for everybody

by
Kathryn P. Haydon
and
Jane Harvey

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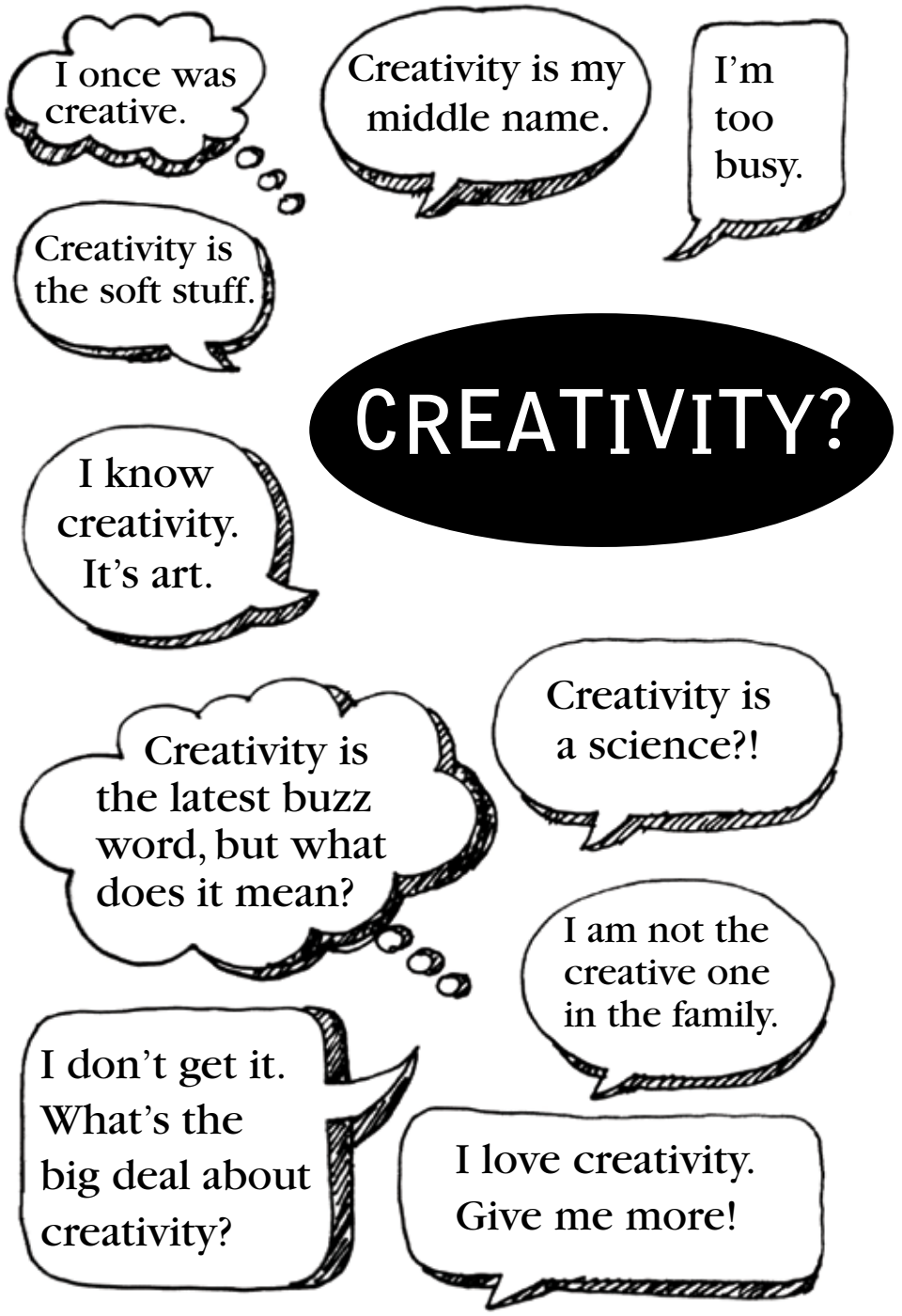

