

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-01

Being Creative Starts with a Choice. Yours!

One of the key learnings I have about creativity is that being creative and growing more creative are both choices. My first recommendation for you in 2005 is to deliberately choose to be more creative in as many aspects of your life as you can while you grow and live this year.

Each day this week use your Crea8ng Development Time to think about how and in what parts of your life you want to become more creative.

family, friends, work, education, fun are areas you may choose among the many areas of your life. Here are 5 suggestions. You CHOOSE which areas to truly focus on this week.

MONDAY

Today focus on thoughts about how you may grow creatively with your family. It might be cooking or related to aspects of your meals together. It might be the types of entertainment you enjoy together.

TUESDAY

Today focus on thoughts about how you may grow creatively with your friends or new friends you may begin to make in 2005.

WEDNESDAY

Today focus on thoughts about how you may grow creatively at work if you work. If you are not working now, focus your thoughts on the type of work you plan on doing in the future in your ideal job and career.

THURSDAY

Today focus on thoughts about how you may grow creatively through education in school specifically, attending workshops, training programs, camps, going to the library and creating your own education program on the weekends or during chosen specific times each day.

FRIDAY

Today focus on thoughts about how you may grow creatively through fun: recreation, games, sports, adventures, lunch time walks, after school or work activities.

I will you a year filled with creativity and creative growth.

Best wishes for a great year in 2005.

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read a book a week about creativity or creative thinking

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-02 **Risk Taking...tool of creativity**

In many books on creativity, creative thinking and about creative people one of the common traits you find is that being creative often requires "taking risks" being willing to walk down unknown trails, climb unknown paths, travel in unfamiliar villages, towns, cities, even just doing something you have never done before.

What might be the result of taking such risks?

excitement, new knowledge, new experiences, meet new people who could become great future friends, find new sources, find new solutions or ahas that lead to new solutions.....failure, even disaster.

This CC was sparked by a travel article I read this morning in the internet version of the NY Times (no trees were killed for my newspaper...ha ha...just a bunch of electrons). The article spoke about traveling around the world, the risks, the adventures, the benefits, the types of people who do know compared to only the

very wealthy several years ago. The primary point I discovered in the article was that only through such risk can new be discovered.

This week use your creative thinking development time to focus on risks you might take this year from very small to perhaps large ones.

Traveling the way I often have traveled the past 7 years without having all details worked out, no maps, no reservations, no real knowledge of the place I was going so often provided me experiences, adventures, knowledge that I could never have experience in such a naive, fresh way if I had done far more research and had planned far more.

May your 2005 be sprinkled to filled with valuable risk taking and much creativity.

MONDAY

take some time to visualize, ponder, think, virtually experience physical risks you might take in 2005

TUESDAY

take some time to visualize, ponder, think, virtually experience mental risks you might take in 2005

WEDNESDAY

take some time to visualize, ponder, think, virtually experience emotional risks you might take in 2005

THURSDAY

take some time to visualize, ponder, think, virtually experience social or family related risks you might take in 2005

FRIDAY

take some time to visualize, ponder, think, virtually experience work related risks you might take in 2005

You don't need to be a "Wiley Coyote" to be creative yet some degree of risk is often very helpful and opens the doors or windows or exposes things you would never have experienced living a truly safe life.

Have a creative week. It's yours to do so.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2004-03
Connections, Disconnections, Disjoints, Parallels
(parables), intersections

This week's CC was inspired by the first couple lines in Steffen Konrath's latest IM-BOOT newsletter about connections.

Much of creative thinking, problem solving, life in general is because of connections, disconnections, dis-joint-ions, parallels (parables), intersections.

This week let's develop our creative thinking skills further by focusing on one of these each day.

Each day during your creative thinking development time focus on one of these by thinking of as many examples of one of the them in your life: personally, then professionally at work or school.

MONDAY

Today focus on thinking about and recording examples about how "connections" have sparked your creativity.

TUESDAY

Today focus on thinking about and recording examples about how "disconnections" have sparked your creativity.

WEDNESDAY

Today focus on thinking about and recording examples about how

"disjointtions" (ways in which two or more things contradict and challenge each at the same time knowingly or not) have sparked your creativity.

THURSDAY

Today focus on thinking about and recording examples about how "parallels (parables)" have sparked your creativity.

FRIDAY

Today focus on thinking about and recording examples about how "intersections" have sparked your creativity.

The next 3 weeks I will be wandering around Scandinavia, working mostly in Denmark and then taking side trips to Holland, Finland and Sweden.

Have a creatively full week. Yours to choose.

I wish you a better week than you expect.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-04 With Ideas No Waste Can Happen

I have been in Denmark for the past 8 days working with a mix of clients and groups doing workshops and presentations on creativity in the workplace plus visiting several friends in Holland. During one session yesterday I assigned the 5 teams a different challenge to practice FORCED RELATIONSHIPS. I gave one table animal, one tree, one plant or flower, one fruit, one a piece of junk. They looked funny at me. What is "junk"? Denmark is so into recycling and keeping the environment clean plus sustainable designer that the concept of junk basically does not exist. In my 7 or so visits to Denmark over the past nearly 30 years, one thing I have never seen is a "junk yard".

Let's practice idea generation this week with pieces of junk, trash, waste, leftover materials as the spark.

Each day....Generate as many ideas for potential uses for the items given for the day.

MONDAY

Think of fruit peels or cores.

TUESDAY

Empty oil cans from standard quart to multi-gallon size.

WEDNESDAY

used school paper

THURSDAY

broken window glass

FRIDAY

rusty automobile parts.

Please share your 144 ideas per day. Let that be your goal to see if you can generate 144 or more during the day.

Have a creative week. From the shows of eastern Denmark across from the lights of western Sweden.

Wandering Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-05
Our Mood Effects Our Creativity

I have been in Helsinki and southern Finland the past couple days staying with a creativity consultant friend and his family. Tomorrow I head back to Copenhagen late afternoon to take a train to Malmo, Sweden to meet up with another creativity friend for a couple days before returning to work in Denmark.

Vexi gave me the idea behind this Cre8ng Challenge.

Let's focus on developing a positive mood on the spot this week. Each day, Monday thru Friday at different times during the day choose a negative or disappointing thing from the news or in your workplace or school and develop 12 to 24 ways to turn it into a positive.

MONDAY

Today think about small items in the newspaper.

TUESDAY

Today think about things that happen on the way to work or school.

WEDNESDAY

Today think about weather problems like snow storms, earthquakes, mud slides. How to make them positive.

THURSDAY

Today think about times your favorite sports teams have lost or disappointed you.

FRIDAY

Today think about disappointing or bad movies you have seen.

The goal is to work on developing your personal skills at turning any situation into a more positive one or totally into a positive one.

Have a great week no matter how bad it seems at the moment.

There is 75 cm of snow here outside Helsinki. There is ice all over the streets, trees and buildings back in my home in Athens and the town is closed down. Much of Europe has had blizzards. Much of the northern and eastern part of the US has had a series of heavy snowstorms. All of these can contain or spark positive moods if you choose to.

<http://www.positiivarit.fi>

Wandering Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-06

Seeing Great Variety in Sameness

I just returned from my 3 weeks in Scandinavia, mostly Denmark with short trips to Holland, Finland and Sweden. This week's challenge was sparked by my describing an experience I had in 2001 in Franz Joseph, New Zealand on top of a glacier. For as far as I could see when not facing the helicopter I had been flown up onto the glacier in on the ground was pure white. In the sky was pure blue from whitish blue at the horizon to deep blue straight above my head. I had never been in such a minimal color environment except in the dark of a cave deep in the earth where everything was completely black when flashlights and torches were put out.

This week focus on minimal color looking and collecting varieties of sameness.

Each day experiment with a single color. Color things around your home, classroom, work, places you visit during the day that are of only the color of the day.

MONDAY

Collect as much things that are red that you can gather, one of each today.

TUESDAY

Collect as much things that are white that you can gather, one of each today.

WEDNESDAY

Collect as much things that are green that you can gather, one of each today.

THURSDAY

Collect as much things that are gray that you can gather, one of each today.

FRIDAY

Collect as much things that are blue that you can gather, one of each today.

Finding variety, vast amounts of variety in sameness, commonness, repeated-ness can help stretch your observation muscles.

Best wishes for a creative week,

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-07

Many Words Understood, No Words Heard

In April this year I will be one of several presenters at the 3rd CREA Creativity Conference in Sestri Levante, Italy along the Riviera Coast. Go to my photo website to view this beautiful part of the world...

<http://www.homepage.mac.com/cre8ng>

My proposed session is about VISUAL THINKING and will involve as few words as possible and those will intentionally not be spoken during the 60 to 90 minutes of the session. My design and plan is meant to avoid the use of words, limited by languages, yet communicate many ideas through images, actions, movements, facial expressions.

Thinking about this today sparked this weekly challenge.

This week take on each challenge daily and strive to work on them without relying spoken words. Each day create multiple ways to exchange thoughts without speaking a single word.

MONDAY

Ask for help about basic things without using spoken words: time, directions to somewhere specific, something to eat, a place to sleep. How might you do this without speaking a single word?

TUESDAY

Share a joke or humor without using words. How might you do this without speaking a single word?

WEDNESDAY

Get help in an emergency situation. How might you do this without speaking a single word?

THURSDAY

Let people know how you are feeling, share your emotions. How might you do this without speaking a single word?

FRIDAY

Go two hours without speaking a single word yet communicate effectively. How might you do this without speaking or writing a single word?

Have fun with this challenge. During my travels since 1977 when I first went to travel around Europe through until just recently in Scandinavia I have often had to do just these types of things in order to communicate with people when neither of us knew each other's language.

Have a great and creative week. Remember it is always your choice to do so.

Wandering, Wondering While Willingly Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-08
How to Make a Dull Day Colorful and Exciting

Here is Athens, Georgia today the sky is gray and overcast. Only filtered whitish gray light is coming through the clouds today. Everything is still with

no breezes and little to no sounds. It is a quiet Sunday morning. The only color outside is coming from the few pansies that are blooming and the occasional cardinal or blue jay that land on my bird feeder.

Hopefully in your area it is sunny today.

How do you make boring, dull, repetitive, non-interesting days interesting and creative?

That is the challenge for this week.

MONDAY

Today make a list of how you can add color into your life on a dull day. Generate a list of up to 144 ways to add color.

TUESDAY

Today make a list of how you can add variety of sounds to your life to make more interesting often during the day.

WEDNESDAY

Today focus on adding richness and uniqueness to tastes today throughout the day.

THURSDAY

Today strive to expand the smells of your day from none to many from those natural to your area to those only found in other cultures around the world.

FRIDAY

Enrich the emotions you experience on a typical day today. How many ways can you think of to change and vary your emotions today?

Boredom, sameness, repetition, consistency may be reality but it does not have to stay that way. Use your creativeness to add variety and uniqueness to your life this week.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-09
EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED TO FIND IT

Recently I read the newest book by Roger von Oech (Whack on the Side of the Head), EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED or You Won't Find It, sparked this week's Cre8ng Challenge.

