Design the Future

Why, what, how and what else...a bird's eye view

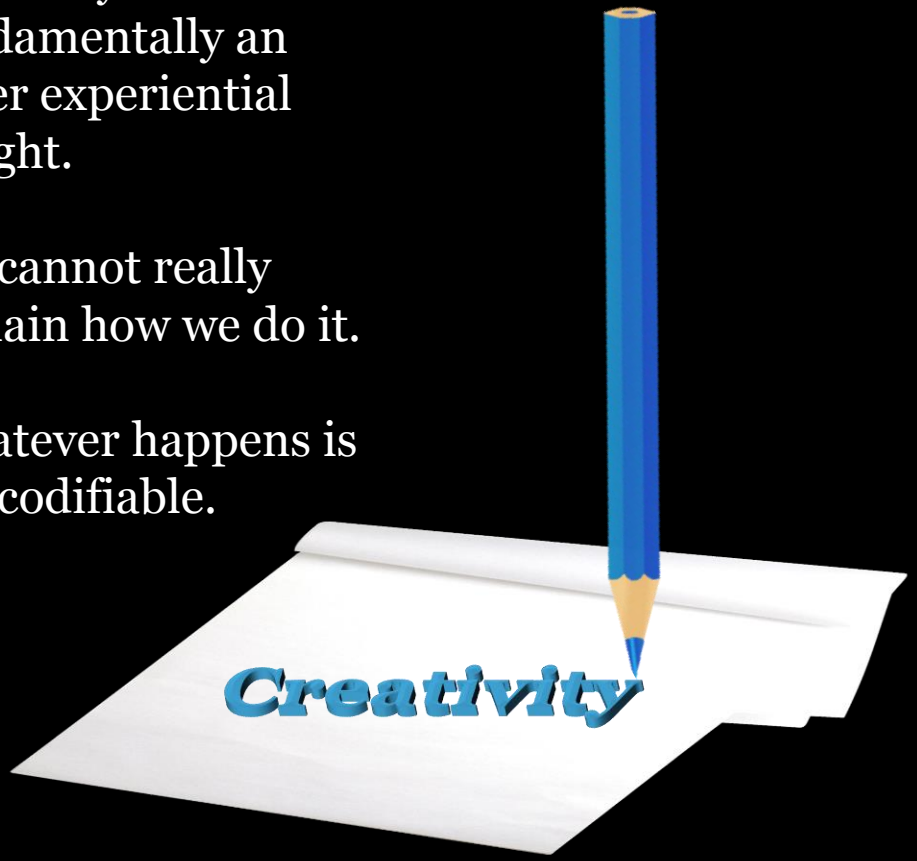
Idea Square, CERN

A personal view of creativity

Creativity is fundamentally an inner experiential insight.

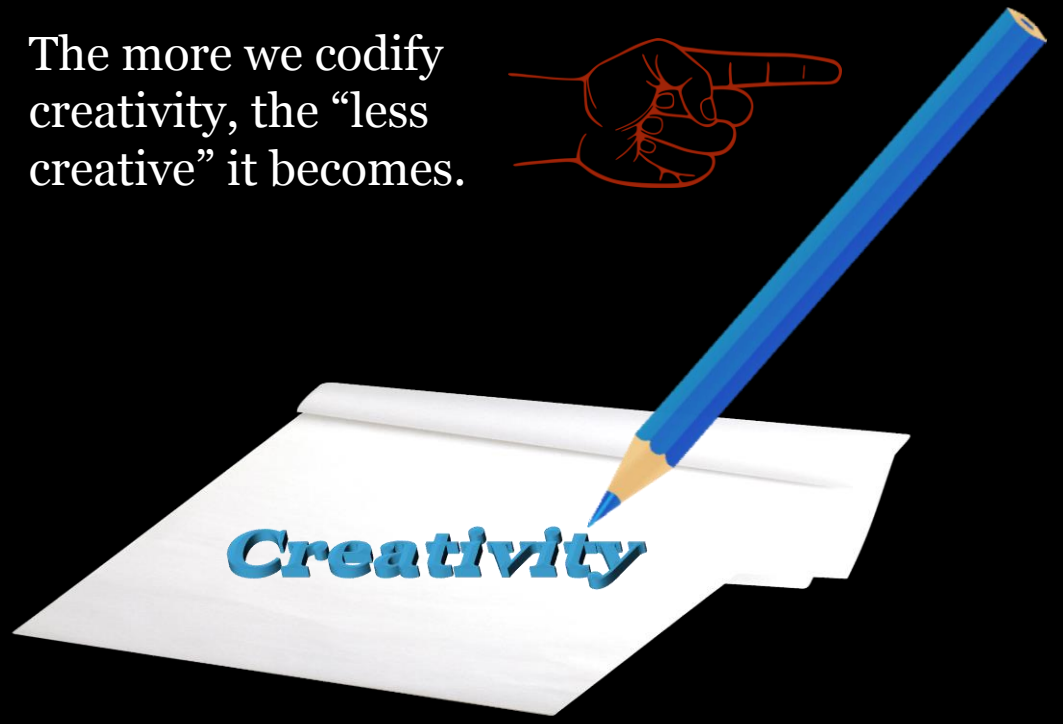
We cannot really explain how we do it.

