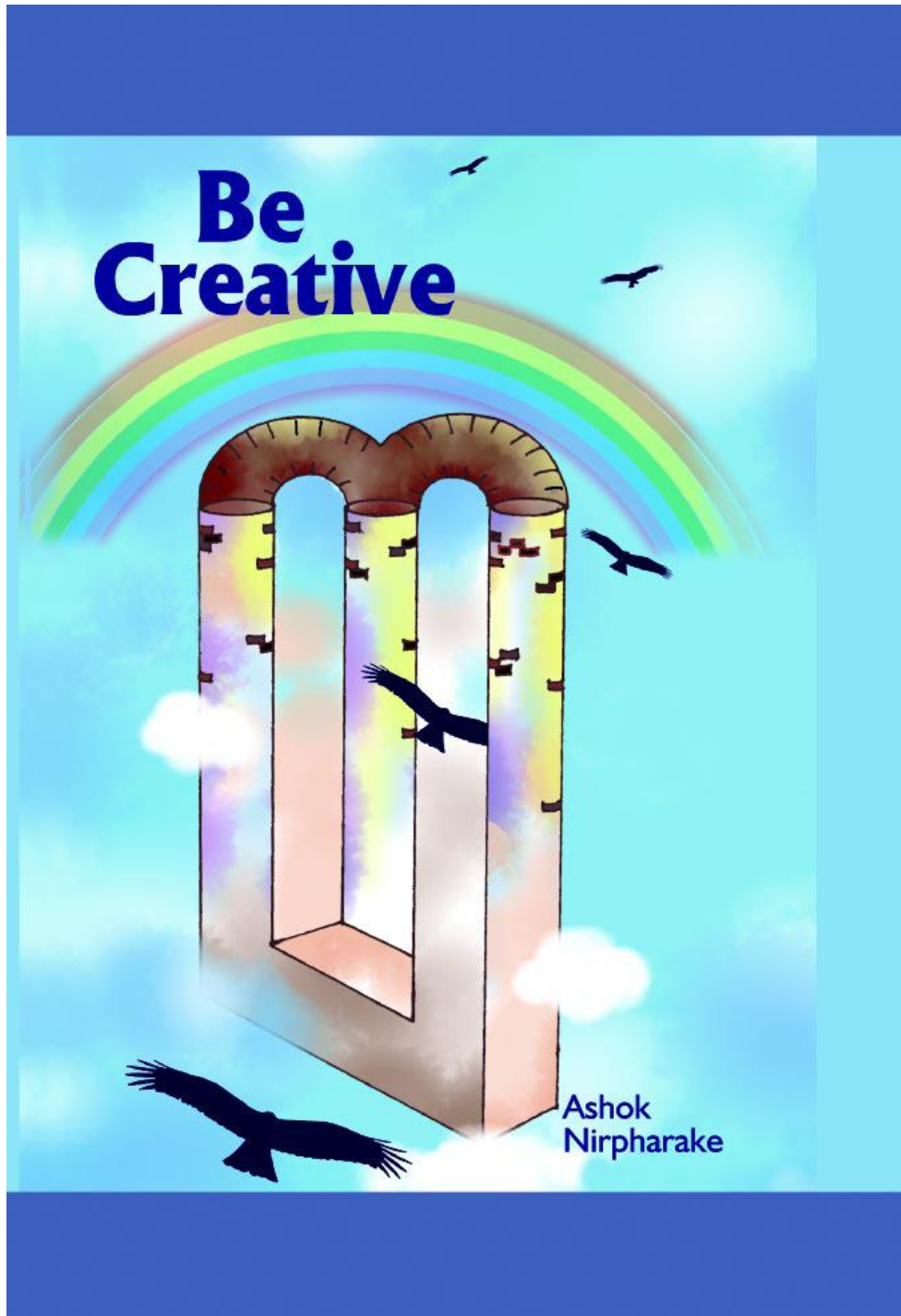


Be Creative



Ashok
Nirpharake

BE CREATIVE

(A Workbook to Develop General Creativity)

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Be Creative

(A workbook to develop General Creativity)

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Preface

I remember a lecturer playing with the meaning of the words 'creator' and 'creature'. He was insisting the audience to live like 'creators' and not like 'creatures'. Creatures are created things. The word is generally used for animals. But it is also used for those who are bonded labourers, subservient serfs and apathetic dependents. They are always at the receiving end of somebody else's actions. They are the object in the sentence with the verb 'create'.

On the other hand, Creator with capital C is the term reserved for God. A creator is the initiator of action. He is the producer of a product. He is the deliverer of a performance. He adds to whatever is existing. He makes changes in form and content. A creator is the subject in the sentence with the verb 'create'.