One creative thinking strategy that has helped me most over the past nearly 30 years has been to take time to generate lists of EXPECTED or seemingly UNEXPECTED potential conditions, situations or results before moving ahead with an idea, solution or plan. By taking time to examine potential conditions, situations or results I generally am able to produce even more ideas to use as "Plans B, C, D,.....Z" if something happens other than what I initially expected.

The benefits of doing this include less stress, more preparation, more positive attitude when "Murphy's Law(s)" seem to be coming true along with others.

So this week stretch your creative thinking skills by practicing EXPECTING THE UNEXPECTED each day during your creative thinking development time.

MONDAY

Think of something you are going to do in about a week that would be affected by a change in the weather. Then make a list of the various possible combinations of weather conditions you might experience. In Athens, Georgia I have seen such drastic changes of weather as from 70s and sunshine to 30s and snow within 24 to 48 hours many winters I have lived here. Then make a list of how you would alter your idea, solution or plan to suit the change.

TUESDAY

Think of something you are going to do in about a month that would be affected by a change in the economy. Then make a list of what might change the economy. Then using that list make a list of how you would alter your idea, solution or plan to suit the change.

WEDNESDAY

Think of something you are going to do next week that would be affected by a dramatic act, such as a terrorist act. This happened in 2001 while I was traveling around the world: rebels in Sri Lanka

bombed the Colombo Airport destroying half of the commercial airliners in the Sri Lanka Air fleet. I had a

ticket to fly from Colombo to Channai, India the following week.

So if something like that might happen what might it be? Generate as long a list as you can. Then create a list of back up plans for your idea, solution, plan.

THURSDAY

Think of something that you have planned for tomorrow that you have had planned for months. Then think of what are some wonderful things that could happen in the next 24 hours that could greatly effect your idea, solution or plan. Then create a list of how you would alter your idea, solution or plan.

FRIDAY

Think of something you want to do in the next hour and then generate a list of up to 144 things that might happen in the next 60 minutes that could interfere with your idea, solution or plan. Then generate a list of how you might alter your idea, solution or plan so that you still WIN.

Most of the time I seem to use what I have learned about creative thinking to do the very things this week's challenge is focused on. It often feels like Mr. Murphy is with me 24 hours a day trying to trip me up and my primary goal in life has become to use my creativity to BEAT Mr. Murphy each day.

Have a creative week. It is your choice.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-10 Let's Get Visual

Most of my life I have been a visual person. When I traveled in Europe the first time in 1977 I discovered I could communicate with people through my drawings to get directions, buy food or get help.

In a couple weeks I am going to be doing two workshops that will be focused on visual communicating and thinking at CREA 2005, the 3rd Creativity Conference held in Sestri Levante, founded and directed by a mixed team of creativity people from Italy and France. My goal is to help people from a mix of countries communicate, think and solve problems visually both individually and together in pairs and teams.

This challenge is aimed at helping you to develop your visual skills through practicing concentrating on discovery specific shapes in things, nature, faces, bodies. The emphasis this week is on discovery, recovery and collection. Each day you are being asked to concentrate on a specific shape or collection of shapes in your searching and gathering.

This week we are PREPARING, getting ready to CREATE.

MONDAY

Today look for squares in drawings, magazines, newspapers, books and on billboards or other exterior signs or displays. Collect copies of as many as you can and put them into a folder, bag or box.

TUESDAY

Today look for CIRCLES in drawings, magazines, newspapers, books and on billboards or other exterior signs or displays. Collect copies of as many as you can and put them into a folder, bag or box.

WEDNESDAY

Today look for TRIANGLES in drawings, magazines, newspapers, books and on billboards or other exterior signs or displays. Collect copies of as many as you can and put them into a folder, bag or box.

THURSDAY

Today look for ROUND SHAPES (that are not circles: ovals, free-flowing soft shapes, curved) in drawings, magazines, newspapers, books and on billboards or other exterior signs or displays. Collect copies of as many as you can and put them into a folder, bag or box.

FRIDAY

Today look for MULTIPLE-SIDED SHAPES (pentagons, octagons, hexagons...etc.) in drawings, magazines, newspapers, books and on billboards or other exterior signs or displays. Collect copies of as many as you can and put them into a folder, bag or box.

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-11 Reuse, Reuse and Reuse Once Again

While wandering through some shops along Grand Avenue in St. Paul with some creativity friends from CPSI (Creative Problem Solving Institute) on Friday we discovered a shop called "10,000 Villages". It is a non-profit company devoted to helping artisans from 30 different countries focusing on sustainability. The products range from arts and crafts to every day products, each unique and most to many made of recycled goods. One that I bought is a place mat made in the Philippines. The design is made up of connected circles made up of tightly wound spirals. The spirals are mostly gray or tan with spots of color. When I asked about the product I was told that it is made from old newspapers.

This sparked this idea generating challenge along with reading an article in the Delta Air Lines monthly passenger magazine about an arts and crafts gallery in New York City that is devoted to arts and crafts constructed of recycled materials from many countries around the world.

During my travels I have come across samples of such products made from cans, plastic bags, plastic bottles plus I studied an architect, Bruce Goff in Oklahoma who often designed recycled materials into his home designs for clients. Each day take one material that you find laying around your home, school or workplace and generate 144 ideas of products that might be made up or constructed of that material.

MONDAY

Plastic or paper straws

TUESDAY

Scrap from automobiles

WEDNESDAY

Broken glass (think also of broken glass found on the beach that has washed ashore after being polished by the sea)

THURSDAY

Wood scraps from a construction site

FRIDAY

Wrapping material and containers from fast food restaurants. Use your imagination and stretch.

Please share some of your ideas.

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-12

1 + 1 = 3, 4, 5, ????

One of the most powerful ways to generate new ideas or revise/improve/innovate existing ideas is through unique combinations, even forced relationships.

This week let's take our Cre8ng Development time to practice these skills.

Each day review a source of ideas for a list of ideas and then randomly combine them with the goal of generating the beginning of new ideas. Keep in mind the goal is to generate new ideas not necessarily create perfect solutions. Without fuzzy ideas it is hard to produce future clear working solutions.

You can do the following with a specific problem in mind when you start or simply work with the challenges that the ideas you collect are related to.

i.e.:

car plus radio led originally to simply that: a radio in a car.
wrist plus watch led originally to simply that: a wristwatch

or

car plus radio...think about the potential ideas that might lead to...a radio that is driveable, a car that works like a radio....

Let your mind wander or keep it focused. You try these back and forth each day or on alternating days.

MONDAY

Using the daily newspaper or any newspaper you can access scan headlines for ideas and make a list of 6 to 12. Then make a 2-dimensional chart writing the chosen/found ideas both on the vertical and horizontal of the chart. Then combine the ideas and write whatever comes to mind.

TUESDAY

Using a magazine you normally read collect 6 to 12 ideas and write them down on separate pieces of paper, index cards or Post-It Notes™. Then randomly choose two of them at a time and try to generate new combined ideas or completely new ideas.

WEDNESDAY

Watch television for 12 minutes changing the channel each time you hear an idea and write them down. Do this until you have collected 6 to 12. Number them. Then randomly combine the numbers 1 to 12 in pairs using the pairs to generate new ideas.

THURSDAY

Listen to the radio for 12 minutes changing the station each time you hear an idea and write them down. Do this until you have collected 6 to 12. Label the ideas with letter...a to l (first 12 letters of the English alphabet). Then make a randomized list of the 12 letters in pairs (a+k, d+f, etc.). Then take the pairs and turn them into new ideas.

FRIDAY

Go for a visual walk through a library or store and collect 12 ideas from what you see. Then combine them into pairs and threesomes. Then use the combinations to generate new potential ideas.

Have fun finding and generating ideas.

Remember being creative is always your choice.

Wandering Alan

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wander the world with me visually at your convenience

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-13 Einstein You're Not—and Don't Have to Be

This week's CC was inspired by an article of the same title in the Harvard Business School Review HBSWK Pub. Date: Nov 3, 2003 by the authors of Why Not look to everyday ingenuity—not genius—to solve problems.

Sometimes it isn't helpful to start the problem-solving process by identifying a problem. Sometimes the solution has to come first. Only after we've discovered a better way do we realize in retrospect that there was a problem to be solved.

For example, no one starts by saying, "Kids really need a scooter that spins more easily." Instead, they might say, "The polycarbonate wheel has revolutionized roller skates and rolling luggage. Are there any other products that might be improved?"

Voila! The Razor scooter. When we translate ideas that have worked in one context and modify them to bring them to another, we discover a solution to a heretofore

unnoticed problem...taking a solution from one context and seeing if it might work in another.

Each day today during your creative thinking development time choose a series of

recent inventions and think about how they might be applied to another industry,

profession, business or occupation.

A visit to your local library in person or via the internet may help you collect some starting inventions.

MONDAY

Look at scientific inventions or breakthroughs and generate ideas of how they might be used in sports.

TUESDAY

Look at creative ideas in the food industry and generate ideas of how they might be used in the auto industry.

WEDNESDAY

Look at breakthroughs in the music industry and generate ideas of how they might be used in the trucking or shipping industry.

THURSDAY

Look at inventions used in the computer industry and generate ideas of how they might be used in the games business.

FRIDAY

Look at military ideas and generate ideas of how they might be used in the entertainment or travel industry.

Remember the key is to generate ideas not necessarily initially try to generate solutions. From the ideas may come the solutions with some help from experts in both fields.

Have a creative week.

Off to Singapore for awhile, then a few days in Japan capped off with some days in Sestri Levante, Italy at the 2005 CREA Creativity Conference.

Willingly Wondering Wandering Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-14 Little Ways to Increase Your Creativeness

I just read a book 101 Ways to Add Humor in Your Life by a humorist speaker colleague from the National Speakers Association in the US, Scott Friedman. Several of his 101 Ways sparked the concept behind this week's CC.

It is the first steps that lead us to the end of 1,000 miles, the top of mountains, the construction of high-rise buildings, the creation of major corporations. Let's have fun this week creating 144 or more such steps.

Each day use the alphabet, a to z, as the structure for your work and ideas. Each day generate a list of 26 or more ways to have fun and spark, release or increase your creativeness or creative spirit.

Each day you are being given a theme to work from. Please share your resulting lists so that I can share them with all the other subscribers and users of the CCs.

MONDAY

Today generated a list of ideas involving using small objects. Let the 26 letters of the alphabet help inspire your ideas.

TUESDAY

Today generated a list of ideas involving making small changes physically during the day. Let the 26 letters of the alphabet help inspire your ideas.

WEDNESDAY

Today generated a list of ideas related to things you see during the day. Let the 26 letters of the alphabet help inspire your ideas.

THURSDAY

Today generated a list of ideas involving what you might listen to during the day. Let the 26 letters of the alphabet help inspire your ideas.

FRIDAY

Today generated a list of ideas involving things you might taste today. Let the 26 letters of the alphabet help inspire your ideas.