GRATITUDE

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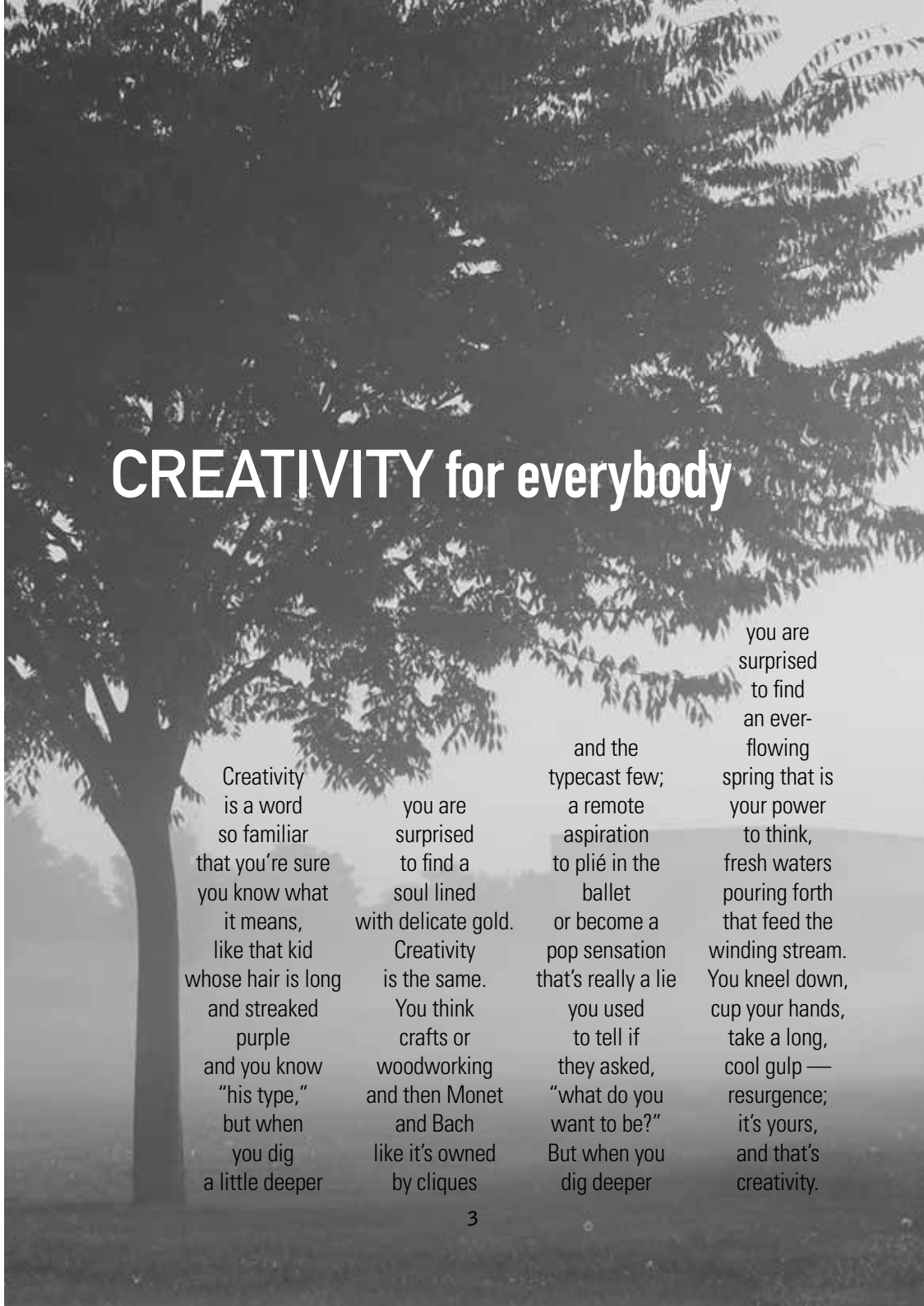

CREATIVITY for everybody

Creativity
is a word
so familiar
that you're sure
you know what
it means,
like that kid
whose hair is long
and streaked
purple
and you know
"his type,"
but when
you dig
a little deeper

you are
surprised
to find a
soul lined
with delicate gold.
Creativity
is the same.
You think
crafts or
woodworking
and then Monet
and Bach
like it's owned
by cliques

and the
typecast few;
a remote
aspiration
to plié in the
ballet
or become a
pop sensation
that's really a lie
you used
to tell if
they asked,
"what do you
want to be?"
But when you
dig deeper

you are
surprised
to find
an ever-
flowing
spring that is
your power
to think,
fresh waters
pouring forth
that feed the
winding stream.
You kneel down,
cup your hands,
take a long,
cool gulp —
resurgence;
it's yours,
and that's
creativity.

