

Some Thoughts on Creativity

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Creativity is more important now than ever before. There are looming issues in the world right now that need resilient, out of the box thinkers to face and solve them. As educators, parents and community members, we need to nurture and foster those independent problem-solving skills in all of our students. Everyone can be creative, and we need to remember that it benefits everyone in many ways to practice and tend to our own creative needs. Yes, needs. There are studies that show that being creative is a human need, and that when we let our creative minds atrophy, our overall health suffers: our mental, psychological, emotional and physical health. (Bergland, 2013) Students learning capabilities also suffer when they are not using and developing their creative skills. There are studies that also show that children that participate in the arts or other creative endeavors regularly score higher on tests, and have a higher graduation rate. (Berrett, 2013) They also retain information for longer and make more meaningful connections to content that they can transfer and use later on in different formats. Think back to something you remember learning about in grade school. What were the key elements of that lesson, project, or objective that makes it possible for you to remember years later? For me, I remember my fourth grade Colorado History project about Baby Doe Tabor. I researched her at the library, created a paper mache diorama of her gold mine and opera house, and even wrote a poem about her rags to riches and then to rags story that I read as part of my presentation. Did I do well on the test? I have no idea. Did I practice and hone important skills such as researching and reading about a topic, writing, synthesizing information, planning and creating a 3D model? Yes, and those were the skills I could take with me. Why, also do I remember those details? I was interested and found inspiration in my creative endeavors. I bet you have a story like that as well. I think it's important right now to not forget that true learning happens when we tap into our creative souls. Our students and children will benefit greatly, even in a time of remote/online learning– and a time when test scores rule all. Creativity takes time and effort, but it is always worth it.

Here are some tips from Sir Ken Robinson, PHD, an expert in the field of creativity, on expanding and growing creativity.

- **Promote experiment and inquiry and willingness to make mistakes**
- **Encourage new ideas, free from immediate criticism**
- **Encourage the expression of personal feelings**
- **Convey an understanding of phases in creative work**
- **Develop an awareness of the roles of intuition and aesthetic judgement**
- **Facilitate critical evaluation of ideas**

References:

Bergland, C. (2013). Childhood Creativity Leads to Innovation in Adulthood. *Psychology Today*. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-athletes-way/201310/childhood-creativity-leads-innovation-in-adulthood>

Berrett, D. (2013). Creativity: A Cure for the Common Curriculum. *The Education Digest*, 59, A33-36. <https://chronicle.com>

Robinson, Sir Ken (2017). *Out of Our Minds: The Power of Being Creative (3rd ed.)*. John Wiley and Sons, Ltd.

Did you know...

Humans NEED to be Creative?

Why?

Creativity does So much for us...

Feeds our brains

We learn better, focus better, and remember more when we are being creative.

Makes us happy

When we are being creative, endorphins in our brains are released that make us calm and feel good. Kind of like sunshine and chocolate!

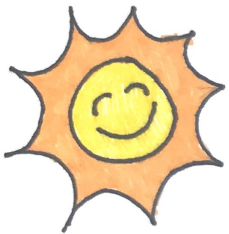
Creates skills we can use forever

Big companies like IBM and Google want creative leaders to work for them.

Can save our planet

Everyone needs creative thinkers to help solve some tough problems in our world.

That could be you!



How do we become more Creative?

- ~ Try new things and ask a lot of questions.
- ~ Don't be afraid to make mistakes. Learn from them.
- ~ Don't throw out any idea right away. You may use part of it or it may give you an even better idea.
- ~ Be free to express yourself.
- ~ Being creative takes time - be patient with yourself.
- ~ Trust yourself,
- ~ But listen to others.
- ~ Know that to make an idea Grow, you may need to change things or sometimes restart.