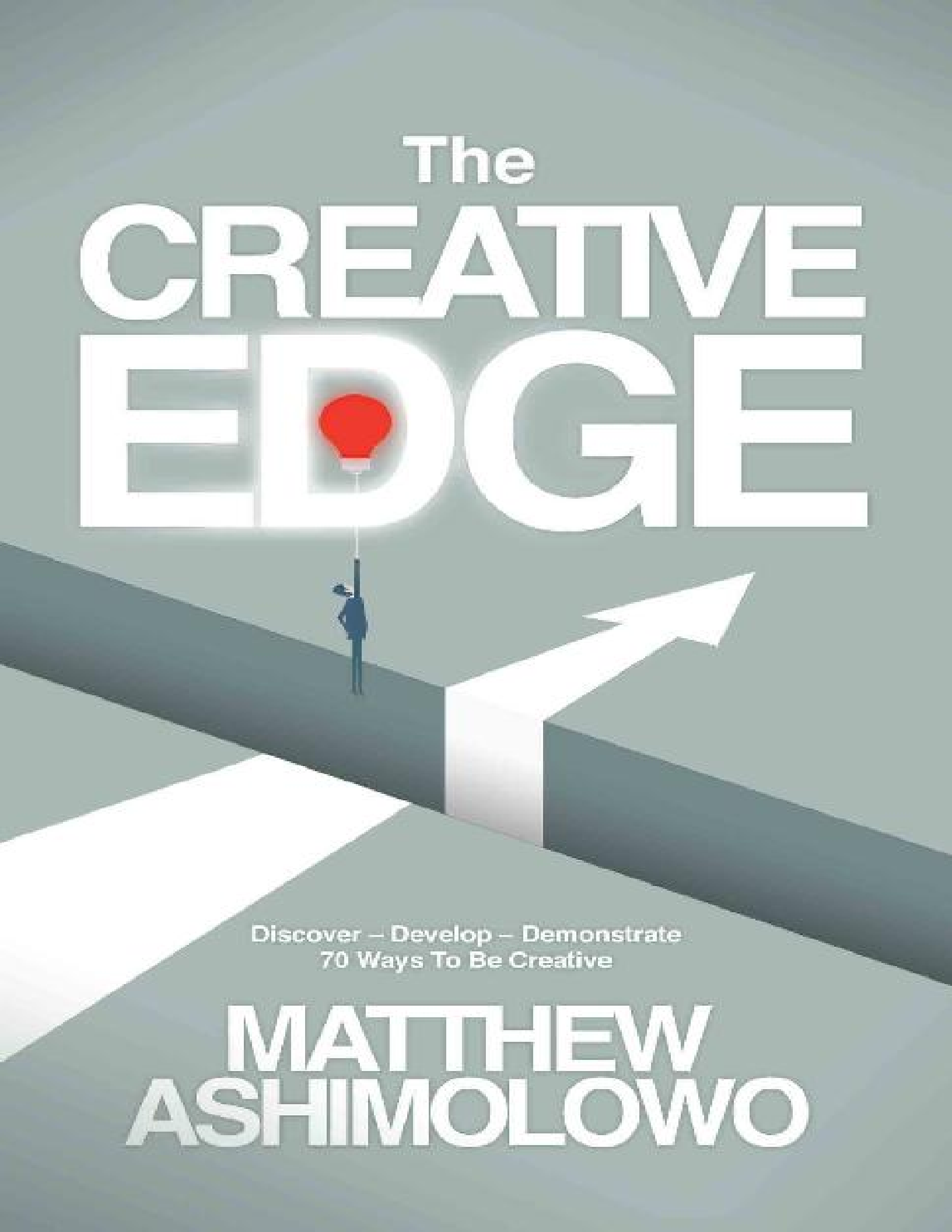
# The CREATIVE EDGE



Discover – Develop – Demonstrate
70 Ways To Be Creative

MATTHEW ASHIMOLOWO

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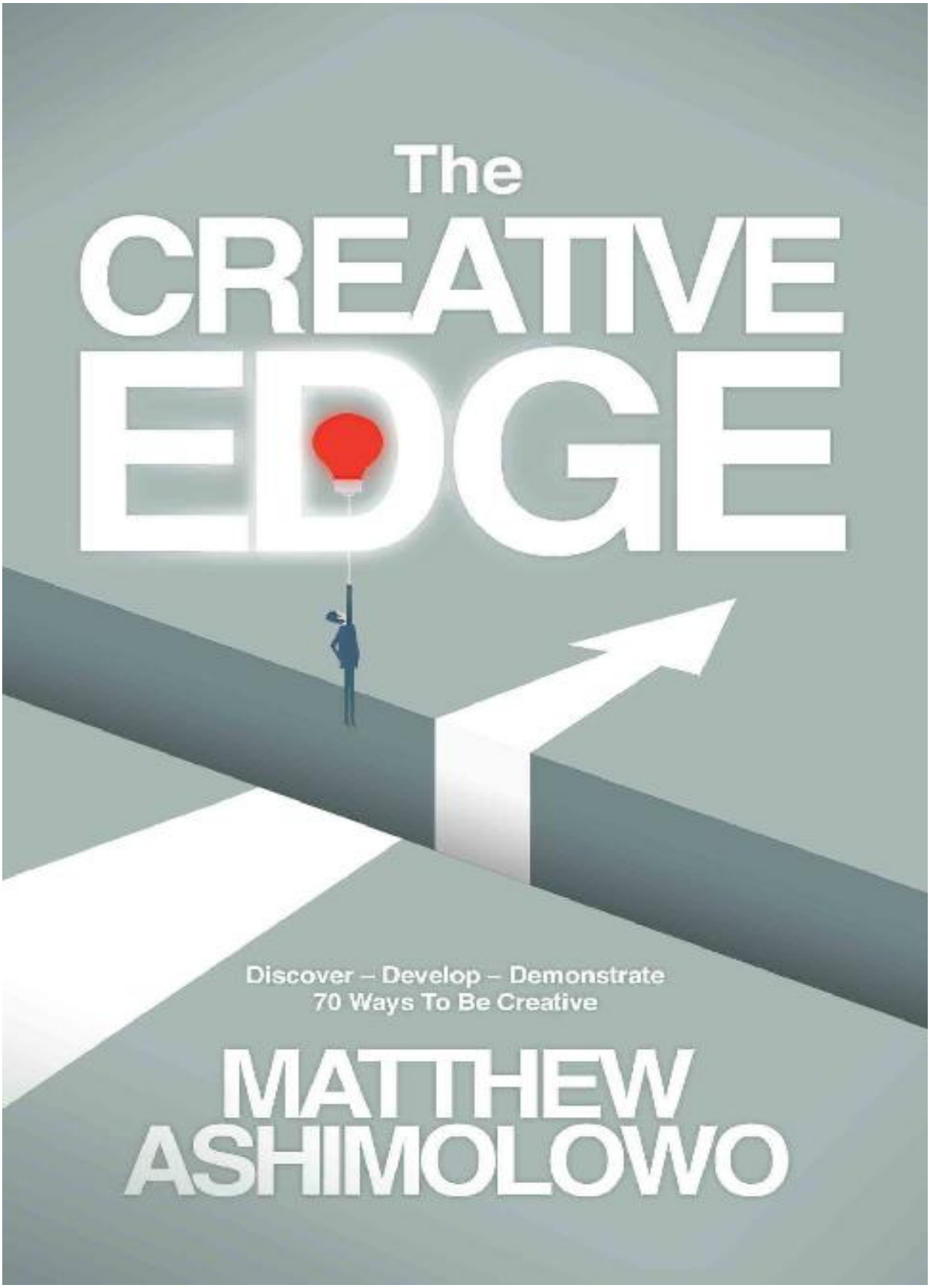

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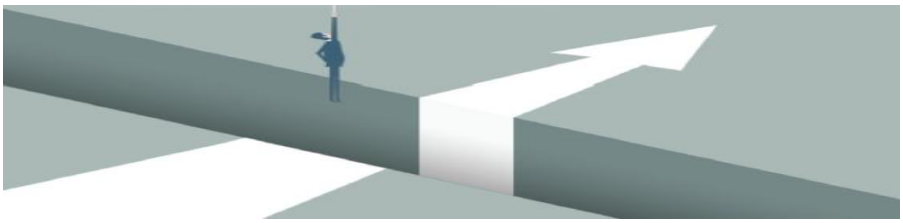

MATTHEW ASHIMOLOWO

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# INTRODUCTION

We were created by God, for ourselves to be creative. For you to understand this statement and to understand that creativity is hard wired into our DNA from the beginning by God, you would need to imagine our planet from the days of Adam.

When God created Adam and Eve and put them on this planet, there was no house standing, no iron, no cars, no canoes, nothing except the planet pregnant with possibilities. I am sure, when they looked into the horizon, they saw nothing but greenery and animals.

When I fast forward to 2018, when I am writing this book, you would see that man's ingenuity and creativity have since made the earth to deliver what it was pregnant with. Iron was dug out of the earth for us to be able to have cars. First discovered by the Hittites with which they made chariots. Plastic has been used today to replace rubber. Rubber was discovered. Several minerals have since been discovered for different reasons. Our earth is now full of skyscrapers, buildings of amazing designs, unusual architectural and engineering feats have been achieved by mankind.

