


REVISED

the All New
**UNIVERSAL
TRAVELER**



a Soft-Systems
guide to:
creativity,
problem-solving
And
the process of
reaching goals

by Don Koberg *And* Jim Bagnall

INTRODUCTION



The goal of THE UNIVERSAL TRAVELER is to provide a simplified format for solving problems. We believe that all problems, no matter what size they may be, can benefit from the same logical and orderly procedures now employed in the highly specialized, computer-assisted statistical disciplines that address themselves to complex world problems. In principle our everyday and occasionally more important personal problems are no different from those larger issues. The process remains constant. It is only the methods that need to be changed, and then, often in appearance alone.

Since SYSTEMS is the general name assigned to Cybernetics and the various numerical techniques for modeling problem situations, we have similarly called our MORE CONVERSATIONAL APPROACH to problem-solving by the name SOFT SYSTEMS. We intend the language and methods we have developed to help our readers deal more logically and systematically with the situations of their lives. By helping them to become more conscious or aware of their own procedures and methods, we ultimately expect to generate more creative problem-solvers at the world level.

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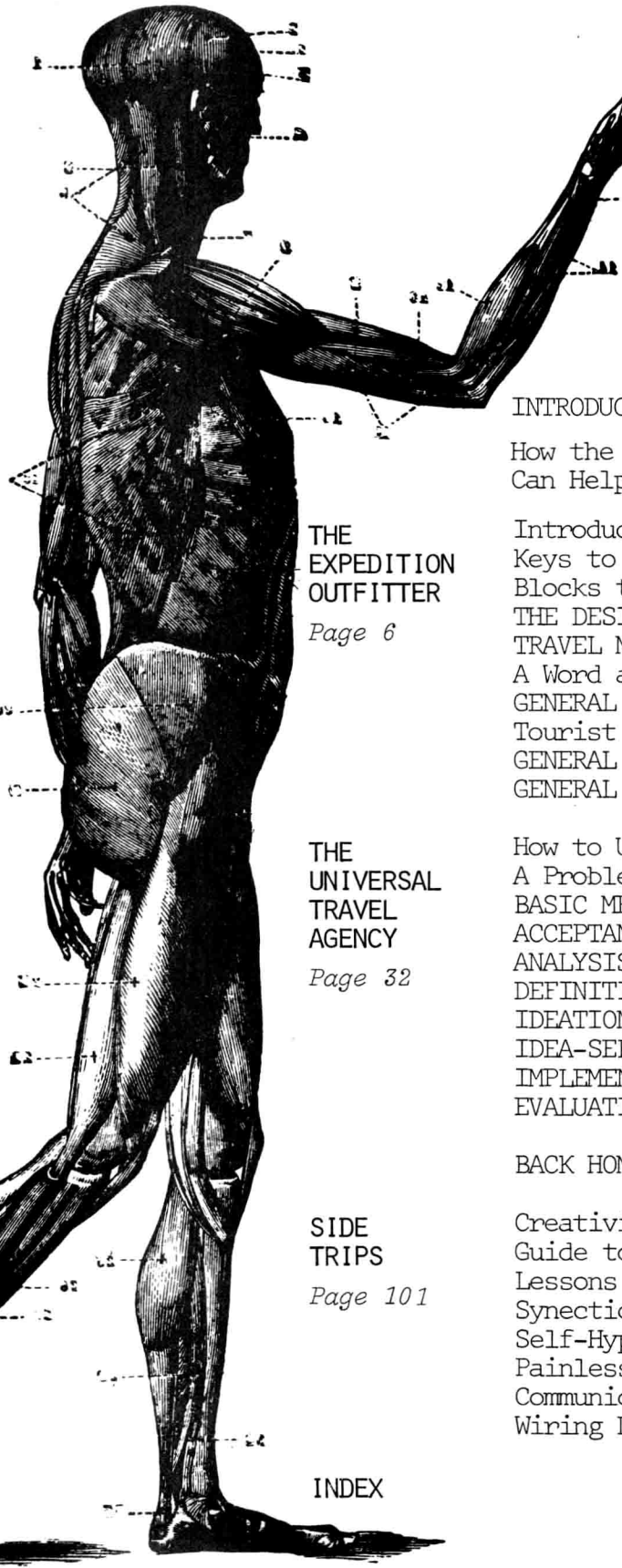
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the ANATOMY

