

# UNLEASHING YOUR CREATIVITY

## Oregon FCE workshop

2004

### Teaching Supplies:

Slips of paper with examples of using creativity to solve crisis, education or teaching dilemmas. Samples included in workshop.

Flip chart, a large piece of paper or a dry erase board plus pens.

Optional visuals: Wrapped gift labeled in big letters CREATIVITY.

Cut-out hearts, print a big C or the word Creativity on them.

Tape or pins to attach hearts to participants.

Print or write out the PROMISE written at the bottom of page three of the Teaching Guide

Put it up on the wall in front of the group

Print or write out some of the quotes printed in your Teaching Guide. Share with group.

Workshop based on "A World of Possibilities: Skills for Creating Happiness and Blessing Others" a ten part series written by Dr. Sam Quick and Alex Lesueur. The Cooperative Extension Service, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture published the series. A World of Possibilities website is <http://www.ca.ukky.edu/fcs/possibilities/>. The authors gave permission to Dorene Garland, Anne Engen and Betty Kamikawa to edit and adapt this workshop for presentation at the 2004 Oregon FCE Annual Meeting.

# UNLEASHING YOUR CREATIVITY

## Teaching Guide

*As your group or audience settles in to listen surprise them with a short scenario of how to discourage creativity. You will need at least two actors, Creative Catie and Wet Blanket Barbie. Let the actors enjoy using facial expressions and tone of voice to get the point across. Jump right into the conversation without introductions.*

**Creative Catie:** *“Did you know the 2006 annual meeting will be in Salem? Gals are bouncing ideas around to expand the annual meeting. Their hope is to reach out to other organizations with similar missions involving them in a project to help alleviate hunger in our state.”*

**Wet Blanket Barbie:** *“You’ve got to be kidding! Don’t change our annual meetings!”*

**Creative Catie:** *“Listen! School children often participate in service projects. FCE’s role would be to coordinate organizations and schools to maybe glean free produce, box and distribute it. Hey, we could get fce members and experts to contribute recipes. We could make a big difference in family’s lives!”*

**Wet Blanket Barbie:** *“It would be too much work! Who would want to put it together?”*

**Creative Catie:** *“Wow what a way to let other people hear about us! We can recruit new members. We could apply for grants from our FCE Enhancement Fund. We’d encourage public participation with a mini-fair or classes or entertainment or speakers!”*

**Wet Blanket Barbie:** *“Jeez Louise! Are you sure our members would support this? What if you work your tail off and no one shows up?”*

**Creative Catie looks deflated, puts her head down:** *“Yah, maybe you’re right. Forget it.”*

1. Thank Creative Catie and Wet Blanket Barbie for showing how easy it is to discourage creativity. The facts given are true. Introduce the workshop teachers.
2. This workshop, Unleashing Your Creativity, is one of a 10 part series titled “A World of Possibilities” published by Kentucky’s Cooperative Extension Service. The writers, Dr. Sam Quick and Alex Lesueur, Jr., gave permission to Dorene Garland, Anne Engen and Betty Kamikawa to edit and adapt this workshop to reflect the interests of Oregon FCE members.

Present this workshop in a way that best meets the needs of your group.  
Draw from the suggestions mentioned throughout the workshop.

3. Have participants shout out ways or times each has felt they have been creative. Quickly jot down their suggestions on a large sheet of paper. Hand out to the audience slips of paper that include examples of using creativity to solve a crisis, an irritation, education or teaching dilemmas. (Samples, In grade school my daughter had trouble grasping simple math problems until we used chocolate chips in place of numbers. When someone else’s dog kept leaving surprises on my lawn I attached a box of small plastic bags and a pooper-scooper to my fence. Sometimes when I drive, I put Jesus in my back seat. Not only am I a better diver but he helps me sort out problems. We had a dangerous situation in our neighborhood so we invited neighbors over to brainstorm a solution. We gathered information and contacted the police for help. Having more people thinking alike made an impact. Getting angry helped me decorate a room – you know you don’t have to put up with ugly wallpaper even if it was expensive.) As a Teacher you can probably come up with more samples.

## WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- Learn Creativity's 5 core principles
- Side step Creativity's roadblocks
- Awaken your creative genius
- Try fun creative skill builders
- Bring a dream to life

To be creative means to be playful, to relax and to have fun and, in so doing, to successfully meet the often daunting challenges that life throws our way. How you think about a problem is more important than the problem itself – so always think positively. Powerful possibilities abound during times of difficulty and change. Creativity is like the human heart. It lives in each of us and can pump new vitality into all that we do. (You may want to cut out hearts and put a big C on them and stick them on your audience. Bring out a large wrapped gift labeled CREATIVITY and place in front of you. Think creatively and have fun with your visuals.) You may wish to reread this paragraph to your audience.

## HAND OUT THE PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

*Contains a summary, two pages of Awakening the Spirit of Creativity and evaluation sheet.*

Slowly read the 5 core principals of creativity (show your labeled gift). *Handout has underlined points.*

## FIVE CORE PRINCIPALS OF CREATIVITY

1. Though we express it in different ways and to varying degrees, creativity is a gift given to each of us. Continually remind your self of this truth. You are a marvelously resourceful individual with unique perspectives and talents that are needed to create the best world possible for yourself and others.
2. Creativity thrives in an atmosphere of trust, freedom, playfulness, spontaneity and enthusiasm.
3. When an innovative idea pops into your mind – and this happens much more often than you might realize – jot it down right away; give it your respectful attention, and instead of judging the idea honor it and have fun with it.
4. Develop an eagle's eye for spotting and encouraging the creative tendencies of family members, friends, co-workers, neighbors and community leaders.
5. When you are part of a relationship, organization, or community that confronts a significant difficulty, get together and enjoy an all-out brainstorming session, building on each other's ideas and generating as many imaginative solutions as possible.

*The two terrors that discourage originality and creative living are fear of public opinion and undue reverence for one's own consistency.* Ralph Waldo Emerson

**LIFE IS A GREAT BIG CANYAS, THROW ALL THE PAINT ON IT YOU CAN!**

Danny Kaye



## ROADBLOCKS TO CREATIVITY

These, briefly, are some roadblocks that typically prevent capable people from expressing their creativity more fully. Do they sound familiar?

- Thinking, “I’m not very creative.”
- Fear of criticism or self criticism
- Stress
- “Too much talk, too little doing.”
- Nonsupportive people or environments
- Resistance to change
- Too much seriousness.
- “That’s not my job.”
- Laziness
- Fear of failure
- Worry about who gets the credit
- Lack of faith in oneself, or others

## AWAKENING THE SPIRIT OF CREATIVITY

*Teachers this is your chance to be creative and tailor part of the workshop to fit your group.*

*Turn to the next two pages titled – Awakening the Spirit of Creativity – have participants turn to the same pages in their handout.*

*Suggestion* – Read the paragraph under the title on page four. Then have members of your audience take turns reading aloud the tips, going around the group until both pages of Awakening The Spirit Of Creativity have been read.

*Suggestions* – choose **one** of the following

1. Divide your group into two or three equal groups. Give them 10 minutes for this activity. Have each group share among themselves personal dilemmas that call for creativity. They are to decide on one dilemma and then choose an option from either page two or three to actually follow. After practicing, they are to come back together ready to explain the problem, and role-play ways their group would creatively handle the dilemma.
2. Divide group, but give them a suggested dilemma to practice being creative and role-play.
3. If the group is small, you may want to work on being creative with the facts given in the opening scenario. Let District III, 2006 annual meeting hosts, know how creative you are.

## SKILL BUILDERS

Skill builders help you exercise your creative muscles to give you the strength you need for success. As with a physical fitness workout, benefits come from actually *doing* the exercises. Think about all you have learned from this workshop and how you might put it into practice. Choose one small goal that you want to accomplish in the next few days. Use the form on the front of the Handout to bring your dream to life. Tell a supportive friend or family member about your goal. Visualize success. PROMISE TO SAY OUTLOUD – “Every problem I face is a challenge, an opportunity for learning, creating and growing. I skillfully handle each difficulty with wisdom, playfulness, and confidence.”