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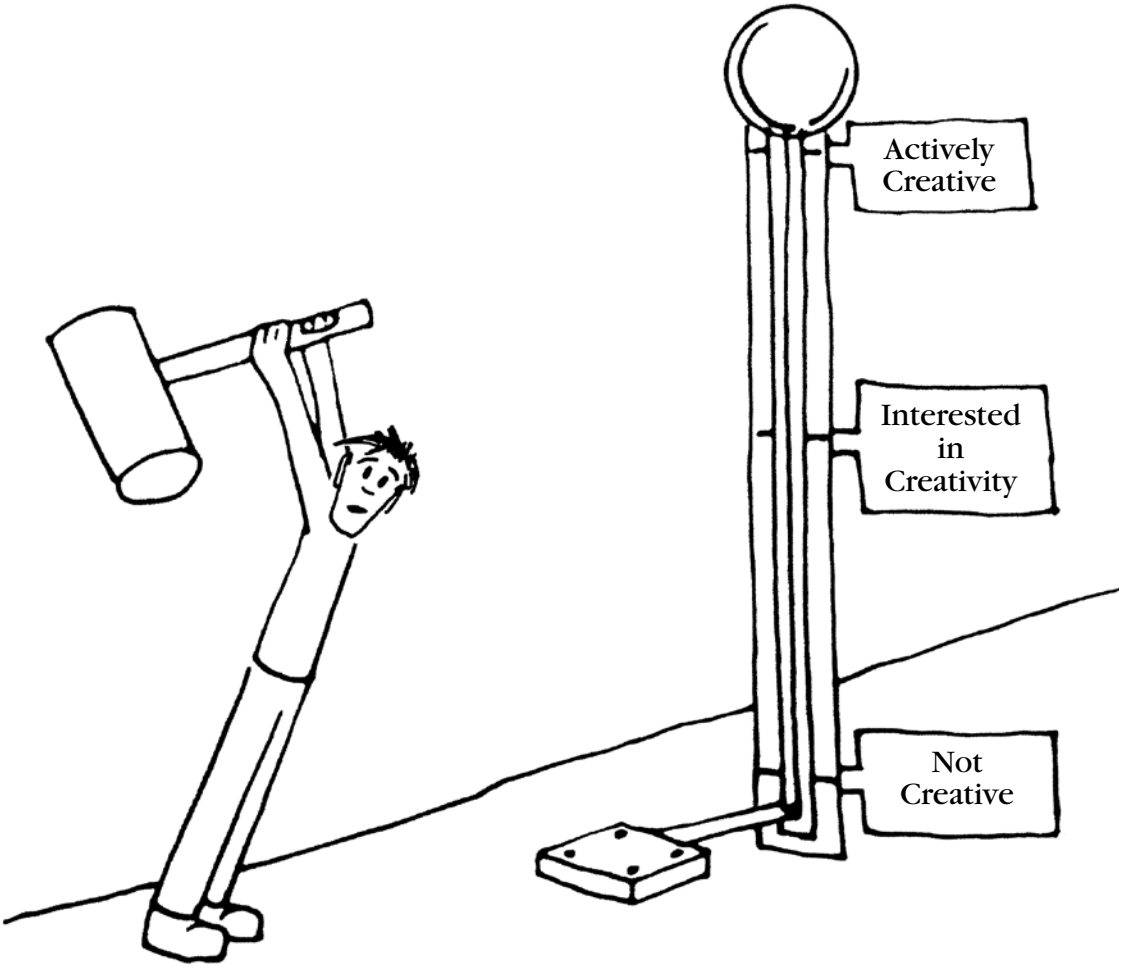


WHY CREATIVITY?

Do you realize that creativity is one of your prime superpowers? The simple awareness of what creativity actually means can be transformative. It can help you navigate obstacles, enhance your relationships, and connect you to your purpose, whether at home, work, or school.

With three-quarters of a century of empirical research, we know that creativity indeed belongs to everybody. Unfortunately, myths about creativity abound, and these misunderstandings hold us back as individuals and as a greater world community. This book provides a fast overview of what creativity entails. Whether you currently identify yourself as creative or not, you can use it for positive growth, change, and innovation.