Creative capability runs in our veins. We all have it. It comes in different shapes, sizes and styles. Some write, some paint, some cook, some design, some sow, some look at wood and see furniture, some look at plastic and see things to mould. Some take sand, mortar and bricks and turn them to uncommon and unusual houses. We all have an irresistible, divinely inspired impulse to create, to fashion and to organise.

***Genesis 1:27 – "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."***

We draw this from God who created everything. He put the earth in its current shape. We are surrounded by so much creativity that it is almost possible to take it for granted.

A person goes to the market, buys condiments and turns them to amazing food. A writer assembles letters, the 26 letters of the alphabet, and writes books that are practical, engaging, mind-boggling, attention-keeping; crafting out sentences and paragraphs to form the entire book. This again is a reflection of God's ability to create.

We have, in effect, become satellites of the greatest creator. Men, women, children are all creative and when we do, we are imaging Him. It is hard work to take words and create rhymes of poems, to take the greens of flowers and turn them to a beautiful garden, to take wood and turn it into beautiful furniture and make humanity to pay thousands for it.

One could fold his arms and do nothing and be a mere consumer. It is possible to suffocate your gifting and not create anything. We all have creative gifts. We are gifted and that is why musicians can create songs that amaze us and people can make cars that take us faster, quicker and with great comfort; airplanes that take us from one continent to the other; dancers who have turned main steps to things that keep us in amazement; music, a succession of sounds that keep us responding; woodworkers, organisers, landscapers or what shall I say of preachers who are able to take the truths of scripture and craft an argument that is quite engaging and compelling.

We are creative, and when we do, we are copying our Maker.

When we write a song or a book, we bring out the DNA of God that is in us.

Creativity reminds us of how much greater God is. He is the best, the greatest. That is why the best of us who has committed himself to creativity feels restless until something has been converted to that which amazes, blesses, engages, draws or makes humanity feel better and enjoy the world. Even the clothes we wear were once cotton on a tree, or wool of a sheep on the plains of New Zealand.

We need to create. Creativity is what will make a photographer not to be satisfied with just having a camera; but what is the use of a camera if you do not capture the beauty of life with it. What is the use of a piano if there is no musician to bellow the sound inside it. Creativity is part of mankind. We must discover our creative edge.

Our creativity echoes God's ability. It also shows that we are not God ourselves, we are an extension of the great Maker.

Some creativity grows out of serendipity. It is a sudden discovery that was not planned for. Others come out of curiosity, when we question and

challenge the impossible, when we turn ‘why’ to ‘why not.’ Creativity requires that we have the eyes to see it and the mind to appreciate it. Creativity requires that we answer questions and begin to create even when the value may not be obvious. The value may not always be known because it is new or has never been seen before. Imagine the great paintings of the likes of Michelangelo, Leonardo Da Vinci, Dalli etc. At the point of creation, they were not appreciated, but some have exchanged hands for as low as you can think but also as high as fifty million dollars for one painting; never tested before, possibly never sold at the time of creation but later finding its value.

In this book, I will attempt to show how that creativity, particularly the body of Christ discovering, developing, deploying and demonstrating its creative edge may be our way of tapping into all the resources which we need for global evangelism.

At the time of writing this book, four companies namely, Apple, Microsoft, Facebook and Google have a joint value greater than the GDP of a whole continent, the continent of Africa. Wikipedia puts the 2018 value of the GDP of the whole of Africa, from Cairo to Johannesburg at 2.2 trillion US dollars. On 30th May 2018, Microsoft was valued at 753 billion US dollars. In July 2018, Apple became 1 trillion US dollars. Facebook stands as 400 billion US dollars and on 30th May 2018, Alphabet Inc., Google’s parent company, was valued at 739 billion US dollars. These four companies, in 2018, were valued at a total of approximately 2.9 trillion US dollars. Ironically, the four companies did not exist forty years ago and Facebook, as at 2018, was only fourteen years old.

Apart from Apple which produces physical products such as iPhones and iPads, all four companies have essentially developed concepts that depict creativity. Facebook created a virtual platform for a social community. Google started out mainly as a search engine and yet, their combined current value is more than that of a whole continent. Nothing else argues better for the fact that creativity is a major avenue for wealth creation.

*"There is a fountain of youth: it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life and the lives of people you love. When you learn to tap this source, you will truly have defeated age." Sophia Loren*

# CHAPTER 1 – THE CREATIVE EDGE OF GOD

*"bereshit barah Elohim"*

In case you are wondering what that was, that is Hebrew. That is the opening statement of the book of Genesis in Hebrew and it means, "In the beginning, Elohim God created out of nothing."

The opening statement of the Bible gives an account of the creation. It shows us how creativity is the opening of everything. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing. The word '*barah*' is to create out of nothing.

This very statement totally contradicts every argument of evolutionary science. Evolutionary science argues that there was an evolving of mankind from a lower form to the other and that we are here because of the survival of the fittest. The scriptures make known, on the contrary, that everything God created was by faith and perfect at its time of arrival. The scriptures say that when God looked at His creation, it was the best and in its fullest form and therefore He said it was good.

***Genesis 1:31 – "Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So, the evening and the morning were the sixth day."***

Man is totally different from animals. It could almost be concluded that animals are monochrome in their capacity to create. Once they build their nest or cave as the case may be, the only other ability of most animals is the one they have learnt from the previous of their species on how to survive. Lions for example have always eaten their meat raw. Humans, on the other hand have developed a thousand and one things to do with meat i.e. cook, fry, freeze, eat as lean meat, sirloin etc.

God's process of creation started by Him speaking the universe into existence.

***Genesis 1:3 – "Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light."***

***Genesis 1:6 – "Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.""***

***Genesis 1:9 – "Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so."***

***Genesis 1:11 – "Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was***

***so."***

***Genesis 1:14 – "Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years;"***

***Genesis 1:20 – "Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens.""***

***Genesis 1:24 – "Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind"; and it was so."***

The way He created the universe reflected His creativity, which is to create out of nothing. His creative ability reveals His person to us.

***Romans 1:20 – "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,"***

God's creative skill and design is shown in the universe that surrounds us.

***Isaiah 45:18 – "For thus says the Lord, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited: "I am the Lord, and there is no other."***

We see design and purpose in everything He did. Some of His purposes may not be immediately obvious to mankind but everything has a purpose - not only with purpose, but also in order. The account of creation in Genesis shows an ordered process. Man was created on the sixth day after everything he needed to exist had already been made.

There is an absolute synchronisation in the process of God's creativity. Nothing was made out of place. Even the human body is a wonder of God's creativity.

***Psalm 139:14 – "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well."***

Even the smallest parts of the human body have the most intricate of designs. For example, the retina. The retina is about one-square-inch of tissue inside the human eye and yet it has over one hundred million light receptors. These cells are cones and slender rods which convert light into electrochemical energy, enabling humans to see.

Man is a wonder of creativity. The eye is so delicate a camera that it takes 196 colour photos per second. It has its own light meter, protection, cleaning equipment – that is why we shed tears or have fluid in our eye. It

has its self-repairing abilities. Still on the human eye, it has close to 6 million cones. These cones provide the eye's colour sensitivity.

What shall we say of another small part of the human body, that the awesome creator made: the ear. The ear did not happen by accident, neither is it a mere addition to the human body. The upper ear collects sound waves from the air and funnels them to the eardrum. These waves cause the eardrum to vibrate. The eardrums can sense frequencies that move the eardrum only one billionth of a centimetre. The vibrations are mechanically transmitted and amplified through the three connecting bones in our inner ear. The mechanical vibrations enter a fluid in the inner ear. These waves are converted into nerve impulses by 24,000 auditory receptor cells in the ear. The auditory nerve transmits these to the brain, enabling a person to hear. The ear also provides us with balance. It gives balance to the human body.

A third part of the human body which most of us do not get to physically see, is the heart. This part of the body which keeps us alive beats 100,000 times per day, pumping 5.8 tons of blood per day, enough to fill a 4000-gallon tank car; and except for a few people who have experienced either a heart attack, palpitations or some other issues, it works with such accurate rhythm until it finally stops, in old age. 100, 000 times a day.

Let me take on the entire circulatory system in your body. This includes passage ways totalling about 60,000 miles around the body and yet the heart is self-lubricating, high capacity and self-regulating.

This creative God made every part of the human body as a whole lesson in itself. The brain, the skeletal structure, our hands, each one of them took some creativity. The bones in our hands, the ones in our legs, our feet and if we look beyond our own human body and into the world of nature we would be amazed at the capacity, creativity and variety of His work.

Take the simplest of insects, the bee. There are 20,000 species of bees. Take soil, there are various kinds of soil:  loamy, clayey, humus, sandy etc. There are multiple kinds of water: sea water, lakes, lagoons, streams, rivers, waters in the aquifers of the earth, the dew, the rain etc. There are multiple kinds of leaves, thousands in fact. There are sixty thousand species of trees and according to independent.co.uk[1], there are 3 trillion trees on earth.