Samples...wear two different shoes
use colorful laces or strings to tie your shoes
eat your meals in reverse order
eat with your opposite hand

Have a creative week.

I'll be doing these in Singapore until very early Thursday morning in Singapore. Then I will be in Osaka, Japan.

Wandering Alan

Alan`s Cre8ng Challenges 2005-15 Walk in Nature and Let Your Mind Wander

I just had 4 days of wandering around various parts of Japan to enjoy the Cherry Blossom Festivals and Events in 5 different cities in central Japan as the guest of a group of 4 Japanese business friends.

On my own I went to the Osaka Castle and then along a couple of the rivers at night plus went to a town northwest of Osaka where the creator of Astro Boy grew up and the city built a fabulously creative and fun museum in his honor when he died a few years ago. Imagine the state of Minnesota or the city of Minneapolis building a museum and monument to Charles Schultz.

The next two days it was Nara, Wakayama, Kyoto and Nagoyda to see their various "walks of flowers". Some new some very, very old and famous.

Now take a look at your immediate area. Where are there 5 different natural areas: streams, lakes, rivers, forests, parks, valleys that you could go walk for about an hour each day and just let your mind wander.

Take a pad of paper with you and some pens for capturing those ideas as they fly into or out of your mind.

Monday
Destination one

Tuesday
Destination two

Wednesday
Destination Three

Thursday
Destination Four

Friday
Destination Five

Take a camera or a sketch with you to capture the beauty of the nature experience.

Happy creative wandering.

Wandering Alan in Tokyo waiting to go to Italy.

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-16 **Curiosity? Tool? Curse?**

This week work on developing your powers of curiosity. Each day focus on one specific category of curiosity seeking questions.

MONDAY

All day today focus on "Who questions?" Who do I know? Who do I want to know? Who do I need to know? Who is involved? Who is not involved? Develop your own questions to generate lists of who's.

TUESDAY

Today focus on "What questions?" What is involved? What is known?.....

WEDNESDAY

This day focus on "Where questions?" Where does it happen? Where does it not happen?.....

THURSDAY

Now focus on "When questions?" See if you can generate a list of at least 144 whens during the day about a variety of things.

FRIDAY

Finally today focus on "How?, How Might We? How do others? How Might Others....? questions.

Take different points of view during the week...as a child, as a senior citizen, as a tourist from eastern Europe, an engineer, etc.

Have a creative week developing your curiosity muscles.

Wandering Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-17

Changing Your Perspective

This week I bought two books I think you will find very interesting and helpful in improving your ability to "change perspective" in any given situation and open you to more creativity and creative thinking.

The books are Zoom and Re-Zoom. Both are visual only. No words except the titles on the covers of the books. When you first open either of the books you see a full page drawing or graphic. As you turn to the next page the scene changes mildly to dramatically much farther from the original scene and often changes your initial impression of what the original drawing or scene was depicting.

Years ago I saw similar books and videos of photos of the earth going in the reverse. The first shot was the earth from the moon as a dot in the sky. The next shot was much closer showing the continents. The next showed the terrain, mountains, lakes, rivers. The next showed a city with its buildings and streets. Eventually the last photo was of a picnic in the park on the grass.

This week experiment with changing your viewpoint, your perspective, your position each day. Start close up or far away and move in steps, small to large deliberately changing the scene and location. Each day use a different sense to experience the changing scenes.

MONDAY

Today experiment with sketching drawings with simple to complex drawings, depending upon your current drawing skills. Draw a scene. Then draw the next scene with the first as a small part of the new scene. Then draw the next scene with the second as only a small part of the new scene.

TUESDAY

Today experiment with the sense of touch. First touch an object, thing, surface. Then imagine yourself inside that surface touching an every smaller surface. Then go within that surface much more imagining what that surface might feel like to touch.

WEDNESDAY

Today experiment with the sense of smell. Smell something where you are located. Then imagine a smell that would be inside that smell at a smaller scale.

THURSDAY

Today experiment with the sense of sound. Listen for a sound inside the room you are in. Then listen for a sound within that sound. Then a sound within the sound. I.E.: listen to the sounds of your backyard. Then listen for a sound within that sound, such as a bird singing. Then listen for a sound that might be inside of the bird's song or being made by an insect on the branch where the bird is perched.

FRIDAY

Now use your imagination and write descriptions moving closer or farther away at least 5 to 7 steps of a scene you are experiencing around you wherever you are.

Have fun experimenting with your creative imagination and your senses this week.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-18 Periods of Creative Block

This week I experienced once again what many of us experience...

CREATIVE BLOCK

Creative block comes in many forms while having similar characteristics.

loss of confidence

self questioning

mild to moderate depression or feelings of depression

fuzziness

loss of focus

Over the years since getting involved with the creativity movement I have developed several strategies for dealing with my own creative block. So far this week I have used several to get to this point on Wednesday having had two days of creative productivity working with a client.

This week let's focus on our own personal creative blocks and discovering the strategies that we have already used that work and create several others as the challenge for this week.

MONDAY

Today use your creative development time (15 to 30 minutes) to think about and list times of creative block you have experienced the past 6 months to 12 months.

TUESDAY

Today use your creative development time (15 to 30 minutes) to think about the times you have gotten through, past, around, under, over periods of creative block and generated even higher levels of creative thinking.

WEDNESDAY

Today make a list of creative friends, family members and contact some of them to ask what they have done or do to break through their own bouts with creative blocks.

THURSDAY

Today review your notes and work on generating a list of 12 to 24 different strategies you have used to eliminate or out survive creative block.

FRIDAY

Today focus on generating the wildest, most fun, most creative ways you can deal with creative block.

take a short trip

go wash dishes

go to an amusement park

go to the movies for the entire afternoon

go buy yourself the neatest, juiciest, sweetest dessert and just enjoy it (you can exercise or diet later)

Think of physical, mental, emotional, social, antisocial things that you can do to help you smile again, laugh again, see things with new eyes or in new ways to help you break thru, around, over, under the next creative block you experience.

Best wishes for a creative week that you will be proud of in weeks in to.

Alan

**Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005--19
Highly Creative People Dream, Wish, Make Believe and
Virtually Live in Their Futures**

After hitting near bottom of a period of creative block bordering on depression I have begun rising up again.

One of the strategies that worked was visting my local library and wandering through the shelves going wherever my mind wandered or the last book lead me on their computers.

One of the books I found is THE SOUND OF PAPER by Julia Cameron who is famous for her The Artist Way and other related books on self creativity development. The Sound of Paper is a collection of short 2 to 4 page essays with suggested follow up exercises.

This week's CC was sparked by a combination of her first exercise "The Life of the Imagination" and one of her general strategies....morning walks.

So this week I am recommending that you take a 20 to 45 minute walk each morning wherever you can. During your walk use your imagination to generate and focus on new dreams, wishes, hoped-fors, goals, virtual realities you want to live. Take along some means of recording what you generate: note cards, tape recorder, etc.

MONDAY

Use the following idea sparker borrowed from Julia Cameron...

Ask yourself repeatedly while you walk the following question and fill in the blank.

If the best of all possible worlds were reality for me I would.....

TUESDAY

Focus on dreams you have had during your life from childhood until now. If you recall one that brings up negative thoughts or feelings, let it go and go onto another one. Generate or think of as many as you can while you walk.

WEDNESDAY

Today focus on wishes you want to have happen in the next year.

THURSDAY

This morning focus on realities you want to have happen in the next 5 years.

FRIDAY

While you walk this morning review all that you generated during the other 4 days and narrow them down to 12 or less dreams.

We'll visit them again soon.

Have a dream filled week.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-20

What If-ing Your Future

What If-ing is one of the tools I have used most effectively over the past 30 years consciously and probably before that sub or un- or non-consciously.

This week during your Creative Thinking Development time each day What If? different parts of you and your life. Each day generate a series up to 12 to 25

What If wishes.

What if I could draw like Van Gogh?

What if I could sing like....?

What if I could dance like...?

MONDAY

Generate What If statements that represent wishes, dreams, far out fantasies about your LIFE today.

TUESDAY

Generate What If statements that represent wishes, dreams, far out fantasies about your HEALTH today.

WEDNESDAY

Generate What If statements that represent wishes, dreams, far out fantasies about your KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS today.

THURSDAY

Generate What If statements that represent wishes, dreams, far out fantasies about PLACES YOU WANT TO TRAVEL today.

FRIDAY

Generate What If statements that represent wishes, dreams, far out fantasies about your GARDEN OR OTHER HOBBIES OR INTERESTS today.

Have fun in your mind creating your future reality.

Best wishes,

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-21

Focus on the Total Picture to See the Details

Yesterday two CPSI creativity leader friends, Joe Miguez and Mary Ann Smorra wandered around Istanbul for the day by taxi, foot and boat. During our journey we wandered down very busy streets filled

with people. In the ancient area where the Blue Mosque and S. Sophia are located the people were mostly tourists (we're visitors who sometimes act like looney tourists).

In others they were a mix of tourists and citizens and other areas mostly citizens with perhaps a sprinkling of a few tourists among a thousand or more local citizens or visiting Turks.

One thing that kept happening during the day yesterday and today while I was wandering around the European side of the Bosphorus was experiencing highly complex montages or collections of hundreds to thousands of alike things: gitts, electronic devices, shoes, fruit, veggies, spices, etc/

Sooooo no matter what I was doing whether up on the top of a tower on the highest hill on the European side of Istanbul looking in 360 degrees at the city

10 floors below me or wandering along the water's edge of the Golden Horn passing by hundreds of hawkers of goods with their ware spread out on the ground or passing hundreds of stalls in the Grand Bazaar my eyes were captivated by the masses of things and then fascinated by the simplicity within the at first apparent complexity.

Sooo this week practice looking for simplicity in complexity using photos or going to places where you can experience mutiple examples of highly complex collections or displays.

MONDAY

Go to a large shopping center or use a collection of photos of product displays

TUESDAY

Go visit a giant grocery store and walk by a variety of its displays. In Buffalo Wegman's would be great.

WEDNESDAY

Go to a hardware store or a home improvement center and view displays of parts or equipment.

THURSDAY

Wander through the woods or a park and study masses of leaves, flowers, trees, or even shadow patterns cast by the trees.

FRIDAY

Study the sky of rippling, wavy water and look for the patterns and details of clouds of ripples.

Have fun challenging your visual skills to see complexity and simplicity at the same time or at two times of the same stimulus.

Wandering off in Istanbul again tomorrow all day.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-22

Powers of Observation a Trait of Highly Creative Thinking

Many researchers have listed "observation" as a very strong trait in people who demonstrate high creativeness. This week let's work on our powers of observation.

The initial idea came back to my conscious memory this morning while I was walking a couple miles to the nearest Publix Grocery for exercise and for some basic groceries for the next couple days to fill up my very empty refrigerator.

Bob Pike, the most known trainer's trainer's trainer, of the Bob Pike Group, previously CTTI-Creative Training Techniques International includes the Alphabet Treastury Hunt in all their basic Creative Training Techniques courses. It consists of challenging a team of 4 to 6 people to demonstrate that

they have with them an alphabet of items in their pockets, wallets and/or purses or briefcases.

