

## **The Cognitive Maps of Creativity**

As we continue our series on creativity, we will discuss the five step process of preparing yourself to become a writer—or any creative avocation—and how you shift from being a person who merely enjoys the creativity of others, to becoming creative yourself. We will also explore and do exercises to explore the cognitive maps of creativity, and how you can tap these webs to translate your idea into a finished product—a book, a screenplay, a movie, a dance, a song—that satisfies your inner desire to create.

### **What Does It Take to Be Creative?**

People learn to be creative. People start out looking to the creativity of others, both consuming it and admiring it—perhaps even idealizing those who are creative, turning them into larger-than-life heroes or “celebrities.”

Creative “consumers” enjoy a variety of creative outlets: books, poetry, music, television dramas, viewing art in museums or galleries, theatre, movies, opera, dance, and sports.

They may become avid “fans” of the people who create in one or more of these genres, for example, they might buy all of the books of a particular author; or they might purchase all of the compact disks of a particular musician, download his or her MP3s from the internet, and go to as many of his or her concerts as they can.

Yet these consumers and fans seldom find their own creative voice, or develop their own ability to create. They admire others, but don’t know how to become artists or entertainers themselves.

It is possible to bridge this divide to become creative yourself. We will detail the five steps to show you how to develop yourself in different creative and entertainment modalities.

To introduce these five steps, we will use as an analogy, how people advance in their careers.

The first step is **Observation**. In your career path, this might take the form of watching someone perform a particular line of work, either as a character on a television drama, or perhaps you actually experience their services. You might interview someone in that profession, and find out how they learned to do what they do. You might even experience what it is like to do what they do through volunteering and watching them on the job.

The second step is **Learning and Vocational Training**. Here you gain the knowledge and skills to learn to perform the job. Your training may include an opportunity to practice your skills through an internship, so you feel more confident.

The third step is **Gaining Experience**. Here you apply to different employers. One of them eventually hires you, and you work in the profession for which you have trained.

The fourth step is **Learning Additional Skills**. To advance in your profession, you need additional skills—to acquire new “people skills,” sometimes called social skills; to improve your technical skills; to gain supervisory or management skills; and to enhance your productivity skills, by which you learn to do your job more efficiently, and to produce a superior product or service.

The fifth step is **Leadership or Mentorship**. Here you take on a more responsible position, perhaps moving into a management role, or become involved in training, mentoring, or teaching others.

So let’s look at how these five steps play out in developing your creative abilities in different professions.



*A Webinar of the Mudrashram® Institute of Spiritual Studies*

<i>Profession</i>	<i>Observation</i>	<i>Learning and Training</i>	<i>Gaining Experience</i>	<i>Learning Additional Skills</i>	<i>Leadership and Mentorship</i>
Composer	Listen to music and watch musicians play music	Learn to play and instrument	Play other people's songs	Learn about composing, conducting, advanced musical theory and techniques, or music production, and practice them	Compose your own songs and lead others to play them
Dance Teacher	Watch others dance	Learn the basic dance moves	Dance in a dance company or for a play	Learn choreography, advanced dance techniques, dance production	Teach others to dance, design dance programs, produce dance performances
Actor	Watch others act	Take acting classes, and learn the techniques	Act in plays and on television	Learn advanced acting techniques, to write screenplays, and to direct a play or show	Become a acting coach, a director, or screenplay writer



<i>Profession</i>	<i>Observation</i>	<i>Learning and Training</i>	<i>Gaining Experience</i>	<i>Learning Additional Skills</i>	<i>Leadership and Mentorship</i>
Writer	Read other writers' work in the genre of your interest	Take classes to learn to write, practice a variety of writing media: essays, poems, short stories, screenplays	Publish your writing on the internet, in books, in magazines, or do poetry readings	Take additional training in writing, obtain critique and guidance from a professional writer; learn book production	Become a writing coach or teacher, write books that sell well, or become a book publisher and editor
Painter	View others painting	Take classes in painting	Paint different subjects: portraits, landscapes, still life, abstract, classical—show and sell these pieces	Learn advanced art techniques	Sell your art at high prices once you are in demand, teach others how to paint
Athlete	Watch others perform your chosen sport	Learn how to play the game, and practice your sport with someone to coach you	Play on a team with others in the sport; compete in your sport at events	Get coaching to optimize your sports performance, so you become a superior athlete and win games and events	Become a coach or sports trainer

## Multiple Avenues of Creative Intelligence

To understand the varieties of intelligence that impact your creativity, we will draw from Howard Gardner's work on this topic. We quote from Wikipedia:

[[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theory\\_of\\_multiple\\_intelligences](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theory_of_multiple_intelligences)]

“Howard Gardner proposed the theory of multiple intelligences in 1983 as a model of intelligence that differentiates intelligence into various specific... modalities, rather than seeing it as dominated by a single general ability...”

