

For our children,

*With the hope that their parents' 'nearlings' may be the
inspiration for a better world.*

"You may remember the story of how the devil and a friend of his were walking down the street, when they saw ahead of them a man stoop down and pick up something from the ground, look at it, and put it away in his pocket. The friend said to the devil, "What did that man pick up?"

"He picked up a piece of truth," said the devil. "That is very bad business for you, then," said his friend.

"Oh, not at all," the devil replied,

"I am going to let him organize it."

J. Krishnamurti

Creativity explored

In Gulliver's footsteps

(3) VOYAGE TO LAPUTA

Previous publications in *the series*.

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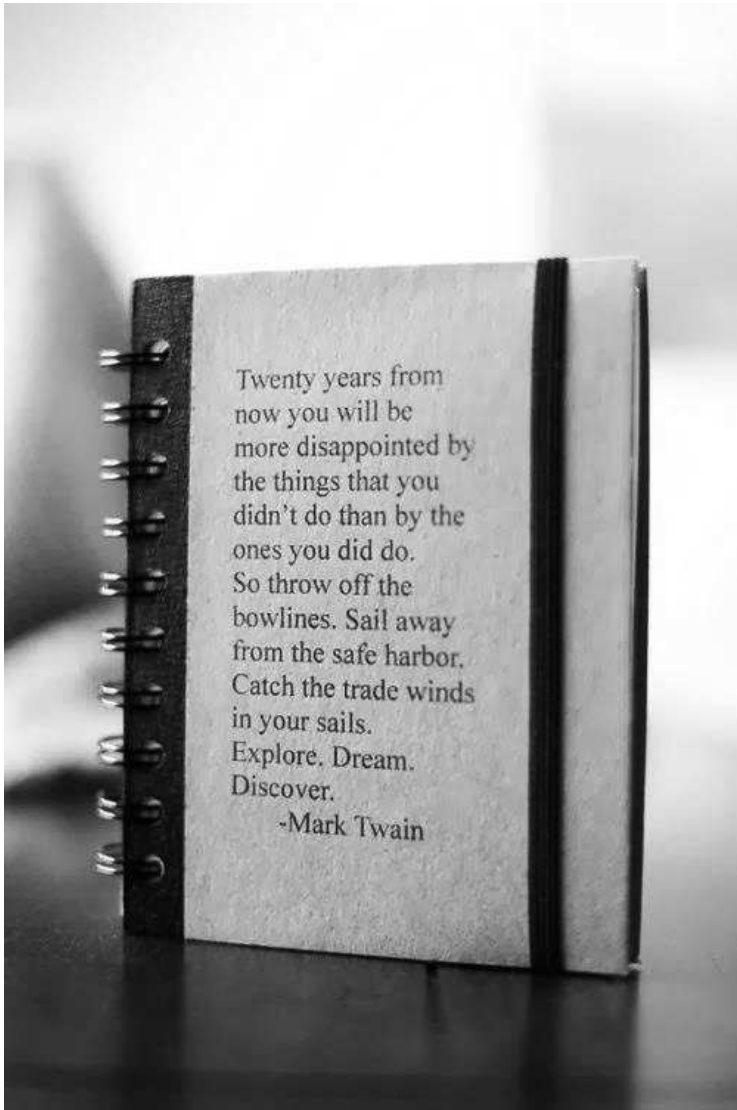
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Everything changes and nothing stays the same

諸行無常
sho gyo mu jo

Creativity explored, the series

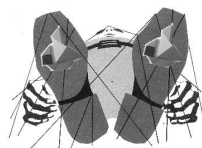
Knowledge and experience should not be confused with wisdom.

Originally this project started as a translation of ‘the ABC of XYZ; Creativity in theory and practice’.

However, I soon found out that translating your own work was really a way of rewriting and reflection. As time passed by new insights come up, which need research. It was then put aside, until I re-read Gulliver’s Travels.

That book came about as a result of an assignment! The *Scriblerus Club* proposed to satirize the follies and vices of learned, scientific, and ‘modern’ man. Jonathan Swift’s topic was to satirize the popular voyages to faraway lands. After ten years Swift published (1726) this satirical masterpiece in travel literature. Later it became –in abridged form– a children’s classic. Truly a creative achievement!

