

# Getting In Shape For Creativity

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## Getting In Shape For Creativity

Over the years, several research and studies have concluded with the same result: every human being is born creative. We see clearly that creativity is a fundamental trait of been human and it is well known that children are considered to be creative.

However, there is very little creativity on display amongst adults, a study conducted suggested that less than 2% of the adult population displays creativity.

How can we get back in that original creative state?

The big idea: creativity is a state that can be achieved by anybody, anyone at all. World changing ideas, creativity, scientific breakthroughs, technological inventions, radical new economic policies can come from anybody, regardless of their background, age, gender, race, or skin colour. It is not connected to the size of your wallet or your geographical location.

These all sounds like some far reaching theory that bears no resemblance to daily reality. Nevertheless, it is not impossible for most people to become more creative, regardless of their background. The ability to activate unlimited creativity is closer than most people think and it is more accessible than most people think. Let me share a quick story with you.

After many years of teaching farmers some potent secrets behind how to increase the productivity of their farmlands, one year the harvest was in excess with respect to available market demand. People couldn't sell their crops. Shocked at this outcome of his work, and seeing the threat of a disaster, George Washington Carver, the man responsible for it all, retreated into his laboratory. He didn't ask for government aid, or demand people to stop planting.

Carver locked himself in his laboratory for several days and nights. When he emerged, he announced that he had come up with a solution. He was going to synthesise new uses for the surplus

harvest, and he eventually came up with 300 things the harvested crops could be used for.

From the peanut, and later the pecan-nut and sweet potato, Carver discovered how to extract, or synthesise, face powders, printers ink, peanut butter, shampoo, creosote, vinegar, dandruff-cure, instant coffee, dyes, rubberoid compound, soaps, wood stains, and hundreds of other uses.

George Washington Carver said that, “The great Creator gave us three kingdoms, the animal, vegetable and mineral. Now he has added a fourth, the synthetic kingdom.”

There is no need to idolise Carver, which is not why I am sharing his story with you. I want you to read his story and trust that “if George Washington Carver; a former slave that grew up in a racist and very negative atmosphere could access and unleash the highest levels of his creative abilities, what then is my excuse?”

You can reclaim your creativity, channel it in a productive manner and unleash your inventions. However, the reality of things is that not everybody is able to retain their creativity beyond childhood or reclaim it after maturity. We need to come up with a solid roadmap for achieving that.

Let us develop a clear and unambiguous roadmap to connecting with our innate creativity. Digging deeper into how we can get in shape for creativity and inventiveness. We might have been born creative, but in order to maximise creativity, one might need a few pointers on the journey.

# I. How Do I Activate And Explore My Creativity?

Is there some form of formula that one can trust to consistently come up with creative ideas and uncommon insights?

The real authoritative answer is NO. There is no known formula or exact step-by-step theory that is guaranteed to bring you creative insights in an exacting manner. The kind that would be scientifically acceptable.

Nevertheless, my quest to understand creativity has led me to develop a framework. The framework that works and if you open up to learn the framework from me, you would be ready to reclaim your creativity and unleash your inventions at the highest levels.

I know it might look like a big claim, but I have done my homework. I have considered all angles of the arguments and settled down with an informed opinion.

After reviewing the best of the best of ideas, books and theories about creativity and how to develop creative ideas, I observed that there is always an aspect that deals with intuition or the subconscious mind. Something that is neither rational nor even predictable.

Leading experts on creativity, productivity and human psychology are searching for ways to intentionally utilize the power of our intelligence and imagination to facilitate subconscious creativity.

Emphasis on subconscious creativity.

CREATIVITY DOES NOT SEEM TO BE SOMETHING THAT HAPPENS BY CALCULATED THINKING AND ANALYSIS OF FACTS, DATA, INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE. It is something that happens unconsciously or rather, creativity is not a fruit of your conscious efforts.

Let me highlight some globally acclaimed thinking about the subject matter.

In 2009, Elizabeth Gilbert, the bestselling author of travel memoir *Eat, Pray, Love* gave a TED Talk about the origin of creativity. Her big idea was not a new idea at all, she simply pointed out that in real life, **NOBODY COMES UP WITH NEW IDEAS**. The ideas come to them.

She proposed that we revert back to the way ancient Roman and Greek civilisations acknowledged new ideas and creativity. During that era, people spoke about fairies, daemons and genies that dropped fresh insights in the minds of people. People were not called “genius”, rather it was said that “they had a genius”. An external guiding light that offered ideas, and fresh knowledge to their host.

Socrates, the popular and influential Greek philosopher was known to often mention that he was guided by a daemon, a kind of divine spirit, oracle, or “sign,” that takes the form of an inner voice or non-vocal nudge. This spiritual guide helps Socrates and speaks wisdom into his ears.