Let's use a modification of this challenge individually or with a partner or small team if you choose.

MONDAY

Today in 15 to 30 minutes assemble items starting with each of your alphabet, whether English or any of the other 5,000 languages on the globe that you can find within one single room of your choice. A - apple, b - button, c - candy, to z or whatever alphabet you choice to use.

TUESDAY

Today in 15 to 30 minutes assemble items you can find around your workplace or school.

WEDNESDAY

Today assemble items you can find wherever you eat lunch or dinner.

THURSDAY

Today virtually assemble items you might find in a zoo any where in the world.

FRIDAY

Today viturally assemble items you might find in any sports arena.

Good fun and good luck to you each day.

Alan

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Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-23 Tools and More Tools

During the past two weeks I talked with Andy Beckett who has created a popular website that list many creative thinking tools with short descriptions.

After you complete this week's CC perhaps you can correspond with Andy...

"Andy Beckett" <andy.beckett@mycoted.com>

His initial website devoted to creative tools is...

<http://mycoted.com>

His new website where he is provided an opportunity for people to become part of the process is..

<http://crinnology.com>

So the challenge this week is to choose a challenge, wish, dream or problem of yours and experiment using 5 different tools randomly chosen from Andy's primary website generate new ideas for it for 15 to 30 minutes each day. Explore the list of tools and deliberately choose a variety of different types of tools to challenge yourself even more.

MONDAY TO FRIDAY

Go to

<http://mycoted.com>

explore a few of the tools

choose one

experiment with in on a challenge, wish, dream or problem of yours for 15 to

30 minutes

At the end of the week spend 15 to 30 minutes thinking about which of the tools did you enjoy using the most, which the least. Then write out what and how did you gain from doing this week's challenge.

Have a creative week, it is your choice.

Alan

<http://www.cre8ng.com>

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-24 Puzzling Can Jump Start Creative Thinking

Last November I attended Win Wenger's annual Renaissance Project Conference in the Baltimore/Washington Area. The conference I attended took place in an international known puzzle designer and puzzler Kates Jones' home. On nearly every wall and every shelf in her and her husband's home, studio and offices were puzzles of every kind I had ever seen and many I had never seen from 2 to 3 to 4 dimensional puzzles.

Puzzles, whether visual, physical, mental, abstract or concrete can stimulate our brains and our creativity.

This week take advantage of the WWW and the Internet and experiment with different types of puzzles during your CREATIVITY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TIME each day.

MONDAY

Go to the following website and have some fun puzzling your mind.

<http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/Lab/8972/lessons/puzvis1.html>

Visual Puzzles

Visual Puzzle 1. What is the greater distance? Next >. Back to Lessons and Puzzles Page.

TUESDAY

Go to the following website and have some fun puzzling your mind.

<http://www.psychnet-uk.com/games/games.htm>

Psychology Games, Puzzles

Puzzle Playground - Classic and Modern Visual Puzzles. Rat Maze - What's it about? Try it and see. Rozie's IQ Tests and Alphabet Graphics ..

WEDNESDAY

Go to the following website and have some fun puzzling your mind.

<http://www.scientificpsychic.com/graphics/>

Illusions and Paradoxes
Seeing is Believing?

This page illustrates that our visual perception cannot always be trusted. The components of an object can distort the perception of the complete object. Our mind is the final arbiter of truth.

THURSDAY

Go to the following website and have some fun puzzling your mind.

http://www.archimedes-lab.org/index_optical.html

VISION ISN'T ALWAYS *WYSIWYG!

Optical or visual illusions are particular illusions that deceive the human visual system into perceiving something that is not present or incorrectly perceiving what is present. There are 2 kind of optical illusions: physiological

illusions and cognitive illusions. Optical illusions teach us how we perceive things.

FRIDAY

Go to the following website and have some fun puzzling your mind.

<http://www.brainbashers.com>

Brain Bashers

Brain teasers, puzzles, online games, optical illusions and jigsaws. ... collection of brain teasers, puzzles, riddles, games and optical illusions ... of brain teasers and puzzles, over one hundred awards and ... regularly and has 5 new puzzles added each week. ...

Have a creative week.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-25 Creating Puzzles To Stretch Your Mind

With the previous CC-2005-24 I invited you to experience various types of puzzles by wandering the WWW. This week the goal is to challenge you to create some of your own puzzles.

Supplies

Large scale (1/4 inch by 1/4 inch grid/graph paper or the equivalent in the metric system), pens, pencils, colored markers, perhaps a straight edge or a drafting triangle (30/60 or 45/45), sketch paper, tracing paper, or a computer and some simple graphic software.

MONDAY

Create a series of geometric jigsaw-type puzzles consisting of 6 to 12 pieces. Use simple geometric shapes.

TUESDAY

Create a series of crossword puzzles using 12 to 24 words.

WEDNESDAY

Create a series of mazes

A movement in my little forest behind my house just caught my attention. It was light brown and moving. Through the "maze" of leaves and tree trunks the movement caught my attention. It was a deer's tail flicking. I used to see deer often before the surrounding open land was turned into neighborhoods and commercial shopping centers.

Let the unexpected catch your attention this week.

THURSDAY

Mount some coloring book pages on cardboard and create large scale jigsaw puzzles (12 to 24 pieces each). Test them out on some children you know.

FRIDAY

Find a book of math puzzles and create some of your own. This is the type of puzzle my father got me started with when I was only 8. "Pick a number from 1 to 12. Add your age to it. Mutliply it by the number of the month. etc. etc....continue to add actions that revolve in a circle and slowly undue what you have done with the original number. Then just before the last step subtract the original number so you end up with a specific number. Like a magician you can fool people with these types of mental puzzles.

Have fun creating and stretching your creativeness this week.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-26 What Might It Be?

I am about to warm up a group that is enrolled in a 4-day TOOLS & TECHNIQUES class here at the 51st CPSI in St. Paul at St.Thomas University.

The warm up is the challenge for this week.

First find a collection of a dozen or two dozen things, objects, leftover pieces and put them in a bag or a box.

Second then each day pick an object out of the container and generate a list of 12 or things it might be if it wasn't what it is. Then pick a second, then pick a third.

Do this each day and record what the objects initially were.

Your goal is to generate 144 or more possibilities this week today.

Have a fantastically creative week.

MONDAY things found in a garage

TUESDAY things found in a kitchen

WEDNESDAY things found in a child's room

THURSDAY things found in a storage closet

FRIDAY things found in a basement or junk room.

Have a fantastically creative week.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-27 The Muse is in All of Us

This morning while regrouping and refocusing after 10 days in St. Paul involved with the fabulous 51st CPSI by CEF I read a definition of a "Muse" that I had not discovered before. Many years ago I learned about the Greek concept of Muse, a god that makes creativity possible. Today in Julia Cameron's book I read her description of a Muse as anyone that helps spark our creativity or enhances or increases of creativity while we are creating.

When I first became aware of creative thinking tools and techniques (Michael Michalko's THINKERTOYS, Bob Eberle's SCAMPER, James Higgins 101 Creative Thinking Tools, Andy van Gundy's BRAIN BOOSTERS) through several workshops at my first CPSI in 1978 I heard some people talk about the impact of "their Muse". I accepted the concept as being what some people believed, especially painters, writers, poets, sculptors but not the rest of us who need to be "creative on call" when it is needed nearly every day.

Now thanks to Julia's definition and description of MUSE I can see them throughout my life as various human beings, living or dead, real or imaginary, buildings, artwork, writings, etc. I see Muse as external impulsers on our creativity.

This week let's spend our creativity skill development time thinking about the various Muses we have had in our lives and might have in the future.

MONDAY

As a child did you have any Muses, heroes, heroines, guides, people who inspired you directly, indirectly or from a far? Make a list of them and note examples of when their working as a Muse helped you. For me I had Walt Disney, Charles Schultz and many cartoonists.

TUESDAY

As a teenager from junior thru senior high who were your Muses? For me I had the same cartoonists and more along with Frank Lloyd Wright, Edgar Allan Poe, Alfred Hitchcock and other suspense writers.

WEDNESDAY

As a young adult as your began your career or now as you are beginning your career who were or are your Muses or might be yours? For me I had Frank Lloyd Wright, Corbu, I.M. Pei, HH Richardson, Louis Sullivan and many architects, some more writers as I entered my first career as an architect and on the side as a writer.

THURSDAY

As an adult in your 30s and 40s who were, are or might be your Muses? During that period of my life I was experimenting with various jobs and design careers so I added many designers as my indirect Muses...graphic, signage, interior, industrial designers, set designers, movie directors.

FRIDAY

In your mature career who were, are, might be your Muses? For me professional speakers, consultants, actors, movie directors, additional writers (mystery, travel, inspirational) became my Muses.

I wish you a Muse filled week, jam-packed with many memories of times of inspiration and awakenings.

Best wishes for a very creative week my cyberspace creatively growing friend.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-28 A Life of Gratefulness

Last week I was in St. Paul, MN participating in and presenting at CPSI, the 51st CPSI, Creative Problem Solving Institute. This week I am attending and presenting at the 2005 National Speakers Association's Annual Convention in Atlanta, Georgia. The past two days I have been meeting up with long time, mid and short time speaker friends from around the US and the world. From morning to night I have been listening to fellow speakers demonstrating or sharing some of their greatest stuff and ideas. Last night during the official opening our audience of around 1500 professional speakers from beginners to those who have been in the profession for 30 or more years we were literally "blown away" by two absolutely fabulous performances. One by a member who portrayed the "oldest living human", 2,000 years old who shared his wisdom and humor through anecdotes from his life experiences with Socrates, Michelangelo, "Willie" Shakespeare and many others. The second and closing presenter, a newcomer to most of us at NSA, previously not a member, simply was himself, Andy Anderson, who has been called the Bob Hope of the 21st century for his work with the troops. He has entertained 4 US presidents in Washington, DC we were told and has been to many military bases, Iraq and other war-torn areas to help the troops through his words, his message. He is the author of the "The Traveler's Journey" a series of stories based on autobiographies and biographies he has read over his life and the 7 life principles he had learned from his reading.

Among his wondrous and wonderfully humorous and heart-filled stories he dramatically told he shared one of the 7 that came from Anne Frank,..

#5. "Today I will choose to be happy."

Within or behind that principle was the practice of Anne's of thinking and writing nearly daily..."What am I thankful for today?"

That is what sparked this week's CC.

Often I have read and often I have said over the past 30+ years about developing creativity..."the first step is choosing to be creative." As with most things in life...being creative is a choice.

The choice or ability to make or take such a choice is the result of many people in our lives and many events. This week use your daily creativity development time to make lists of people and events that you are thankful for in your life. They can be positive or negative. It is from finding the positive, the meaningful, the valuable, the lessons from all our contacts with friends, enemies, strangers, family members or the events we experience that we become the richly creative people that we become.

Each day strive to generate lists of 144 people or things you are thankful for in your life so far.

