

A Creative Approach to Challenges

An assistant golf course superintendent has been given the task of determining the operating condition of a new automatic irrigation system. It's a big job and he is understandably nervous about the outcome. Will he be able to handle the job in a way that will be a credit to him?

Most people have moments of self-doubt, wondering whether they are up to the challenges they face. Challenges are really tasks of problem solving and problems can be solved through creativity.

There are many ways to approach a challenge. Practicing self-discipline, believing in one's ability to succeed, being constructively discontented, using intuition as well as reasoning and escaping from habits are some of the keys to facing a challenge creatively. Self-discipline is freedom from pride. A proud person is one who stifles the key requisite for curiosity. It restricts a change of mind or direction in order to hold the head up high. This is counter creative behavior. It is taking personal responsibility for performing tasks.

Believing in one's ability to succeed is difficult today. It is not ego-tripping; it is ego-strengthening. It is a necessary trait for further development of creative behavior and its concomitant ability to face challenges confidently.

We all have gripes and discontents. In adolescence we tend to let the discontent, which is a healthy trait, turn into a monster. It can be an unleashed demon threatening to destroy. Directing that discontent and learning to develop it constructively comes with age. Discontent is a prerequisite for problem solving. It allows us to look at the world upside down, which is as good a way as any. There must be an attempt to balance our behavior when we face challenges between feeling and knowing, sensing and deciding. It is natural to both feel and think. But we shouldn't smother sensitivity in favor of strengthening reason. We need both to face challenges.

Escaping from habit is probably one of the most difficult tasks confronting a creative approach to problem solving. Habits keep most of us from behaving creatively. To be able to see things in different ways and to remain innovative, it is absolutely necessary to be in control of our habits - always ready to discard them when they get in the way of a clear view.

Creatively confronting challenges demands listening to others, heeding our own logical and sensitive conclusions and not only the dictates of our society. The problem solver is prideless, adventurous, self-disciplined and self-believing. He is someone who wants to resolve problems in a positive way.

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