This account is supported by many people, myself included, for example: I never consciously decided to become an inventor, the idea came to me. I simply perceived in my heart: “Boy, come up here! Boy, upgrade! Real inventions are required from you, you can do better than website designing and mobile app development” (As a Christian, I do not believe in daemons, fairies and genies, and so, I would describe such a phenomenon as God speaking directly to me)

In a nutshell, Elizabeth Gilbert believes that ideas generation are beyond us humans. Ideas are channelled through, from something divine and unto people. With story after story, she backed up her beliefs in an authentic manner.

The mind-set here been that there is no way to really control the process or even reasonably trust that someone can channel another creative thought ever again. The idea that the realms of creative idea generation is beyond human and no control can be asserted.

I find this to be a very limiting belief and not even close to what could be possible if one masters creativity. Serendipity might be a

feature of creativity, but that should not be taken to mean it is outside our control altogether.

It is common knowledge that our best ideas seem to simply come to us, especially when we are in the bathroom. That moment when our mind is in a kind of blank slate and no active thinking is going on. This phenomena is now commonly referred to as the shower moment.

The cognitive psychologist Scott Barry Kaufman explained why experiences like the shower moment seems to aid creativity: “The relaxing, solitary, and non-judgmental shower environment may afford creative thinking by allowing the mind to wander freely, and causing people to be more open to their inner stream of consciousness and daydreams.”

I would like to draw your attention to the words “inner stream of consciousness”, those words once again suggest that creativity is not something one actively thinks about doing. It happens far away from conscious thoughts or schemes.

If creativity is not something that happens by following a clearly marked out step-by-step process consciously, but rather seems to involve the unconscious mind, then I think it is best for us to turn to other places for answers.

One cannot deny that there seems to be something intuitive about ideas and creative insights. Marriam-Webster Dictionary defines intuition as “the power or faculty of attaining to direct knowledge or cognition without evident rational thought and inference”

When we attempt to understand intuition, we find that the discussion moves quickly away from logic and rational thinking and towards the subconscious mind, something we also refer to as the inner soul, or the spirit of a person.

There is something about creativity that transcends the physical and the mental. An issue modern science seems to side-step by using polished terms like intuition, chance, inner stream of consciousness, and even quantum physics to explain it away. (No jokes, some people actually think it is all due to unknown laws of quantum physics)



It is hard for one to deny that there seems to be something spiritual about ideas and creative insights. Rational enquiry cannot explain creativity and so, I think it is in our best interest to move on and venture towards a model that has reliably explained spiritual things for over a millennium.

Religion, faith and spirituality have given mankind a means of understanding things that transcend our three-dimensional world where we live, work and play. Spiritual things cannot always be explained away by our current model of logic and science as it is obvious that our spiritual exploration is much deeper than our physical and mental exploration.

Matters of creativity and invention is a spiritual affair. There is something spiritual about creativity and if we want to make progress with regards to a deep exploration of our innate creative powers, one must turn to spiritual knowledge of God over academic and scientific knowledge.

The basic tenets of science; the true spirit of science demands we do so.

## II. How Brilliant Must You Be In Order To Be Creative?

When Time magazine designated Albert Einstein in 1999 as The Person Of The Century, nobody really protested that decision.

Albert Einstein was chosen as the person of the century, on the grounds that he was the preeminent scientist in a century dominated by science. The editors of Time believed the 20th century “will be remembered foremost for its science and technology”, and Einstein “serves as a symbol of all the scientists”

In fact, the word “Einstein” is universally accepted as a synonym for the word “genius”. You could switch genius for Einstein in a sentence and nobody would mark you down.

It is surprising then that Albert Einstein is not considered to be the smartest person ever. During his lifetime, it was well known that several other scientists and researchers possessed an IQ (intelligence quotient) that was much higher than his.

In terms of raw brain power, it is accepted that certain people, like John von Neumann for example were much more intelligent than Albert Einstein. John von Neumann had a reputation as a “frighteningly fast problem solver”.

John von Neumann would often resolve difficult problems in an amazing short time, problems which took experts many hours, months, or even years to solve.

Neumann’s mind was simply quicker and more powerful than anybody of his era, yet, nobody considers him greater than Albert Einstein. Neumann published over 150 papers in his life: about 60 in pure mathematics, 60 in applied mathematics, 20 in physics, and the remainder on special mathematical subjects or non-mathematical ones which affirms that he was a very productive thinker.

Why then is Neumann not as prominent as Einstein?

Eugene Wigner, a Nobel-prize winning physicist who was friends with both Einstein and von Neumann is quoted to have said:

“I have known a great many intelligent people in my life. I knew Planck, von Laue and Heisenberg. Paul Dirac was my brother in law; Leo Szilard and Edward Teller have been among my closest friends; and Albert Einstein was a good friend, too. But none of them had a mind as quick and acute as John von Neumann. I have often remarked this in the presence of those men and no one ever disputed.

