

Creativity and complexity

A study into the practices, disciplines and mantras that support creativity

in unpredictable and uncertain circumstances.

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This thesis is not confidential. It may be used freely by the Graduate School of Business.

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A personal thanks to Herman, without whom none of this would have been possible.

I certify that except as noted above the thesis is my own work and all references used are accurately reported in the reference section of this report.

Signed:

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ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with creativity and productivity in unpredictable and uncertain environments, and more specifically with creativity as means of self actualization and contribution to society. The combination of a nominalist ontology and social constructionalist epistemology reflects postmodern conceptions of knowledge. The literature review primarily deals with the works of Ralph Stacey on complexity, Mihaly Csíkszentmihályi on positive psychology and ‘flow’, Teresa Amabile on the three components of creativity, and Vona du Toit on creative ability theory. Case studies have been done on four individuals functioning on high levels of creative ability; investigating the practices, disciplines and mantras that they employ. Semi-structured interviews have been analysed using the constructionist approach to the grounded theory method. Systems thinking tools have been used in the theory building process, and this paper culminates in a conceptual practice model suggesting the causal mechanisms between critical variables in the process.

The level of the individual’s awareness of life’s demands, the quality of his creative response and the degree of attentiveness reflect the quality of the individual’s motivation and will influence the quality of his action. The level of creative participation refers to the degree of active involvement in all activities or challenges presented. Creative participation starts with initiative in the sense of ‘turning towards others’. The quality of connectivity between the entities of the system will influence the degree of deconstruction and synergy achieved. An optimum ‘thinking environment’ (Kline, 2008) enhances the level of critical thinking of individuals and teams and facilitates experimentation. The tangible and intangible products of experimentation are captured, refined and reproduced to create more products of similar or superior quality, ideally in all spheres of life. The individual’s capacity for sustained effort is represented by an action learning cycle, enabling that individual to sustainably function on the next level of creative ability where he demonstrates refined skills as expressed in relational contact with people, concepts and materials.

KEYWORDS: Creativity, complexity, contribution, creative ability, creative capacity, creative participation, flow, growth, learning.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Area and problem

“What are the possible answers to the demands of Life’s moments? We may understand and yet be silent. We may understand and actively turn aside completely; or turn to a known accustomed and acceptable ‘unoriginal’ answer. We may understand and respond with the substance of our being into the situation; i.e. infuse ourselves into the lived life. This is creativity.” (Du Toit, 1970: 9)

With this project, the researcher seeks to contribute to the knowledge within the fields of creativity, learning, strategy and leadership. The purpose of this research is to construct a middle range theory that describes and explains (Maxwell, 1996) the practices, mantras and disciplines that support creativity and productivity within a complex reality. More importantly, it is concerned with creativity as a means of contributing to society (Du Toit, 1970), bringing soul back to business (Csíkszentmihályi, 2003) and underscoring meaning in the ‘art’ of leadership (Taylor, 2002).

Markman and Wood (2009: 4) note that, despite our greater understanding of creativity, an agreed upon definition is elusive. Sutton (2002: 31) expresses it pragmatically: “In short, an idea is creative when it is new to people who use or elevate it, and (at least some of them) believe it could be valuable to themselves or others.” It is a myth that creativity cannot be managed or harnessed. While it cannot be forced or fully predicted, the conditions that make creativity more likely to occur can be created (Harvard Business Essentials, 2003). Furthermore, it is a myth that “creativity is reserved for the few creative geniuses among us; for the flamboyant risk takers and restricted to high-risk endeavours” (HBE, 2003: 81).

The subjects of inquiry are individuals outside of traditional corporate environments: an artist, a stand-up comedian, a trauma physician, and an occupational therapist. What lessons could be learnt from them; from the way they conduct their craft on a day-to-day basis? Can we transfer those lessons to business management research? Why do we need to enhance our creativity and whose responsibility is it? What is meant by a complex reality?

A complex reality calls for creative and collaborative problem-solving

The complexity sciences have brought to the attention of the business world that not everything is predictable, consistent and forever under control (April, Macdonald and Vriesendorp, 2005) and that control is merely an illusion (Stacey, Griffin and Shaw, 2002). Complexity is described as “a particular dynamic or movement in time that is paradoxically stable and unstable, predictable and unpredictable, known an unknown, certain and uncertain, all at the same time.” (Stacey and Griffin, 2005: 7). The situation or environment in which humans must act is inevitably complex; and this is distinguished from simple or certain environments. (Stacey *et al*, 2005).

According to Hichert (2009) complex and messy problems at global, societal, national, regional and organisational level are a reality. Complexity as such is nothing new, but our world is not becoming any simpler. Pentacle Consulting has coined the phrase ‘*the world after midnight*’ referring to circumstances in which the rate of change in the environment has exceeded the rate of our learning (figure 1). Old rules have made way for the new.

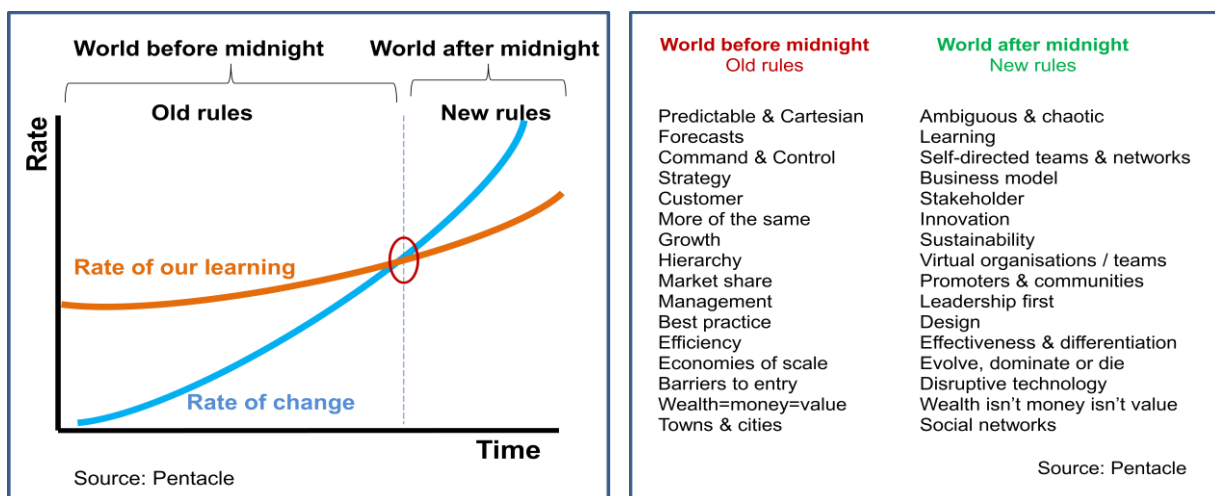


Figure 1: The world after midnight (www.pentacle.co.uk)

The world after midnight is ambiguous and chaotic, but offers tremendous opportunities for individuals, organisations and even nations able to adapt and thrive. Taylor (2002) however

states that it is not clear that organisations have adjusted to the implications of such an indeterminate world. According to Seel (2005) more and more organisations are realising that creativity is essential. “Whether it is new product development, provision of innovative services or fundamental creative change resulting in a new, more adaptive, culture; *harnessing creativity* is the key to organisational performance and success in an ever-changing environment.” (Seel, 2005:1).

Hichert (2009) has found that standard traditional forecasting methods and planning tools associated with the classic approach to strategy may not always be appropriate for turbulent situations, characterized by high uncertainty, complexity and volatility. The emphasis is on strategic thinking rather than strategic planning. The former involves *creativity* and intuition; and a committing, as opposed to a calculating, management style (Mintzberg, 1994). Hamel (1996) agrees that it requires considerable finesse, and sees strategising as a quest for discovery that is inquisitive, expansive, prescient, inventing, inclusive and demanding.

Maria Ramos, CEO of ABSA bank, is adamant that South Africa, as a country, will have to become more *creative* in her approach to business and that she will have to apply her people and their talent optimally to thrive in the new emerging future (Duvenhage, 2009). According to Markman *et al* (2009) the model of the lone individual endeavouring to create is brought into question and creativity does not happen in isolation, but rather in groups. The nurturing of creativity, in ourselves and the teams and organisations that we are involved with, potentially leads to innovative problem-solving at ground root level – necessary skills in the world after midnight.

Mintzberg and Hamel, amongst others, emphatically advocate the allowance of emerging strategies on all levels of the organisation. “The notion that strategy is something that should happen way up there, far removed from the details of running an organization on a daily basis, is one of the great fallacies of conventional strategic management.” (Mintzberg, 1987). “Any organisation has many people at many levels in the hierarchy who play critical roles in generating and sustaining *creative tension*.” (Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Roth and Smith, 1999: 16). Therefore creative approaches are not reserved only for senior management, but for all individuals and groups shaping the future of the system. It is each and everyone’s responsibility.

Creativity and meaning

“When you work you fulfil a part of earth’s dream, assigned to you when that dream was born, and in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life, and to love life through labour is to be intimate with life’s inmost secret.” (Gibran, 1970: 33)

“It is no accident that professionals often refer to an ‘art’ of teaching or management and use the term ‘artist’ to refer to practitioners unusually adept at handling situations of uncertainty, uniqueness and conflict.” (Schon, 1983, in Johnson, 2009: 65). Taylor (2002) draws parallels between art and art appreciation on the one hand, and leadership as an art. “Working creatively with complex reality is the challenge for leadership in the contemporary context, without which the role of leadership would lose at least some of its meaning.” (Taylor, 2002, in Meyer *et al*, 2007).

“Revolutionary shifts in the operational structures of our world seem to call for new definitions of who we are and what we are here for.” (Zandler and Zandler, 2000: 3). Pink (2005) describes a seismic shift now under way in much of the advanced world – a shift away from the information age towards the conceptual age. This coming age calls for individuals with ‘a whole new mind’ that combines traditionally left-brained and right-brained skills into ‘high concept’ and ‘high touch’ aptitudes like design, story, symphony, empathy, play and meaning. “The future belongs to a very different kind of mind – creators and empathizers, pattern recognizers, and meaning makers. These people – artists, inventors, designers, storytellers, caregivers, consolers, big picture thinkers – will now reap society’s richest rewards and share its greatest joys.” (Pink, 2005: 1).

We owe it to ourselves and others to live and think creatively. According to Flora (2005), creativity provides opportunities for self-actualization, and living life creatively can result in more fulfilling workdays and even in fewer relationship headaches. She hypothesises that engagement in creative behaviours “makes us more dynamic, conscious, non-defensive, observant, collaborative, and brave. It makes you more resilient, more vividly in the moment, and, at the same time, more connected to the world.” (Flora, 2005: 4).

To love our work as leaders, to see leadership as an art (De Pree, 1989) that embraces science but is not restricted to it, to find the meaning in our existence and the soul in business (Csíkszentmihályi, 2003), to look for means of contributing instead of competing (Zandler *et al*, 2000) – this is how we ‘fulfil a part of earth’s dream’ (Gibran, 1970). However, it takes courage to be creative (Goff, 2002).

1.2 Research questions and scope

Research questions:

- How can individuals increase their performance and productivity in terms of creativity over time?
- What are the disciplines, practices and mantras that support creativity in an unpredictable and uncertain reality?
- How can individuals harness creativity to the benefit of society?
- What are the stumbling blocks to creativity and how can they be overcome?

Scope:

The research area is broad, ambiguous and difficult to interpret. Time and cost factors limited the scope of the research, especially the sample size and degree to which true theoretical saturation can be achieved. The purpose of the intended research was, however, never to construct a grand theory, but rather a middle range theory, which according to Bryman and Bell (2007) may be more valuable for business management purposes than grand theories, since the former is often more practical, less abstract, more specific, more accessible in terms of implementation in the real world and easier to test.

1.3 Research Assumptions

“Standard social and business practices are built on certain assumptions – shared understandings that have evolved from older beliefs and conditions. And while circumstances may have changed since the start of these practices, their continued use tends to reconfirm the old beliefs. For this reason our daily practices feel right and true to us,

regardless of whether they have evolved to keep up with the pace of change. In just such a way a business culture arises and perpetuates itself, perhaps long after its usefulness has passed.” (Zandler et al, 2000: 4)

This project is based upon the grounded theory method, which prompts the researcher to challenge existing assumptions and instead build a new theory on creativity as it emerges from the data. There are nevertheless certain underlying assumptions that form the cornerstone of this research.

It is assumed, and shown in the literature review, that creativity can be cultivated, managed and enhanced. Furthermore it is assumed that findings from diverse creative environments can be transferred to corporate creativity. Rich accounts of the details of the findings and settings will be provided to assist users in making judgments about the possible transferability of findings to their own milieu (Bryman *et al*, 2007).

1.4 Research Ethics

The data collection process was neither invasive nor potentially harmful to participants; and the ethical issues in question concern transparency and possible invasion of privacy. Interviewees were not coerced into divulging sensitive information, and participation was voluntary. Candidates have signed a consent form.

Appropriate consideration have been given to referencing – both in terms of literature review and the contributions of interviewees. The UCT ethical clearance form has been submitted with the hand-in of the research proposal.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

While the orthodox Glaserian approach to grounded theory stipulates that no extant literature should be brought into the project before the initial coding of fieldwork has been completed, the researcher following a more constructionalist approach to grounded theory may choose to begin with a literature review simultaneous to fieldwork (Charmaz, 2000; Fendt and Sachs, 2007; Goulding, 2002; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2008).

The work of Ralph Stacey and colleagues (1996, 2002, 2005, 2006) on complexity and creativity, Mihaly Csíkszentmihályi (1997, 2003) on positive psychology and flow, Vona du Toit (1964, 1970, 1972, 1974) on creative ability, and Teresa Amabile (1997, 1998) on the three components of creativity have been used as a basis for the design of the basic interview questions (Appendix B) and a starting point for the theory building process. The following literature review provides a brief description of the basic concepts underlying these four models.

2.1 Discussion

2.1.1 *Ralph Stacey and the zone of complexity*

Ralph Stacey combined the complexity theories and psychoanalytical theory and suggested three concentric zones of operation for an individual mind (figure 2). According to him, creative behaviour is located in the zone of complexity: a transitional space between the real world outside the mind and the inner fantasy world, the world of mythologizing and play that is the foundation of creativity, the place where we are able to hold the ambiguities and paradoxes of life and contain the anxiety they generate (Stacey, 1996).

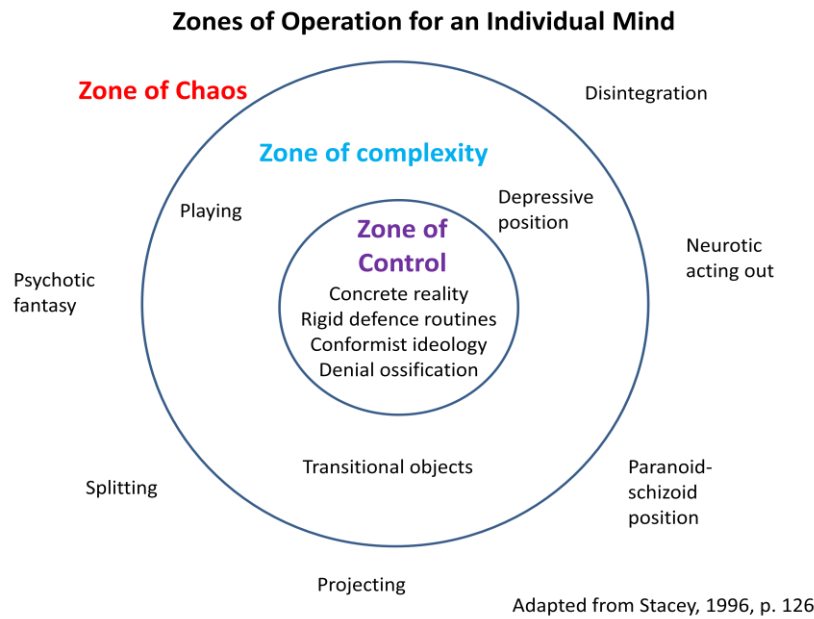


Figure 2: Zones of operation for an individual mind (Stacey, 1996)

Stacey (1996: 171) suggested a similar model for an organization or team's shadow system, and transformed the concept from concentric circles into a matrix of certainty and agreement (figure 3). As Zimmerman (2001) explains, the vertical axis of the matrix measures the level of agreement about an issue or decision within the human system, while the horizontal axis measures the degree to which cause and effect linkages can be determined. Complexity stems from situations where the outcomes are far from certainty, and the actors or participants are far from agreement.

Humans and their organisations are not only living systems (Senge *et al*, 1999); but also purposeful systems, meaning that they have a choice over both means and ends (Gharajedaghi, 1999). According to Seel (2005: 1) "human beings have intentionality; they can decide to ignore the rules or to make up new ones. Individuals behave unpredictably and getting consensus can be almost impossible in some circumstances. Yet human systems display many of the properties of complex systems. In particular, coherent patterns of behaviour can arise from the apparently idiosyncratic interactions of random individuals. This property of complex systems is perhaps the most significant of all: the seeming inevitability of the appearance of new and unpredictable patterns—a phenomenon known as emergence."

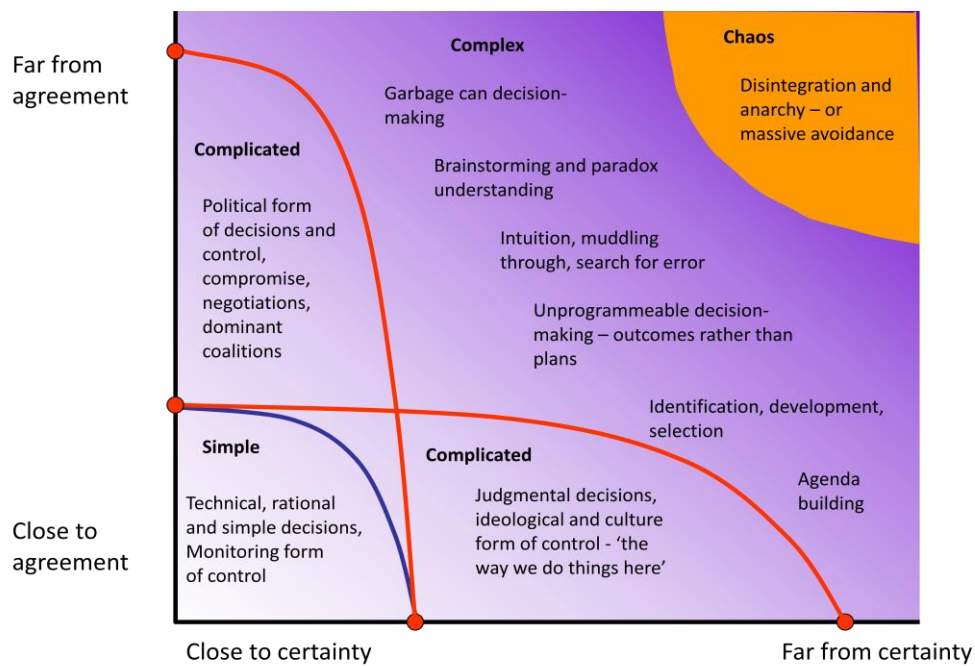


Figure 3: Ralph Stacey’s matrix of certainty and agreement (Zimmerman, 2001)

In the zone of complexity there is considerable scope for creativity, innovation, debate and trial and error; but functioning on the ‘edge of chaos’ is more often than not associated with anxiety, doubt and often frustration. Stacey (1996: 15) notes that the creative process in human systems is inevitably messy: “it involves difference, conflict, fantasy, and emotion; it stirs up anger, envy, depression, and many other feelings.”

The zone of complexity therefore offers the maximum opportunity for creativity, but “for many people ‘complexity’ has bad connotations, for it seems to refer to things that are complicated or cumbersome” (Csíkszentmihályi, 2003: 67). As a result, we then tend to shy away from it: we oversimplify, deny, or shift into ‘command and control’ gear. However, “to remove the mess by inspiring us to follow some common vision, share the same culture, and pull together is to remove the mess that is the very raw material of creative activity.” (Stacey, 1996: 15).

Stacey has identified a number of control parameters, or complexity indicators, that track and influence the team’s positioning on the matrix. “It is only when the control parameters reach a critical point that systems operate in the phase transition at the edge of disintegration, and it

is only then that they occupy the space for creativity.” (Stacey, 1996: 222). These complexity indicators include the:

- Rate at which information or energy flows through a system.
- Degree of connectivity between the agents in the system.
- Degree of diversity in the schemas that are driving behaviour.
- Power differences and the manner in which they are expressed.
- Level of anxiety that can be held and contained.

2.1.2 Mihaly Csíkszentmihályi on 'flow'

“If one wants to stay in flow, he or she must progress and learn more skills, rising to new levels of complexity.” (Csíkszentmihályi, 2003: 63).

Csíkszentmihályi (2003: 48) describes creativity as a vision – “the process by which new objects and new ways of doing things come into being.” He insists that creativity is more likely to occur when an individual experiences ‘flow’, a state where a person is fully engaged in the task and intrinsically motivated to excel because the task has meaning and relevance to his or her life. Likewise, engaging in creative activities maximises opportunities for flow. He suggests the following simple equation: “Flow occurs when both challenges and skills are high and equal to each other” (Csíkszentmihályi, 2003: 44), as visually represented in a radar (figure 4).

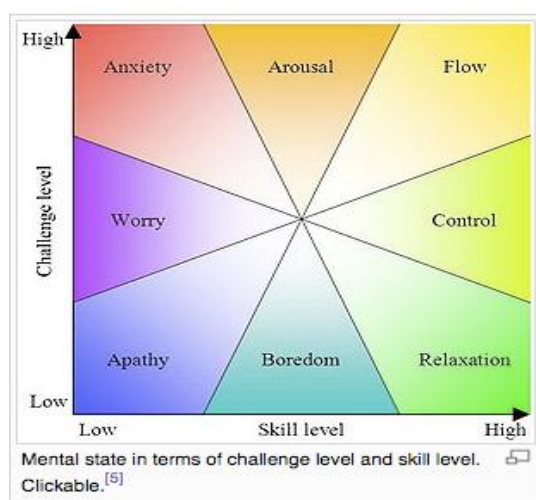


Figure 4: Mental states in terms of challenge and skill level (Csíkszentmihályi, 2003)

Csikszentmihályi's work on positive psychology links well with the concept of everyday creativity (Flora, 2005; Ivcevic and Mayer, 2006; Goff, 2002). Flow is a desired state not only because it supports creativity, but as a goal in itself. Individuals who practice forms of everyday creativity tend to be open-minded and curious, persistent, more flexible, less judgmental, positive, energetic, and intrinsically motivated by their chosen activities. (Ivcevic; in Flora, 2005). Maximising the experience of flow on a day-to-day basis increases happiness: the notion that one's talents are fully employed, one is able to develop one's potentialities, and that everyday life is neither stressful nor boring, but holds deeply enjoyable experiences (Csikszentmihályi, 2003).

One can grow into complexity, but this requires an intense journey of learning and personal transformation. "Through learning we grow, becoming more than we were before, and in that sense learning is unselfish, because it results in a transformation of what we were before, a setting aside of the old self in favour of a more complex one." (Csikszentmihályi, 2003: 163). There seems to be a vicious circle concerning learning, growth, complexity and anxiety. "Creativity requires that we be able to hold, rather than avoid, high levels of anxiety, because only then can we perform complex learning. But human beings have a powerful tendency to avoid the space for creativity. Our experience causes us to dislike complex learning, and we often seek to kill our own learning." (Stacey, 1996: 223).

"To solve a complex problem, we have to immerse ourselves in – and open up to – its full complexity. We must stretch way beyond our comfort zone." (Kahane, 2007: 75)

2.1.3 Vona du Toit on 'creative ability'

Creative ability theory has been developed by and for occupational therapists in the 1960's, and while it is relatively widely used internationally for assessment and intervention, the theory remained largely unknown outside of the profession.

Creative ability (Du Toit, 1970, 1972, 1974; De Wit, 1995; Sherwood, 2009) is that area of the individual's creative capacity or potential which he has realized and defined or manifest in himself. Goff (2002) sees creative potential as the ability to respond constructively and in non-habitual ways to change and stress. Growth through the proposed levels of creative

ability enables the individual to constructively deal with increasing levels of complexity and respond to life's demands in meaningful ways (Sherwood, 2009).

The central concept of creative ability theory (a.k.a. the theory of *motivation in action* or *volition in action*) is that motivation governs action and action is the manifestation of motivation (Sherwood, 2009). Du Toit (1970) found the term ‘creativity’ too broad and vague on the one hand; and too limiting on the other. She advocated the use of more specific and functionally significant terms such as creative capacity, creative response, creative participation, creative act and creative ability. Creativity is an approach to life.

