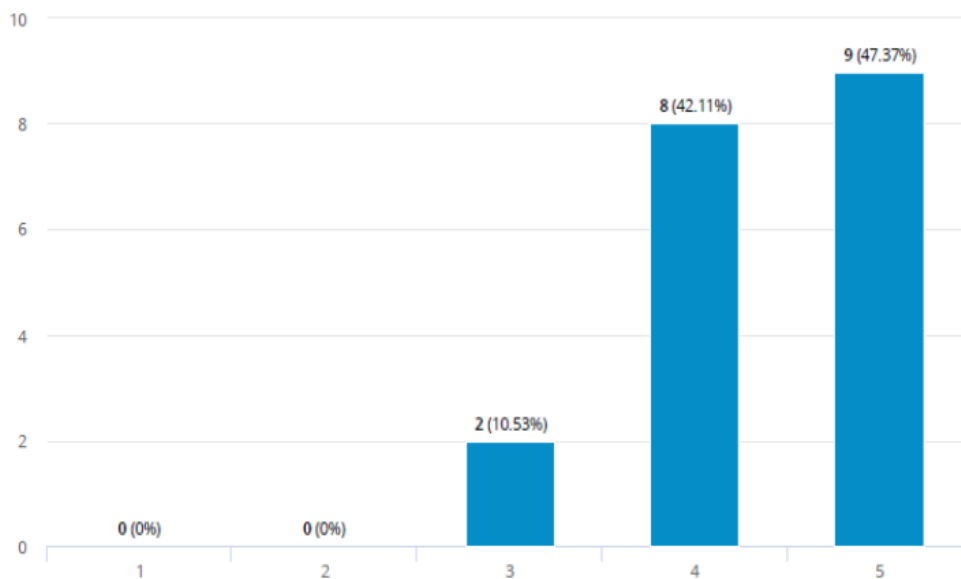
Figure 6 Creative activities act as a ‘contemplation’ tool



Q 14. To what extent do your everyday creative activities contribute to your sense of development / achievement?

The third possible use of creativity, its contribution to personal development and sense of achievement was examined in question 12.

Figure 7 Creative activities contribute to self-development/achievement



As Figure 7 reveals, this was a highly important dimension for respondents. No-one scored it 1 or 2; 17 people (= 89%) scored it 4 or 5, with only 2 respondents scoring it 3 stars.

Q 15. To what extent do your creative activities provide a means to entertain yourself?

Another potential use of creativity is as means of personal entertainment.

