

## **NEW IDEAS DO NOT COME FROM YOUR MIND**

### **THE SCIENCE OF BEING STUCK (or, how to avoid having fun when it is raining)**

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*“Liberating ourselves from stuckness that we did not previously recognize as stuckness can add tremendous new dimensions to our ability to create.”*

The newly married man comes home from work and says, “Honey, I’m home! I love you!” The wife rushes to the door with hugs and kisses and says, “Oh, Sweetheart! I love you too!” The next day the man comes home from work and says, “Honey, I’m home! I love you!” The wife takes a little more time getting to the door. When she gets there she says, “That’s nice. I love you too.” The next day the man comes home from work and says, “Honey, I’m home! I love you!” The wife keeps peeling potatoes in the kitchen and says, “Okay. That’s great. You love me. I love you. Good. Now, what I want to know is: what else do you have to offer me?”

Relationships do not die from a lack of love. Relationships die from a lack of intimacy. Intimacy comes in many levels of intensity, ranging from a simple common interest to a holy communion of being. We are not only talking about personal relationships here. We are also talking about relationships with your clients, with your colleagues, with your suppliers, and with your boss. As you can see from our story of the man coming home and repeating the words, “I love you,” intimacy is not nourished through normal communication. This story is meant to illustrate the importance of *creative* communication. Intimacy is nourished through *creative* communication. Your successful relationships will occur through your ability and enthusiasm to produce creative communications.

#### **BE WHERE YOU ARE**

Even though creating is one of the most challenging and satisfying of human experiences we rarely have classes in school about creating. We may have thought about creating. We may have struggled to create. People tell us to be creative. We may even have taken a profession that requires us to be creative. But we have a lot to learn about creating.

When we try to be creative what we may discover (if we dare to admit it) is that in many cases we are actually stuck. What we then try is to avoid being stuck. We hate being stuck. We struggle against stuckness as if it were the enemy. But nonetheless, we are stuck.

One of the techniques from Possibility Management is that we can gain power to take action by *being where we are*. When we deny where we are, or try to be

somewhere else, such as in the past, in the future, or in some other circumstances, we have no power to take action. We gain the when we are where we are.

Using this technique we can do an experiment when we are stuck. The experiment is to accept and acknowledge our stuckness. If we are willing to admit and to experience being stuck then stuckness can become our friend and can educate us. We can study the science of being stuck. The science of being stuck can reveal a lot about the science of creating.

If we do the experiment of acknowledging and accepting our stuckness, the first thing we may realize is that we cannot have stuckness without also having creating. The existence of one reveals the existence of the other. They come as a pair, like light and darkness, or motion and stillness. We are actually quite creative about the ways in which we are stuck. If you talk to others about this, you will notice that each of us has our own favorite ways to create ourselves being stuck.

To learn from being stuck we can use the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle, which says that the closer we look at something, the more it changes. By closely examining our stuckness – going into the stuckness – the stuckness can serve as the gateway to vast new domains of creating. Discovering that gateway is the purpose of this talk.

If we study our stuckness we can see that we are stuck in ways that we did not even recognize as being stuck. Suddenly we are learning about things that we did not know that we did not know about. Liberating ourselves from stuckness that we did not previously recognize as stuckness can add tremendous new dimensions to our ability to create.

Although there are many unrecognized dimensions of stuckness I will limit this investigation to five categories of stuckness. Later today in the workshop we will study the science of becoming *unstuck* and we will practice simple methods for accessing unlimited possibilities both individually and as teams. But first we will study the science of being stuck. Here are five kinds of stuckness that severely hinder our creating.

1) WE ARE STUCK IN SURVIVAL. If we think about the unlimited potential available to every individual, everywhere, all of the time, what stands between us and accessing that potential? Another way to ask this question is: If you give two people the same job and the same resources, what makes it that they always produce different results? There are many contributing factors, such as beliefs, attitudes, opinions, self-image, assumptions, decisions, conclusions, interpretations of experiences, the meaning we give to things, our education, our culture, and so on. These mental components form the structural framework of what we call our “Box.” Just like a room is made of walls, ceiling, floor, doors, windows, etc., our Box is made of beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and so on. And just like each room is unique, each Box is also unique.

Everybody has a Box. Look around. You can see the Boxes of those people sitting near you. There is only one Box that we do not normally see. Our own! Right now you have a moment where you can examine your own Box. Please use this

opportunity to answer the following question: what is the purpose of your Box? The purpose of our Box is protection and security. The purpose of our Box is to ensure our survival. How does your Box ensure your survival? The Box ensures our survival by controlling what we can perceive and what we can express like a 360 degree filter.