MONDAY

think about and list...friends in your life that in some way helped you be or supported your creativity

TUESDAY

think about events when you were creative

WEDNESDAY

think about relatives, relatives of relatives, relatives of friends who were creative or helped you with your creativity.

THURSDAY

think about events you observed, read about that other people you know of or know were creative.

FRIDAY

think about friends, neighbors, classmates, fellow workers, supervisors, bosses who were creative or helped you with your creativity.

Then next weekend review all 5 lists and make a pact with yourself to review these list periodically over the next 6 months.

Best wishes for a highly creative week.

Wandering Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-29 **Look, Look, Look until you feel**

This past weekend I attended the 16th Alden B. Dow Creativity Conference held at Northwood University in Midland, Michigan. I have been attending the Dow Conference yearly for a few years now. The past couple years I have arrived deliberately a day early and stayed a day late so that I could spend time getting to know Midland and the surrounding area in Michigan.

The past two years I have take time to walk from the Northwood Campus into Midland, about 2 1/2 miles along a "tracks to trails" trail that is used regularly by Midland citizens of many ages for running, walking, biking, roller blading, strolling. Along the trail are many wild flowers on both sides. During my first walk into town I photographed wildflowers and on the return trip. Then I used them to begin my day as a slide show along with some beautiful mello Turkish music.

This sparked this week's Cre8ng Challenge.

Collect photos: print, magazine tear outs, electronic on your computer, electronic from websites. Then select some instrumental music of different types. Sort out your photos into natural images: 1) flowers, 2) trees, 3) animals, 4) clouds, 5) sunrises/sunsets. Sort out your music into a) mello guitar or flute, b) classical yet mello, c)

New Age, d) rock translated for orchestra, e) natural sounds: waves, wind, rainstorms, etc.

Select one from each list and pair them and experience them for 15 minutes each morning, perhaps at lunch and then just before you go to sleep.

MONDAY

2 and d

TUESDAY

4 and a

WEDNESDAY

1 and e

THURSDAY

5 and c

FRIDAY

3 and b

Perhaps you might keep a note or sketch pad nearby with pens and pencils in case some creative ideas or solutions emerge from your relaxed state and mind.

Have a creative week.

Alan

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Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-30
Music Inspires, Guides, Opens Us Up

What music do you enjoy?

What music inspires you?

What music has sparked ideas or solutions in your mind unexpectedly?

This week let's allow music to inspire and guide us to ideas and solutions.

First take some time to assemble some of your favorite music: cds, tapes, dvds, records.

Second sort them out into five groups

Third then assign one group per day as your music to listen to while resting, walking, driving or even working on other projects, daily or long range.

Fourth then each day listen to music for 15 to 30 minutes during your creative skills development time or throughout the day in chunks of 15 to 30 minutes. My gut feeling is that if you listen to the music throughout the entire day there will not be the same impact or sparking of ideas. This may be different for you.

here is a sample guide that I will use...

MONDAY

60s rock and rock

TUESDAY

80s instrumental

WEDNESDAY

New Age natural sounds...ocean waves, thunderstorms, etc.

THURSDAY

classical music

FRIDAY

movie theme music

Please share the results or experiences you have during the week.

Have a creatively filled week.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-31 Let Thoughts Inspire You

This week's Cre8ng Challenge has been inspired by a visit to the following website and playing on it.

<http://creativequotations.com/>

Inside the website I found a section devoted to quotations from famous composers and musicians.

<http://www.creativequotations.com/p-class.htm>

The premise behind this CC is that the thoughts and words of others can inspire us. Let the following quotes help inspire thoughts in your mind each morning.

Please share what happens for you.

Each day read the given quotes and then think about or react to them and write down what comes to your mind.

MONDAY

Ludwig van Beethoven

1770-1827) born on Dec 16

German composer. He was the dominant figure between the Classical and Romantic eras who composed his Ninth Symphony when totally deaf.

Music - The one incorporeal entrance into the higher world of knowledge which comprehends mankind but which mankind cannot comprehend.

"Tones that sound, and roar and storm about me until I have set them down in notes."

"Beethoven can write music, thank God -- but he can do nothing else on earth."

"Recommend virtue to your children, that alone - not wealth - can give happiness. It upholds in adversity and the thought of it and my art prevents me from putting an end to my life."

TUESDAY

John Cage

1912-1992) born on Sep 5

US "composer, poet, essayist, painter, pianist". "His avante-garde, inventive compositions and unorthodox ideas, e.g. with 12-tone scales, profoundly influenced mid-20th-century music."

It is better to make a piece of music than to perform one, better to perform one than to listen to one, better to listen to one than to misuse it as a means of distraction, entertainment, or acquisition of "culture."

It's useless to play lullabies for those who cannot sleep.

I can't understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I'm frightened of the old ones.

"If you don't have enough time to accomplish something, consider the work finished once it's begun."

"If someone says can't, that shows you what to do."

WEDNESDAY

Oscar Levant

1906-1972) born on Dec 27

US "composer, musician, actor". "He was a concert pianist of caustic wit who appeared in "A Rhapsody in Blue," 1945 and "An American in Paris, 1951."

There is a thin line between genius and insanity. I have erased this line.

"Once I make up my mind, I'm full of indecision."

I can't understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I'm frightened of the old ones.

"If you don't have enough time to accomplish something, consider the work finished once it's begun."

"If someone says can't, that shows you what to do."

THURSDAY

Giuseppe Verdi

1813-1901) born on Oct 10

Italian composer. "He was the leading opera composer in the 19th c.; his works include "Rigoletto," 1851; "Il trovatore," 1853; "La traviata," 1853."

You may have the universe if I may have Italy.

"I adore art . . . when I am alone with my notes, my heart pounds and the tears stream from my eyes, and my emotion and my joys are too much to bear."

"Our mistake, you see, was to write interminable large operas, which had to fill an entire evening . . . And now along comes someone with a one- or two-act opera without all that pompous nonsense . . . that was a happy reform."

"They were all churning out operas of mine. It was clearly impossible for me to work under such conditions, so I hired the

organs from their owners. It will cost me about 1,500 lire for the summer, but that is not too large a price to pay for peace."

"Oh blessed a thousand times the peasant who is born, eats and dies without anybody bothering about his affairs."

FRIDAY

Cole Porter

1893-1964) born on Jun 9

US "composer, lyricist". "He is known for his sophisticated musicals, e.g., "Kiss Me Kate," 1948 and his song "Night and Day.""

Brush up your Shakespeare,
Start quoting him now,
Brush up your Shakespeare
And the women you will wow."

"You're the Nile,
You're the Tower of Pisa,
You're the smile
On the Mona Lisa."

My sole inspiration is a telephone call from a director.

"Good authors, too, who once knew better words now only use four-letter words writing prose... anything goes."

Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? I don't.

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-32

**Miscellaneous Pieces to Puzzles to Patterns to Possible
Answers or Solutions**

This week's CC was sparked by looking up and seeing the two Kate Jones puzzles I have sitting on my dining room table. I would show the photo I took but the Yahoo.com system does provide an easy system for posting or attaching photos or any other attachments to group.com messages.

If you would like to see the photograph send me an email and I will send it to you directly.

The two puzzles are on display stands.

The left puzzle is comprised of 6 x 6 or 36 separate pieces, no two the same ranging from a simple square to many completely irregular looking pieces. The other 35 pieces resemble standard jigsaw puzzle pieces with varying combination of male and female interlocking pieces from one of either to 4 of either or varying combinations of the two.

The right puzzle is comprised of a 5 x 5 grid with separate square pieces (24 pieces and one void or open space) with simple triangular designs in one, two or three colors: purple, blue, silver on 23 of the pieces. No two are the same.

What this caused me to think about was one of the skills or traits that has been

recognized in highly creative people is their ability to see, recognize, discover then understand patterns, systems. Left brain folk it is more systems. Right brain folk it is more the patterns or shapes or designs.

This week's CC is meant to help you further develop your skills at recognizing patterns or discovering systems from rational, linear, systematic to amorphous, biological, free-form.

Each day explore the environment you are in at that time, picture books, magazines, files/piles of photos or magazine clippings to explore the patterns you see or find.

MONDAY

Look around your room. What patterns of similar things do you find? What patterns of dissimilar things do you find?

TUESDAY

Take time to look through photos of nature. What patterns of similar things do you find? What patterns of dissimilar things do you find?

WEDNESDAY

Take time to look through photos of human made objects. What patterns of similar things do you find? What patterns of dissimilar things do you find?

THURSDAY

Throughout the day today look for patterns in nature. What patterns of similar things do you find? What patterns of dissimilar things do you find?

FRIDAY

Throughout the day today look for patterns in human made things. What patterns of similar things do you find? What patterns of dissimilar things do you find?

Explore store windows, store display racks, store layouts, parking lots, elevations of buildings, entire blocks of buildings in your town or city.

What patterns to you see or find that you have not noticed before.

This skill can then be used on nearly any problem or challenge. Often spending time to look for patterns you then can study the impact or effects of those patterns on your problem, challenge or your life in general.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-33 Zigged When He Should Have Zagged

Idioms, Idioms, Idioms. The English language, especially the American English language is filled with idioms, phrases that have meanings beyond their possible literal meanings. These short phrases often communicate much more than the simply collection

of words. These phrases can be used to spark ideas, open our thinking, cause us to look at things differently instantaneously.

This week's challenge is to use a different collection of idioms to generate new ideas, new understandings, changes in perspectives.

Each day choose a current personal or professional challenge and use the provided idioms and experiment with them. Record what ideas and thoughts come to mind.

MONDAY

A

Absent Without Leave

A Doubting Thomas

A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand

A Leopard Can't Change His Spots

All Your Base Are Belong To Us

America

A Picture Paints a Thousand Words

Apple of My Eye

TUESDAY

K

Keep body and soul together

Keep your chin up

Kilroy was here

Kick The Bucket

Kitty-corner

Live By The Sword, Die By The Sword

Knee jerk reaction

Knock on wood

Know the ropes

Know which way the wind blows

Ku-Klux Klan

WEDNESDAY

P

P's and Q's

Paddle Your Own Canoe

Pedal to the metal

Peeping Tom

Pick up your ears

Pie in the Sky

Pin Money

Pipe Down

Play by ear

Posh

Pull the plug

Pull the Wool Over His Eyes

Pull out all the stops

Push the Envelope

Put a sock in it

Put on your thinking cap

Put your best foot forward

THURSDAY

S

Sabotage

Sacred Cow

Safe Sex

Saved by the bell

Scapegoat

Shake a leg

Shot in the dark

Sitting in a Catbird Seat

Skid Row

Skin of your teeth

Sleep Tight

Sour Grapes

Southpaw

Spare The Rod, Spoil the Child

Spitting Image

Straight From The Horse's Mouth

Strike a deal

Stumped

Son of a gun

FRIDAY

W

Wag the Dog

Wearing the pants

Well Heeled

Where there's muck there's brass

White Bread

Whole nine yards

Windy City

Wild and Woolly

Wolf In Sheep's Clothing

Word for Word

Word in your shell-like

X

X marks the spot

Y

You are what you eat

You Can't Take it With You

Your name is mud

Yankee

Z

Zero Tolerance

Zigger Zigger

For more word origins, visit WordOrigins.org

Or write to me and I will send you a 4 page MS Word file list of them that I found on this following site....

