

Supercharge Your Creativity!

A man in a dark suit, white shirt, and tie is celebrating with his arms raised in the air, holding a small object in his right hand. He is standing on a dark surface, possibly a desk or table. The background is a solid purple color with a large, faint, light purple dollar sign (\$) overlaid on it.

Tap into the power of your creativity to
solve your problems,
innovate ideas,
and
create new opportunities!

Avish Parashar

Supercharge Your Creativity!

**Tap into the power of your own
creativity to solve your problems,
innovate ideas,
and
create new opportunities**

by Avish Parashar

visit the website:

<http://www.avishparashar.com>

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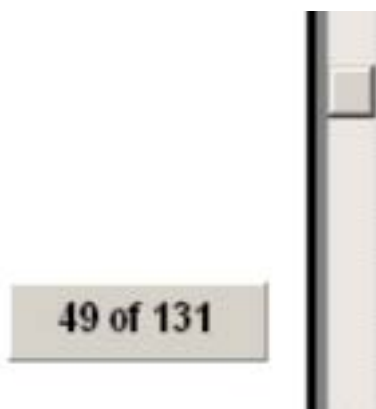
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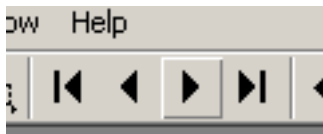
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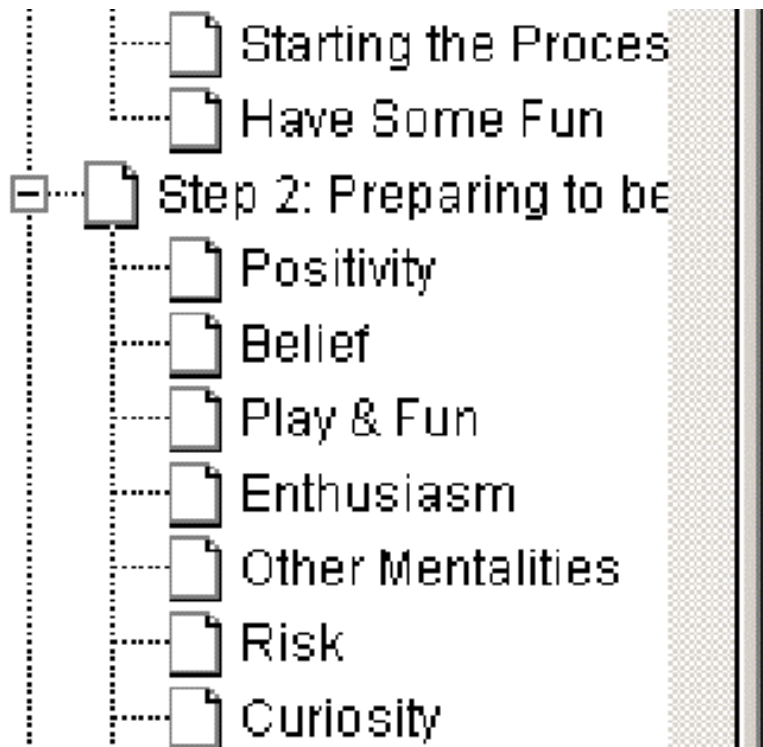
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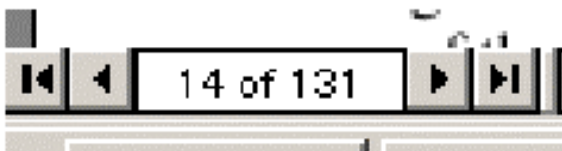


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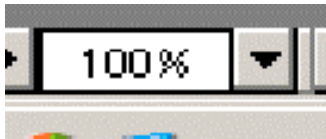


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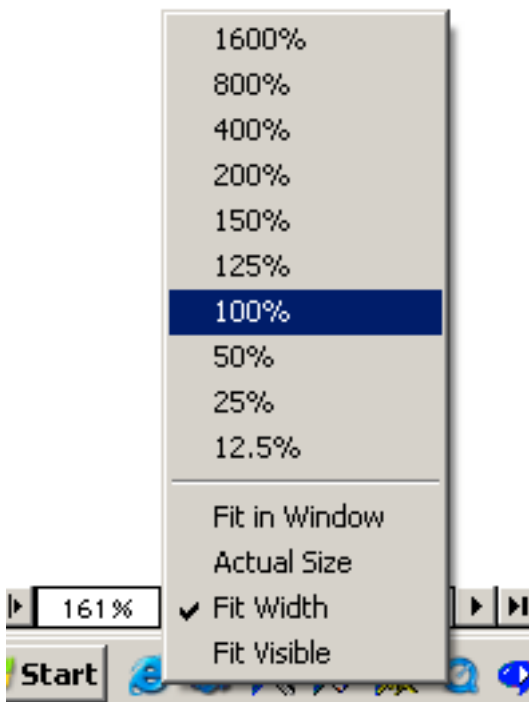


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About the Author



Avish Parashar

Avish Parashar is a speaker and trainer who uses improvisational comedy to teach creativity, productivity, teamwork, and leadership.

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or contact Avish directly at 610-804-2214 or avish@avishparashar.com

'Avish presented a lively, fun, and practical lesson on the importance of listening, cooperation, and humor.'

-Pat Hartnett, Assistant Vice President, Wachovia Bank

'Practical Stuff: Journaling, Mindstorming + Games. I will use !!'

-Shushma Shah, The Attic Youth Center

'Mr. Parashar's presentation was not only engaging, but was also instantly applicable to my situation. '

-Ms. Delaney, Business Writer

'I'll leave thinking playfully and creatively'

-Kevin Hackenberg, Get-Kinetic

'I just wanted to let you know that I really enjoyed your presentation-I found a lot of your points interesting and applicable to "real" life as well as business.'

-Leigh Maida, Leigh Maida Graphic Design

How is your Creativity?

How much did your creativity improve by going through this e-book?

What improvements did you make and see in your life?

Do you have any specific examples of how you applied the principles in this book to different areas of your life?

Please pass along your comments to:

<mailto:avish@avishparashar.com>

Introduction

Hello!

Congratulations on taking the first steps towards unleashing your creativity!

Let me ask you a question:

Do you feel confident that you can solve your own problems, achieve all you want, and move your personal and professional life confidently forward?

If you answered 'yes,' then congratulations! You don't need this or any other product!

If not, then welcome to 'Supercharge Your Creativity!'

This program is designed to explain to you what creativity is, why you need it, how you can develop it, and how you can apply it to many areas of your life. Most importantly, the goal of the program is to make you a creative person - a person who has access to all of their abilities and resources at all times.

As much as it saddens me to say, I hope that within a month or two of going through this program that you will never need to look back on it again - everything in this e-book should be a part of you by then! Of course, if you're like me, then you'll keep coming back to it for periodic refreshers!

I believe that all people have the capacity for greatness. The potential is inside every one of us. To try to reach greatness, though, people look outside themselves. They try to learn tools and techniques and they try to get external credentials and validation.

Those things are great and can be helpful, but this program is designed to show you that the first place to start with is yourself. You have tremendous creative resources, and the sooner you learn to unlock and tap into those resources, the sooner you will start to realize your potential.

Everyone will get different results from the program, but I believe that if you read it through and follow the plan that you will see some serious improvement in your confidence, flexibility, peace, happiness, and results!

How this program is set up

This e-book has three parts, plus an appendix:

Part 1 introduces creativity and explains what it is and gives you the basics of how to start becoming a creative person.

Part 2 shows you how to take your newly developed creative powers and start applying them to different areas.

Part 3 is a series of different techniques to help you 'supercharge' your creative powers. You will learn how to attack and approach problems from many different angles.

The Appendix is a collection of guides to help you apply your creativity to different areas. These are not the end-all be-all. They are just step by step guides to take you through the process of applying your creativity to some specific areas. The ultimate goal of the appendix is to give you some ideas about and practice with applying your creativity to any area of your life.

Each section ends with 'Action Items' to help you improve your creativity. While there is no way I can force you to do them, I highly recommend that you do (that is, if you really want to develop, apply, and supercharge your creativity!)

Part 1

Creativity: The Ultimate Tool Everyone Possesses (Yes, That Includes You!)

Hi! My name is Avish Parashar and what I have done for the past 12+ years is perform improv comedy. For the last 8 of those years I have directed and taught people how to perform improv comedy.

I started out with improv in college with a group called Without a Net at the University of Pennsylvania. Then I founded and served as artistic director and business manager of a Philadelphia group called Polywumpus. We used to perform in downtown Philadelphia and the suburbs.

Now before we get off and running, let me clear up any misconceptions. I want to make it clear that improv comedy is not stand-up comedy. In standup comedy, a performer takes the stage, grabs a microphone, and rattles off a series of jokes he's rehearsed in advance. The following people perform (or performed) stand-up comedy:

- Jerry Seinfeld
- Ellen Degeneres
- Bill Cosby

Improv comedy is a different animal altogether. In improv comedy, a group of performers take the stage with nothing prepared in advance. They ask the audience for suggestions, which they then use to create improvised scenes or play some improv games. The following shows or groups are well known for improv:

- Whose Line Is It Anyway? (on ABC and Family Channel)
- Second City (in Chicago as well as other places)
- The Groundlings (in LA)

I performed and taught improv comedy. Over the years of doing it, I started to realize that the tools and techniques that made for good improv comedy were the same tools and techniques that could lead to success in other areas, such as business success or interpersonal relationships. So I developed this system to teach some of these skills.

These skills include:

- Creativity
- Teamwork
- Listening
- Risk Taking

So what I do now is go out to associations and companies and I teach seminars and workshops on creativity, communication, leadership, and teamwork, all using improv principles. I found that no matter what kind of seminar I was teaching, though, I had to start with creativity.

Being able to tap into your own creative power opens the doors that lead to more effective communication, leadership, teamwork, or anything at all!

Who Needs Creativity?

A common problem I come across is people complaining that they are not creative, or people think that they don't need creativity.

Let me ask you a question: What do you think of when you hear the word 'creativity'?

For many people, the following things come to mind:

- Art
- Music
- Poetry
- Writing
- Dance

These things require 'artistry.' Artistry is a sub-section of creativity. I want to make clear that creativity is *not* artistry.

Being creative doesn't necessarily mean that you're out there writing poems, and composing songs, and creating books. All those things are creative, but creativity is much more. At the same time, it is much less.

Creativity is much simpler. Creativity is, by definition, 'the ability to create.' Everyone already does it!. That's different from artistry.

Ask yourself, 'do I ever have to do any of the following?'

- Solve problems
- Come up with new ideas
- Figure out how to get things done with less time or money
- Think on my feet

- Deal with changes

If you said 'yes' to any of the above, then you are already creating - this e-book will just help you be better at it!

But I'm not Creative!

A common comment I would get after performances is that people would say, 'I could never do that, I'm not that creative.' Well, I have a simple response to that:

Hogwash!!

I have an honest belief that everyone is creative. I believe that all people have the capacity for great creativity. Most people just don't know how to tap into it.

If you can do any of the following you can be creative:

- Think
- Breathe
- Move
- Remember
- Imagine
- Be Quiet
- Be Loud
- Speak

What a big chunk of this program is going to be about is helping you learn just how to tap into it.

Tap into the Subconscious

The easiest way I can explain to you the difference between being creative and not being creative is to think of your thought process as *flowing vs. thinking*.