of the Universal Traveler



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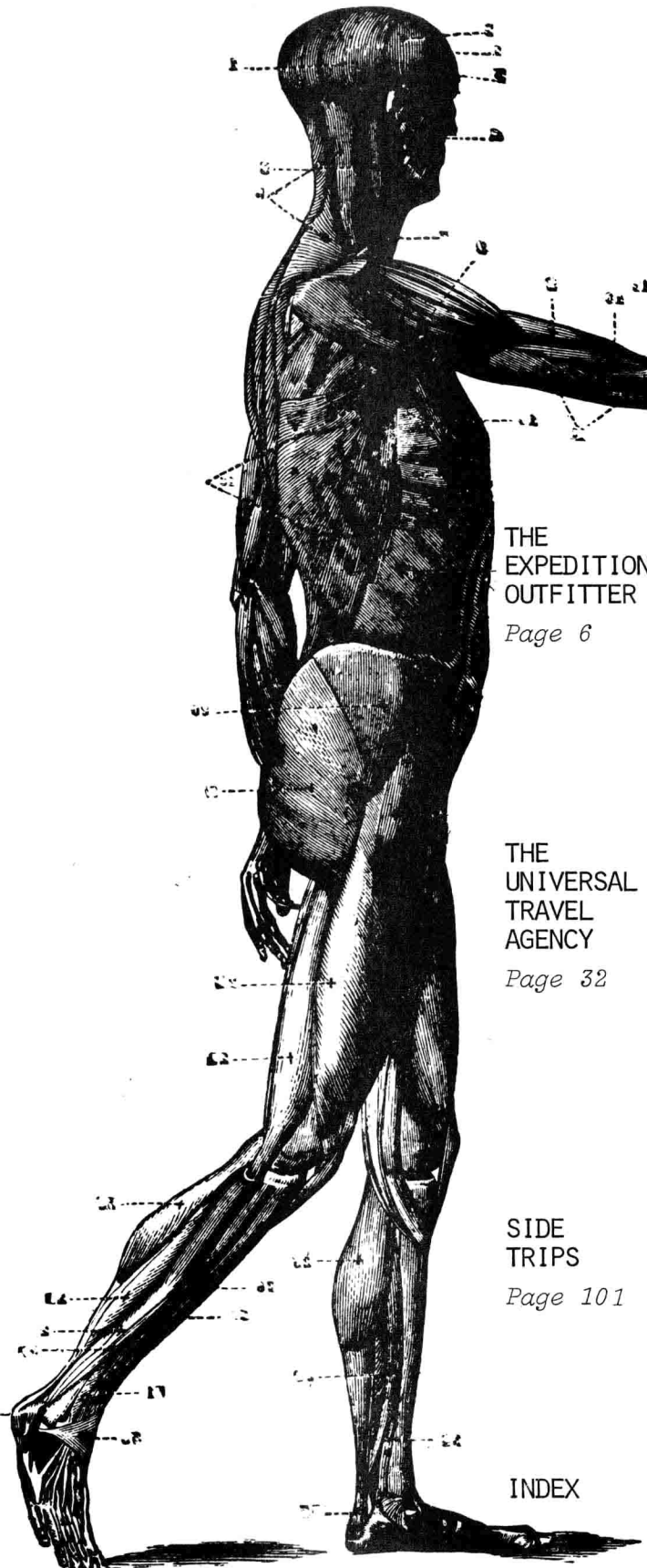
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How the Universal Traveler can help YOU



Although we expect it to be self-evident, here is the way in which **THE UNIVERSAL TRAVELER** has been designed to work for you:

Throughout you will find continual references to the process of design as a journey or excursion. This symbolic "travel-ese" is used in order to reinforce the concept that design is more meaningful when it can be visualized and pursued as a logical, planned journey through a series of **DESIGN STAGES** and not simply taken as a random, chance process.

