

In “The Bias Against Creativity: Why People Desire but Reject Creative Ideas”, the authors state:

Future research should identify factors that mitigate or reverse the bias against creativity.

The process of finding creative solutions to problems is discussed in Stephen R. Covey’s book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. In essence, Covey argues that one must establish independence before one can effectively work interdependently with others. One must win the “private victory” before one can win the “public victory”. A healthy tree must have a strong root system underground to support the trunk and branches that are above ground.

The habits that are part of the private victory include:

1. Be proactive
2. Begin with the end in mind, and
3. Put first things first.

Once one is sufficiently competent in these areas, one can move on to the public victory:

4. Think win-win
5. Seek first to understand and then to be understood and
6. Synergize.

Of course, to be effective we need to take care of our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health, so the entire concept is surrounded by the final habit:

7. Sharpen the saw.

Covey argues that the most important habit is to be proactive, which means to take responsibility for our lives. The opposite of proactivity is reactivity, which means constantly playing the victim, blaming others for our situations and living with an “if only” perspective on life. Problems we encounter are always “out there”, and we can do nothing about them.

A proactive person understands that the greatest human freedom is the ability to choose how to respond to any given situation. No one makes us act a certain way and we take responsibility for the consequences of the choices we make. The proactive person is mindful of their emotions, has a life-giving sense of right and wrong, and is able to weigh likely outcomes of different alternatives. They make the best choices possible and accept the results.

The proactive person naturally understands the importance of goals (an end in mind) and time management (put first things first). They also recognize our interdependence with other human beings, and they look to create situations that are mutually beneficial (win-win).

An important quality of a proactive person is that they recognize that they do not have all the answers and thus value the opinions of others. They are thus able to listen with an open mind before sharing their own perspectives.

In other words, a proactive person is able to embrace the creativity of others without feeling threatened in any way. They can see the bigger picture and focus on what is of greatest benefit to all.

Once this diversity of opinion is embraced, the individuals in can take their ideas to the collective level and establish synergy, thus creating a result far beyond the capacity of any single person.

Perhaps future research on creativity should first find a way of measuring proactivity and reactivity in individuals. One could then study whether or not Covey's theory of effectiveness is demonstrated in the collective creativity of proactive individuals, and compare these results to those of a group of reactive individuals.

A brief search of the internet shows that some work is already being done in this area:

<https://journals.aom.org/doi/abs/10.5465/ambpp.2016.13935abstract>