Any self-respecting human being would like to be a 'creator' rather than a 'creature'. This book by Dr. Ashok Nirpharake gives the techniques, with many illustrations, by which a person can become creative. A creative person is a creator. To create one's own version of the universe has been the dream of ambitious men through all ages and from all continents. As Dr. Nirpharake says, to be creative is the birthright of man. I would rather say, to be creative is to be human. All other animals are creatures. Only human beings can be creators. They can consciously rearrange their environment.

Creativity is an attitude of mind. Creativity is a dimension of personality. Creativity is assertion of our humanness. For a developing country, creativity of its people is an asset. But even in developed countries, creativity keeps its citizens at the level of humanity. Without creativity people in developing or developed countries can become sophisticated creatures of the political and economic machine called the nation-state. So

training in creativity has to be an integral part of man-making education.

Dr. Nirpharake s original research in training for creative thinking took place in Jnana Prabodhini. Jnana Prabodhini aims at finding and establishing ways and means to enhance the mental abilities and skills of its students in particular and the student population in the country in general. Creativity not only makes a person more human, but it also adds to the progress and growth of the nation. Creativity applied to different walks of life generates both material wealth and an ambience of art and culture. Creative responses to unexpected situations, situations of stress and calculated risk, often change the course of history. Creative problem-solving is the mental process behind all innovations. So Jnana Prabodhini wants to make training in creative thinking an integral part of its educational practice. This training has to be supported by an atmosphere conducive to creative thinking, which is also being attempted in Jnana Prabodhini. Whatever has proved useful in Jnana Prabodhini is to be offered to the society for widespread use. This book is a step in that direction.

The first Marathi edition of this book was a boon to self-learning students and the teachers. The revised second Marathi edition was more enriched. Dr. Ashok Nirpharake has been successful in further enriching this first English version which is based on the Marathi book, but is not its translation. I hope that this book will be as useful to the non-Marathi speaking students and teachers as the Marathi edition was to the Marathi-speaking students.

Girish S. Bapat

M.Sc., Ph.D., M.Ed, D.B.M.

Date : 01 April, 2008

Director, Jnana Prabodhini

Introduction

There is increasing awareness about **creativity** these days. That is perhaps because we feel that creativity will remain a typically human mental possession . So far man was proud of his intelligence, more so of his rational thinking. But the computer science advanced with leaps and bounds giving rise to Artificial Intelligence (A.I.). On February 11, 1996, the IBM computer programme Deep Blue defeated the World Grand Master Kasparov and made the head-line news. That shook man's pride in his own rational thinking ! He, therefore, turned his attention to creativity –a mental capacity hopefully beyond the reach of the computer. In this area, too, some A.I. specialists have generated programmes asking the computer to compose poems, draw sketches and play music, claiming it to be computer creativity. But, can computers be really creative?

I feel they can not be, as long as they lack awareness and understanding of what they are doing. At present, the machine is merely following orders to produce random combinations of phrases, figures and notes, at most, selecting them before production against predetermined criteria. It is the human mind of the reader, viewer or listener who finds meaning and beauty in those random combinations.

Another source of the increasing interest in creativity is practical. In the world of industry and technology, there is a pressing need for continuous innovations. The fast changing fashions, consumer preferences and foreign competition have made it necessary for Indian industrialists to think in novel ways. President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam has ignited young Indian minds, and Dr. Mashelkar as the Chairman of CSIR has created an ambience of vying for international patents.

Modern research in creativity started in the fields of Psychology, Education and Management some 50 years ago

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and is gaining momentum. Before that, it was an area of speculation by the artists, art-critics and aestheticians. Way back in the tenth and eleventh centuries, Indian scholars have done sound theorisation about 'Pratibha' i.e. creative imagination.

This book is not a scholarly book. Here I have tried to introduce creativity in general, not specific to any particular area like literature, science or fine arts. I have avoided theoretical controversies, heavy terminology, foot notes and references. I have discussed many techniques of developing creative thinking and have illustrated their practical application. There are many exercises. The reader who tries them out, rather than just gloss over them, will benefit more. For some exercises, I have given specimen answers given by ex- participants in my training programmes. They are only specimens, not models to be emulated.

I hope that anybody ----- a student, a teacher, a parent or a professional, will be able to read and profit from this book. Readers' comments and suggestions are most welcome.

I wish to thank Prof. V. K. Kothurkar for guiding my Ph. D. research in creativity, Dr. N. H. Atthreya for introducing me to the world of corporate training, Prof. Shrikant Bahulkar for providing the Sanskrit references, Shri Sharad Sunkar for sharing the responsibility of conducting hundreds of training programmes with me, Shri Mahendra Sethiya for making this book possible, and my colleagues in JP for general support.

Ashok Nirpharake

M.A., Ph. D. (Psychology)

Date : 01 March 2008

Note : 'Man' includes 'woman' and 'his' includes 'her'. To avoid the cumbersome practice of writing 'man / woman', 'he / she' or 'his / her' etc. I am following the convention. Of course, no gender-bias is intended. ... A. N.

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