**EVALUATION** Fill in the Oregon FCE workshop evaluation. *THANK YOU!*

## Awakening the Spirit of Creativity

The Spirit of creativity resides in abundance within each of us. While you may have unique and favorite ways of tapping into it, you might also find it helpful to draw from the following tips for awakening your creative genius.

- **Walk on the wild side.** Be daring: take risks; break the rules; be unpredictable. Let the “wild person” within you come out and romp. Feel the raw energy and aliveness, and let it take you where it will. Of course, as you walk on the wild side, be true to your deepest self and kind to all those around you.
- **Take time for silence and solitude.** We block imagination and innovation when our lives are too busy, too noisy, too filled with planning and analytic thinking. Make space in your life for peace, quiet, and solitude, and then listen receptively to the creative prompting within and around you.
- **Sleep on it.** Before falling asleep at night, think of some challenge in your life and ask for assistance. Upon waking up, see if any fresh feelings or new perspectives on the situation have emerged. Also, be open to your dreams and their symbolic messages.
- **Give up the need to look good.** Ask dumb questions. Say what you really think and feel. Do what brings you peace and helps others, even if it is unpopular. Forget about looking good and instead focus on being true to yourself and your heartfelt inner guidance.
- **Step out from the crowd.** Respect and learn from other viewpoints, but be your own person. Think originally, trust yourself, and let your brilliance shine. As psychologist Abraham Maslow advised, “Be independent of the good opinion of other people.”
- **Call a virtual council meeting.** In your mind, call together some wise individuals whom you are familiar with and admire—perhaps your grandmother, a favorite teacher, or an insightful leader, such as Mother Teresa or Abraham Lincoln. Then ask for advice, and take notes as you imagine the discussion among your council members and their words of wisdom.
- **Adopt a creative genius.** Select a historical figure or modern-day hero and adopt his or her spirit into the family of your beliefs, thoughts and actions. Choose someone you deeply admire. It might be an expert in your given field who can serve as a mentor or someone such as Leonardo da Vinci, Mahatma Gandhi, Helen Keller, or Jesus Christ. Study your chosen genius and strive to make his or her best qualities your own. You can, of course, learn from more than one creative genius!



## Awakening the Spirit of Creativity—continued

- **Let your pen do the talking.** Jot down your bright ideas as soon as you think of them before they fly away. Doodle with a creative eye or draw out your dreams and questions with color markers. Write a “Dear Creativity” letter, and inwardly listen for helpful responses with pen in hand. Start a Creativity Journal, listing past successes and your many creative traits that made them possible.
- **Brainstorm.** Pose a question to a small group and invite a flood of spontaneous and briefly stated creative responses. Encourage participants to build playfully upon one another’s ideas. Don’t evaluate the responses until all ideas are expressed
- **Brainstorm negatively.** Let us say your goal is to position your organization to thrive and to continue benefiting society in today’s fast-changing world. Think five years into the future, and envision the total demise of your group because of its failure to creatively adapt to change. Brainstorm all the reasons why the organization failed to prosper. Then shift gears and focus on creative ways to protect your organization against the factors that could contribute to a “failure to thrive” syndrome.
- **Create a wisdom circle.** Pull together a circle of people representing various ages and perspectives. Begin with a few minutes of silence. Next, post a single thought-provoking question on a flipchart or wall poster and place a “talking stick” in the center of the group circle. Only the person holding the “talking stick” may speak; all others listen respectfully. Throughout this powerful process, silence is honored as a valuable component of creativity.
- **Be playful.** A vital part of creativity, playing around and having a good time can be serious business. A playful imaginative mind and a receptive loving heart give birth to all kinds of marvelous possibilities. Laugh and be silly. Imbue your work with inspired playfulness.
- **Think in reverse.** Imagine the best possible solution to a personal or societal challenge, and then work backwards, step by step, to discover how the ideal solution was implemented.
- **Sit at the feet of young children and wise elders.** The very young and very old see life from unique and fascinating vantage points. Seek the precious insight of young children and the wisdom-bestowing experience of elders.

