

Being Creative

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create: “to bring into existence,” from Latin *creare*: “to bring forth”

There is a primary meaning of the word “creation” that has been nearly lost in the modern materialistic world. In general, today’s world defines creation as something that results from doing something new. Creativity is therefore considered in materialistic terms as the ability to do something that results in something new. A creative person is generally credited with having learned some discipline or technique and is well experienced in a particular skill that produces tangible results.

The largely forgotten meaning of creation is considered to be in the province of religion or the spiritual. This creation is the bringing forth of something new that changes the surrounding world. In general, this change increases the power of an individual, group or society to more fully live or understand life. The majority of such creations are, however, largely unrecognized by the populace other than they have to pay more taxes, or their house is warmer, and perhaps they work fewer hours per week.

The effect of spiritual creations can be seen in the passage of time. For instance, compare the average lifestyle of people living in the modern world with that of their ancestors of two or more generations ago. Compare the power and energy that they have to cook, heat their homes or to travel, as well as their knowledge and ability to understand their world to fully use what is there. All of these differences represent an evolution that has taken place with the creations of individuals. However, it is difficult to perceive these creations at the time they come forth. Generally, they become obvious only with the passage of time. Similarly, the works of a creative individual may not be obvious to those within their immediate world and may not be obvious until a lifetime or more has passed.

In order to discuss the higher aspect of creation, what it is, and how it is obtained, consider the lives of five individuals who are now recognized as having had creations that changed the world. The few highlights of their lives given below will be important for the later discussion.

The first person is an excellent introduction, primarily because his name is associated with the highest award society can give for creations that better the world. He is Alfred Nobel, a trained mechanical engineer, who discovered dynamite. He lost his brother in an accidental explosion and dedicated himself to finding a safe explosive that would not endanger the user. We heard a story that he carelessly dropped a vial of nitroglycerine onto the floor and then, no doubt, stood there in amazement since he had not been blown to pieces. The dropped nitroglycerine fell into some packing material (carelessly left there, we can assume) which absorbed the shock and prevented an explosion. From that chance and accidental occurrence, dynamite and other safe explosives were developed.

Otto Loewi, a physician and pharmacologist, is famous for proving that chemical substances carry nerve signals to organs. He and his colleague, Sir Henry Dale, were awarded a Nobel Prize. But Loewi is perhaps more famous because the idea for the design of his experiment came to him in a dream. He related how he half awakened from a dream with the feeling that he knew how organs communicated and wrote down a sketchy summary. The next morning his conscious

brain couldn't understand his summary. Nevertheless, Loewi's dedication was rewarded with another dream that night. But before he could lose the message, he dashed into his lab to manifest the weird image of his dream.¹

Friedrich Kekulé, a professor of chemistry, had an experience similar to Loewi's. He had dedicated himself to finding the nature of carbon atoms and the structure of molecules in aromatic hydrocarbons. He succeeded quite well and his created models opened many new doors in organic chemistry. During a much later assembly of scientists honoring his work, he told how he found the answers in two dreams that pointed to the structure of carbon and the coupling of carbon atoms to form a ring. Kekulé ended his speech with, "Let us learn to dream, gentlemen, then perhaps we will find the truth... but let us beware of publishing our dreams before they have been put to the proof by the waking understanding."²

For years as a student, Nikola Tesla struggled to solve the problems of direct current motors. After leaving the university, he suffered with a debilitating illness. But he was dedicated to live and continue to find the elusive answers. He claimed that "Back in the deep recesses of the brain was the solution, but I could not yet give it outward expression." While walking one evening, Tesla was reciting poetry to a friend. Inspired by the sunset and the poetry, a vision came to him "like a flash of lightning." He could see the forces and motions of a revolutionary electric motor running on alternating electrical current, considered impossible at that time. Years later, he managed to convert his dream experiences into reality and later sold his patents on the motor and other related patents to Westinghouse, which became the foundation for the world's present electrical power system.³