Du Toit's theory is based upon developmental and humanistic principles (Sherwood, 2009) and the levels of creative ability correlate with normal developmental stages from birth to adulthood (Du Toit, 1970). Intellect, personality structure and talents will most likely influence the creative capacity or 'ceiling', but often individuals never reach their true creative capacity.

Du Toit described the nine levels as a continuum (visually represented in figure 5), moving from egocentrism towards contribution to community and society. Individuals can progress and regress through the levels, and movement in either direction can be expected as human beings are dynamic and ever changing.

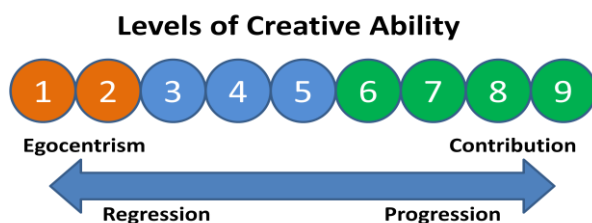


Figure 5: Levels of creative ability as a continuum (developed from Du Toit, 1970)

Table 1 has been adapted from Du Toit (1970: 34-35; 1974: 54 and 1974: 60-86) and serves as a summary of the levels of creative ability in terms of motivation and action:

Table 1: Levels of creative ability expressed in terms of motivation and action

Level	Motivation (stage of volitional growth)	Action (stage of activity participation)
1	Positive tone: Appears to be motivationally blank.	Pre-destructive action: Movements appear to be purposeless and haphazard. Actions are 'prehandling' in nature. Physical action: arbitrary uncoordinated, purposeless.
2	Self differentiation: Motivation is feeble, erratic and egocentric. May be elicited by activities which define body boundaries, basic body function, and self-differentiating concepts. 'Self' as cause of visible tangible effect is beginning to emerge as motivational factor. This is the essential precursor of constructive action.	Destructive action: Destructive action, throwing, tearing, biting, treading (undifferentiated destructive action). Incidental creative action: Action is not aimed at effect or product. The effect of action is totally unplanned, purely by chance and immediate.
3	Self presentation: A readiness to present the newly and basically differentiated self to people and situations. The quality of motivation now becomes progressively influenced by the intellectual capacity. The character of motivation is one of enquiry. The discovery that 'it is necessary to know about, in order to make' is the essential motivational reaction, for progression to following stages of participation.	Explorative action: The quality of action is exploratory. There is an 'intentional' exploration of all aspects of the child's reality. Materials are explored in order to isolate their properties: "What can I do with this". Security in action results from familiarity with at least the range of materials commonly used. Depth of enquiry will significantly affect work readiness.
4	Passive participation: Motivation is robust enough to comprehend a task in its entirety, but not robust enough to initiate task performance or to execute a task. He requires external stimulation and constant reference to the pedagogue for sequencing the steps in a task, and for providing task content.	Passive participative action: Action progresses from material handling to product creation and task fulfilment. Action is erratic and dependent, but competent with guidance. It is step-by-step / task component directed
5	Imitative participation: The quality is robust enough to be product centred and directed towards task fulfilment, but does not yet permit the emergence of initiative, or of competition with others. He seeks to 'lose' himself in a group, by being identical to others.	Imitative participative action: Action is essentially imitative in nature. In order to avoid the anxiety associated with the 'unknown', the individual seeks a security in 'doing the same as'.
6	Active participation: Motivation is directed towards achieving at least the appropriate industrial and social norms, and in addition there is a directedness towards improving on these standards by the infusion of initiative or original thought.	Originative participation: The element of originality permeates action. The individual will do what someone else has done, attaining at least the same standard. In addition, he will attempt to add something of his own which will improve the standard.

7	Competitive participation: Motivation is robust and can withstand failure. It reflects the desire to 'be better than'. Satisfaction and fulfilment is attained through competition with others. Competitive norms which elicit effort will vary according to the mental and physical ability, personality structure and work interests.	Product centred action: Action is competitive in nature. It is disciplined and dictated by the standards which the individual seeks to surpass. These standards will apply to the immediate product which results from action and will not be global or abstract in nature as found in contributive action.
8	Contribution: He has gained social versatility and can maintain reliable social behaviour in any unselected group of people. He can interchangeably assume roles with require subordination to an authority figure, and those demanding leadership qualities in himself.	Contributive – situation centred action: The individual re-enforces his capacity to function creatively in many areas of participation, and experiment with his capacity to make an original contribution, in the fields of his interests and aptitudes. He further develops his decision-making capacity and upgrades his ability to assume responsibility in the vertical as well as the horizontal dimensions.
9	Collaborative contribution: Strong intrinsic motivation, focused around meaning and adding value. This individual would function in accordance with his self expectations which surpass any external expectations.	Collaborative-contributive society centred action: He is spiritually independent but interconnected, and has the ability to manoeuvre, manipulate and direct his relational and creative skills to the benefit of society.

An individual's creative ability is a variable that can be plotted on a 'behaviour over time' graph, and it is a loaded concept. Creative ability is said to be a reflection of the whole person, or "the way each person actually expresses what he is." (Du Toit, 1970: 29). A natural progression from chaos and randomness (levels 1, 2 and to a lesser extent level 3) towards mastery and control (starting at level 4 and peaking at level 7) and then an openness to complexity (levels 8 and 9) is noticeable on close inspection. The current level of creative ability can be tracked by means of nine measures (Du Toit, 1974: 60):

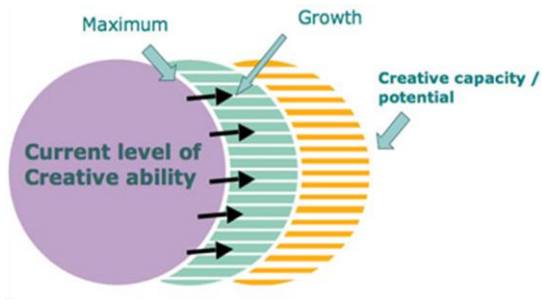
- The level, type and quality of **motivation**.
- The quality of **action**.
- The quality of **products**.
- Skill in the handling of **materials and objects**.
- The ability to form relational contact with **people**.
- The ability to form relational contact with **situations**.
- The ability to control the **effects of anxiety**.
- The degree of **initiative** or originality infused by him into his thought and action.
- The quality and degree of **effort** which he is prepared to channel into the tasks and challenges set him in all spheres of life.

According to Du Toit, individuals functioning on level 6 are capable of professional training and are employable in the open labour market, while individuals functioning on level 7 are suited for managerial and high responsibility employment. Leaders function on level 8, while truly visionary leaders function on level 9 (also see Appendix A). An individual wishing to become a leader rather than a micro-manager will need to become comfortable with high levels of complexity and grow into levels 8 and 9. “There are indeed no simple mechanisms for managing uncertainty or complexity. At best, an attempt can be made to accommodate complexity through innovative and responsive leadership.” (Taylor, 2002; in Meyer *et al*, 2007: 167).

It is worthwhile to note that the term ‘competitive contribution’, originally used for level 9, does not accurately reflect the sentiments of creative ability theory and that the researcher has replaced it with ‘collaborative contribution’. At this level the individual demonstrates a sustained attitude of loyalty, interpersonal tolerance and compensation for others at an intimate level (De Witt, 1997); and the will and ability to modify his behaviour to benefit others (Du Toit, 1970). Level 9 is also characterised by high and refined abstract creative responses, and functioning according to self expectations which surpass any external expectations (Du Toit, 1970).

“Existing creative ability only increases with effort at the frontiers of that ability, i.e. maximum challenge and maximum effort” (Du Toit, 1970: 28); linking to Csíkszentmihályi’s (2003) work on flow and positive psychology. Growth through the levels of creative ability (figure 6) cannot be achieved alone, and the purpose of such growth is for the benefit of all. The individual is seen as part of a system. The quality of action and interaction between the entities in a purposeful system will influence the emerging outcomes, pointing to what Stacey *et al* (2002) calls a ‘transformative teleology’.

The environment – challenges, opportunities, learning environment, mentors, meaningful others etc. may encourage or discourage growth through the stages; but these external motivators will not have a sustainable impact on the level of creative ability without maximum effort from the individual himself.



<http://www.modelofcreativeability.com/what-is-macaig.html>

Figure 6: Growth through the levels of creative ability (Sherwood, 2009)

The researcher proposes that, instead of a continuum, the levels of creative ability may be better understood as concentric circles (figure 7). Growth can therefore be seen as progression in the form of expansion, rather than movement along a continuum. This implies a broader range of mental models; a larger repertoire of skills, tools and options to choose from as the situation demands; a deeper level of awareness; more constructive and original action; a larger focus on contribution and collaboration; and in general a larger capacity for complexity.

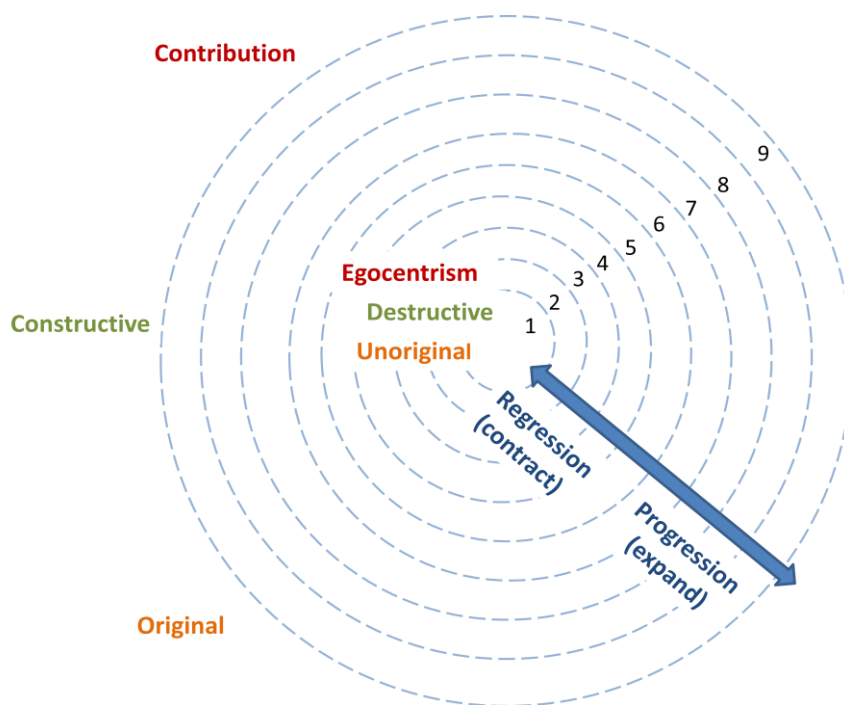
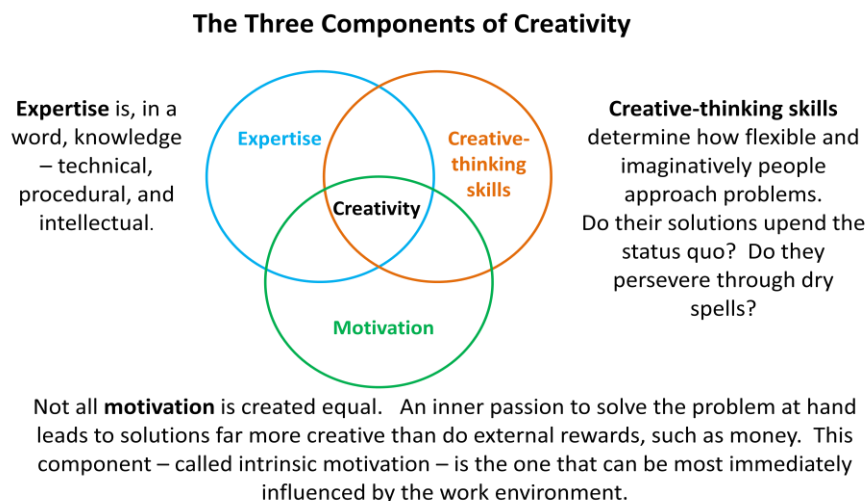


Figure 7: Levels of creative ability as concentric circles

When represented in this way, it is easier to understand that adults still have the capacity to play and experience the world with a childlike wonder (Jenkins *et al*, 2006). We can access the incidental creative action of level 2 and the explorative action of level 3 – if we make an effort to reconnect with the inner child. But, theoretically, we also have the maturity to choose our actions, control our emotions, hold anxiety, collaborate, and be pragmatic enough to implement ideas to achieve the most beneficial outcomes for all. “When psychologist Mihaly Csíkszentmihályi studied eminent people, he found that they held almost contradictory impulses and qualities within: a desire for solitude but also a need for social stimulation; superior knowledge on a subject but also a childlike naïveté. These qualities seemed to fuel their ability to come up with great ideas and their ability to execute them—quite a combination.” (Flora, 2005:3).

2.1.4 Teresa Amabile on 'the three components of creativity'

Amabile (1998) theorised that, within every individual, creativity is a function of three components: *creative-thinking skills*, *expertise*, and *motivation*; and that these components can be influenced through workplace practices and conditions. In her model (figure 8), creativity occurs in the space for where the three components overlap, and the goal is to enlarge that area.



Source: Amabile, 1998, pp. 77-87

Figure 8: The three components of creativity (Amabile, 1998)

Unfortunately, Amabile's model is confined to creativity within the workplace, and not necessarily everyday creativity. It does, however, serve as a simple but solid high level overview, and many of her findings link well with those of other authors in the field. When grouped into themes, the nine measures of creative ability (Du Toit, 1974) correlate well with Amabile's (1998) three components of creativity.

Component 1: Creative-thinking skills

KnowInnovation (2008) has done extensive work on the development of *creative thinking skills*, and Kline (2008) on what she calls a 'thinking environment' – how individuals can co-create an environment where they can think together brilliantly. Amabile, Hadley and Kramer (2002: 56) have found a link between the quality of creative thinking and time pressure. According to them, creative thinking under low time pressure is more likely when people feel as if they are on an *expedition*. They show creative thinking that is more orientated toward generating or exploring ideas than identifying problems, and tend to collaborate with one person rather than with a group. Creative thinking under extreme time pressure is more likely when people feel as if they are on a *mission*. They can focus on one activity for a significant part of the day because they are undisturbed or protected; they believe that they are doing important work and report feeling positively challenged by and involved in the work; and they show creative thinking that is equally orientated toward identifying problems and generating or exploring ideas.

Component 2: Expertise

The component of *expertise* crops up frequently in literature on creativity. According to Markman *et al* (2009), creativity requires a substantial amount of information about the domain being studied. Gladwell (2008) emphasizes the mastery of critical skills in what he calls '10 000 hours of practice'. Csíkszentmihályi (2003: 78) also speaks of this: "Psychological capital is built up when the attention invested results in a more complex consciousness – more refined skills, a fuller understanding of some subject, a deeper relationship. This usually takes place when we use our skills to confront a higher level of challenges – in other words, when we experience flow." As mentioned earlier, the paradox between 'beginners mind' and expertise is an essential characteristic of creative groups (HBE, 2003).

Component 3: Motivation

Amabile's emphasis on *intrinsic motivation* is echoed in the work of Csíkszentmihályi (2003) and Pink (2005, 2009), amongst many other authors. According to Pink (2009) creative problem-solving is more likely to occur when the individual finds the subject matter interesting and meaningful, and when he or she experiences the sense of autonomy, mastery and purpose associated with intrinsic motivation.

2.2 Conclusion

It is hypothesised that individuals functioning on the highest levels of creative ability are better equipped to deal with increased levels of complexity in a rich and constructive manner. They can thrive in the zone of complexity and have the courage and skill to venture closer to the edge of chaos without constant fear of disintegration.

It is proposed that it is possible to superimpose a wedge of the concentric levels of creative ability upon a simplified version of Stacey's matrix (as illustrated in figure 9).

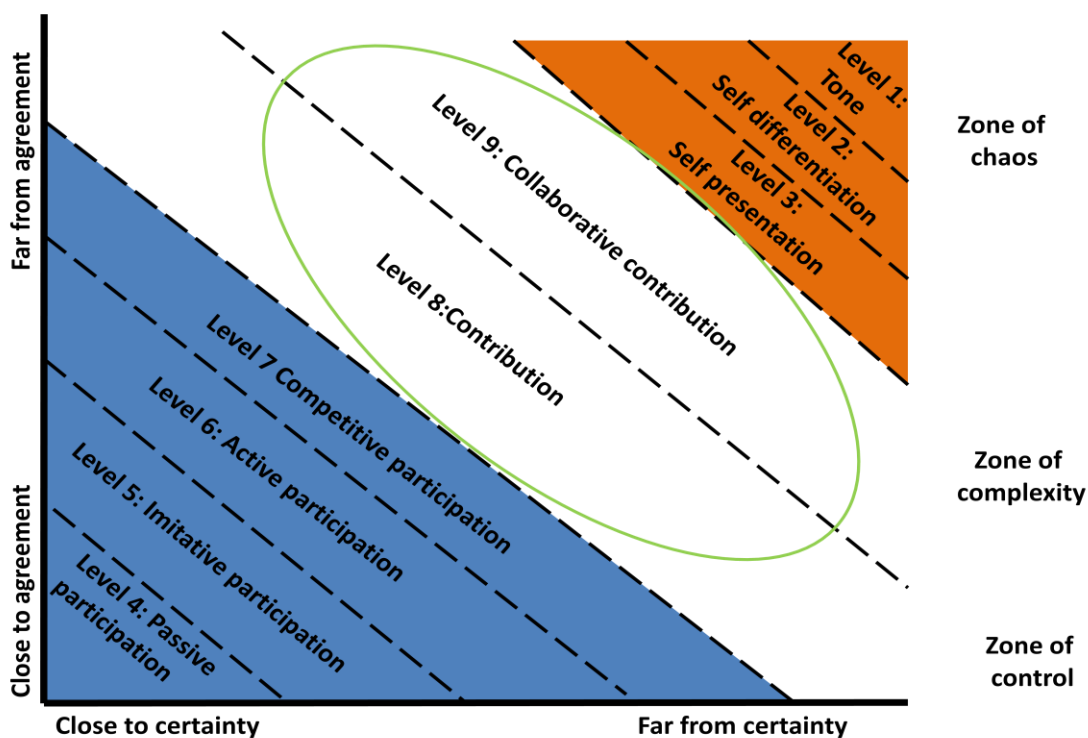


Figure 9: Levels 8 and 9 indicate comfort in the 'zone of complexity'

Levels 1, 2 and 3 correlate with the zone of chaos, and are therefore placed in the top right-hand corner with level 3 closest to the zone of complexity. Levels 4 to 7 correlate with the zone of control, while levels 8 and 9 indicate comfort in complexity. In the eighth level of creative ability, and especially in the ninth, there is a move away from the focus on control and competition and into a space of 'letting go'. The individual shows openness for the novel and unexpected to emerge and is more focused on collaboration and contribution as opposed to outright competition. On level 8 already, an individual have reached a "level of contribution where the degree of his selfdirectedness is sufficiently robust to accept and structure the norms most advantageously applicable to unpredicted situations." (Du Toit, 1970: 27).

In figure 9, levels 8 and 9 border on the childlike levels 1 to 3, and in a sense it makes a full circle: the person has matured enough not to take himself too seriously and can connect with the inner child. This is where he once again has access to the world of mythologizing and play that is the foundation of creativity, the place where he is able to hold the ambiguities and paradoxes of life and contain the anxiety they generate (Stacey, 1996).

The research questions (section 1.2) can therefore be summarised by the following: How can an individual move from competitive participation towards contribution and ideally collaborative contribution? Levels 8 and 9 are ill described in literature on creative ability (De Witt, 1997), mainly because it falls outside of treatment precincts (Du Toit, 1972) and no research has been done specifically on growth into the higher levels of creative ability (Sherwood, 2009; Du Toit, 1974; De Witt, 1997).

This problem lies somewhere between the realms of psychology and business management research. It is from this position that we actively seek out the multiple perspectives of interviewees from diverse backgrounds and work environments in order to start the theory building process. What are the disciplines, practices and mantras that they employ?

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research approach and research strategy

Table 2 (developed from tables 4.2, 4.3 and 4.5 in Easterby-Smith *et al*, 2008: 59, 60 and 63) provides a summary of the chosen research methodology.

Table 2: Summary of research methodology chosen

	Description	Chosen for this research
Ontology	Philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality.	<i>Nominalism</i> : Truth depends on who establishes it and is therefore subjective by nature. The social world is created through the interaction of actors.
Epistemology	General set of assumptions about the best ways of inquiring into the nature of the world.	<i>Social constructionalism</i> : Facts are all human creations. Human interests are the main drivers of science and concepts should incorporate stakeholder perspectives. Explanations aim to increase general understanding of the situation through sense-making.
Methods	Individual techniques for data collection analysis, etc.	<i>Grounded theory method</i> (constructionalist approach): cycle of theoretical sampling, coding, iteration, theoretical saturation.
Tools	Tools used at various stages of the data collection and analysis process and theory synthesis process.	Interviews. Systems thinking tools (affinity diagram, interrelationships diagram, systemic score card, causal loop diagram).

3.1.1 Philosophical positioning

The combination of a nominalist ontology and social constructionalist epistemology reflects postmodern conceptions of knowledge. According to Easterby-Smith *et al* (2008:73) social constructionism is flexible and good for theory generation, ideal for capturing processes and meanings, and data collection is less artificial than is the case with positivist or relativist studies.

3.1.2 Qualitative research

The nature of this sociological research made the grounded theory method (GTM), which is qualitative in essence, a viable option (Stauss and Corbin, 1990). Bryman *et al* (2007: 584) even go as far as stating that “grounded theory has become by far the most widely used framework for analysing qualitative data.” The GTM offers qualitative researchers concerned with qualitative data an effective means of sorting through large amounts of unstructured data through a set of procedures that captures the richness of the data, but at the same time protects the validity of the research and promises a means of producing a theory that upholds to research criteria (Fendt *et al*, 2007).

Generating theory out of data is one of the particular strengths of the grounded theory method, as opposed to other supposedly inductive studies, which often fail to provide clear, theoretical significance for their findings (Bryman *et al*, 2007). This research project culminated in a conceptual practice model; suggesting key variables, links and causal mechanisms that influence the level of creative ability. “A conceptual practice model is an abstract representation of practice. It represents theories or ideas in schematic form.” (Turner, Foster and Johnson, 1997: 35).

3.1.3 Method of inference

The GTM is best known as an inductive approach (Strauss *et al*, 1990). Induction requires the researcher to draw conclusions from the observations and findings in the form of a rule or theory (Bryman *et al*, 2007). The researcher has therefore not used cases and existing theory to predict results, as is the case with deductive inference (Bryman *et al*, 2007).

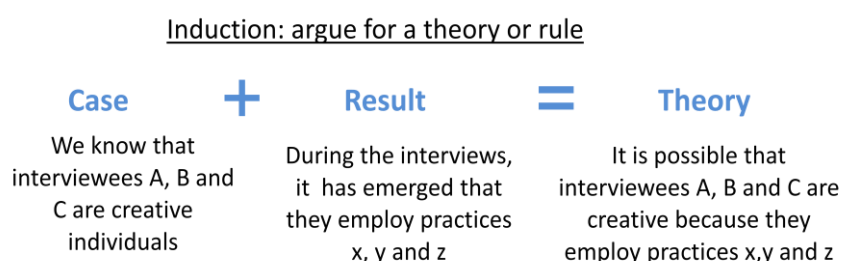


Figure 10: A simple example of the inductive method of inference

3.2 Research design, data collection methods and research instruments

An in-depth study has been done on four selected individuals. According to Easterby-Smith *et al* (2008), in-depth studies are ideally suited for the constructionalist approach to GTM, since it enables the researcher to describe the observed patterns *and* explain the underlying mechanisms and processes as opposed to a cross-sectional study which is best suited for relativist studies.

3.2.1 The social constructionalist approach to grounded theory

Though there are many variations of grounded theory (Fendt *et al*, 2007), driven by differences in epistemology and ontology, certain features are agreed upon: the research must fit the substantive area, be understandable and useable by actors, and be sufficiently complex to account for variation (Easterby-Smith *et al*, 2008). The key analytical operations of grounded theory are: a cycle of theoretical sampling, constant comparisons, evolving theory, and theoretical saturation (Easterby-Smith *et al*, 2008; Fendt *et al*, 2007; Strauss *et al*, 1990; Goulding, 2002; Fernandez, 2004; Richardson and Kramer, 2006; Bryman *et al*, 2007).

The research process has followed the above key features of the grounded theory method, and systems thinking tools (Pegasus Communications, 2009) have been used where appropriate to ensure a solid and practical end product. Figure 11 illustrates the sequence (A to F) of methods and tools used for data collection, data analysis and theory synthesis.

