

A Manifesto for Creative Thinking

Introduction

The ability to think creatively is a trait inherent in us all. With that said, it is often difficult, frustrating, and time-consuming in making the transition from merely retrieving information and comprehending it to actually engaging in the act of exploring new, original ideas. This manifesto seeks to affirm my own creativity while positing that it is possible and permissible to encourage others to find their own threads of connectivity in fostering creative risk-taking and problem-solving. In writing this manifesto, I have relied heavily upon my work as both a teacher and student who consistently attempts to specifically foster an environment that values and emphasizes creative thinking. I have found that in doing so, I have continually faced certain problems relating to my own creative thinking, and this manifesto serves as a basis by which to move forward and beyond any obstacles that impede my ability to trust myself. Accordingly, I have devised a number of simple statements designed to help free myself of constraints, brainstormed strategic tools to help foster creative thinking, and focused heavily on the theme of self-acceptance as resources that I will utilize moving forward.

Freeing Yourself from Constraints

Relax. The first step in freeing oneself from self-imposed constraints is finding the ability to relax. This may take the form of deep breathing, meditative exercises, personal reflection or other suggested relaxation techniques. Finding and striking a balance between the feelings of anxiety and the ability to function is essential to the act of moving forward.

Stop fighting. After relaxing, it becomes necessary to seek validation through personal affirmation because in doing so, feelings of guilt, anger, and disappointment are authenticated and accepted. These feelings are not unnatural and are healthy when facing unexpected obstacles and difficulties solving problems; it is essential to remember that such emotions are useful.

Consider your assumptions. When solving problems, a key element of success is to reconsider the cultural framework that the issues are presented in. One must be wary of a value-free and culturally neutral approach because it fails to take into account cultural objectives that can enhance creative thinking. Are there alternative perspectives from which a problem can be viewed? Why is it necessary to solve a problem or find a creative solution in a form that has already been mastered? What is the worst thing that could happen if one was to fail? Is the worst-case scenario likely or just a figment that has been created in an imagination?

Find intrinsic acceptance. The act of being creative is an activity often undertaken with the goal of success, and oftentimes measures of success are presumptive of certain values and ideas. This can

present a barrier and it becomes necessary to reframe a goal in order to find a creative solution. Moreover, the act of reframing allows for the person to express and explore their ideas and beliefs that constitute their own personal intellect for the purpose of finding autonomy that allows for the enhancement of both problem-solving and invention

Strategic Tools to Help Foster Creative Thinking

The act of utilizing certain tools and activities centers on the appreciation of them as resources in the creative exploration of ideas. Certain tasks are necessary in overcoming creative blockage.

Task repetition. After completing the outlined cognitive steps above, one can begin to find practical approaches to thinking creatively. The first is task repetition that will ideally aid someone in overcoming anxiety through the act of taking continual risks, which will ideally desensitize the problem and make it not as anxiety-producing.

Seeking support. The second task is to find support. Regardless of whether it be through engaging in a dialogue or venting frustrations, it is important to receive feedback, input, and encouragement through the support of another.

Creating short-term and long-term goals. Goal setting is an important act that allows the creation of concrete strategies to reach an objective. Citing short term, manageable goals allow for steps to be broken into increments and thus made more accessible, which in turn makes longer-term goals more attainable.

Creating a list of principle moral values. Defining one's principle moral values is helpful because therefore we own our ideas; they become meaningful and worthwhile. When we engage in the social transmission of ideas, we need to feel ownership over our own discourses in order to find our own autonomy.

Acceptance

I have found, over the duration of this course, that personal acceptance has been enormously important to me in feeling comfortable in engaging creatively with problem-solving and goal-setting.