Before beginning any serious journey, it is well to stop at **THE EXPEDITION OUTFITTER** where general advice and information is available for the kinds of tools and equipment you may require for the trip. The **OUTFITTER** can also provide **TRAVEL TIPS** or hints, **LANGUAGE GUIDES** or notes on the semantics of foreign tongues, and **GUIDEBOOKS** and additional references, including a **TRAVEL MAP**.

The central part of the book is named **THE UNIVERSAL TRAVEL AGENCY** because it is the information storehouse for journeys of all kinds. In it you will find the methods for getting started and for proceeding along toward the various points on your itinerary. Much in the same way that we select different ways to travel to different destinations in life, we also need to tailor our design journeys by selecting appropriate methods for each of those unique trips. **THE UNIVERSAL TRAVEL AGENCY** contains many alternative vehicles for traveling and it emphasizes the movement or transition from one **DESIGN STAGE** to another

within the total sequence of steps in the design process. **THE UNIVERSAL TRAVEL AGENCY** section is sub-divided into the seven major phases or **DESIGN STAGES** so that the traveler might take a sample problem through the process in an efficient manner.

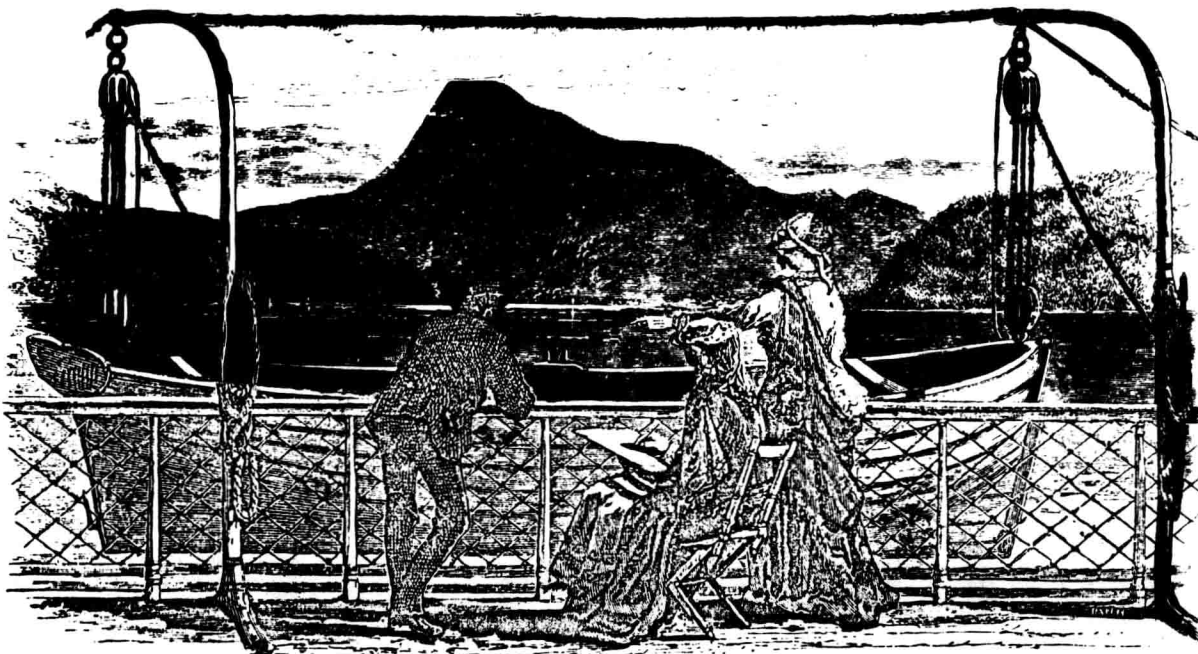
Additional **TRAVEL TIPS**, **LANGUAGE GUIDES** and **GUIDEBOOKS** are provided within each of these seven sections.

The final part of **THE UNIVERSAL TRAVELER** is called **SIDE TRIPS**. It contains some information that can enhance or enrich each journey and make it more meaningful. **SIDE TRIPS** are like bonuses for extra effort in problem-solving.

