

## Perspectives - Part 5

*Howard Hendricks*

### I. Pronouncements on Creativity:

A. There is no one without significant creative potential.

1. Frequently creativity is buried under layers of conditioning.

2. Two culprits:

a. Teachers.

1) Personal example: a student who had the courage to share a poem. A fifth grade teacher turned off his “creative juices.”

2) The evangelical community is covered with people with creative potential, but teachers are shutting them down.

b. Parents.

1) You can tell a lot about a home through its creative environment.

2) Television has taken the creativity out of students; reading is a needed substitute.

B. The conditioning process can be reversed.

1. The process is costly—it requires a lot of time.

C. Creativity is essentially a lifestyle.

1. Creativity must pervade every area.

2. There is no point where one decides that he will now be creative.

3. Types of practice.

a. Never wrap a present in the same way.

b. Never love your spouse in the same way.

### II. Introduction to the field of creativity.

A. Alex Osborne’s *Applied Imagination* is one of the speaker’s top ten books.

1. The value of the book is in its exercises at the end of each chapter.

B. Three questions:

1. Why is creativity a concern?

a. Creativity perpetuates the learning process.

1) The peril of stopping the learning process is deadly.

2) Discipleship is essentially a call to perpetual learning.

b. Creativity is essential to meet the growing demands of a changing society.

1) Package thinkers are out of business for another tomorrow.

2) Three things are guaranteed: taxes, death...and change.

3) Christianity demands that we change in its call to conformity to Christ.

4) Our disciples must be prepared for the next generation.

c. To infect your communication with a characteristic and vitality.

1) A creative individual is a provocative individual.

2) Many do not like good communicators because they challenge the status quo.

d. Creativity develops your leadership potential.

1) The greatest need in evangelical Christianity is for top leadership.

2) No period in history has afforded such opportunity for leadership.

e. Creativity will overhaul your lifestyle.

1) Most Christians do not live—they exist.

2) Rarely do Christians enjoy life.

3) Jesus came that we might have life—we have become a fraud because we are either living in the past or the future. We need to live in the moment.

2. What is involved?

a. Creativity is largely a matter of effort.

1) The mind is like a muscle—it grows with usage and atrophies with neglect.

- 2) Personal example: the viewing of an autopsy—lack of brain usage.
- b. Quantity is essential to quality in the creative process.
- 1) The creative side of your brain is the least part that is used.
  - 2) We spend so much time developing critical thinking that creative thinking is usually wiped out.
    - a) Only six percent of any of your ideas are any good.
    - b) We need to spend less time being critical with our ideas and form more of them to encourage creativity.
    - c) Ideas must be multiplied.
    - d) In the creative process you always need more behind counter than in front of the counter.
    - e) Unused ideas are thrown into the creative reservoir.
    - f) Personal example: Cecil DeMille's filming of the Ten Commandments—one clip was filmed over sixty times.
- c. Results where are good, bad, or indifferent are welcome.
- 1) We need to put the breaks on the critical thinking.
  - 2) Judgments are not made at the outset of creative thinking.
- d. Incubation generates illumination.
- 1) Break periods of work on a subject into portions of three so that the ideas can incubate between the portions
  - 2) The more you feed your mind, the more it produces.
  - 3) Warmed up imaginations continue to perk.
- e. Group imaginations stimulate creativity IF you have learned how to listen.
- 1) Everyone is taught how to speak, but not how to listen.
  - 2) We have been given two ears and one mouth.
  - 3) The best insights are not with professorial colleagues because they are only trying to get their insights in.
3. How can you activate it?
- a. Experience provides fuel for ideation.

1) You should put more of your time in travel.

a) This is why the coach always has to repeat the message to the lineman.

b) This is why missionary kids come out well balanced.

2) You should spend more time with uneducated people.

a) It is easy to become far removed from these people.

b) These are the ones Jesus spent time with.

c) Whenever you get around a significant person keep your mouth shut and just ask questions; we have much to learn.

b. Problem solving: systematically challenging the obvious.

1) Greatest opportunity to use this in the games and challenges of life.

a) Personal example of student who crammed for a test.

b) Example of David who failed at the challenge. Regardless, even he was one of the most creative men in the Scriptures.

c. Hobbies and the arts.

d. Reading.

1) This makes a full man.

2) This cannot be passive.

3) Read well.

4) Don't read everything—there is too much junk per square inch in printed literature.

5) Don't simply read the stuff with which you agree; know what is going on in the world and broaden your mind.

6) Rely on close friends for book references.

e. Writing.

1) Keep a journal.

a) Personal example: Jim Eliot had more profound thoughts than the college faculty.

2) Personal example: Professor who challenged speaker to be creative by illustrating a doctrine by only using the items on his desk.

f. Spending time with creative people.

1) Arguments are not good until they are tested.

2) Most of us don't have convictions, we merely have prejudices.

3) The hell-raisers are the ones who are making an impact for Christ today.

***Application Questions***

1. Of the reasons that the speaker lists for Creativity being a concern, which struck you the most? Explain.

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2. What areas of your life presently require or could use some creativity? Brainstorm some ideas to enhance this area without entering into the critical phase.

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3. Which suggestion for activating creativity is presently the strongest in your life? Which area could use the most growth? How do you plan to activate more creativity in your own life?

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