Without formal education, Charles Goodyear solved one of the critical problems of preparing rubber through vulcanization. After many tries with different additives, he finally mixed sulfur into the raw rubber even though it had shown no previous benefits. Then as many know, he inadvertently dropped some of the mix on a hot stove. Instead of making a real stinky and sticky mess, however, it hardened under the heat and obtained the characteristics now associated with cured rubber. Goodyear is often quoted as arguing that this discovery was not the result of an accident. He claimed that the hot stove incident would only make sense to someone "whose mind was prepared to draw an inference."⁴

In all of the above cases, each creative individual:

- 1) had a strong dedication to reach for answers,
- 2) applied himself to working with what was known,
- 3) accepted the accidents, dreams, or the unexpected as necessary steps, and
- 4) reduced his creation to practical use.

The above examples are of scientists whose results were easily perceived and converted into practical and understandable applications. However, the same creative process is also evidenced in many others such as philosophers, writers, politicians, religious leaders and social reformers as they likewise find unexpected sources of solutions to their dedicated search. In many of these cases, it is not so easy to point to one critical answer or occurrence. Generally, several creative

¹ See <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4291908/>

² Japp, F.R. (1898) Kekulé memorial lecture. *Journal of the Chemical Society*, 73, 97-108

³ See pp. 27-28 in <https://www.amazon.com/My-Inventions-Autobiography-Nikola-Tesla/dp/1684222060/>

⁴ See pp. 111-112 in <https://archive.org/details/trailsofinventor00peir>

insights or the acquiring of critical information is required, and these steps are difficult to explain to others. This is certainly the case with Kekulé, who probably didn't understand his first dream until he finally mastered his problem with his second dream.

The above can be summarized as stating that creation is not something that an individual does. It is something that happens when the individual is dedicated, seeking, trusting and receptive. In the above cases, creation might be considered to be luck, an imaginative dream, or just a turn of fate. However, the results point to something more, since: 1) they were the results being sought for, 2) they were unexpected and unknowable and 3) they had a power to change the world.

In order to understand the nature of creativity, it may be more instructive to consider it from a physicist's view than that of a theologian or a psychologist. This is because creativity increases the orderliness and energy of the world which is an integral concept of thermodynamics. Consider a king who builds a pyramid, establishes roads, provides schooling, and trains the populace to produce more and better products. Then he dies. Because of the king's creativity, the society is more organized with more available energy to sustain itself. This is the reverse of what thermodynamics expects to happen.

The second law of thermodynamics points to the universe becoming more disorganized with less ability to find useful energy as it cools. (This law is also known as the law of increasing entropy or disorder.) The world is supposed to be gradually sinking into the oblivion of less and less available energy and the loss of organization in societies and in individuals' lives. Such a condition seemed to be developing in the West just before the advent of the industrial age, when firewood was only found at increasing distances from the towns and cities. Within the towns and cities, anarchy was increasing and Western civilization was in real danger of disappearing into oblivion. Physics could have been well used to explain this increasing problem of society.

Fortunately, during this crucial time many creations were given to the world including the use and transportation of coal, the restructuring of society, and the rise of private enterprises. These creations reversed the expected effect of the second law of thermodynamics.

This reversal of entropy, or the gain in available energy and organization, was manifested on a grander scale at a much earlier time. This major shift in energy flow and organization occurred with the creation and development of life on earth. Life has the miraculous capability of growing and gaining in organization and complexity rather than dissolving, burning up or wearing away. Life is considered to be a spiritual creation that is unexplainable. The change in organization of the world and life with the rise of civilization must likewise be considered to be a spiritual creation. History certainly evidences an evolution that is now large enough to be observable from space as the face of the earth is changed to better serve society and to provide energy for its activities.