The creative God left His signature in every corner of our universe and particularly on our planet.

Imagine if we had lived in a world where everything was the same, one species of animal, same soil, colour. Imagine if we ate the same thing all the time. If we all looked alike. What a world that would be! Rather, we see His creativity in everything. Fruits come in different colours, shapes and sizes, from mango to apple, oranges to blueberries, gooseberries, blackberries, pears, grapes. Not only do they come in different colours, but the vitamins they contain are different. If you go around the world, the landscapes of the earth are amazing. In one place you see the desert, in another, you see dense forests. In some places you see the snow and in others you see the trees, valleys, hills, rocks. You see His signature in the Kalahari, you see amazing worlds in North West of Africa, the country of Mauritania for example, is a case in point. This is a country facing the Atlantic and yet, mostly a desert. God put so much snow in the North Pole and in the South as if to create balance. In the deserts across the world, some produce so much heat and the others so much cold.

He put heated volcanoes in the islands of the sea while the waters of the snow-covered land are very cold. In Iceland, He created geysers, large potholes where waters that are two thousand degrees hot suddenly shoot up to a hundred feet into the air. By 2010, scientists say there may have been more than two million different species of marine life. The census of marine life currently comprises of 15,304 species of fish. There are 194,696 to 214,696 species of animals and plants.[2]

Each of these fishes are amazing in their creation. The creative ability of God is unending. With fishes that jump out of water to catch their prey and take then back into the water, to the salmon that naturally swims back to the place where it started its life, lays its eggs there and dies there, as if obeying a genetic coding. It swims hundreds of miles to the very place of its beginning and dies there eventually.

It is from that God that we get our creative skills. We get our creativity from God who made us in His own image. If we are His image, then we are an extension of His ability. Our awesome God has displayed His creativity in nature and in us and He wants us to do likewise.

It is this creative skill that some people get in touch with, inside themselves, that enables them to think outside of the box and do unusual things, creating the unusual.

As you read this book, you are surrounded by amazing creativity to the point that it is almost taken for granted. If you are reading it in a book, a paper book, the sheets are made from pulp of trees. If you are reading it on an iPad, Kindle or any form of electronic tablet, that is a plastic in your hand with connectivity to the world wide web.

As I write this book, the plates in front of me, from which I have just eaten, are made of clay from somewhere, some hill, extracted, moulded and baked, painted and decorated. They became expensive china for us to buy. The glass with which I drink water was the sand upon some seashore. The bottles that brought the water were a plastic extracted from crude oil, possibly from the deserts of Arabia. Polymer is a material extracted from crude oil.

Creativity is the signature of God. It is also an extension of the image of God in man.

So, the attributes of a creative God passed on to the ones He made in His own image. That is why we appreciate art, literature, poetry, love.

God spoke the universe into existence. When He created the earth, He commanded the earth to bring forth. God spoke to the earth to bring forth grass, to yield seed, to bring forth trees that yield fruits and the earth brought forth.

***Genesis 1:11-12 – "Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good."***

*"Creativity involves breaking out of established patterns in order to look at things in a different way." Edward de Bono*

# CHAPTER 2 – UNLOCK YOUR CREATIVE CODE

***Genesis 1:26 – "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.""***

We have established that God is a God of creativity. He created the universe, ex-nihilo and to make man, He took the time to make, to create him out of the dust of the earth. This is not '*barah*' creating out of nothing but '*asher*' in Hebrew, creating out of something.

It is this creative dimension of God now inputted into us that makes us seek to create because it is deep in our DNA. Our creativity echoes God's ability but also shows that we are not God, we are an extension of His ability. God is creator, we are made in His image. So, when we invent, create and produce, we manifest what He has put into us.

When God made man on the sixth day, He laid on the ground lifeless. The outer shell was formed, the body was shaped, man had eyes that could not see, ears that could not hear, lungs that could not breathe and a heart that did not beat. He was the finality of God's creation. He was a creation that came out of an agreement of the trinity. God finally said, this lifeless thing on the ground needs to have a life that is not just producing after its kind like the trees and the fishes did. The trinity invited itself, "Come, let us create man in our own image."

***Genesis 1:26 – "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.""***

Man was not simply spoken into existence, but he was fashioned by God's creative hands. He was the finality of creation. The rest of creation was spoken, but in his case, he was fashioned.

We might put it another way. The beautiful, wonderful specie called 'man' was personally wired by God.

***Psalm 139:13-16 – "For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them."***

This creative ability of God shows that man was created in the image of God to fill the earth with His own likeness, to reveal the heart and nature of God and continue the creative work that God started. He was created to be the biological son of God, so he could have a vessel that is tried and tested, purified and proven, and connected to God.

We value creativity, celebrate artistic achievements, music, advancements in science, the beauty of other people's works because we are inherently creative.

***Genesis 1:27 – "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."***

God is a creative being. We are, because we are made in His image. We are inherently creative because we have that DNA. This is not a matter of being gifted. There is no gift of creativity. It is a matter of expressing what was already inherently written into us. We possess it.

## WHAT IS CREATIVITY?

Certainly, it is not wearing funny hats and looking stupid. Rather, creativity is simply our ability to make something new that did not exist before; to do things in a new way. This happens every time. Creativity is when you stop doing the regular, step out of the box and refuse to judge yourself, but end up creating something that stands out.

## THINK OUTSIDE OF THE BOX

You need to think outside the box. We do not often go outside the box in our thinking because we want to be safe, accepted and we are comfortable with the regular.

Sometimes this begins with the world around us that tries to box us and shape us into lines drawn. This reminds me of my grandson. A little 3-year old who will start making up stories about Harry the Rabbit. He brings all his friends and his most favourite person in the world, apart from his parents, his cousin. He talks of how Harry the Rabbit entered his cousin's room and went on her bed. He goes on in his story, which is as if his cousin lives in the same house as him and so do his friends in nursery. My grandson does not realise that though very close to his cousin, she lives in her own house and his friend also lives in his own house. There are structures around them that are not known to Harry the Rabbit which he saw in his own house, move out to go and enter their bedroom, even if they lived on the same street.

Perhaps he is thinking outside of the box. However, we find it difficult to accept a young boy's way of thinking because it does not flow with the regular.

Which box? The box of limitations. We are often told, "you cannot do that because it is not permitted." So, we find ourselves in the box of limitation. The box of the regular. It is so easy to stay within the box of the regular. That way, you do not rock the boat. The box of the known. We drive by roads we are familiar with and even when there is a diversion, we complain before we comply. The human brain resists change. If you are going to be creative, you must begin to be flexible in your thinking and you need to begin to move away from the known.

The box of which we refer to is the boundary within our mind that holds us within a limited space. Sometimes when instructions are not even given, we stay within a certain remit, assuming that it is the most appropriate.

In creativity, you must step out of the box of assumptions because unfounded assumptions prevent us from thinking and breaking barriers. In thinking outside the box, you must value long thinking, judge ideas by how

they fit as an ensemble, not just individually. This whole process will require a lot of patience, particularly if you are used to a particular way of thinking and operating.

Hardly do we meet anyone who is not enthralled by the creative, by the unusual. Stepping out of the boundaries we are used to becomes the issue. The reasons for this cannot be farfetched.

Firstly, our genetic make-up. Secondly, the environment of our upbringing. If you were raised by people who were always afraid, risk-averse, people who believed in things that are concrete and non-exploratory, you will end up being rather conservative and not daring to step into the unknown. Some nations have had crude oil and bitumen oozing out of their land, but because they never knew the value of it, neither were they ready to explore, they did not know what to do with it. In some cases, when a people have not been able to explore the creative, they ended almost deifying what seems absurd.

Another boundary is cultural mores. In almost every culture, there are belief systems, there are rules which have held the people up. People stay within boundaries because of patterns that are already known and when a new one shows up, they may have been proverbs, ideas that prejudge such creativity.

What seems accepted to the immediate society in which we find ourselves can be a major hindrance to your capacity to be creative. Part of our boxes could include things taught in school that have already created structures for us. Some were taught as if they were the best way.

In order to read the several thousands of books on my shelf I had to take a course in speed reading. The first lesson went in total contraflow to what I was taught in school. Having been taught to read one word at a time, that was all I was used to. But, in speed reading, I was told the obvious, that my two eyes can see more than one word at a time and if I can just move forward and look at three, four, five, six words at a time, I will be able to go through a book at a shorter time than the regular.

The failures and successes you have known can become part of the box which you have to overcome. Failures can hold you, so can success. In success we may think we have found a solace, a reason to argue that this is the best way. When what seems to be a success today may thin out in the

face of greater possibilities. If the men who built the aeroplanes in the early days of aviation were to show up today to see jet planes that are big enough to carry 600 passengers and still move at 900 kilometres per hour, they would know that things have changed.

## GETTING OUT OF THE BOX

What are the mechanisms that get you out of the box and into the world of creativity?

Several points will be suggested here, and they are by no means exhaustive.

### 1. DO SOMETHING BEYOND THE CONVERGENT INFORMATION YOU ALREADY HAVE

What you will do may seem absurd but do it. It seemed absurd when the Wright brothers began in 1904. Some argued that if God had meant for man to fly, He would have given him wings.