But Einstein’s understanding was deeper even than von Neumann’s. His mind was both more penetrating and more original than von Neumann’s. And that is a very remarkable statement. Einstein took an extraordinary pleasure in invention. Two of his greatest inventions are the Special and General Theories of Relativity; and for all of von Neumann’s brilliance, he never produced anything as original.”

The truth is that Albert Einstein did not discover his world-changing formula:  $E=mc^2$  by working towards it from existing logic and reason. He did not think it up.

He intuited it from “the universe” and then worked backwards from the answer. The initial idea simply came to him.

It could be considered comical then that when Albert Einstein died (and without seeking necessary consent from his family), the pathologist performing an autopsy stole Einstein’s brain and preserved it, hoping that cytoarchitectonics, the study of brain cells under a microscope, would reveal useful information as to why Einstein was so brilliant. Was his brain different from the brain of others?

Well, nobody needs Einstein’s brain to be creative. Your brain is more than enough to conceive creative ideas. Your creativity is not linked to your IQ score.

You do not need to be a mad genius before you can unleash your inventions. Creativity and inventiveness is not a function of your brilliance, but a fruit of your intuitiveness.

You can be more brilliant and exhibit a higher form of creativity than somebody with a higher IQ than you.

Creativity is about intuition and not brilliance. Intuition – the non-rational, non-logical, the subconscious, the spiritual.

Creativity is not really a function of how brilliant are you? Rather, it is a function of how spiritual are you?

I do not wish to be misunderstood; logic and reason have a role to play in creativity and invention, but the initial idea does not depend on anything logical. The kind of ideas that spur creativity and invention often happens outside the realms of logic and reason.

The role of logic, reason, thinking and calculation comes to play after the seed of the original idea has been sown and not before. It is after one has received an idea that one must engage reason, logic and thoughts to process the idea, refine it and execute it.

The next clarification would be the role of knowledge. Even though creativity is a spiritual affair, it does not negate the role of knowledge. Knowledge provides a kind of fuel for the subconscious mind to work with; the more the knowledge available for you to work with, the better.

Acquisition of data, information and knowledge is no guarantee that we are getting closer to new insights that are really needed for inventions. However, it is important to be armed with as much knowledge as possible.

When you try to explore your creativity without having sufficient knowledge, the expressions of your creativity will be mediocre. I am fond of saying if you lack the intellectual framework needed to work out your creative ideas in the physical realm, it is useless because you end up building “a lizard”, even though the picture inside your spirit is “an alligator!”

Calculated thinking, and logic is meant to take you from one end to the other, but creativity is something that could lead you anywhere. John von Neumann possessed a powerful ACTIVE mind, but the mind only comes into play after the initial idea has been seeded.

Your powers of thinking are only relevant in working through problems that are already defined, things your mind can already see and comprehend. Creative and inventive ideas are not birthed by the ACTIVE mind, they are birthed from the spirit.

If logic, reason and thought are the only things we need for creative and inventive ideas, then we should expect that computers would possess the ability to generate ideas. It would be hard to find a human being (dead or alive) that can match the speed of a computer.

What we discover is that computers merely process whatever data is available, and nothing more. When mankind finally develops real artificial intelligence platforms, we will see clearly the distinctions between man and machine, especially with respect to new ideas and possibilities.

Inventive ideas are not a function of brilliance aka how fast your mind can work. Your IQ number is mostly irrelevant. Creativity is mostly a product of intuition more than anything else; can you intuit ideas from the universe? Rephrased as: can you pick up ideas from the mind of God?

Creativity is unleashed when one learns how to tap into Divine Intelligence, armed with the necessary pre-requisite knowledge. There is a way the Spirit of God can employ the mind as a tool to manifest Divine Intelligence.

This is the true nature of our task: Learning how to tap into God – the Source of Creativity and Invention. The person that seeks a manifestation of their creativity at the highest levels must also be ready to pay attention to the spiritual, which is where the ideas will come from. Idea generation is not a conscious process, brilliance has nothing to do with it.

### **III. Taking Control And Reclaiming Your Creativity**

We have established certain things so far: creativity is something we are born with, and generating world changing ideas is not a function of brilliance because creativity works with intuition; your subconscious mind, your spirit.

The first instinct is to think creative ideas is something irrational and as such, it is not something that can be expected or planned for. That instinct is wrong, for there is so much that can be done to get into a creative flow.

We have people that constantly and consistently generate creative ideas. If it was impossible, then there would be no recorded cases of people who have done such before. George Washington Carver walked into his laboratory and returned with three hundred new ideas!