Creativity Explored



in Gulliver's footsteps

When I retired (*but was not tired*), I wrote ‘*Crea-Zenny looking*’ and an e-book: ‘**Creativity from A to Z**’ (low priced specially for students) both updates of the ‘**ABC of XYZ**’.
Teaching is a great way of learning.

The Travels inspired me to explore creativity loosely ordered as the subjects of the 4 travels, and add one for ‘*the creative self*’.

“Sooner or later something seems to call us onto a particular path. You may remember this “something” as a signal moment in childhood when an urge out of nowhere, a fascination, a peculiar turn of events struck like an annunciation: This is what I must do, this is what I’ve got to have.

This is who I am.”

James Hillman (The Soul’s Code)

After finishing the updates **Creativity Explored** demanded my attention. To publish it, as one volume would make it very thick so now it is being published in 6 parts: the **introduction** and 5 **voyages**.

At the same time writing the different parts offers the opportunity to reflect and focus on different aspects. I also find that while reflecting on the subjects and re-reading old material and combining this with new information, a broader –and deeper– picture comes to the fore. An essential aspect of the creative process: **incubation**, when subjects simmer at the back of your mind



new associations come up. It works a bit like serendipity: you are alert to the subject and it is amazing how easily new connections occur. Just like it is wise to sleep on new ideas (your own or of others) before spreading the news; it will avoid a lot of misunderstanding.

Satire is a creative way to expose and criticize foolishness and corruption of an individual or a society. It intends to *improve* humanity by using humour, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule. Contrary to Swift's times it does not seem to be very well understood on the social media. There it is often used as a false shield to mask racist or fascist ideas.



It is also a good standard and criterion for democracy: management and leadership that dislike satire show its anti-democratic attitude. As does any reaction that takes it literally.

The [wise] kings of old understood this. As *Shakespeare* makes the fool of King Lear say: "*The weight of this sad time we must obey; speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.*"

Every king with any self-respect used to have a court jester, some one to play the fool. In ancient times fools were used to make kings see the other side of a particular issue. The better they were able to do this, by using their wit and humour, the more they were appreciated. Probably one of the most difficult roles to play, as most people like to be told that they are right and doing well.

Comedians nowadays often play the jester's role. There is certainly a part to be played in the creative thinking process for the fool, albeit not an easy one. It requires courage and confidence to dare express what one really sees; and what's more in a humorous manner. Too many people tend to advise the expected. A phenomenon also called '**groupthink**'.



CREACTivate

Creativity is a noun, being in creative flow is the *act of creating*. To describe the creative attitude I prefer the verb **creactivate**: *being creative in any form*. So

whenever you see the **CREativeACTtion** picture, there's a call for different thinking, away from the routines, original thinking to surprise yourself.



*Well if I had one wish for you in this god forsaken world, kid
It'd be that your mistakes will be your own
That your sins will be your own*
Bruce Springsteen (Long time coming)

Memory and reflection

Never forget that, no matter how certain, you might be wrong.
John Perry Barlow

Re-reading books made me aware how our memory tricks us selects and filters, thus guaranteeing subjectivity. Rereading makes correction of certain ideas possible.

Our memory follows puzzling rules, says D. Draaisma (psychologist & writer).

* Routine and drudge are not stored. So one eventful happening may colour the whole day.

* An event with great impact seems closer in time.

* Humiliations carry emotions and will be remembered. (Similar to pointing at someone's shadow aspect, really unforgettable; one feels caught with the pants down!) We store these memories better because they stand out.

* Life seems to go faster as we get older. An hour is just as long, but the subjective experience of time changes. The many 'first-time' experiences of childhood take a special place. As we get older there are fewer new events and the days and weeks start to look alike. Creazenny looking may help to appreciate everyday life.

Why not (randomly) do routine activities in the opposite manner?

(Start with desert, end with soup?)



Hopefully, these reflections on **creaACTivation** give new insights to start onto new roads, so that – unavoidable – mistakes can be turned into 'nearlings.' No easy thing, but fun when you get the knack.