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# UNDERSTANDING HOW TO NURTURE CREATIVITY

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## **Understanding How to Nurture Creativity**

### **Synopsis:**

The purpose of this paper is to discuss and demonstrate how creativity can be nurtured through consistently practicing activities which promote high curiosity, inquisition, imagination, and novelty associated with giftedness.

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### **Synopsis**

#### **Background and Definition of Creativity**

It was believed that the sun was revolving around the earth until Copernicus in the 16th century. It was believed that humans couldn't fly until the Wright Brothers in the early 20th century. It was believed that children with disabilities couldn't learn until Itard in the early 19th century. All of these examples tell us that the truth can be changed and beliefs associated with perceptions can change the truth. Obviously, beliefs change the way we think and the way we do. What are beliefs? Beliefs are "the knowledge and information which a person assumes to be true about the environment" (Schafer & Tait, 1986). In other words, when a person's knowledge and information changes, the truth of the environment can be changed. Likewise, when the environment changes, the truth associated with a person's knowledge and information can be changed. The recurring changes of the environment, knowledge, and information activate the process of creativity where the key elements of curiosity, inquisition, imagination, and novelty interact with each other. How the key elements interact with each other determines the quality of end product. The end product can be a creation of a research design or a masterpiece of art, a novel concept about space (multiverses vs. universe), an invention of technology use, or a marvel outlook about music or song birds. Accordingly, the acts associated with creativity are new and unique ideas or perceptions for solving problems, novel and interesting ways of communication with others both verbally and nonverbally. As Franken (1993) stated, "Creativity is the tendency to generate or recognize ideas, alternatives, or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, communicating with others, and entertaining ourselves and others" (p. 396).

However, creativity doesn't need to be born with. Rather, it can be nurtured through consistently practicing activities which promote high curiosity, inquisition, imagination, and novelty associated with giftedness (Davis & Rimm, 2004) as long as an individual can invest his/her most energy and learning interest in bringing out curiosity. Through curiosity, new ideas may spurt like a geyser, questions may appear like a constant flowing river, and imagination may spark like twinkling stars in the sky.

#### **Purpose and Goal of the Paper**

The purpose and goal of this paper is to discuss and demonstrate how creativity can be nurtured through consistently practicing activities which promote high curiosity, inquisition, imagination, and novelty associated with giftedness (Davis & Rimm, 2004). These activities can take place in our daily lives but are frequently overlooked for the convenience of doing effortless thinking. For example, when a child asks, "Why do we have 10 fingers and toes?" and if our answer is "genetics" or "biological design," our answer won't be satisfactory as it is a taking-it-

for-granted answer. In order to achieve the purpose and goal of this paper, a few activities, such as questioning facts and golden rules, challenging assumptions, and how to give feedback to encourage more open-ended questions are discussed in the following.

### **Examples and Activities**

Activity 1:  $1+1$  doesn't need to be equal to 2.

Often times, teachers or parents may correct a child if he/she answers 0,1, or 3 for a question, "What is one plus one equal to?" In order to promote creativity, teachers or parents should also develop curiosity or interest in finding out how the child got the answer. So to speak, teachers or parents should give the child an opportunity to explain his/her own reasoning and try to understand in what context that  $1+1$  can be equal to 0,1, or 3. Can't 1 be a correct answer if we combine a dough of clay with another dough of clay? The more teachers and parents dig into the context, the more teachers and parents will be amazed with the answers and reasons. It's interesting, entertaining, and creative!

Activity 2: Be inquisitive (Never stop asking questions)!

If gravity is the reason why the apple never falls far from the tree, then does gravity also explain why the raindrop falls downwards? If yes, does the shape of the raindrop change when the force of gravity is different? If yes, what does the raindrop look like in different planets with different gravity forces? If gravity accounts for all objects falling downwards on earth, can gravity be partially deactivated to prevent an air crash? If yes, what would happen to the airplane when it happens? All of these questions will encourage imagination, originality, and experiments!

### **References**

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