### 2. VALUE LONG THINKING IN CREATING WHAT YOU LOOK FOR

### 3. THERE IS NO CORRECT ANSWER BUT THE ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO EVERY MATTER

### 4. TO BREAK OUT OF THE BOX, YOU MUST LOOK FOR WHAT CAUSES CONSTRAINTS

This could be a mind thing, the environment, belief systems, people around you and limitations of the people you have to convince to make it happen.

### 5. MOVE FASTER THAN YOUR DOUBT

### 6. MIX THE UNMIXABLES

Almost everything today is a potpourri of several things. You are reading what I have written in a book. The book was not just the pulp of a tree, it was ink that was made and printed upon the book. There was a design for the cover, etc.

If it is on a Kindle or any other electronic tablet, several things were mixed to make it possible for you to be able to enjoy what you read. The plastic that was shaped, the internet that was set up, the people who created the various websites, the servers upon which the documents sat,

the battery that runs it. The materials came from various corners of the earth.

## 7. ALLOW RANDOMNESS

We have been taught all of our lives to go in one straight line and that two plus two can only be four. Sometimes what looks like it requires five ways to do, may actually be resolved with three things.

## 8. TRY SIMPLE THINKING

Creativity does not have to be the impossible and the difficult. The obvious answer may just be the one we never thought about. We are told that Houdini, the greatest escapologist of all times was locked up in a room and told he would be paid a certain amount if he could escape. This is the same man who went in under water in a box and the box covered but managed to remove the chain, open the box and escape. He tried everything but could not come out of the room. When he finally gave up, he simply opened the door. It was never locked, but in his mind, he thought, "Who would try Houdini with a door that was never locked?"

## 9. TO CREATE SOMETIMES, YOU MAY BORROW IDEAS FROM OTHERS.

Steve Jobs, the creator of Apple, borrowed the idea of the personal computer from Xerox.

## 10. ASSOCIATE THINGS

Compare one thing with the other.

## 11. FINISH BEFORE YOU LOSE THE ZEAL

How many people have had unusual ideas, real creative concepts but became complacent and did not pursue, fix timelines to achieving what they wanted to do.

## 12. USE WHAT YOU HAVE, DO NOT WAIT FOR PERFECT TIMING

Do it now. It is better to be wrong than to try to be right from the beginning. All great creative ideas are often started on a wrong footing. It is said that Thomas Alva Edison, described as America's

greatest inventor, tried the conducting of electricity about 10, 000 times. He said, “I have not failed, I have just found ten thousand ways that won’t work.”

In another case, Thomas Edison said, “Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.”

And in such trial, it is better to be wrong. So, if you are not afraid to be wrong, follow your instinct then think later. Thinking too much and overanalysing can make you throw away quite a good idea. You might just find that following your instinct can lead into great discovery.

In 1907, John Spangler turned trash to treasure when he created a dust-free vacuum cleaner from a box fan, soapbox, pillowcase and broom handle because he was asthmatic. That simple creation which resolved his own problem became a major household equipment. It looks stretched, but that is how creativity is. Stretch the ideas, but yet, make the ideas simple enough to share. If you do not use it, you will lose it. Do something and do it quickly.

## 13. STEPPING OUT OF THE BOX COULD MEAN THAT YOU SHOULD JUST DO IT

Do not just try. Act like there is no crisis in your creation and that it is the best thing ever. One of the most amazing creations I ever watched on social media is that of some little kids in Asia who had fabricated a bulldozer using cardboard boxes wired with cables that can let air pass through them. The little boy then connected hospital syringes to each cable and every time he drew the syringe and pumped back, it acted like hydraulics for the bulldozer he had created. He had one syringe pumped to lift the hand of the bulldozer, another one pumped to make the bulldozer come low and take a load of sand and deliver elsewhere. Ingenious, you may say, but that is the start of creativity and if somebody does not put him in the box of the regular, that might just very well be a major genius in the making.

## 14. STAY CURIOUS ABOUT EVERYTHING

The young mind which created the bulldozer must have been curious about how the bulldozer would lift its loader, bring it down to take tons of sand and deliver elsewhere. Adults mind will see it and move on, but this child decided to replicate and maybe in the process, showed that with lesser equipment and lesser cost, the same bulldozer could be made to work, using hydraulic pressure.

Children are creative because they are curious. They yearn for answers, question everything and want to know. Have you noticed that when children cross the age of 3, somewhere between 3 and 7, their biggest question is ‘why’ and when you answer that ‘why’, there is another ‘why’ waiting. Curiosity stimulates the brain of children and makes them more creative.

The bottom line therefore is that a child-like approach to life, questioning almost everything will make us discover what in some ways may have been hidden from us.

## 15. BE BOLD

I finish this chapter by saying you need to be bold and that boldness should lead to not just stepping out of the box but either tearing the box up so that it does not exist in your imaginary world or as a matter of fact, creating new paradigms, new boxes, new ways of doing things, new ways of seeing things.

*“Passion is one great force that unleashes creativity, because if you're passionate about something, then you're more willing to take risks.” Yo-Yo Ma*

# CHAPTER 3 – TRAITS OF THE CREATIVE MIND

We have established the fact that having both His DNA and mind, all men were created to themselves, be creative. Someone has suggested that of all human activity, creativity comes closest to providing the fulfilment we all hope to get in our lives. This is true because what a man creates conveys and carries his signature.

Creativity allows us to stretch our minds and thinking. It excites us. Sometimes you find some creative people have spent all of their life making something happen, even if they never fully benefit from the skill.

## FIRSTLY, CREATIVE PEOPLE COULD BE SMART BUT COULD BE NAÏVE

Creativity and intelligence quotient may not necessarily go together. There are people who, by the structure of our education, were scored as Cs but they are very creative with their mind and their hands. People with high IQs have never been shown to be exactly creative geniuses.

In the film ‘Rain Man’ Dustin Hoffman was portrayed as the autistic guy who did not have coordinated speech, body or even the ability to socialise but he had an incredible calculative mind.

So, creativity amazingly involves a certain amount of the combine of wisdom to see what is needed and a childlike mind to see the possibilities of creating it.

Creative people are smart. They are able to maintain the sense of wonder, curiosity and ability to look at the world with the goggles of a child, without the complications of seeing the boundaries and the impossibilities.

## SECONDLY, CREATIVE PEOPLE ARE ENERGETIC, NOT HYPERACTIVE BUT ENERGETIC

With enough energy and mental agility to pursue the possibilities they see, they spend a great deal of their time reflecting and thinking outside of the box on what could be possible and what could be achieved.

## THIRDLY, MOST CREATIVE PEOPLE COMBINE INTROVERSION AND BEING EXTROVERTED

It is very easy to categorise people into one of these two but creative people combine the two. The artistic side of them is able to be introverted enough to be still and quiet to find the answers; and yet they can be extroverted enough to be excited and inspired to make it happen.

It is very easy to imagine that the average creative person would be very melancholic, phlegmatic and internalising because of their ability to study nature and think beyond our own boxed way. However, an additional zest is needed to go beyond the regular.

## THE FOURTH CHARACTERISTIC OF HIGHLY CREATIVE PEOPLE IS A SENSE OF PRIDE

Pride in their achievements, discoveries, experiments, innovations and the eventual realisation of the innovation, dreams and explorations becoming reality or something that becomes usable by others.

These kinds of minds, as a matter of fact, once they are able to create one item, it is as if the other items are waiting to come out. So, they do not dwell too long on one, they move on to the next thing to create.

## FIFTHLY, CREATIVE PEOPLE ARE BOTH DISCIPLINED AND RELAXED

To capture this aspect of the creative mind, you would have to take a ride in Disneyworld or any other high-level amusement park where you see a combine of play as well as risk. The rides on Space Mountain, Smokey Mountain show risk, fun, laughter and science. These rides are created with gravity in mind, knowing that even if the ride drops suddenly, raising your adrenaline, the systems are also created to also find balance. The creative person enjoys combining fun with hard work.

## THE SIXTH CHARACTERISTIC OF CREATIVE PEOPLE IS THAT THEY DRAW GREY LINES WHERE WE LEAVE RIGID LINES

Gender is immaterial to them. For example, very artistic and highly achieving female architects are dominant in their thinking and aggressive in their achievements without any thought of femininity. They are just in touch with the creative skills inside them. At the point of their creativity, they are more in touch with their strengths which traverse both genders' behaviours.

## THE SEVENTH CHARACTERISTIC OF CREATIVE PEOPLE IS THE NEED FOR ORIGINALITY

They resist rules and conventions. Lower achievers call it rebellion, but it is that rebelling against the norm, the regular and the acceptable that makes them cross boundaries and discover the things that were already ours but that we did not know. It is this kind of creative skill that pushes the boundaries.

Creative people are also flexible. They have the ability to see different aspects of issues and come with optimal solutions that beat the obvious answers. Imagine forgetting to put off your gas cooker, but today, the advanced cookers have Wi-Fi capabilities so, if you have access to the internet wherever you are, far away from home, you are able to switch off the cooker.