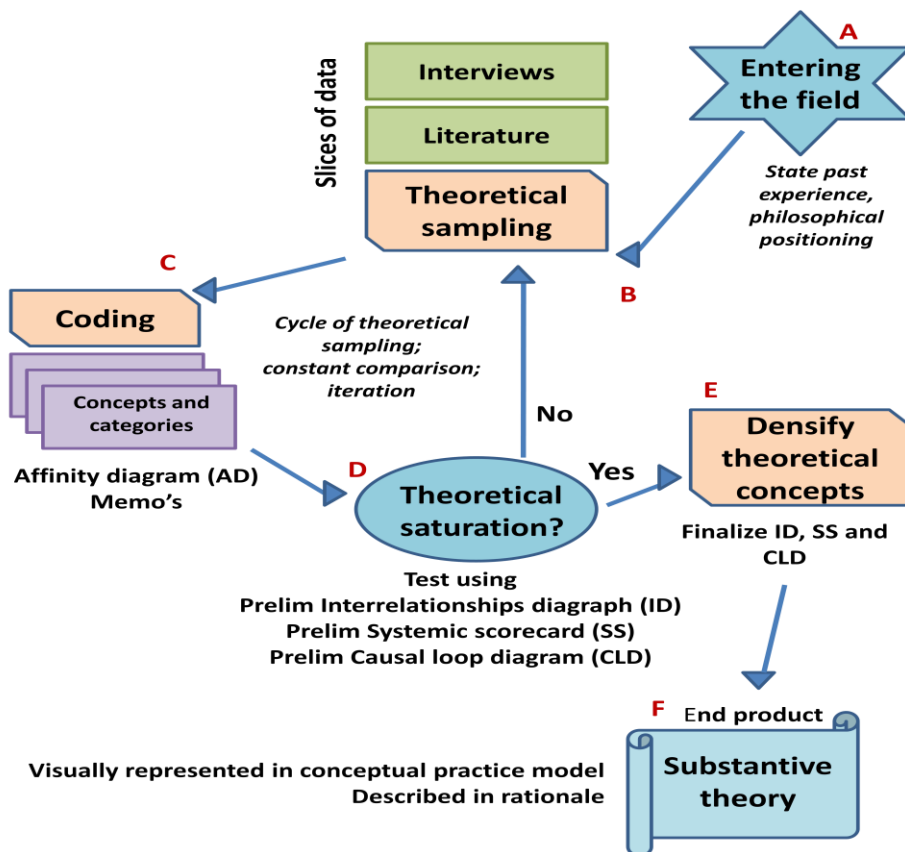


Figure 11: Research process, methods and tools

3.2.2 Critical assumptions

The approaches to grounded theory based upon a nominalist ontology (Strauss *et al*, 1998; Charmaz, 2000) acknowledges that the total neutrality, impartiality and dispassion required from the researchers by the Glaserian approach are not realistic expectations. “Nobody starts with a totally blank sheet.” Goulding (2002: 55). The researcher attempted to make profound use of dialectic arguments (Collinson and Plant, 2007), documenting the methodological procedure, and providing bountiful examples (Fendt *et al*, 2007: 10) to add credibility to the research. Also see section 3.4 (research criteria).

An important critical assumption is that the interviewees function on high levels of creative ability. This was judged subjectively according to Du Toit’s measures of creative ability (1974: 60); using their respective bibliographies, achievements and public images as sources

of information. Lastly, it is assumed that the reader has the creative capacity to function on high levels of creative ability. This is not an unfair assumption.

3.2.3 Collecting slices of data

Semi-structured, pre-arranged interviews (Bryman *et al*, 2008) have been recorded and transcribed for coding (Appendix C). Similarly, relevant pieces of literature also formed slices of data. “Data collection and analysis are an *iterative process*” (Fendt *et al*, 2007:7), involving a “weaving back and forth between the emerging theory and data” (Bryman *et al* 2007:14), as illustrated in figure 12.

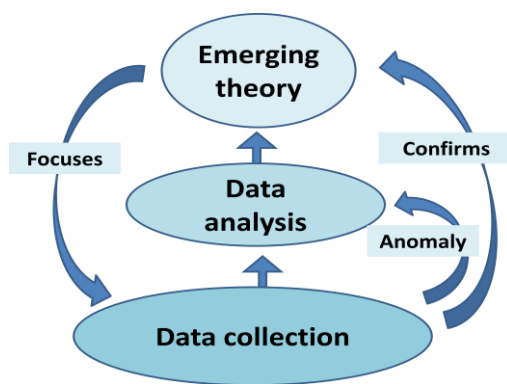


Figure 12: Iterative process

The emerging theory shaped data collection and data collected shaped the emerging theory. Easterby-Smith *et al* (2008: 143) advise researchers to “make choices as to which line of questioning they should explore further, and which lines of inquiry to discard.” Hence, with each cycle of theoretical sampling, the interview questions and literature study have become more focused on specific issues emerging from the theory.

3.3 Sampling

A *cycle of theoretical sampling* (loop formed by steps B, C and D), which stops only once theoretical saturation has been reached, is one of the key features of the GMT (Easterby-Smith *et al*, 2008; Fendt *et al*, 2007; Strauss *et al*, 1990; Goulding, 2002; Fernandez, 2004;

Richardson *et al*, 2006; Bryman *et al*, 2007). “Data collection decisions are progressional and subject to the theory in question” (Fendt *et al*, 2007: 2), and have not been done randomly.

The researcher has interviewed four South Africans who have achieved surprising success in diverse industries because of their creativity. Moreover, these individuals are known for their focus on collaboration and contribution rather than self service, and they all function on high levels of creative ability. A short bibliography of each has been included in Appendix C.

Table 1: Interviewees

Paul du Toit	Internationally acclaimed painter and sculptor. Humanitarian. Founder and CEO of PlanetPaul productions.	Face to face interview
Dr. Craig Friderichs	Principle medical officer at the Department of Health, Western Cape.	Face to face interview
Annemarie Lombard	Occupational therapist, facilitator and coach. Founder and CEO of Sensory Intelligence consulting. Professional category winner – Business woman of the year 2008/2009 SACBW.	Interviewed via Skype
John Vlismas	Internationally acclaimed stand-up comedian and writer. Corporate speaker and painter. Social commentator. Founder and CEO of Whacked Management. Co-owner: Virus Communications Honorary member: Golden Key International Honour society	Interviewed via Skype

“Theoretical sampling is a defining property of grounded theory and is concerned with the refinement of ideas, rather than boosting sample size.” (Charmaz, 200: 519, in Bryman *et al*, 2007: 459). According to Fendt *et al* (2007:2) “sampling is aimed at theory construction and not representativeness of a population.” It has been attempted to obtain generalization through theoretical abstraction, rather than statistical probability (Easterby-Smith *et al*, 2008: 59). According to Easterby-Smith *et al* (2008) constructionalist studies require a smaller sample size than positivist or relativist studies but a higher unit of analysis.

3.4 Research criteria

Confirmability: The researcher has attempted not to allow personal values of theoretical inclinations to sway the conduct of the research and findings derived from it (Bryman *et al*, 2007). Dependability: Complete records have been kept of all phases of the research process

for possible auditing of methodology (Bryman *et al*, 2007). Validation of the research rests upon the following aspects:

- Quality of craftsmanship in research – examining and providing arguments for the relative credibility of alternative knowledge claims (Kvale, 1995: 5).
- The communicative concept of validity – “the emphasis on observation is extended to include conversation about the observations” (Kvale, 1995: 1).
- Pragmatic proof of action – “justification of knowledge is replaced by application” with the emphasis on effectiveness and ethical issues of right action (Kvale, 1995: 5).

According to the Economic & Social Research Council (2009) qualitative research based upon postmodern train of thought might also be evaluated against the following criteria:

- *Deconstruction*: Does the content sufficiently display and unsettle the discursive rules of the game through deconstruction to reveal those meanings which have been suppressed, sublimated or forgotten?
- *Hyper-reflexivity*: Does the text / end result itself sufficiently lend itself to deconstruction in order for the content to evoke alternative social constructions of reality?
- *Paralogy*: Did the author destabilize his or her own narratives sufficiently enough to privilege the text and encourage discursive closure, rather than creating a contrived invisibility around the authorial presence behind the text?
- A preference-less toleration of the *polyphonic or heteroglossia* in the end result: Are the multi-vocal authors empowered to manipulate signifiers to create new textual domains of intelligibility which are then destabilized ad infinitum?

3.5 Data analysis methods

Constant comparison at each stage of the analysis is another key feature of the GTM (Easterby-Smith *et al*, 2008; Fendt *et al*, 2007; Strauss *et al*, 1990; Goulding, 2002; Fernandez, 2004; Richardson *et al*, 2006; Bryman *et al*, 2007); and this enables *coding*. “Constant comparison is the exploration of similarities and differences across incidents in the

data. By comparing where the facts are similar or different the researcher can generate concepts and concept properties based on recurring patterns of behaviour.” (Goulding, 2002: 168). These were captured in an affinity diagram (Appendix D).

“*Memoing* is the GTM technique that is meant to take care of observational data and ideas as they strike.” (Fendt *et al*, 2007: 13) and is “the pivotal intermediate step between data collection and writing drafts of papers.” (Charmaz, 2006: 72). Each memo has formed a slice of data and fed back into the theory generating process similar to an interview or piece of literature. Memos have therefore been a main driver of the iterative process of theory building.

In the grounded theory method, theoretical sampling stops when “no new or relevant data seem to be emerging regarding a category, the category is well developed in terms of its properties and dimensions demonstrating variation, and the relationships among categories are well established and validated.” (Strauss *et al*, 1998: 210, in Bryman *et al*, 2007: 460).

Throughout the procedure, preliminary interrelationship diagraphs, systemic scorecards and causal loop diagrams (Pegasus Communications, 2009) have been used to measure whether or not the theory adequately explains a possible hypothesis. When the causal loop diagram sufficiently reflected the concepts and mechanisms underlying the personal transformation process, it has been finalised and fleshed out. The researcher acknowledges that true theoretical saturation is unlikely to have happened due to the limited scope of the project and the large scope of the research area.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Creative ability is expressed in relational contact with people, materials and situations (Du Toit, 1970). The interviewees all demonstrate refined relationships, a humble nature, superior skills and the ability to capitalise on complex situations. We set out to learn from them how they have managed to function on high levels of creative ability. What are the disciplines, practices, mantras and philosophies that they adhere to? How can an individual raise his or her level of creative ability to sustainably function on levels 8 or 9? The answer makes certain claims about what is valuable and useful in the lives of the interviewees. Their opinions and stories are supported by literature and appeals to logic and emotion (GSB, 2006).

Section 4.1 describes overarching themes and metaphors surrounding the research topic and questions as it emerged from the interviews. Section 4.2 is devoted to the theory building process and addresses the research questions more directly, culminating in a model discussed in the conclusion of this research report.

4.1 Research Findings

“Creative thinking is much more than using our imaginations to invent lots of new ideas. Creative thinking is a lifestyle, a personality trait, a way of looking at the world, a way of interacting with others and a way of living and growing. Living creatively means developing our talents, tapping our unused potentials and becoming what we are capable of becoming through self-discovery and self-discipline. Anytime we are faced with a problem or dilemma with no learned or practiced solution, some creativity is required.” (Torrance, 1995).

Creative journey and growth

The artist Paul du Toit and the stand-up comedian John Vlismas speak of creativity as a journey. Paul tries to keep a general creative path in mind, which includes continuous experimentation and being true to himself and his art. Bruce Mau’s *Incomplete Manifesto for Growth* (1997) resonates with him and he refers to it frequently. John sees creative end results as by-products of this creative journey, and insists that we each need to discover our

own way. He then uses a growth metaphor: “Whether it’s a great meal or a painting or a good gig...these are all fruit of the same tree. So focus on the tree rather, and on life quality. And then it will come; whether it comes as an orange or a pear or an apple for me it’s all the same process.”

Mau (1998) also uses the travel metaphor and agrees that the process can be more important than the outcome. In many instances this will mean taking the road less travelled. According to Mau (1997) growth is not guaranteed; it is not something that will simply happen to you. It has to be produced and lived. A measure of intentionality is key to growth and learning. “Intentionality is about the future. It is one’s desires about the future put into willing a difference. It is conceiving how to bring the new into practical form.” (Jenkins and Jenkins, 2006).

Creativity as a bridge

According to Annemarie Lombard, creativity involves the concepts formed around a particular interest or response, in her case specific dreams and career goals, and it starts somewhere in your brain. “Creativity is the connection between what you know and your dream or vision...how do you combine those two?” This is echoed by Robinson (2001: 11): “Creative insights often occur by making connections between ideas or experiences that were previously unconnected.” As a result of subconsciously applying the ‘scamper’ technique (KnowInnovation, 2008), Annemarie has been a pioneer in bringing sensory profiling to the corporate world, for which she has won the Business Woman of the Year award (2008/2009) in the professional category.

In Paul’s case too, creativity was the bridge between his formal background as computer programmer and his dream to become a full time artist. He had a goal of becoming internationally renowned within 10 years, and used the internet – which was still in its infancy - extensively to research the international art scene, to network and to market himself. Paul worked hard to position himself, and attributes a large portion of his success to the ability to spot, use and create opportunities.

Complexity metaphors

John frequently uses complexity theory metaphors in describing creativity and creative processes. He views creativity as ‘a fundamental condition of existence’ that is not restricted to certain types of people, but something inherent that needs to be allowed. Sir Ken Robinson (2001: 12) confirms this by saying that “creativity is not a single aspect of intelligence that only emerges in particular activities, in the arts for example. It is a systemic function of intelligence that can emerge wherever our intelligence is engaged.” The novelist Henry Miller (in Sutton, 2002: 22) phrases it eloquently: “we are all part of creation, all kings, all poets, all musicians; we only have to open up, only have to discover what is already there.”

According to John, highly creative individuals are merely more in touch with their creativity and less inclined to create controls that will predict their outcomes than people who follow traditional approaches. This does not imply that he demonstrates a laissez-faire attitude towards creativity, quite the contrary. “I control my own momentum no matter where I am, because I have continuity.” He claims that many business people are too lazy to find the underlying pattern in complexity (Gharajedaghi, 1999) and therefore write it off as ‘chaos’.

Paul finds children’s creativity inspiring; and working with them reminds him to return to the bare essentials, to reduce and distil lines and patterns and to find simplicity within complexity (Wheatly, 1992). This distinctive quality of Paul’s work has been described as ‘deconstructing labels and their boundaries’ (Johnson, 2006). It is up to the reader to decide which labels and boundaries within his or her own environment may benefit from deconstruction.

Both John and Annemarie see the ability to manage and embrace the unpredictable as essential to creativity. For Annemarie, the time spent in the United States has led to immense personal and professional growth, expanded her horizons and opened her eyes to a multitude of possibilities. Yet it was an incredibly difficult time. “I was out of my comfort zone 99% of the time, it was a matter of either swimming or sinking.”

John sees improvisation as one of the most difficult but most rewarding skills to master. “Real creativity is about being brave enough to accept that unpredictability is an almost vital

ingredient.” John’s own theory, called ‘the five R&D’s’ (figure 13) rests upon five polarities to manage, some of which will be discussed at a later stage.

The five R&D's (Vlismas, 2009)	
1)	Revere but Disregard
2)	Read but Distil
3)	Register but Detach
4)	Reframe but Destroy
5)	Rigor but Dynamism

Figure 13: The five R&D's (Vlismas, 2009)

Creativity and meaning

“Human intelligence is creative in a profound sense. Thinking and feeling are not simply about seeing the world as it is, but of having ideas about it, of interpreting experience to give it meaning.” (Robinson, 2001: 11). Dr. Craig Friderichs feels that traditional approaches to hospital management will not succeed in generating the much needed fundamental shift in culture, and sees creativity as a means of finding meaning and replicating character and purpose.

Craig and Annemarie both want to generate positive change and make a contribution to society. Craig believes in the inherent good of mankind and that we are here to add and create value. The problems he is faced with at Groote Schuur Hospital are typical of the public health care system. Staff members feel overworked, stretched beyond their limits, underappreciated and are demoralised. Craig mentions, for example, that nursing staff tend to “feel like inferior members of the team, that creativity is not required from them, that their creative thinking skills are not required and not appreciated. So of course they will not be intrinsically motivated.” According to him, the situation needs to be viewed and approached from a different angle, and he has been inspired by Nancy Kline’s work (2008) on the thinking environment. Although he does not use the term, Craig’s mission is to raise the creative ability of his team, or rather to empower each team member to raise his or her own level of creative ability. Craig has developed a high level model (figure 14) to enhance his own understanding and to use as training and development tool.

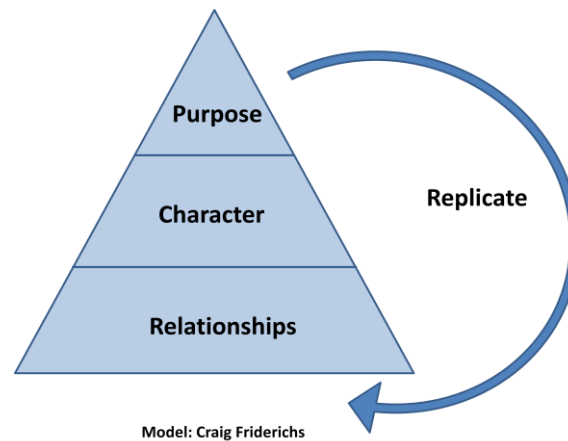


Figure 14: Craig Friderich's model

Thinking back to her years in private practice, Annemarie sees the ‘art’ of therapy as being seated in relationships. Creativity is needed to combine therapeutic relationships with clinical skills, thereby “shifting the child, scaffolding that child from where he is now to the next level...the next level of skill, of coping, of sensitization, of how he perceives his environment.” In other words: empowering the child to raise his level of creative ability.

Although creativity is by far not limited to the creative arts, artists have historically played an important role in bringing emotional truth to established principles (Zandler *et al*, 2000). “Art, after all, is about rearranging us, creating surprising juxtapositions, emotional openings, startling presences, flight paths to the eternal.” (Zandler *et al*, 2000: 3). Not only is Paul’s art aesthetically pleasing, but he also uses art to contribute to charitable causes.

John sees his contribution in the form of provocation: challenging people to think about life and to re-evaluate their belief systems. John has a philosophy to “spread the good stuff around and limit the bad stuff”, but insists that he does not try to be a “boy scout”. He just happens to be very interested in people. “I have this particular warmth for people because I almost see us as a mentally ill species that needs a bit of help.”

Finding your medium

“Realising our creative potential is literally a question of finding our medium, of being in our element.” (Robinson, 2001: 16). Annemarie has found her passion in sharing information

with adults when she became involved in the training of occupational therapists. Training, mentorship and coaching is also Craig's medium of choice.

Paul sees work as play. "Work and play is the same thing, it is living." His art is very personal and comes from his mind and experiences. Paul likes to quote Bob Dylan: "A man is a success if he gets up in the morning and gets to bed at night, and in between he does what he wants to do" and feels that he is lucky in the sense that he is living his passion.

"When your work is the canvas onto which you express your soul, it is the job you were born to do and involves moving beyond self-sacrifice to self-fulfilment, beyond dilemma to authenticity, and leads to a life of purpose and success." (Williams, 2008: 164).

4.2 Research Analysis and Discussion

4.2.1 Overview of the causal loop diagram

The basic causal loop diagram in figure 15 provides an overview of the variables and causal relations in order to orientate the reader for the sections to follow. The current level of creative ability is a driver in the system (systemic scorecard, Appendix F), while the next level of creative ability is the desired outcome. It may be worthwhile to note that the term 'creative' that precedes many of the variables borrowed from creative ability theory (Du Toit, 1970) does not imply that the specific behaviour is necessarily of a particularly creative kind. The level or degree of originality for each variable may be plotted on a 'behaviour over time' graph (Pegasus Communications, 2009).

All causal relationships between the variables in the causal loop diagram follow the same direction (S), *i.e.* when one variable changes, the others change in the same direction (Pegasus Communications, 2009). The current level of creative ability will influence the quality of all other variables, but with strategic intervention and sustained maximum effort, the individual may reach increasingly higher levels - enabling him/her to interact with life (others, environment, tasks, and the self) in an even more meaningful, original, and effortless way.

Furthermore, the causal loop diagram consists of two loops which are both reinforcing (R), in other words the causal relationships within these loops create exponential growth or collapse (Pegasus Communications, 2009). Unless that individual decides to, or is influenced to make adaptive responses, no real growth will take place. This will result in what Csíkszentmihályi (2003) calls “arrested psychological complexity” – acting more or less by rote, following old habits and responding to familiar cues.

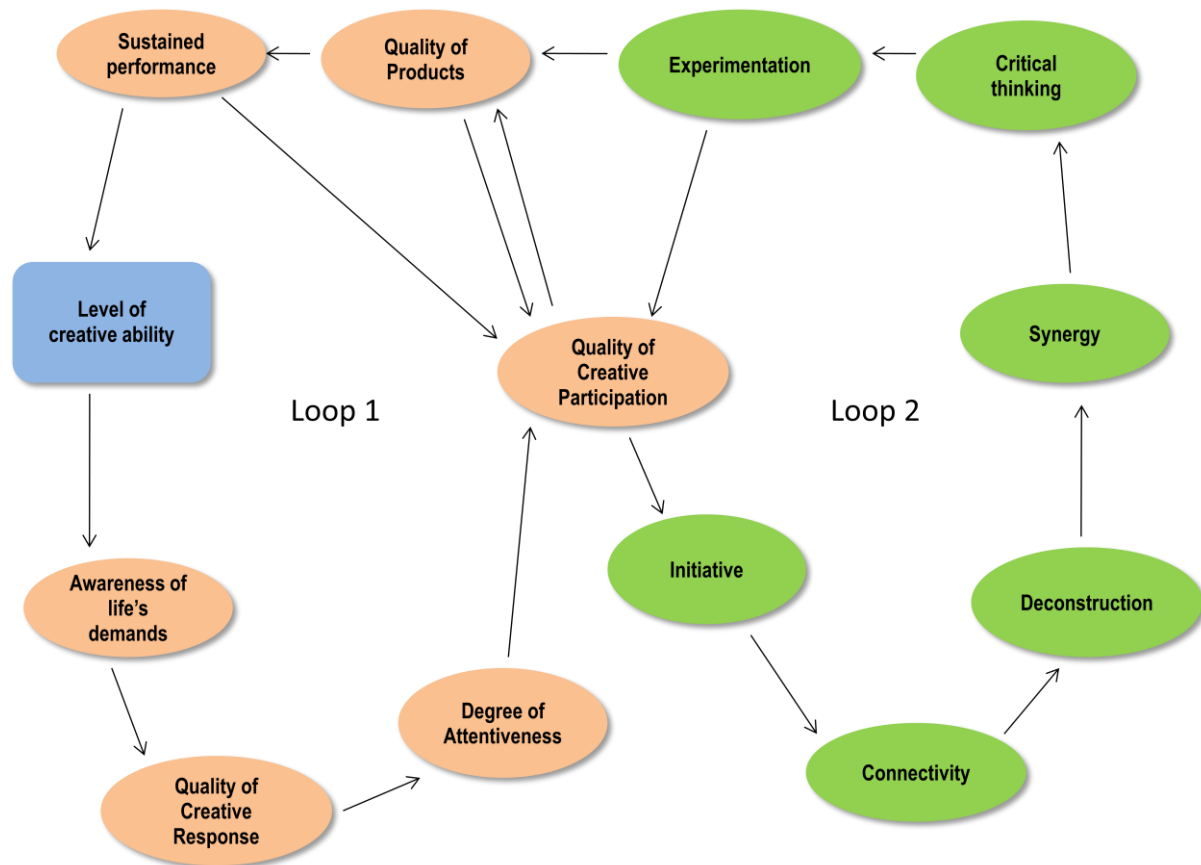


Figure 15: Basic causal loop diagram

4.2.2 Loop 1: Raising the level of creative ability

“Quantities of knowledge may be poured into human receptacles, but it is only when the human being in his absorption of this knowledge endows it with creativity – when he becomes that knowledge, plus himself, that we get creativity.” (Du Toit, 1970:9).

Figure 16 describes the first loop and deals with the causal relationships between an individual's awareness, creative responses, attentiveness, creative participation, outcomes produced in tangible or intangible form, and his or her ability to sustain performance. The discussion will start with the person's awareness of life's demands as a reflection of the current level of creative ability.

