Chapter 3
Wandering the World in Search of Creativity

Robert Alan Black

Abstract Since 1977, the author of this chapter has been wandering around the world in search of creative thinking, creativity, and creative people while challenging himself to be creative everyday. Totally, he has traveled in 93 countries on six continents. This chapter shares some of the things he has discovered in his wandering.

A Preamble

Since 1977 I have been wandering around the world in search of creative thinking, creativity, and creative people while challenging myself to be creative everyday. What started out as simply a dream trip to fulfill a fantasy of a lifetime, travel around the world like Phileas T. Fogg did in Around the World in Eighty Days, became partially a research project.

Initially, I was searching architecture, graphic design, signage, and interior design. In 1998 I began searching for examples of creativity being taught and trained, and in 2001 I took my first of ten trips completely around the world in search of creative thinking, creativity, and creative people while challenging myself to be creative everyday. I have traveled in 93 countries on six continents. This chapter (that based on my initial attempts at preparing this article for the 2002 Creativity’s Global Correspondents) shares some of the things I have discovered in my wandering.

Since 1976 I have focused much to most of my efforts (personally and professionally) on the application and development of creativity: mine and others. Over the past 39 years, professionally, I have slowly refined my focus to S.P.R.E.A.D.ng™ creative thinking throughout workplaces. S.P.R.E.A.D.ng™ is the acronym I use to demonstrate to people what I believe needs to be done within workplaces to enhance, expand, and enrich the creative thinking of all employees (support, promote, recognize, encourage, apply, and develop).

R.A. Black, Ph.D. (*)
S.P.R.E.A.D.ng Creative Thinking Throughout, Athens, GA 30604, USA
e-mail: alaniscre8ng@gmail.com

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During my 73 days traveling around the world, the summer of 2001, through New Zealand, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, India, Dubai, Turkey, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, England, and France, I sought to find examples of creativity everywhere I went and to interview people about their own creativity and creativity in general in their country.

As a skeleton structure for this chapter, I have chosen to use two lists of traits of creative people. The first list comes from the TTCT™ (Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking), and the second comes from an ongoing project I have been working on since I was a doctoral student studying with Paul Torrance in 1980. The 20 traits from the TTCT™ represent 20 traits that are examined by the TTCT™ tests based on over 40 years of E. Paul Torrance’s scientific study with subjects around the world. The 32 traits from my “Are You a Crayon Breaker?” exercise come from a survey study I did of articles on the traits of creative people written from 1950 to 1980. I have used the survey as part of over 2100 professional speeches and workshops since 1981 to suggest the existence of creative thinking potential in all people and also to indicate different styles of creative thinking.

During my trip, I often had people I met and interviewed complete the 32 traits survey to share which they believed fit them. While we talked together, I introduced them to the work and ideas of E. Paul Torrance and the 20 traits from the TTCT™. In addition, as a post trip survey, I have reviewed my daily journal notes using both the list of 20 from the TTCT™ and my 32 “Crayon Breaker” exercise traits for potential understandings of what I experienced and discovered.

The Traits

TTCT™ Traits

1. Fluency—many ideas
2. Flexibility—different types of ideas
3. Elaboration—addition of details
4. Originality—uniqueness
5. Abstractness of approach moving from reality
6. Openness—resisting early closure or completion
7. Change of context (cross-interpretation)
8. Combination of ideas/facts—synthesis
9. Breakthrough from current limits
10. Unusual viewpoint
11. Internal perspective
12. Humorous perspective
13. Richness and colorful detail
14. Feelings and emotions
15. Fantasy
16. Movement and sound—sense change
17. Multiple idea combinations
18. Macroscale perspective—seeing from larger view
19. Provocative viewpoint
20. Future orientation