## EIGHT - THE CREATIVE ARE MOTIVATED AND ALWAYS HAVE A NEED TO PERFORM

They are goal oriented, have an innovative attitude and a stamina to be it. At the extreme, a lot of motivated people look like trouble makers. Imagine the world of music. Some of the best instrumentalists have either looked funny because of the way they dressed, talked, the things they drank or smoked. Have you seen the photographs of Albert Einstein lately? He does not really quite look like a gentleman going out for a dinner with the high society. Rather, he is more concerned with the problems of relativity.

So, by definition, creative people are different. Yes, everyone in the world is different from the next person, but the creative find the way of making themselves stand out, not fitting in the box that we would generally put everybody in.

## NINE - THEY ARE ALSO DREAMERS

Dreamers always think of change. They sometimes push and step out of what society has accepted as boundaries that must not be crossed. It is a creative mind that will think of growing the human ear on the back of a pig or growing certain cells in a laboratory for people who have challenges with their bone marrow.

## TEN - THE MAJORITY OF CREATIVE PEOPLE ARE NOT MOTIVATED BY MONEY

The first thing which motivates them is the force of achievement and making things different, making things happen.

## ELEVEN - CREATIVE PEOPLE SEE THE WORLD DIFFERENTLY FROM EVERYONE

It is like walking upside down. They thrive on multiple ways of perceiving – they see, they hear, they touch, they smell, they taste, they sense differently from every other person. This, of course, is possible based on continuous disciplined training.

Imagine the young man who travels to visit his relations in the city of New York. He comes from a rural world into a bustling concrete jungle. Suddenly he announces that he can hear the sound of crickets in the heart of Manhattan. His relations think he must be joking until he walks to the spot where the sound was coming from and lifts a stone and there was a cricket.

It is common for us to ask the question ‘why’ when things baffle us. The creative mind turns it around and says, ‘why not?’ They still keep the mind and questions of a toddler. Their questioning nature often mistakenly appears as criticism when it simply is an exploratory mind, a mind that examines, that plays, that looks again.

## TWELVE – FLUENCY IS ANOTHER CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CREATIVE MIND

Imagine yourself in your premises today, finding a brick. The first thing which comes to your mind is where it fits on the wall of your house. The creative mind sees the fluency of even the brick. It could be a door stopper, a paper holder. He sees how it might even be a decoration on your table.

## THIRTEEN - CREATIVE PEOPLE DO NOT LIKE TO COPY

They like to be originals. While they may take concepts and ideas from other people, they thrive on the originality of their own concept, the originality of their own thinking.

The regular mind will say things are working. The creative will feel, ‘why not think of alternatives?’ So, today, we have electric cars with no exhaust at all because there is no smoke to exhaust; because somebody thought of alternatives to fossil fuel and set out to create the car that did not have to use such fuel.

## FOURTEEN - THE CREATIVE ARE PERSISTENT

It is said that Charles Goodyear who discovered and invented the vulcanised rubber worked for over thirty years, trying to make a solution that would work and in the process, discovered the use of rubber.

## FIFTEEN - THE CREATIVE ARE ALSO KNOWN TO PUSH THROUGH IN SEASONS WHEN THERE SEEMS TO BE NO IDEAS, NO INSPIRATION

They go all the way looking for something. They do not wait for it to just happen and once they go for it, it flows, it comes.

## SIXTEEN – THE CREATIVE MIND COULD BE VERY ENGAGING

Once an idea strikes it, people with such a mind forget about everything else but the work they are meant to do. They tend to get lost in time and forget to even eat or sleep.

## SEVENTEEN – CREATIVE MINDS ARE NOT GOOD WITH ROUTINES

This is not surprising at all, considering the fact that what stimulates a creative mind is not the regular and monotonous. There has to be a sense of adventure in everything the creative mind does.

Imagine the people who landed man on the moon. Their thoughts must have gone beyond just getting man to be on the moon. Every detail and every microcosm had to be taken into consideration. The details, small and big were considered.

Creative people have a keen eye for everything needed and required.

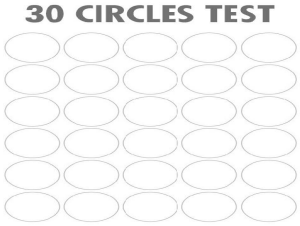
*“Creativity is putting your imagination to work, and it's produced the most extraordinary results in human culture.” Ken Robinson*

# CHAPTER 4 – SEVENTY-ONE WAYS TO RELEASE YOUR CREATIVE SKILLS

Creativity is born in the atmosphere of curiosity. Curiosity is provoked by questions – the right questions. To be curious, you must start with ‘how can I?’

Questions can help you to become an expert in a narrow area. Once that narrow area is found, practice as many times as possible to make this happen and begin to think outside of the box.

1. TAKE THE “TIM BROWN THIRTY CIRCLES TEST”[3].



## 2. BE A CHILD AGAIN

Create things with Legos or look for a game like Tetris and play with building blocks, tear them apart, find solutions.

## 3. GET A SKETCH BOOK AND CREATE

Do it also on your phone. Do not wait for it to look perfect. The very act of beginning helps you to begin to move out of the rigidity of thinking too much of you being an adult.

## 4. DO SOMETHING PHYSICAL

## 5. PLAY AROUND WITH SOMETHING

## 6. IF NEEDS BE, BUILD SOMETHING WITH ORDINARY PAPER

Move on from there to computer modelling. You may have to learn how to use a particular computer software to do this. Never talk yourself out of doing a course out of the ordinary.

## 7. SIGN UP TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW

It may be an online computer skill or a school nearby where you may be taught, for example, how to do the computer modelling earlier mentioned.

## 8. CREATE THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Have a work area in your room, office, where you live or work, where you play with ideas.

## 9. IMAGINE YOURSELF IN DIFFERENT SETTINGS

If you had always wanted to know how a ship moves, why do you not look for where you could take a few days of tuition or the wonders of aviation. Imagine yourself in such setting, where you possibly make yourself available for a couple of lessons.

## 10. ENGAGE PEOPLE WHO SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY AND BUILD A RELATIONSHIP

The creative person must not only stay around those who share the same worldview but learn to be large hearted enough to relate to people whose worldview is different. Such persons will help you stretch your thinking.

## 11. FUSE IDEAS

It is interesting how our world is a world of boxes, quadrant lines, lines we have drawn around things and we have told ourselves it cannot be. But we must learn to fuse to make creativity possible.

The rapper, 50 Cents, came up with a concept of mixing the chemical elements found in vitamins with water. This became known as ‘Vitamin Water’. The concept and product which became a mega success and was later sold to Coca Cola was rumoured that it was sold for a billion dollars. Vitamins and water do not seem to fuse. However, remember also that you could not take your vitamins without water. Since then, several companies have come along that have taken the same concept and used it to make their own product.

## 12. SPEND EACH MORNING TO FREE WRITE CREATIVE IDEAS IN A JOURNAL

They may not all make sense, but the journal will be helpful for what you are likely to create in the future.

## 13. JOURNALING SHOULD LEAD TO YOU SETTING UP AN "IDEA TIME"

An idea time is a time of intellectual discipline when the totality of your thinking is focused at what you are writing down with the mind to create.

## 14. GENERATE A LOT OF IDEAS

Do not become so monocular that you are too focused on one thing for too long. It is as an idea expands, that you possibly set aside the other ones to now take this one from idea to reality.

## 15. PLAY AND BE HYPOTHETICAL

Someone else's hypothesis which they worked on has made your own world comfortable; from tearing sheets off the part of a tree to make paper and write to the point where the same trees were ground to pulp and made to dry and pages created. That is how papers and eventually journals, books etc. were made.

## 16. BE OPEN AND AWARE

Like 11 again, enjoy creating combination, the fusing of ideas. Current ideas work because they stand on the shoulders of those who went ahead. Somebody else discovered another person fused theirs into it, expanded it. That is the world of creativity you are invited to.

## 17. SELECT THE BEST IDEAS

When ideas begin to increase in your journal, look for the ones that seem to be the best, that can be taken further and produced.

## 18. YOU MUST KNOW WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR AT THIS POINT

You have selected your idea, you have probably fused other ideas into it.

## 19. MAKE OPPOSING IDEAS

Some opposing ideas will work, others may have consequences. Cows are by nature herbivores. It was an opposing idea that made farmers in the western world grind parts of dead cows and mix with the animal feeds. When the cows ate it, it triggered mad cow disease.

## 20. THE AFOREMENTIONED MIX MAKES IT NECESSARY FOR YOU TO LOOK PAST THE GOOD IN YOUR IDEA

Think of the pros and cons. What benefits? What adverse consequence? What ethical and moral law is it likely to be broken?

## 21. KEEP DROPPING IDEAS AND CHANGING THE ONES YOU HAVE ALREADY COME UP WITH

Be your own critic and though you may reject them, keep the ones rejected on one side because it might lead to another discovery.

## 22. INCREASE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Before running too far with an idea, ensure that it has not been worked on by somebody else. Do your research. You do not want to work very far on an idea only to find that you have spent unending hours on something somebody else had worked on.