Figure 8 Creative activities provide a means of entertainment

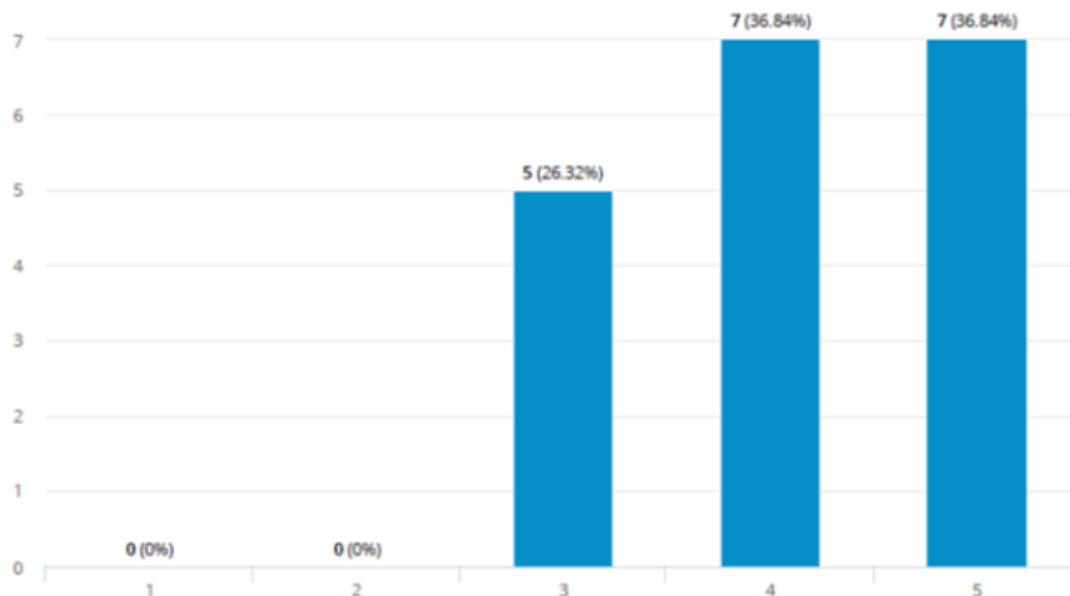
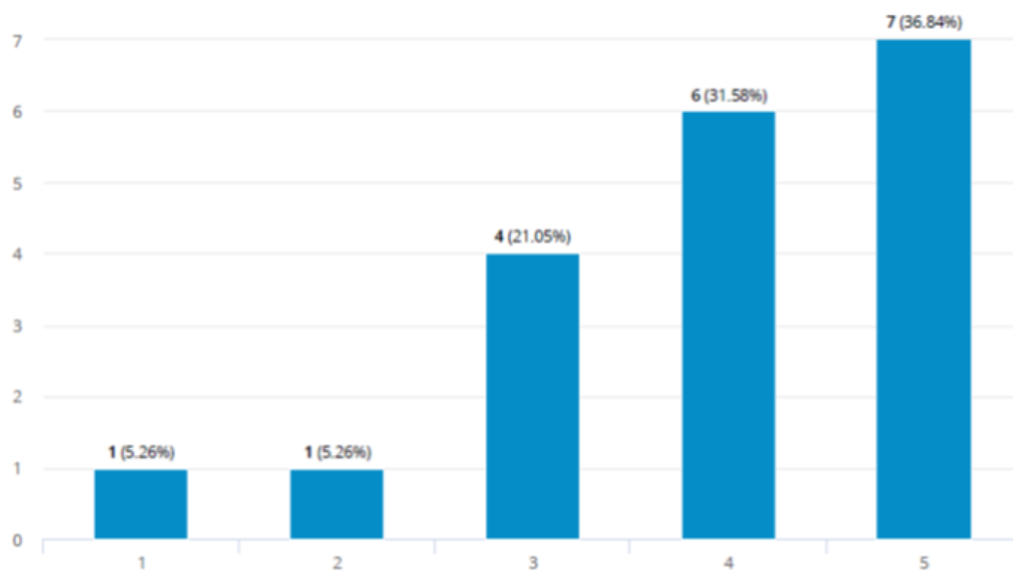


Figure 8 shows that this, too, was a highly valued role for respondents, with 14 (= 74%) selecting 4 or 5 stars, and the remainder 3 stars. No-one said that this was not important to them.

Q 16 To what extent do your creative activities serve your desire/need to solve problems

Figure 9 Creative activities and a drive for problem solving



The results shown in Figure 9 indicate a more mixed response to this dimension, although the two individuals who gave low scores are outweighed by the remainder scoring it average or above.15. To what extent do your everyday creative activities relate to discovery?

Q17 To what extent creative acts are related to discovery?

This question does not differentiate between a purposeful process for discovery or serendipitous act