**Are You a Crayon Breaker™**

1. Sensitive
2. Not motivated by money
3. Sense of destiny
4. Adaptable
5. Tolerant of ambiguity
6. Observant
7. Perceive world differently
8. See possibilities
9. Question asker
10. Can synthesize correctly often intuitively
11. Able to fantasize
12. Flexible
13. Fluent
14. Imaginative
15. Intuitive
16. Original
17. Ingenious
18. Energetic
19. Sense of humor
20. Self-actualizing
21. Self-disciplined
22. Self-knowledgeable
23. Specific interests
24. Divergent thinker
25. Curious
26. Open-ended
27. Independent
28. Severely critical
29. Nonconforming
30. Confident
31. Risk taker
32. Persistent
The Beginning of My Creative Wanderings

From 3:30 pm in Athens, Georgia on June 25th 2001 to 5:30 am in Auckland and finally 11:00 am June 27th in Christchurch I began my first trip around the world.

After I arrived in New Zealand, in Christchurch, on the train to Dunedin, in Wellington, and in Auckland, I asked architects, designers, advertising art directors and account executives, landscape architects, and theater people I met and/or stayed with to complete my “Crayon Breaker” survey.

Initially, I discovered that the lowest number of traits checked off by the people was 15 with a few marking all 32, including #28, severely critical. Over the 35+ years I have been using the exercise, the people in my programs or audiences have generally marked between 5 and 15 with a few, most times, who mark over 15.

Most people do not openly admit to this. It is the one trait I discover in personal interviews and reviews of biographies and autobiographies of highly creative people, living and dead. My assessment is that the “higher” creative people are severely critical of three things and are accused of being severely critical of a fourth. They tend to be severely critical of (1) themselves, (2) their work, and (3) the potential of their fields of passion. Because of these three, people who are much less creative as them see the “higher” creatives as being severely critical of other people. My experiences and ongoing study do not support that anywhere in the 93 countries I have traveled in during my life.¹

During my interviews in New Zealand after the 32 traits survey was completed and reviewed, I discussed the TTCT™ traits as trainable/learnable traits asking the people who were company owners or managers, if they actually, consciously, strived to increase the creative thinking abilities and skills of their people. Except in a few isolated cases where the interviewees were creative thinking consultants, the answer was always no, and generally the people were unaware that creative thinking could be increased or taught.

My 4-week journey around Australia (six states and two territories) took me to Sydney, Canberra, small towns and a self-sufficiency site on a mountain in the Snowy Mountains, Melbourne, Hobart, Adelaide, Uluru, Alice Springs, Perth, Darwin and a couple small towns in the Northern Territory, Cairns, and finally Brisbane.

In most of the cities and towns, I stayed with Servas members, an international travel organization whose members open their homes to other members as their guests. Using the Servas Australia directory as I had in New Zealand, I hand selected a mix of creative people to stay within each city with no repeats of professions or occupations. They consisted of creative thinking consultants, designers, theater promoters/directors, therapists, ceramic artists, counselors, writers, fabric artists, sculptors, and teachers or trainers.

¹At the moment of the 2001 travel (Ed.)
**Researcher Becomes Searcher (Part I)**

As my trip continued, I became less systematic with my data collection primarily because I became much more involved in getting to know my hosts and the people I met along the way instead of playing scientific researcher, and also I become more involved in simply the various experiences day by day.

Periodically in Australia, I had people complete the “Crayon Breaker” survey. The results were the same: very high numbers of traits selected. I continued my sharing information about E. Paul Torrance’s work and some about my own and other creative thinking consultants I have gotten to know from various countries and ones I got to meet along the way during the journey.

**A Primary Creative Learning: Dealing with Daily Frustrations**

One learning that kept coming back again and again throughout my trip was one I learned from Joel Goodman from the Humor Project many years ago: “If when something happens you can say ‘some day I’ll laugh about this’ then why not start now!” When frustrating and highly stress producing or simply very negative things happened during my travels around Australia and then in other countries later, I would “step out of my shoes, boots, or saddles” and remind myself of Joel’s bit of wisdom, and within a few moments I was smiling and laughing and making notes of how to turn the experience or situation into material for a future article or speech.

**Learning from the Weather**

Have you ever thought that it takes more creativeness to enjoy a rainy day than a sunny one?

