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CREATIVITY AND PERSONALITY INTEGRATION

According to J. P. Guilford, creativity "represents an area in which psychologists generally, whether they be angels or not, have feared to tread (1950, p. 444)." A survey of the literature for the past twenty-five years reveals a dearth of material having a definite bearing on creativity. Yet at the present time creativity is in the forefront of psychological research. The research has centered generally on three areas – nature, nurture, and evaluation. In all three areas creativity has proved to be an elusive concept, difficult to recognize, define, and measure validly.

The recognition of the concept of creativity as a dimension capable of assessment brought the realization of the lack of creative individuals in the present society. The individual who dared to be different was ostracized by society. He stood anywhere on the scale from a misfit to a madman, basically because of the outmoded belief that when the creative individual acts against the given norm he is mentally unbalanced (Barron, 1958).

Some research studies have arrived at the view that the creative individual lives closer to the inner reaches of his personality, and if this is true, "then an approach to the assessment of creativity potential may be made through better understanding of personality dynamics (Flemming & Weintraub, 1962, p. 84)."

This study was an attempt to establish the positive relationship between creativity and personality integration using the theoretical and experimental models of leading psychologists. More specifically the study attempted to answer these questions:

1. What determines the creative person?
2. What are the characteristics of the integrated personality?
3. Is there a positive relationship between the creative person and the integrated personality?
4. Is the neurotic person a truly creative person?

Personality integration, recognized by eminent psychologists as a criterion of mental health, was defined as *"the organization and unification of the many diverse elements of personality into a well-knit efficiently functioning whole* (Schneiders, 1958, p. 77)." Consideration here is not restricted to the healthy mature *adult,* but rather related in broader fashion to the healthy person. Yamamoto's (1966a) concept of the healthy person accurately describes the individual considered here. This person is one

> . . . who "actively masters his environment, shows a unity of personality, and is able to perceive the world and himself correctly" . . . *within the limiting biological and social conditions specific to that particular developmental stage.* Thus, we have a person who is "being" . . . or living fully at that point of his development . . . and is continuously "becoming" or actively changing himself and his environment to attain the next stage of equilibrium (p. 601).

Experimental studies undertaken by Seeman (1959) and Duncan (1966) on male and female populations produced significant characteristics of the integrated personality. Two interesting observations made as a result of the studies were noted as being relevant to this particular enquiry: first, that personality integration (as defined within the limits of those studies) is a highly visible phenomenon (Seeman, 1959); and second, "that the individual differs in measurable ways from his 'normal' or 'average' peers (Duncan, p. 522)." The studies showed that in relation to the contrast group the psychologically integrated individual exhibited:

1. a more positive self-concept
2. a greater degree of environmental contact
3. an internalized locus of control
4. an internalized locus of evaluation
5. more intellectual efficiency

These significant characteristics seem to accord well with the view expressed by Allport (1955) that at the highest levels of integration the structure of personality clarifies, the individual becomes bound to the world in terms of major meanings and in spite of the large amount of unordered, impulsive, and conflictful behavior, the most comprehensive units in personality are broad intentional dispositions. Using these significant characteristics as a basis, an attempt was made to show that the highly creative personality was the highly integrated personality.

Creativity, defined in terms of Fromm's "creative attitude," is a character trait, exhibited in the individual as the ability to see man and things objectively without projections and distortions. Thus, seeing the "object" in this utmost reality the individual gives a realistic response to it as a whole person and becomes one with it (Anderson, 1959).

It is generally agreed that if creativity is to be anything more than fantasy there must be some product of relationship achieved. Implicit in this is the realization of the creative process.

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

An understanding of the creative personality is more readily available if it is based on a knowledge of the creative process. This study relied heavily on Kubie's (1958) theory that creativity and neurosis were "intertwined yet mortal enemies (p. 1)." The potential for both are inherent in each individual and because of the composition of the three types of psychological processes, and because of their interaction, either creativity or neurosis may be produced by the same simple and universal experiences.

All human psychological processes fall into three categories – the conscious, the unconscious, and the preconscious. These, Kubie says, "operate concurrently and in varying patterns (p. 21)." These three are placed on a theoretical spectrum – at one end is the conscious, whose prime function is usually to communicate verbally, and usually to communicate only one meaning at a time; at the other end is the unconscious process, whose prime function is not to communicate but is to hide from self and others unacceptable conflicts, fears, guilts, etc.; and in the middle of the spectrum the preconscious process whose function is to relate and rearrange data into new

patterns and act as selective agent on free associations, and the associations of every moment of life.

The creative individual is the one who uses his preconscious functions more freely than others potentially or equally gifted. Creativity depends upon the process of free association which allows spontaneous thought and feeling to roam, to follow their own bent (Kubie, 1958, p. 57), allowing new combinations, reshuffling of ideas, and "that fantastic degree of condensation without which creativity in any field of activity in any field of activity would be impossible (p. 34)."