By 'flowing' I mean that your creative power lies in your subconscious. Your subconscious is amazingly powerful. It handles thousands of things every second. Take a look at just some of the things the subconscious handles all the time:

- Your breathing
- Your blood flow
- Your autonomic functions
- Organ regulation
- All of your senses and sensory input. (including all the stuff that's coming in that you're not even aware of)
- Memories
- Feelings
- Associations.

It really handles everything; it's immensely powerful. So if you want to get creative, you need to tap into that part of you and let ideas flow out of there.

The opposite of that is 'thinking,' and with thinking you use your conscious mind. The conscious is much weaker because it can only focus on one thing at a time.

Now I know you're saying to yourself, 'No no, I multi-task. I can drive my car, and eat a taco, and talk on my cell phone, and read a road-map all at the same time.' In this case, however, you're not thinking about four things at once; you're actually switching your attention between

four things very quickly. And in fact, the things that your attention is not on your subconscious is handling anyway.

So the subconscious is much more powerful. You need to learn how to tap into that.

Here's a quick comparison of the conscious to the subconscious

Conscious	Subconscious
Handles one thing at a time	Handles thousands of things at a time
Very weak	Immensely powerful
Overused	Under-utilized
Slow	Fast
Critical and Limiting	Open and flowing

Why am I not tapping into my subconscious already?

There are a couple of things that stop you from tapping into your subconscious.

First, and primarily, is you don't know how. That's where this e-book comes in!

Second, you have these things I call filters. We're going to get more into filters later in the book.

In a nutshell, filters are those little voices in your head that say, 'No, don't do that, don't say that,' or 'you're not good enough,' or 'you can't do that.'

We're going to have to look at a couple of ways of breaking those down and getting around them.

Control

To be more creative, it really helps if you can let go of control. The willingness to let go and not be in control all the time makes you more creative. You give up control to your subconscious and also to other people, and that stimulates your creativity.

The unwillingness to let go of control is tremendously limiting. This is true for many areas of life, not just creativity. It limits communication, teamwork, leadership, and progress, to name a few.

Basically, this is a comfort zone issue. Maintaining control is the way people stay in their comfort zone, which is safe.

Improvising, by its very nature, is letting go of control. As you go through this program, be willing to let go of control and get out of your comfort zone. Remember, progress and improvement lies outside of your comfort zone!

On the flip side, becoming more creative will help you let go of control. Once you get more creative and become a better problem solver, you become more able to roll with punches, so you are more willing to step out of your comfort zone.

This skill set allows you to let go of control and flow with things around you.

It becomes a cyclical thing:

- The more you let go of control, the more creative you become
- The more creative you become, the more willing you are to let go of control

Trust

Trust is also extremely important. Consider a traditional trust-building exercises like a trust fall. In a trust fall you would stand there with a few members of your team behind you. You would then fall backwards and your teammates would catch you, which should increase your trust. In theory, the fact that you trusted them there means that when you go back to your office you will now trust them at work.

I tried this exercise when I was directing improv with my group of players, but it never really held true for me. In my mind, if I'm sitting there in a workshop, I could even take strangers and I'd probably trust them not to let me fall because I believe people are good.

But I don't really know them, so the fact that they catch me does nothing to make me believe that I can trust them with my ideas, or that I could trust them to respect me at work, or I could trust them to pay attention. I found that one form of trust did not necessarily imply another.

As I was going on my quest to try and make trust greater in my group, I came across only two ways to increase trust. One way obviously is just time. You throw people together for long enough and they start to get to know each other, and trust develops.

The only other way I came up with was to make people more *trusting*. If I know that I can handle whatever comes my way, I'm going to be more willing to open up and trust you, even if I don't know you that well.

The reason I'm going to not trust you is because I'm going to be holding on to control, and I'm going to be afraid of what you do because I'm afraid I won't be able to handle it.

So I found that the more creative people are the faster trust grows. My performance improved amazingly the day that I realized this because I could go out with anyone and not really be afraid. I wasn't worried

about what they were going to do, or if they do what I wanted them to. I just knew that I trusted myself that I could flow with whatever they did.

So what can I get out of this?

Some of the benefits of creativity are obvious, but to highlight a few:

- **Enhanced problem-solving skills** - When you tap into your creativity, you become able to generate new solutions quickly.
- **Greater confidence** - If you know going into situations that you are creative and that you can come up with solutions and ideas, it really will make you more confident.
- **Setbacks** - You can leverage setbacks and look for new opportunities in areas where you wouldn't otherwise.
- **Fun** - For me, it's just more fun to be creative than to not be creative.
- **Dreams** - Once your creative juices get going, you can structure your thoughts to figure out how you can go about realizing your dreams.
- **Time** - You can save time by organizing all of the thoughts in your head and determining what's important to you. You will also be able to come up with creative ways of leveraging your time.

Examples of Creativity

Here are a few examples of companies that have used creativity at some point to great success for themselves.

Starbucks

Starbucks demonstrated creative service because when they came out coffee was really more of a diner type thing - a dollar for a cup of coffee. Starbucks came along and convinced people with a different experience and different service that they should pay three or four dollars for a cup of coffee. At the time it was a very creative idea. Now there are Starbucks everywhere so it doesn't seem that creative, but at the time it really was.

Dell and Amazon.com

Dell and Amazon used a creative distribution system using direct mail for ordering over the phone or internet. They were some of the first people to really do that and go wide scale with it. It was creative, because up until then computers and books were traditionally sold in stores.

3M

The story of the Post-It Note from 3M is pretty well known. The Post-It Note came into existence when 3M was trying to come up with a more permanent adhesive and kept failing. Rather than being upset at their failure and packing it all in, they looked at what they had and decided to use it. The setback that they couldn't come up with permanency led to the Post-It Note, because that temporary, weak glue was perfect for the notes. They leveraged that set back and were hugely successful with it.

Ford and Microsoft

Ford and Microsoft used creativity in opportunities. Ford and Microsoft both had similar visions at different times. Henry Ford wanted to take the car, which was an extremely expensive thing to create, and he wanted to let everybody have one. It was a crazy idea at the time. But

as a result of doing that he came up with the whole assembly line system and brought the automobile to the masses.

Microsoft's Bill Gates had a similar idea. He had a vision of a computer on every desk in the country. At the time, computers were mostly a business thing - it wasn't really expected for them to be in the home. But that was his vision, it was creative, and he has been quite successful with it.

Getting Aligned

I think one of the keys to success is to align what you want with who you are and how you can get it. Creativity obviously applies to how you can get it, because you can use your mind to create different approaches.

What most people don't realize is that who you are and what you want are very important to the creative process. You have to get in touch with those things to really move forward, be creative, and to really tap into it. So we're actually going to spend some time addressing those two things before we get into the uses of how you can get what you want

Overview

The first half of this program is really going to be how to develop your creativity. You're going to learn how to tap into your resources and generally become more creative. In the second half you're going to learn how to focus that creativity and how you can apply and increase it.

Step 1: Unblocking Yourself

The first step in developing your creativity is unblocking yourself. Or, as I like to put it, clearing out the gunk. Everybody has gunk inside of them. Call it what you will, but there are thoughts, ideas, and feelings that are floating around inside of you. All of those thoughts actually block you from tapping into your subconscious, so you have to get through that. You have to get all of those things out of you.

Filters

The very first step in increasing your creativity is to clear the gunk out. Some of that gunk exists in the form of *filters*. Filters are those little voices in your head. Chances are, they've been there for a while.

Think about it: We're constantly being told to watch what we do and say:

1. From when you first started to walk, your parents told you, 'don't do that, don't touch that.'
2. From when you first started to talk, your parents told you, 'don't say that, you can't say that.'
3. Then you went to school and your teachers all throughout the years told you, 'don't do that, don't say that, you can't say that.'
4. Then when you moved into your friend circles and social cliques, you needed to be careful what you said because if you said the wrong thing you would be made fun of or ostracized (hey, school kids can be rough!)
5. Then you moved up into high school and college and political correctness became a huge issue.
6. Then you got into the workplace and you had to worry about harassment, diversity, and sensitivity issues.

When you think about it, you spend a **huge** chunk of your day guarding you we say.

Those filters can be useful because they save us from saying the wrong thing and getting into trouble. But in the creative stage they're not helpful at all; they actually slow us down. The problem is people don't often have enough control of those filters to turn them on and off.

When generating ideas or solutions, there are going to be two phases:

- Idea Generation - the time when we come up with lots of new ideas, hoping to find 'the one.'
- Idea Evaluation - the time when we look at each idea we have and determine if it will work.

I think most people have a good enough understanding of how to evaluate an idea and determine if it's going to be good or bad, so we're not even going to worry about that second phase.

What we're going to worry about in this program is just the first phase, idea generation. In the stage of idea generation you need to get rid of these filters.

One problem to watch out for is that most people tend to combine these two phases into one and evaluate ideas as they are generated. This is very bad for the creative process!

You also need to get rid of criticism, which is the second part of the filter. Once you start tapping into your creativity and flowing, your conscious mind has the critical faculty that's going to start getting in your way. You will start hearing things like:

- That's a pretty dumb idea
- That won't work
- That's impossible
- What are you thinking?
- That's not enough
- No
- That's not good enough
- etc...

Your mind is going to criticize ideas as they come up. In order to be creative, you have to train your mind to not be critical.

Know Yourself

Once you've put filters in perspective, the next step is to really know yourself. It sounds a little new-agey or touchy-feely, but it's really important to the creative process.

Creativity is fundamentally just *self-expression*. It's you generating ideas.

Think about it: no matter what you do, no matter where you go, the one truly unique thing you will ever bring to any situation, job, or deal, is yourself. The more in touch with yourself you are the more you can leverage that.

There are a few ways you can start to know yourself again. Or, if you've never explored things in this way, maybe you will truly know yourself for the first time.

Journaling

One way is *Journaling*. Journaling is simply recording your thoughts in a notebook or journal.

The method I'm going to talk about is the one that Julia Cameron describes in her book, 'The Artist's Way.' It's something she calls Morning Pages, and I think it's really useful.

With Morning Pages, you wake up in the morning and, before you mind has had time to start getting filled up with all the thoughts that it has, you sit down and write in a journal. You write your thoughts for three straight pages, filling them up. It doesn't matter what you write.

If you're like me, then when you first start doing this you'll start out by writing things like, 'I don't know what to write, I don't want to do this, I don't want to be here, why am I doing this, I don't know what to write.' You can write that for as long as you want. Whatever comes into your mind, you just write. The key is to keep the pen moving.

What you'll probably find is after a little bit, maybe half a page or so of rambling, your thoughts will gain a little cohesion. You might start writing about your day or about what's going on in your life.

Eventually, as you get later in the pages and as you do this for a few days, you'll start writing about your feelings regarding different things. It could be how you're feeling about what just happened or it could be how you're feeling about what's coming up.

Note: It's ok if your thoughts don't gain cohesion. Don't force it. Just let ideas flow naturally.

As you continue to do this, things will come out. You will start to clear out that gunk. It will come out of you and onto the page. That's the important thing because you want to get it out of you so that you can clear the way for your creative powers.

Meditation

Another way to clear out the gunk is meditation. I'm not going to get super deep into meditation because I'm not an expert on it. If you want more in-depth info on meditation there are lots of good sources out there.