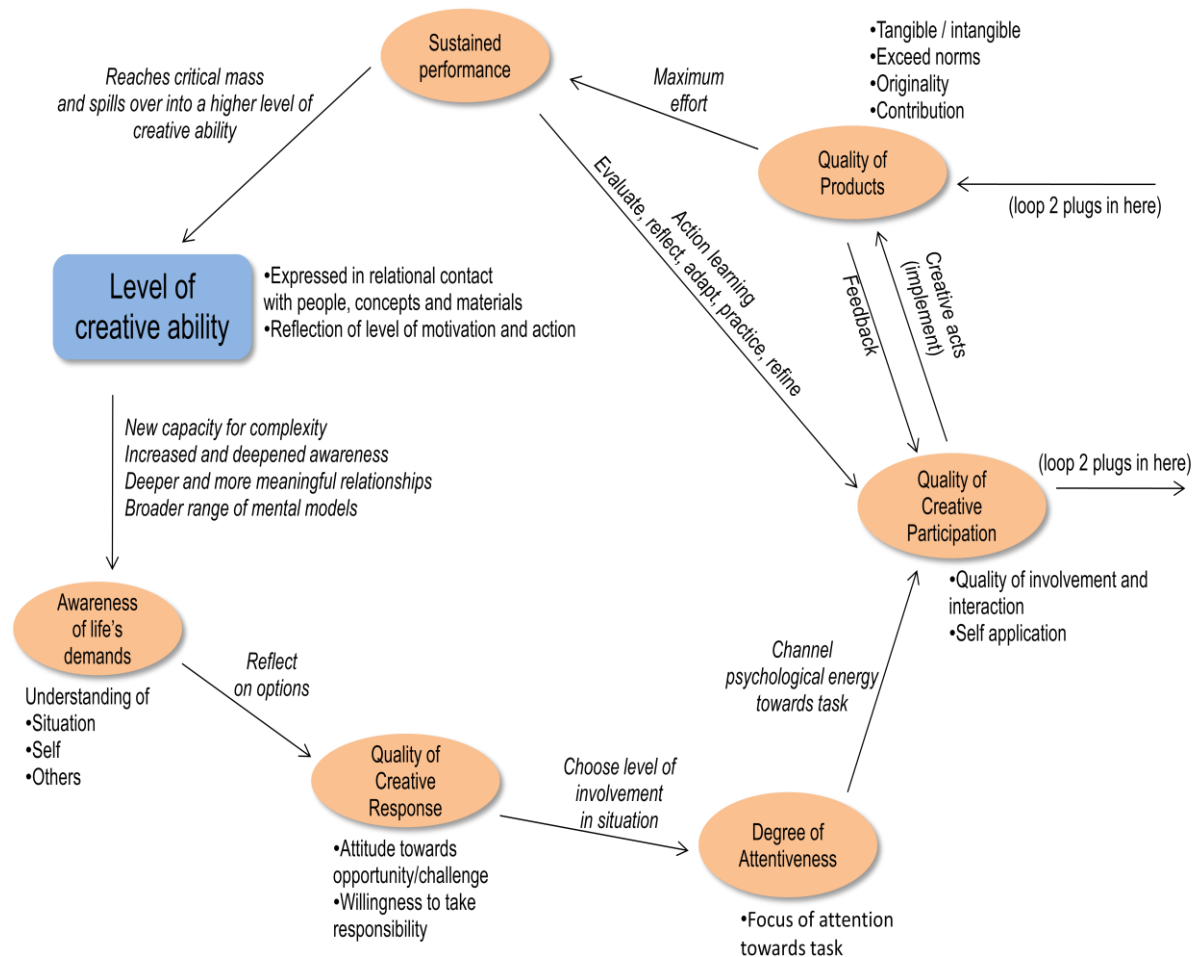


Figure 16: Detail of loop 1

Awareness of Life's demands

Du Toit (1970: 9) defines awareness as “our receptiveness, in order to participate in the dialogue of life, it is the listening component of Life’s communion.” The level of awareness will shape the quality of the creative response and all other variables. It is only when we know that life demands an answer, a decision, at every new moment of living, that we can

understand the other important factors in the background which permits the emergence of initiative (Du Toit, 1970:8). Zandler *et al* (2000: 10) note that “we perceive only the sensations we are programmed to receive, and our awareness is further restricted by the fact that we recognize only those for which we have mental maps or categories.”

John believes that it is important to “see things in very broad, contextual terms rather than seeking the detail. I think that if you are able to do that better and faster, you may find patterns that were not apparent before.” Annemarie concurs that we need to look at the bigger picture. The individual’s ability to observe and reflect will influence his concept of the world and his place in it. “We can no longer rely only on ‘making sense’ of the whole of what is going on: we also have to ‘sense’ it. This requires us to access a deeper, non-rational, more ancient kind of knowing.” (Kahane, 2007:105).

First and foremost we need an awareness of norms, of our own current level of skill and capacity for learning, and our own strengths, weaknesses, goals and fears (Chu, 2007). An awareness of one’s own responsibility towards the situation is critical. “If we cannot see how what we are doing or not doing is contributing to things being the way that they are, then logically we have no basis at all, zero leverage, for changing the way things are – except from the outside, by persuasion or force.” (Kahane, 2007: 84). For Annemarie, “the core thing is still sharing, compassion...sharing love and peace and actually changing people’s lives for the better.” Annemarie’s brain is in constant motion, always thinking about ways to achieve this, but her challenge is to learn how to be still and reflect. “I mull things over in my mind continuously, but it’s a rather chaotic process...it’s like a mouse on wheels that just keeps on going.”

Craig’s desire to bring about positive change requires a thorough understanding of the complexity of the situation: the people, environment and challenges that he is dealing with. According to Kahane (2007) situations may be generatively complex, dynamically complex and/or socially complex.

Awareness may be deepened by exposure to life; therefore one should read, travel, listen, experience, engage with diversity, see, feel, taste, smell, experiment, live, be, learn, practice and grow as much as possible. It is important, however, to note that mere awareness without a quality response is meaningless.

Quality of creative response

“Having a Sense of Wonder is being open and responding to the miraculous. It results when you are carrying out your best and most authentic understanding in the service of your most powerful resolve toward what is needed. Wonder is present when you experience that instant of awe, a simultaneous combination of dread and excitement after which you seem to have a new appreciation of life.” (Jenkins et al, 2006).

The creative response refers to the attitude an individual displays towards any opportunity offered to him. It also reflects the individual's willingness to take responsibility and his preparedness to use all his resources to participate (De Witt, 1997). The creative response is one's answer to life's questions. According to Du Toit, (1979) you can choose to a) turn away completely b) make a half-hearted attempt, c) fully immerse yourself into the situation or d) any range of options in between. A positive creative response may be seen as the decision to step out of the box and go beyond the limitations you've set for yourself. “Throw yourself into life as someone who makes a difference, accepting that you may not understand how or why.” (Zandler et al, 2000: 59).

Trade-offs (Porter, 1996) are involved e.g. while it may often be easier to turn away from a challenge, one may miss out on the opportunity to raise the level of creative ability. Many factors will influence our answer. At the highest level of creative ability the individual demonstrates a sustained attitude of loyalty, interpersonal tolerance and compensation for others at an intimate level (De Witt, 1997), making him less likely to turn his back on a situation that needs attention. He has the will and ability to modify his behaviour to benefit others (Du Toit, 1970). Craig's intrinsic motivation to raise the standard of public health care, replicate positive behaviours, and empower others to raise their level of creative ability inspires him to fully immerse himself into the situation. Similarly, his decision to enrol in the MBA program was driven by his desire to leverage purpose with business acumen.

Annemarie's inherent appetite for variation, change, and risk motivates her to take on challenges. “I continuously see new opportunities, new things. And when I see a new opportunity, I immediately start to plan how I could take this further”. Annemarie doesn't believe in doing things halfway, but her creative response is ultimately driven by the desire to ‘do greater good’ and to give back to society. As part of her corporate social responsibility,

she plans to design a program where “we can use sensory integration as a base to actually empower parents and communities.”

According to De Witt (1997) anticipated pleasure, acknowledgement and success increase the likelihood of a positive creative response. The perceived imbalance between the demands or challenges and one’s own skill may, however, seem insurmountable and intimidating; leading to anxiety, worry or apathy (Csíkszentmihályi, 2003). Anxiety may also be rooted in uncertainty about the outcome of participation (De Witt, 1997) or by the mere prospect of change (Senge *et al*, 1999). While anxiety leads to alertness and may mobilize high-functioning individuals to take charge of a situation (Du Toit, 1970); it may lead to defensiveness and withdrawal on the lower levels of creative ability. These are all challenges that Craig will have to deal with when lifting the team. Senge *et al* (1999) recommend support in the form of mentoring, coaching and training.

Degree of attentiveness

Attentiveness is an inner growing into the need of each moment, it is the culmination point of awareness and response, it is the quality of our answer to life (Du Toit, 1970). While modern-day creative ability theory has assimilated the concept of attentiveness into creative response, it deserves its place in the causal loop diagram, since it forms a crucial link between creative response and creative participation.

Attentiveness is still related to the motivation that precedes action and refers to the focus of attention on the absorption of knowledge - about oneself, others and the environment - that may be relevant to the situation one has chosen to get involved in. In order to come up with material for new gigs and to manage creative tension between himself and the audience, John relentlessly studies “the human animal” in order to observe and recognise behavioural patterns. According to him, your ability to read the environment increases your intelligence in that specific environment and therefore your creativity.

Individuals functioning on a high level of creative ability are lifelong learners - their curiosity keeps them wanting to know more, to improve themselves, to become better leaders. Paul is certainly a lifelong learner, and pursues self-initiated activity (HBE, 2003) in many ways. For many years now, he has rigorously ordered and studied material prescribed to postgraduate

art students, and is currently enrolled in the 'Business acumen for artists' course at the Graduate School of Business. He continues to do intensive research, reads widely, and actively develops his technique. These actions are a reflection of his intrinsic motivation.

According to Craig, one's ability to spot opportunities and to see possibilities in problems depends upon what you pay attention to. Craig chooses to pay attention to people, and tries to eliminate activities that do not add value, for example watching television, so that he can focus on those that do. He tries to make best possible use of available time to get administrative tasks out of the way so that he can be more 'present' for things that actually matter, like spending time with staff. "If one is not willing to invest psychic energy in the internal reality of consciousness, and instead squanders it in chasing external rewards, one loses mastery of one's life, and ends up becoming a puppet of circumstances." (Csíkszentmihályi, 2003:188).

Annemarie, too, is a lifelong learner who sees continuous growth and development as fun. On top of starting and managing a unique and demanding consultancy, she is finishing off her PhD. Annemarie is not particularly organised and sees this as a major weakness. She is not "a journal kind of person" but a visual learner. "I've got these millions of pictures in my brain" and little notes scattered all over the desk with ideas or solutions scribbled on them, "but I can never find them and that's frustrating me, it's always gone!" Annemarie compensated for this by hiring a highly organised personal assistant. Could it be that Annemarie is spreading herself too thinly – not making enough trade-offs to focus her attention on specific challenges?

Paul actively looks around for inspiration for future work and documents it in what he calls his 'scan and retain process'. An interesting crack in the pavement might show up in a painting, as part of a human form or background. He takes photographs of things he spots all around him - especially on travels – capturing designs, images, and memories. "I make sketches in little books like this one, or on pieces of paper, anything really. On people's hands, if they're keen."

To recap: "One's attentiveness to the demands made by human existence, will absorb all one has to give in spiritual and physical and psychical vitality, in alertness of one's physical senses, intelligence, and enthusiasm, directed via the instinct of origination, to the other" (Du

Toit, 1970: 11), which brings us to creative participation. Although a high quality of awareness, creative response and attentiveness are prerequisites (these variables indicate the level of *motivation*); it is mostly through creative participation, creative acts that lead to products, and sustained performance (these variables indicate the quality of *action*) that an individual can grow into a higher level of creative ability.

Quality of creative participation

The level of creative participation refers to the degree of active involvement in all activities or challenges presented (De Witt, 1997), and the degree of participation can be measured. This is the first part of the causal loop diagram where action can be noticed and arguably offers the most opportunities for strategic intervention, growth and change. Loop 2 will plug in here, and we will return to the concept of creative participation at a later stage.

Creative participation is an opportunity to experiment with new approaches and dynamics, to practice creative-thinking skills, interactive skills and technical skills and to help others raise their own level of creative ability. Emergence is the product or outcome of the interaction of two or more variables or entities. “It is emergence that lends specific characteristics to an organization/team and renders it distinctively innovative (or otherwise) in a changing, uncontrollable world.” (Meyer *et al*, 2007: 172). Creativity emerges as a result of self-application and meaningful interaction. “Something arises that was not there before.” (Du Toit, 1970: 10).

Paul actively manages the polarity of living in his own mind on the one hand, and seeking out social interaction and inspiration from others. “We do not have creative ideas in a vacuum. Individual creativity is stimulated by the work, ideas and achievements of other people.” (Robinson, 2001: 11). Mau (1997) sees “openness to experience events and the willingness to be changed by them” as prerequisites for growth. For John it is important to balance rigour with dynamism, “which is the ability to react to change, which causes further change, which illicit a further reaction. It’s an ongoing process.”

Craig and his team’s challenge is to create the conditions for character and purpose to emerge. “We believe that these conditions will enhance our outcomes in terms of productivity and patient care in general, and much more.” For Craig, being part of a team that grows

together is incredibly rewarding. “If one takes a systemic perspective...then interaction, participation and process have a very particular meaning. As parts of a system, individuals are interacting with each other to produce a system. Participation means that they participate as parts of the system that their interaction creates. The meaning of process within the system is that of interaction to produce a system. In all of these cases, interaction creates something that is abstracted from direct experiences of interaction itself.” (Stacey *et al*, 2006: 28).

Quality of products

Through creative acts (Du Toit, 1970) the individual or team can deliver products that have emerged from creative participation. Scharmer (2009) speaks of crystalizing: “When a small group of key persons commits itself to the purpose and outcomes of a project, the power of their intention creates an energy field that attracts people, opportunities, and resources that make things happen. This core group functions as a vehicle for the whole to manifest.” Therefore, creative acts are the actual crystallization of the creative response and creative participation into a product; or the execution of strategy in terms of social interaction, personal growth, concrete work-related tasks or leisure (Du Toit, 1970).

More than one product may emerge from a single creative act. These may be small, experimental outcomes and need not only refer to the final products of innovation. (Scharmer, 2009) explains it as such: “Prototyping means to create a landing strip for the future you want to create and to build something that allows you to explore an emerging idea or concept by doing something. Prototypes are an early draft of what the final result might look like. Prototyping often goes through several iterations based on the feedback that you generate from other stakeholders.”

Annemarie insists that “creativity is about producing new, interesting dynamics. It is not always something that you produce in a tangible form.” In fact, the intangible side-products may often be more important in terms of growth than the tangible ones. Craig sees character, ethics, and purpose as outcomes which are every bit as important as patient care statistics. To maximise growth in terms of creative ability, the products should have a positive impact on

society, *e.g.* a richer way of thinking and interaction, research, something of beauty, something of value, something inspirational.

Also, the product needs to be better than before, regardless of the quality in absolute terms. An expert that produces an excellent product of similar quality to his previous attempt may gain less in terms of growth than a novice producing a product of lesser absolute quality. Individuals functioning on the higher levels of creative ability are willing to take personal responsibility for the standard of the product (Du Toit, 1970); are motivated towards quality and originality; and to exceed norms (De Witt, 1997). They are able to evaluate the quality of the product against feedback and constructive criticism; and adapt accordingly (De Witt, 1997). Paul meticulously judges the quality of his own work, and won't release substandard canvasses. He keeps them in his studio as references of his creative journey, and may revisit them later.

“Learning without change and change without learning are equally bankrupt processes.” (Meyer, in Meyer *et al*, 2007:334). Double-loop learning occurs between the variables of creative participation and products in the form of feedback from others, from one's own standards, and/or from the task itself. Positive feedback from clients keeps Annemarie motivated. “I'm a doer, I put my head down when I've decided to do something and I do it. And then I usually learn by trial and error”, says Annemarie. She is of the opinion that she learns more from her failures than from successes.

Ability for sustained performance

The quality and sustainability of purposeful performance in relation to people, things and materials (Du Toit, 1970) is both a reflection of the level of creative ability and a method of reaching sustainable functioning on the following, more complex level. Double-loop learning occurs between the variables of performance and creative participation. The individual will only progress to the next level of creative ability once this has reached saturation or critical mass, which may take weeks, months or years. If the individual has functioned on higher levels of creative ability earlier in his life, residual memory will speed up the growth process.

It is unlikely that one creative act resulting in one product will enable the individual to function on a higher level of creative ability if the skills learnt are not practiced and

generalized to other spheres of life. Initially, as a result of new learning, the individual might demonstrate skills and behaviours characteristic of both the current and next level of creative ability. “Until changes sink in deeply, new approaches are fragile and subject to regression” (Kotter, 1995). Perseverance and sustained effort can make or break growth at this stage. Bruce Mau (1997) phrases it quite memorably: “If you like it, do it again. If you don’t like it, do it again.”

Periods of consolidation (De Witt, 1997) are essential for the mastery of skill and for confidence to emerge. During these periods, the individual should gradually decrease his dependency on support, structure and encouragement from outside until he can maintain this behaviour independently and give back just as much as he receives. Paul needs moments of solitude to recharge, reflect and absorb influences. He might spend time in the studio for three days straight without seeing anyone or speaking to anyone, and likes to go to the movies on his own on Fridays. Annemarie reflects in the shower, while John might “let things gently cook up” in his brain while cooking or watching television.

All four interviewees demonstrate an almost limitless capacity for maximum effort. John insists that “there’s a massive amount of discipline and structure that goes into creative work, because in order to make it work, you must have spent the time. I might sleep in late sometimes, but then I work late.” Similarly, Paul mentions that he works longer hours than most people, but chooses his own time. He sometimes works straight through the night. Craig’s inherent belief in the good lends him a certain stubbornness to sustain efforts despite a very demanding job and study requirements.

Annemarie admits that “when it comes to cleaning up and going into the detail I get bored, I’m already onto the next idea and the next thing.” Having said that, she is fully capable of committing herself to tedious tasks, for example the e-profiling project, but she needs to “be able to balance that with other new, interesting stuff, idea generation.” She works “really really hard” and admits that her family might not be getting the best of her at the moment. “That’s part of the reason why I want to put things into place so that I can withdraw a little bit and have some fun as well. I don’t have enough time for fun.”

4.2.3 Loop 2: Creative participation

We now return to the variable of creative participation. Ind *et al* (2004) argue that the unleashing of creativity has less to do with creative-thinking training programs than with the complex interactions that occur between people and their context. “When we connect, it doesn’t just make us feel better, it makes us do better.” (Harrel and Hill, 2007: 6). This is highly compatible with Otto Scharmer’s (2003, 2007, 2009) work on co-initiating, co-sensing, presencing, co-creating and co-evolving.

Loop 2 (figure 17) will attempt to indicate the causal relations between the variables of initiative, connectivity, deconstruction, synergy, critical thinking and experimentation. This causal loop therefore describes how the quality of interactions and critical thinking influence the level of originality reached by the individual, but more importantly by the group during creative participation.

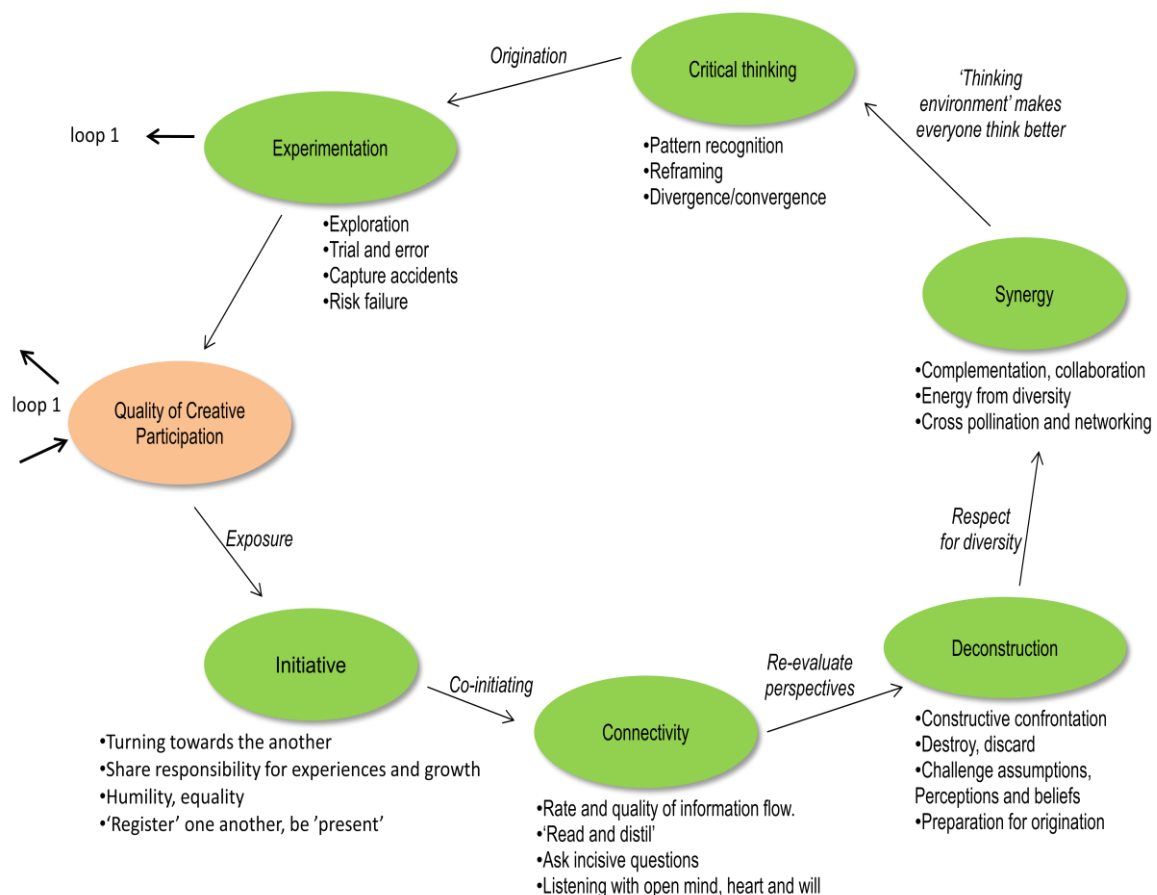


Figure 17: Detail of loop 2

Loop 2 may run several times before entering into the first again, and its reaction time may range from seconds to months. In fact, loop 2 may run several times during the course of one interaction session. “We get stuck by holding on tightly to our opinions and plans and identities and truths.” (Kahane, 2007: 4). If no change in mental models, critical thinking and social interaction occurs during the second loop, the individual may never progress to the next level of creative ability. Dysfunctional teams, without intervention, may in fact have a negative effect on the true creative ability of the team members.

Creative participation offers the opportunity of co-creating a ‘thinking environment’ in which “humans can think for themselves – with rigour, imagination, courage and grace.” (Kline, 2008: 12). According to Kline (2008), the quality of our action depends on the quality of our thinking, which is in turn dependent upon the quality of our relationships. An individual engaged in superficial or stereotypical relationships will most likely not be aware of the real needs of others nor have a deep understanding of himself, *i.e.* ‘relational blindness’ (Senge *et al*, 1999: 141).

In contrast, the high-functioning individual “develops a new tolerance of the faults of others, and a readiness to respond with companionship to members of an unselected group.” (Du Toit, 1970: 35). The close and intimate nature of interpersonal relationships – measured by a high degree of trust, loyalty and mutual disclosure – will lead to increased awareness of subtleties. Paul’s relationships and networking in the art scene carried him through the recent global recession. “Relationships are everything, when you see the world as a social system” (Senge *et al*, 1999: 140). For the same reason, relationships form the basis of Craig’s model (figure 14).

John sees each gig as a joint creation between himself and the audience. The concept of polarity management (Johnson, 1998) surfaces frequently in literature on creativity and seems to be necessary in maintaining optimum creative tension. HBE (2003) speaks of the paradoxical nature of creative groups, and identified the following four polarities to manage: beginners mind versus experience; freedom versus discipline; play versus professionalism; and improvisation versus planning. Apart from the five R&D’s (Vlismas, 2009) in figure 13, the balance between talking and listening; acting and being; passion and reason; analysis and synthesis; diversity and commonality, divergence and convergence and many more should be

monitored and adjusted continuously. “If we want to create new realities, we need to listen and be, but we also need to talk and act. Open listening and open talking are yin and yang, two parts of the same whole, two movements in the same dance.” (Kahane, 2007:112).

Degree of initiative

“Keeping the capacity to be delighted by groups, events, and even ourselves is difficult in a time of scepticism and cynicism. Having a Sense of Wonder is being able to see possibility without succumbing to naïveté.” (Jenkins et al, 2006).