Instead of becoming frustrated by the many days of rain I experienced in the southern states and territories of Australia, I chose to use my creativeness to turn them into wandering adventures.

One example would be my third day in Sydney. It had rained off and on, mostly on, for the entire 3 days making it difficult to capture the beautiful sites and experiences with my point and shoot Fuji camera. That day after the first couple of hours of riding one harbor boat after another, there are a series of boat lines that crisscross Sydney Harbour from one end to the other, I noticed that the streets were becoming extremely crowded with people. All the while it began raining harder and harder.

Most of my life I experienced claustrophobic-like reactions in crowds of people, especially when the people all seem to have gotten up that morning with the sole intention of getting in my way. That day by noon, it had gotten worse and worse. I felt like a young chicken stuffed into an extremely wet and overly crowded chicken growing house with chickens all around and over me, so packed in a can of sardines would seem vastly loose.
I pushed my way through the crowd and found a train station under one of the high-rise blocks of buildings. On the spot I had decided to go out to the 2000 Olympic Site just to get away from the mobs of people. As I pushed my way through, I asked person after person how to get to the Olympic Site. After seven or eight different answers, I just got on a train heading out of town and asked the conductor once I sat down. My luck was with me. The train I had run onto was the right one.

In about 20 min, I was walking in the vast, very, very open area of the Olympic Site enjoying the environment and architecture. One person per 20 acres instead of the thousands per 200 square feet I had just left behind in Sydney. After enjoying the openness and viewing many of the contemporary sports arenas, I realized that the only building, way off in the distance, almost to the horizon, that was open had a very long line wrapping nearly around it. So I decided to head back to Sydney to catch the bus from downtown Sydney, near the Opera House, to my creative thinking consultant friends’ home in the northern suburbs and end my day of wandering in Sydney.

I slowly walked back to the empty train station. There was a good reason it was empty. The last train back to Sydney that evening was leaving in 3 min.

**Learning: Trust Your Subconscious**

Once again my subconscious or intuition had taken control and I had unknowingly trusted it to guide me.

That was another learning/relearning I discovered as I traveled throughout the journey: trust my subconscious and intuitive skills.

**Learning: Trusting Some Natural Creative Traits**

In Hobart, Tasmania, while staying with Helen and Andre, two very successful and accomplished ceramic artists, I experienced the value of trusting the natural creative traits of curiosity, exploration, divergence, openness to premature closure, independence, imagination, and others. Because I was trying to experience something of each of the eight states and territories all within 4 weeks, I had only planned to be in Hobart and Tasmania 3 days and 2 nights.

Tasmania is an absolutely beautiful island state, which until this summer I mistakenly had thought it was a separate nation. By only planning to be there for such a short time, I was not going to see or experience much of the natural beauty of the island on the ground: the vast forests, valleys, rivers, mountains, snowy peaks, etc. Add to that it was raining most of the time as well.

So I played tourist and gathered up maps and went to the Chamber of Commerce plus the Tasmanian Tourist Agency offices to pick up information of what I might see in less than 48 h by bus (commercial or tour), bicycle, or foot.
After a couple hours of frustration of trying to make my time work, I simply decided to enjoy Hobart by foot and plan on returning to Tasmania in the future for a much longer time. I was scheduled to speak in the afternoon on adding creative thinking to your life and I wasn’t using my own.

I threw away all but a simple street map of the downtown area of Hobart and began to “wander.” It became another “relearning”—allow yourself to creatively experience life instead of always trying to create it. That day and the next 1/2 day became fantastic. I experienced many people, the streets of Hobart, the interiors of many shops, restaurants, and much urban art and toured several artist studios enjoying a great variety of art.

“Letting go and experience the creativeness and creativity that surrounds you” became a creative tool throughout the remainder of my 73-wandering journey because of my time in Hobart.