If you hear yourself or others say, "I could never do that," try responding with, "What *can* you do?"

AN INVITATION

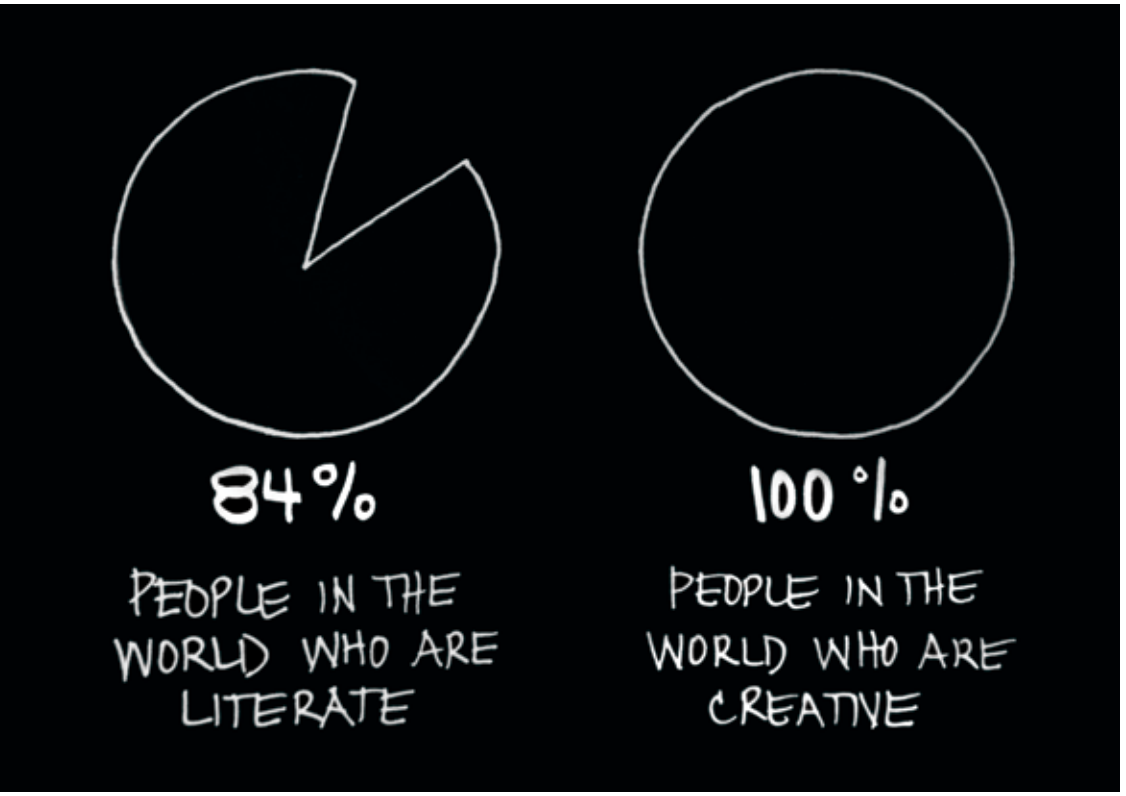
Learning about creativity should be a choose-your-own-adventure. That is why we have structured this book in two parts. The first section is designed to resonate with you personally and in small concept-bites, free of jargon from the academic field. We hope that you find it inspiring and engaging. The second section, "Dig Deeper," supports each page with notes and references from decades of research on the science of creativity.

We invite you to begin your excursion by reading this book in any way you choose: from cover to cover, flipping between the two sections, opening to a page now and again, or turning it sideways. This won't be the only book about creativity that you ever read, but we hope it empowers you to take hold of your own creative thinking and support the creativity of others around you.

Be curious,

Jane and Kathryn

If you read this book sideways, you'll find a flipbook of quick tips and reminders.



"Creativity is now as important in education as literacy..."

—Sir Ken Robinson

WHAT CREATIVITY IS NOT

Let's start with what creativity is *not*.

It is not owned by the arts, science, genius, or fame. It is not exclusive to folks like Mozart, Van Gogh, Thomas Edison, or Ella Fitzgerald.

In fact, everybody is creative.

We all use creativity in our everyday lives, all the time.