Initiative in the context of creative ability theory is the ‘turning towards another’ in order to share the responsibility for experiences and growth (Du Toit, 1970) *i.e.* the actions (verbal and non-verbal) that signal that we intend ‘to do’ things and solve problems with others. The consistency of initiative depends upon the current level of creative ability (Du Toit, 1970). It requires humility, the acknowledgement that the collective effort may be more powerful than mine alone; and the realization that I do not know it all. These are Annemarie’s motivations for hiring a new employee. “It will be good for me to have people who can actually reflect and take creativity to a quieter place”.

Diversifying your stimuli enhances creativity (HBE, 2003: 95). Although the artist’s journey is often a solitary road, Paul actively gets involved in charity projects and joint exhibitions and shows a preparedness to let himself be changed in the process (Mau, 1997). Initiative is the commitment to apply yourself not just as the sum of your intelligence and skill; but by showing a willingness to give of yourself to others and to the task at hand (Du Toit’s, 1970). Ideally one should ‘be present’ not just in the physical sense. “You can be ‘present’ to the extent that you are so absorbed in the situation that you are not aware of anything else going on.” (Stacey et al, 2006: 90). Paul fondly recalls an artistic game that he played with a group of children at the Red Cross Hospital: they played musical chairs and each made a marking or pattern on the outside of a box. “The end result was a collaborative piece of art (laughing). It was a really amazing experience!”

Craig wishes to enhance team coherence and synergy and believes that this can be achieved by flattening out the traditional hierarchy to such an extent that team members see each other as equals in problem solving and the sharing of responsibility. According to Kline (2008: 35),

“treating each other as thinking peers” involves giving equal turns and attention and keeping agreements and boundaries. John finds it of critical importance to show reverence, which means that he rates everybody in the room equally, including himself. John also consciously ‘registers’ others; putting people on his own radar and ensuring that he appears on their radar as a definite entity. He uses a computer programming metaphor: shutting down the peripheral programmes and giving that person your full attention increases your processing capabilities.

‘Co-initiating’ calls for us to uncover common intent, and to stop and listen to others and to what life calls you to do (Scharmer, 2009). This brings us to connectivity and the social interactions related to it.

Connectivity

To connect is to feel and/or create a strong, positive relationship with an individual, a group, and idea, or a cause; that results in the uplifting of both the individual and others (Harrel *et al*, 2007). Connectivity can be seen as the sharing of information, the exchange of ideas, knowledge and views and as a way of exploring the underlying issues related to the problem.

According to Meyer (2007) connectivity is facilitated by communication, and it leads to synergy and emergence. The degree of connectivity between the agents in the system and the rate of information and energy flow through the system are two of Stacey’s (1995) complexity indicators. “From a complexity perspective the individual and the social are forming and being formed simultaneously by each other. The free-flowing conversation occurring between people is crucial for new patterns to emerge and creative movement to occur. Out of this conversation the themes which influence and pattern both individuals and the group develop.” (Stacey *et al*, 2006:120).

Tension and anxiety counteract true connectivity (Kahane, 2007). According to Kline (2008) the freedom from rush or urgency is a component of the thinking environment. Connectivity is stimulated by opportunities for expressive interactions and the highest level of interactive reasoning takes place during face-to-face encounters (Hopkins and Smith, 1993). Craig’s team recently participated in a collaborative art session, which fed into a group discussion on synergy, collaboration and teamwork. “It’s amazing how well people respond to a bit of creativity, even if it is just as an ice breaker.”

Scharmer (2009) sees listening with an open mind, heart and will as the foundational capacity of meaningful regeneration. “This includes listening to others and listening to oneself. And listening to what emerges from the collective. Effective listening requires the creation of open space in which others can contribute to the whole.” This is supported by Kline (2008: 35), who sees attentive listening – “listening with respect, interest and fascination” – as a critical component of a thinking environment. Kahane (2007:90) remarks that “reflective listening has a powerful impact on the person being listened to: the person feels heard and supported, becomes clearer about her or his own thoughts and feelings, and more centred and purposeful.”

John starts to gather information on the person or audience that he is dealing with from the very first second. For him, ‘reading’ the other is not limited to verbal exchanges, but includes non-verbal signals like facial configurations, body postures, pressures, colour changes and moods. John notes that one should always remember why you are ‘reading’ and continuously distil the information without jumping to conclusions.

“What assumptions am I making, that I’m not aware I’m making, that gives me what I see?” (Zandler *et al*, 2000: 15). According to Scharmer (2009) “the capacity to suspend the ‘voice of judgment’ is key to moving from projection to true observation.” John also speaks of the ability to reserve judgement, and sees the ego as the “worst filter for accessing information that I’ve ever come across because it’s a personal filter” which leads to value judgments and therefore hampers learning. “Once you’ve made a judgment, you stop researching that topic because you’ve found a point that you’re satisfied that you know enough about it to decide...you’ve sort of boxed it.”

Asking incisive questions helps remove assumptions that limit ideas (Kline, 2008). John feels that it is important to keep the ego in check, to ‘register’ and ‘revere’ the other person, but also to ‘disregard’ and ‘detach’ sufficiently to ask important and difficult questions: “Disregard just means that, in my respect for other people, I must never forget my need to question anything that I don’t understand.” Scharmer (2003) urges us to be open up for insights from others in order to adapt our perspectives and reframe problems; feeding into the next variable, namely ‘deconstruction’.

Deconstruction

Increased skill in pattern recognition requires hard work, keen observation skills and the ability to deconstruct. Originality – also referred to in creative ability theory as ‘origination’ often requires the destruction of that which is known, and which is genuinely rejected (Du Toit, 1970). Annemarie needed to deconstruct the perception she and others had about her before she could become truly creative career-wise. She was a highly respected and successful private practitioner, and her decision to give up her practice was met with a mixture of awe and resistance.

John feels that deconstruction, or constructive destruction, is vastly underrated in South Africa. “My painting teacher has taught me a trick where you paint a picture and cover it with black and start all over again. The value of the painting underneath that blackness is huge because you needed to paint that painting in order to get to the next stage of your creativity.” Paul has also started to shred some of his substandard canvasses and used the pieces for a series of collages.

‘Reframe but destroy’ is one of John’s ‘R&D’s’, and arguably the one that he feels most passionate about. “Once your ego is in check ... you develop the ability to suddenly take that argument that you have in your head, spin it 180 degrees and view it from the other view point. Now I understand that some people get morally confused by that, and I’m not saying that you must adopt the absolute opposite of your argument. All I’m saying is that if you have the ability to fully inhabit the total opposite of your own argument; it gives you a 360 degree view of the topic. That must increase your intelligence on topic.”

A powerful analogy can be drawn from one of Paul’s habits. He likes to view his works-in-progress at different times of the day. “The light will fall differently on a painting at 4am, highlighting different textures. The shadows will fall differently and sometimes that guides what emerges from the painting – what is already there but needs to be highlighted.” Even more importantly, “when I look at a painting at 4am, I’m in a different state of mind and it may be easier to see the unexpected then.” Inspired by Alan Fletcher’s *The Art of Looking Sideways*, Paul has started to lay his canvasses flat and walk around them while making the scratches. “I don’t always know in advance which edge will turn out to be the top one and

which the bottom. And the figures are sometimes upside down or sideways. Your perception changes when you turn things upside down.”

John sees constructive confrontation as a useful tool in breaking through to other people and is anything but scared to challenge assumptions – his own and those of others. “So it’s very important to me that we break all that unnecessary nonsense and get to the core of...what it is that you believe and if you are going to fight for it, then you better have thought about it.”

Annemarie also sees constructive conflict as positive, and purposefully invited potential conflict into her life by hiring an employee who, in her own words, “is going to irritate the hell out of me” because she thinks differently. She argues that “conflict can be good, it will actually facilitate certain decisions and certain processes that won’t happen otherwise.”

Synergy

Synergy usually arises when two or more persons with different complementary skills cooperate. It can be described as “a dynamic state in which combined action is favoured over the sum of individual component actions” (Wikipedia). According to Annemarie this is an important component of ‘the art of therapy’, and she sees her ability to “collaborate with the parents and working on a combined relationship” as a critical strength.

“Just as intelligence in a single mind is interactive, creativity is often interdisciplinary. This is why the best creative teams often contain specialists in different fields.” (Robinson, 2001: 11). Cross-pollination and networking result from initiative, connectivity and deconstruction. Paul shares studio space in New York with a cross section of artists: “They are always playing experimental music... there is new stuff all the time. There is this buzz which I find incredibly inspiring.”

Synergy flows from a respect for diversity – a respect for what others bring to the table; and is closely linked to game theory (Brandenburger and Nalebuff, 1995), where entities seek to add value through their uniqueness and choose to supplement and complement each other instead of engaging in full-out competition. This requires a high level of self-knowledge and authenticity. Flora (2005: 1) has found that “everybody shines at different stages of the process; understanding where you fit in gives you a big advantage.” In terms of hiring a new

employee, Annemarie feels that “it won’t help if I get someone who is strong where I am strong. I need someone who is strong where I am weak and maybe weak where I am strong. That’s where you complement one another...that’s what will take the business to the next level. If team members are all the same, it is boring and you won’t get the job done.”

Constructive conflict sustains creative tension, but it needs to be managed sensitively. “Being present does not mean you are in balance or tranquillity, rather that you are in a process of opposing forces, which creates energy.” (Stacey *et al*, 2006:89). Craig hopes that the positive energy related to synergy might enhance the intrinsic motivation of team members and therefore create an environment where they can deliver the best possible service to patients. As mentioned, the ten components of a thinking environment (Kline, 2008) will help people to think brilliantly together and achieving higher levels of creative thinking and products that make maximum impact.

Quality of critical thinking

In Craig’s work context, he ultimately wishes to empower nursing staff to do problem-solving and make best use of limited resources through creative thinking. Craig admits that he has a scientific mind, and created his model (figure 14) to gain a better understanding of the underlying drivers. “Pattern recognition is the ability to observe a phenomenon, identify significant characteristics or cues, determine whether there is a relation among the cues, and compare the present observations to a previously learned category or type.” (Hopkins *et al*, 1993: 873). John goes from the base assumption that there is always an underlying pattern to be found, even though he might not yet see it. With this in mind, a genuine curiosity and openness for the unexpected, those patterns become clearer. As a result of deconstruction one can now start to reframe the situation.

Deconstruction and the reservation of judgement (KnowInnovation, 2008) also stimulate idea generation. John describes it as such: “You’re bouncing your own open mind against something as a sounding board. So you should be able to find inspiration in everything.” This links to the question posed by Zandler *et al* (2000: 15): “What might I now invent, things that I haven’t yet invented, that would give me other choices?” However, Annemarie realises that divergent thinking should be balanced with convergent thinking (KnowInnovation, 2008). At

her own admission, Annemarie is not a detail orientated person. She is strong on idea generation and weaker on implementation. “I need someone who can drag me down and say: ‘Stop, you can’t do that!’”

Experimentation

Paul never formally studied art, and sees this as his salvation since it hasn’t corrupted his style. He does, however, continue to experiment with different techniques, mediums and tools in what he describes as ‘playing around’. Very often Paul’s experimentation is aimed at finding ways of bringing spontaneity to the final painting. Being open to serendipity can enhance creativity greatly (HBE, 2003: 95). Paul makes his own tools, sometimes attaching surprise finds onto a broom handle, thereby creating interesting scratches and patterns in the white paste he mixes himself. “Because of the length of the stick, the lines are not exact...there’s a certain freedom to it...imperfection. I also use my left hand, that’s what I call ‘experimenting with my weaker hand’ – for the same reason. Less control...more interesting and surprising results.”

According to Simington (1995), “creativity is a consequence of sheer productivity. If a creator wants to increase the production of hits, he or she must do it by risking a parallel increase in the production of misses...The most successful creators tend to be those with the most failures!” Paul tries to capture his accidents and quotes Mau (1997): “Love your experiments as you would an ugly child. Exploit the liberty in casting your work as beautiful experiments, iterations, attempts, trial, and errors.”

Annemarie doesn’t mind the unpredictable and learning by trial and error. “It is a lot of hard work but there is also a certain element of fun, of anticipation, of challenge, of excitement, of surprise that I actually really do enjoy and that I really work well with.” She sees idea generation, her preparedness to take risks and her willingness to do action learning as critical strengths, and links it to her own sensory profile as ‘sensation seeker’. “That’s why the entrepreneurial thing really works for me...I’m good at coming up with ideas and I’m not scared to try them.”

According to Mintzberg (1987: 70), “errors become opportunities, and limitations stimulate creativity.” John is adamant that rules and structure enhance creativity. “If you give people

too much freedom, you can actually take away their creativity. The more rules you have, the more creative you have to be as a result.”

Experimentation is by no means restricted to the concrete and tangible, and includes experimentation with new behaviour patterns and interactive dynamics. From here on loop 2 will either repeat itself or feed back into loop 1. In the latter case, products will start to emerge as a result of creative acts, most likely in the form of prototypes. “Moving down the left side of the U requires the group to open up and deal with the resistance of thought, emotion, and will; moving up the right side requires the integration of thinking, feeling, and will in the context of practical applications and learning by doing.” Scharmer (2009).

4.3 Research Limitations

As pointed out by Easterby-Smith *et al* (2008:73), the chosen research methodology has been time consuming, analysis and interpretations have been difficult, and the subjective nature of the intended research may not have credibility with policy makers.

The conclusions reached are a result of assumptions and inferences made on the perceptions, habits and beliefs of the interviewees and the way in which the researcher has interpreted it as a whole (GSB, 2006). It does not claim to portray a universal truth, and the reader has the freedom to judge the possible value and usefulness of the findings in his or her own life.

On two occasions, the researcher has asked leading questions during interviews. These have been indicated in the transcriptions. Due to geographical distance and time pressure on part of the interviewees two of the interviews have been conducted via Skype. The small sample size is a definite limiting factor, but rich data could be drawn from the interviews. The only advantage of the small sample size is that it enables the reader to keep track of the characters of each of the four interviewees as the description proceeds.

5. RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

“To be successful you have to enjoy doing your best while at the same time contributing to something beyond yourself.” (Csíkszentmihályi, 2003: 29).

Only when we recognise complexity for the natural phenomenon that it is, only once we embrace complexity as something positive, only when we actively position ourselves in the zone of complexity; only then can we hope to live our lives creatively.

The constructed theory, as described in section 4.2 and represented in figure 19, suggests how an individual may grow in terms of his or her creative ability in order to reach his creative capacity. It is based upon the disciplines, practices and mantras employed by the interviewees, and may be used as a high-level approach to life or as a guide to dissolving complex problems. Growth is described in broad, contextual terms, and the theory provides explanations that aim to increase general understanding of the situation through sense-making (Easterby-Smith *et al*, 2008). It offers a possible explanation of how an individual can increase his performance and productivity in terms of creativity over time, reach his creative capacity, and harness creativity to the benefit of society.

The focus on contribution, collaboration and transformation in creative ability theory is accurately reflected in the words of Zandler *et al* (2000: 61): “When you play the contribution game, it is never a single individual who is transformed. Transformation overrides the divisions of identity and possession that are the architecture of the measurement model, recasting the tight pattern of scarcity into a wide spread array of abundance.”

Growth results from a combination of meaningful interaction and maximum effort from the individual himself. This requires him to risk, venture, try, and stretch himself in terms of action and interaction; in other words to manage anxiety. Choices made will often be in direct conflict with the internal “voice of judgment, voice of fear and voice of cynicism” (Scharmer, 2009). The experience of ‘flow’ (Csíkszentmihályi, 2003) is a major enabler and acts as positive reinforcement in the action learning process – motivating the individual to stay involved. Flow is a feeling of enjoyment, not pleasure, which means that it may not always be pleasant and can be very stressful at times (Csíkszentmihályi, 2003: 36). It is, however, ultimately much more rewarding.

Drivers, links and outcomes in the system

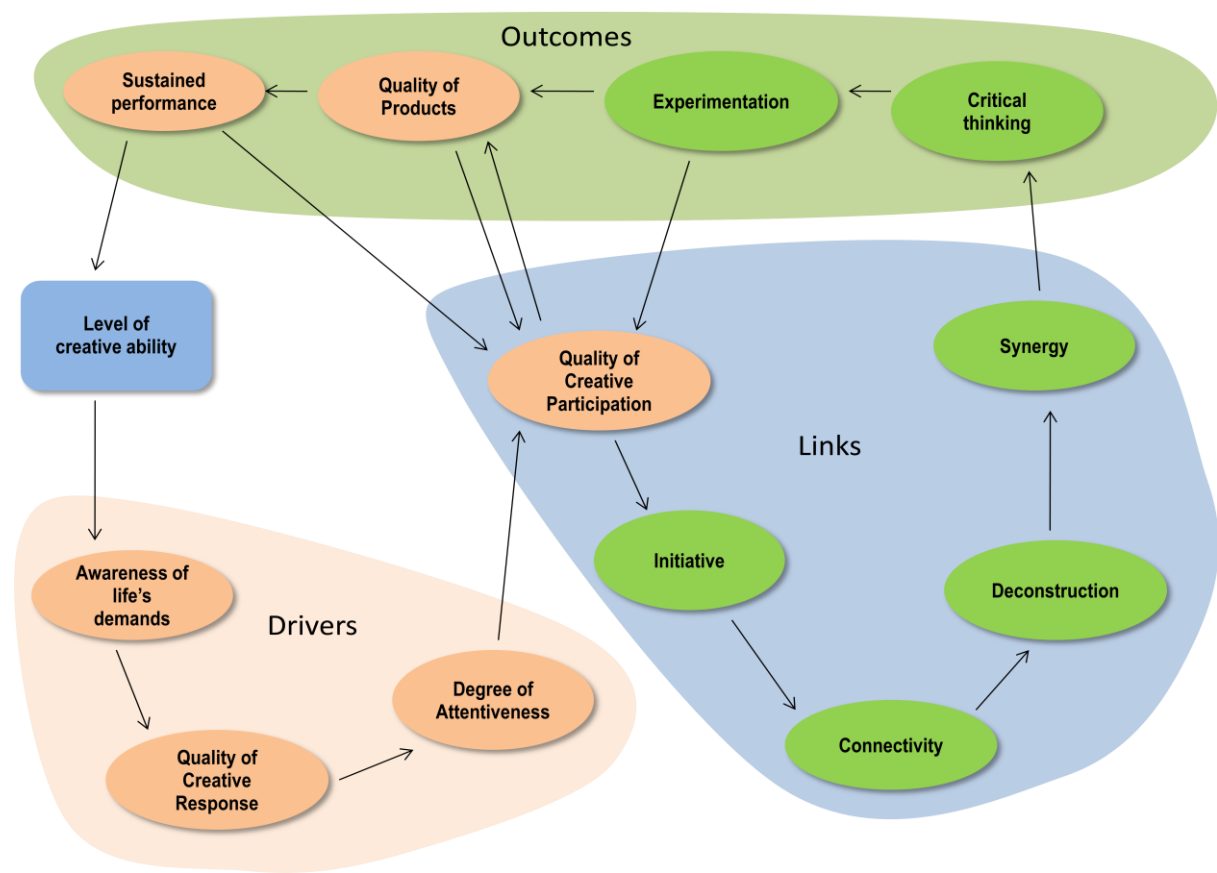


Figure 18: Causal loop diagram indicating drivers, links and outcomes

The simplified causal loop diagram in figure 18 highlights the drivers, links and outcomes in the system as drawn from the systemic score card (Appendix F). The first three variables, namely the level awareness, the quality of the creative response and the degree of attentiveness relate to the *motivation* that precedes action and are the drivers of the system. The individual will benefit from interaction with inspiring people and involvement in meaningful projects, and this may ‘kick-start’ the process, but the ultimate goal is to give back as much as he receives - or more. Individuals functioning on high levels of creative ability demonstrate “strong intrinsic motivation, focused around meaning and adding value” (Du Toit, 1970: 35).

The remaining variables indicate the *quality of action and interaction*. Creative participation, initiative, connectivity, deconstruction and synergy form the crucial links and this is where

motivation is directed 'towards the other'. Critical thinking, experimentation that produces prototypes and products, and the ability for sustained performance are outcomes of the system and spill over into a higher level of creative ability.

Summary of causal relationships between variables

The individual's level of awareness of life's demands reflects his understanding of the situation, of 'the self', of the people involved, and of his own responsibility towards the situation. This enables him to reflect on his options in terms of dealing with the situation in question and will influence his attitude towards the opportunity or challenge presented, *i.e.* his creative response. A positive creative response is characterised by the willingness to immerse oneself into the situation whole heartedly, to take personal responsibility and to see problems as opportunities. The individual can now choose to focus his attention on the task at hand, which involves trade-offs. A high degree of attentiveness means that he channels his psychological energy towards the situation.

The individual is now presented with a critical fork in the road, whether or not he realises it: he can either see himself as a lone creator or show initiative in the sense of reaching out to others. The latter invites a considerable amount of additional uncertainty and possible disagreement into the system; but also offers maximum opportunity for growth and change. Co-initiation means that individuals demonstrate a willingness to share responsibility for experiences and growth, they 'register' one another as definite entities and equals, they demonstrate both humility and self worth, and they are 'present' in more than the physical sense. These are the ideal conditions for true connectivity to emerge. With the ego in check, individuals may ask one another incisive questions and listen with an open mind, heart and will; enabling them to explore the full underlying story.

A willingness to test assumptions and re-evaluate perceptions prepares the individual for deconstruction. Constructive confrontation at this stage may prompt the individual to discard perspectives that may hamper his creativity. Synergy arises between the entities because of newfound authenticity and a respect for diversity, supplying an energy that supports complementation, cross pollination, sharing, networking and collaboration.

This environment enhances critical thinking in each individual and also in the team as a whole; enabling them to reframe, recognise patterns, practice divergent and convergent thinking, and to originate. Exploration leads to experimentation with ideas, tools, techniques and behaviour patterns. Once the second causal loop has reached saturation, tangible or intangible products may crystallize from creative acts in the form of prototypes, sometimes as ‘captured accidents’. Feedback from these prototypes may require further trial and error in the creative participation loop before a satisfactory end product emerges.

According to learning theory (Turner *et al*, 1997) ‘good habits’ can be created through positive experience and practice. The individual’s ability to sustain maximum effort and to produce more products of similar or improved quality is critical in consolidating newfound skills. A feedback loop from the variable of ‘sustained performance’ to the creative participation loop indicates ongoing action learning, which is a major enabler of the change process. The action or experimental learning cycle is one of multiple iterations between the concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and generalisation, and active experimentation (Meyer, 2007; in Meyer *et al*, 2007). Active experimentation is described as “testing implications of concepts in new situations” (Taylor, 2002; in Meyer *et al*, 2007: 174).

Figure 19 visually represents the theory and can be used as a practice model.

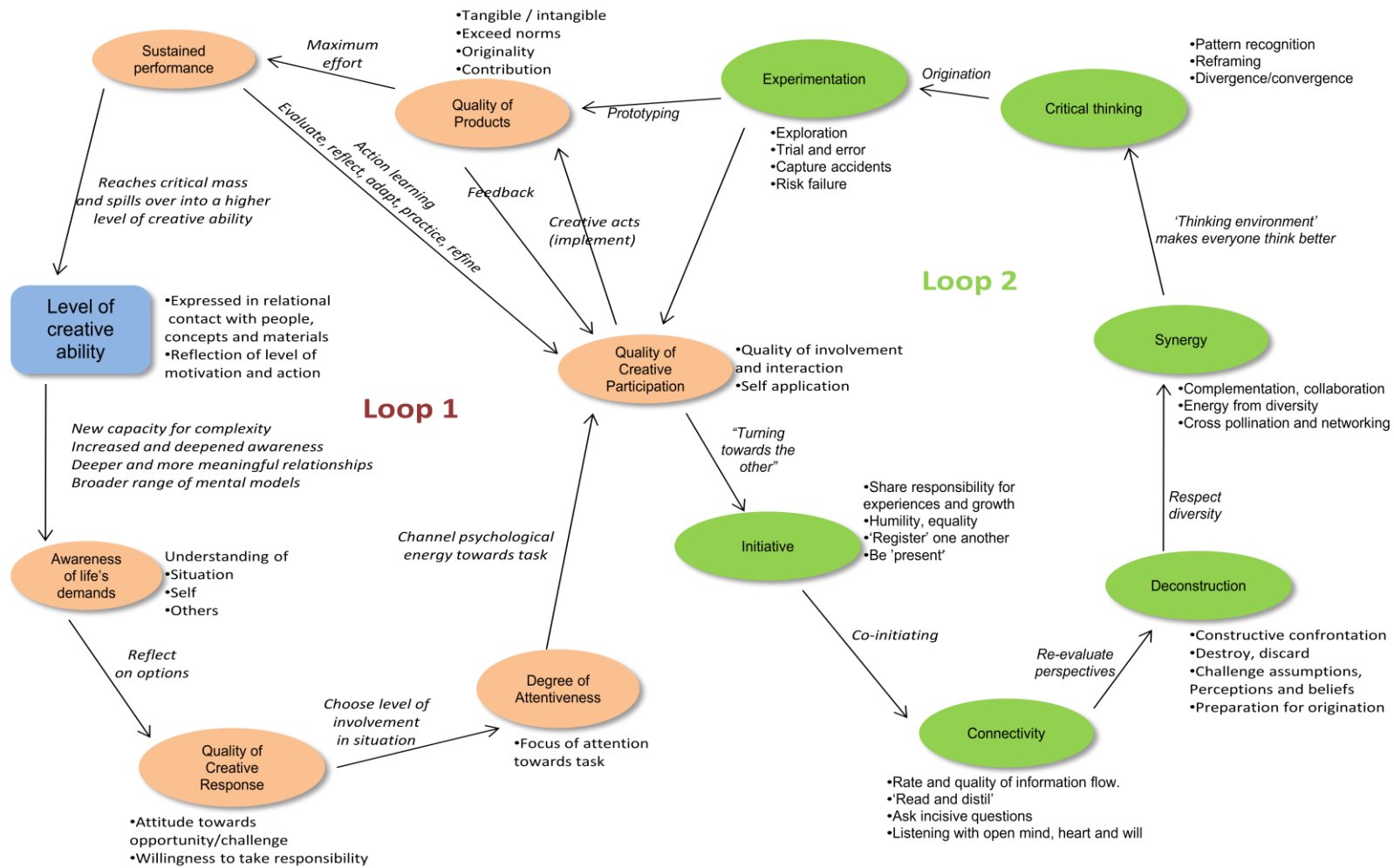


Figure 19: Model: How an individual can raise to higher levels of creative ability

A higher level of creative ability

“The end point – the highest level of development – is one at which a person has refined her uniqueness and is in control of her thoughts, feelings and actions, while at the same time relishing human diversity and feeling at one with the infinite cosmos. A person who has reached this stage can truly be called happy, because she needs nothing more.” (Csíkszentmihályi, 2003: 33).