We have countless examples we can learn from and follow in the same footsteps. Creativity is simply misunderstood, once better understanding goes mainstream, I can only imagine how much it will increase efficiency and productivity.

I believe that creative ideas automatically surface when you add knowledge, information and skills to a “correct” spirit. Anybody that commits to wholesome development can maximise their creative potentials.

If you commit to completely develop your body, mind and spirit; that wholesomeness is key to all of this. People who express their creativity usually fit a certain profile and a commitment to all-round development is part of it.

Every feat of creativity and invention has its root in the spirit. Only people who see themselves as spirits can access it and so, you find that spirituality is not a topic to joke with.

Spirituality is a sensitive topic any day, and it is one I have laboured so hard to shy away from. However, I realise that there is no other way.

In order to be extremely creative, you are going to need a source of ideas and power that goes beyond the 3-dimensional physical world we can all touch and see. To become more creative, you need to invest in your spiritual development. The more spiritual you are, the more creativity you would unlock.

When I say the goal is to be completely in tune with God – the secret origin of all creativity and inventions. Someone else may express the same idea as “the goal is to be completely in tune with the Universe”. Like I said, spirituality is a sensitive topic.

Indeed, I could write, teach and train creativity without all the spiritual stuff, but then my message would not be whole. It would be grossly incomplete and hence, success cannot be guaranteed.

I have reviewed several works on creativity by people who would rather shy away from the spirituality of creativity and invention, and one can see clearly that such works are not whole. They do not contain the entire pathway.

If I were to toe that line and simply share a part of the message, I would have to then pray that somehow God brings the missing pieces to you.

I do not want to say things that might be politically correct like: “I would have to hope that somehow the universe brings the missing pieces of the message to you” or opt for scientific sounding nonsense like: “hoping that the unknown laws of quantum physics will by chance bring you the other parts of the creativity message.”

I would rather bring you a complete message, which is obviously heavily influenced by my Christian background, something I have tested and proven over to work. I have taught and seen real results with everything I am sharing with you, this work is a product of my research.

We do not need to look too far before we discover that Christians (and people heavily influenced by the Judeo-Christian worldview)

contributed heavily to the development of all of the scientific stuff we use today.

It is very long list, and so, I will highlight a few and then we will explore WHY they were able to manifest such high level of creativity and inventiveness.

The father of modern genetics is a priest called Gregor Mendel, he conducted an experiment on genetics for several years before writing on genes. Mendel's work remains ever relevant and is still taught in schools till today.

A Scottish mathematician, John Napier is best known as the discoverer of logarithms. He invented logarithms which converted multiplication and division into addition and subtraction respectively. He also made common the use of the decimal point in arithmetic and mathematics.

Anyone that has ever passed through the four walls of a school must have encountered logarithms at one point or the other. John Napier was as passionate about his Christian faith as he was about mathematics, physics and astronomy.

There are just countless numbers and examples of people who maximised their creative nature through this spiritual route. It can be done, I can assure you of that.

We also have Nigerians that have done great things by tapping into God – the source of creativity and inventions. A quick example would be Professor B. O. Osuntokun.

Professor Benjamin Oluwakayode Osuntokun (1935 - 1995), was a researcher and neurologist from Nigeria globally acclaimed for discovering the cause of “ataxic tropical neuropathy”. He operated firmly from the University of Ibadan, South-Western Nigeria from which he launched an extremely productive career full of fresh ideas.

Adeloye Adelola, a contemporary of Professor Osuntokun writing about the man after his death wrote:

“His (Osuntokun) religious and spiritual upbringing started much earlier than his mates at school imagined. It started, antenatally, from the miracle of his birth wrought by prayers; it continued in



the childhood years which he spent in the compound of the apostolic church: at the age of six years, he was precocious enough to read the native edition of the Bible from cover to cover. One suspects that the regular religious knowledge classes which we all had at Christ's School Ado Ekiti must have been child's plays to him!

The education in Christ's School gave its students more than a religious philosophy to prepare them for the battles of life. The school imbued them with a disciplined mind, love of hard work and industry, self-confidence and the grit to meet challenges. Osuntokun was an archetype of that generation.

Some of us who made successful careers in the sciences left Christ's School without physics and chemistry, and like Osuntokun, saw a bunsen burner for the first time as medical undergraduates. It was from such an unprivileged and unpropitious origin that Osuntokun grew, an apostle of hard work, to attain the pinnacle of his profession.”

Creatives and Inventors come from every walk of life. Prolific inventors all have certain things in common, and if we can learn that and imbibe that, our creativity will find room to blossom and impact the world positively.

The first step to reclaiming your creativity is spirituality and I choose not to skip that in my work. Let us consider what it really means to be spiritual.

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