Children are creative. So are you, you just forgot. You don't have to be an artist to be creative.

LOOKING

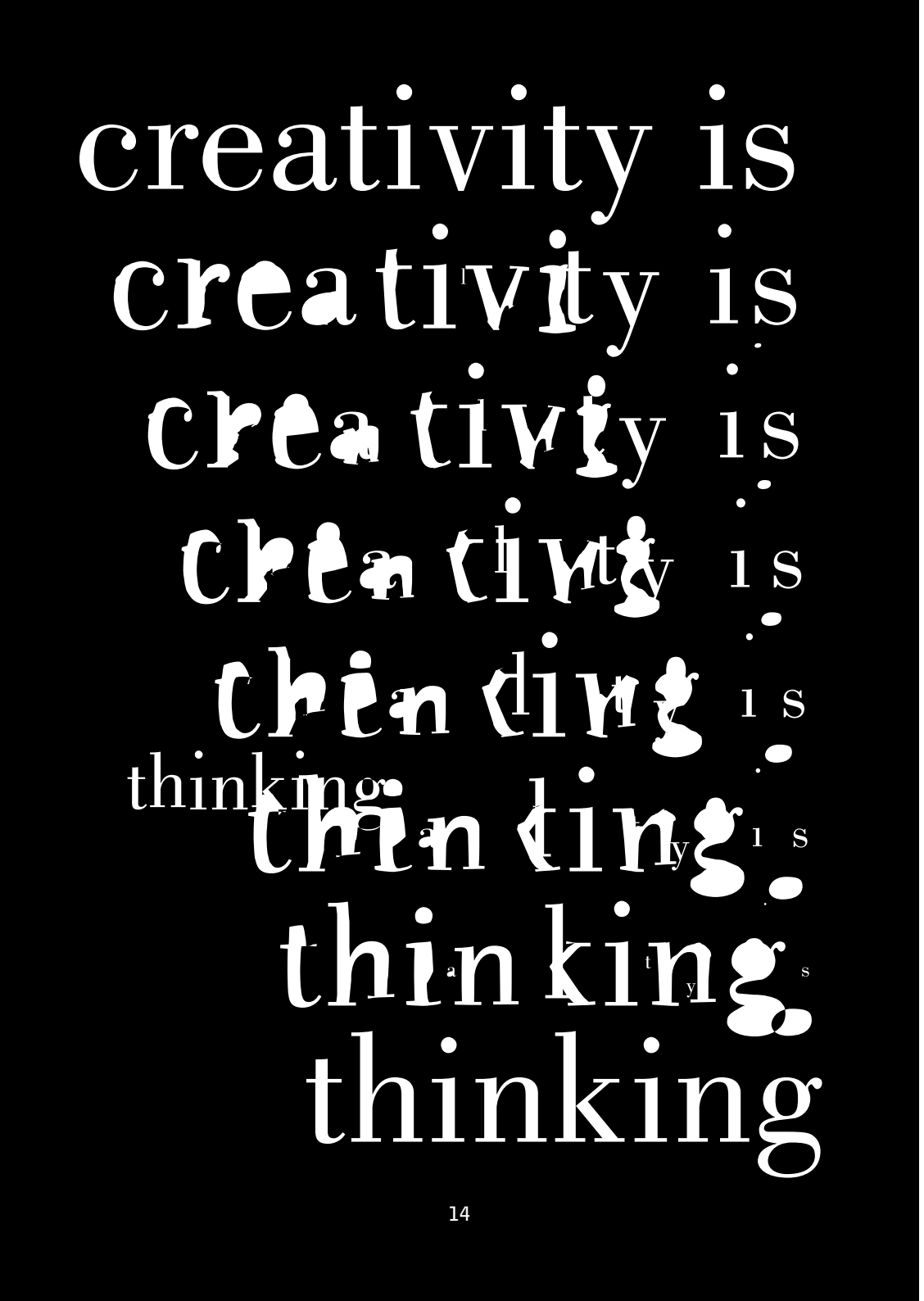
SEEING

CREATIVITY IS SHIFTING PERSPECTIVE

Creativity requires new perspectives to break free of habits, assumptions, and automatic responses. Through active observing, noticing, finding patterns, sensing incongruity, and making connections, our thoughts shift. Rethinking what we already know helps us gain new insights.