Our Box's survival strategy has so far worked. Our Box justifiably assumes that if it can defend itself it can protect us. Our Box has made self-defense its number-one priority.

Answer this question: What is the purpose of the universe? – Yes, it is somewhat arrogant to think that we can name the purpose of the universe, but hey, let's give it a try! – If we look around at what has been happening on our planet we could reasonably say that the purpose of the universe is evolution. Voila! We have just discovered a significant conflict of purpose between the universe and our Box.

Here we are: this jelly-bag salt-water bio-computer protected by a hard-as-nails Box righteously dedicated to defending us from any kind of change. Out there is the universe doing everything it can to get us to come out and play, to create, and to evolve. **OUR CREATING IS STUCK BEHIND THE DEFENSIVE SURVIVAL STRATEGY OF OUR BOX.**

It is possible to shift the original childhood survival-mechanism of our Box to be more in alignment with the mature creative purpose of the universe, but our culture does not provide that shift for us. Traditional cultures used to provide a right-of-passage for their people, but our modern culture does not. To be truly creative we must escape the automatic tyranny against anything not permitted by the Box, and we must go outside of our culture to make that shift. As professional creators, you are already involved in doing that. It is good to know what you are doing.

2) **WE ARE STUCK IN WORDS.** Beginning as babies we are hammered into a Verbal Reality. We do not realize what has happened. Everyone thinks they are doing us a favor. Reading and writing are universally recognized as good, a foundation-stone of intelligence and civilization. But there is a downside: No matter what language we learn to speak; languaging itself limits our creating and can make us completely stuck.

In Verbal Reality our words lead our experience, and then our experience is limited to what we have names for. If we cannot name it, we cannot experience it. Once we name it, the experience ends because we are trained to prefer the label instead of the experience. We cannot create anything outside of our words. **OUR CREATING IS STUCK IN THE PRISON OF VERBAL REALITY.**

There are many other kinds of realities besides Verbal Reality. To find one we can ask the question: What is bigger, the world of experiences, or the world of our vocabulary? As an answer to that question it is easy to have an experience that we do not have a name for. For example, read this little story: It is a hot sunny Saturday morning. A little girl is running down the sidewalk chasing after her daddy. She is wearing a short dress. She stumbles and falls down, scraping her knees, her elbows, and the palms of her hands on the rough hot cement...

Stop a moment and check-in with your body. Did you just have an experience in your skin, or in the pit of your stomach? What is the name for that experience? We do not have a name for it. Nor do we have a name for the after pain of having to pee for a long time and finally finding a toilet. We normally do not notice or speak about such experiences because we do not have words for them.

Noticing that we have many, many experiences that we have no words for can bring us into Experiential Reality. If it is not okay for us to be without words our resources for creating will be limited to only those things for which we have words. Creating itself is an experience that happens previous to words.

Experiential Reality is the source of appreciation. A woman in our training program once remarked how startling it was to see a man actually appreciate the qualities of the experience he was having. Appreciating the qualities of our experiences before we put the experiences to words opens vast resources for creating that were previously blocked by the limitations of Verbal Reality.

3) WE ARE STUCK IN LINEARITY. We first began massive implementation of Linear Thinking 150 years ago in the Industrial Revolution when we developed production lines and standard business practices. A manager of a French coal mine gave every coal miner a standard sized shovel and his coal production doubled. Linear thinking has come to its peak in the Information Age where everything from childcare to chickens is computerized and mass-produced. We are trained to believe and can prove it mathematically that the shortest distance between two points – and thus the most efficient and effective way to get from Point A to Point B – is a straight line. Once we have found a linear solution we stop thinking. Game over. This is how we are trained to think. OUR CREATING IS STUCK IN LINEAR THINKING.

About thirty-five years ago small teams of people in tiny companies began experimenting with other ways of thinking. They discovered pathways from Point A to Point B that were far quicker, saved more resources, and were more effective and more efficient than the standard linear solutions. These companies have stolen the marketplace. Nonlinear Thinking's time has come. How many Linear Thinking solutions are there to a problem? One. How many Nonlinear Thinking solutions are there to a problem? Infinity. Unlimited. Nobody knows. And nobody can predict the next Nonlinear Thinking solution. Economies, governments, sciences, financial systems, and technologies are all changing so quickly that rigid organizations are dying off like dinosaurs. The future belongs to the Nonlinear Thinkers, and we have all been trained in Linear Thinking.

4) WE ARE STUCK IN COMPETITION. We are blind to it but our basic attitude towards the world and towards each other is competition. Competition is a game strategy based on scarcity. Scarcity is the linear assumption that there are not enough resources (e.g. land, food, time, money, power, recognition, customers, ideas, love). Competition creates positionality, such as "I am right, and you are wrong." Positionality automatically produces war. Look at human history.