All travel guides are forever in need of updating, so **THE UNIVERSAL TRAVELER** has been printed with a wide margin on each page to provide plenty of room for your notes. As you discover methods of your own and adapt them to better meet your personal needs, it would be helpful to you to write them down on these pages. Then you won't have to rediscover them every time you embark on a new journey.

MAKE THIS BOOK YOUR PERSONAL TRAVEL NOTEBOOK BY ENHANCING IT WITH ADDITIONAL DISCOVERIES IN THE FORMS OF SKETCHES, CUT-OUTS, PASTE-INS, UNDERSCORES AND SCRATCH-OUTS. EACH ENTRY WILL INCREASE ITS VALUE TO YOU.

BON VOYAGE



Get everything you
need to take along
at



the
EXPEDITION
OUTFITTER

- ✓ hiking boots
- rain slicker
- fur-lined gloves
- ✓ safety matches
- hat
- ✓ flashlight
- batteries

To make your journey comfortable it will be necessary to bring along sufficient food and proper equipment. The basic requirements must be given top priority; then you can add the frills and extras. You don't want to find yourself miles away from familiar ground with a pack full of fine clothes but without your compass, map, and walking boots. When your gear is incomplete or mismatched to the situation everything else seems to lose importance. BE PREPARED.

Here in THE EXPEDITION OUTFITTER you'll find the basic requirements for a more satisfying problem-solving journey. There is a discussion of the fundamental nature of CREATIVITY and of its destructive counterpart, FEAR, a kind of traveler's survival guide. Also included is a descriptive "map" of a typical problem-solving expedition. And you'll find the variations that other travelers have used to wend their ways through the same process. There is information about techniques...travel METHODS, TIPS, TOURIST TRAPS and a list of other GUIDES that may help you to realize a meaningful journey.



After reading THE OUTFITTER you may also find it helpful to breeze through the remainder of the book to the SIDE TRIPS section at the end. There, the GUIDE TO MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES may be found and put to immediate use for saving time and energy at the outset of your trip.

After looking the entire book over, you will be in a better position to custom-tailor the alternative routes and methods outlined in the main body of the text. Take it slowly and easily the first couple of times through the process. Travel is a lot more fun when you are not always on the run.

INTRODUCTION to CREATIVITY

The DESIGN PROCESS is a sequence of events that demands creative behavior from its participants. The activity of design is to improve existing conditions and to find clear paths out of dilemmas.

To improve existing conditions, it is first necessary to become aware of the "problematic" state (the general situation or what it is that needs improving); second, of the essential components of the problem; and third, of the skills and methods required to manipulate that problem condition into a better state. The same process will work while attempting to resolve the unknown conditions of a dilemma, but a cool awareness will also make it easier.

Creativity can be defined as both the art and the science of thinking and behaving with both subjectivity and objectivity. It involves being "whole" and knowing you have feelings; of alternating back and forth between what we sense, what we can know, and what we already know. Becoming more creative involves waking up to that state of wholeness that differs from the primarily objective or subjective person common to our society. For example: a primarily **OBJECTIVE** person, most typical in society, being a knower after the fact, briefly senses the surrounding natural and man-made environment and then determines the existence of logic and beauty within that experience. The primarily **SUBJECTIVE** person, a rarer species, being a here-and-now sense-response mechanism, delights in sensory experience and cares little for fixed conclusions. **TO COMBINE THE TWO IS TO GAIN MORE THAN BOTH:** a more natural and conscious balance between the two extremes. Such "creative" wholeness allows us to see ourselves as if from above...to **BOTH** lead our way **AND** to follow that way...to both determine our goal and to go...to both design the stimulus and to experience the response...to control our own behavior in a holistic way.



But wholeness requires alternating back and forth between thinking and feeling; an alternating, bi-modal behavior instead of a primary acceptance of one part and a rejection of the other. And to the novice traveler, fresh from the protection of a familiar home, that changing, alternating mode will be difficult. So it's going to take practice; and when learned the new behavior will in itself be just as steady and stable as it was before. Such creative wholeness leads us beyond the here and now of sensory response and beyond remembered experiences and knowledge. It leads us to a deeper understanding of the natural balance between divergent and convergent thought and the needs to both expand and to compact... to both be free and to limit...to experience the rhythm or pulse of a whole energy process.

