

Developing Creativity

Removing the Mental Block

Everyone faces mental blocks from time to time. These blocks will prevent focusing, finding answers to problems, discovering inspiration, and achieving goals. Overcoming mental blocks is difficult but it can be done. If you find yourself blocked, stop and refocus by doing something distracting. Consider the following techniques to refocus and overcome the mental blocks:

- A change of scenery (someplace relaxing or inspirational)
- Meditate
- Read
- Busy work
- Exercise

Positive Mindset

Remaining positive is essential to the creative mindset and in everything we do. It is easy to focus on the negative aspects of life because we are hardwired to remember negative information, but this will only lead to depression and self-fulfilling prophecies of failure. There are ways to improve positivity and change your mindset so that you can become more successful in whatever you do.

- **Count your blessings:** Focus on the things that you have to be thankful for in your life. You may want to keep a daily list of good things to pull your attention away from the negative.
- **Use positive affirmations:** This may seem strange at first, but positive affirmations will help you truly believe that the best is possible.
- **Confront negative thoughts:** When facing difficult times, place the events in perspective. It is easy to overreact. Facing the situation directly and honestly will prevent an unhealthy focus on the negative.

Spark Your Curiosity

The human brain responds to rewards. We are not likely to repeat behavior if we do not see the benefit, which is why rewarding curiosity is necessary to spark it. Look for intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that will help you on the road to pique your curiosity. The reward of satisfying curiosity is an example of intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation is an external reward. Gamification, which borrows from gaming theory, is a useful tool to reward your curiosity.

- **Choose tasks related to curiosity:** Make a list.
- **Assign points:** Assign a number of points to each task. Tasks that are more difficult should be given more points.
- **Assign rewards:** Better rewards have higher points attached to them. For example, a visit to a coffee shop could be 20 points, while buying an app could be 50 points. The rewards will depend on what motivates you.
- **Keep score:** Find a way to keep track of your points that works for you. You could use anything from spreadsheets to phone apps.