**Learning: Wandering Without a Predetermined Plan**

A learning that I often share with participants and students is that of simply “wandering” and letting the creativity that surrounds them remove the “clouds” or blocks of creativity that prevent them from being creative at any given moment. This I did in shops, malls, streets, banks watching the customers, waiting around ATM machines, ceramic, painting, fabric, sculpture studios, toy stores, grocery stores, along piers, and restaurants.

**Wandering: My Greatest Creative Tool**

After Hobart, it was Adelaide, Uluru (Ayers Rock, Alice Springs, Indian Pacific) train across from Adelaide to Perth, flights to Darwin, Cairns, and Brisbane. The experiences and lessons during those 3 weeks continued to reinforce what I had already lived.

**Learning: Experiencing Varied and Many Cultures to Expand Creativeness**

By the time I reached Brisbane, my last destination in Australia, located in Queensland, I had already experienced many cultures and subcultures. That was one of my earliest creative learnings from 1977 when I first took an extended trip involving visiting 20+ countries in Europe, Eastern Europe, and North Africa.
Learning: To Expand and Enrich Our Creativeness and Creative Thinking Skills, We Need Only Expose Ourselves to Varied Cultures and Peoples

From Athens, Georgia, on June 25 until August 8 in Brisbane, I had experienced New Zealanders, natives and immigrants, from the very northern part of the North Island to the southern section of the South Island, Maori natives who live in a variety of ways from very old custom to very contemporary. I had traveled thousands of miles by train, bus, cab, foot, and plane experiencing Australians from all eight states and territories: New South Wales, Victoria, Canberra, Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia, the Northern Territory, and Queensland. They ranged from very contemporary residents of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, and Brisbane. Throw in hedonists who enjoy their lives in Darwin, Cairns, or along the Gold Coast between Cairns and Brisbane, some making their livings as scuba diving instructors or street artists. Also they included self-sufficiency living people from the Snowy Mountains who work only when the money runs out plus country people from each of the eight areas.

Add to that were outbackers who spend days and weeks totally alone in the barren outback. Plus include a mix of Aborigines from those who live as their forefathers and mothers have lived from 40,000 years to college-educated professionals who had been trained by both their native cultures and the white culture of modern Australia.

Varied Traits Provoked Through Cultural Immersion

The learnings from such immersion in varied cultures help to expand, enrich, and provoke increased creativeness through the following traits:

• Abstractness of approach moving from reality—seen through the art and thinking of so many different peoples
• Adaptable—experiencing how so many different Australians live their lives
• Breakthrough from current limits—caused by the contrast of my culture with so many others
• Change of context (cross-interpretation)—continually exposing myself to daily to by the hour changes of context and culture
• Combination of ideas/facts (synthesis)—trying to create a synthesis of everything I was learning and experiencing
• Synthesize correctly often intuitively—trusting these abilities in myself by the hour and day
• Curiosity—pushing this to extreme limits everywhere I went whether flying by helicopter to the top of a glacier in Franz Josef, New Zealand, or a seaplane over the skyline of Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia, or walking around the famous Uluru Rock
• Divergent thinking — being open to experiencing this everywhere I went
• Open-endedness — reminding myself not to go to premature closure quickly
• Elaboration — learning to see through the eyes of others
• Fantasy — trying to experience the fantasy lives of other cultures
• Multiple orientations — past, present, future, and virtual
• Internal perspective — trying to experience these in others and myself
• Question asker — being willing to ask and be asked
• Richness and colorful detail — experience vast varieties everywhere I went
• Risk taker — opening myself to risk taking daily or by the hour
• See possibilities — opening myself to possibilities everywhere
• Unusual and provocative viewpoints — opening myself to these everywhere

Researcher Becomes Searcher (Part II)

Changing Cultures

During the first 6 weeks, I traveled where English, at least some version of English, was spoken wherever I was. When I left Brisbane for Kuala Lumpur, I left that security blanket behind me at least part of the time each day.

The Physical Environment and Its Creativity

Kuala Lumpur and Singapore have much in common. Both have worked very hard to enter the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in less than 40 years each. Both skylines are filled with the most contemporary buildings any architect could dream of. Each of the major cities I had been in so far in New Zealand and Australia also was filled with many relatively new buildings, with Brisbane having the largest concentration, mostly built in the 1990s and Sydney slightly behind it because of it hosting the 2000 Olympics.