For my purpose right now, when I say meditation or meditating, I'm just talking about sitting in silence. This is something people never really do because there is always stimulus around. But if you just try to sit in silence with your eyes closed for even five minutes it will be amazingly difficult. Your mind will go crazy, and you'll be dying to move, or open your eyes, or just get up.

What you want to do is just sit there and try not to have too many thoughts. As thoughts come up, just gently push them away and relax and let your mind be free.

Again, as with the morning pages, it will take some time. But as you practice and develop this you will eventually start to think of things and start to remember things. You'll start to get ideas about things. This again is another way to clear out the gunk and get in touch with what's deep inside of you.

I strongly recommend that you either meditate or journal, every day for a while - starting today! This whole creativity thing is a process. It's not going to happen instantly. So meditate or journal everyday to start clearing out that gunk to prepare you to be creative.

Have Some Fun

The last way to know yourself is to do some fun stuff. As you get older and more responsible, fun is one of the first things to go.

I'm going to ask you to start doing some fun stuff again. It can be anything, as long as it's fun for you.

Doing this will have two benefits:

1. It will serve as a mental recharge. Doing something fun will get your mind off of whatever is stressing you and let your battery recharge.
2. It will get you back in touch with yourself, especially if what you do for fun is something that you haven't done in a long time or something that you have always wanted to do but never did. By doing that you start getting in touch with who you are and who you want to be. You may start to wake up parts that are dormant inside of you. That's going to help you get in touch with yourself and your creativity.

One caveat is that whatever you do you must do it alone. It may be fun to hang out with family and friends, but when you do that your attention and focus are on the other person.

What you're trying to do is get you in touch with yourself, so whatever your fun activity is, it needs to be solo. It also needs to be something engaging, not some mindless distraction like TV.

So start doing something fun. You don't need to spend three hours a day; even one hour a week can start you down the creative road and make huge differences in your life.

Come up with what you like, but here are some ideas:

- Go for a walk

- Go to a museum
- Read a good book
- Write something (poems, a book, anything)
- Play an instrument
- Take in a show
- Go window shopping
- Exercise
- Go golfing (or any solo sport - shoot baskets, hit a tennis ball against a wall)
- Relax in the sun
- Go for a swim
- etc.

It doesn't matter what it is, as long as it is fun for you!

Action Items for Step 1: Unblocking Yourself

That's the first step to being creative - clearing out your own gunk.

Before you proceed on to Step 2, you should do the following:

1. Commit to either Meditating or Journaling everyday. You don't have to commit to doing it everyday forever, just for as long as you go through this program (although once you make it a habit, you will probably want to continue it). Don't stress about doing it exactly correct or for long periods of time, either. 5-10 minutes everyday is better than not at all.
2. Create a list of fun items you can do. You can write them in a journal or print this page and write them below. Remember, they should be things you can do by yourself. Commit to doing at least one in the next week. Do at least one a week for the duration of this program.

My Fun Activity List:

1	11
2	12
3	13
4	14
5	15
6	16
7	17
8	18
9	19
10	20

Now you're ready to start - or at least to start preparing to start!

Step 2: Preparing to be creative

Keep in mind that clearing out the gunk is a process. Once you've started getting some of that stuff out of your way, the next step is preparing to be creative. This next section is all about preparing the mind and body.

In my experience teaching, whether I'm teaching improv, creativity, communication, leadership, or even martial arts, I have found that the quickest way to improve somebody is to change their attitude or mentality.

Often times when people want to improve at something the first thing that they do is look for new techniques and tools. Tools and techniques work to a degree, but for real, deep, fundamental improvement, I've found that the fastest and best way is to change the attitude and mindset.

When it comes to creativity, it's one thing for me to give you some tool, like 'do this, do this, and do this,' but if I can get you to approach being creative with a whole different mindset you'll really be able to take off. The creative tools will actually *become a part of you*, instead of just something you do.

So let's look at some of the mentalities. There are five basic things we want to look at in terms of attitude.

Positivity

The first attitude to have is positivity. Positivity means being positive. This is more than just a 'power of positive thinking' attitude. When you're positive, your body and mind has specific characteristics:

- Your energy is up
- Your juices 'flow'
- You generate ideas much faster
- You don't dwell on problems.

The easiest way for me to explain this is to have you remember a couple of examples from your life. Think of a time in your life when you were feeling very negative and things were not going well. How did you feel? Did you feel resourceful? Did you feel ready to tackle problems? Did you feel ready to come up with new ideas? Were you able to do those things at all?

Now think of a time in your life when you were very positive. How did you feel then? Did you feel ready to go? Did you feel more resourceful? Were you feeling jazzed up to tackle new problems and come up with new ideas?

I'm sure that when you were negative you were very unresourceful and uncreative.

I'm also sure that when you were feeling positive your felt jazzed up and ready to solve your problems.

Whether you consider it endorphins, blood flow, positive intent, or something else, being positive really helps you tap into your creativity.

Belief

The next attitude is belief. Again, this is not just a 'let's be optimistic about our lives' thing. Belief is important to the creative process for a very specific reason.

Remember that creative power comes from the subconscious. The thing is that what you believe also lies deep inside of you, in your subconscious.

Consider this:

1. If you truly believe something can be done, if you believe you can solve your own problems, then that means your subconscious believes it.
2. Your subconscious is what's giving you your creative ideas
3. If your subconscious believes you can, then it's going to give you good ideas.
4. If your subconscious doesn't believe that you can do something and you ask it for advice, it's going to come up with weak ideas because it doesn't really believe it.

You've heard phrases like:

- 'I believe it to my core'
- 'I believe it in my bones'
- 'I just know it'

Those phrases are what people use when they believe something deep within their subconscious.

So in some way, at some level, you have to believe. Whatever you are trying to apply your creativity to, you have to believe that it's within your capability of doing.

What do you do if you don't believe? The first thing to do is to get a little smaller. What I mean by that is that if you are trying to use your creativity to make a million dollars, maybe your subconscious won't really believe that you can.

So make the idea smaller. Instead of one million, go with \$100,000, or \$10,000, or \$1,000. Pick something that is just beyond where you are at now, but is also within what your mind believes what you can do.

As your creative powers grow, you'll find your beliefs about what you can do growing as well.

I'll discuss how to formulate powerful goals to stimulate your creativity in more depth later in this program.

Play & Fun

The next two mentalities are play and fun, both of which are vitally important.

If you think about a time when people are most creative in their lives, it's when they are children. They use their imaginations all the time. They strive to create all the time. Maybe they haven't developed their skills, but they're out there finger painting, playing with dolls, and playing sports.

Children very rarely play sports as themselves. They're always out there imagining they're some famous player like Michael Jordan when they shoot a basket or Joe Montana throwing a touchdown pass.

As you get older, play and fun are two of the first things to go. So now is the time to start adding fun and play back in to your life.

Again, you don't need to make your entire day from start to finish crazy and wacky. I'm not saying that would necessarily be a bad thing, but with the corporate world being the way it is, it would be difficult.

But even just adding a few elements of play and fun to your life will really increase your energy, increase your creativity, and increase your resourcefulness.

Come up with your own ideas, but here's some to get you started:

- Make a game out of a boring task. Try to do it in record time, for instance
- Sing while you work, even if it's just in your own head
- Write humorous notes to yourself that you can pull out and read

- Imagine yourself as someone else, or imagine your work being something glamorous and exciting (if it isn't already!)
- Set up routines with friends and co-workers to add some fun to the workplace.

Enthusiasm

The final attitude is enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is really just directed positive energy.

Enthusiasm is attacking something with excitement and zeal. If you can be enthusiastic about things your positive energy is going to be up, your play and fun are going to be up, and your belief is going to be up. It synthesizes all the other beliefs and really makes you more resourceful.

Take a moment and think of something that you feel enthusiastic about. How does that feel? Pretty good, right?

If you apply that enthusiasm to being creative and this whole program, you will find yourself making great strides.

You can improve any area of your life by adding some enthusiasm about it.

Other Mentalities

Those five attitudes are the core attitudes to have to prep your mind for creativity. There are a few other mentalities to keep in mind though.

Risk

You have to be willing to take some risks, and you must be able to assess those risks.

For some people being creative is a very risky endeavor. This is for two reasons:

1. It taps into who you are and exposes it to the world. If you're going to be creative you're going to tap deep within you and get in touch with that and people are going to see it. You might be worried that you're going to have to justify what you're saying and why you're saying it.
2. You're going to be exposing yourself to you. Like I said in the clearing out the gunk part, there is stuff that's been gunked up inside of you for a really long time. It is possible that when it comes out you're going to have to face some things that maybe you've been avoiding or not wanting to see or deal with.

So it can be a risky proposition, but in order to be able to really tap into that creativity you need to be able to assess that risk and ask, 'how big is this risk? Is it a problem or is it something I can deal with?'

If you really want to move forward, you have to be able to assess that, put it in perspective, and move forward.

Curiosity

Another key mentality is curiosity. Think about the great innovators and inventors from recent history:

- Edison
- The Wright brothers
- Einstein
- Benjamin Franklin

Many of their innovations came just out of their curiosity, out of their wondering how something works or why something is the way it is.

If you can be curious, you will really be sparking your subconscious, your creative mind, to start coming up with answers.

If you have a major problem, rather than being upset, or angry, or despairing over it, try to get curious about the problem. This curiosity will spur your creative mind.

Try asking questions like, 'how did this happen?' or 'what can I learn?' or 'how can I use this?'

The curiosity is going to get your creative mind working and give you some really good answers.

Ego

Ego is that part of you that cares about what other people think. It's the part that wants other people to accept and like you. Everybody has one.

The thing is that when it comes to being creative, you must put aside your ego. Creativity is you exposing yourself at a deep level. If you are worried about how others are going to perceive the ideas you generate, you are going to completely cut off your creative flow.

You must remember that you are not using your creativity to get recognition and acceptance for your ideas. You are using it to solve problems, create solutions, and come up with new ideas.

When you were a baby you didn't give up trying to walk because people watched you fall down. The falling down was one step in the process of your learning to walk.

In the same way, using your creativity is a process, and saying some of these silly things is part of that process.

You must be willing to say some things that might make you look silly, or stupid, or wrong. The only way to do that is to put aside your ego.

Getting rid of the ego also helps you give up control. This further allows you tap into your creativity. It also allows you to use other people and other resources much more effectively (more on that later).

Right and Wrong

You also need to ignore the concept of right and wrong.

As mentioned earlier, when being creative there are two stages.

The first stage is where you are just generating ideas, and the second stage is where you are evaluating those ideas. In this first stage there's no right and wrong. Just let the ideas come.

A wrong idea in this stage might become a right idea with a little bit of tweaking and massaging.

Also, a wrong idea might give the inspiration for a right idea down the road. It might not be good in and of itself, but it might trigger something in your mind, which leads you to a new and great idea.

Remember, right and wrong are very subjective things. In this stage of creativity, there is no right and wrong!

The sooner you can adopt that mentality, the faster ideas will start to flow out of you.

Fake It Until You Make it

The next time you approach any task, not necessarily a creative task, but anything that you do on a day to day basis that you don't enjoy, try to think about the principles talked about above.

Think about the five key attitudes: Being positive, believing you can do something, playing, having fun, and being enthusiastic.

I invite you to try this next time you are faced with doing something you don't generally like to do. It could be a work task like cold calling or paperwork that you don't like. It could be a household chore that you don't enjoy doing.

Take thirty seconds before you do it next time and try to get these attitudes.