The double learning loop between sustained performance and creative participation builds psychological capital. As a result of ‘flow’ experiences and positive feedback, the individual’s level of intrinsic motivation increases. Throughout the whole process, but especially during creative participation, the individual develops a new capacity for complexity reflected by regenerated purpose (Scharmer, 2009), deeper and more meaningful relationships, and a broader range of mental models. In other words, the individual develops a deepened awareness of life’s demands, ideally positioning him for a further cycle of growth.

It has been shown how an individual can increase his thinking skills, intrinsic motivation and expertise – the three components of creativity (Amabile, 1998). Theoretically, the area where the three circles overlap (figure 8) has been enlarged. This is the space where creativity occurs.

It is hypothesized that the suggested growth process facilitates the refinement of authenticity on the one hand, and connectivity on the other. This may link to Csíkszentmihályi’s work on differentiation and integration. The dual processes of differentiation and integration form what he calls ‘the two pillars of happiness’, and a person who is fully differentiated and integrated “becomes a complex individual, one who has the best chance at leading a happy, vital, and meaningful life” (Csíkszentmihályi, 2003: 29).

“We fail to have a Sense of Wonder unless we discipline ourselves to maintain it. We need to set aside our cynicism, our belief that the world is out to do us harm. We need to learn to see, to experience the awe that is available in every moment. We need to learn how to set aside our capacity to judge, to put things into boxes and learn how to appreciate the unknown. We need to learn to have courage, the courage to be open to the new, the courage to be wrong, and the courage to act to correct the wrongs we have made.” (Jenkins et al, 2006: 68).

6. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The research area of creativity in general is broad and complex, and this research is but a tiny drop in a vast ocean. There is considerable scope for future research to build upon this project. Not only can certain components - such as critical thinking skills - be researched in more detail, but insights from other researchers might highlight flaws in logic and transform the theory into a richer or tighter product. The relative inaccessibility of literature on creative ability theory might, however, deter researchers from building upon this theory. This will be unfortunate.

As an occupational therapist herself, the researcher might consider this as a topic for a doctorate degree, in which case a large sample size will be imperative. From a creative ability theory perspective, this is the first research project to visually represent and describe causal relationships between the components of creative ability. Systems thinking tools have been invaluable in lifting patterns from literature. This is also the first attempt at researching the growth mechanisms in the higher levels of creative ability, an area that falls outside of the traditional domain of therapy.

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APPENDIX A: LEVELS OF CREATIVE ABILITY

Group	Level of Creative Ability	Motivation is aimed at:	Action is:	Employment potential
Group 1: Preparation for constructive action.	1. Tone	Establishing positive tone	Pre-destructive	Total institutional care
	2. Self-differentiation	Self-differentiation	Destructive and/or incidentally constructive	Occupational centre or home. One-step guided activity.
Group 2: Behaviour and skill development for norm complacency.	3. Self-presentation	Self-presentation	Explorative	Sheltered workshop – low production 50%.
	4. Passive participation	Passive participation	Experimental	Repetitive imitative work in sheltered workshop or in selected open labour market.
	5. Imitative participation	Imitative participation	Imitative	Open labour market – further study or technical training.
Group 3: Behaviour and skill development for self actualisation.	6. Active participation	Active participation	Original	Open labour market – professional training.
	7. Competitive participation	Competitive participation	Product centred	Managerial and high responsibility employment.
	8. Contribution	Contribution	Situation centred	
	9. Competitive contribution	Competitive contribution	Society centred	Researchers.
This table is an aggregation of tables compiled by Du Toit (1974) and De Witt (1997). Du Toit has described the levels of motivation and action, as well as employment potential connected to the levels of creative ability, while De Witt has classified the levels within three groups.				

APPENDIX B: BASIC INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Question 1: Which aspects of your life are unpredictable and/or sources of possible disagreement, and how do you deal with it?

Question 2: How do you view creativity?

Question 3: In which ways does Life demand creativity from you as an individual (at work, home, leisure)?

Question 4: What are the challenges to your creativity? How do you overcome/manage them, or how do you intend to do so?

Question 5: What are the disciplines, practices and mantras (supporting creativity, motivation and productivity) that you adhere to?

Question 6: What gives meaning to your life and work?

APPENDIX C: TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEWS

Interview 1: Paul du Toit

Internationally acclaimed painter/sculptor

Founder and CEO of PlanetPaul Studios

Humanitarian



“Paul du Toit is a South African artist who has carved a unique niche in the international arena. Beyond being able to access and be exhibited globally, Du Toit has simultaneously continued to create a very personal form of art that has not adjusted itself to the demands of a commercial art market. Du Toit's art is his own; a linear, phantasmic world that he has created from his mind and experiences.

Over the years, he has built up a forest of symbols - his own alphabet of awkward scrawls that spawn off each other. When he creates a work of art, he retains only forms that are appropriate. This combined with the treatment of space and master lines (scratched into wet paint with sticks) result in a desired unity of composition. Primary colours are added on top of the impasto and movement is created by a variation in the dimension of forms in relation to other elements. His work starts out with a line (origination) and ends with a black line defining the pools of colour.

Among the many awards he has received is a medal from the city of Florence in the Biennale Internazionale Dell'arte Contemporanea. He was nominated for the Daimler Chrysler Sculpture Award of 2002. He was recently invited to work with former president Nelson Mandela and international musicians on the 46664 campaign.” (Paul du Toit [website](#))

“This same passion has gone into his support for the Children’s Red Cross Hospital where he has acted as one of the ‘Children’s Champions’. In a strange echo of the art classes he attended as a suffering child during his teenage battle against juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, Paul has held art classes for the children of the Red Cross every few months for the last three years. He claims these lessons have taught him more than they taught the children, being

some of his earliest experiences in collaborative work. He experimented with multi-focused points of view within a single work, and tried representing the human form inverted; flat; and angled – all results of teaching & viewing art from ‘the other side of the page’. It is in his nature to explore these exposures, and to exploit them to their fullest opportunity.” (McCarthy, 2006).

“The remarkable fact is that Paul has found his truth; that he has distilled where he wants to be in the world, and what he wants to do there. This focus has given him the energy and joy to beam that same intensity straight into his burgeoning career as an artist.” (McCarthy, 2006).

Start of interview

Author: *Can you describe your creative process? What goes on behind the scenes to create a ‘PauL’?*

Paul: Well, the paintings start with a line or a couple of lines, scratched into a thick white paste that I mix myself and spread onto the canvas. I do three works at a time, but they are always different from one another. Uhm...I experiment a lot...It is often a solitary process, playing around in the studio, trying out different techniques and tools...I make my own tools like fixing a (?) onto a broom handle to create interesting scratches and patterns...because of the length of the stick, the lines are not exact...there’s a certain freedom to it. And imperfection. I also use my left hand, that’s what I call ‘experimenting with my weaker hand’ – for the same reason. Less control...more interesting and surprising results.

These days I prefer to lay the canvas flat on a surface and walk all around it to do the scratches...I don’t always know which edge would turn out to be the top one and which the bottom. And the figures are sometimes upside down or sideways and so on. *The Art of Looking Sideways* by Alan Fletcher has inspired me. It’s about looking around and seeing various possibilities around you. Also how your perception changes when you turn things upside down.

Uhm...I started out doing more representational art... that was my first period, during childhood. But later on it felt like copying, not creating. For me, my art is very personal and it comes from my mind and experiences. Uhm...I only do original work, I don't make prints. This is partly a brand thing, but also because the textures contribute a lot to the paintings, and this doesn't always show up in a print. I generally prefer not to do commissions, but I do take on special projects like the sculpture of Nelson Mandela's hand and the humanoid mural at the Cradle of Humankind and...I've just recently painted on wine bottles that were auctioned off at HQ...

Author: *Yes, I've heard about that...for charity? You've raised a hefty sum!*

Paul: (laughing) It was fun. Uhm...I like that I can use art to contribute. But I get back so much.

Uhm...so...I draw my inspiration from various things, it changes. Books, music, other artists, designs in nature. Ancient Chinese rock carvings. Children's art. Children are so creative, it is amazing to work with them, it teaches me a lot. It's actually sad to think just how easily we forget how to be creative as we get older, as adults. So working with them reminds me to connect to the inner child, and also to reduce images to the bare essentials. The other day my son and I drew on the concrete with chalk. I think it was very spontaneous partly because we knew it would be washed away by the rain sooner or later.

We've done this 'Pandora's box' thing at the Red Cross a while back, me and a group of the kids...where we each made a line or image or pattern on a box...markings...we sent it around in a circle like musical chairs... and the end result was a collaborative piece of art (laughing). It was a really amazing experience!

Author: *(laughing) Great collaboration!*

Paul: (laughing)

Author: *Uhm...you've spoken about your 'scan and retain' process?*

Paul: Yes, I'm always looking for things to use as inspiration for future work. In this sense I'm always busy gathering and processing things, even when I travel. I take photos of things I spot all around me, especially on travels. Wait a second, look at this...I've recently swopped a painting for this camera. It's a vintage (?) and it has been fully transformed to digital. Super cool, I love it! *(shows photos of his son playing guitar – great shots).*

Uhm...or I'll sketch things I see: designs I come across, images, memories. Like a crane in New York's meat packing district. Or an interesting crack in the pavement might show up in a painting, as part of a human form or background. I also find rock carvings fascinating, especially those from ancient China. Uhm... I make sketches in little books like this one, or on pieces of paper, anything really. On people's hands, if they're keen *(laughing)*

Author: *(laughing)*

Paul: Uhm, you wanted to know...?

Author: *Uhm...your creative process. You've talked about where you draw inspiration from, your basic sketches and...up to the part where you scratch in the white paste*

Paul: Ja. When the paste has dried, I use primary colours to fill in the figures and some of the other spaces that have been created – sometimes by accident. Uhm...I like to view the works in progress at different times of the day, for example the light will fall differently on a painting at 4am, highlighting different textures, the shadows will fall differently and sometimes that guides what emerges from this painting – what is already there but needs to be highlighted. But maybe also ...when I look at a painting at, say 4am, I'm in a different state of mind and it may be easier to see the unexpected then... Uhm... then lastly I add the definitions, mostly with black or white lines.

But as I've said, it is a journey, a creative journey. I always keep on learning and experimenting. I never formally studied art, and I always say that I'm glad for it because it didn't corrupt my style. (laughing) I do a lot of research, though, and keep updated with prescribed material for postgraduate art students. I really believe in continuous learning. I phone up the art department each year and ask which books are prescribed for the year and then I buy the new ones through amazon. Uhm...this year I'm also doing the 'Business acumen for artists' programme at the GSB...

Author: *How do you deal with failures? (laughing) Do you have failures?*

Paul: (laughing) Yes I do have failures and I won't release a painting into the world if I'm not 100% happy with it. I store them in the studio. I've started to shred substandard canvasses; I cut them into rough pieces and use some of the pieces. Pieces of about this size (shows about 10cm x10cm).

Author: *Yes, I've seen a couple of them in the Houtbay studio, right?*

Paul: Yes.

Author: *But I'm fascinated by the idea. Tell me more?*

Paul: Well, I've glued them onto canvasses and painted around them, used them for collages. They now form part of new paintings. A series...

Author: *It's quite symbolic. Turning your 'mistakes' into something of value...*

Paul: Yes...making mistakes is part of experimentation. You learn a lot from your mistakes. But in a sense I don't really see them as mistakes. In some instances I've looked back on work that I've not released at that time...but now they spark off a new direction. Now I'm maybe more ready for it. So I keep everything. I really like...go and check out Bruce Mau Design...here, let me write down the website (scribbles). He's got 'an incomplete manifesto' in which he talks about loving your experiments and capturing accidents and a lot more. Really great stuff. One of the things he says is "If you like it, do it again. If you don't like it, do it again."

Author: *Thank you! Cool, I'll go and check it out.*

Paul: I've found a lot of valuable stuff in there, valuable lessons. I think the very first point is about allowing events to change you...openness to growth.

Author: *Which is evident in your life, I think....Uhm, tell me: how do you stay productive regardless of the travelling and other disruptions, like people visiting the studio? (laughing) And students asking for interviews? (laughing)*

Paul: (laughing) I can't be in the studio all the time! I really enjoy this. The travels and social interaction is necessary for inspiration. It can be distracting to stop and start due to special projects, but I try to keep a general creative path in mind. I've met amazing people...meeting inspiring people energises me tremendously. It fires me up. I also like visiting other artists, observing them while they work. I've been greatly inspired by Peter Gabriel. And in New York I share studio space with other artists, they are always playing experimental music, new stuff all the time. There is this buzz which I find incredibly inspiring. From time to time. This environment is inspiring and enhances my creativity. But I live in my own head most of the time...

I probably work longer hours than most people, but I choose my own time. I like working at night, sometimes straight through the night. Loretta is involved in the business now, she manages a lot of the business related things now. I always say she's the boss and I'm the labour. (laughing) But sometimes I'll go for 3 days straight without seeing anyone or speaking to anyone. I need these times to recharge. I try to involve the children a lot in my work, which is relatively easy since the Houtbay studio is at home. And I try to keep my promises. We go away every now and again.

Author: *Do you never wake up in the morning and don't feel like painting?*

Paul: Actually no. Well, for me work and play is the same thing, it is living. My work is play. I like that quote of Bob Dylan: "A man is a success if he gets up in the morning and gets to bed at night, and in between he does what he wants to do." In that sense I'm really lucky. And I like to create art just for what it

is. I like to create art for art's sake. I sometimes work on weekends but I don't work on Fridays. Friday is for alone time, to think, to go to the movies on my own. And I drink lots of water and green tea as energy source.

Author: *There seems to be a polarity between the need for silence and solitude and the need for people, music and interaction...*

Paul: Ja...I think so...but it's all life. That's life, hey? (laughing) Another coffee for you?

Author: *Will you be having something?*

Paul: Ja, I'd like another orange juice

Author: *Another coffee then, that'll be lovely. Thank you.*

Paul: Black and bitter? (orders coffee)

Author: *Another interesting thing...it appears to be a polarity...is the balance between freedom and control. You talk about emergence in your artwork, and of experimentation. Yet you rigorously study academic material, you work hard and you have spent a lot of time and effort on research and strategising about your career.*

Paul: Uhm...yes. Absolutely, yes. It has been a long and difficult road. I definitely had a strategy, or I developed it as I went along, but I did put a lot of thought in it. I still do. My goal was to go international within ten years. So I...well, let me start earlier. After school I did a computer course and did programming. The programming had an element of creativity involved in it since you create the programmes from scratch but...later on I did programming for a bank, but I found the work in the bank limited and restrictive. So...during that period my paintings became darker and heavier. I wanted to paint full time, and the internet played a large role in my marketing strategy. I realised that branding was very important and that I should build up a name and a logo to distinguish myself. There's another South African artist called Paul du Toit, so ...that's where the PauL with the L facing to the left came from, to distinguish myself.

Back then the internet has just taken off, and I used it extensively to research the art industry and to do networking and to market my art. I uploaded an electronic portfolio, and this lead to an invitation to exhibit in Paris which was great. So I could use my computer background to my advantage, and it still comes in very handy with PlanetPaul productions and so on. But I think it's all about spotting and using opportunities. Or creating them. When I was invited for a CNN interview, I wondered how I could make use of the marketing opportunity and at the last minute I had T-shirts printed with the Paul logo on, and that worked out well.

Author: *You are one of the most successful South African artists, arguable the most successful. Yet you are one of the most humble and genuinely nice people that I've come across. What keeps you grounded? What gives meaning to your life and work?*

Paul: (laughing) Wow, thank you. Uhm. My family and friends are very important to me. And I like to get involvement in charity projects. As I've said, this has brought me so much already and I've met great people. It's hard not to feel humble in the presence of someone like Nelson Mandela. He is just such an amazing person, so humble. Uhm...and working with kids keeps one humble. I love working with them. I had juvenile rheumatoid arthritis as a child, from about the age of 11 until 16 I've spent long stretches in hospital. It was a solitary time...and a defining time in my life. I outgrew it when I was about 16. So it's nice to give something back. But also, relationships and networking is very important. These relationships carried me through the global recession.

Interview 2: Dr. Craig Friderichs

Principle medical officer at the Western Cape Department of Health

Craig's responsibilities include facility management, staff training and clinical work at Groote Schuur Hospital and a day hospital in Cape Town. He works in a highly pressurized environment with over 6,500 patient visits per month, only three full time doctors and a handful of contract positions.



The challenges associated with limited resources, unpredictable cases and case loads, and the inevitable staff issues call for creative problem-solving. Craig works 40 - 70 hours per week, Monday to Friday from 08h00 - 16h00 with every second weekend and five night calls per month. Craig is married to Nicky, and a fellow MBA student. He has been serving as class representative for two consecutive years, and is widely known and loved for being a servant leader.

Start of interview

Author: *How do you view creativity?*

Craig: Well, one can be creative in everything you do. It's about how you view life, how you live your life, how you see possibilities in problems, how you spot opportunities and seize them. How you make best use of available resources and how you source other resources. I think creativity is an attitude to life more than anything else. For example: one can be creative in relationships. Whether it's my relationship with my wife, with colleagues, friends, family... a large part of it is about what you pay attention to in one another. Nicky and I have a weekly date where we just spend time together, even if it is just an hour. But then we try to create conditions in which we can truly connect, talk, have fun, spend quality time together in an otherwise hectic schedule. Something different, set apart from everyday life, and neither of us will compromise on that time, no matter what. Uhm...we take turns in planning this date, whether it's a picnic or...anything really.

And like I said, it's about spotting opportunities to create value, add value. I'm working on a business plan for a potential joint venture between public health care, medical insurance firms and the retail sector in townships. Something that may streamline operations considerably and ease access to medical testing and basic treatment for many. But I don't necessarily see myself as the implementer. I hope to sell the idea and might be involved in the initial set-up and training, but won't necessarily take ownership of it. I'd rather move on to the next thing that might bring about change and add value to people's lives. That way there's more potential leverage for change, I think. This is part of the reason why I'm doing the MBA in the first place.

Author: *In which ways does life demand creativity from you? What are the challenges to your creativity? How do you overcome/manage them, or how do you intend to do so?*

Craig: Uhm...overall I think it's a matter of making the most of limited resources. Time has certainly been a limited resource, especially during the past two years, since I work long hours and the MBA has been time consuming. But there is always time, you just have to look for it, and it often involves eliminating activities that don't necessarily add value so that one can focus on those that does. For example, watching TV doesn't add value but spending quality time with Nicky does. At work, while admin tasks are necessary, I try to get them out of the way as quickly as possible so that I can spend more time with the people...colleagues and patients. Making optimal use of those 'off-cut' minutes helps, I always have my iPod with me, with inspirational talks and the like, or I work on an assignment. It's about being focused so that I can be free later. And more 'present' for the things that actually matter.

At work... dealing with a high but unpredictable patient load, and having limited financial resources to channel towards equipment, staff support and the like creates a difficult working environment for the whole team. When I speak of the team I mean nursing staff, doctors, support staff, admin personnel, everyone. So my challenge - and the challenge for the whole team - is to try

and create an environment where we can offer the best service to patients. Now, you will know...being a medical professional yourself...that the challenges of working in the public health care system can be very demoralizing and demoralized people cannot care for others in the best possible way. Let's take a nurse as an example: the monthly salary may serve as an extrinsic motivator because in all likelihood she supports a whole family on it. But this merely ensures external commitment...going through the motions...

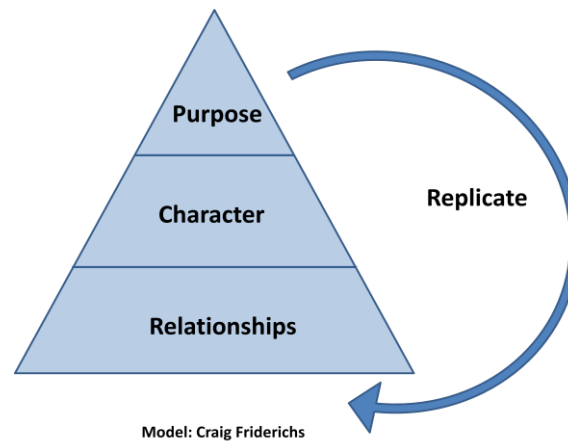
Author: *Aptly put in the Argyris article (referring to Argyris, 1998)*

Craig: Exactly. So the main challenge is to shift the team from external commitment towards internal commitment. From external motivation towards internal motivation. And true empowerment. You know, there is still this major thing in hospitals. It's a culture thing, a hierarchy thing...that doctors are superior to, say nursing staff. It comes from both sides, I think. But it results in a situation where nursing staff do not feel empowered to do problem-solving on ground root level. They feel like inferior members of the team; that creativity is not required from them, that their creative thinking skills are not required and not appreciated. So of course they will not be intrinsically motivated.

And I don't think that traditional approaches to hospital management will get around this situation. It requires some creativity. Looking at things from a different angle... trying to create a fundamental shift. And I think there's a lot to be said for Nancy Kline's work, *A Time to Think* - how to create a thinking environment. Especially when it comes to treating each other as thinking peers, and making people feel that they matter.

Author: *You have your own model, too. Can you take me through it?*

Craig: (laughing) Yes, well I have a scientific mind so I like to understand how things work. Well, my understanding of it. It is very basic, really. Nothing earth shattering. But it is easy enough to understand and I sometimes use it in training too. It is basically a triangle; let me draw it for you.



So what I see as the basis, the fundamentals, is relationships. Respect for one another, love, caring, listening...compassion, appreciation. It all starts by demonstrating those things. The whole model is about replicating positive behaviours, right? A ripple effect.

Author: *Yes...and it starts with you?*

Craig: Well, uhm...yes, one has to be the change that one wants to see, right? So I have to live it. But it gains momentum, and it's not about me after all. So quality relationships form the ideal breeding ground for character building...work ethics and the like. Others care about me, and I can care about my patients and my work. Uhm...what is the right thing to do? Character and ethics are more likely to emerge from sound relationships, which lead us to purpose. Doing my best because it matters... it adds value, because it makes a difference. And then replicating these behaviours, building relationships, helping others to grow character and to find purpose in what they do.

Author: *And what keeps you internally motivated?*

Craig: Uhm...I think I have an inherent belief in the good. The good of mankind and that we are here to make a difference. Small changes make it worthwhile. Being part of a team that grows together is incredibly rewarding.

Author: *And this training, the building of relationships, character and purpose; does it occur naturally...uhm around the water cooler, that sort of thing? Or do you have scheduled sessions?*

Craig: Both. We've used the model in some of the structured training sessions, but it is more of a...something we try to stay aware of. A background...uhm... background conditions that may guide our interactions. We believe that these conditions will enhance our outcomes in terms of productivity and patient care in general. That it will improve the effectiveness of our clinical training sessions and therefore the clinical skills of staff too. Obviously time is limited, but we try to make training sessions enjoyable. It's amazing how well people respond to a bit of creativity, even if it is just as an ice breaker.