Whatever happens is not codifiable.



Any methodology is a process for codification. Otherwise a process cannot be shared for reproducing it.

The more we codify creativity, the “less creative” it becomes.



P. G. Tello, and M. Nordberg, *A brief introduction to the Process Space*, forthcoming on CIJ.

My obsession…

- Developing and implementing what I call, “Minimally Invasive Methodologies” (MIM).
- A methodology qualifies as MIM when it incorporates the minimal codification for interfering as little as possible with the inner experiential insight that creativity is.
- What do I call minimum codification? Think about *Pictionary*: One notebook, one theme, pencils and the rule that nobody can talk for guessing…the rest is a good approximation to “raw creativity”. So, *Pictionary* has only 1 methodological rule (=no talk, just draw).
- In other words: “*I share with you a minimum set of rules and you decide entirely how you play the game and these rules, though minimalistic, would allow you playing the game again.*
- This is what *Design the Future* is…applied to the realm of “imagining big” (e.g. non-incremental).

Design the Future: A Bird's eye view

- Workshop of minimum two weeks.
- Teams (ideal 5 members, no background limit, no age limit…9 to 99)
- Objective: Build your toy society of the future (long term 2070 onwards) and imagine a technology that was largely responsible for the shape of your society.
- Divided in MIM modules (next slides).
- Only one final deliverable: A narrative (short video, story, performance…(no PPTs).
- No intermediate deliverables neither pitching…nothing.

Design the Future: A Bird's eye view (today)

Module 1: Counterfactual Thinking

Game: *Cha-cha-cha*

Why? Students have problems for thinking counterfactually. Meaning: Challenging assumptions.

Cha-cha-cha is a game of 5 steps out of which only one is methodological.

Module 2: Exponential and System Thinking

Interactive talk and discussion

Why? Students have problems about thinking non-linearly and in a systemic way.

Module 3: Option Thinking, Combinatorial Thinking and System Thinking

Game: *Multiverse Thinking*

Why? For integrating all the thinking toolboxes learnt until now.

Multiverse Thinking is a game with 7 steps out of which only 2 are methodological.

Lessons learnt (out of practice and students and tutors' testimonials)

- "A workshop that really changes the way they think about society, sustainability, technology".
- Multiverse Thinking is on grater demand every year (this one 3 editions).
- Students, in the beginning, feel a blocking for…"are you sure we are able to imagine what we want?"
- After the initial blocking is passed, creativity and imagination is unstoppable.
- Their creativity runs better without pitching and PPTs…they feel thrilled by writing and/or making a narrative video (small movie).
- The younger the students are the better it works (= less time spent in resetting their minds for thinking freely (modules 1 and 2)). I run a mini-workshop of 2 h with 7 year's old…it has been the best.
- Design the Future is always as work in process…

Design the Future: Novelties for future editions

Module 1: Experiencing raw creativity

Game: *Quantum Concept Dynamics*

Why? I feel the need of restoring the confidence in the students that we are creative creatures and that we should not be afraid of letting our imagination free from feasibility, desirability and viability.

Quantum Concept Dynamics is a game with 3 steps out of which 1 is methodological.

Module 2: Counterfactual Thinking

Game: *Cha-cha-cha*

Why? Students have problems for thinking counterfactually. Meaning: Challenging assumptions.

Cha-cha-cha is a game of 5 steps out of which only 1 is methodological.

Preliminarily tested

Module 3: Creative Deconstructionism Thinking

Game: *Creative Destruction*

Why? I feel the need to share with the students the benefit of deconstructionism and reassembly as a creative pathway. I think it is not sufficiently and scarcely taught.

Creative Destruction is a game with 5 steps out of which only 1 is methodological.

Module 4: Exponential and System Thinking

Interactive talk and discussion

Why? Students have problems about thinking non-linearly and in a systemic way.

Module 5: Option Thinking, Combinatorial Thinking and System Thinking

Game: *Multiverse Thinking*

Why? For integrating all the thinking toolboxes learnt until now.

Multiverse Thinking is a game with 7 steps out of which only 2 are methodological.

Preliminarily tested

Longer term plans, challenges and personal pitfalls

Plans

- Continue delivering it.
- I intend to stop with the addition of the new two modules (unless something really worth crosses my mind).
- I would like, if time allows, writing a booklet with the whole Design the Future modules and an intro talking about why.

Challenges and personal pitfalls

I will be honest…I am personally not interested in measuring/quantifying anything. For me it is enough observing the students before/after and listen to their testimonials. I know it is wrong but this is who I am. So, if anyone is interested you are super welcome!!!

Thanks a lot!!!

Questions?