

LIFE  
MANAGEMENT  
PRINCIPLES

## THIS ISSUE

**Ten ways  
creativity can  
improve your life**

**How to jumpstart  
your creativity NOW**

**Brainstorming dos &  
don'ts**

**Recommended  
resources**

## Getting into the Creativity Zone

It's interesting that when we're faced with a challenge, conflict, or the effects of stagnation, we seldom turn to one of our most valuable resources - our minds. Your mind is like a pure vein of gold and when mined regularly, it can produce a wealth of ideas and solutions.

Although some of us have greater right-brain tendencies, creativity is not reserved for artists, writers and musicians. We all can tap into the creativity zone (c-zone) and benefit from our creativity. Some of the advantages include the ability to:

- Resolve conflict
- Explore new possibilities
- Boost productivity
- Expand thinking
- Multiply options
- Generate improved systems, products and services
- Experiment
- Make new discoveries
- Create practical and innovative solutions
- Enhance one's personal and professional contribution

So how can you tap into the c-zone and make the most of your time there? Below are several strategies to get you started and help you take full advantage of your time in the zone.

### Schedule time in the c-zone

Earl Nightingale, one of the greatest philosophers who ever lived and the co-founder of Nightingale-Conant Corporation, understood the advantages of frequently turning on your thinking



cap. Before starting his workday, Nightingale invested one hour with a pad of paper thinking and recording ways to improve his work. He admits that not all of his ideas were good ones, but it only takes one great idea to revolutionize your business and your life. If you want to flourish in the c-zone, allocate the necessary time to brainstorm and analyze previously formu-

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lated ideas. Perhaps it's weekly, monthly or quarterly. The key is to get it on your calendar and do it.

Julia Cameron, author of *The Artist's Way*, also suggests scheduling an artist date. According to Cameron, an artist date is "a block of time, perhaps two hours weekly, especially set aside and committed to nurturing your creative consciousness, your inner artist. You do not take anyone on this artist date but you ... no friends, spouse, children - no taggers-on of any stripe." Some suggestions from the book include a long country walk, a visit to an aquarium or an art gallery, or a trip to an ethnic neighborhood to taste foreign sights and sounds. Still can't think of anything to do? Check your local newspaper for a list of events and activities or contact your area convention and visitors bureau.

You can also sharpen your thinking skills and stimulate your creativity by playing a game of chess, doing a crossword, or putting together a jigsaw puzzle.

### **Capture creativity**

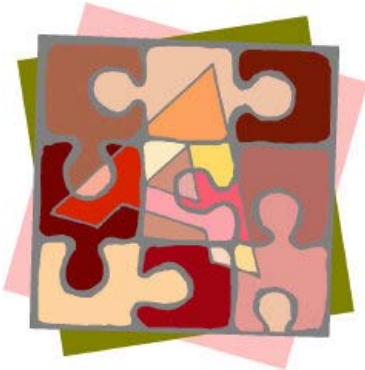
Be sure to write down or audiotape your thoughts and ideas. Consider keeping a notebook, index cards or recorder handy (e.g. in the car, on your nightstand, in the office, in your purse or wallet). You never know when an idea will bubble up or where you will be when it happens. Also think about creating a creativity folder or computer document where you can store clever and innovative materials you discover (e.g. newspaper and magazine articles, advertisements, flyers, brochures, web sites). You can include random notes (e.g. personal stories, buzzwords, movie lines, billboard slogans, information from a radio program). These will serve as excellent resources when you need a creative jumpstart.

### **Brainstorm**

This is a free flow of thoughts, ideas and images. You can brainstorm alone or with a group. Below are some tips on maximizing your brainstorming sessions:

- Establish a specific purpose/objective or have a well-defined problem you want to resolve.
- Remember when assembling a group to avoid selecting all "like-minded" individuals. Consider members from outside of your team, department, organization or industry. Also consider how diverse your group is (e.g. years of service with the company, experience in the field, gender, ethnic background).
- Use an activity or game if you need a jumpstart or to pump the well. Try the *Creative Whack Pack* by Roger Von Oech or *The Big Book of Creativity Games* by Robert Epstein.
- Think of as many ideas as you can. Don't stop with the first good idea ... keep going - dig





deeper. Focus on quantity vs. quality remembering that one idea spurs another and so on.

- Avoid judging ideas while brainstorming. It interrupts the flow and in a group setting can discourage participation. Throw out the rule book.
- Write down *all* ideas.
- Schedule a separate session to analyze and judge ideas generated by the brainstorming session. The break will give the subconscious mind time to process the information. It is often during this time (after we have engaged the mind to generate a solution), that we experience “aha!” moments resulting in breakthrough ideas.

Just imagine, anytime you had a challenge in any area of your life (e.g. workplace, household, relationship, financial) you could put your mind to work to create a solution. You can. Spending time in the c-zone can enhance every aspect of your life. All you have to do is get in the zone.

### Recommended Resources

*The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity* by Julia Cameron (Paperback)

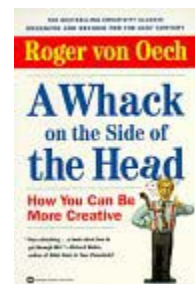
*The Big Book of Creativity Games: Quick, Fun Activities for Jumpstarting Innovation* by Robert Epstein (Paperback)

*The Breakout Principle: How to Activate the Natural Trigger that Maximizes Creativity, Athletic Performance, Productivity and Personal Well-Being* by Herbert Benson and William Proctor (Hardcover)

*Creative Whack Pack* by Roger Von Oech (Illustrated deck of cards)

*Lead the Field* by Earl Nightingale (Audio)

*A Whack on the Side of the Head: How You Can Be More Creative* by Roger Von Oech (Paperback)



Jennifer is a professional speaker, author and president of CommuniQuest, Inc. Through her seminars and keynotes, she delivers fresh insight and proven techniques on how to work smarter and live a more satisfying life. For more information on her workplace strategies and inspirational programs, visit [www.communiquet.com](http://www.communiquet.com) or call 1-888-866-0821.

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