“Gardner believes that eight abilities meet these criteria:

- Spatial
- Linguistic
- Logical–mathematical
- Bodily–kinesthetic
- Musical
- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal
- Naturalistic

“He considers that existential and moral intelligence may also be worthy of inclusion...”

In our own writing, we have divided up those types of intelligence that operate through the intellect and those that operate through the personal intuition.

**Intellectual intelligence** uses strategies to operate on abstract concepts or ideas. It primarily uses *inductive and dialectical reasoning*.

**Intuitive intelligence** opens into deeper layers of structure and meaning. It primarily uses *mandalic or synthetic reasoning*.

We briefly compare Gardner's theory with our own formulations. Our structural map of the Intellect originated in an article, "The Seven Chords of Jnana Yoga"

[<http://www.mudrashram.com/sevenchords1.html>]

In this article, we describe the four types of intellectual intelligence:

"Education seeks to awaken the intellect, the second chord of Jnana Yoga. The intellect comprises four distinct functions:"

**Verbal-Written** – This function is the ability to read and comprehend written language. It bestows the ability to communicate information and concepts through writing.

**Kinesthetic-Intuitive** – This is the ability to communicate non-verbally through sign and symbol. This gives the ability to understand spatial, mechanical, organizational and interpersonal arrays, and to perform analyses and decision-making in these domains.

**Auditory-Speech** – This is the ability to listen to spoken information and derive meaning from it from one's native and other languages. It grants the ability to communicate information and concepts through speech.

**Mathematical-Logical** – This is the ability to reason and solve problems using mathematics and logic.

[You can learn more about the applications of meditation to education in our book, *The Practical Applications of Meditation in Daily Life and Education*.]

We excerpt from some of our heretofore-unpublished explorations of the intelligences that operate at the level of the personal intuition. You are the first to see it!



### *Comparing the Two Models*

Level of the Mind	Boyd's Categories	Gardner's Type(s) of Intelligence
Intellect	Verbal-written	Linguistic
	Kinesthetic-Intuitive	Spatial Bodily Kinesthetic Naturalistic
	Auditory-Speech	Linguistic
	Mathematical-Logical	Logical-Mathematical
Personal Intuition	Musical	Musical
	Emotional Intelligence or Empathy	Interpersonal
	Self knowledge	Intrapersonal
	Spiritual intelligence, connection with the Earth (environment) and Heaven (the Superconscious mind)	Existential and moral intelligence [We suspect that Gardner equated this type of intelligence with the Christ Child or Moon Soul nucleus of identity]

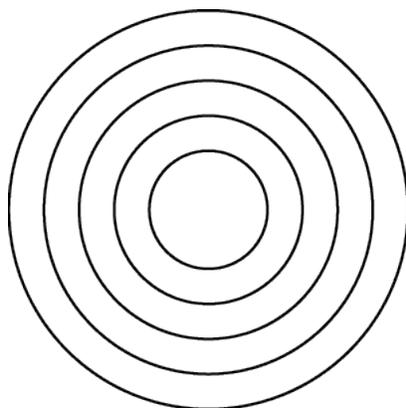
We derived our model of the eight intelligences from contemplating the four quadrants of the intellect and personal intuition, using an aspect of Raja Yoga called *microconcentration*. We teach this method, and several other insightful techniques, in our basic meditation courses—The Mudrashram® Master Course in Meditation, or its sister program, The Accelerated Meditation Program.

## **The Creative Mandala**

We are going to dive deeper into the structures of intuitive knowing, which appear as progressive layers within the mind. We identify seven major levels of this intuitive prehension of the world and the realms of consciousness.

1. **Neurological substrate** – Contemplate the layers of your brain cells, and how they connect with other cells to form associative networks.
2. **The schemas of Scientific Knowledge** – Contemplate the arrays of ordered knowledge within each scientific discipline, which proceed from elementary concepts to highly complex theories.
3. **The mandala of Personal Intuition** – Contemplate the layers of instrumental music that make up songs; empathically sense the levels of deeper knowledge of another person; sound the levels of your personality through polling the voices and feelings within you; intuit your embeddedness in the earth and larger Cosmos.
4. **The rings of Soul Knowledge** – Contemplate the spheres of consciousness your Soul has opened up to your current stage on the Path—these are the expansions of consciousness your Soul has undergone, or as they say in the Western mystery teachings, the Initiations you have taken.
5. **The layers of the Higher Unconscious** – Contemplate the pattern of your spiritual destiny: the future initiations of the Soul up to the level of its Liberation; look at the pattern of the unopened track of the Nada to the origin of the spirit.
6. **The local structure of Inner Space** – Contemplate the forms [vehicles of consciousness], Subplanes, and Planes for the Division of the Continuum of Consciousness in which you dwell.
7. **The global structure of Inner Space** – Contemplate the grand map of consciousness, comprising the Personal, Subtle, Planetary, Transplanetary, Cosmic, Supracosmic, and Transcendental bands of the Great Continuum of Consciousness.