What Kuala Lumpur and Singapore still possess that neither New Zealand nor Australia do not is also the ancient. NZ and Australia are barely 200 years old. Both KL and Singapore are also ancient countries filled with temples, shrines, and slums, by today’s standards, that use construction types and living styles that people have lived for over 3000 years.

Learnings: Western Creative Meets Eastern Creativity

The learnings for me as an outsider with little to no knowledge of the many cultures that have lived and died in Malaysia and Singapore were that of watching the contrasts which produce the richness along with the vast confusion and stress that appear to exist in both of these cultures.
Seeing the simple lines, colors, and forms of the newest contemporary buildings and developments contrasted against the extremely complex, ornately detailed, and polychromed Hindu temples caused me to recognize the need for juxtaposing our thinking.

**Onto Sri Lanka to Learn More: Creativity During Revolution**

From Singapore after about 10 days spent traveling back and forth between KL and Singapore off I went to rebel-torn Sri Lanka, the paradise that has drawn many people from around the world. Less than 2 weeks before I arrived, rebel forces blew up five commercial airplanes on the runways at the airport. I was traveling to Colombo, Sri Lanka, with the purpose of presenting professional programs on creative thinking in their workplaces and touring a little.

From my arrival at 12:30 am to be picked up by a total stranger to be driven through totally dark streets to a hotel that I only knew was located somewhere in Colombo, the capital city where I would sleep and finally meet my formally unmet client in the morning, I needed to use my creative skills to learn to accept and let go of my growing fears.

**Learning: Our Cultures as Blocks to Our Creativity**

The greatest learning for me among many from my 4 days and 3 nights in Sri Lanka was the power of blocks upon the creativity of a complete culture of people. With all the roadblocks, checkpoints, military personnel, nightly curfews, and daily required power outages, I saw creativity everywhere I went from how to drive effectively in a non-geometric fashion to get from point a to point b through absolute chaos without traffic lights or electric auto turn signals to some of the greatest creative lunch and dinner buffets I have ever experienced. True I felt like a dragon with a flaming mouth most of the time I was eating, but I did learn how to enjoy even the pain of spice as long as I had a glass of fresh orange juice, something sweet, or ice cream to contrast the spices in my mouth with.

When I reacted to my driver’s actions by putting up my hands to cover my eyes from the possible car crashes at every turn, I was laughingly warned to watch out for the drivers in India. The warning was truly well given.

**Going Deeper into the East Like Marco Polo in Reverse**

From Colombo, I went on to Chennai, India (once Madras), located near the southeastern tip of the Indian peninsula. Chennai is a very ancient city that too tries to mix the ancient and the near contemporary. Ancient construction techniques are used to build the local EDS office building or the local Domino’s Pizza delivery shop.
Learning from the East

Visiting countries such as Sri Lanka and India as a citizen of the USA is a learning in itself. From our nearly anal obsession with geometrically laid out streets and driving laws to the totally amorphic conditions on their streets and apparently nonexistent driving laws, you truly experience the contrast between focused convergence and seemingly aimless divergence.

Researcher Becomes Searcher (Part III)

Going Home: Again to Istanbul

From Chennai I traveled to Istanbul, Turkey, stopping for a few hours in Dubai, the most modern convention/conference mecca of the world. In the 140° desert of Dubai lies the most modern airport with the largest and most contemporary duty-free mall, not shop or shops, a full-range mall. One lesson from those 2 h was that creativity can occur in any environment no matter how harsh or repressive to human existence.

Arriving in Istanbul was a pleasure, partly because I was being picked up by a friend I would spend much of my time with in her beautiful city and because I had been there three times before. I was not going to experience the shocks of the unknown or simply imagined environments and cultures of Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and India.

Instead, I was returning to a favorite city that I have traveled extensively about with friends and alone.

