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Creativity consists of various processes. **Creative processes** presents the multi-layered aspects, associations and steps that are integral to creative thinking. Separating these layers creates greater insight into the individual creative process that can be used to guide and steer that process. This book addresses the nine creative processes that are fundamental to applying creativity and **offers tools** and inspiration to all those who draw on the power of their imagination in their professional domains.

The Netherlands is widely acknowledged internationally as one of the most creative nations in the world. Creativity is what drives innovation, development and resilience. These are vitally important processes with even more relevance in the landscape of the rapid and far-reaching changes challenging today's society. The modest size of the Netherlands with its limited resources and multiculturalism means that consensus and negotiation is second nature. We have to carefully consider the way in which we communicate, weigh up and balance the various interests and adapt accordingly. This entails continually stepping back to examine the issue, consider its place in relation to ourselves and framing it in the right context. Following the path towards generating an income, getting the best out of life and experiencing contentment. We need **ideas, inspiration and imagination** to lead us on that journey. Creativity plays a key role in mapping that path while never losing sight of the potential offered by our own capabilities and skills.
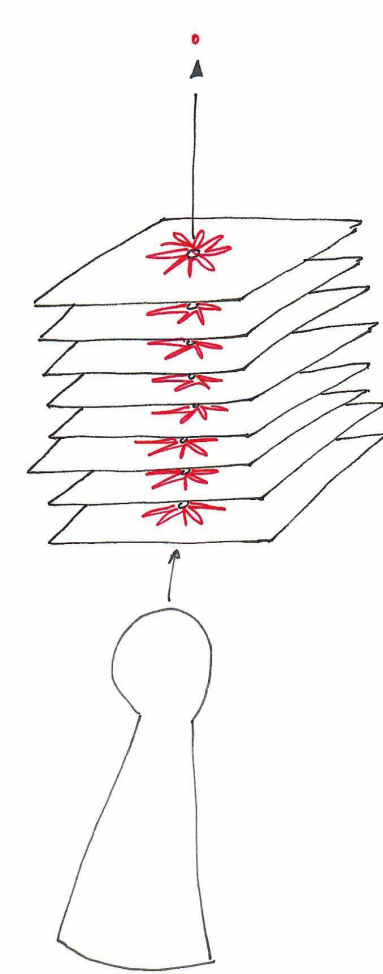
INTRODUCTION

In my role as a coach of creative talent, it struck me that the majority of creative souls find **communicating** with the outside world a challenge. For creative individuals, their perceptions, thoughts and methods are logical, but they deviate from the accepted standards. Their background, personal preferences and choices combine to create a unique manner of working. They recognise and interact with fellow creatives and in this way manage to carve out a place in society. However, outside their own familiar sector they are faced with obstacles due to the lack of this instinctive, mutual recognition.

The outside world wants to **recognise** and understand creatives. However, as creative individuals choose to travel their own unique path, it can be complex for outsiders to truly identify with them. The steps in the creative process do not follow a structured route. In order to comprehend what drives a creative, you must immerse yourself in their world. Their intuitive and spontaneous approach is often far removed from the preferences and goals of the commercial sector. Financial objectives and targets are the primary drivers behind the actions in practically all commercial sectors. The desire for predictability necessitates thinking and acting based on defined frameworks and contexts. In the creative sector the fundamental needs are radically different; the driver is translating concepts and ideas into a work or reaction, exploring where your **passion** really lies. An income is vital to be able to live and work, but it is not a goal to be accomplished in itself.

'Creativity' is multi-faceted without a default definition. However, grouping every aspect under this umbrella fails to do justice to the complexity of this abstract. It is crucial to **interpret** the various details, the components and the different processes that occur during the process of creativity. Each creative person, whether an artist, a designer or a performer, operates in their own sphere of activity, and expresses their creativity in a distinctive and unique way. Each designer has an **individual pattern**, uses their own imagery and signature. Despite that, these processes, similar to text, all share a universal alphabet that can be utilised as a framework and to create words that can be understood by others.