# UNLEASHING YOUR CREATIVITY

## Participant's Handout

To be creative means to be playful, relax and to have fun and, in so doing, to successfully meet the often-daunting challenges that life throws our way. How you think about a problem is more important than the problem itself – so always think positively. Powerful possibilities abound during times of difficulty and change. *Creativity is like the human heart. It lives in each of us and can pump new vitality into all that we do.*

### FIVE CORE PRINCIPALS OF CREATIVITY

1. Creativity is a gift given to each of us
2. Creativity thrives in an atmosphere of trust, freedom, playfulness, spontaneity and enthusiasm.
3. When an innovative idea pops into your mind – jot it down right away!
4. Develop an eagle's eye for spotting and encouraging the creative tendencies of others.
5. When you are part of a relationship, organization or community that confronts a difficulty get together and enjoy an all-out brainstorming session, building on each other's ideas.

**SKILL BUILDERS** help you exercise your creative muscles to give you the strength you need for success. Bringing a dream to life is a journey. It begins and continues one step at a time. Think about all that you have learned from this workshop and how you might put it into practice. Choose one small goal that is important to you, one you want to accomplish in the next few days or weeks, a goal about which you are enthusiastic and confident.

**A NEW POSSIBILITY:** Briefly state what you will do and by when. Sign and date this plan. Tell a supportive friend or family member about your goal and frequently visualize your possibility coming to life.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ By this date \_\_\_\_\_

*Creativity is inventing, experimenting, growing, taking risks, breaking rules, making mistakes and having fun. Mary Lou Cook*

**NEVER LET THE FEAR OF STRIKING OUT GET IN YOUR WAY!**  
**GEORGE HERMAN 'BABE' RUTH**

Check out "A World of Possibilities: Skills for Creating Happiness and Blessing Others" at this website <http://www.ca.uky.edu/fcs/possibilities/> Unleashing Your Creativity is one of a 10 part series.



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## EXAMPLES OF USING CREATIVITY TO SOLVE A PROBLEM

*(Add examples of your own to this list, cut apart and hand out to your audience to help stir the creative juices.)*

*In grade school, my daughter had trouble grasping simple math problems until we used chocolate chips in place of numbers.*

*When someone else's dog kept leaving surprises on my lawn, I attached a box of small plastic bags and a pooper-scooper to my fence.*

*Sometimes when I drive, I put Jesus in my back seat. Not only am I a better driver but he helps me sort out problems.*

*We had a dangerous situation in our neighborhood, so we invited neighbors over to brainstorm a solution. We gathered information and contacted the police for help. Having more people thinking alike made an impact.*

*Getting angry helped me decorate a room—I didn't have to put up with ugly wallpaper even if it was expensive!*



## POSITIVE THOUGHTS FOR CREATIVE PEOPLE

(Suggestions for use. Cut apart, hand out and let participants read aloud. Cut apart and post on the wall for members to read to themselves. )

Inspiring ideas easily pop into my mind, and the wisdom of my heart guides each step of my adventure-filled life. Anything is possible, for the unlimited spirit of creativity dwells within and around me.

Every problem I face is a challenge—an opportunity for learning, creating, and growing. I skillfully handle each difficulty with wisdom, playfulness, and confidence.

The infinite power of creativity lives in each of us. When we unite behind a common purpose, no obstacle is insurmountable. We can meet every challenge and bring to life our finest dreams.

Together, let us envision and build a world where all people enjoy optimal well being. Let us strive to awaken fresh thinking, new enthusiasm, and abundant love. Let us create a world of unimagined possibilities. It can be done!

**When the artist is alive in any person,  
whatever the type of work, he or she  
becomes an inventive, searching,  
daring, self-expressing creature.**

**Robert Henn**

**BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE IN  
THE WORLD**

*Gandhi*

**The two terrors that discourage originality  
and creative living are fear of public opinion  
and undue reverence for one's own  
consistency.**

**Ralph Waldo Emerson**



**NEVER LET THE FEAR OF STRIKING  
OUT GET IN YOUR WAY!**

*GEORGE HERMAN 'BABE' RUTH*

**Creativity is inventing, experimenting,  
growing, taking risks, breaking rules, making  
mistakes and having fun.**

**Mary Lou Cook**

**No one can make you feel inferior without your  
consent.**

*Eleanor Roosevelt*