

How to Optimize Your Creativity by Tamara R. Belland

What if the main thing that gets in the way of creativity is “managing” it? On a day-to-day-basis. What if we’ve been managing for something “reasonable” and “practical,” when, within humanity’s huge web, something more substantial is needed from you and me? Maybe success is wider spectrum, with more people, places and things involved, and more natural (and more enjoyable) than we’ve been accustomed to. Maybe some of our plans and goals haven’t come to fruition yet because of our cramped thinking.

How to think more expansively? Buckminster Fuller, one of the most original and successful minds of the 20th Century, advised on this topic, “*To be optimally effective, undertake at outset the most comprehensive task in the most comprehensive and incisively detailed manner.*”

To put this idea into practice and to begin managing your creativity at an optimal level, picture a goal, in this case, one that’s big! It may be something you’ve always wanted to do.

Then take a pen and notebook and answer these questions:

- 1) What would be the most comprehensive task I could do to bring this goal into reality?
- 2) What is the most comprehensive manner that I could do this? Include as many details and aspects that you can think of. Describe this in an *incisively* detailed manner, that is, as clear and direct as possible.
- 3) What resources come to mind that you’re already familiar with that might be useful?

Being optimally effective in anything we do naturally takes advantage of *synergy*. Fuller’s definition of synergy is “the behavior of whole systems unpredicted by the behavior of their parts taken separately.”

When we think large, as comprehensively as possible, without restriction, “intercomplementary functions,” as Buckminster Fuller pointed out, come into play. Unexpected people, activities, and things show up that we couldn’t have predicted.

- 4) Who are people who could show up to make this goal come into being?
- 5) What is an example of something “off the wall” that might come into play?
- 6) Can I be on the lookout for people, activities, and things who / that might appear unexpectedly?

We are used to thinking small and “practical.” However, thinking this way, due to the manner in which synergy works, prevents a great possible array of solutions. Whole (i.e., large) systems behave in a way that parts of systems (which we are familiar with) can’t predict. As Fuller pointed out, there is nothing in the protoplasm of a single cell (i.e., a small part) that predicts a (whole) plant or animal. Working only with parts of the whole of our *big* goal (i.e., small, “reasonable,” plans and goals) creates misassumptions that resources are inadequate and that we have to compromise what we really want.

When we expand our thinking, taking off the “common sense” filters; when we let go of the desire to please, let go of “fitting in,” when we gather courage—life opens up.

Thank you to Alex Gerber Jr. and his book, *Wholeness: On Education, Buckminster Fuller and Tao* for helping me to understand and apply these concepts. To learn more about the subject of synergy and comprehensivity, check out this book as well as his new book which will be released Spring 2017. I encourage you to visit www.wholenessbook.com as well as the Buckminster Fuller Institute website, www.BFI.org.