How do you get them? To be honest, I don't know, because I don't know you.

This is where knowing yourself comes into play. I can't tell you how to be positive or how to believe in yourself or how to play or have fun or be enthusiastic. Only you know what makes you feel those ways. So you need to really take control and implement those.

The one piece of advice I can give you to try is 'fake it until you make it' You may not feel enthusiastic about doing your dishes tonight, but if you pretend you're enthusiastic, and enact that role, you will approach that task with more enthusiasm. You will also start to develop the feeling of enthusiasm. Usually you think you feel it on the inside and then it comes out on the outside. It works in reverse also. If you have all the trappings on the outside you can start to feel it on the inside. Give it a try and see for yourself.

The Body

This step is where we are preparing the mind and body, so the next step is preparing the body.

Movement

When accessing your creativity it is really valuable to move around. You could do something simple like standing up and walking around, stretching, or maybe getting a little light exercise.

In an office environment you're not going to be able to run laps, but just walking around or stretching in your chair, or something else like that, can really get the blood flowing and help you access your creativity.

Unless I am trying to do a different type of creativity where I let my mind wander and flow, I always do my creative thinking standing up and walking around. I also do some of my best thinking while shooting baskets.

Come up with your own, but here are a few ideas of ways to get some movement going:

- Take a walk
- Run
- Ride a bike
- Exercise
- Stretch
- Do some yoga
- Climb some stairs
- Shake your joints and body out

Posture

Another simple thing, especially for the office, is posture. This ties very much into the positive/negative thing. If you're hunched over and thinking it really contracts your body which contracts your energy. Put yourself in the right posture and that helps your breathing and lets you access those positive resources and get the creative juices flowing.

Here are some signs of negative and positive posture:

Negative	Positive
Body hunched over	Body up tall
Unhealthy 'C' shaped curve to spine	Healthy 'S' shaped curve to spine
Head Down	Head Up
Eyes down	Eyes straight ahead or up
Frowning	Smiling
Shoulders slumped	Shoulders slightly back

Try it now. Try hunching over and contracting your body. How positive and creative do you feel? Now sit up straight with your head up and chest slightly out. How does that feel? Good posture can really help you access your resources.

Breathing

One of the fastest ways to martial your resources and center yourself is to control your breathing.

Most people breathe very shallow; that is, when they breathe, they only fill the top part of their lungs.

Try breathing in deeply, to a point where your belly actually expands because it is filling with air. This may takes some practice, but after a while it will become very natural.

In addition to being very good for you, this style of breathing will calm your mind, improve your focus, and get your creative mind ready to go.

This technique is especially great if you are starting to feel overwhelmed. Take a few controlled deep breathes to calm yourself and focus, and then use your creativity to make a plan to get out from under (I will discuss exactly how to do that later in the book)

You should also be using this style of breathing to improve your meditation. When you meditate (you are meditating, right?), if you find it difficult to clear your mind, try just focusing on breathing properly. This will improve your breathing and keep your mind from over-thinking.

Action Items for Step 2: Preparing to be Creative

You have now made it through Step 2: Preparing to be Creative. You should now have an understanding of how your attitude, mentality, and physicality affect your creativity.

Before proceeding to step 3, you should do the following:

1. For each of the 5 attitudes, create ideas for how you can add more of them into your day to day life:

Positivity:

1)	6)
2)	7)
3)	8)
4)	9)
5)	10)

Belief:

1)	6)
2)	7)
3)	8)
4)	9)
5)	10)

Fun & Play:

1)	6)
2)	7)
3)	8)
4)	9)
5)	10)

Enthusiasm:

1)	6)
2)	7)
3)	8)
4)	9)
5)	10)

2. Start easy - pick one of the five attitudes, and commit to applying the techniques you came up with to increase your amount of it for one week
3. Commit to noticing when one of the three fears enters into your decision process: fear of risk, fear of bruising your ego, or fear of being wrong.
4. Commit to paying attention to opportunities for curiosity. Try to find one thing a day to be curious about.
5. Write down 10 things you can do to use movement to charge up your creativity:

Ideas for adding movement:

1)	6)
2)	7)
3)	8)
4)	9)
5)	10)

Now you are ready to learn the basics of creativity!

Step 3: Priming the Pump - the Basics

Now that we've cleared out the gunk and prepped the mind and body, the next step is to learn the basics of how to tap into your creativity. If you do just what we've covered so far and in this section regularly, you will find yourself being more creative. You'll find yourself accessing your creativity in a more general sense. Once we've done that we'll get into applying it.

But here are the basics, or as I like to say, priming the pump.

Speed

The first creativity basic is speed. It is possible to go so fast that you bypass the conscious mind and go right into the subconscious.

What you have to do is trust yourself - you have to start talking and let the ideas come from inside of you and let them flow out of you without stopping.

You'll know you're doing it right, whatever creativity thing you're doing, when you surprise yourself, because then your ears and your mind are hearing things at the same time.

If you just let go and flow and trust your subconscious something good is going to come out.

It's very scary to do, though, because you are trusting yourself. You're moving forward without really knowing what you're doing or where you are going.

Just remember the stage we're in. In this stage (idea generation) that's good. It's fine because you're just generating ideas.

Some of the Action Items in this book have involved you creating lists. If you've been having problems coming up with ideas, try to use this speed approach. Let ideas flow out of as fast as you can. Don't judge or criticize, just try to keep your pen moving.

Empty Mind

The next creativity basic is to empty your mind. Let me give you a metaphor to help explain this:

Imagine a pond. If the pond is still, very quiet, and you throw a pebble into it, you get ripples. If the pond is churning and turbulent when you throw a pebble in, then you won't see any ripples.

Think about that pond as being your mind and the pebble as being an idea, question, or problem. When your mind is quiet like the still pond, and you throw in a 'pebble', all of those ripples that come up in the quiet pond are ideas your subconscious is giving you.

If your mind is churning like the turbulent pond, and you throw an idea into it, even if your subconscious gives you ideas, you can't see them.

So this is similar to meditation. You want to empty your mind and just put your attention out and just listen to what's going on around you.

You can't be thinking a lot if you want to hear what your subconscious is giving you.

Associations

Word association is what I consider the first creativity building exercise. It's actually a simple improv (or psychology) drill.

You can do a word association with a partner. First you say a word, and then your partner says the first word that comes to his mind, then you say the first word, then he says the first word, then you say the first word, and so on and so on.

However you can also do this on your own and play this game by yourself. Just say a word, then say the first word that comes to your mind, then say the next word that comes to your mind, then say the next word, and so on and so on. It sounds simple, but it gets complicated.

What you'll find when you do this is the first four or five words will come very easy because as soon as you say one word your mind instantly comes up with the next four or five.

Once you get beyond that is when you are tapping into your creativity. You have to open your mouth and talk and see what comes out.

You'll know you're using your subconscious if you go fast and it's word after word after word. If you do this and you pause, or hesitate, or stutter a little bit or stammer, then what you are doing is thinking about things in your conscious mind.

You want to get to a point where you can go for 30 seconds, or a minute, or just keep going without ever having that hesitation, because then you're really bypassing the conscious mind and tapping into your creativity.

This is just a muscle building exercise. It builds the creativity muscle. You're not going to use this exercise to solve all of your problems. Just saying one word is not really going to give you a whole lot in terms of results, but when you apply this mentality, when you build this muscle

then apply it to say, generating ideas, you get some very interesting things that come up very quickly.

Seek Out Inspiration

With the metaphor of the pond, we talk about keeping the pond calm. Now let's talk about the pebble. The pebble represents a question or idea that you pose to yourself.

But you can make the pebble external to you by seeking out inspiration. The way to do that is to put your attention out of you. Seek inspiration and notice and be aware of the world around you.

For example, I like books. Sometimes I'll just go to a bookstore, wander around, and pick up something to read. When I just let my mind be still and take in things around me and just notice things, I can start generating ideas. I might be reading a book on basketball, but something in there might suddenly gives me an idea for a new product, speech, topic, or theory.

To do this properly your attention has to be on the world around you. If you're focused on things going on in your own head and if you're caught up in your own mind, you won't be aware of anything that goes on around you. You won't take in any input. All of this input that's coming in that your subconscious might be able to riff off of, you end up missing or ignoring because you're caught up in your own head.

Just try to let things go and let your subconscious go to work. This is one the reasons I wanted you to start getting back to doing what's fun. Go out and do what's fun and put your attention outside of you.

Action Items for Step 3: Priming the Pump

That's the first half: how to develop your creativity. Armed with just what you know so far (and provided you do the things we've gone over) you're going to find yourself very quickly thinking much more creatively.

The next steps will show you how to focus and use that creativity for specific results.

Before you proceed to Step 4, you should do the following:

1. From this point forward commit to doing all of your idea generation with speed. Keep your pen moving, keep ideas coming, and do not criticize (yet). This applies to the exercises in this book as well as any other creative endeavor.
2. Practice calming your mind. At least once per day, take a few moments and try to still your mind before jumping into a task (especially a creative one)
3. Try the word association exercise. Do it at least once out loud, and see how long you can go. Commit to practicing it a few times every day. Work up to a point where you can go for at least 30 seconds very fast without hesitating or stumbling.
4. List 10 places you can go to put your attention outside of yourself and find inspiration.

Place to find inspiration:

1)	6)
2)	7)
3)	8)
4)	9)
5)	10)

Part 2

**So How
Do I Use
This Stuff?**

Step 4: Focus

The next step is how to focus the creativity for specific ends.

Consider the sun. It's this giant ball of energy that's very far from the earth. If you go out on a sunny day you'll get warm or hot. Depending on your skin tone, you might get sunburned. Chances are that neither you nor anything around you will burst into flames just from the sun's rays.

If, however, you take a magnifying glass and focus all that energy into one point, you will be able to easily light fires with that same base potential.

That's what this next section is going to be about. Focusing your newly developed general creative energy in specific ways to really help you achieve what you want.

Goals and Questions

The first step to really focus your creativity is to give your subconscious something specific to deal with (i.e. we're going to create a better 'pebble').

Let's look at goals and questions as a way to let your creativity go. Questions and goals are similar because the goal is just the statement version of the question (and vice versa).

For example if I wanted to be 155 pounds I would say that my goal is, 'to be 155 pounds.' From that I would refine it into the question, 'how can I be 155 pounds?' Because they are similar I'm going to talk about them together.

Once you create a good goal and question, you give your subconscious something to work on. The beauty of this is that your creative mind will work on your goals and questions even when you are not focusing on them! Remember, the subconscious can handle thousands of things at once, so it will keep working on stuff while you are off doing other things.

The key here is that you have to create good goals and questions.

Be SMART

There's a common thing out there called making your goals SMART. S-M-A-R-T. That's an acronym, and the letters stand for:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**ttainable
- **R**eachable (or Realistic)
- **T**ime-bound.

Specific and Measurable

Let's say that my problem is that I want my business to do better. My initial goal statement then is, 'I want my business to be better.'

The first two parts of the SMART acronym are specific and measurable. Is the current goal specific and measurable? Not really.

First off, how do you measure 'better?' There are many criteria I can use:

- Working more
- Making more money
- Having more clients
- Working less
- Being happier
- Etc

Pick a goal that you can measure. 'Being happier' is great, but how will I measure that?

For this example let's go with more 'having more clients,' making my goal, 'I want to have more clients.'