The next consideration is the nature of individuals who manage to be creative. Society seems to stimulate some individuals with the desire to bring order into their lives and to find increased power to live their lives. This desire for orderliness first takes the form of being neat and organized such as with their rooms, desks, and playthings or tools. Even many of the games that they play are based upon bringing disorder into order. For example, Solitaire is played with a shuffled deck of cards and then effort is made to bring the mixed cards back into suits and numerical order. As creative individuals go through life, they learn rules of games and organization and then keep their world neat, clean and organized. However, as will be pointed out later, this is not creativity, since there is no increase in power of the self or world and no increase in orderliness above what already exists within the world.

Individuals touch the source of creativity after all of their training and conditioning fails to solve some requirement for finding more power or control. They may find a problem with some relationship with others or some project that is stalled. Or they may become frustrated attempting to understand some concept that seems necessary to grow further in life. This can also be expressed as becoming aware of a pressing need that cannot be satisfied. They finally reach a place of having to relinquish the idea that they know, or that they can do, or that they can solve the problem. Nevertheless, they are already used to succeeding in what they dedicate themselves to do. So instead of giving up their desires, they rest with the expectation that whatever they may need will sometime, in some manner, and in some form, arrive.

The stage of waiting for the solution is not without effort, however. It can be compared with that stage of waiting that almost everyone has encountered after you have tried to remember someone's name. You feel that it is ready to appear, but won't. You let go of trying and wait with an expectation that the name will appear later, and generally it does. That state of expectation cannot be learned in a classroom or from a book. It can only be gained through experience that teaches the necessity to quit trying, exercise the faith that it will happen, and then maintain the energy of expectation as you wait.

Waiting for a name to appear is simple, however, compared to waiting for the solution to a problem. The solution must be recognized (from experience again) to take many unexpected forms. Also, one must maintain the expectancy plus some state of discrimination to be able to see the answer when it arrives. For instance, consider what might have happened to Nobel if he had been overpowered with fear and relief that he didn't get blown up when the nitroglycerine was dropped. Instead, he realized the enormity of a discovery that filled him with awe and increased dedication to pursue his search.

The unexpected nature of the answers to problems convinces the seeker that the answers do not come from the conscious or subconscious brain, since the brain has never before been exposed to them. As an example, Nobel could not have explained his discovery as due to any deliberate planning on his part, yet the discovery was obviously the result of his strong dedication.

It is at this stage of discussion that science must be forgotten. Instead, one must use religious insights to attempt to comprehend the awesome nature of the power behind creation. The first realization is that creativity is not only unique but is also quite universal. The second is that one's creation is only a small step in some long-range evolution that started with the original creation of the heavens and earth. The third is that there must be some connection of the conscious self with the original Creative Force in order to explain the mystical occurrences that carry the dedication to a completed creation.

It is at this stage that inner mental conflicts develop, since when this view is made public, one finds considerable opposition. This is because the average person has not experienced nor observed creation and certainly has not experienced the force behind creativity. If creativity has not been experienced, then it is natural to deny its reality. This denial seems to have exist on a national level with the exception that God created heaven and earth. It is believed that God rested afterward and never went back to work. Hence there are no more mystical creative forces and further evolution of mankind.

Instead of telling of Tesla, schools tell of Edison and how hard he worked at trying different things before he reached his goal. Creations are now considered to be the result of trying different things and then selecting the best one. This idea is almost fundamental in modern

scientific research where it is recognized that following the scientific methodology or procedures allows a non-creative individual to create new things. Our society teaches hard work and frowns upon dreamers or those trusting an inner power rather than the rules of society or its institutions. Yet, of course, these dreamers are the very same individuals who change and improve society.

Creativity has been described using the experiences of five great contributors to society for ease of attempting to show creativity as being more than just being different. If the mystical or spiritual aspect of creativity can be perceived and understood, then you can begin to find it in your daily life when you have a strong need to increase the orderliness and power to more fully live your life. Then you can follow the universal teachings of first dedicating yourself to finding what you seek, keeping the expectation of finding it, and then fully accepting the answer in whatever form it might arrive.

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