

Creative Process The Stages

1. Problem Presented

2. **Preparation**--immersion in the problem, search for information...the imagination roams free.

- a. Brainstorming
- b. Research

3. Ideation

- a. Sketches
- b. Notes

4. **Frustration**- when the rational, analytic mind, searching for a solution, reaches the limits of abilities.

- a. Necessary part of the process, the "darkness before the dawn".
- b. Evidence suggests that people often fail to solve problems because they give up prematurely.

5. **Incubation**- more passive stage where you digest information you have gathered. Much of what goes on is inside...focused awareness--it happens in the unconscious. The unconscious mind is a storehouse of everything you know. All conscious awareness is unconscious before it is conscious---it must pass through the unconscious--less than 1% of what is in our unconscious ever reaches conscious awareness.

The unconscious knows more than the conscious...we call this intuition.

- a. Daydreaming fits into this category.
- b. Every moment of the day your mind is being occupied, controlled by someone else. At school, at work, watching television...somebody else's mind is controlling what you think about. Getting away from all that is really important. You need to kick back in a chair or go for a walk and just daydream...meditate.
- c. Dreams also often reveal answers to problems.

6. **Illumination**- with luck, immersion and daydreaming lead to illumination. When the solution seems to come to you out of nowhere. With reality it was hard work.

7. **Translation**- The thought alone is not a creative act.

The final stage is translation, when you take your insights and transform them into action.

- a. Make the ideas real—drawing, sculpture, paper or whatever.
- b. So then it is more than a passing thought but an idea that can become useful to others.

8. **Reflection and Revision**—Reflection means you seriously analyze how your solution relates to the problem.

- a. Does your solution present a 'new' or 'creative' solution?
- b. It's possible your idea, once presented, will need revision based on reflection, trial and/or feedback from others.

This process is a rough approximation. Any process is fluid and can flow many directions...and in the course of a complex creative act...there can be a series of preparations, frustrations, incubations, illuminations and translations.