(This is not to say that you *can't* measure 'happier.' You could measure it by evaluating how you feel on your own scale, or how many happy thoughts you have, etc. It's up to you, just make sure you *can* measure it in some way)

You can measure 'more,' but is that goal specific? Not really. How many more? 1? 10? 100? 1000? There is a huge difference between one new client and 1000 new clients. So, to make it specific, instead of saying, 'I want to get more clients,' say, 'I want to get 1000 new client'. That goal is now specific and measurable.

Attainable and Reachable

The next two letters, the A and R, stand for attainable and reachable. To be 100% up front with you, I have never come across a good distinction between 'attainable' and 'reachable.' Some people have the 'R' stand for 'realistic.' That still doesn't explain the difference between the 'a' and 'r.'

In any case, just because they mean the same thing doesn't mean they are invalid - besides, who would want to try to set a SMAT or SMRT goal?

Look at your goal. Is this something you think you can do? Is this something realistic for you to get? It should push you but it should be something you believe you can do (remember the section on belief?).

So if I'm just starting out, maybe I want to have 1000 clients eventually, but is that a realistic goal? If I set my goal to be to get 1000 new clients, then if that goal is too big my subconscious is not going to even try. So is 1000 new clients attainable and reachable? Probably not.

How about 10 new clients? It depends on your circumstances, but to me that sounds attainable and reachable. So we'll remake the goal as 'I want to get 10 new clients.'

Time-bound

So now add a time binding to it. If your goal is just, 'I want to get 10 new clients,' and you don't add a time frame to it, your mind has no perspective for it. Getting 10 new clients tomorrow may be impossible. Getting 10 new clients in the next year is very doable, but is that going to help you get what you want?

Pick a time frame that you want to achieve the goal in that will push you a little but that is also realistic.

For our example, let's say that getting 10 new clients in the next month will push me but will also get me closer to where I want to be.

So the final goal is, 'I want to get 10 new clients by one month from today.'

Now, that's become a smart goal. Specific, measurable, attainable, reachable, and time bound.

Be Positive

What I would like to add to this is that once you have made your goal SMART it generally ends up being positive, but you should double check and make sure that it is. This becomes more evident when you turn your goal into a question.

In the example from above, one of my early goals was 'I want to get more clients.' Many times people will get caught in the trap of asking themselves negative questions, such as 'why do I have no clients?' or 'why can't I get any business?'

Your mind's going to answer any question you give it. So if you say, 'why don't I have any clients' your mind is going to say 'because you're lazy and because nobody likes you.'

That's just going to reinforce the negative belief and you're not going to get anywhere.

Keep your goals and questions positively phrased.

Questions

Now that we have a SMART goal, we just need to turn it into a question.

Continuing with the '10 new clients by one month from today' example, I can simply formulate that into the question, 'how can I get 10 new clients by the end of the month?'

By simply making my goals SMART and positive and then putting them in the form of a question, I have now focused my subconscious on them with laser precision.

As mentioned above, my creative mind is going to go to work on that question. It will start coming up with answers right away.

The first few answers may not be anything new. That's ok though, because sometimes you need to get ideas out to make room for new ones.

Some of the ideas may be ridiculous or silly. That's also ok, because it's all part of the process. Just let your creativity work on it.

And it will work on it, even when you don't realize it. You may get a great idea while you are doing something completely unrelated.

In fact, I'd be willing to bet that you've had that experience already. Have you ever randomly thought of a new idea or solution to a problem when you weren't consciously focusing on it? I'm sure you have. That's your creative subconscious working on things while you take care of other things.

This means that you can't force it. Don't create a SMART question and then sit there and *think* about answers. Remember, *flowing*, not thinking! You can use speed, meditation, journaling, etc, to help the process, but you have to be willing to trust your creative subconscious.

Fear and Failure

When it comes to being focused, you want to put your focus on the important things. Many times people get caught up focusing on fear, failure, and the fear of failure.

Fear can be a useful thing because it can prevent us from touching a hot stove, or from running out into rush hour traffic.

But many times we give in to fear a little too much. The problem with fear is that in most cases it just detracts from our abilities.

For example, let's say I need to make a cold call, and I'm afraid of getting rejected. In that case half of my energy is being put on the fear and only half of my energy is put on the cold call. This means that the call is only going to be half as effective as it could be.

It's ironic, but the more you focus on failure the more likely you are to actually fail.

Along the same lines make sure you put failure into perspective. Getting beyond failure is huge, so put it in perspective.

If you don't like to cold call, put that in perspective. Why don't you like to cold call? Where are you putting your attention? Are you putting it on failure, and if so why? You want to put your attention on the solution.

In my experience, here are just a few things, in addition to failure, that people are afraid of and focus on too much:

- Loss
- Rejection
- Embarrassment
- Criticism

The 80/20 rule

The 80/20 rule (the 'Pareto Principle,' named after the Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto who discovered it) says 80 percent of your results come from 20 percent of your efforts. There's a variation that says you should spend 80% of your time on the solution and only 20% on the problem.

For our purposes, we can use both of these versions.

First off, make sure you spend your time focusing on the solution, not the problem. Most people end up spending 80% of their time focusing on the problem and only 20% of their time on the solution. When something goes wrong they focus on the problem - 'oh man, it's wrong, it's wrong.' They get really upset and stressed, and they put their attention on the negative emotion.

If you really want to be successful put your attention on the positive and on the solution to the problem because this directs the subconscious. One way to ensure that you spend your time focusing on the solution is to make sure your goals and questions do so.

That simple act puts your creative power on moving forward.

The subconscious is going to go where your attention goes. So put your attention on the solution and you put your power on the solution.

The second way to use this principle is in prioritizing your ideas. Once you start using your creativity to plan your days and map out your goals, the 80/20 rule becomes immensely useful.

You see, if you are really tapping into your creativity, your 'lists' (of to-dos, action items, tasks, etc) will be longer than ever! That's simply because you're going to start letting your mind flow over everything.

At the first glance, this sounds like a recipe for disaster! I'm guessing that your to-do lists are long enough as is, and now I'm going to make them longer.

The thing to remember is that the list phase is just part 1: Idea generation.

Part 2 is evaluation, and even though I said most people don't need help with that, I think in this area, people do.

Most people just make a big list and get overwhelmed by how much they have to do. The key to getting out from under is to understand how to prioritize that list.

This is where the 80/20 rule really helps. Look over this massive list, and honestly decide which activities will have the biggest impact on your life. You will most likely be able to pick out a few activities (the 20%) that will have a huge impact on your life (the 80%).

You have to be honest! Don't pick activities that are the easiest or most fun (which means don't avoid activities that are the hardest or most unpleasant).

When you combine your supercharged creativity with the 80/20 rule, you are really going to firing all of your pistons at once!

Check the appendix for more details on how to make the most of your time and get stuff done.

Action Items for Step 4: Focus

Excellent! You should now have the knowledge and tools to really start to focus your creative powers on different areas of your life.

Before you move on to step 5, you should do the following:

1. Write out a list of areas that you would like to apply your creativity to. These will be just general areas, such as 'work,' 'money,' or 'health.'

Areas:

1)	6)
2)	7)
3)	8)
4)	9)
5)	10)

2. Pick just one from the above list and write out what your goal is in that area.
3. Put your goal into the SMART format.
4. Re-Phrase your goal as a question.
5. Write out a large list of answers to that question. Remember to use the creative techniques described earlier to make your list.
6. Identify the critical 20% of items on your list, and start to work with those!
7. Also, pay attention over the next few days and weeks as your subconscious gives you more ideas to your question.
8. Re-apply this process to the other areas on your list.

Part 3

**Now,
Supercharge
Your
Creativity!**

Step 5: Techniques to Supercharge Your Creativity

Now that we've gotten you tapped into your creative power and given you some ways of focusing that creativity, we'll look at techniques to supercharge your creativity. We're going to supercharge your creativity, which means I'm just going to give you a series of questions, ideas, and approaches to make your brain think in different ways and attack problems in different ways so that you can be really powerful.

Start Where You Are

The first technique is to start where you are. People are often so determined go from A to Z that they immediately look all the way down the line. You are at A, but you start looking at D, L, and T. You're looking down the road trying to figure out how to get to Z as quickly as possible.

By doing this you lose track of where you are. First, you lose track of where you're starting and what resources you have right now that you can take advantage of. If you spend too much time looking down the line you miss what's right in front of you.

Second, let's say that you've been applying your creativity to some problem and you keep coming up with solutions you don't necessarily think are going to work. As a result, you start to think, 'I'm never going to get there.'

But if you have an idea, even if it's great, or even good, you still have it. That's where you're starting at, so build off of that. Use that idea and riff off of that. Start where you are, which most people forget to do.

Sometimes if you just begin and start moving forward, new ideas will develop. The work you do now can spur your creativity. If you don't start where you are, your mind will just fixate on where you are at.

Change Directions

The next one is to change directions. Most people start at the beginning and move forward. However, you can also go to the end and come back.

Let's say I make the goal, 'I want to earn ten thousand dollars next month.' As we previously discussed, put that in the form of a question to direct it to the subconscious: 'how can I earn \$10,000 next month?'

Say you've been thinking about it and coming up with ideas but nothing quite clicks. Change directions. Instead of starting at the beginning, start at the end.

Say to yourself, 'ok, in order to have earned \$10,000 let me take just one step back. I probably sold this number of products, or I probably closed this number of deals.'

Then say, 'well, if I closed this number of deals then I probably saw this many people and this many people.' Continue this process until you work all the way back to today, and you will have created a roadmap to achieve your goal.

You can start at the beginning or you can start at the end. You also can start somewhere in the middle of the process if you prefer that and then go in both directions. This is just free form getting the mind flowing stuff. Do what works for you.

Let Go Of Control

Let go of control. This is huge. In order to be creative you need to always let go of control from your conscious mind to your subconscious. You have to turn control over to your subconscious. But in addition, letting go of some of that control and ego will really help you spur your mind into new ideas.

Have you ever had a problem or an issue that you're trying to solve and somebody, maybe a friend, colleague, or co-worker, came up to you and gave you advice, but you weren't really interested in hearing what they had to say? Maybe they said stuff that you already knew, or maybe they said it in a patronizing, condescending tone, even if unwittingly. And your basic thought process was, 'get away from me!' You may have been polite about it but you're not really paying attention, because you're thinking, 'you have nothing to offer me.'

All of that is control and ego driven. Think about it; does it really hurt you to listen to somebody tell you something you already know? No. Does it really hurt you to be patronized? No. That's your ego being bruised and saying, 'I don't need help!' or 'I don't stand for that from anybody!'

I understand that. I have my pride. But consider this: sometimes if you let go of control and really listen to that person they might actually have something to offer. They might not, and chances are that if you aren't listening to them they probably aren't going to give you any earth shattering advice.

But we're not looking for solutions - we're looking for inspirations. What if that person says something that spurs your mind onto a new idea? Or if they say something you already know but in a slightly different way which sparks your creativity?

Have you ever had somebody come up to you and give you advice on something and they said, 'oh yeah, I was thinking you should do this.' Then maybe something clicks inside of you and you say, 'you know

what, I'm not going to do that, but that makes me think of this idea.' If you never let go of that control and keep yourself closed off, you're never going to get that inspiration.

Let go of ego, let go of control, and listen to these people who are giving you advice no matter how much you might dislike them.

Remember, it's not about them, it's about you and it's about you getting what you want.