Creativity is the ability to think differently to tackle and overcome challenges. In order to get different, more favorable results, we must see anew. How do we attain another mode of thought to solve problems in new ways? That's what this book is about, but first we want to turn the focus to your inherent creative ability.

Try thinking like someone else: an alien, a rock, a stray cat, a high school math teacher.



CREATIVITY IS THINKING

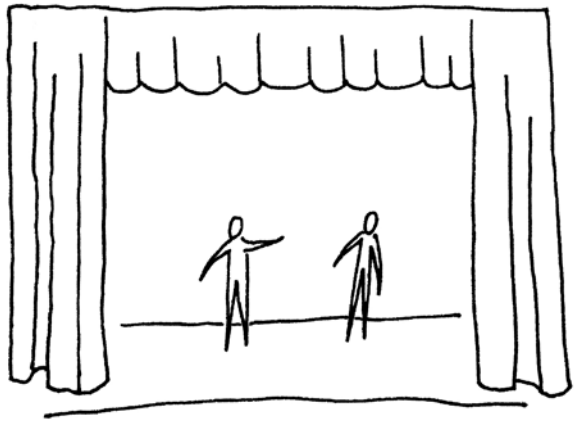
Have you improvised when you were trying to fix something? Have you figured out a way to stretch your dollars? Have you found an inventive new use for a flea market item? Have you thought of a way to explain a complex concept to a child?

In each case, you used your thinking to solve a problem in a way that was both valuable and original to you or someone else. That is creativity.

Cyndi's story on the next page illustrates that when either meaning or originality is absent, creativity is not being employed—even if you are involved in the arts.

CREATIVITY≠THE ARTS

There is a general misunderstanding that creativity is only expressed in realms such as music, art, or theater. Cyndi experienced that the arts don't require creativity in every circumstance. A theater major fresh out of college, Cyndi moved to New York City. In her very first audition, she landed the role of the swing in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* for the show's first national tour. She was ecstatic! Theater had been her main creative outlet all through school, and now she was living her dream. She used her creativity to learn her role, but too quickly faced a hard lesson. As she performed the show 189 times in 81 cities over six months, she realized that her job was to implement a role with practiced perfection. She felt like a cog in a wheel and her job required more conformity than original



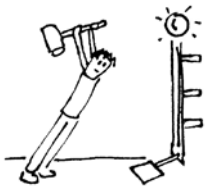
thinking on her part. After that experience, Cyndi faced a personal crossroads and decided to pursue a career that would help her to more deeply understand and practice creative thinking. For her, it was important to discover that creative thinking fueled her drive more than perfomance.

Though creativity is not limited to the arts, the arts enhance creativity. Is there something you want to try?

DIG DEEPER

The following is a collection of endnotes as academic support for each page of the book. Because the research on creativity continues to grow, our intent is to provide the origin of each concept or refer to a scholar who has studied that area in depth. These roots support the foundational base of the field of creativity. If you are interested in learning more, this is a great place to sample some of the research.

6–7 WHY CREATIVITY?



Ruth Richards coined the term "everyday creativity" (Richards, Kinney, Benet, & Merzel, 1988) and has written widely on the topic: "The construct of everyday creativity is defined in terms of human originality at work and leisure across the diverse activities of everyday life. It is seen as central to human survival, and to some extent, it is (and must be) found in everyone" (Richards, 2010, p. 190).

Richards, R. (2010). Everyday creativity. In Kaufman, J. C., & Sternberg, R. J. (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of creativity* (pp. 189-215). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, R., Kinney, D. K., Benet, M., & Merzel, A. P. (1988). Assessing everyday creativity: Characteristics of the Lifetime Creativity Scales and validation with three large samples. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54(3), 476-485.

10–11 WHAT CREATIVITY IS NOT

The science of creativity has been researched and studied empirically for decades. Academic fieldwork was spurred by a seminal speech given by J. P. Guilford to the American Psychological Association in 1950. Substantial research continued in the 1950s and 1960s, when the Soviet launching of Sputnik fueled a national drive for innovation in the United States. Guilford and early researchers demonstrated that creativity is a different form of intelligence, not necessarily measured by IQ tests, and that all people are capable of creative acts. Wrote Guilford, "Creative acts can therefore be expected, no matter how feeble or how infrequent, of almost all individuals. The important consideration here is the concept of continuity. Whatever the nature of creative talent may be, those persons who are recognized as creative

merely have more of what all of us have" (Guilford, 1950, p. 446).