Learning: Integration of Ancient, Old, Current, and Future

One of the extensive creative learnings that Istanbul provided was the integration of ancient, old, current, and future cultures, religions, and peoples. The most distinct difference at first for westerners is that the population is over 90 % Muslim with a very small minority of Christians or Jews. Yet there is a sense of peace that exists in the initially appearing chaos.

Wandering to Replenish My Creative Soul

This time in Istanbul I chose to walk or boat most places when I wasn’t riding in my friend’s car. Wandering through the streets basically unnoticed was a pleasure. It enabled me to explore, experience, and examine the ongoing creativity that
surrounded me in the Bazaar, the commercial areas where the wholesale trading goes on, or some of the most contemporary and pricey malls I have ever seen in the world. Combined with that were several strolls along the Bosphorus Straits on both sides, European and Asian.

**Learning: Integrating Contrasts**

A significant learning from Istanbul comes from the fact that it is a city of over 20–24 million people and is the only city that exists in two separate continents connected by bridges. The learning is the value of contrasts and integration of contrasts to produce creativity and innovative ideas and solutions.

**Revolving Back to Western World**

Time to contrast again, a flight from Istanbul to Copenhagen. From ancient chaos to modern and contemporary highly controlled order. From high contrasts in nearly every aspect of life to sameness and uniformity, much by law and culture.

**Learning: Control and Orderliness Can Produce Creativity**

My first learning from returning to Copenhagen after 24 years was how controlled and orderly it is and apparently lacking in spontaneity and creativity. It took about a day to clear up my creative blinders from Istanbul, Chennai, Colombo, and Kuala Lumpur and to begin to see the wonderful creativity in Copenhagen and the countryside of Denmark.

The learning, no matter how much control and systemization a culture may generate the natural desire for creativity, will show through. In Copenhagen, individual creativity does not seem to exist initially until you begin to look for it and become more open to experiencing it. Doors, doorways, entrances, window flower boxes, personal window displays, gardens, graphics, furniture, silverware, artwork, and ceramics from artistic to everyday chinaware are what demonstrates the creativity of the Danish people as individuals and not just members of a highly refined creative nation.

After once again seeing their creativity, I felt more relaxed. Then I went with an Italian friend, who had arranged to be in Copenhagen while I was there, out to dinner to walk the streets at night and to visit Tivoli, one of the oldest amusement parks in the world. Viola, the internal creativity and desire for independence and divergence showed inside Tivoli even until 2 or 3 in the morning.
From Copenhagen by train, boat, bus, foot, and car, I traveled for an entire day to Delft in the Netherlands across northern Germany to be welcomed by my cyberspace friend, Marc Tassoul, professor of creativity and industrial design plus a consultant and creator of the first creativity-focused Internet email discussion list, CREA-CPS.

Prior to this trip, I had the pleasure of visiting and staying in Delft several times beginning in 1977. Delft is a walking town, medieval architecture and design combined with the most contemporary available in the world. Each integrated beautifully at a human scale. No high-rise buildings within the city. Everything is located a few minutes away by foot.

Learning: Vary the Scale and Speed to Rejuvenate Creativity

The learning for me was in the need to vary the scale and speed of our lives to help expose, expand, and enrich our natural and developable creative thinking traits and skills.

Delft is an example of a completely designed and integrated community. All that is built new is integrated to create a harmony that is rarely experienced in any other community, town, city, or country.

Off to the Center of the British Empire: Shakespeare’s Home

After an abundance of sensory enjoyment and ample time with friends, I was off to England, Stratford specifically, to experience another small-scale well designed community. What Stratford lacks in contemporary design it relishes in historic and singularly focused creatively. It is an entire community devoted to the creativity of one man, William Shakespeare. Yet within and among all the curios and tourist attractions is the love of the beauty of the landscape and the blending of the architecture and contemporary life.