Record Your Ideas

This one seems so simple it seems almost not worth talking about, but it is important. Sometimes people are afraid to let their creative juices flow because they have a good idea, and they're afraid that if they start exploring a new idea they'll lose the one they already have.

The simple way to ensure that that doesn't happen is to write those ideas down. If you write down your ideas you'll never lose them. Then you can feel free to explore and do whatever else you want to.

Make sure you write legibly though, otherwise you could be in big trouble, and I've actually encountered that problem myself!

There's another benefit to writing down your ideas. Maybe you record an idea right now that's not super great but you're just recording it. Six months from now, though, maybe your situation changes and suddenly that idea is valid. If you wrote it down then you can just go back into your old notes and go into this idea bank you have created.

In the beginning of this e-book I talked about Journaling. In addition to Morning Pages, you should keep a journal to record your creative ideas in. Keep it close by to you so that when your subconscious throws you an idea you can write it down immediately.

If you've been following the lessons in this guide, then you have set your mind up to give you ideas at any moment. Keeping a journal near you will make sure you get the most out of those ideas!

Be Obvious

Be obvious just means don't ignore the obvious solution, which is really common to do. This is especially true when the obvious solution is one that you don't like.

I have a personal example for this one. There was a period where I wanted to get more business. I needed more clients. I was asking myself 'how do I get more clients?' (well, I phrased it SMART when I did it) I kept ignoring the really obvious answer because I didn't like it and I didn't want to deal with it.

The most obvious answer for how to get more clients was to pick up the phone and just call. If I made a hundred calls a day, I'd probably get more clients pretty quickly. But I had no desire to that. I don't like cold calling. What happened was I got stuck in the 'how do I get more clients' phase for months because I was avoiding the obvious.

I mentioned that sometimes you have to get ideas out of you to make room for new ones.

There were two benefits to being obvious:

1. Once I got that idea out of me I could move on to other ideas.
2. Once I got that idea out and wrote it down and addressed it I could use my creative power to now build off of that. I can at least move one step further. I start with 'how do I get new clients?' 'I need to cold call.' Well now I take the next step. 'How can I get clients without cold calling?' Or, 'how can I make cold calling fun and effective and easier for me?' Now I can riff off of that.

All of these new questions lead to great ideas, but they are all blocked up until I get the obvious out of there. So make sure you are not missing, avoiding, or bypassing the obvious.

Be Contrarian

Now that we have looked at being obvious, let's look at the opposite of that: being contrarian. I love this one.

Being contrarian is basically looking at your problem or issue, looking at what conventional wisdom tells you to do, and then looking at the opposite. What is the opposite of conventional wisdom? What do people tell you not to do? What shouldn't you do in this situation?

We're not looking for whole complete solutions; we're looking for inspiration.

For example, when raising a child, conventional wisdom says you have to set borders, you have to set limits, and you have to discipline your child. What's the contrarian viewpoint to that? Don't set any limits and just let them do what they want. That's certainly not a whole solution. No one is going to do that because their kids would go crazy and probably get hurt or into some trouble.

However, that contrarian viewpoint has some inspirations in it:

- There's something to be said for giving your child autonomy.
- There's something to be said for letting them develop themselves.
- There's something to be said for letting go a little control to them and letting them be their own person.

While the opposite viewpoint isn't valid in and of itself, it does serve the purpose of getting the mind working in new ways.

For business people, the moment you stumble on a contrarian viewpoint that is valid in and of itself is the moment you have an amazing business idea. From previous examples in this manual, the

Wright brothers, Dell, Amazon, Microsoft, Ford, and Einstein all started out with contrarian ideas.

Take a Break

There's only so long that the mind can work without frying. The amazing thing is that in corporate America frying the mind seems to be the norm.

Have you ever been in a meeting that goes on for hours where the group is trying to solve a problem or brainstorm and everyone's getting pretty fried, and finally the person in charge says, 'ok, let's go to lunch?' The thing is that after the first forty-five minutes or so most of the group is probably beyond the point of effectively using their creativity.

The longer you spend doing this stuff without a break, the more your conscious mind is going to take over and the more you're going to start focusing and stressing over the problem. You have to take some breaks to both recharge and distract the mind.

When I say 'take a break,' I'm talking about a real break. If you leave a meeting and run to your computer and answer your emails and return a few phone calls, you're not really giving the mind a break, which is what it really needs to recharge.

You have to also not think about the problem. If you do manage to get away from your desk and take a real break, maybe you go for a walk, you can't continue to think about the problem. If you do, you are letting your conscious mind take over and block the creative subconscious.

Where do you get your best ideas? I get my best ideas either in the shower, while I'm driving, or when I shoot baskets. Very few people ever answer that question with, 'while I'm sitting at my desk.'

The reason for this is when you do something else you get your conscious mind off of the problem, but your subconscious continues to work on it and mull it over. Chances are the subconscious is going to come back to you with an 'a-ha!' if you give it that break.

So take the break, let your subconscious go over it, and let your mind recharge. This doesn't need to be a two hour long lunch break where you go crazy and cut loose.

Five minutes, a couple of minutes, or even just sixty seconds, where you really just get your mind off of things and try to recharge a little bit will be hugely beneficial to you.

Modeling

Modeling is an interesting technique based on the principle that success leaves clues. It says that if someone else has gotten the result you want, then you can get the same result by doing the same things that they did.

You can do this with real people, but if you know somebody who solved your particular problem then my advice is don't even deal with your imagination. Just go talk to them and see what they've done to get that result!

But if you don't know somebody personally, you can use your imagination and creative powers.

You can model famous people who you're pretty sure have solved or would be able to solve your problem.

You can also model imaginary people or fictional characters. If you see a character in a movie or in literature that you think would be particularly good at your problem, you can model them.

Basically, just ask yourself, 'what would they do?'

The reason this doesn't work well for most people is because they do it with their conscious mind. They ask themselves, 'what would this person do,' and then they sit there and think about the answer. They're not using their power and they're really just going to come up with the same things that they themselves would do.

What you have to do is pose this question, 'what would this person do,' and turn it over to your subconscious and empty your mind and see what comes up. Let your imagination flow and see what they would do.

There are a ton of books out there in the that use this principle. For example:

- 'Leadership Secrets of Atilla the Hun'

- 'Jesus CEO'
- 'Sun Tzu for Success.'

There are all of these authors out there writing books about what these famous people's thoughts on business would be.

None of these people ever wrote a business book, but there are these authors out there writing these books (which become best-sellers) about what these people would do in these situations.

It's the exact same principle as modeling. If it works for these authors, you may as well do it yourself.

Use Obstacles and Constrains

An obstacle is something that's in your way. Normally when you face an obstacle you try to push through it (or smash through it!).

Sometimes, however, you can use that obstacle.

Use your creative process and, rather than railing against it, let your creative mind flow over how you could use that obstacle to your advantage.

When you think about the 3M Post-It note, the fact that they couldn't figure out how to make the adhesive permanent was an obstacle. They managed to use that obstacle to their advantage and became extremely successful.

Using constraints is very similar to using obstacle. I like to think of obstacles as things that sit in front of you, stopping you from going where you want. Constraints are things that are behind you holding you back.

Using constraints uses the exact same approach as obstacles. Rather than railing against the constraints and limitations you might have you can use your creative power to find ways to leverage those and use them to your advantage. This is what successful people do really, really well.

Rather than being upset at their limitations they use them to their advantage.

The other approach to obstacles and constraints is to flow with them. Rigid, one-dimensional thinking is the enemy of creativity. Often times when faced with a problem, you get fixated on how the problem is stopping you (remember the 80/20 rule?).

In these cases it is very helpful to keep site of your goal. You don't always have to solve a problem, smash through an obstacle, or cast off a constraint.

If you know what you want to accomplish, you can use your creativity to circumvent obstacles and constraints.

For example, if you are planning on taking a family vacation to Florida, but your boss decides that you need to work that week instead, that's a pretty big obstacle.

Most people would be pretty negative about this. However, try to put your real objectives into perspective. What's your real goal? Is it going to Florida?

Or is to spend quality time with your family. Can you do that without going away? Can you still achieve your goal of doing for your family while also keeping your job? I'm guessing that if you flow with the situation and apply your creativity, you can. It just takes some perspective and practice.

Chunking Up and Down

The basic principle behind chunking is that people think about things in different sizes. Some people look at the big picture, while others focus on small details.

The size of your 'mental chunks' is a good indication as to whether or not you will get overwhelmed.

If you try to look at the entire picture, you can get overwhelmed because it looks so enormous. If you chunk too small you get overwhelmed because you give yourself 100 little details to deal with.

So the key is to chunk to the right size. In a project management sense it is similar to breaking down a large project into smaller sub-projects.

What we're going to use this for with creative problem solving and idea generation is to look at the question you've given yourself. Can you scale the problem up or down?

For example, let's say my goal is to earn \$10,000 next month, and I'm thinking about how to do that and I'm having trouble coming up with a good solution to that problem.

If I can't think of a way to do that, I can chunk the problem up and look at the bigger picture. In this example, if I want to earn \$10,000 next month, what's the bigger picture? Maybe I want to earn \$10,000 next month because I want to earn six-figures this year. So now look at the bigger chunk: 'what can I do to earn six-figures this year?' Maybe I can't think of how to earn \$10,000 in a month but I can think of some things or put some things in motion to earn six-figures this year. That gets the creative mind working in a different way.

I can also scale the problem down. I can say, 'I can't figure out how to earn \$10,000 next month, but can I figure out how to earn \$333 in a day?' Maybe I can figure out how to do that, and now I've got some new ideas. If I can earn \$333 in a day then I'll achieve that goal.

By changing the size and scope of the problem, you get your mind working in different ways and different attacks, and that's the whole point.

Daydreaming

Daydreaming is just another muscle building exercise. It builds the creativity muscle. Children daydream all the time. When I was a child I use to daydream constantly.

Then, as you become older, it becomes much less accepted to daydream. It's not 'serious' and 'responsible,' and people think you have your head in the clouds.

My advice is to daydream again. It doesn't need to be very long. A couple of minutes a day is fine. Just let your mind wander and flow. The more you do this, the more you access your creativity. This builds that creativity muscle.

Daydreaming can also help you in a couple of other ways. If you take your problem or issue that you're trying to solve and daydream about solving it, you're going to get the feeling of what it's going to be like when you've moved beyond it. That's really going to motivate you to move forward.

The key is that you have to let your mind go and really get immersed in the daydream.

The other thing, and this is a little trickier, is that it is possible to imagine yourself in the future having solved the problem, and then look back and see the steps you took to get there. If you fully immerse yourself in daydreaming about where you are going, then you can look back and see what you need to now do to get to that point. It's a little bit different, but it's an interesting and very useful technique.

Use All of Your Senses

Using all of your senses is really where you start making the transition from having creative resources to actually being a creative person. Normally when you try to solve a problem or come up with ideas you think, and it's a very intangible thinking process.

If you're having trouble 'thinking of ideas,' start using your senses. Try to visualize your ideas. See your problems and see your solutions. You can use your hearing; hear your problems and hear your solutions. You can also use inspiration from your smell, taste, and touch too.

I use my feelings and physical sensations as a barometer. Sometimes I'm brainstorming and an idea will come up. I'll say it out loud and get a sensation like a tingling. If you're tuned in to that then you realize that 'oh, that's resonating with me, I want to build off of that.'

Once you start being aware of other senses and using them in your creative process, that's when you really start becoming a creative person.