Figure 10 Creative activities and discovery

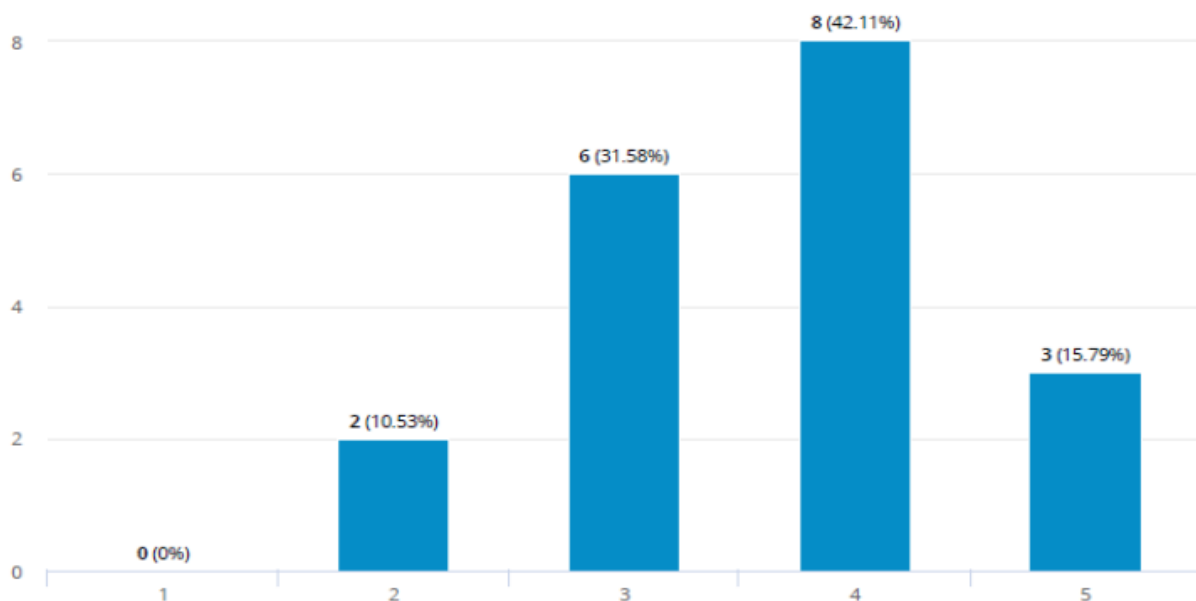
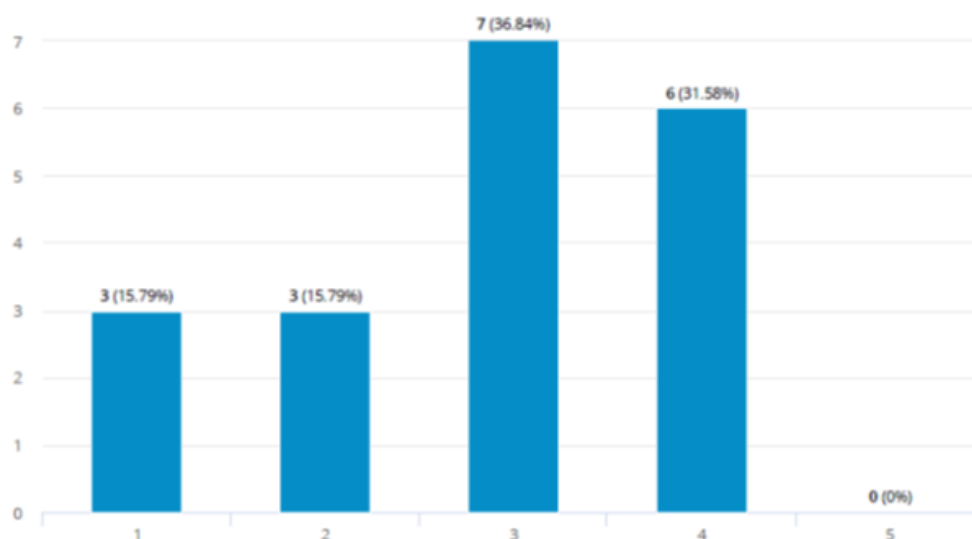


Figure 10 reveals a more diverse set of responses to this question. Here, the highest scores are in the 3 and 4 star areas, with only 3 people (= 16%) awarding 5 stars, and 2 (= 11%) scoring 2 stars.

Q18 To what extent is your creative self-expression planned i.e. you set out to express yourself creatively?