Author: *Can you give examples?*

Craig: Uhm...the other day we had a collaborative art session with a smallish team. We made a painting together and then had a group session on collaboration and teamwork. Synergy. In basic language.

Interview 3: Annemarie Lombard

Founder/CEO [Sensory Intelligence Consulting](#)

Registered Occupational Therapist, Workshop Facilitator, Coach

Professional category winner - Business woman of the year 2008/9 SACBW



“Sensory Intelligence™ consulting was established in 2003, by Annemarie Lombard, a qualified and registered occupational therapist with 18 years of extensive local and international experience in the clinical and training fields of occupational therapy. Annemarie specialises in the theory and practise of sensory integration and applies new and revolutionary research outcomes with adults in the workplace. She developed and trademarked sensory intelligence; a primitive, yet powerful process identifying the interaction between individuals, their environments and their resulting performance. Unlocking ones sensory needs have profound effects on daily living and provides a cutting edge approach to address workplace dynamics.

Apart from having sound theoretical knowledge, her background and training has made her an astute observer with excellent skills in facilitation, teaching and motivating others. Call centre workforce optimisation, workshops, consulting and individual coaching are her main approaches in applying *sensory intelligence™*.

Annemarie is doing research through a PhD programme at the University of Cape Town. Her quantitative study is comparing sensory processing with performance, absenteeism and attrition of call centre agents in the South African context. The study aim is towards identifying the best-fit agent for the call centre industry and applying the concept of sensory processing as a performance predictor.” (Sensory Intelligence consulting [website](#))

Start of interview

Author: *To what degree is your life predictable, and which aspects of your life are the most*

Annemarie: unpredictable

Author: *Yes, in terms of work or everyday life...Is everything always under control? Is it possible to control everything? Is it possible to predict? To what degree can you...*

Annemarie: Ja, absolutely, I get what you mean. At least my personal life is predictable, my husband is predictable and my children are fairly predictable, given that you've got a 9 and a 4 year old. My work is not predictable AT ALL. I have no clue, because I don't have particular contracts that I work with, I don't have particular clients. There may be some form of planning that I can do, but most of it is a matter of not knowing what's going to happen next month, not knowing who's going to be the next client, where my next pay check coming from. And... keeping on growing and developing new things... so there's a huge, huge, huge amount of unpredictability from a professional perspective, from a work perspective, from an income generation perspective. I would say up to ... 80%.

Author: *How does that make you feel? How do you cope with it? What works best for you?*

Annemarie: Hmm...

Author: *How do you deal with the possible anxiety that that can create, while also making the best use of possibilities?*

Author: See, I'm a sensation seeker, so it doesn't faze me in the least. It actually fits in and works with my profile perfectly! So I actually like variation, I like change, I like 'unpredictable' ... it really works for me, I really enjoy that. Sometimes it does make it stressful, but I don't think too much about it. I always joke and say that I do too much and I think too little (laughing). So I don't really get wrapped up in a lot of detail, and I don't think too much about it. I am a doer, I put my head down and decide to do something and I do it. And then I usually learn by trial and error (laughing). If I've made a mistake, if things don't work, then I retrace my steps...OK what happened?...and how can I do this differently?

Author: *Hmm...*

Annemarie: So, to tell you the truth, uhm...I don't mind all the unpredictable components of it, it is a lot of hard work but there is also a certain element of...of fun, of anticipation, of challenge, of excitement, of surprise that I actually really do enjoy and that I really work well with.

Author: *So, what I hear from you is an element of trial and error... reflection on what you have done, seeing how you can adapt in future, right?*

Annemarie: Ja, ja, ja, absolutely.

Author: *And I guess a fair amount of awareness is necessary. (note: this was a leading question)*

Annemarie: Ja...

Author: *How do you do that, practically? Do you sit with a journal and jot down your notes? Or do you do it in your head? Describe your process of reflection...*

Annemarie: In the shower. I do most of my thinking in the shower (laughing) that's where I do all my problem-solving, that's where I do my thinking, that's where I come up with new ideas, continuously. My brain actually doesn't switch off, which is tiring. I continuously see new opportunities, new things. And when I see a new opportunity, I immediately start to plan in my mind...uhm...how would I take this further?

I'm actually a visual learner as well, so I've got these millions of pictures in my brain. I don't really write things down, that's also why I'm battling with my thesis. I'm not a journal kind of a person, I think in pictures, I have pictures in my brain ... in my mind. I make notes. So my whole desk is full of tiny little notes, but if I have to go back and find something...don't ask me...(laughing). If I have to go back and find 'OK, where did I write down that idea or solution'? I can never find it, and that is frustrating me, it's always gone (laughing)

Author: *(laughing)*

Annemarie: So, it's like...OK let me clean up this desk, and let me try and find...where did I write those things down? Decluttering does help. I've got a good personal assistant who is extremely organised and that really helps. She cleans up after me, but I'm really good at...that's why I think the whole entrepreneurial thing really works for me... I'm good at coming up with ideas and I'm not scared to try them. I'm actually looking at employing someone who can pick up on the detail behind me. I kind of need people to walk behind me and literally and figuratively 'clean up'. Because when it comes to cleaning up and going into the detail I get bored, I'm already onto the next idea and the next thing.

Uhm, but I mean so far I had to do everything by myself so...you know I've just done all our e-profiling myself, it's about 80% finished, so that literally involved putting my thoughts, my clinical reasoning, my experience, my insight into Sensory Integration theory into algorithms for the internet so that we can actually produce a product. So I do that, I do that, but I would never be able to do just that. I need to be able to balance that with other new, interesting stuff, idea generation.

Author: *Ja, ja... Tell me, Annemarie, in general, how do you view creativity? And how do you see it in your life?*

Annemarie: Well, creativity for me is literally...producing new, interesting dynamics. It's not always something that you produce in a tangible form. Creativity is coming up with different ideas, it definitely starts in your brain somewhere. You know, getting a particular interest or a particular response; in my case, a dream...and goals. What happens in your brain in terms of the concepts that you are forming around that. So that's what creativity is for me.

Uhm, I must admit, I probably practice a form of creativity on a daily basis, because I think up new things, and I create something new out of nothing on a regular basis. That's what I've done with Sensory Intelligence as well. I've taken old concepts, old applications and ...you know, I've had very particular

experiences in my life that have let me to it, but it is continuously thinking up new dynamics, new applications, new uses of old things. And it is so out of the box. Uh...

Author: *Mmm. Yes, I tend to agree with you.*

Annemarie: I always joke and say that at the age of 35 I had a midlife crisis, but I think a lot of this started when I was abroad, when I lived in the States for 2 ½ years, it was the best and the worst time of my life. I was absolutely thrown out of my comfort zone 99,9% of the time. It was a matter of sink or swim. I got great exposure, lots of challenges, but lots in terms of growth and learning while I was there. On a professional level as well as on a personal level. And then, when I came back, I just didn't fit into the mould anymore. I tried to...I just couldn't. I always joke and say that I got back from the States and had itchy feet from the day I actually put my feet back onto South African soil.

Uhm...and things just didn't work out for me. I tried...I went back into practice but it was difficult. I went back into paediatric private practice (Sensory Integration) with a good friend, that didn't work out. Then I did go into practice in Sea Point for four years, which was good, it was a good period for me. And then I did a year of private practice in Durbanville...I hated that. I hated it with a passion. I didn't feel part of the team, I didn't feel that I fitted in. And in retrospect I'm grateful for that year because that was my release year. Because saying, after 15 years, that I'm about to give up on my practice...people said 'Oh no, you can't give up your practice!'...I said 'Well, watch me, of course I can give up my practice.'

But that year was also a pushing factor for me, to get to the point where I knew that I just couldn't do it anymore.

Author: *Ja.*

Annemarie: And for me it was... I believe in Occupational therapy, I believe we've got an amazing profession, so I thought... 'OK, so you can't be in practice anymore... I don't believe in doing things halfway, either you do it or you don't. So what

do I do now, how do I use the skill, the knowledge, the insight, all the continued education that I had ... how do I use it to my benefit?’

So then I started to do training (Sensory Integration theory and practice training for other Occupational Therapists), and when I did training the light bulb actually got switched on for me and then I knew that I’ve got to position myself into sharing ideas and sharing knowledge with adults.

Of course I never thought at that stage that I would be doing what I’m doing now, it’s a growth process. There’s a lot of creativity, but there’s also a lot of risk involved. You’ve got to be prepared to take a risk. I mean, hell, I’ve taken risks. Sometimes I scare myself a little bit (laughing).

Author: *(laughing)*

Annemarie: But I’ve never been too scared to take the risk, and I’m not afraid of failure. Because I think we actually learn a lot more from failure than we learn through success! Uhm...and I think creativity is like a key... the connection between what you know and your dream or vision. How do you combine those two?

Author: *What are the challenges to your creativity? Are there days when you feel blocked? How do you overcome/manage it, or do you never feel like that?*

Annemarie: Uhm...no...actually my brain is always working. I’ve got too much... I sometimes wish I could switch off my brain! Because...it gets too much for me...the fact that it’s always in constant motion...always thinking...always seeing things and planning things...and doing.

The challenge for me is rather...how to be still. How to take time out, how to sit and reflect. I don’t think that I necessarily reflect a lot. I mull things over in my mind continuously, but it’s a rather chaotic process...it’s like a mouse on wheels that just keeps on going. So the challenge for me is to make the time out to just sit and actually do more reflection. And time is a huge thing for me. I really battle with everything that I need to do, with all my commitments.

I am running a business on my own. I've got a personal assistant, and that helps, but I'm actually getting in another person next year who is extremely detail orientated and that is going to irritate the hell out of me, but I really need her. Incidentally, she is also an OT with an MBA. I need someone who can drag me down and say: 'Stop, you can't do that!' And then I'll say 'Of course I can do that!' But it will be good for me to have people who can actually reflect and be more quiet. Who can take creativity to a quieter place. Mine is always 'raserig' and busy and noisy.

Author: *That's actually a very interesting point that you've made. You've consciously chosen someone who's different from you, who can both complement and challenge you.*

Annemarie: Ja, absolutely. I definitely did that by choice. It's diversity...it's the flip of the coin. I work with teams all the time, I do sensory profiling for teams, and if team members are all the same... it is boring and you don't get the job done. And if I surround myself with people just like me, we would come up with great ideas, but you know what? How will we position it from an operations point of view? How do we take that into systems? How do we actually fine tune the detail? I'm not a detail person, I don't like detail. I actually steer away from it as much as possible, so that is definitely my weakness.

It doesn't help if I get someone who is strong where I am strong. I need someone who is strong where I am weak and maybe weak where I am strong. That's where you complement one another. Conflict...yeah for sure, I know she is going to irritate the hell out of me, but you know what? I'm very open to it, I want to be challenged, and we'll just have to deal with it. Because that is what's going to make us grow, that's what's going to take the business to the next level.

Author: *Mmm...ja...the creative tension?*

Annemarie: Absolutely, yes, absolutely. And there's a lot more strength and benefit to that than weakness. You must just learn how to manage the conflict behind it.

Because conflict can be good, it will actually facilitate certain decisions and certain processes that won't happen otherwise.

Author: *What gives meaning to your life and work?*

Annemarie: From a work perspective, the fact that I get such good feedback. And people are totally amazed at just how simplistic the information is, and how it actually really changes people's lives. For me the core thing is still sharing, compassion...sharing love and peace and actually changing people's lives for the better. That's why it's sometimes difficult for me to go into a corporate space, because...I mean...that's the last thing on their agenda. But I've been very clear that that is my agenda, and have worked very hard to maintain the compassionate, humble approach. Without rolling over, of course. I need to be very assertive, strong and specific in what I want to do. Very dedicated, but with a humble spirit. So, it's about changing people's lives, it's about adding a bit of softness to what's out there in the world... it can be so tough and so hard.

On the other side, I must admit, my family – my husband and my sons – are currently getting the least of me. I work really, really hard. Sometimes it's difficult. That's part of the reason why I want to put things into place so that I can withdraw a little bit and have some fun as well. I don't have enough time for fun.

But it has ultimately been driven by 'doing greater good' and giving back.

Author: *What are your thoughts on the difference between 'the science of therapy' and 'the art of therapy'? If you think back 5 years or so when you were still treating...*

Annemarie: Yes

Author: *What made you such a good therapist? What skills did you need to master in order to master 'the art of therapy'?*

Annemarie: Mmm...yes, the science is useless if you don't have the art of it. You can have all the knowledge and you can have all the clinical skill, but if you don't know

how to apply it, it doesn't really add any meaning. I really think from an occupational therapists point of view, working in practice...the 'art' of it is seated in our relationships. Must be. It's the key. It's definitely the key. Your relationship with the child, your relationship with the parent...definitely those relationships. And then using the science of therapy to position it correctly so that you can shift that child, and you can scaffold that child from where he is to the next level...the next level of skill, of coping, of sensitization, of how he perceives his environment. But the art is definitely the relationship.

Author: *Mmm... mmm*

Annemarie: And obviously, with children it's about play. I must admit, while I was a good therapist, I never felt that I was really good with the play aspect. But I was very good at collaborating with the parents and working on a combined relationship, looking at the bigger picture and not just treating children in isolation. Unfortunately, I think that Sensory Integration theory is way too much dealt with in isolation. I don't think we see the bigger picture. At all.

Author: *Without relationships with all other stakeholders?*

Annemarie: Yes, but I think it goes further than that. Obviously I am a bit critical; it is easy for me to look back. Uhm...and I think I've got more of a bird's eye view on what clinical practice and Sensory Integration really looks like at the moment, and how it really works. I think it's got huge benefits and it's wonderful, but I think we should actually step away... or some of us, some of the applications...should step away from pure clinic based intervention. Not necessarily merely working with the parent and the child, but working with schools, with communities. Uhm...I don't think Sensory Integration is being utilised for communities yet. And that's part of my vision, and part of my corporate social responsibility... designing a program where we can use Sensory Integration as a base to actually empower parents and communities.

Author: *So, if I hear you correctly, you have the desire or vision to leverage your skills and knowledge into something bigger...to make a larger impact on society?*

Annemarie: Absolutely, absolutely. Otherwise we'll always be working in an isolated zone. You know...what do you really...what do you really achieve in the long run? Uhm...the degree of change that we generate is too small. The impact is too little. I know the impact is huge for that child and that family, absolutely, that's why I'm saying that clinical practice will always be necessary...will always be alive. But we need to think beyond that, we need to think wider.

Interview 4: John Vlismas

Stand-up comedian and painter.

Director: Whacked Management

Co-owner: Virus Communications

Honorary member: Golden Key International Honour society



“Award-winning comedian, John Vlismas is one of South Africa’s most creative, prolific international comics. John Vlismas has entered 2009 with a full schedule but typical low-key stealth, continuing to play to a large number of corporate audiences and readying an exciting film project for release in September 2009 and to be announced in due course. John’s international travel will be limited this year, due to local commitments.

April sees his much-anticipated solo art exhibition, "Off The Reservation" featuring 20 oil on canvas works at the Obert Contemporary Gallery In Melrose Arch. While the work is serious in nature, Vlismas has opted to open the exhibition on April 1st, determined to reference his comic roots. His new one-man comedy show, *Pow!*, will premiere in June, visiting both Durban and Johannesburg.” (<http://www.whacked.co.za/>)

“Award-winning comedian, John Vlismas is one of South Africa’s most prolific international comics. 2008 has seen him represent his country in Toronto, finishing in the top eight at the *Yuk Yuk’s Great Canadian Laugh Off*, and perform at Freedom Day celebrations in Dubai, at the request of the South African Business Council. John returns to the Johannesburg stage with a long-anticipated one-man show, entitled *Lucky Plebian*, in June 2008.

The year started with a bang, as John produced the South African leg of Henry Rollin’s 2007/8 world tour, taking in the Baxter Theatre in Cape Town and the Bassline in Johannesburg. John is currently developing a primetime television comedy pilot at MNet’s request. In 2007, he produced and headlined *Shady Okes* at the Hammersmith Apollo in London. He also won the inaugural SA Comedy Award for Stand Up of the Year, with his one man show, *Gay, Black & Immortal*.

Of the stand up comedians working the circuit in South Africa today, John has the widest international profile. From his 2002 performance in Berlin, at the *Maulhelden* Festival, to his

shows in Dubai in 2006 and 2008; to 2007's *Shady Okes* in London and at the Bulmer's Comedy Festival in Dublin; to his appearance at The Comedy Store in London in 2005; and his four trips to Canada, where he has played at Montreal's *Just for Laughs* Festival and remains the only South African comedian to be invited to return three times, having impressed in Club Soda, *Globecom* and *Bubbling with Laughter*, and performing by invitation in the prestigious showcase *Talk of the Fest* with Drew Carey; to his 2000 participation in the Melbourne Comedy Festival, where he enjoyed a sold out run of 28 shows in the highly regarded *Best of the Edinburgh Festival* showcase.

While outspoken and sometimes controversial, Vlismas is a firm favourite in the corporate market, and spends over 60% of his stage time entertaining executives and their staff with tailored, material, proving that he has the ability to adapt rapidly and appropriately for diverse audiences.

In 2006 he produced and headlined *Have a Heart (HAH)* in aid of Child Welfare Johannesburg. In 2002, he hosted and co-produced the largest ever stand up comedy event seen in South Africa, *Laugh Out Loud*; which played to 7000 people.

Not content with stand up and MC work, John also writes for publications and spent sixteen weeks in 2007 attempting to attract litigation for his weekly column attacking the local *Idols* judges, syndicated in Independent Newspapers. He also completed a year-long column in the Star Newspaper's Business Report, called *Funny Money* with Ronnie Apteker, and wrote a monthly column for *In London* magazine, for 3 years.

Recently, John has joined academic friend and mentor, Jonathan Foster-Pedley to lecture on MBA "Creativity" Electives at the Graduate School Of Business, delivering his talk "The Shared World" on applied intuition.

He has scripted and performed for the FNB Life Start, and SAB Brand Power national road shows, and regularly performs at his comedy club, The Comedy Underground, now SA's longest running regular comedy event.

John has enjoyed much local success with his previous one-man shows, all of which he wrote, directed and produced: *Whacked* in 2001, *Aggravated Assault* in 1999, *Man in Black* in 1998, and *Mr Ballistic* in 1997. In 2001, his two-hander with Bevan Cullinan, *Grinder*

confirmed his ability to sell tickets. The esteem in which John is held by the comedy industry is evidenced by such events as his role in Steven Wright's South African tour as support act, and his performance for SA Tourism at the Sydney Art Museum in 2004.” ([ComedyCV](#))

Start of interview

Author: *How do you view creativity in general? What do you think...*

John: Uhm...I think the first thing is that it's not a skill that you develop, I think it's something inherent that we just have to allow. And... it's kind of a fundamental condition of existence.

Author: *Do you think everyone has that, or not?*

John: Absolutely, absolutely. I think you've got to accept that...it's something I often talk about: there's no such thing for humans as chaos. You know, chaos is a word that business people use to describe something that they don't recognise. And if you actually pay attention to any form of ... of anything in our existence, everything is the result of creative order. Whether you feel that it is religious or scientific or biological or by pure accident...

Author: *Ja...so you don't see chaos and complexity as a negative thing, something to be avoided?*

John: Well no, first of all I don't believe there is anything such as chaos, because even in theory...it's all about finding the pattern that must exist. Uhm... as far as complexity is concerned; I think sometimes we confuse complexity with chaos. I think it's kind of a lazy reaction: instead of deciding that all results from a pattern, we write it off as chaos. But chaos is a whole different thing.

Author: *Yes... how do you... Complex situations encapsulate an element of uncertainty, an element of unpredictability, possibly an element of disagreement... How do you see that playing out in your life? Is everything in your life always under control or even possible to control? Which aspects are not? Do you try to control it? How do you deal with that?*

John: Well...I think that I need the condition of unpredictability, it is very important. And I think when I call you a creative person - although they're not types of people...I think they're various states – I don't think that you're more creative, you're just more in touch with your creativity. In which case, you are less inclined to create controls that will predict your outcome. Where I believe that people who are creative for a living, I believe that we are able to come up with unpredictable outcomes because it's in our reaction...not controlling whatever it is that we want to get a result from. If that makes sense to you...

Author: *Absolutely...yes*

John: And I think the point of unpredictability is...you have to make the most of it. It's exactly like performing for an audience that you haven't surveyed, you haven't given a questionnaire to, that you won't get formal feedback from. And I think real creativity is about being brave enough to accept that unpredictability is...is almost like a vital ingredient.

Author: *And you actually have a very nice theory on how to manage the creative tension between yourself and the audience, if I'm not mistaken? The R&D's?*

John: Yes... that's out of "The shared world" (referring to a corporate lecture he delivers on shared intuition).

Author: *Do you mind taking me through them?*

John:

The five R&D's (Vlismas, 2009)

- 1) Revere but Disregard
- 2) Read but Distil
- 3) Register but Detach
- 4) Reframe but Destroy
- 5) Rigor but Dynamism

No worries...The first R&D is 'revere but disregard'. That simply means that, in order for me to get the best out of my audience, I must firstly show

reverence. This basically means that I rate everybody in that room equally, including myself. So in other words, my importance is equal to theirs and theirs is equal to mine. So I think most people struggle to manage that equality. They either put the audience before them - in which case they become less than their best - or they project themselves as more important than the audience - in which case they kind of write themselves off. So it's important to revere.

Disregard just means that, in my respect for other people, I must never forget my need to question anything that I don't understand. Provided that I show reverence...uhm... my disregard for (inaudible) rules, for example the need for a beard on a muslim man tends to be a huge barrier for questions from some people from Europe – they're a little bit afraid of questioning. But my belief is, that if I show reverence first, I am more than allowed to ask questions, and I do!

It leads me into my next R&D, which is 'read but distil'. If I read someone for information, I must be able to disregard the 'rules' that would normally stop me from asking questions. So I would then move on to 'read and distil'. Reading means that I know that my body is the best biological machine in the history of evolution, so I must learn to use that to read...I can read pressures, colour changes, I can read facial configurations, body postures, I can sense moods...there are so many things that I can read. And reading your environment is linked to your intelligence. I think intelligence is incorrectly measured as a set number, and that doesn't make any sense. Because if you take someone who is supposedly intelligent and put them in a completely different environment, for example scuba diving at 60m, which is a technical dive, then that person would probably die and kill everyone else because he is not intelligent in that environment.

Author: *Ja*

John: So what's going to happen is that....I'm only as clever as my knowledge of my current audience right now. So, I have to start gathering information on that

audience as soon as possible. And the way I do that, is I read. But to speed up the quality and the richness of my reading, I need to understand why I'm reading. And I always remember in the back of my mind: I'm trying to find laughter. So then my distillation process...I read, but then I distil what I read...

Author: *Ja*

John: Cause I think a lot of people gather data in the belief that, just by doing research that they generate things, but often you don't think why you research. You've got to own that reading, got to focus it...

Author: *Mmm...absolutely*

John: And then we move on to 'register but detach'. By register I simply mean that when you are reading a certain audience, you need to actually register them, in other words put them on your own radar. And you definitely have to appear on their radar. And that's what you've mentioned earlier about disagreement. I think confrontation is a very, very useful tool in breaking through to other people. Provided that it's constructive confrontation.

Uhm...so what I do is that I make sure that I register in their world as a definite entity and I register them. And how I describe registering people, it's like when you are running a computer and you have eight programmes running but you have one (?). What I would do, is I would shut down all the peripheral programmes and just use all that processing power for the programme that is currently most needed. And that would increase my processor ability. It's exactly the same with my brain. I should shut down everything when I speak to an audience except reading that audience and gathering as much information – this is what I mean by registering. Somebody called it presencing.

And in order to make that more effective I focus on becoming personally more involved with that person. But when I ask someone where they live, I'm not really wanting to go and visit them, I'm just looking for information. So I must

detach myself while I register. This is quite...sort of an eastern, Buddhist concept.

Author: *Mmm...*

John: You know the ego is the worst filter for actually accessing information that I've ever come across because it's a personal filter. It creates value judgments. Once you've made a judgement, you stop researching that topic because you've found a point that you're satisfied that you know enough about it to decide...you've sort of boxed it. I say reserve judgement by being detached and keep your ego in check, because that's just an extra filter for information that you're trying to gather.

Author: *Mmm...mmm...*

John: The next R&D would be 'reframe but destroy'. Once your ego is in check by being detached, you develop the ability to suddenly take that argument that you have in your head and spin it 180 degrees and view it from the other view point. Now I understand that some people get morally confused by that, and I'm not saying that you must adopt the absolute opposite of your argument. All I'm saying is that if you have the ability to fully inhabit the total opposite of your own argument, it gives you a 360 degree view of the topic. That must increase your intelligence on topic. So if you're able to reframe your ...you know I've used the example of local minibuss taxis here in South Africa. People get this kneejerk reaction to what taxis stand for. But once you explain the economics and the moral situation of the people who are forced to use those taxis, suddenly some people may actually have sympathy for those people, and to almost be...uhm...uhm...a (?) for that kneejerk reaction. There may be an alternative approach to just saying that you hate taxis.