Action Items for Step 5: Supercharge Your Creativity

Those are a bunch of techniques. You can use one of them, or you can use many of them. Find out what works for you, and try them. There's other out there, and you can develop them yourself. Anything you can do to stimulate your mind working in a new way is perfect.

You now have all the tools you need to really start playing with your creative powers.

Before you go on to step 7, you should do the following:

1. Pick one of the goals or questions you created in Step 4.
2. Try to apply each supercharging technique to it. See which ones work and which ones don't.
3. Pick one or two techniques and commit to trying them out on different problems you encounter over the next week.
4. Create your own list of different ways to think and supercharge your creativity.

My Own Supercharging Techniques:

1)	6)
2)	7)
3)	8)
4)	9)
5)	10)

Step 6: Applications

All right, here are a couple of quick applications.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is the most obvious method to use creativity. We've talked about going fast, having a positive environment, not criticizing, and recording your ideas.

The only additional thing to keep in mind is that if you're going to do this with other people you need to set your environment up so everyone is on the same page.

If four people are all on the same page with being positive and being fast and what not but one person is not, that person can really undercut the entire effort. One critical person who wants to stop and evaluate each idea as it arises can completely cut the creative flow.

Make sure everyone's on the same page!

Mindstorming

The next application is mindstorming, which is a technique I got from Brian Tracy who is a sales trainer and motivational speaker. Basically, his thing is to take your pressing question or problem and write it down on the top of a piece of paper.

My addition to this is to make sure that it's in a SMART and positive form. Then write down twenty answers or solutions to that problem.

This sounds simple but what you're going to find is that the first four or five are going to come easily because they are what you've already thought of. After that, it's going to get a lot harder. Coming up with the next ten or so ideas will be a struggle, and the last four or five will seem impossible. You have to force yourself to keep writing until you get twenty ideas.

Use all of the creative stuff we've gone over in this program to come up with your ideas. Write down the silly and the impossible, don't criticize, be contrarian. Use all of those techniques and see what you can come up with. Force yourself to do it and go very fast.

Once you have your list of twenty, circle one of the twenty ideas on your paper and commit to applying that technique that day.

If you do this, at the end of a week you will have generating 100 ideas and implemented five new techniques or attempted solutions to your problem. If you do this for a year, that will be 250 techniques you have tried that year. They don't all need to be the same problem, but what do you think would happen to your business, life, or whatever, if you tried 250 new things in a year? All spurred on by your creativity...

Thinking on Your Feet

If you trust yourself to empty your mind and to react and respond and flow with other people, you can think on your feet very easily.

The big key here is to trust your creativity and let go of control. The primary reason people can't think on their feet is that they expect something to go a certain way. When it doesn't, they freeze like a deer in the headlights.

I'm a big fan of planning. I am an equally big fan of being willing to flow with the situation if things are not going as planned.

It is true that the better your plan is the less likely you are to have to deviate from it. At the same time, I have found that the more willing I am to trust myself and flow, while at the same time knowing my real objectives, the more able I am to deal with hurdles and stay on track.

Consider a sales meeting. Many sales people go in with a set pitch, which may be very good. The problem is that sometimes the prospect isn't into the pitch but the salesperson keeps pitching. In this case, the salesperson has lost site of the goal - rather than keeping the goal of 'closing a sale,' he has made his goal, 'finish my presentation.'

This unwillingness to flow can be costly indeed.

This is also a great small talk technique for people who don't like networking. People sometimes try to create and memorize a list of questions and topics to talk about.

It's far simpler to use you creative power and flow. Walk up to somebody and ask them a question. 'Hi, I'm so and so, what do you do?' They'll tell you what they do. Then ask them a question about that. Keep your mind empty, be open to what they are saying, and build off of that. If you keep your mind open, listen completely to what they say, and then ask them a question or ask them to elaborate on something

they just said, you will be able to easily have a conversation with anyone without any preparation.

Artistry

Ok, I know that I said that creativity is more than artistry. And it is.

But the fact is that you might have picked up this program specifically to improve an artistic endeavor. Or, you might find that as you tap into your creativity you begin to want to exploring different arts forms.

Whatever the case, it's worth talking about how to apply your supercharged creativity to any artistic endeavor.

Here are some things to keep in mind as you explore, develop, and improve your artistry:

Who are you doing it for?

The primary thing to keep in focus is who you are doing your art for. Whether you write, play an instrument, dance, or do pottery, you must do it for yourself.

Create what you like, and what makes sense to you. If you are trying to create for others, you will have a much harder time getting in touch with yourself. You will most likely ultimately lose enjoyment and interest in your art.

If you plan on getting paid for it, you will at some level have to create things that other people are willing to pay for. But even then, you must be true to yourself first.

If you want to get paid for it, you will need to use your creativity to find the intersection between what you love and what people want.

Self-expression

Creativity is ultimately self-expression. To get the most out of your art, you must infuse it with yourself.

The simplest way I have found to improve people's performance is to get them to let go and be themselves. I have found it to be true in any art form I have applied it to.

I have seen many performers, especially new ones, who look 'timid' on stage. I can tell they are holding back, and the performance suffers.

To use these creative principles in performance, let yourself go and express yourself!

Don't evaluate

Remember, in phase one of creating ideas, the rule is to not evaluate. Similarly, there are times in any artistic endeavor when you can't worry about how good you are.

This is especially true in the beginning. You can't pick up an instrument and start worrying about how bad you are. These things take time, so don't judge yourself.

Even as you progress and develop skill, make sure you do not over-judge yourself. Every artist has ups and downs, and sometimes you need to be bad for a little while before you get good. The thing is though, that once you come out of a slump you will often find yourself to be better than you were before.

This happened to me as an improv performer. I had a period of about six months when I felt awful in my performances. The audiences didn't notice, and my fellow performers thought I did fine, but I knew deep down inside that I was off.

Eventually, something clicked inside of me, and my performances exploded. It was a wonderful feeling!

Looking back on it, I probably would have come out of my slump much faster if I had stopped judging myself and just let myself flow.

Ah well, live and learn!

Do what you love

Make sure you do not get bogged down by what you 'should' be doing. Explore different things. Find what you love.

I have a friend who was getting a Ph.D. in music. The thing was, he started hating it because the program forced him to focus on the 'shoulds.' He was spending an inordinate amount of time listening to music he didn't love, as well as music that he hated.

He left the program to pursue the type of music he loves.

For the first six months since leaving the Ph.D. program he listened to nothing but the two types of music he loved: rock & roll and movie soundtracks.

He found his creativity returning stronger than ever, and he is now on track to being a professional film composer.

This doesn't mean you should never learn about things outside of your interest or expertise. Just make sure that you always remember why you are pursuing your art in the first place.

Action Items for Step 6: Applications

Congratulations! You have gone through the entire program!

Keep working it and applying the principles, and pretty soon you'll have 'Supercharged Creativity!'

There's only one action item for this step:

1. Start (and keep) developing, applying, and supercharging your creativity!

A Final Word

Creativity is not a one-time thing. Your goal should not be to pick up one or two techniques that you can apply - although that's a great start!

Your goal should be to practice the daily exercises, incorporate the mentalities, develop the basics, and practice the focusing and supercharging techniques to a point where they are a part of you. You will then have all of your creative resources at your fingertips.

Ultimately, by consistently practicing, you should go beyond even what I hope to accomplish with this program. You can and will come up with your own supercharging techniques. You will develop your own ideas and tools to access your own creativity.

Creativity is about self-expression. This program is about helping you tap into your own potential. Your consistent practice and development will help you realize your potential and achieve all you want to!

Keep on creating!
Avish

Appendix

Examples of Step-by-Step Methods to Apply Your Creativity to Different Areas of Your Life

Greetings!

I'm glad to see you've made it this far! By now you should really be feeling freer and more creative. You probably already have a good idea of how to apply your creativity to a variety of areas of your life.

Just to help out, I have included seven different step-by-step guides for how to apply your creativity to tackle different issues. For the most part, the steps refer to and incorporate the different techniques you have been developing throughout the program.

These guides are not end all be all methods. Just because I only mention one or two of the creativity techniques in them doesn't mean that others aren't valid.

These ideas are just guides. Modify them as you will and find what works for you.

Many of these plans will be very similar to each other. That's because this stuff isn't that complicated. Once you get good at applying your creativity to one thing, you will find it easier to apply it to other areas. These guides are just to get you started and to help you get started on using your creativity in every area of your life.

Use the existing ones as templates, and try some new ones out for yourself. Try:

- 'How to make more money using my creativity'
- 'How to be happier using my creativity'
- 'How to have better relationships using my creativity'
- 'How to move ahead in my career using my creativity'

Be this point you have all the tools. This program was not designed to take you by the hand through each of your problems one at a time. It

was designed to give you the ability to never need someone or something to take you by the hand again!

Good luck, and have fun!

-Avish

Guide #1 - How to use your creativity to solve your problems

1. State the problem

- You need to know where you are, so state your problem

2. Re-state as SMART goals and questions

- Take your problem and phrase it as a SMART goal: smart, measurable, attainable, reachable, and time-bound.

3. Adopt the very real belief that you have the capacity to solve the problem

- Belief is vitally important here. Do whatever you need to to get to a place where you believe in your own abilities.
- If you are feeling down, break out of it! Start by moving your body - do something physical.
- If you are feeling negative, sit up, straighten your posture, take some deep breaths, and put a smile on your face. Remember, fake it until you make it.

4. Mindstorm Answers to those questions

- Write down one of the questions from above on the top of a piece of paper. Mindstorm and write down 20 answers to that question.
- Circle one of the ideas and commit to do that activity today.

- Repeat this everyday.
- 5. Use any and all techniques from the manual to give you new ideas in your mindstorms**
 - 6. Combine the above with the guides for productivity and goal setting and achievement**

Guide #2 - How to set and achieve your goals using creativity

1. Brainstorm your List

- Take a piece of paper (I like to have a notebook designated to just goal setting and planning) and write down everything you want. Have fun with this - let your mind wander and absolutely do not limit yourself.
- You can create different lists for different categories. You can have one list for work goals, one for personal, one for 'thing' goals, etc. Do what works for you.
- Create a big list, and really use your creativity to get in touch with what you really want.

2. Determine your time frame

- For every item on your list, make a note of whether you want it within 1 year, within 3 years, within 5 years, or in more than 5 years.
- Then determine what time frame you want to work in. I like to focus on the 1-year goals, but you may be different. For the purpose of this guide, I'm going to assume you are working on 1-year goals.

3. Prioritize the list

- Prioritize all of your one-year goals. A simple way to do this is look at your list and ask yourself, 'which one goal, if I accomplished, would have the greatest positive impact on my life?' Alternately, you could ask, 'what one goal, when accomplished, will most help me

achieve my other goals?' The answer to that is your number one goal. Ask that question again with the remaining items on your list. That's your number two item. Continue this until your list is complete.

- Feel free to drop any one-year goals that you really don't care about.

For the remaining steps, I'm going to assume that you are working on your number one goal. You can repeat the remaining steps for each of your goals.

4. Make you goals SMART

- Take your goal and make it SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, reachable, and time-bound.

5. Create questions out of your goals

- Turn your goal into a positively stated question.

6. Brainstorm your action items

- Write down everything that you need to do, get, or learn to achieve that goal. Let your mind flow, and get everything out. Also write down the things you don't know. As with all creative exercises, don't criticize your ideas - don't think of something you'd like to do and then not write it down because you think you won't be able to do it or that you shouldn't do it.