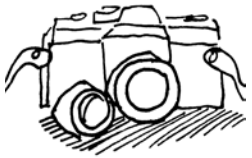
Guilford, J.P. (1987). The 1950 presidential address to the American Psychological Association. In S. G. Isaksen (Ed.) *Frontiers of creativity research: Beyond the basics* (pp. 33-45). Buffalo, NY: Bearly Limited.

Guilford, J. P. (1950). Creativity. *American Psychologist*, 5, 444-454.

Robinson, K. (February 2006). Ken Robinson: *How schools kill creativity* [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity

Unesco Institute for Statistics. (2014, September) UIS fact sheet. Retrieved from http://www.uis.unesco.org/literacy/Documents/fs-29-2014-literacy-en.pdf

12–13 CREATIVITY IS SHIFTING PERSPECTIVE

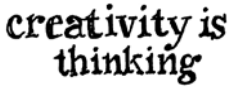


E. Paul Torrance defined creativity as "a process of becoming sensitive to problems, deficiencies, gaps in knowledge, missing elements, disharmonies, and so on; searching for solutions, making guesses, or formulating hypotheses about the deficiencies: testing and retesting these hypotheses and possibly modifying and retesting them; and finally communicating the results" (Torrance, 1969, p. 6). Looking at creativity as a problem solving process, as Torrance defined it, gives us another way to see that everybody is creative.

Torrance, E. P. (1969). *Creativity*. San Rafael, CA: Dimensions Publishing Company.

Torrance, E. P. (1988). The nature of creativity as manifest in its testing. In R.G. Sternberg (Ed.), *The nature of creativity: Contemporary perspectives.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

14–15 CREATIVITY IS THINKING



The most well-known definition of creativity focuses on two qualifiers: novelty and usefulness. This wording was first put forth by Mo Stein in 1953: "The creative work is a novel work that is accepted as tenable or useful or satisfying by a group at some point in time . . ." (p. 311). Who defines originality and usefulness? Stein said that both internal and external measures must be considered. Therefore, creativity can be judged as useful on a personal level or on a societal level. Recently, some scholars have substituted the word "valuable" for "useful" when defining creativity (Puccio, Reisman, & Matson, 2014).

Puccio, G. J., Reisman, F., & Matson, J. V. (Panel). (2014, September 11). *Teaching creativity* [Radio broadcast]. In Marty Moss-Coane (Producer), Philadelphia, PA: National Public Radio. Retrieved from http://whyy.org/cms/radiotimes/2014/09/11/teaching-creativity/

68–69 GOING BEYOND

Torrance wrote (1991), "The word 'beyonder' is not in the English dictionary, yet almost everyone seems to understand its meaning" (p. 69). Through his work, he identified the top ten most common Beyonder characteristics: 1). Delight in deep thinking. 2). Tolerance of mistakes. 3). Love of one's work. 4). Clear purpose. 5). Enjoying one's work. 6). Feeling comfortable as a minority of one. 7). Being different. 8). Not being well-rounded.* 9). Sense of mission. 10). Courage to be creative (Torrance, 1995, p. 152). Garnet Millar (2004) summed it up: "Being a Beyonder means doing your very best, going beyond where you have been before, and going beyond where others have gone" (p. 1).

* Here, Torrance meant that people should not be prevented from pursuing their interests due to pressure to be "good at everything."

Millar, G.W. (2004). *The making of a Beyonder*. Bensenville, IL: Scholastic Testing Service, Inc.

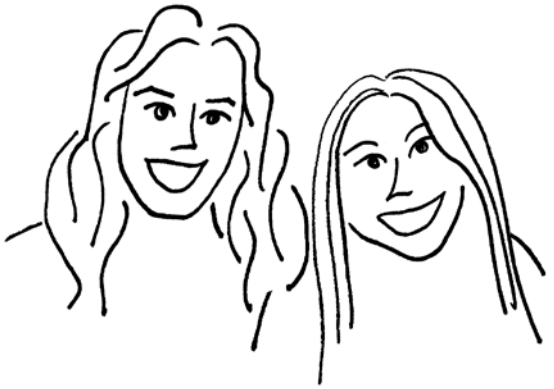
Torrance, E. P. (1991). The beyonders and their characteristics. *Creative Child and Adult Quarterly*, 16, 69-79.

