

- The creative faculty does not belong only to the young. It also follows with age if properly preserved through practice.

CREATIVE PRODUCTIVITY

Perhaps the most outstanding study dealing with problems of age and creative productivity was made by H. C. Lehman in his book *Age and Achievement*. On the basis of his studies he reached the conclusion that the rate of good production does not change much in the middle years and that the decline is gradual in older years. He has been careful to point out that it is not age change itself but the factors that accompany age change — increased family responsibilities, decrease in physical strength, contentment with past accomplishments, lack of recognition, imbedded habits of conformity, and others — that bring about a reduction in creative production.

By avoiding the conditions that account for decreased creativity, an individual can continue to be creatively productive throughout life. To develop creativity in himself,

each has to be the engineer who charts his own course, supported by the cooperative action of colleagues.

A person can explore ways of providing a more favorable environment for creative production and of developing feelings of adequacy. Some suggestions are:

1. Capitalize on experience of others in order to develop confidence in self.

2. Accept the challenge of an opportunity to share creative efforts.

3. Seek an opportunity to communicate ideas and dreams to a person in whom you have great confidence, one who is a good listener and who accepts ideas expressed.

4. Be willing to experiment with untried ways of doing things.

5. Accept needs and blocks to goals as challenges.

6. Take time to do whatever is necessary to maintain good physical health.

By accepting the fact that

we have the capacity for creativity and that it can be developed, we become more able to encourage and foster its development in others.

Many adults have grown up in an authoritarian environment and have developed inadequate self-concepts. They fear new or unfamiliar experiences. Yet, through contact with facilitating persons they can develop more fully functioning personalities. Individuals and groups can do many things to stimulate and support them as they undertake new adventures:

1. Serve as a patron or sponsor.
2. Recognize potential of the individual.
3. Listen to ideas.
4. Encourage experimentation.
5. Suggest sources of information and materials.
6. Encourage persistence

and new approaches when first efforts are not successful.

7. Express praise when it is deserved.

8. Provide opportunities for others to enjoy and appreciate the products of creative efforts.

9. Provide opportunities for participation in creative group activities.

10. Recognize the importance of good inter-personal relationships by extending warm and friendly greetings, condolence during time of sorrow, and congratulations over joyous events.

In spite of seemingly slow progress, the results of efforts in behalf of colleagues may be beyond measurement. As people experience the creative process, they learn to foster the development of creativity in others. — *By E. E. Parker in The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin.*