## 23. ATTITUDE

Attitude, not aptitude is what determines your altitude in creativity. The most creative have not always shown the greatest aptitude. Christopher Cockrell who invented and developed the Hovercraft, which has been described as the aircraft on water, did not train at all in anything that had to do with marine engineering. Rather, he read mechanical engineering. He imagined a craft on water that could go faster and rise practically on top of water. He conjectured that such a craft had high speed, it would be better and faster than any boat previously built.

## 24. EXPLORE CREATIVELY

That is, turn the idea to something workable. Move it from the back of the napkin to the product people will buy.

## 25. USE LEGO, CLAY, SILLY PUTTY, BE FLEXIBLE

The flexibility of the materials will help you to be able to model your dream, see the weaknesses and perfect it before moving on to building prototypes.

## 26. MAKE A COLLAGE

Stick photos together.

## 27. DRAW PICTURES

Do not criticise the pictures. They mirror how you see what you want to achieve. Pictures can be perfected later.

## 28. MOVE YOUR STRONG IDEAS TO THE POINT OF PRODUCTION

## 29. ATTEMPT WHAT YOU HAVE NO SKILLS FOR

Moving out of your skilled area is a major necessity for being creative.

## 30. DROP DEFENCE MENTALITY

Your tendency to be defensive when people pick on what you are doing can bear heavily on your creativity. Giving permission for your work to be critiqued would only result in a better output.

## 31. VISUALISE

Give your imagination freedom. Freedom to think, to dream, to see things outside the normal, the regular. Visualise yourself outside of a common box.

# 32. FIND THE THINGS THAT CAUSE THE CONSTRAINTS

# 33. MOVE FASTER THAN YOUR DOUBT

## 34. MIX THE UNMIXABLES

## 35. ALLOW RANDOMNESS

When you play a CD with music on it, at some stage, you are used to it and know what song is next, and how it will even be introduced. Your brain plays it ahead. In random selection, the machine does the choosing. Human nature tends to want to immediately react and say, “That is not how it should be.” But, what is wrong with random choices. After all, sometimes it creates new innovations, new taste and a fresh new perspective. The same goes in creativity.

## 36. ASSOCIATE THINGS

Fibre glass has been used to make the mudguards of cars. This reduces the weight of cars. It looks like iron until there is probably an impact before you see it tear. The mix has allowed for cars to be faster, lighter and easier to maintain.

## 37. FIND, FACE AND FINISH YOUR FEAR

You must find where your true fear is, then face it until you conquer it.

## 38. TRY SIMPLE THINKING

Great achievements in creating are not based on how dense your thoughts are, but how workable.

## 39. DO NOT WAIT FOR PERFECTION

Do it! The early cars did not move as fast as we move today. The first locomotive train moved only at 5 miles per hour. Even then, the generation of Mr Stephenson, the inventor of the train, resisted the thought and said the speed was too much for the human body.

## 40. COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS

Collaboration will prevent tunnel vision. Sometimes, we are very sure that we are totally out of the box, but even then, we may miss vital parts because our thoughts are still controlled by innate restrictions. Collaboration would allow others to see what we missed and bring their perspective.

## 41. STRETCH THE IDEAS

## 42. MAKE IDEAS SIMPLE TO SHARE

Whatever you create will be difficult to market if you cannot explain it in simple terms. Yes, you may have to hide the original concept until it is patented.

## 43. KNOW THAT UNUSED IDEAS WILL BE USELESS

You may not have the wherewithal to produce and multiply it at the moment, but your ideas need to be worked on and banked for the right time. However, also, with the speed at which inventions, discoveries and creations are taking place today, you need to put ideas to work immediately.

# 44. FOLLOW YOUR INSTINCT, THINK LATER

## 45. CHANGE ‘WHY’ TO ‘WHY NOT’

Anyone can ask the question ‘why.’ Why does this happen? Why does the other happen? ‘Why not’ will help you find answers, solutions. ‘Why not’ will help you make the necessary impact.

## 46. FINISH BEFORE YOU LOSE ZEAL

What excites you today may not always be, tomorrow; and if you are one who pursues creativity, it is possible that you want to go from one thing to the other and once you discover a new thing to spend your energy on, the previous may become invalid to you; whereas every invention, every creative work has its value and market.

## 47. LOOK FOR THE OBSCURE INSIGHT

In 1941, while on a stroll, Swiss engineer, George de Mestral, invented Velcro. After going for a walk in the woods, as sticky grass stuck to his clothes, it gave him the idea. Today, Velcro is used all around the world, to stick things, shoes and clothes.

## 48. DO NOT TRY, JUST DO IT

Trying suggests non-committal. Making up your mind to do it, to create, to invent is better than merely attempting.

## 49. ACT LIKE THERE ARE NO CRISIS

When things do not work in the process of creating, it is not a crisis, it just reveals the way not to do it, what to avoid and how to go about it.

## 50. DESTROY ONE TO CREATE ANOTHER

Celebrate the achievement of creation, but in order not to rest on your oars you have got to move from the current prototype to a better one. If you get stuck on how good your current invention is, you will not be able to make a better one. So, destroy one to create another.

## 51. DO NOT WAIT FOR FAVOURABLE TIMES

The world of creativity is broad. The same ideas and concepts you have may have been what someone else is pondering on, in another part of the world. Several years ago, one of my staff came up with the idea of real video playing billboards that could be remotely controlled. Maybe others had the idea before him. He did not advance his. But today, it is a global phenomenon. It is possible that while he was meditating on it, some others were already working on it. In creative skills, the first man becomes the recognised one unless you put a variation to what you have created.

## 52. SLEEP ON IT

In the words of Salvador Dalli, “All my best ideas come from my dreams.” Sleeping on an idea may mean not being hasty and taking the time to give it further meditation and who knows, you might just find your dream world invaded and how to go about it coming up in your spirit.

## 53. COMPETE

The atmosphere of competition pushes your gift to a greater level. Competition can lead to completion because it makes us stretch, think, broaden and not coast or settle.

## 54. DEVELOP CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Critical thinking is the objective analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to form a judgement. The elements of critical thinking include rational, sceptical, unbiased analysis of the valuation of evidence according to Wikipedia.

It helps in making reasoned judgements that are logical and well thought out. Critical thinking is key to developing creative skills because it helps you not to simply accept all judgements and conclusion you are exposed to, but rather develop an inquiring mind.

When critical thinking is applied in creativity, you understand the links between ideas, you approach problems in a consistent and systematic way, you are able to recognise and appraise arguments without thinking that it is tearing apart your proposition.

Critical daily thinking helps to determine the importance and relevance of the various interconnections, assumptions, beliefs and values.

## 55. PLAY A LOT

Particularly things like video games. It sounds almost like an anachronism to say that playing would boost your creativity. The way video games are created demands structured thinking. It will help better concentration. It will enhance your spatial skills. It will improve your neural processes. It will increase your performance, your ability to solve problems. It will improve your mood as video games lead to winning or losing. It will boost your inspiration.

## 56. WRITE

Writing improves your thinking. Creative writing is a skill few people choose to cultivate, but it helps to boost who and what you do above the competition. Many of the best CEOs in the world have extremely advanced creative writing skills which they use on a regular basis to present their case and win over contracts.

Writing, as it relates to creativity boosts imagination. It broadens your thought processes and can lead to success in many areas, including problem solving and analysis.

Secondly, it gives you the basis for self-expression.

Thirdly, your confidence is boosted because you find something that helps to develop your voice.

Fourthly, through writing you are able to develop your communication skills and your ability to persuade.

## 57. GIVE IN TO WHAT YOUR MIND WANTS TO KNOW

## 58. THINK OUTSIDE OF THE BOX

We have used this expression severally, but we have not given much thought to what it means. To think outside of the box is to study areas you have never covered, to expose yourself to new areas of learning.

## 59. RESPECT ABSURD IDEAS

Treat other people's ideas with respect. It may sound absurd, but it may lead to investigation and investigation could lead to discovery. What is absurd today may be brilliant tomorrow. Experiment with the absurd, go out of the way to do things. People who are interested in your success may like the product which looks absurd to you. Respect the absurd areas. The absurd needs encouragement. They must be treasured and protected.

60. CELEBRATE CREATIVE IDEAS, IRRESPECTIVE OF WHO HAD THEM

## 61. VALUE THE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

## 62. CARRY A NOTEPAD EVERYWHERE

Ideas do not give prior notice. They come up in your mind at any time. What you do not use, you lose. That is the reason for having a notepad, to be able to capture the thought while it is fresh. It could be the rhyme for a new song. It could be the concept for a book.

## 63. BE OPEN

## 64. BE SURROUNDED BY CREATIVE PEOPLE

Iron sharpens iron. Let other people's quest provoke yours. Who you see determines what you see. What you see determines what you hear. Being surrounded by creative people would encourage collaboration, feedback and quality challenge.

## 65. MAKE ROOM FOR MISTAKES

The world is awash with inventions, creative ideas that have gone wrong. The British inventor, Sir Clive Sinclair, who was the first to produce a slim line electronic pocket calculator and in Britain, the Sinclair home computers; was also the man who experienced massive failure with the invention of the Sinclair C5, a battery electric vehicle that was a commercial failure.