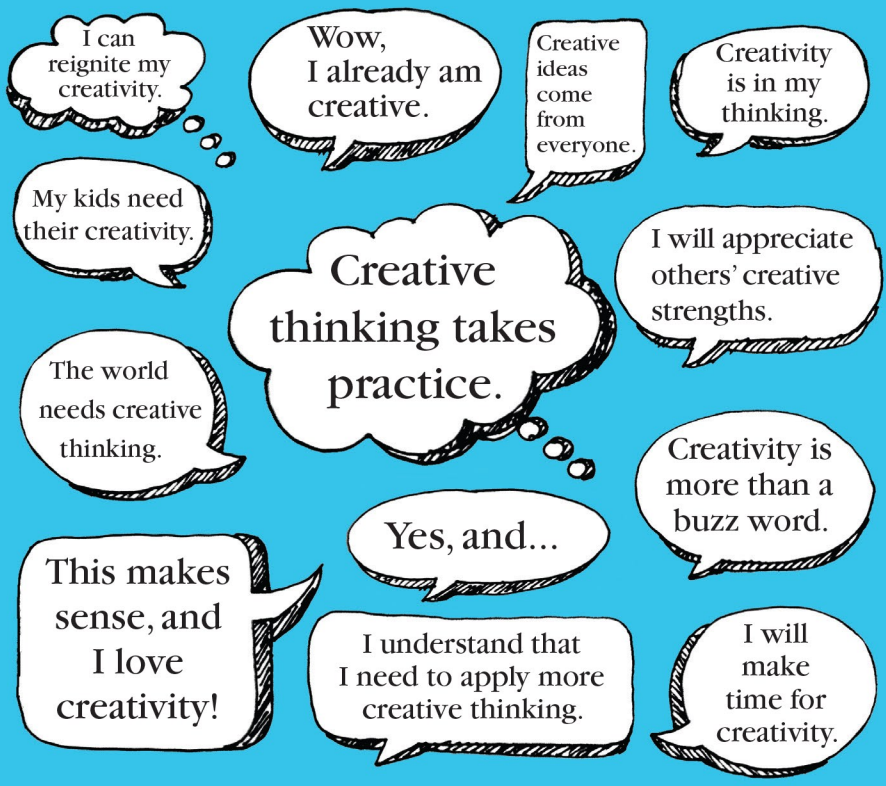
Torrance, E.P. (1995). *Why fly?* Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Kathryn P. Haydon is a consultant, writer, and speaker, helping families, schools, and organizations. An innovative educator working to change the paradigm to one based on student strengths and creative thinking, she seeks to turn the fix-it mentality upside down by asking, "What lights up this child and how can we leverage it?" Kathryn co-authored *Discovering and Developing Talents in Spanish-Speaking Students* (Corwin, 2012), writes for publications on education and creativity, and is a regular contributor to websites including *The Creativity Post.* She is also a published poet. As a former teacher, Kathryn first founded Ignite Creative Learning Studio in 2009 which led to Sparkitivity in 2012. Sparkitivity seeks to engage "square peg" students and to support parents and educators who want them to succeed. Kathryn holds a Master of Science in Creativity, Creative Problem Solving, and Change Leadership from the International Center for Studies in Creativity at SUNY Buffalo State and a Bachelor of Arts from Northwestern University. Please visit Kathryn at **sparkitivity.com**.

Jane Harvey is an insightful designer, graphic recorder, and visual facilitator. She is a creativity expert valued for her openness, empathy, humor, and three decades of experience in design. As a former 'creative' in a Fortune 100 company, she saw that people's creativity is typically underused and undervalued in organizations. In addition to freelance design work, Jane encourages and facilitates individuals, businesses, and students toward creative thinking and innovation. She earned a Master of Science in Creativity, Creative Problem Solving, and Change Leadership from the International Center for Studies in Creativity at SUNY Buffalo State and has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Parsons School of Design. Please go to **visualtranslating.com** to learn more about Jane's recent work.





This book is, indeed, for everybody—some who already consider themselves creative and love creativity, and others who feel differently. Open the book and see if this perspective propels you towards innovation.

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