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“Have a nice day!”

That is not only an idiom it has become an oxymoron in the US when used by most retail employees.

I wish you a fabulous week of your design and choosing.

Willingly Wandering and Wondering Alan

Alan’s Cre8ng Challenges 2005-34 To Puzzle or Not to Puzzle That is the Puzzle

Since getting involved with creative thinking training and development I have been using puzzles of various types as warm-up exercises and as ice breakers in teams and groups in classrooms or training room or even large audiences to spark various creative thinking traits and skills of people.

This week spend you creative thinking development time trying different types of word and visual puzzles on your computer by exploring a different puzzle website each day.

If you are are a manager, supervisor, team leader, trainer or teacher I pre-warn you that not all people enjoy all puzzles for many different reasons, one of course being that they find them too frustrating or have never been able to figure them out. Perhaps this is because they have not developed the necessary skills.

No Pain No gain may be true and it may be an effective too for sports and some other activities but I believe I have discovered that the person who is going to experience a pain must have a deep desire to achieve what getting past the pain offers.

All that said....try out these puzzles yourself. Try them out as a warm-up in a training program or meeting to help engage the people while watching for the potentially growing frustration and resulting pain. Too much pain without gain or fun can backfire on us very quickly.

Have fun this week. Perhaps push yourself. Even let yourself experience some pain. Hopefully it the effort and time will be beneficial for you.

These were found by doing a Google.com search

for “Brain teasers”

Results 4,230,000 for brain teasers - 0.02 sec.

Also try: brain teasers riddles, free brain teasers, math brain teasers

MONDAY

http://www.eduplace.com/math/brain/index_sc.html

an educational website with many brain teasers sorted by grade level. Challenge you self. Share with your children

TUESDAY

<http://www.brainconnection.com/teasers/>

Brain Connection a site with many types of brain teasers.

WEDNESDAY

<http://server1.billsgames.com/slider/scenic.html>

a site with many types of puzzles. This specific page has many “slider” puzzles where a photo is jumbled up and you need to rearrange the pieces back in order by moving only one at a time.

THURSDAY

<http://www.braingle.com/>

Brain Teasers, Riddles, Games, Forums and more....over 8,000 brain teasers, riddles, logic problems and mind puzzles

FRIDAY

<http://www.brainteaser-world.com/>

<http://www.brainteaser-world.com/funny-riddles/logical-riddles/logical-riddles-archives.htm>

A site filled with many types of puzzles: word, visual, riddles
The second one is a specific one inside of the website for “Riddles”

Please share your reactions, feelings potential results from doing these sample puzzles.

I will gladly collect the feedback and share them with the total group.

Best Wishes,

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-35 Oxymorons...as Tools for Creative Thinking

Another source of creative spark I have found has been playing with oxymorons to see how I might actually make them true, useful or simply even funnier than this initially appear.

This week, each day, have some fun playing with the provided oxymorons. Perhaps you will be able to apply insights to some of your current challenges that come to you from the daily oxymorons.

MONDAY

A little big
a little pregnant
A new classic
absolutely unsure
abundant poverty
academic fraternity
Academic sorority
Accidentally on Purpose
accurate estimate
accurate horoscope
accurate rumors
accurate stereotype

TUESDAY

gargantuan lilliputian
geniune imitation

gentle turbulence
gentleman bandit
genuine fake
genuine imitation
genuine(ly) fake
genuine-imitation leather
giant dwarf
gigantic microorganism
girly man
glacier-like rapidity

WEDNESDAY

IBM-Apple compatible
icy hot
Idiot Savant
idly laborious
ignorant professor
ill fortune
ill health
immigration control
impatient patient
important trivia
inarticulate writer
Income Tax
incomplete cure

THURSDAY

Peaceful riot
peaceful liberation
peaceful protests
Peacekeeper Missile
Peacekeeping Force
PeaceMaker missile
peasant king
peer pressure
perfect idiot

perfect misfit
perfectly awful
Perfectly Normal

FRIDAY

totalitarian democracy
totally partial
tough love
traditionally radical
traffic flow
tragic comedy
train schedule
tranquil fiesta
transient stability
traumatic bonding
tremendously small
troubled paradise
true counterfeit
true fiction

for more oxymorons go to

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<http://www.oxymoronlist.com/>

Best wishes for a highly creative week.

Alan
<http://www.cre8ng.com>
alan@cre8ng.com

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-36
Add Creativity and Creativeness to Everything

As we each move through our daily lives we see so much blandness, boredom, lack of artistic flare, lack of fun. I believe that small doses of creative thinking and creativity can make any task, action, thought more fun, creative, exciting, and meaningful.

Let's use our creative thinking development time this week generating grosses of ways of making basic task more fun, creative, exciting and meaningful.

Each day I am assigning you a typical job or task that we either do or see others do each day that is typical done in bland, boring, dull, overly stale way.

Your challenge each day will be to use your creative thinking abilities to generate lists of ways from the smallest detail or action or movement to make a particular job or task more fun, creative, exciting and meaningful.

Over many years I have noticed or heard people talk about examples of such uses of creativity.

The summer that Merry, Jessica and I lived in Cortona, Italy I saw many examples. One particular one that has stood out in my memory was the fellow who had the job to clean up the main piazza (plaza) to the front and side of the city hall each morning, whether after a typical day and evening, the weekly market or a festival or some sort that took place, it seemed at least once every couple weeks.

Watching him clean up "his" piazza was like watching an artist painting a canvas, an interior designer creating a beautiful room, a nurse preparing a surgery unit. He took great care. He used flare in the ways he used his hand-made natural straw brooms.

Another example, I saw happen twice while I was in Turkey this May. Both times involved ice cream vendors, ice cream kiosk employees. Both of the young men made the experience of choosing, buying and receiving your particular cup or cone of ice

cream a performance, a play, an operetta, an experience I will never forget.

Each day this week imagine you are the employee with the specific job or task provided and then generate as many ideas, preferably 144 (a gross) or more of how you might make any aspect of the task or job more fun, exciting, creative and memorable.

MONDAY

Checkout clerk at a discount store

TUESDAY

Customer Service person at a returns counter

WEDNESDAY

A wait person in a resort restaurant

THURSDAY

An amusement ride person

FRIDAY

A garbage collector

Please share your lists and I will collect them and make them available to any and all who request them.

Best wishes for a highly creative week.

Alan

Alan's Creativity Challenges 2005-37
Are You Going to Be More Creative?

Tomorrow morning, September 21st I leave for South Africa to travel and to present at the 11th African Creativity Conference in Bella Bella

(Warmbad) at Klein Kariba ENE of Pretoria about 100 miles. Every one of my trips has helped to spark and respark my daily creative. My challenge the past couple months has been using being at home and traveling a little in the US and Canada to spark and respark my creativity. Of course it was easier because most of the travel was to creativity conferences or to present a week-long program focused on developing cre8ng communities in the workplace.

This week let's focus on things we can do any day, any where to spark our creativity.

Each day strive to generate the longest list of things you might do that could/ might spark or respark your creativity and creative thinking at work, home, school; alone or with others.

MONDAY

Generate a list of environmental things you might do to spark or respark your creativity.

TUESDAY

Generate a list of actions you can do differently from when you wake up until you go to sleep again at the end of the day.

WEDNESDAY

Generate a list of books you might scan that might spark or respark your creative thinking.

THURSDAY

Generate a list of people (real, imaginary, known to you: family, friends, fellow workers, students, clients) that you could spend time with (real or virtual) and

spark or respark your creative thinking.

FRIDAY

Generate a list of things in your home or office you might use as metaphors or symbols to help spark or respark your creative thinking.

Best wishes for a creative week, whatever that means to you.

Wandering Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-38

Traveling in Multiple Worlds to Generate Creativity

Currently I am traveling in eastern South Africa on the Indian Ocean

Coast. Today my friends and I have traveled through Durban and are

staying at a cottage and camp ground about 30 kms south of the city.

Two days ago we were in 105 degree weather. This afternoon the wind

is blowing very hard, the waves are high on the sea and the

temperature has dropped into the 60s.

Traveling has always been a great sparker for creativity for me and I am encouraging you to use virtual traveling to do the same this week.

MONDAY

Travel to a favorite place in your memory today and write down everything you remember.

TUESDAY

Travel to a place in a country you have never been before and write down everything you learn by looking in books or on websites.

WEDNESDAY

Travel to a climate totally different than yours and write down everything you learn by looking in books or on websites.

THURSDAY

Travel to a different time in a different country and write down everything you learn by looking in books or on websites.

FRIDAY

Take time to write to people in other countries and learn from them about their country.

Each day you can spend 15, 30, 60 or more minutes doing any of these.

You may even take what you write down and review it to see how it might spark ideas for a problem you are currently working on.

Best wishes to you from Southburgh, South Africa.

Wandering Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-39

Each Step Higher Produces a Greater View

This morning a small group of creativity friends and I went mountain climbing at the Neethling Place outside of Warmbad, South Africa where we are guests of Kobus Neethling, a long time friend of ours and a noted international creativity consultant.

As we rose higher and higher we turned around and looked out at the horizon and were gifted with greater and greater views with wider and wider vistas. That experience sparked this week's CC.

Each day take time to broaden and increase your horizons.

Using our physical experience as a virtual metaphor, each day change your viewpoint by age elevation level rather than elevation.

MONDAY

Chose a place to go and travel through it as if you were a 5 year old or younger. Go to some physical space or virtual one through the WWW or books or television.

TUESDAY

Virtually travel today as a 10 year old might.

WEDNESDAY

Today travel as a mid to late teenager might.

THURSDAY

Today travel as a middle age person from 40 to 55 might.

FRIDAY

Today travel as a more seasoned person of 60 to 80 might.

Use all your virtual senses, even your 6th and 7th or 8th senses and take notes of what you discover.

Have a wonderfully creative week.

Wandering Willingly Wondering Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-40 New Things, New Activities, New People

Over my 61 years I have discovered one of the greatest sources of creative sparking has been doing "NEW" things, activities and meeting new people or old friends in a new way.

This past 10 days has been filled with NEWness while I have been traveling in South Africa. The first week a creativity friend (CPSI leader), Ed Wiseman and I have been traveling with our wonderful South African friend, Nico Botha. This has become a traditional, yearly thing with us over the past 5 years. Each of us are involved with our mutual friend, Kobus' Neethling's famous annual African Creativity Conference. This year is the 11th one. This year the 3 of us traveled to and around the Kwa-Zulu Natal Province of South Africa before returning to Warmbad and the Kneethling Place/farm in the bushveld of the Limpopo Province for our annual fun weekend prior to the conference.

This coming week we will move to the Klein Kariba resort located on the other side of Warmbad, a rain forest looking oasis in the desert looking, due to the dry winter that has area surrounding it.