We forget the fact that the rules for playing all of our games with each other are created by agreement. The rules are neither true nor objective. We forget that

whenever we want to we can change our agreements and change the rules of the game. There are three games that we can play.

- 1) Competition, which is “I win, you lose.” We consciously or unconsciously think, “If I get the resources, you die. If you get the resources, I die. So I will get the resources.” OUR CREATING IS STUCK BECAUSE WE THINK THAT WE MUST COMPETE. Again, competition easily leads to war.
- 2) Cooperation, which is “I win, you win.” Cooperation can produce significantly different results from competition. However, when practically implementing “I win, you win” we often resort to compromises that degrade into the condition “I lose, you lose.” Or, we think, “It is okay with me if you win as long as I win just a little bit more,” and then we are back to competition.
- 3) Fortunately there is a third game to play: creative collaboration, which is “Winning Happening.” Notice that in Winning Happening there is no “I” and no “you.” This is because Winning Happening is a Principle. Winning Happening is at first difficult to grasp because we have few examples and the assumption of scarcity seems so obviously provable. For example, there *is* not enough food, because people in Africa are starving to death. But we forget that farmers in France, Germany and America are *paid by their governments not to grow food*. Resources become abundant when we take responsibility for sourcing the resources. If there are not enough resources we choose to create whatever is needed. Then creating gets abundant too.

5) WE ARE STUCK IN FEAR. We are trained that it is not okay to feel. This is amazing. We have bodies. Our bodies have feelings. Our culture says that it is not okay to feel, so when we have feelings, we are not okay. (Being not okay could be this erroneous! Becoming okay again could be as quick as making the new decision that it is okay to feel!) Even though we have feelings every day we do not have clarity about our feelings.

Here is a short course in feelings. (I strongly recommend that at some point in the near future you take a longer course in feelings. For now this will have to do.) There are four feelings: anger, sadness, joy, and fear. In our old way of thinking, there are three bad feelings and only one good feeling. But actually it is not okay to feel glad either because if you are feeling glad people think that you do not have enough work. Or that you are taking drugs.

Of all the feelings, it is definitely not okay to feel fear because we have been trained that fear is bad or dangerous. OUR CREATING IS STUCK BECAUSE WE ARE AFRAID OF FEAR.

With a new mental map about feelings, feelings are neither positive nor negative, neither good nor bad. Feelings are neutral energy and valuable information that can serve us professionally. We do not have to be afraid of fear. For our whole lives before now, fear has been cross-wired in our mind as fear equals danger or fear equals being hurt. We can rewire fear without the negative meaning. We cut the old connection and wire it straight across. Fear equals fear. Then we have an “x” on the map of feelings. We know where we are. Fear is fear. Then we can take action as needed.

If we are afraid of fear we will never go to the edge of our Box and step into the unknown. If we do not go into the unknown we will only do what we have already done before. By doing what we have done before we are making something from something. Creating is the act of making something *from nothing*. You can tell if you are really creating because you will feel at least a little bit afraid.

### THE SCIENCE OF STUCKNESS

By examining the ways we are thinking about things that we did not think we could think about we can liberate whole new waves of creation.

- We can expand our Box rather than being stuck in merely surviving.
- We can shift to Experiential Reality rather than being stuck in Verbal Reality.
- We can go Nonlinear rather than being stuck in Linear Thinking.
- We can play Winning Happening rather than being stuck in competition.
- And we can become friends with fear rather than being afraid of fear.

There is actually a sixth way that our creating is stuck. We can mention in now.

6) WE ARE STUCK IN SANITY. Our culture gives us a strong preference towards appearing to be mentally sane. If we appear insane we may be abandoned or rejected by our culture. If we appear mentally sane we will be accepted. We have exchanged our freedom to be crazy for acceptance by our culture. OUR CREATING IS STUCK BECAUSE WE HAVE NO PERMISSION TO GO CRAZY. We use so much of our energy to make the appearance of our own sanity that we disconnect from our free imagination.

In our culture, mind is at war with imagination. Mind has won. As a result we have lost our ability to take actions for no reason. This means that our reasons have more power than we do. If we as individuals had the power we could choose for no reason. But making decisions or acting without a reason makes us look crazy. We put all our efforts into creating "good" reasons that are acceptable to the people around us so that we appear to be sane.

It is not too difficult to start getting our imagination back. Reconnecting to our imagination is something that we cannot talk much about, but it is something that we can do. This is where we will start our workshop at 14.00 at the Tagungszentrum. You can join us if you would like to. You know what we will be doing. We will be getting unstuck by reclaiming our ability to go crazy. See you there!