Then I talk about 'destroy', in other words...when I paint, my painting teacher has taught me a trick where you paint a picture and cover it with black and start all over again. And...he teaches that the value of the painting underneath that blackness is huge because you needed to paint that painting to get to the

next stage of your creativity. Unfortunately, we don't see destruction in South Africa as a very important part of creativity...

Author: *It's fantastic*

John: So that's 'reframe and destroy'...

Author: *Ja, ja...sorry, if I'm quite it is because I don't want to interrupt you too much. I'm merely listening and thinking that I'm getting really valuable information here. It's fantastic. Please go ahead, ja...*

John: OK cool...and then the last one is... 'rigour but dynamism'. What that refers to is...it goes back to sort of the initial underlying part of your *question (note: referring to basic interview questions)*, which interests me a lot because this isn't the first time that one of the students of Prof. Jon has asked me some questions. You see there's this underlying conception that creative people are chaotic...and...and...almost thrive on a lack of structure. And that's actually exactly the opposite of it. Again, it's this business reaction of 'if I don't recognise it, it must be chaos'. It's a very dangerous attitude when it comes to strategy.

Part of creative people's strategy is to have an order in their lives, which actually allows them to control the situation far better. So there's a massive amount of discipline and structure that goes into creative work, because in order to make it work, you must have spent the time. It's just that we don't spend the time (?) what the western business world sees as work effort. I might sleep in late sometimes, but then I work late. So in the middle of the day, the middle of the week I may lie in front of the TV and watch rubbish for three hours. It looks like I'm doing nothing, but actually allowing my brain to let things gently cook up: what need to do that night or what the (?) will be about the next day.

So it's very important that, wherever creative work is done, expect that there is a huge amount of structure that's needed. And we are...I think it's like advertising agencies...they've got (?) in their lobbies and pin machines, that's

not creative! That's just embezzling the client. A truly creative person needs rules. Like with a child, you've got to give a child structure. It's exactly the same with a creative person. In fact, the more rules you have, the more creative you have to be as a result. So there is this misperception that the more structure there is, the less creative the workplace can be. It's completely not true. If you give people too much freedom, you can actually take away their creativity.

So there is rigour. But the tension comes in balancing rigour with dynamism, which is the ability to react to change, which causes further change, which illicit a further reaction. It's an ongoing process. So rigour but dynamism is a very important relationship between rules and freedom in creativity.

Author: *Mmm...what I get from you is that there is a fair amount of awareness and reflection needed to spot the underlying patterns. How do you practically do that? You've mentioned that you might sit in front of the TV and just let it process at the back of your mind...are there other practices that you employ?*

John: Well...when I spoke about 'reframe but destroy', it's very important to me, because I sit down on the base assumption that there is a pattern that I don't see yet. So if you know that and once you're open, those patterns become clearer. And I also believe - and this is something that a lot of people struggle with - that it is important to see things in very broad, contextual terms rather than seeking the detail. I think that we are able to do that better and faster, you may find patterns that were not apparent before.

Author: *Right, yeah. So do you do that mostly as a form of improvisation or do you do things like journaling, meditation...*

John: Uhm...you know I probably do in my own way. But one of the books that I really don't like at all is called The Artist's Way. Some lady thought she was speaking on behalf of all artists with these things like (?) and blah blah. I think it's very important that you find your own methodology. I'm also very much against these 'airport self-help marketing opportunities' that sort of...

Author: *(laughing)*

John: ...people inflict on other people. I think it's vitally important to be on a creative journey, and every life is a creative journey. No matter what you do, no matter what you create or what you've produced or what deals you break...every life is a creative journey. I think the way that I explain it is a bit frustrating to people because they want an easy to digest '2 steps to...6 keys to...7 habits of' and I don't believe it's like that. I hope in my work, that people would just get the inkling that they need to begin their own work and discover their own way.

So my way is ongoing and it changes all the time, and for example, you've mentioned improvisation... for me that is one of the most fundamental things that I've done in my life. And it's been, for a few years, a very very hard situation where I've not run the material that I have - and I know my work - but I choose to improvise. To me that's a far better skill. So I think it's about judgement as opposed to rules. I prefer to use judgement rather than rules.

Author: *You're a very creative individual in many ways. Not only in coming up with new acts and paintings, but also in the way that you approach business and life in general. You've also mentioned earlier that you see creativity as an approach to life... you see it as much more than coming up with tangible products?*

John: Absolutely, I think you kind of know it because...I've realised that all the things that people create are not...the truth is that those are by-products of this creative journey that I talk about. So I think the trick is to focus on that creativity and that journey and then those products will come. For example: whether it's a great meal or a painting or a good gig...these are all fruit of the same tree. So focus on the tree rather, and that thing that I talk about life quality. And then it will come. And whether it comes as an orange or a pear or an apple... that's almost kind of irrelevant for me. So whether I go scuba

diving or work in the studio or cook in the kitchen, for me it's all the same process.

Author: *How do you channel your creativity to the benefit of society?*

John: (laughing) I don't know if I do. Uhm...I think...uhm...I'm not sure that anyone is under any obligation to benefit society. I think as far as people go I think I just happen to be very interested in people. And I have a philosophy that you should spread the good stuff around and limit the bad stuff. But I don't necessarily wake up in the morning and think "How can I be a better boy scout?" (laughing)

Author: *(laughing) But still, I think why I asked that question is...I got the impression from your lecture that you have an acute sense of social awareness.*

John: Sure, I think that's a personal philosophy or approach, it's just something I've been raised with, and I think it is quite important. And I also think that if you make your living out of observing a specific animal, then yes, surely part of your intelligence must be concerned with the (?) of that animal. Not that I say that people are animals, but if I practice reverence they are!

Author: *(laughing)*

John: Yeah, all are equally important.

Author: *(laughing)*

John: So I have this particular warmth for people because I almost see us like a mentally ill species that needs a bit of help.

Author: *(laughing) This might be a leading question, but do you think that you contribute in the sense that you challenge people's assumptions? You challenge people to challenge their own assumptions.*

John: Yes. I think it's very, very important to do that. Everything I do is about that. From my very latest tattoo on my arm to my dress sense, my haircut, my insistence on talking about awkward things just blurting them out at the most

inopportune moments. I think it is so important to force people...not force them, that's the wrong word...provoke them to perhaps question the things that they think they believe. Because I don't mind anyone causing trouble for what they believe, but I hate people who cause trouble for what they think they believe and have never really thought it through. So it's very important to me that we break all that unnecessary nonsense and get to the core of ... what is it that you believe and if you are going to fight for it, then you better have thought about it.

Author: *Quit the pretence and think for yourself?*

John: Absolutely, and that goes back to judgement as opposed to rules.

Author: *John, you're a frequent traveller; you're all over the place. Does that hamper you in terms of momentum and productivity? Or not?*

John: I don't think so, because it only becomes a hamper if you see yourself as being spread out all over the place. But I understand that my locus of control is internal. In other words, I control my own momentum no matter where I am because I have continuity. In other words, I've got my brain, I've got my laptop, I've got all my other toys...so what is the difference if I'm in a hotel in the Seychelles or I'm at home with my daughter or I'm in London. I have complete continuity because I understand that my process begins and ends with me. You know like I gave up drinking. It doesn't mean that I phone ahead and ask them to clear out all the alcohol in my life. I understand that my locus of control is inside me.

Author: *Where do you draw your inspiration from?*

John: Uhm...somebody once asked John Cleese, the comedian, where he gets his jokes from. He said: "I get them from a lady in Bath, and she gets them from a man at the coast, and he won't tell us where he gets them from". And in that answer...I think that's what I've said earlier about this creative journey...it's holistic almost. It's in everything. And I love that eastern thing: "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear". I think when the creative person is

ready, the inspiration will be there. Exactly the same thing. You can get it out of anything: a rock, a table, a chair...it doesn't matter, because actually you're not getting it from there. You're bouncing your own open mind against something as a sounding board. So you should be able to find inspiration in everything. Ultimately, obviously, I'm not a zen master right now, but I'd like to aim for that.

Author: *Do you practice eastern religion or are you merely interested in the theory behind it?*

John: I'm just interested in the theory. What I like about the eastern spiritual practices or let's rather say belief systems, is that they're very much (?) human nature. So intuitively, once you have learnt to settle yourself and go inside, those belief systems will ring true for you. Well they certainly ring true for me, they resonate. I'll never become an adherent to a particular believe system, but I must say that the more I read about Tao and Buddhism, the more I feel...those things got a lot of truth for me.

APPENDIX D: AFFINITY DIAGRAM

The learning journal entries were grouped together in themes, and a suitable variable was extracted. This is the starting point of synthesis and structuring of the ‘mess’ (Day, 2009). Since we are largely concerned with behaviours, these variables should represent a behaviour that can be observed and potentially be plotted over time e.g. on a BOT graph; and not a ‘state’. These variables represent the essential parts of the system – those that are sufficient for co-producing the defining behaviour of the system (Jon Foster-Pedley on SCQARE).

The terms Creative Ability, Awareness of Life’s Demands, Creative Response, Attentiveness, Creative Participation and Creative Acts were borrowed from Creative Ability theory (Du Toit, 1970), and adapted to fit the context of leadership theory.

Variable	Description
Level of creative ability Expressed in relational contact with people, materials and situations (Du Toit, 1970)	Paul: use art to contribute to charity (gives and get back so much in return). Also art for art’s sake. Humble, humility. Childhood illness. Refined relationships, artistic skills and complex situations. Craig: refined relationships, clinical skills and complex situations. Making a difference. Annemarie: stable family life. Making a difference. Art of therapy (relationships) then “using science of therapy to position it correctly so that you can shift that child, and you can scaffold that child from where he is now to the next level...the next level of skill, of coping, of sensitization, of how he perceives his environment.” Wishes to leverage skills and knowledge to make larger impact, generate positive change on a larger scale. “We need to think beyond that, we need to think wider.” John: Creativity is a fundamental condition of existence. Not a specific type of person, just in various states, more in touch with your creativity.” In which case, you are less inclined to create controls that will predict your outcome.” Every life is a creative journey. “I hope in my work that people would just get the inkling that they need to begin their own work and discover their own way.” Philosophy to spread the good stuff around and limit the bad stuff. Just happened to be very interested in people, does not try to be a boyscout. Sees his creative contribution as provocation – challenging people to question what they think they believe, challenge assumptions.
Awareness of Life’s demands	Paul: the art of looking sideways (Alan Fletcher), view things from different perspective, different time of the day. Different perspective. Travel. Recharge – sometimes goes for 3 days straight without seeing anyone or speaking to anyone. Movies alone (alone time, reflection,

	absorption) Craig: Creative approach to hospital management needed to create fundamental shift in culture. Desire to use opportunities to bring about positive change, create value, add value, also in business. Meaning, purpose. Annemarie: “For me the core thing is still sharing, compassion...sharing love and peace and actually changing people’s lives for the better.” “Creativity is the key...the connection between what you know and your dream or vision. How do you combine those two?” Brain is in constant motion...always thinking...always seeing things and planning things...and doing. John: “I believe that it is important to see things in very broad, contextual terms rather than seeking the detail. I think that if you are able to do that better and faster, you may find patterns that were not apparent before.”
Quality of creative response	Paul: Career strategy to become full time artist. 10 year goal – international. Research international art scene – want to go bigger, wider. Works hard to position himself. Uses internet (trained as computer programmer) extensively to network and market himself. Spotting and using opportunities and creating opportunities. Craig: Raise the standard of public health care. Replicate behaviours, empower others to raise their level of creative ability. Annemarie: Creativity involves the concepts formed around a particular interest or response (e.g dreams and goals) Sensation seeker. Likes variation, change, an element of unpredictability. “I continuously see new opportunities, new things. And when I see a new opportunity, I immediately start to plan in my mind...uhm...how would I take this further?” “Don’t believe in doing things halfway, either you do it or you don’t” “But it has ultimately been driven by ‘doing greater good’ and giving back. John: “I understand that my locus of control is internal. In other words, I control my momentum no matter where I am because I have continuity. I have my brain, my laptop, my other toys.”
Degree of attentiveness	Paul: actively looks around for inspiration for future work, document it (scan and retain process) photo’s, sketches. Lifelong learner – orders postgraduate books, business acumen for artist at GSB. Intensive research for career. Reads a lot. Quotes. Craig: spot opportunities, see possibilities in problems, what you pay attention to. Pay attention to people. Eliminate activities that don’t add value so that one can focus on what does (e.g. TV vs. Quality time with people). Being focused so that he can be more ‘present’ for things that actually matter. Making best use of available time. MBA leverage purpose with business acumen. Annemarie: “keeping on growing and developing new things” SI training, PhD. Sees it as fun. Visual learner “I’ve got these millions of pictures in my brain.” Drawback: Not organised “I don’t really write things down, that is also why I’m battling with my thesis.” Not journal kind of person. Little notes scattered all over the desk – loses things, frustrating. Very organised

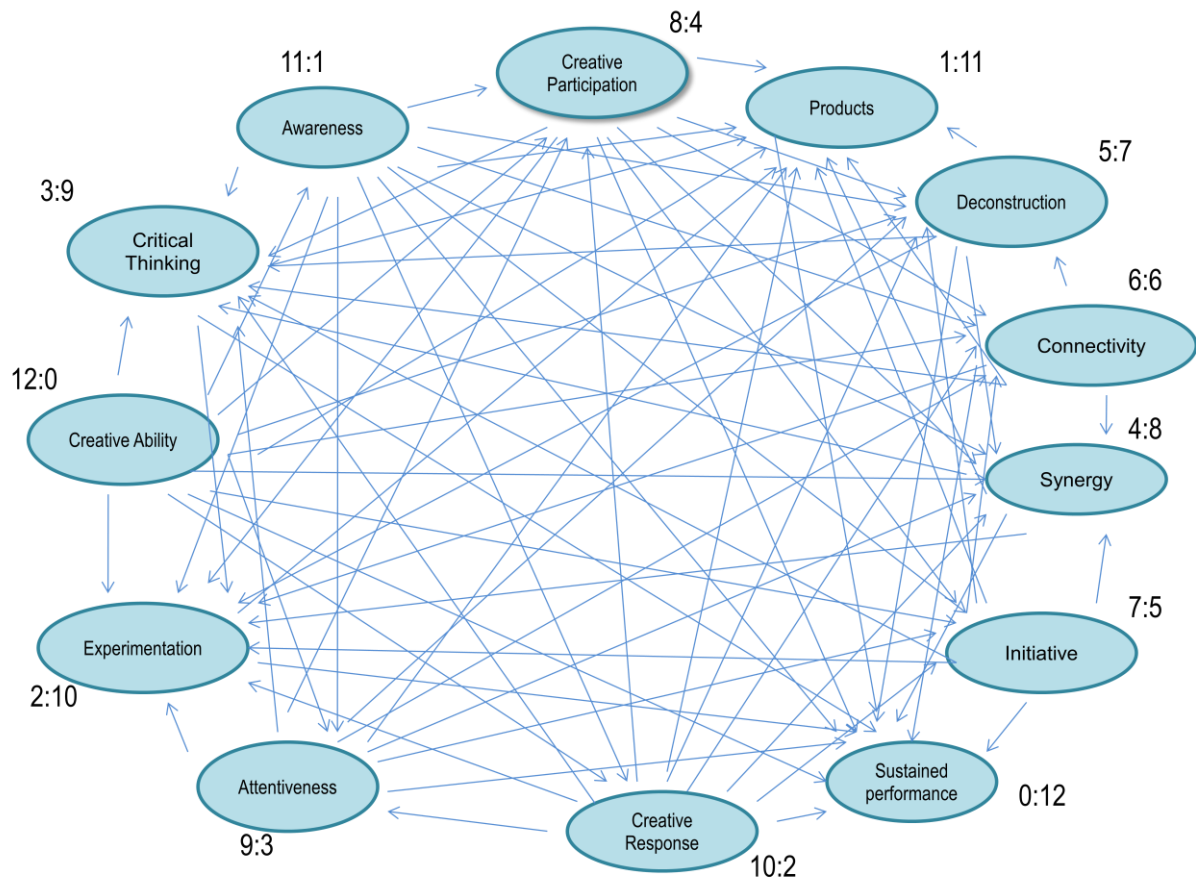
	PA. Challenge: time for reflection. Overcommitted? Possible weakness: doesn't reflect enough. "My brain actually doesn't switch off, with is tiring." Challenge is how to be still. "I mull things over in my mind continuously, but it's a rather chaotic process...it's like a mouse on wheels that just keeps on going." John: Study the human animal – observe patterns. "Chaos is a word that business people use to describe something that they don't recognise." Lazy reaction. Allow your brain to let things gently cook up. Doesn't journal. "Wherever creative work is done, expect a huge amount of structure. A truly creative person needs rules. The more rules you have, the more creative you have to be as a result."
Quality of critical thinking	Nancy Kline (thinking environment) KnowInnovation (e.g. divergence and convergence) Creative tension Craig: empower nursing staff to do problem-solving, creative thinking, make best use of limited resources. Scientific mind – created model to understand how it works. Annemarie: Doesn't get wrapped up in a lot of detail. Strong on idea generation, weaker on implementation. New employee thinks differently, constructive conflict needed. Creative tension. "I need someone who can drag me down and say: 'Stop, you can't do that!'" "Creativity is coming up with different ideas, it definitely starts in your brain somewhere." Create new concepts, new dynamics, new applications, new uses of old things (scamper?). Use existing knowledge and skills – combine into something new. (link Robinson) "I do most of my thinking in the shower. That's where I do all my problem-solving, that's where I do my thinking, that's where I come up with new ideas, continuously." (tortoise mind?) John: View argument from other perspective – gives 360 degree view of the topic – increase your intelligence on the topic. Pattern recognition – everything is the result of creative order. Inspiration can be anywhere, chair, table etc. "You're bouncing your own open mind against something as a sounding board. So you should be able to find inspiration in everything."
Deconstruct	John: Reserve judgement, keep ego in check otherwise value judgment. Stops you from learning. Reframe but destroy. Counterintuitive. Deconstruct. Destruction is a very important part of creativity. Painting covered in black and start again – value underneath. Challenge assumptions. "So it's very important to me that we break all that unnecessary nonsense and get to the core of...what it is that you believe and if you are going to fight for it, then you better have thought about it." Paul: shred canvasses Annemarie: deconstruct career.
Quality of products	Paul: Judges quality of his own work, won't release substandard canvasses. Shred and use for collages. May re-evaluate what was previously seen as

	mistakes. Craig: Character, ethics, purpose also outcomes/products. Annemarie: “Creativity is about producing new, interesting dynamics. It ‘s not always something that you produce in a tangible form.” Learns by trial and error. “If I’ve made a mistake, if things don’t work, then I retrace my steps...OK what happened?...and how can I do this differently?” feedback from self, action learning. “Reflection, adaptation. Learn more from failures than from successes. John: “I’ve realised that all the things that people create are not...the truth is that those are by products of this creative journey that I talk about. So I think the trick is to focus on that creativity and that journey and then those products will come. For example: whether it’s a great meal or a painting or a good gig...these are all fruit of the same tree. So focus on the tree rather, and that thing that I talk about life quality. And then it will come. And whether it comes as an orange or a pear or an apple... that’s almost kind of irrelevant for me. So whether I go scuba diving or work in the studio or cook in the kitchen, for me it’s all the same process.”
Ability for sustained performance	Paul: works longer hours than most people, but chooses his own time. Sometimes works straight through the night. Bruce Mau: “If you like it, do it again. If you don’t like it, do it again.” Craig: Inherent belief in the good – stubbornness to sustain efforts? Annemarie: From a work perspective, the fact that I get such good feedback. “I’m a doer, I put my head down and decide to do something and I do it. And then I usually learn by trial and error.” “When it comes to cleaning up and going into the detail I get bored, I’m already onto the next idea and the next thing.” But also can work hard e.g. e-profiling but “I need to be able to balance that with other new, interesting stuff, idea generation.” “Work really really hard” Family is currently getting the least of me. That’s part of the reason why I want to put things into place so that I can withdraw a little bit and have some fun as well. I don’t have enough time for fun” John: “There’s a massive amount of discipline and structure that goes into creative work, because in order to make it work, you must have spent the time. I might sleep in late sometimes, but then I work late.”
Degree of initiative	Paul: gets involved in charity projects, working with kids etc. Be prepared to let yourself be changed e.g. inspired by other artists, share studio space, joint exhibitions, learn from working with kids (humility). Pandora’s box – collaborative. Craig: working together, flatter hierarchy, equals in problem solving and responsibility. Collaborative art session and group discussion. Annemarie: Hiring new employee who is more detail orientated, more operations. Art of therapy: key is relationships. John: Show reverence. Rate everybody in the room equally, including myself. (link Kline). Register – put people on your own radar and ensure that you appear on their radar as a definite entity. Constructive confrontation useful tool in breaking through to other people. Give your full attention, shut down peripheral programmes – somebody called it presencing (Scharmer?). Become

	involved with that person, but also detach.
Synergy	Paul: magic of New York studio. Experimental music, other artists. Craig: environment best service to patients. Teamwork, appreciation – potentially lead to intrinsic motivation in others. Annemarie: “It doesn’t help if I get someone who is strong where I am strong. I need someone who is strong where I am weak and maybe weak where I am strong. That’s where you complement one another.” Constructive conflict. Take the business to the next level. Learn how to manage the conflict. Annemarie: Art of therapy: collaborating with the parents and working on a combined relationship, looking at the bigger picture and not just treating children in isolation.” John: Co-creates gig with audience.
Quality of creative participation	Opportunity to practice skills, interaction, creative thinking. Thinking environment (Kline). Experiment with new approaches, dynamics. Help others to raise their own level of CA. Paul: polarity re. living in his own mind and seeking out social interaction. Relationships and networking carried through recession. Craig: “Being part of a team that grows together is incredibly rewarding”. Relationships. Craig’s model- the foundation (also see Kline, 2008) respect, love, caring, listening, compassion, appreciation. Annemarie – relationships key to the art of therapy John: Rigour but dynamism. Structure, discipline. If you give people too much freedom, you can actually take away their creativity. But the tension comes in balancing rigour with dynamism, which is the ability to react to change, which causes further change, which illicit a further reaction. It’s an ongoing process.
Experiment	(links to divergent/convergent thinking?) (action learning?) (double feedback loops) (being open for the unexpected?) Paul: techniques, tools, weaker hand. Playing around. Spontaneous – chalk on concrete. Never formally studied art (polarity between beginners mind and expertise?) (polarity freedom and control) Annemarie: “That’s why the entrepreneurial thing really works for me...I’m good at coming up with ideas and I’m not scared to try them.” Deconstruct – give up private practice. Do OT training – find passion. Not afraid of risks. John: Improvisation. “I believe that we are able to come up with unpredictable outcomes because it’s in our reaction...not controlling whatever it is that we want to get a result from.” “Real creativity is about being brave enough to accept that unpredictability is...is almost like a vital ingredient.”
Emergence	Paul: less control, more surprising results. Highlights what emerges from painting. Craig: create the conditions for character and purpose to emerge (relationships NB)

	Annemarie: “I don’t mind all the unpredictable components of it, it is a lot of hard work but there is also a certain element of...of fun, of anticipation, of challenge, of excitement, of surprise that I actually really do enjoy and that I really work well with. John: Creativity is something inherent that we just have to allow.
Finding your medium	Paul: art is very personal and it comes from my mind and experiences. Art, sculpture, production. Distinguish himself – brand. create art just for art’s sake. “A man is a success if he gets up in the morning and gets to bed at night, and in between he does what he wants to do.”Bob Dylan (links Robinson – find your medium. Williams) Annemarie: training, sharing info with adults John: stand-up comedy, production Craig: teamwork, training, mentorship
Connectivity	Annemarie: new employee complement and challenge. Diversity. If team members are all the same, it is boring and you won’t get the job done. Cross pollination. “It will be good for me to have people who can actually reflect and be more quiet. Who can take creativity to a quieter place.” John: “Disregard just means that, in my respect for other people, I must never forget my need to <u>question</u> anything that I don’t understand. Provided that I show reverence.” (link kline incisive questions) <u>Read</u> pressures, colour changes, facial configurations, body postures, sense moods. Gather information. Distil information – remember why you read. “Ego is worst filter for actually accessing information that I’ve ever come across because it’s a personal filter.”

APPENDIX E: INTERRELATIONSHIPS DIAGRAM



APPENDIX F: SYSTEMIC SCORECARD