So this week spend time doing NEW things, NEW activities and meeting NEW people or old friends in NEW ways.

Here are a sample of things you might do.

MONDAY

Buy or borrow a new board game or new form of pencil and paper game/crossword puzzle

TUESDAY

Attend a meeting of a group you have never attended and meet as many people as you can.

WEDNESDAY

Go to the library and find some books about a hobby you have never tried and work at it a little each day for the week.

THURSDAY

Call a list of old friends and catch up on what is new in their lives.

FRIDAY

Start a new collection for fun...coins, stamps, unique pencils or paperclips, postcards

Have fun being NEW and experiencing NEWness all week.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-41 Creating on the Spot While Sitting Still

Yesterday 7 creativity friends from several countries and I spent most of the day at the Urban Brew Production Studios in Johannesburg, South Africa as audience members and guests on our mutual friend Kobus Neethling's new creativity quiz show: "Out of the Box". We were at the studios during the taping of epsiodes 10 and 11, two quarter final episodes when winning competitors from the first six shows competed to move onto the next level towards winning the possible title of most creative in South Africa and R75,000 (\$12,500).

Each show consists of 5 creativity games. The first four narrow down the 3 contestants to 2, who then compete to win for the show with the last game.

Being there for about 12 hours gave me plenty of time to think about

this week's CC.

This week your challenge is to create creativity quizzes, games, challenges to test yours and other people's creativity skills. Each day work on creating different types of quizzes, games, challenges and puzzles.

Each day I am present a type of creative thinking tool for you to create quizzes, games, challenges and/or puzzles from.

MONDAY

Forced Relationship

Take an animal and one object or problem and generate potential relationships between them: lamb and a clock radio

TUESDAY

Checklist

SCAMPER-Substitute/Combine/Adapt/Minify-Maximize/Put to other uses/Eliminate/Reverse

Take a product and generate lists of lists for improving it or creating a new product.

WEDNESDAY

Produce a group of 5 squiggle unfinished open drawings

Create finished drawings with creative titles for each.

THURSDAY

Take any object and generate as many possible other uses for it than

what it really is used for.

FRIDAY

Put together several photographs or photo clippings from magazines.

Then randomly pick 5 of them and create a story that they might tell.

Have great fun THINKING "OUT OF THE BOX" this week.

Wandering Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-42

Coloring Inside and Outside the Lines

This morning I received a promotional email from a "coloring book" publisher which sparked this week's CC.

Look in your personal library or your children's library and find a couple coloring books or go to a bookstore and purchase one.

Then each day choose a separate coloring page to work on.

MONDAY

Color within the lines but use colors that would normally not be used in the drawing....instead of a blue sky make it brown or purple or striped.

TUESDAY

Color completely outside the lines today using the seemingly correct colors.

WEDNESDAY

Color in patterns instead of areas...stripes, plaids, stipples, wavy lines

THURSDAY

Color in only striped patterns....horizontal, vertical, diagonal

FRIDAY

Take a photograph or drawing, a sheet of tracing paper and create your own "coloring page". Then color inside or outside the lines.

Have fun letting your child play this week.

Have a very creative week. It is your choice.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-43 Alternative Scenarios

Since the first creativity internet chat groups prior to commercial ISPs to the hundreds to thousands of creativity focused websites, the internet has grown from a beginning resource to an infinitely growing resource for information about creativity.

One of those resources for CREATIVE THINKING tools was created by Andy Beckett in the UK....

<http://www.mycoted.com/creativity/techniques/index.php>

This week's CC was sparked by one of the first tools on his extensive list of tools.

Alternate Scenarios

Through using this tool Scenarios (different descriptions of possible futures) are used to help determine multiple possible plans and solutions.

First Step.

Choose a time in the future. For this week let's choose 2015 (ten years into the future).

Second Step.

List major environmental forces

social values,
economic
international relationships
technology
medical or health

Third Step

Create four scenarios based on principal forces.

Each day this week experiment with writing Scenarios in different fields and how you might deal with them now knowing that the scenarios might happen.

MONDAY

You own a restaurant and want to expand for the future.

TUESDAY

You sit on a library board and need to decide how to expand your services.

WEDNESDAY

You are a cartoonist just beginning your career.

THURSDAY

You are a teacher just graduating from college.

FRIDAY

You are beginning a family as a young parent.

Best wishes with your scenario writing and creating thinking this week.

Alan

<http://www.cre8ng.com>

alan@cre8ng.com

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-44

Breaking Away from a Box

Much that is written about creativity and creative thinking talks about “getting out of the box” or “out of the box thinking”

Perhaps we need to

1. accept boxes some times.

2. destroy boxes some times.
3. totally jump out of boxes some times.
4. jump into some boxes deliberately.
5. imagine that no boxes exist.

This week each day let's play with the boxes or imagine they don't exist.

Imagine that you are a pen manufacturer. You have been in business for a long time and have acquired great expertise, equipment and money yet you are bored and want to turn your company into a completely new and more creative company.

Your goal is to explore and generate ideas for new products for your company.

MONDAY

Today "accept that boxes some times exist".

Use your creativity development time to generate the longest list of potential to real "boxes" that might exist if you were this pen manufacturer. List physical, financial, emotional, etc. "boxes" and list all that you can.

TUESDAY

Take your list of "boxes" from Monday and explore how you might "destroy" them if you were the pen manufacturer.

WEDNESDAY

Today imagine yourself totally "jumping out of boxes" some times. What might you do if you totally jumped out of the boxes you listed on Monday?

THURSDAY

Today imagine yourself "jumping into some boxes deliberately" what you might you do inside them? Jump into other people's "boxes". Think about other industries, professions, businesses and deliberately limit yourself with their "boxes". Then generate ideas for new products, for example: NASA moon shot and writing in a vaccum, race car driving and writing at 180 mph, coal miners and writing in the dark.

FRIDAY

Today let your mind go totally wild. Imagine there are no “boxes”, no limitations and you are capable of creating/manufacturing anything you can imagine. Generate 144 fantastically “box-less” ideas for new pens.

Have fun this week being creative with or without “boxes”

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-45 Virtual Alter Egos and Heros

When most of us were children we probably had heroes, perhaps many of them. As a young boy I often would imagine/pretend that I was a particular athlete when I was playing by myself and occasionally a group of us would do that each imagining that we were our own specific heroes....I'm Al Kaline! I'm Babe Ruth! I'm Mickey Mantle! we would say while we were playing baseball or names of hockey players while playing backyard or street hockey games.

This week let's explore this youthful game as a source for creative sparks. Instead of sports stars or heroes let's us inventors. Below I have used a sample set of lists of inventors I am familiar with. Please substitute any of your favorites instead.

Each day take some time to look at the Day's List and imagine yourself as that person working on any of your challenges or simply spend some time thinking about how they would think in general when they were inventing.

For specific information about their thinking do a google.com search for them or go to your library and find a biography or autobiography about the person and read for pleasure searching for clues to how they thought.

MONDAY

Alexander Graham Bell, (1847-1922), Scotland _ telephone
Karl Benz, (1844_1929), Germany _ the petrol-powered automobile
Louis Braille, (1809-1852), France _ the Braille writing system
Jacques Cousteau, (1910_1997), France _ co-inventor of the
aqualung
George Eastman, (1854-1932), USA _ roll film

TUESDAY

Thomas Edison, (1847-1931), USA _ phonograph, commercially
practical
Philo Farnsworth, (1906-1971), USA _ vacuum tube television
display
Benjamin Franklin, (1706-1790), USA _ the pointed lightning rod
Robert Goddard, (1882-1945), USA _ liquid fuel rocket
Johann Gutenberg, (circa 1390s-1468), Germany _ modern
movable

WEDNESDAY

Charles F. Kettering (1876-1958) USA _ invented automobile self-
starter
Jack Kilby, (1923-2005) USA _ patented the first integrated circuit
Edwin H. Land, (1909-1991), USA _ Polaroid polarizing filters and
the Leonardo da Vinci,
(1452-1519), Italy
Guglielmo Marconi, (1874-1937), Italy _ radio

THURSDAY

Samuel Morse, (1791-1872), USA _ telegraph
Alfred Nobel, (1833-1896), Sweden _ dynamite
Elisha Otis, (1811-1861), USA _ passenger elevator and
concomitant Igor Sikorsky,
(1889-1972), Ukraine _ helicopter
Levi Strauss, (1829-1902), USA _ blue jeans

FRIDAY

Joseph Swan, (1828-1914), England _ inventor, physicist - (first
light bulb)
Nikola Tesla, (1856-1943), Serbian-Croatian-alternating current -
AC

George Westinghouse, (1846-1914), USA _ Air brake
Eli Whitney, (1765-1825), USA _ the cotton gin
Orville and Wilbur Wright Airplane
Ferdinand von Zeppelin, (1838-1917), Germany _ rigid airship

Invent yourself this week.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-46

Some Inventors are from Venus

Inventors who are inventors as a source of creative thinking strategies

To borrow from CC 2005-45

" When most of us were children we probably had heroes, perhaps many of them. As a young boy I often would imagine/pretend that I was a particular athlete when I was playing by myself..."

No doubt the girls in my neighborhood also imagined/pretended/dreamed about one or more of their heroines or heroes.

This week let's explore this youthful game as a source for creative sparks. Let's use inventors who are women. Below I have provided a sample set of lists of inventors I found doing Google.com searches for woman inventors.

Please substitute any of your favorites instead.

Each day take some time to look at the Day's List and imagine yourself as one of the women working on any of your challenges or simply spend some time thinking about how they would think in general when they were inventing.

For specific information about their thinking do a google.com search for them or go to your library and find a biography or autobiography about the person and read for pleasure searching for clues to how they thought.

MONDAY

Adeline D. T. Whitney - Alphabet blocks 1882
Virginia Apgar - Apgar tests, which evaluate a baby's health upon birth 1952
Ruth Wakefield - Chocolate-chip cookies 1930
Tabitha Babbitt - Circular saw 1812
Josephine Cochran - Dishwasher 1872

TUESDAY

Marion Donovan - Disposable diaper 1950
Ida Forbes - Electric hot water heater 1917
Mary Walton - Elevated railway 1881
El Dorado Jones - Engine muffler 1917
Anna Connelly - Fire escape 1887

WEDNESDAY

Ellen Fitz - Globes 1875
Sarah Boone - Ironing board - 1892
Stephanie Kwolek - Kevlar, a steel-like fiber used in radial tires, crash helmets, and bulletproof vests 1966
Maria Beaseley - Life raft 1882
Bessie Nesmith - Liquid Paper®, a quick-drying liquid used to correct mistakes printed on paper 1951

THURSDAY

Mary Walton - Locomotive chimney 1879
Letitia Geer - Medical syringe 1899
Margaret Knight - Paper-bag-making machine 1871
Catherine Deiner - Rolling pin 1891
Margaret Knight - Rotary engine 1904

FRIDAY

Patsy O. Sherman - Scotchgard™ fabric protector 1956

Ann Moore - Snugli® baby carrier 1965
Florence Parpart - Street-cleaning machine 1900
Sarah Mather - Submarine lamp and telescope 1845
Mary Anderson - Windshield wiper 1903

Invent yourself this week.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-47 From Humor Can Come Creative Sparks

Often writers about creativity and creative people talk about how highly creative people tend to have varied and excellent senses of humor, perhaps even strange in some occasions.