## 66. BREAK AWAY FROM CONSUMING, GET INTO PRODUCING

You have to break away by going somewhere new, to a different world. Bring all the previous points to bear as you write your ideas and throw yourself in to work.

67. LOOK FOR SOMETHING WHICH STROKES YOUR CREATIVE SELF

## 68. WHEN YOU WRITE DOWN ONE IDEA, YOUR MIND BEGINS TO PRODUCE MORE

Do not wait for perfection.

## 69. ESTABLISH A PURPOSE FOR WHAT YOU CREATE

## 70. DO NOT JUDGE YOUR IDEAS TOO EARLY

# 71. ANALYSE, SYNTHESIZE, EVALUATE

*“Art, freedom and creativity will change society faster than politics”. Victor Pinchuk*

# *CHA*PTER 5 – CREATIVITY AND IDEAS GENERATION TECHNIQUES

The ideas people generate and work on, the things they create are most times preceded by the technique and the approach they applied to make it a reality.

On some other occasions, there is a need to provoke creative skills or the idea one is manufacturing, designing etc.

In this chapter, we will look at some of the ways to come up with creative ideas or generate ideas that can be turned into a business concept.

## 1. THE POLICEMAN QUESTIONS

This is one of the most popular creative or idea generating approaches that I personally use in writing books. Even in the brainstorming phase, I use words and boxes to get the flow of thoughts that will end up becoming a book.

The questions are: What? Why? How? Where? When? Who?

To apply this method, for example in wanting to start a business of selling plastic bottles, you must factor in essentially the following: What types of plastic bottles do I want to sell? Why would plastic bottles be necessary? Who needs plastic bottles? Where can I manufacture the plastic bottles? The list could be endless.

To go into greater detail, let us first look at the ‘What?’ What is being done? Why is it necessary? What else could be done? What else should be done?

The next is the ‘Where?’ Where is being done? Why is it there? Where else could it be done? Where else should it be done.

The third question is ‘When?’ When was it done? Why was it done then? When else could it have been done? When next should it be done?

The fourth question is ‘Who?’ Who does it? Why this person or group of persons? Who else could do it? Who else should do it? Who else could do it? Who else should do it? Who else should have done it?

The next question is ‘How?’ How is it being done? Why is it this way? How else could it have been done? How else should it be done?

With this approach, I am able to come up with the initial materials and ideas which will serve as a basis for my book and then I could flesh out whatever remains to make it robust.

## 2. NEGATIVE BRAINSTORMING

It is another example of creative techniques.

With this technique, you come up with what might be called, “being a devil’s advocate, creating the worst scenario.” Having created the worst scenario by bringing up all possible negatives, one then begins to find the answers.

The best example that comes to mind is if for example you want to write a book on increasing personal capacity.

This approach will start with something like, “10 reasons not to increase capacity.” And having come up with those ten reasons, it will now be reversed to find solutions on why capacity building is a necessity.

## 3. HAVE A MOOD BOARD

The next example will be to have a “mood board”. That is a collection of images which present different kinds of moods: laughter, smile, frown, quarrel, arguments, war zones, play zones etc. In the process of creating these various mood zones you capture concepts, ideas, either for arranging solutions or to develop design concepts that bring to light the otherwise unseen answers and ideas.

## 4. USE THE "SIX THINKING HATS" APPROACH

In his book, "Six thinking hats," Edward de Bono proposes six thinking hats for provoking creativity. These hats are intended to improve your approach to decision-making, as you look at the same matter from different perspectives.

Hat no.1 – a white hat. This covers the fact that you are making a decision on what you are about to create, invent, write about, using actual facts, figures, information that are needed.

Hat no.2 – a red hat. Red hat thinking covers bringing your emotions, feelings and intuitions into decision-making. This might be described as right brain orientation, the side of emotion. It is not bad at all to bring in the side of emotion in decision-making. It might just be the key that unlocks and brings the best concepts.

For example, you could never create a nice playground for children without involving the side of logic so that the playgroup is functional as a place of education and the side of emotion that makes it is a place of excitement as well.

Hat no.3 – a black hat. Black hat thinking is when you use the hat of judgement and caution. Some suggestions and concepts may not fit into what you are developing. Black hat thinking would help to stay within the appropriate system or policy to make your idea work.

Hat no.4 – a yellow hat. Yellow hat thinking is approaching creativity with logic and positivity. It means coming up with reasons why a concept will work and the benefits it offers.

Hat no.5 – a green hat. Green hat thinking is a hat of creativity, but which looks at proposals and ideas from an alternative, thought-provoking and change-making approach.

Hat no.6 – a blue hat. Blue hat thinking is concerned with the total change which comes from the whole creative approach, when all six hats are put into action, the benefit that would accrue.

The six hats approach may be beneficial for creativity and idea generation, particularly in the environment where people are always coming up with

adversarial arguments that immediately tear a concept or idea and announce its unworkability. At the same time, it allows room for a creative and constructive approach, moving away from traditional arguments that have been against the concept.

Wearing these hats will make idea generation faster, more positive and will make the best to come out of persons involved.

When you use the six hats approach, all you need to do is remember the colour of the hats and it makes it easy to learn and to use, resulting in greater achievements and maybe more progress.

## 5. PLAY THE INSIGHT GAME

It is so easy to take our world for granted, without asking questions. An insight game would be to ask questions, observe what is happening and possibly even write down what was learnt or gained.

For example, if a car were to drive past as you are reading this book, and it says it has a turbo engine; the question should be, “What is a turbo engine? How does a turbo engine work? What is the difference between the turbo engine and the normal engine car?”

Once you research and find the answer, it becomes something you learnt today, a new insight gained.

## 6. PLAY THE WORD GAME

How do you play the word game and use it to be creative?

Imagine sitting down and having an open page in front of you. As you do so, write seven words that begin to come up in your head, though not associated; with time, they may lead up to a hundred words. Then begin to draw lines to connect the ones that seem to have a similarity or association.

This way, your brain is performing its function. It is a self-organising system that can bring together what could almost not be immediately seen as connected. While these words are coming together, try to build a metaphor around them.

Associating words should take you to the next point which is storyboarding.

## 7. STORYBOARDING

In today's business world, this is used for advertising campaigns and commercials. This is the method used for coming up with those adverts that really get our attention.

Storyboarding can also influence other artistic works such as song writing, book writing, image building etc. As I write this book, I can think of Lionel Ritchie's song, "Easy." That straightaway creates an image in your mind.

Sunday morning, for those who do not go to church, seems like an easy day: no work, sleep long, wake up late etc. The song goes on to say,

> "Oh that's why I'm easy. I'm easy like Sunday morning yeah
> That's why I'm easy. I'm easy like Sunday morning."[4]

He uses simple words, woven around a metaphor to capture the message he intends to convey to the listener. This take us to the next creative approach.

## 8. METAPHORICAL THINKING

A metaphor connects two different worlds to form a meaning or a concept. A footballer, who it seems, is playing better, scoring goals and becoming a world champion because he drank milk when he was a child.

Football and milk do not go together, but in this metaphorical picture, the story becomes a powerful imagery for young kids who, themselves, want to become football greats.

## 9. USE QUADRANT THINKING

Earlier in this book, we stated the need to think outside of the box; yet, I may say, when various ideas come up in your mind, you need to create boxes to put them in and then draw lines to connect them.

When you want to build a house, you need a box of various designs, a box of architects to approach, a box of where to get finance, a box of the appropriate location, a box of the convenience you intend to achieve when the house is built.  A line then connects this quadrant thinking so that every time you get something fresh and new, it is dropped in one of these boxes in preparation for the house you want to build. The same approach may also be used for the house you want to buy.

Beyond quadrant thinking, the next would be a brain shifting.

## 10. BRAIN SHIFT

We have watched “Superman, Wonder Woman, Iron Man, Batman.” These larger than life images and characters are brain shifters – doing things that are not known to have ordinarily been achieved or could be achieved within the frame of our regular thinking.

So, create your own story line, using a brain shift. As I write this book, my house overlooks a lagoon. In the small bush between my house and the waters, once a while, I see rodents from the top floor where I sit to dictate, running into the bushes by the lagoon. Let us imagine that one of those rodents was known as “Commander Rodent” or “Commander Rod.”

*“Commander Rod lives in the green west section of the bushes in front of me. He is gathering his friends to go to the side of the northeast to invade and get some potatoes left outside by some farmers. Commander Rod and his team burrowed what they called a super highway from the west end to the northeast. It has a dual carriageway. Commander Rod and his team: as soon as they grab some part of the potatoes they want, they go through the super highway underground to show up on the other end. Their families are waiting and as soon as they show with their bounty, there is celebration and rejoicing.”*

That could be the beginning of a story. This could be taken further.

*“In the process of grabbing the potatoes, a trap caught the leg of little Joe who managed to free himself and drag himself back home. Commander Rod and his team rushed in to the surgery of Dr Lilian who has a mixture of bushes and water that cures the body of rodents. She gives him a drink and instead of him simply being cured, he becomes extraordinarily strong. In fact, a super hero: from little Joe to BIG JOE.”*

We have a story!