The final 2 questions investigate whether respondents' creative activity is planned or emergent. Figure 11 shows the results for their being planned.

Figure 11 Creative activities are planned

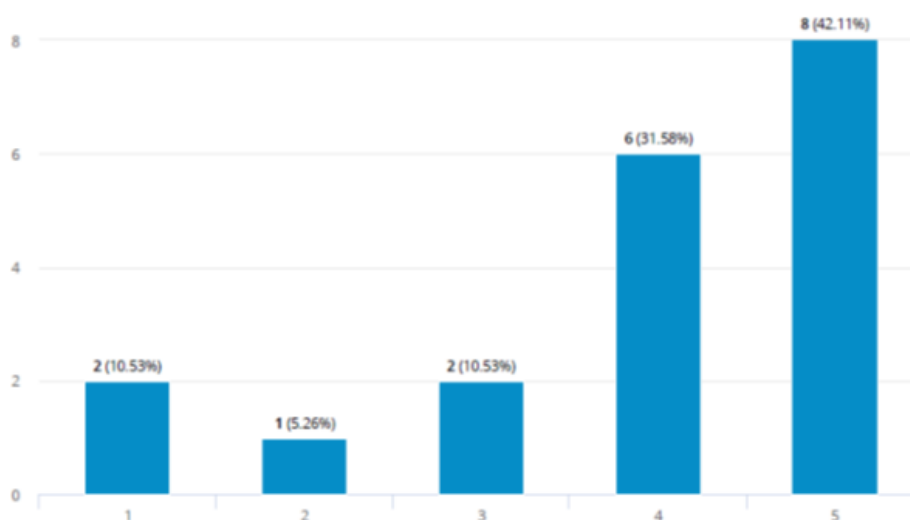


It is immediately apparent that the profile of scores for this question is quite different from those of previous dimensions. Now, 6 respondents (= 32%) suggest that their activities are unplanned, with the same proportion saying they are planned. 7 respondents (= 37%) remain in the median position.

Q19 To what extent is your creative self-expression emergent i.e. you notice and respond to opportunities to express your creativity as they happen?

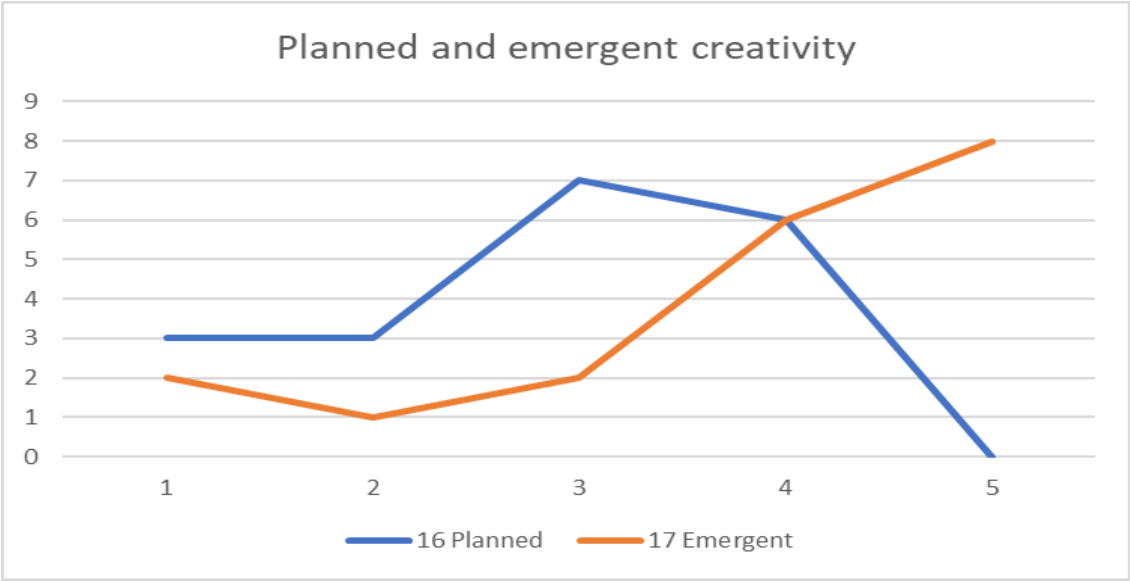
Figure 12 shows the results for the complementary question, the degree to which creativity is emergent.