7. Apply the 80/20 Rule to your List

- Take this list you've created and apply the 80/20 rule to it. Remember, 80 percent of your results come from 20 percent of your effort. Circle only the 20% of items that will yield 80% of those results.

8. Prioritize your list

- Prioritize all of your action items. Do this in a few ways. First, organize your items chronologically. Some items will have to come before others.
- Second, ask yourself, 'which items, when finished, will have the greatest impact on me achieving my goal?'
- Using those two questions, rank your entire list.

9. Schedule those activities

- For every action item in step 8, schedule when you will do it and how long it will take. Resolve to stick to the schedule. For large projects, you may just have to commit to what day or week you will work on the item. When you get to that day or week, you can schedule the specific time.

10. Identify your limiting steps

- Brainstorm a list of limiting steps. What are the things that are holding you back from achieving your goal? What are the bottlenecks? What are the things that you have no idea how you are going to accomplish or how to do? What do you need to do or figure out before you can move forward?

11. Mindstorm on Limiting Steps

- Now that you have a list of limiting steps, mindstorm on each one to come up with a series of ideas to overcome them. Do one mindstorm and implement one technique per day.

12. Keep Re-Evaluating

- For large projects, things can change as time passes. Periodically re-evaluate your goal and plan and make sure they still make sense to you. This plan is for your own benefit, so don't be a slave to it.

Guide #3 - How to increase your Productivity and manage your time through creativity

1. Start with quiet focus

- When you have a lot to do, your first instinct is probably to hit the ground running. If you feel you have a tremendous amount to do, you may feel the urge to jump in and get started on your work.
- Rather than doing that, take a few minutes to get calm and organize your thoughts. Think of this as a short form of meditation - just try to empty your mind.
- After you have done this, your focus, energy, and perspective will all be improved. Taking a few minutes up front to center yourself can make you tremendously more productive.

2. Brainstorm your day

- Take a piece of paper (it can be a loose sheet, but it can be helpful if it's part of a designated notebook or planner) and write down everything you need to do that day. Let your mind flow, and get everything out. As with all creative exercises, don't criticize your ideas - don't think of something you'd like to do and then not write it down because you think you won't be able to do it or that you shouldn't do it.

3. Apply the 80/20 Rule to your List

- Take this list you've created and apply the 80/20 rule to it. Remember, 80 percent of your results come from 20

percent of your effort. Circle only the 20% of items that will yield 80% of those results.

4. Chunk Up

- For each circled activity, chunk up. Put the bigger picture in perspective. This will refocus and motivate you to work on it. Or, it may make you realize that the task is not as important as you thought.
- Having a 'why' is very helpful in getting us to work towards our goal, especially if the task is something we're not excited about doing.

5. Chunk Down

- For each circled item remaining on the list, chunk down. Break the items down into smaller parts. You should strive to get them to a point where each task is broken down into a series of single action items. How big each item is depends on your work style. I like my action items to be things I can complete between 15 minutes and 1 hour.

6. Prioritize your list

- Prioritize every item on your list. A simple way to do this is look at your list and ask yourself, 'at the end of today, what one thing on my list, if finished, will have the biggest positive impact on my life?' The answer to that is your number one priority. Ask that question again with the remaining items on your list. That's your number two item. Continue this until your list is complete.

7. Schedule those activities

- For every action item in step 5, schedule when you will do it and how long it will take. Resolve to stick to the schedule.
- You can take two approaches to scheduling. First, and the way to ensure you get the most important work done, is to schedule your first priority item first in the day, then your second, and so on.
- You can also schedule your high priority items during your most productive hours. You have high and low productive times during the day. You know when they are, not me (if you don't know, pay attention to yourself for the next couple of weeks and figure it out). Scheduling this way ensures you devote your best time to the most important activities, but if your most productive time is not first thing in the morning you run a greater risk of your high priority items not being done.

8. Go with the Flow

- Be aware that the day has a way of stealing your time. Keep your 80/20 priorities in mind when new things come up. Make sure to prioritize and evaluate new things that come. Don't sacrifice an important item on your list to do something less important. At the same time, keep an open mind and be willing to flow with new items. Your schedule and list is there to help you - if something new comes up that will be more beneficial for you, go with it.

9. Go one at a time

- Work through you list and schedule in the order you have it. For big tasks, don't be overwhelmed by the number of tasks. Put your attention solely on the task at hand.

- For the vital action items, try to remove distractions. Turn off the phone, close the door, or work at a time when everyone else is asleep. You can finish a task that you might think would take you three hours in one if you put 100% of your attention on it.

Guide #4 - Use Your Creativity to Generate New Ideas, Products, & Opportunities

1. State a SMART goal

- Write out your objective as SMART as possible.
(SMART: smart, measurable, attainable, reachable, time-bound)
- Clearly write out what you want to come up with (idea, product, or opportunity).
- Also, write out what your higher objective is.

2. Brainstorm a list of ideas/products/opportunities

- Take a piece of paper and write out a large list of possible ideas. Use your creativity and let your mind flow. Keep your pen moving - don't criticize or evaluate ideas at this point. Keep writing until you have a large list.

3. Evaluate the list

- Go through your list and circle any ideas that jump out at you. Make a note also of any ideas that have potential, even if they won't work as is.

4. Build off of your ideas

- If you have any great ideas off of your initial list, you're done. Use the goal setting and achievement guide to implement the idea.

- If you did not generate any great ideas, build off of your list of potential ideas. Take each idea, and use your creative power to brainstorm a list of new ideas.

5. Repeat as needed

- You may have to repeat steps 3 and 4 multiple times to get a winning idea. Be patient - remember that this is a process.

6. Use bad ideas

- If nothing is coming up, try building off of your bad ideas. Take your list of bad ideas and use your creativity to create a list of related ideas. Then use your creative power to brainstorm possible ways of making those bad ideas good.

7. Take breaks & seek inspiration

- Don't spend all of your time sitting at a table with a piece of paper. Take breaks and get out. Do things you like to do to get inspiration. Keep your mind open and your attention on the world around you.

8. Use any and all techniques

- Go back through the manual and try out a variety of the supercharging techniques. Come up with new ones and try them

Guide #5 - Use Your Creativity to Increase Your Sales

1. Create SMART Goals

- Decide what your sales goals are. Make sure they are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Reachable, and Time Bound. Turn those goals into questions. Make sure those questions are positive.

2. Mindstorm ways to achieve those goals

- Write down one of the questions from above on the top of a piece of paper. Mindstorm and write down 20 answers to that question.
- Circle one of the ideas and commit to do that activity today.
- Repeat this everyday.

3. Brainstorm out all of the activities and ideas you have regarding this goal.

- Create a giant list of everything you need to do, or could do, or want to do. Write down the crazy, impossible, and absurd. Keep your pen moving, and try to get absolutely everything out of your head.

4. Apply the 80/20 rule to your new list

- Take this list you've created and apply the 80/20 rule to it. Remember, 80 percent of your results come from 20

percent of your effort. Circle only the 20% of items that will yield 80% of those results.

5. Schedule those activities

- For every activity you circled in step 4, schedule when you will do it and how long it will take. Resolve to stick to the schedule.

6. Model Your Customers

- Take a few moments of time to model your customers. Sit quietly and let your subconscious flow over what your potential customers are thinking.
- What will they like about your product or service?
- What will they not like?
- How do they want to be contacted?
- What will they respond to?
- What questions will they have?
- What concerns will they have?
- Obviously, this can and should be supplemented with actual research where you contact your existing customers.

7. Be willing to get off the script on sales calls and listen

- When you go on a sales call, be prepared and ready. At the same time, be willing to flow.

- Ask a question, keep an empty mind, and listen to the answer. Let your mind take it in and then follow up with another related question. Continue this way until you have dug down and uncovered the prospect's real wants, needs, and concerns.

Guide #6 - Small talk System

1. Create one or two intro questions

- These do not need to be anything complex. For business networking, try, 'what do you do?'

2. Ask and Listen

- Ask someone your question, then be quiet. Empty your mind and put 100% of your attention on the person you are talking with.
- Listen to what they say. Do not formulate a response until they finish

3. Pick one thing and ask about it.

- When they finish, resist the urge to jump in with your own story. Rather, pick one thing they mentioned and ask them about it. Ask them to elaborate on a point, ask why they feel a certain way, or ask for more info.
- The key here is to get them talking and let the conversation flow. People love to talk about themselves and what they do.

4. Wait for your moment to talk about yourself

- While people do love to talk about themselves, people don't want to be interrogated. Plus, you'll need to talk about yourself at some point.
- If the person you are talking to is polite, he or she will ask you something. Now you can offer some info about

you. If after you talk they remain quiet, ask another question. Ideally, you will tie in what you just said with what they had said before and you can ask about that. If not, just build off of what they said before.

- If the person is not polite and never asks you a question, either keep them talking or remove yourself from the conversation. Just because you can make small talk doesn't mean you have to!
- Also, if you are paying attention and are using your creative intuition, you will get a sense of when you should ask another question and when you should say something about yourself. When you get to that point you are really making conversation!

5. Practice

- Play with this technique. Try it out with different people.
- The more you do it the more adept you will get at flowing with questions and conversations. You will also get better at finding the moments when you should talk about yourself and when you should ask questions.

Guide #7 - Use Your Creativity to Get Past Writer's Block

1. Free Journal

- The first step is to get back in touch with your creative juices. Do some free writing, just like the daily journaling. Let your thoughts flow and get them on paper. If you feel inspired to get back to your original project feel free, but don't force it. Just let your creativity flow for a bit.

2. Write Something Else

- If your mind is blocked up on one project, switch to another. Some authors like to have 2 or 3 projects in the works at all time.
- Giving yourself permission to bounce between projects allows you to work on whatever project is most productive for you at the time.

3. Take a Break

- Take a walk, get some exercise, stretch, breathe deeply, or just do some other work. Take some time away from the project. Just like all breaks, remember not to think about your writing project while on your break. Get away from it and let your subconscious work.

4. Write Intentionally Bad

- Sometimes the block comes not from an absence of ideas, but rather from an absence of what you think are

good ideas. In these cases, give yourself permission to write poorly. You can always go back and edit.

- You can even go one step farther than giving yourself permission to write poorly and actually try to write poorly. There is a theory called paradoxical intent which basically means that the more you try to do something the harder it is. This is one reason this whole program tries to get you to flow and not try. By paradoxical intent, if you try to write poorly you may actually end up writing better!

5. Be non-linear

- If you are writing a longer piece and get stuck on one piece, jump to another piece. Writing a piece that comes before or later not only gets you working on the project, but also may open up doorways in your mind to help you get over your block.

And Onward...

So is that the end...?

Well, that's the end of the program, but I certainly hope that's not the end of your creative applications. The entire point of the program was to show you how to be a more creative person yourself – to make creativity a part of your life. I hope it accomplished that purpose!

The tools are there for you. I'm sure there are uses for creativity I haven't even thought of myself yet, and I hope you do.

Thanks for allowing me to help, and let me know how it goes!!

-Avish Parashar

P.S. If you liked the program and got a lot out of it (like I hope you did) please send me a testimonial to:

<mailto:avish@avishparashar.com>

A short note saying that you liked it with a couple of specific things you liked would be super! Thanks, I really appreciate it!

If you liked this program, look for new programs on the following topics:

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