This week let's capitalize on the use of humor in generating a more creative mood and/or environment. My own experiences as a speaker, trainer and facilitator have confirmed that individuals and groups will be more creative after they have begun to laugh.

Each day this week during your creative thinking development time do the following types of things to add more humor to your life.

MONDAY

Go to the Humor Matters website and read a variety of the Jokes of the Day and other features among the many on the site.
<http://www.humormatters.com/jokeof/jokeof03.htm>

TUESDAY

Go to Dorothy Wilhem's website and read some of her humorous columns there. Also explore her television show material.
<http://www.itsnevertoolate.com/>

WEDNESDAY

Go to a few comics/cartoon websites such as...
<http://www.ucomics.com/calvinandhobbes/>
and read several cartoons.

THURSDAY

Go to the library and check out some humor books to read.

FRIDAY

Go to a newstand or bookstore and purchase one or more issues of humor magazines.

BONUS for this humorous week...

Ask everyone you meet this week for one of their favorite jokes or anecdotes.

Have a humorously creative week.

It is your choice.

Wandering Alan

<http://www.cre8ng.com>

check out the Cre8ng Challenges section for the past CCs from 97 until 2005

Rejectionitis-REVISITED

Creativity Challenge 1998 #28

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-48

7 Years ago I wrote the following challenge that continues to be a daily challenge most everywhere I go each day. I just had lunch with a group of friends in Singapore on Saturday, December 3rd and heard many examples of REJECTIONISITIS or KILLER PHRASES.

That inspired me to create this updated version of the older REJECTIONITIS CC from 1998.

So here goes.....

"6 times. 12 times. 24 times. Perhaps 144 times a week you or I suffer from "Rejectionitis": the repelling from others' rejections of our ideas.

Being creative would be so much easier if it weren't for all those people who become or think they are "instant experts" on any and all topics, who get up in the morning simply to "kill" our ideas.

This week's challenge is to create verbal cures for "Rejectionitis". List the first 12 "killer phrases" you receive this week. Then create responses to each one."

This week's challenge(s) are to collect Killer Phrases of the 21st century.

MONDAY

Listen to fellow workers, students for the Killer Phrases they use today. Write down both the new and old ones you hear throughout the day in separate columns.

TUESDAY

Listen to people you cross paths with or happen to be on the same bus, in the same elevator or at the same restaurant or in the same shopping center/store. Write down both the new and old ones you hear throughout the day in separate columns.

WEDNESDAY

Spend time around children of different ages listen for Killer phrases they use. Write down both the new and old ones you hear throughout the day in separate columns.

THURSDAY

When you listen to the radio or television today collect Killer phrases. Write down both the new and old ones you hear throughout the day in separate columns.

FRIDAY

When you read today: books, magazines, newspapers, advertisements or any type from bumper stickers to billboards or

even sky writers. Write down both the new and old ones you hear throughout the day in separate columns.

Please share your lists and I will gladly collect them and post them so all of the members of the CC group can have them.

Happy Holidays

If you would like to learn about daily Holidays you might be missing and could be enjoying each day from now until Chinese New Year in January go to my website...

<http://www.cre8ng.com>

and click on the icons for the HOLIDAYS message or card.

Best wishes to you, your entire family and all your friends.

Alan....sleepless in Singapore...second day and it is 5:04 am and I have been up since the door phone rang around at 3 to tell me my bags had finally arrived in Singapore and were downstairs at the hotel front desk....happiness comes in simple things.

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-49 12 Days of Creativity

Officially today (not sure who created these) begins the 12 days of Christmas. So let's take advantage of this tradition, wherever and whenever it began.

Each day celebrate that particular day of gifting to yourself with new ideas. Use your creativity development time to generate a list of new ideas for 2006 about a particular aspect of your life.

MONDAY

Today generate a list of ideas for yourself of how you may have fun in 2006 on your own. Use RANDOM INPUT. Go to the following website page on Charles Cave's Creativity Website.

<http://members.optusnet.com.au/%7Echarles57/Creative/Techniques/random.htm>

TUESDAY

Today generate a list of ideas for how you and your family members may have fun in 2006 together. Use FORCED ANALOGY. Go to...

[http://members.optusnet.com.au/%7Echarles57/Creative/Techniques/forced_analogy.h\](http://members.optusnet.com.au/%7Echarles57/Creative/Techniques/forced_analogy.htm)
tm

WEDNESDAY

Today generate a list of ideas for how you and some friends may have fun in 2006 together in person or virtually. Use the LOTUS BLOSSOM technique. Go to...

<http://members.optusnet.com.au/%7Echarles57/Creative/Techniques/lotus.htm>

THURSDAY

Today generate a list of ideas for how you will make your work may creative in 2006. Use ASSUMPTION SMASHING. Go to...

<http://members.optusnet.com.au/%7Echarles57/Creative/Techniques/assump.htm>

FRIDAY

Today generate a list of ideas for how you may help other people or organizations through volunteering your time and skills. Use FUZZY THINKING. Go to...

<http://members.optusnet.com.au/%7Echarles57/Creative/Techniques/fuzzy.htm>

Practicing creative thinking each day will increase your natural tendency to think more creatively.

"A list of ideas a day will make you more creative."
(Alan, December 13th, 2005)

Best wishes for a creative Holiday Season.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-50

Let Your Imagination Soar Like You Did as a Child

Yesterday I saw the movie version of a very creative story by C.S. Lewis, The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe.

The opening scene provide me a perspective of history I never knew about during WWII...how many children were sent away from the cities to towns and villages around the UK to protect from the bombing in the major cities.

The home that the 4 children in the story end up at is the size of a castle. While there they discover a magic cupboard, freestanding clothes cabinet. Once they enter it they eventually all enter the land of Narnia.

This week let your imagination soar. Take yourself back to the age of 6 or 7 when your imagination was in full force. Imagine yourself venturing suddenly into foreign, strange, magical, mythical, historical lands. One per day.

MONDAY

Enter the magic cabinet and travel to a foreign land can imagine.

TUESDAY

Enter the magic cabinet and travel to a strange land beyond anything you have ever imagined before, where only happiness occurs.

WEDNESDAY

Enter the magic cabinet and enter a magical land where you have vast magical powers and you are there to save the people in the land.

THURSDAY

Enter the magic cabinet and venture into a mythical land unlike any you have read about ever before.

FRIDAY

Enter the magic cabinet and travel back in time to a great time in history and see yourself part of it.

If you have children or grandchildren perhaps your experiences can become bedtime stories. If you are a child perhaps you can create stories that you can draw illustrations for and share with your classmates.

Imagination is the foundation of all creative thinking. Let yours soar this week.

Happy Holidays from Athens, Georgia to your home, office or school.

Alan

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-51

Reviewing, Rewinding, Readjusting, Reaiming, Refocusing, Refining, Reinforcing, etc.

For 50 weeks this year, if not every week at least once in a while, you have taken time to work on the development of your creative thinking skills. Periodically we all gain by...

Reviewing, Rewinding, Readjusting, Reaiming, Refocusing, Refining, Reinforcing,...

What we have done, learned, failed or succeeded at.

This week take some time each day to examine 2005.

MONDAY

Review 2005. List everything you did, every book and article you have read, list every movie you watched. Then next to each item on your list note one thing you learned from each you can in 15 minutes.

TUESDAY

Rewind 2005.

List everything you have succeeded at starting with this week in reverse order . Then next to each item list one thing you learned from each of them or as many as you can in 15 minutes.

WEDNESDAY

Reaiming 2005.

Think over 2005 for all the goals, plans, targets, tasks you thought about doing. Check mark the ones you did not complete that you want to accomplish in 2006. Then arrange them in priority of importance to you.

THURSDAY

Readjusting 2005

Think over 2005 for all the things that did not work out the way you wish they had: things you failed at, things that went bad, things that ended up out of your control. Make a list of them. Pick the top six from the total list. Write out brief plans of how you might succeed at them in 2006.

FRIDAY

Refocusing, Refining, Reinforcing

One last time think over 2005 and all your lists from MONDAY to THURSDAY. Select the top 6 to 12 you believe will make a difference in your life in 2006. Then develop 3 to 6 step plans for each for how you will succeed.

Best wishes for a great 2006.

Alan

<http://www.cre8ng.com>

Alan's Cre8ng Challenges 2005-52

Beginning a New Year by Celebrating the Previous One

This year has been filled with good and bad for me. This year has been filled with great, wonderful, sad, bad, horrible things around the world. Yet the sun is shining here in Athens this morning on Friday, December 30th, 2005. The high temperature for today is predicted in the high 50s, mild to comfortable for the end of the year. Where you are it may be very cold with snow, gray skies. It may be hot, humid, rainy.

It is what it is.

What you want it to be is up to you. How it will be is up to you in so many ways. (IF IT IS TO BE IT IS UP TO ME)

You may not be able to change the weather. Yet you can change how you use your day.

Each day this week, strive to find and create as much positive, creative thinking and energy as you can.

MONDAY

Read positive books or articles

TUESDAY

Watch positive television shows

WEDNESDAY

Listen to the music that makes you smile and charges you with full energy.

THURSDAY

Write down 100 things that are good in your life.

FRIDAY

Spend time with positive people, write to positive people, call or SKYPE positive people.

As my professional speaker friend, Keith Harrell continues shares from his many platforms.

ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING

Being a pragmatic idealist I prefer to suggest that

OUR ATTITUDES GREATLY EFFECT EVERYTHING to some degree.

Or as another friend, Joel Goodman, Humor Project, says

“If you see in the future that you may laugh about what is happening today to you, why not start laughing right now. It will help some to a great deal.” (paraphrased)

As another creativity consultant friend, Sid Shore taught me many years ago....

“Always ask what’s good about it!” Until you can find the good you can not get past the bad. (paraphrased)

Best wishes for a fabulous year in 2006

Perhaps you can create a motivating slogan for yourself to use in 2006.

What rhymes with six?

bix, **bricks**, brix, chicks, clicks, cliques, fickes, fix, flicks, fricks, frix, hicks, hix, ickes, kicks, knicks, licks, mix, nick's, nicks, nikk's, nix, nyx, picks, pix, rick's, ricks, rix, slicks, sticks, styx, ticks, tics, tricks, vic's, vicks, wickes, wicks, wix

2 syllables:

affix, cake mix, conflicts, depicts, inflicts, predicts, quick fix, **transfix**

3 syllables:

bag of tricks, brownie mix, captain hicks, intermix, river styx, row of bricks

4 syllables:

lemonade mix

for access to all previous CCs 1997 to 2005 go to
<http://www.cre8ng.com/CC/index.shtml>

Share CCs with your staff, friends...invite them to join the growing international group.