Figure 12 Creative activities are emergent



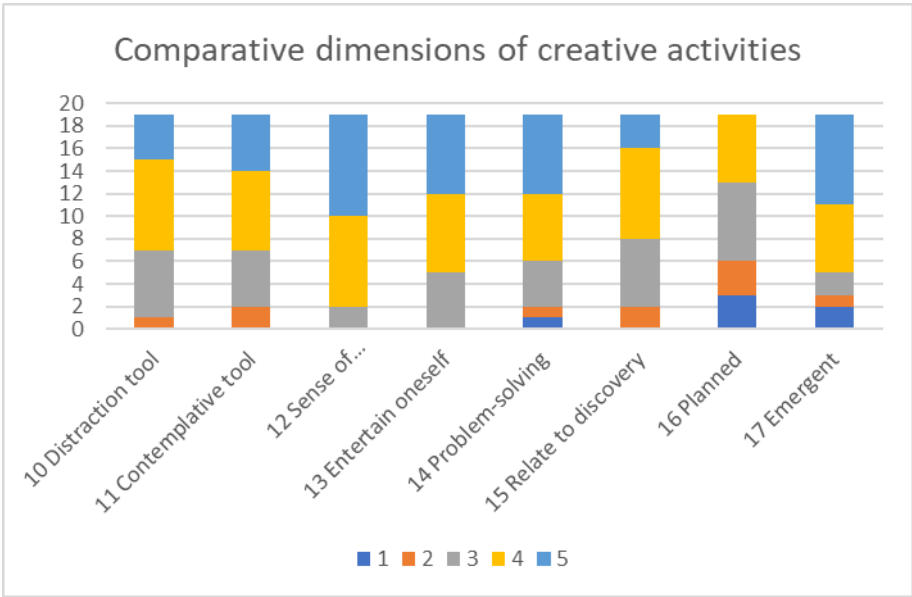
Superficially, responses to this question might be expected to be the converse of those for planned activities (question 16). However, that does not prove to be the case. The same number of people (6 = 32%) scored 4 for both questions, there were 8 (= 42%) who scored emergent creativity 5 compared with 3 (16%) who scored the counterpart 1 star for emergent creativity.

Figure 13 collates the findings for both planned and emergent creativity. This suggests that respondents take advantage of emergent opportunities for creative activities as well as plan their creative action. For this set of respondents, emergent opportunities were more significant than planned activities. Whether a random sample would be so responsive to such opportunities would need to be tested.



A final comparison (Figure 14) reveals the relative importance of all 8 dimensions investigated in questions 12 - 19. Clearly, these are not mutually exclusive; instead, they combine to give a broad view of the potential reasons for, and contributors to creative self-expression.

Figure 14



The blue and yellow blocks represent scores of 5 and 4 stars, i.e. the dimension is highly significant for these respondents. We can now see that the sense of self-actualisation is the most important factor for this group followed closely by self-entertainment and emergent opportunities. All dimensions except planned activities are found to be important.

Concluding comments

Although this was a small sample and respondents were atypical of a random cohort, the findings shed light on the significance of small c forms of activity for these 'creative' people.

Their responses demonstrate how their creativity is deployed for both personal and collective e.g. family, benefit, contributing to wellbeing though the environment they enhance.

They show how their creativity and wellbeing are derived from having a lifestyle that draws on the physical, emotional and intellectual. Interaction with others is greatly valued, and activities include both solitary and social. It is this diversity that appears to sustain their creativity.

