**Notes on Creative Participation**

**Robin Joubert, 1981**

1. **Introduction**
2. **Brief History**

Vona du Toit's work on patient volition and action began to emerge in 1962. She was greatly concerned with the individual's will to do, to participate, and to create, and with factors which influence this will.That the patient's motivation affects his rehabilitation is common knowledge in Occupational Therapy. Vona du Toit's work shows the Occupational Therapist how she can more accurately gauge a patient's level of volition, and from this more accurately anticipate the quality of action which he will display. This knowledge can be used by the Occupational Therapist to select activities in which the patient is more likely to fully involve himself, be this for physical or psychological gain. Conversely, it can be used to attempt to upgrade volition and thus improve action. Colleagues in South Africa are continuing with this work, developing its clinical application in both physical and psychiatric Occupational Therapy practice.

1. **Creativity in General**

Many people tend to regard creativity within man as that ability to create something which is artistically inclined, e.g. a painting, sculpting, a piece of music or poetry. However, following the writings and research of people such as Buber, Carl Rogers, Freud, Maslow and Vona du Toit, it is necessary for we, as Occupational Therapists, to look at the creativity of man in a much broader context.

Rogers' definition of the creative process runs as follows:

"The emergence, in action, of a novel relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, people or circumstances of his life on the other." He further goes on to say that "the mainspring of man's creativity appears to be man's tendency to actualise himself, in other words, to become his potentialities".

 In other words, if we look at it in a global sense, it is the total being and doing of man within his environment, how he survives, and in order to survive he has to do, by doing he becomes. And if we look at Occupational Therapy, it all revolves around man's doing and being and how pathology, either physical and/or mental, affects his ability to do and to be.

1. **Important concepts of Creative Participation**

Volition: An inner drive, readiness or motivation which directs one's behaviour towards a goal.

This may be as simple as the drive which takes one to the kitchen to make a sandwich because one is hungry or it may be as complicated as the drive which makes one enrol to study to become, for example, a scientist.

Volition is present within every living organism but in man it is perhaps the most involved and complicated. It is determined by many factors, the most important being heredity, environmental influences and intellect. Volition is always manifest in some kind of action in order to achieve a goal. It is a drive which responds to a challenge, e.g. as in the example above - hunger, challenges the volition to take action in making a sandwich (product) which will appease the hunger and hence achieve the goal; or the need to obtain prestige in one specific environment may challenge the volition to take action in studying to become a scientist (product).

Action: The exertion of volition and mental and physical effort which results in a tangible or intangible product.

For example, the sandwich is a tangible product of the volition, whereas the degree obtained and the quality of the scientist with the degree is intangible.

Product: The tangible or intangible result of the action taken as a result of the challenged volition.

See the figure below: Volition, Action and the resultant Product all have an effect on one another:

Product

Volition

Action

Creative participation is thus basically the externalisation of the inner drive (volition) in qualitative and quantitative action resulting in a purposeful product (see point 5 for detailed description of terms).

1. **Characteristics of Volition and Action**
2. The growth and recovery of volition follows a constant sequential pattern.
3. The growth and recovery of action follows a constant sequential pattern.
4. The developmental stages of volition and action appear to be dependent on one another (relate to one another in a constant manner).
5. Volition and action cannot be separated from one another.
6. **Criteria for determining the quality of Creative Ability**
7. The quality of a person's ability to make contact with materials, objects, people and situations.
8. The ability to control the negative effects of anxiety.
9. The degree of initiative/originality used in thoughts and action (connected to amount of intellect).
10. The quality and quantity of exertion one is prepared to channelize into tasks and challenges in all the spheres of life (maximal exertion).
11. **Definition of terms**
12. Creative Capacity

This is the total creative possibility or creative potential of a particular individual. Factors such as intelligence, personality and environmental opportunity will influence the capacity.

1. Creative Response

This is the positive attitudinal reaction which an individual displays towards opportunity. This attitude precedes action. It is the "turning towards" or contact seeking element. The creative response reflects the preparedness to participate because of the anticipated pleasure/reward.

1. Creative Participation and the Creative Act

These are practically synonymous (with a slight difference in emphasis):

Creative Participation emphasises the process of "being involved in" and a "doing" component.

The Creative Act is the crystallisation of the creative response and creative participation into action. The final product of the response and participation is the creative act.

1. Creative Ability

That area of an individual's creative capacity (or potential) which he has realised and defined or manifest in himself.

1. **The developmental stages of Volition and their corresponding stages of Action**

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| **Volition** | **Action** |
| TONE | Pre-destructive Action |
| SELF DIFFERENTIATION | * Destructive Action
* ­­Incidental Action
 |
| PRESENTATION | Explorative Action |
| PARTICIPATION:* Passive Participation
* Imitative Participation
* Active Participation
* Competitive Participation
 | * Passive Action
* Imitative Action
* Originative Action
* Competitive Contribution Action
 |
| CONTRIBUTION | Situation Centred/Contributive Action |
| COMPETITIVE CONTRIBUTION | Community Centred/Competitive Contributive Action |