## Playing with Circles



Ever since I was a child, I have loved concentric circles. It turns out that these concentric circles play a role in meditation. For example:

**Contemplation** – When you concentrate or focus your mind, you contract your mind stuff (chittam) in the pattern of concentric circles

**Sonic** – If you chant OM, you create a sand grain resonance pattern of concentric circles

**Temporal** – If you lay these concentric circles on the temporal dimension, you go back through the moments of time in this life, through embryonic development, and through the past lives laid down on the Akashic Records

**Terrestrial** – If you lay these concentric circles on the geo-spatial dimension, you create the familiar grid of latitude and longitude

**Biology** – If you lay these concentric circles on the biological dimension, you trace the changes of ancestors over time, follow them back through all of the species of living beings to the first living creature, and locate each gene on the DNA molecule that makes up each species genome.

**Consciousness** – If you lay these concentric circles on the consciousness dimension, you see the mirror of the Soul's current station on the Path, and the stages that are yet to come.

**Matter** – If you lay these concentric circles on the chemical and physical dimension, you discover the structure of matter is comprised of increasingly more complex structures of electrons, protons, and neutrons. Going deeper into the energetic substrate of matter, you find the energetic arrays of the subatomic particles.

**Astral Plenum** – If you lay these concentric circles on the quality dimension, you will find there is a continuum of qualities going from ultimate evil [e.g., the Devil] to the highest good [e.g., God].

**Vehicles of Consciousness** – If you lay these concentric circles on the dimension of inner form (Swarupa, or vehicle of consciousness), you discover that there are organizing and integrating structures within those forms, that appear as the chakras. With the progressive unfoldment of the Soul on the Path, it embodies, animates, and operates additional vehicles of consciousness. Looking forward on the Path, you can visualize the dormant, unawakened, and potential vehicles of consciousness that your Soul will activate, as its development continues.

## **Applying Our Friend, the Circle, to Creativity**

When you are going to come up with an idea for your best selling novel, or whatever creative project you wish to pursue, you can use cognitive maps to flesh out your finished masterpiece that thousands of people will instantly fall in love with, buy jillions of copies, and make you rich and famous.

A *cognitive map* is simply an array of primary, secondary, and tertiary associations that you organize through their relevance, so you can visualize the entire project as a whole.

One of the cognitive maps that you were taught in school was the **outline**, which you hated. You learned that each paragraph had a primary idea, secondary supportive concepts, and tertiary commentary upon your main topic and your supporting points.

You wrote your required essays showing your mastery of this method, received your “A”, and promptly stopped doing it upon graduation, hoping to never experience this pressure and abuse ever again!

So you did your outline

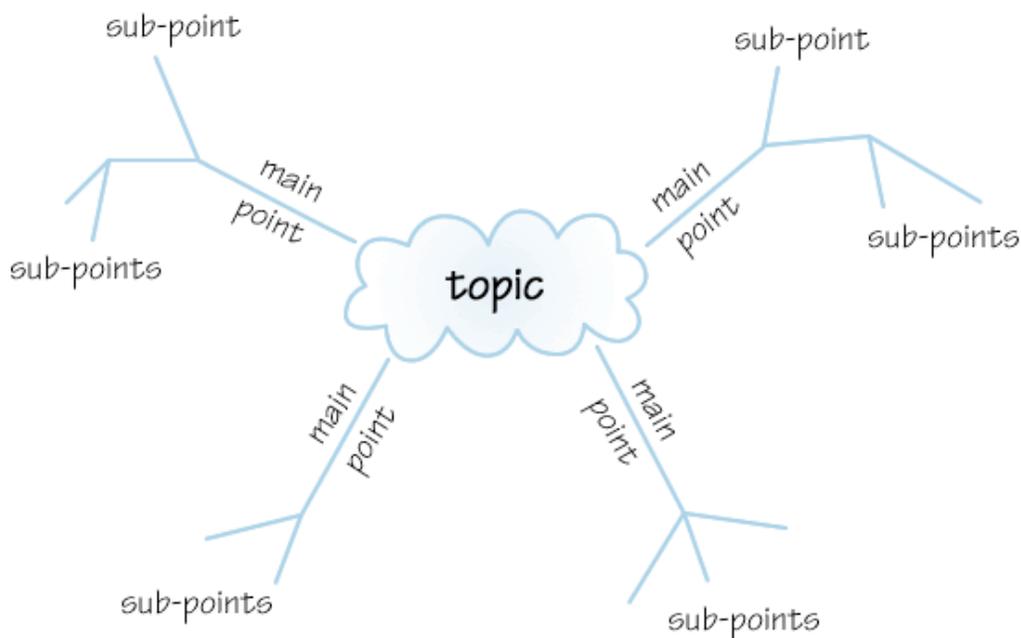
I. Primary idea [topic]