Understandably, responses to ill health depend on the nature of illness. Motivation is affected and physical incapacity constrains their ability to create.

One surprising finding was that, whilst the lockdown has impacted on most respondents, this has resulted in greater creativity, sometimes in response to the challenge, sometimes because it has given more time for reflection and action.

The final word is given to respondents, on the value they found in this brief questionnaire.

I think creativity, well-being etc are such valuable topics to consider and research and discuss. I go to art galleries and museums to get a lot of happiness and inspiration but I rarely discuss these topics. It's been quite nice even to consider these questions and do the survey. It's caused me to reflect on the need to do more. Thank you.

Life is about living and creativity gives us opportunities to discover new meanings and purpose, hopefully for sharing the opportunities for wellbeing for all, but always be aware of the potential for creativity to be destructive.

What an interesting, thought-provoking survey! Thank you.

What an interesting, thought-provoking survey! Thank you.

Thank you for doing this

Thank you for opening up this reflection on elements of my day that I don't usually think about very deeply.

Thank you to everyone who engaged with this survey.

References

1 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/five-ways-to-mental-wellbeing>

2 Full details of The Great British Creativity Test research

Introducing Johanna Payton our new co-editor

I am delighted to announce that Johanna Payton is joining me as co-editor of the magazine. Jo is a journalist, a higher education lecturer and a creativity activist and she will bring fresh ideas, journalistic skills, passion, enthusiasm and energy to her role.

Norman Jackson (Editor)

Johanna

I started my career with a six-year stint in the music industry, then went freelance in 2002, writing for national newspapers, magazines and websites, and appearing as a recurrent guest on BBC radio. I'm most closely associated with the Guardian, where I still lead masterclasses and was a commissioning editor for two years, but my lifestyle features have appeared in most national UK publications. I have used case study based stories to raise awareness on issues including postnatal depression, eating disorders and climate change, and my reviews have given me the excuse to try everything from white water rafting on the Colorado river, to eating my way around the Med on a cruise ship. I'm passionate about digital publishing (I started blogging in 2003) and the arts, and am on the board of trustees for the Wimbledon Civic Theatre Trust.

I became a visiting journalism lecturer in 2011 and was immediately struck by the dichotomy of an increasingly creative and entrepreneurial media industry, and the confines of assessment-based teaching and learning in higher education. I wanted to do something about it. I threw myself into an action research project on unlocking creativity in higher education, with the use of a concept I call 'mindful play'. Committed to creative learning and teaching, and a student-centred imagining of higher education, I am now a permanent journalism lecturer at City, University of London, and a member of the leadership team of the interdisciplinary Centre for Creativity in Professional Practice based in City's Cass Business School. I plan to start a PhD in September 2020 looking at what it means to be creative in contemporary journalism, and how this can be translated pedagogically within journalism education. As an advocate for playful, holistic and transformative teaching, living and learning creativity is at the core of everything I do, in and out of the classroom



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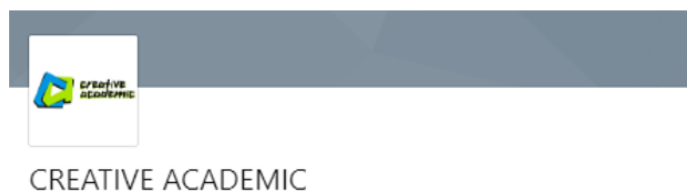


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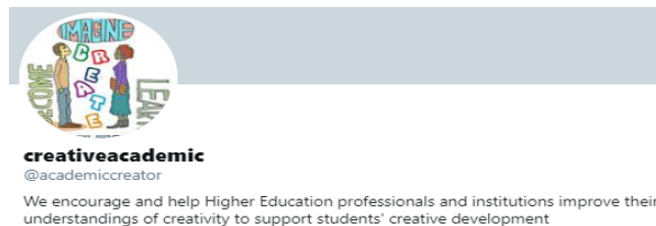
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