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A FAUSTIAN EXCHANGE: WHAT IS TO BE HUMAN IN THE ERA OF UBIQUITOUS TECHNOLOGY?

To be human is to be creative

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Abstract We will assert than in the era of Ubiquitous Technology to be human is to be creative. Small children are experimental and creative actors. The socialisation process in modern societies, both at home and at educational institutions, does not enhance and develop their creativity. On the contrary, their creativity is discouraged in many ways. We conceptualise creativity developmentally: It is possible to use activities, teaching methods, motivation and procedures to enhance and develop creativity, even in older people. This paper gives some guides that can be used both at home and at work to explore, enhance and develop ones own creativity and the creativity of others. Each suggestion is presented from a practical viewpoint and then related to some of the tools and concepts that scientists and artists use in their creative endeavours.

Keywords Creativity tools · ARTS · Sciences · Divergence · Convergence

1 Introduction

> *I do not seek the meaning of creativity.*
> *I seek the experience of being creative.*

In the age of pervasive and streaming technologies, we get the feeling that the more we get caught up in a process of self-commodification, the more we are threatened with the loss of our *existential autonomy*. I will propose that the

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way out of this trap is creativity. To be human is to be creative.

Educational systems are primarily designed to teach children to look for the one right answer. This is not always a good strategy in problem solving because often it is the second, third or even tenth 'right' answer that is the best to solve a problem. In some cases, ten 'right' answers might not do the job, but a combination of them could give the needed impetus to a real solution. Nothing is more dangerous than an idea, when it is the only one you have. For more creative thinking, we need different viewpoints. *Divergent thinking* is needed to produce as many ideas as possible. The best way to get a creative idea is first to get a lot of ideas. This is why professional photographers take so many pictures when shooting an important subject. They may take twenty or sixty shots. In doing this, they will purposely change the different parameters of the shoot. That is because they know that out of all the pictures they take, there may be only a few that capture what they are looking for. The process of selecting those few is known as *convergent thinking*.

Based on my experience as a teacher and lecturer in the area of creativity and problem solving (Vidal 2010), as a researcher in creative methods (Vidal 2009a) and as a facilitator for groups of professionals in creative workshops and conferences (Vidal 2004, 2009b, c); I have reached the following conclusion: *The lack of divergent thinking ability is the main bottleneck in the creative process.*

This bottleneck could be ameliorated if each individual would work on developing his own divergent abilities. Very simple means, tools or exercises can be utilised. Below I outline some simple guides to enhance ones ability to diverge. These guides or tools are the most popular. Each has been used and is still used in practice by many