The creative preconscious must, at the moment of turmoil and tossing about, be free from preponderance of either the rigidity of the unconscious and the limited exploitation allowed by the conscious, if creative production is to result.

Superimposed on the free activity is the "after-the-act process (Kubie, 1958, p. 51)" of conscious selecting from the myriad of combinations that which has new significance – that is, here the creative processes are tested for their "communicability both as intellectual and emotional experiences (p. 54)."

THE CREATIVE PERSONALITY

The self as conceived by the individual, if the concept is a healthy one, has good points and not-so-good features. Both aspects should be readily available to conscious consideration. This does not mean that the individual is at all times "self-conscious," but rather when the need arises an individual is able to bring the information to awareness.

Allport (1937) and others see this accessibility exemplified in the trait of self-objectification, a trait based on insight and a sense of humour. Insight is seen as that freedom from deception which is measurable by the ratio between that which the individual has and that which he thinks he has; and a sense of humor, "defined as the ability to laugh at the things one loves (including, of course, oneself and all that pertains to oneself), and still to love them (p. 222)."

MacKinnon (White, 1963), in a study of architects, noted the accuracy of self-perception by the creative individuals as an outstanding feature of the study. These individuals thought of themselves as creative, and they consistently conformed in thought and behavior to this perception. Barron (1958) also stressed the "broad and flexible awareness of themselves (p. 164)" exhibited by his creative subjects.

Numerous studies of creative persons have noted the presence of a highly developed sense of humor in the individual. While serious about his achievement, it is through the vehicle of humor that he is able to permit "the safe expression of feelings that lie outside or beneath the center of consciousness (Getzels & Jackson, 1962, p. 42)."

The creative individual, because he has a healthy self-concept, may regress in the service of the ego; i.e., he perceives with child-like simplicity, reacts spontaneously, and has the ability to be puzzled. Getzels and Jackson (1962) found this quality in their study of highly creative students exhibited in their stories, drawings, and free response activities. The sense of humor

allows the individual to view incongruities when they exist, and to originate his own categories for expression.

Most psychologists agree that the individual's perceptions are reality for that individual. The healthy person will respond according to his own perceptual system. The low degree of perceptual defense in the creative individual as indicated by the correlation of peer nominations and self evaluations (Rivlin, 1959) characterizes the creative individual as more open to inner and outer stimuli. This openness to experience is exhibited in the individual by his unwillingness to perceive in pre-determined categories, but rather to perceive with sensitivity and complexity and to tolerate ambiguity in order to find the new or the novel. Through this same trait the individual is able to give freer expression to the polarized aspects of his personality.

Various terms are applied to the organizing principle which gives unity to the personality. In Yamamoto's definition of the healthy adult this principle was that "which allowed the individual to actively *become* while living fully, or *being*." Mooney (Moustakas, 1962) states that the creative individual "holds himself open for increasing inclusions . . . takes life as an adventure and as a becoming (p. 264)." Barron (1963) sees the creative individual as "willing to die unto himself," that is, to permit an achieved adaptation or state of relative equilibrium to perish (p. 247)"; and then through differentiation and discrimination to bring a new form into being. Only an individual who accepts and knows himself could endure the imbalance.

The healthy individual is ruled "by the laws of his own character rather than by rules of society (in so far as these are different (Maslow, 1962, p. 170)." This individual appears to weigh and judge against inner criteria, and resulting behavior is simple, lacking artificiality, spontaneous, and in some cases unconventional.

Rogers (1961) notes as a fundamental condition of creativity that the source or locus of evaluative judgment is internal (p. 354). Regardless of external judgment, this basic evaluation is of greatest importance to the individual.

This aspect of the personality shows in independent, non-conforming behavior. The creative individual likes to work out his own solutions and organize his material as he sees it should be. A study reported at one of the Utah conferences on creativity noted that all of those rare and unusually creative persons who had helped to reshape the world in some area had done so outside an existing organization (Razik, 1966, p. 164).

The creative individual is not, however, socially irresponsible, but when the "creative" occasion demands it he may retreat to intense concentration and dedicated commitment, which may be reflected in independent behavior and lack of sociability.

The quantity of intellectual abilities is not necessarily the criterion of intellectual efficiency. However, a certain degree of intelligence is necessary to the development of creativity. Divergent thinking has come to be regarded as the most representative intellectual ability of creativeness. Divergent thinking is a category of the structure of the intellect concept devised by Guilford which is characterized by the intellectual abilities of fluency, flexibility, and originality. A study by Clark and others (1965) noted that those who scored high on divergent thinking abilities exhibited more mature

ideational and perceptual processes, adequately controlled but not conventional, and free and active but healthy fantasy production.

In summary, creativity is exhibited in the individual in the ability to see man and things objectively, and to respond as a whole person and become one with them. The openness to experience makes man more fully man. He is more sensitive to the reality inside and outside himself. His depths are available to him; he can tolerate disorder, conflict, and ambiguity and then focus his energy to integrate the many diverse elements into novel combinations. He is able to regress to former states, but, more important, he is able to return to reality. He is independent, guided by an inner autonomy.