Learning: Change of Scenery Can Relish and Replenish Creative Spirit

A learning for me from Stratford is that I can enjoy intensely crowded streets and parks during the mid afternoon while being able to jump on my rented bicycle to travel off to the countryside in a very few minutes getting lost in the beauty of a
travel along the Avon that William and Anne and their children probably walked hundreds of years ago. I can also bicycle or walk the same busy streets at dawn or late at night after the evening’s Shakespeare Theater performance as if I was the only person on earth.

**Learning: Juxtapositioning Imagination**

Added to that learning is the ease with which I can play with my imagination in a town like Stratford-on-Avon juxtapositioning my thoughts from contemporary life, talking with a political cartoonist I met on the train ride to Stratford to pretending I am a citizen of medieval time Stratford walking to experiencing William’s latest creation at the theater.

**Juxtapositioning in Time**

From Stratford-on-Avon, I traveled by train to Salisbury to meet a met cyberspace creativity friend, John Thomas, a retired teacher and creativity author, and to return again for the third time to the time of the Druids at Stonehenge.

**Every Town Possesses Vast Contrasts of Creativity**

Salisbury provided a sampling for contrasting time comparing the famous Salisbury Cathedral to the Druid Circle of Stones at Stonehenge to experience distinctly different spiritual expressions of creativity. Walking the now controlled, physically and electronically, route around the world famous stones, then walking slowly around the famous cathedral both at midnight under the spotlights and in the early morning at daybreak simply experiencing both provided me a “creative soul” fill-up.

**Back to Modern Times**

Off to London next, not really wanting to be there, except to meet up with some highly creative people at a creative consultant firm and St. Luke’s advertising agency, reported to be one of the most creative in the world today was my next planned destination.
Letting Go Once Again to Learn

Thank you goes to Joel Goodman again. I chose to laugh and to enjoy the on and off rain and chose to walk aimlessly the first day before meeting my contact at What If?! From my visit at the offices of What If?!, I received several tips for what to see in London today. I combined that with on and off rides around London via a constantly available series of double-decker bus tour around the entire city. Instead of being frustrated by the scale and density of London, I fell in love with experiencing parks from small squares to Hyde Park in size, art galleries with the work of Picasso, Dali, and many yet to be known as famous artists, the British Air Eye gigantic Ferris wheel, etc.

Learning: Changing Perspectives Without Specific Plan

A learning from London this time came in the enjoyment and creative potential of constantly changing perspectives and scale, both deliberately and spontaneously as the spirit moved me, from touring the reconstructed Globe Theatre to walking along both sides of the Thames to the Tate Gallery to a seafood festival to a street musician playing an ancient Chinese instrument to a mix of varied food cultures.

What started out as depressing 3 days turned into fantastic and richly creative days.

It Can’t Be Done!: Tunneling to Even More Creativity

Then it was off through one of the greatest examples of engineering creativity in Europe, the England to France tunnel under the English Channel. The learning: what seems impossible with today’s abilities can become easy with tomorrow’s.

Arriving in Paris is always fun. This was my seventh visit to Paris. My goal was to complete my trip in a beautiful city and give a speech to the newly formed French Speakers Association in Paris on my last night at the American Church along the Seine on creative thinking as a professional speaker.

Learning: Complete Openness to Experience Breeds Creativity

My 4 days and 3 nights in Paris and the surrounding area including many of its suburbs, Chartres, and Disneyland Paris were nearly completely spontaneously filled with creative adventures and complete openness to experiences as they happened, minute by minute, hour by hour, person by person, and experience by
experience. Included was walking from the front door of my hotel with a complete view of the Eiffel Tower only a few blocks away, a view I would experience many times throughout the time I was there day and night to returning each evening to sleep once again.

The overall learning from my time in Paris this time was to remind myself to set basic goals, targets, that fulfill my mission and fit my vision while being open to experiencing life as fully as possible at all times during the day each day.

**Returning Home Once Again**

73 days in search of creativity, creative thinking, and creative people from Athens, Georgia to Auckland to Paris, and back to Athens again, I found and experienced each of the three everywhere I went and so will all of us if we simply apply the natural traits of creative people and creative learnings that we choose to develop throughout our lives.