The next is to focus on the process. The aim should not be to just get results but to focus on the process that brought the results, asking oneself, “How can I change my process? How can it be better? What can I do to be more creative?”

When people get stuck on results and do not improve their process, they become left behind by those who improve, enhance and move forward.

Nokia, the telephone company, became obsolete because it did not continue to improve its process. Kodak, the camera people, were the world's greatest sensation but they did not improve their process and the world overtook them. The Swiss watch industry did not see the necessity for improving its processes or embracing new processes. They were overtaken when others came on the scene.

You can draw a list of several scenarios. Linus Pauling, an American chemist, author and educator once said, "The best way to get a good idea is to have a lot of ideas."

Imagine if you sit down to come up with several ways to do a thing. Many ideas will go through your mind and you can begin to knock out the ones that may not likely work and though they are not likely to work now, they are likely to work for something else later.

## 11. USE A NEW TOOL

If you have been used to a typewriter, use something new. Come out of your regular. If you have been used to using a notepad, use a Dictaphone. As a matter of fact, a Dictaphone might just work better because you speak six times faster than you can write. That way, you capture every thought.

## 12. ACT LIKE IT IS WORKING

Sometimes you may get stuck, but in the process of you acting as if things are working and making preparations, you might push your mind out of neutral at the times when things are not working into actual progress.

This works when you feel that what you have created, achieved, the ideas you have come up with, the book you are writing, the music you have written, the songs you have written, are not strong. But because you are acting as if it is really working, you are able to get into work and make something even more creative.

## 13. PUT A LEASH ON YOURSELF

Imagine what happens to you when you are using a new tool. You are slower, more careful and try to get it right.

When you set additional constraints on a project, you force yourself to look elsewhere, to avoid mistakes, to imagine new ways and to see answers. When constraints are put on people, it is amazing how they come up with solutions and make progress.

I have visited nations that were under importation and economic embargos in the past. Some of these nations have gone ahead to find solutions in their constraints, by inventing, creating and manufacturing their own solutions. After all, necessity is the mother of invention.

*“Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That's because they were able to connect experiences they've had and synthesize new things.” Steve Jobs*

# CHAPTER SIX – CREATE, INVENT, INNOVATE

Creativity, innovation and invention are sometimes thought to be descriptive of one and the same concept or experience. This is not so. Each stands on its own. However, they could be dependent on each other. As a matter of fact, an idea can be one of the three, two or all three.

What is creativity again? It is the act of turning new and imaginative ideas into reality. It is about creation, harnessing the power of the mind to conceive and produce ideas, plans, to experiment, test and bring forth a concept of the mind into reality. It can be the expression of a solution to a known problem.

On a micro or macro level, everyone can be creative. It can be from the simplest conception of new food ideas to the complex invention of an aeroplane.

While creativity is the act of turning new and imaginative ideas into reality, invention is the creation of what was imagined. The creation of a new concept, a new idea.

Creativity channels its imagination into something concrete. It is the very first stage of designing a solution where ideas begin, build and become.

Invention on the other hand is the physical creation of a new concept or idea. By creativity, somebody thought about car-sharing which evolved into companies like Uber and Taxify. The invention of a thing is making the concept become viable, possibly for use or even sale.

So, by creativity, someone conceives a concept of a car for example. By invention, you go into designing and production, creating a business model for selling it and maybe the first working prototype. It is not possible to invent without creativity.

The creative mind will ensure that what it conceives results in the purposeful production of that thing, ideas. Some creations may have been accidental, like the discovery of plastic, Velcro, which may not have been through a regular creative process.

Invention is the creation of a new idea or concept. It is not a random process, but the result of research, study, repeated attempts until there is

perfection. Invention must be distinguished from its discovery to its perfection.

Creativity leads to invention. However, after the invention, there is need for innovation. Innovation is about changing a common or long-standing process and improving it. Innovation in the world has led to various evolutions of the products and services we use today. The cars we drive in the 21st century are not in any way similar to the first invented cars of the 1860s. Innovation is about taking newly created ideas and developing them into something useful and practical, enhancing and existing invention, making it better on a day-by-day basis.

Invention is very evolutionary because it is about evolving. So many have either been creative or inventive, but with the lack of innovation, have not been able to move their product forward. Great companies have also disappeared because they refused to innovate. Kodak cameras are today almost non-existent. IBM started the personal computer race, but today struggles to catch up because of the lack of innovation. The Nokia phones dominated a particular market, but today struggles in the world of telecommunications.

If there is no innovation, you will always play catch-up. When people innovate and hit the market, rivals struggle. Innovation is important but it is not about always changing the product or the service. It could just be the way it is marketed, presented or the quality of product.

Being innovative keeps you on the cutting edge. There have been people who were creative and inventive, but lack of innovation meant that somebody else came and overtook them.

Sir Sinclair made several models of personal computers, but he could never catch up with those who made personal computers simpler, easy to use and cheaper to buy.

An innovation can be a distribution method for accessibility to your product by those who will buy it.

Innovation boosts performance in business. Where there are several people playing in a market field, innovation may be what distinguishes you and makes your product popular with the consumer.

Following your creative breakthrough and the invention of something you conceived, it is important to realise that the marketing of your product would require a very good innovative approach.

In a nutshell, after you have been creative, your creativity leads to invention. You now need to turn the new concept into a commercial success for widespread use or else it dies at the design phase.

What was created and invented cannot be an unknown product. It is innovation that makes it stand out.

Cars have been for over a hundred years, but most car manufacturing companies have become innovative and sensitive to the current cry for a cleaner environment by manufacturing cars that use electric power and not fossil fuel. With this, they have created a new market and redefined the automobile industry.

# CONCLUSION

The last forty years of the human race have been most interesting. These forty years have introduced us to the fourth industrial revolution.

The first industrial revolution was actually the industrialisation of the world, the introduction of the steam engine, locomotion, travel by the early trains and the production lines and machines.

The second industrial revolution was mass production, the creation of the assembly line and mass availability of electricity.

The third industrial revolution was the introduction of the computer age and automation technology.

We are right now in the fourth industrial revolution[5]. This is the phase of cyber technology, cyber systems. This last revolution is the revolution of cloud technology, software information, augmented reality, artificial intelligence, big data analytics, IT security, robotics, customisation etc.

We have taken the time to establish the need for you to find your creative capacity, to build your capacity.

Creativity must start with curiosity; being curious about everything around you.

The world is full of amazing wonders and there are yet more horizons and territories unexplored. To lack a curious mind is to die in status quo. To maintain status quo, is to never discover new horizons.

To develop a creative and imaginative mind, you must open your mind to new and unexplored paths. Tackle problems you have never tackled before. Make something that looks harder to become easier.

Creativity is about following an unexplored path, a road less travelled. Thinking of unusual ways to tackle problems, making something that looks hard to become easy.

We have, in this book, challenged you to be curious about everything around you, about the world. Explore, investigate, and question almost the unquestionable. Look deep into the problems that society faces and begin to think of new paths, new answers.

There are people who have previously been creative, who have given us the world we enjoy, who have, through their creative investigation made the world a better place. Associate yourself with such persons, remotely and closely.

In areas where it seems as if there has been exploration and invention, there can still be room for improvement. Improvement may come by way of ideas that suggest that this is a crazy way of solving problems. A creative person will write it down and explore. It may turn out to be a serendipity.

Step-by-step methods for being creative need to be explored. Start thinking about writing what pops up in your mind, take notes and expand the picture you see, refine and change the story line of what you have come up with.

Take your time because new ideas can crop up in the subconscious.

Creativity is not only about inventions. It is also about conceptions, ideas and scientific, artistic, managerial, motivational, personal acumen.

If it is, for example, the world of the artistic, music, books etc. there is the chance of seeing things from new angles, using different strategies. If one method does not work, try another one. Do not box yourself. This is one argument we have maintained as a way to discover your creative edge.

We are all gifted. That was the premise upon which we started. When God created man, He made us in His image. God is creative. We have that capacity. We are an extension of our Maker.

So, stroke your creativity by curiosity. Learn as much as you can about what you want to create. It is possible. Improvise, develop and expand, following different offbeat paths.

There is almost hardly an area where somebody has not worked on. Improve and refine their ideas. These are the reasons for human progress.

Someone made the first automobile. Since then, many more have been made and worked on. Even very small parts of the automobile have been worked on.

You too can take on what seems to be a challenge that no one else had ever explored. Remember that it is exploration that will lead to experiment. Do not be afraid of being wrong.

Joseph Chilton Pearce said, *"To live a creative life, we must lose our fear of being wrong."*

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[1] https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/how-many-trees-are-there-on-earth-10483553.html [accessed in October 2018]

[2] Globalethicsnetwork.org

[3] Tim Brown, Tales of Creativity and Play, TED Talk at http://www.ted.com/talks/tim_brown_on_creativity_and_play.html

[4] https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/lionelrichie/easy.html [Accessed on 27.09.2018]

[5] https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2018/08/13/the-4th-industrial-revolution-is-here-are-you-ready/#70f91511628b [accessed in October 2018]