Unravelling, exploring and selecting the individual strands in the process generates a deeper understanding of the various creative processes. This has created a methodology that can be used as a guide to obtain more clarity. My ambition is to position creativity in a better light.

I have dyslexia and I am a visual thinker, so I know very well how images can offer greater insight than words alone. Images allow more flexibility for individual interpretation. The illustrations used in this book were inspired by conversations I had in recent years with people active in the creative sector during my work as a coach.

This book does not aspire to present a 'correct' definition of the word creativity. Rather, it aims to widen your understanding of your **own unique potential**. Have you ever wondered where your ideas and thoughts come from and what kindled that spark of creativity or inspiration? They are intrinsic to a certain context, specific interests and to that one isolated moment. Critically scrutinise those thoughts. Do they still align with a new situation and circumstances? You can adapt them where needed, twist and tweak or even be bold enough to reject them completely and replace them with something new. It's all about approaching, applying and embracing creativity in a way that works for you.

Whether you are working on a **commissioned project or making autonomous work**, as soon as you share your work with another, the reaction of that person starts to play a role. The better equipped you are to cope with their reaction and place it in the right context, the more able you are to respond adequately. Asking a question to gain a clearer idea of precisely what that person means is a way to more insight. You are unaware of which associations and emotional reactions been triggered, as this depends on the personal **archive** of understanding and experiences built by individuals during their lifetime. So just ask them to open up. You have no idea of where their thoughts come from.

INTRODUCTION

Using recognisable images can give you more grip on a situation. The **perspective** an object is viewed from determines the direction. Your focus is directed at the things you pay attention to. You want it to be correct and accurate, you want others to understand what you are trying to express. You are seeking confirmation and you will find it.

To gain more command over a situation, it's vital to consider which processes from the past play a role, define your goals for the future and think about the choices you are going to make now so you can start to follow a certain path in your journey.
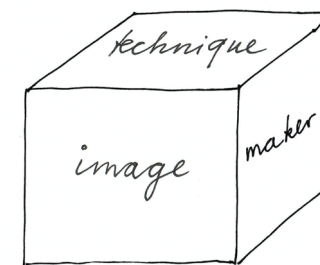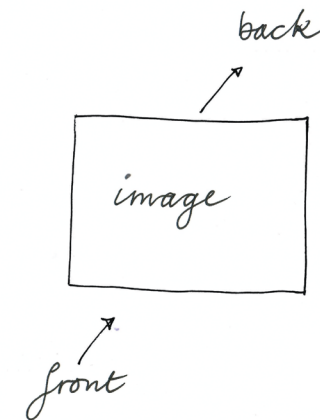
An image indicates **knowledge and awareness** of its creation, the techniques and your experiences, so you can place it in a context. Using your imagination can transform a 2D image into a different dimension, for example. You add further layers to create a **total picture**. No two people do this in the same way, so no one else will decipher and see the image in the same way as you do. This implies you must take certain steps – action – to enable and help others to understand. Once they have understood the first step, the next step can follow.

There are many stages on this journey from one perspective to another. The more experienced you are in empathising with the imagination of others through knowledge, skill and training, the faster this process is. Do not expect others to see everything you have poured into your work. In fact, that is not always necessary: simply prompting the observer to think and ponder is often all it takes for the first step. The rest should follow naturally.
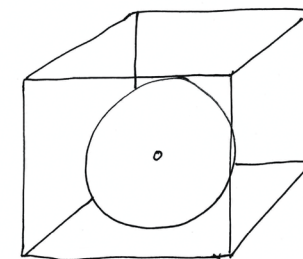
Consider this book as an artwork, think about what it has to say and discover how it can help you. Awareness of and greater insight into your own creative process is already a fundamental step.

Daniëlle Wanders

Maart 2024

back

image

front

technique

image   maker

the framework

total picture