He is an individualized personality but a socialized one, too. Because he has strength within himself he can permeate the boundaries of self to experience more fully other people and things. Because his inner reaches are available to awareness he does not project his inhibitions on others. The originator instinct allied with the instinct for communion – not the will to dominate the other, but to experience oneness with this reality – is necessary to creation.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

If our society is truly interested in developing the creative potential of its future citizens, then education, whether considered from the broad perspective of *becoming who we are* or in the more formal sense of schooling with its intellectual objective, must provide the necessary environment in which creativity may thrive and grow. Whether this creativity will produce outstandingly for society, or whether it exists simply in a degree to make individual lives richer and more fulfilling is immaterial – this human attribute must be given adequate conditions for growth.

Gilbert Wrenn (1968), speaking on changes in counseling, points to a need for *"recognition of a difference between elementary school counseling and high school counseling* (p. 11)." He makes mention of a text, in press, in which the author sees the function of the counselor in the elementary school to be ". . . primarily a helper of the teacher and he should spend more time with teachers than he does with pupils (p. 11)." Since the classroom situation occupies a major portion of a child's years in the elementary grades, and because the teacher can exert a notable influence on the younger child, this would appear to be a wise viewpoint.

If then the counselor did work with the teacher, he should see that conditions are created whereby the individual comes to know himself by recognizing his capabilities and potentialities. To recognize and realize these he must be given the opportunity to experiment and test himself, to take risks and move ahead.

Imposed concepts, such as all-roundedness and sex-roles in society, judge the individual by arbitrary norms; certain abilities, for example verbal abilities, are seen as *the* norm, and those not achieving proficiency in these are labeled underachievers or slow learners. Or the "boys do this – girls don't do that" psychology does not allow individuals to test their capabilities in the masculine or feminine domain, but more importantly does not allow the admittance to awareness of the masculine-feminine polarities in the personality, and therefore denies their integration into the personality structure.

The individual should be encouraged to manipulate, to play around with

objects and ideas. He should be allowed to perceive in his own original categories, not predetermined categories; he should be able to be original in methods used to achieve a task, that is, his thinking should be less regulated by stereotyped answers, methods, and questioning. He should have complete freedom (of symbolic expression) to *become* and to *be*. He should be able to recognize the unconditional faith of the teacher in him as an individual and so he dares to risk the challenge to *become*.

If the individual is free to experiment, he soon learns he has a responsibility following from this freedom — to bear the consequences of his achievements and his mistakes. He should operate in an atmosphere where evaluation does not form a threat and then he can be more open to experience, choose to like or dislike, react more sharply and sensitively. An appreciation by authority of independent behavior is essential for the individual's inner development.

The challenge of the creative process is reward to the creative individual, but there remains in him a desire to communicate to others the success of his struggle. It is the task of education to help the individual translate his daydreams into reality, to give him freedom to rely on and conform to his own perceptions, and to engender in him, while not in any way disrupting or distorting the creative process, a sense of social responsibility. Permissiveness is not conducive to the development of creativity. The self-discipline required for the intense commitment to the goal must be cultivated through guided learning and doing.

It has been noted in research studies that tests of intellectual abilities are based on convergent thinking, and therefore discriminate against the creative students whose divergent thinking abilities are those most characteristic of their creative behavior. The curriculum and methods of testing should be sufficiently broad to permit and measure flexibility, fluency, and originality.

Allport, in an article on psychological models for guidance (1962), advised that if the counselor is to see the individual as a man in the process of becoming he must take seriously the anxieties experienced by youth. He is not equipped for his job unless he "can share in some degree the apprehension of modern youth, and sense the swampy underpinning on which youth treads (p. 377)." He admonishes the counselor to develop two attitudes in his client. The first, *tentativeness* of outlook — to encourage the client to face honestly the uncertainties in himself and in the world; and to blend with this attitude one of firm commitment, that courageous attitude which allows one to take a chance, knowing he may win or lose. These two appear polarized but it is possible for them to exist together in our psychological constitution.

Allport (1962) says

> Taken by itself tentativeness is disintegrative; commitment is integrative. Yet the blend seems to occur in personalities that we admire for their soundness and perspective . . . Whenever the two attitudes co-exist in a life we find important desirable by-products from the fusion. One is a deep sense of compassion for the lot of the human race in general and in each separate social encounter that marks our daily life. The other by-product is likewise graceful; it is the sense of humor. Humor requires the perspective of tentativeness, but also an underlying system of values that prevents laughter from souring into cynicism (p. 378-379).

In conclusion, Gilbert Wrenn (1962) urges counselors to *"accept as an obligation the encouragement of students who think differently from us* (p. 449)." This challenge is not easy, but who else, he asks, will recognize and encourage them? He continues:

> How can we help a student to respect his own differences rather than to deprecate them? How indeed unless we counselors respect them first? We can help a student develop his own integrity even though it is a different integrity (p. 449).

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