A. Secondary idea [concept explanation or presentation] [1]

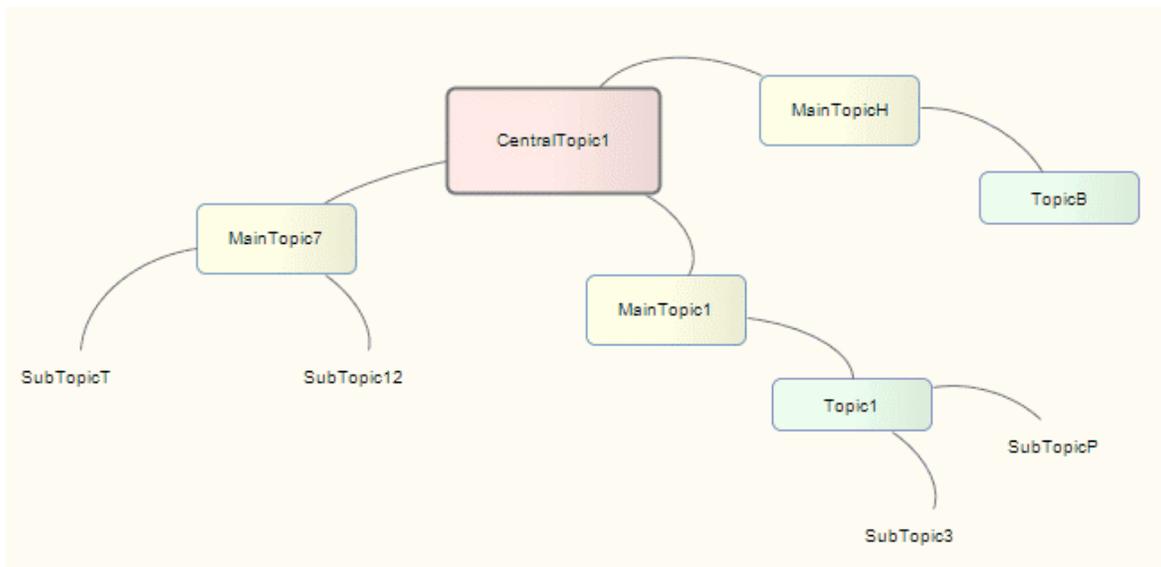
1. Tertiary idea or point [1] supporting the secondary idea
2. Tertiary idea [2]
3. Tertiary idea [3]

B. Secondary idea [concept explanation or presentation] [2], etc.

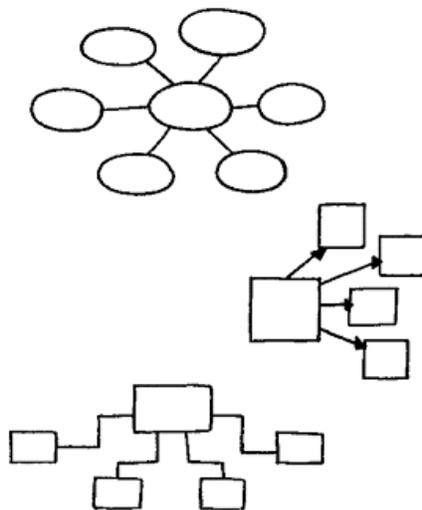
But you can also capture these ideas in a graphical form. Here are some examples of mind map templates you can use to get started with your brainstorming. There are a variety of programs available on the Internet that will allow you to construct mind map models for your project.



Here's another version:



Or how about these concept maps?



If you want to be inspired, do an image search for “mind maps” on Google, or your favorite search engine. It will blow your mind—the wonderful creativity of people, who have used this tool!

Use a mind map to create your masterpiece, and tap the cognitive layers of your creativity.

Thank you for attending our webinar today!