The attributes of creative behavior follow from that "alternation" requirement. Active CURIOSITY, a divergent behavioral characteristic, leads to factual discovery and the relaxed security of KNOWLEDGE, a convergent mode; knowledge begets INVENTIVENESS (divergence) and the search for varied applications of the known. Variety suggests DECISION and selection (convergence). Decisiveness leads to ACTIVITY (divergence). And the consequences of action bring out VALUATION (convergence). Back and forth we must go to achieve our balanced view. But conscious alternation, when skillfully applied to behavior, is not the common or typical behavior found in our society. It is far more typical for someone to work hard at being critical all day long and to save "sensitivity" for "after work" or on the weekend.

It's really abnormal to balance thinking and feeling all day long...as the daily process unfolds. And because such behavior is unique it is often viewed by "normal" society as careless or care-free, sometimes boorish or maladjusted, and even at times subversive to the institutions that normalcy creates to perpetuate the slow-changing process of "remaining normal."



DESIGNERS TAKE NOTE!! IF YOUR HUMAN RELATIONS ARE ON A SMOOTH COURSE, IT IS PROBABLE THAT ONE OF TWO ALTERNATIVES IS IN EFFECT; EITHER YOU ARE NOT BEING CREATIVE OR YOU HAVE CONDITIONED YOURSELF AND THE OTHERS IN YOUR ENVIRONMENT TO ACCEPT YOUR ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR.



Some keys to Creative Behavior

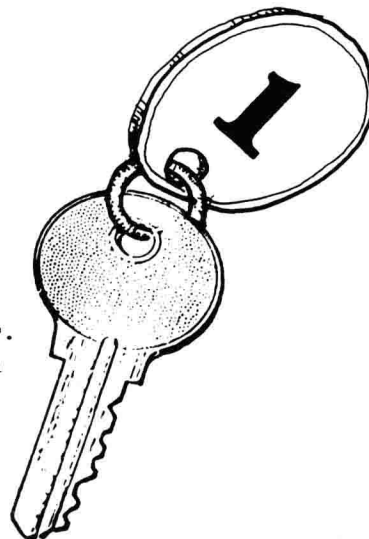
People become more and more creative by simply becoming more conscious of what it is they do and of how their actions relate to their environment. Said another way, creativity and consciousness of procedures (process) and methods go hand in hand. If you become more aware of your position relative to what has gone before and what is yet to come, your ability to decide from both the broad view and the specific view is increased. If you become more conscious of the stages of the process you can become more accurate in your predictions for what to do next. And you can become more skilled at choosing better ways to move forward as you become more conscious of the work such methods must perform.

Along with developing a consciousness of process and methods, here are a few more keys to creativity:

1. FREEDOM FROM FALSE PRIDE
2. BELIEF IN ONE'S OWN ABILITY TO SUCCEED
3. CONSTRUCTIVE DISCONTENT
4. WHOLENESS
5. ABILITY TO CONTROL HABIT

SELF-DISCIPLINE OR FREEDOM FROM FALSE PRIDE

Self-discipline, or as Bobby Seale defines it, "behaving the same," is another way to say "freedom from false pride." (Pride is used here as a general term for the hangups associated with a lack of self-discipline). To be able to "hold your head up high" with pride is destructive counter-creative behavior. It is difficult to see well from that position and detracts from the positive attainment of goals. FALSE PRIDE stands in the way of creativity by inhibiting us from asking key questions, thus stifling the key requisite



for curiosity. It restricts a change of mind or direction which thereby fixes a pre-conceived and prejudicial course. And it runs counter to the true selflessness required for the "giving" of oneself to the task! False pride sets up a potential for being untrue to one's self. It joins the other six "deadly sins" - greed, lust, sloth, envy, gluttony and hate - and diverts our attention from improvement.

Contrary to false pride, **SELF-DISCIPLINE** is a truth-reality behavior. "Behaving the same" requires the courage of convictions and the freedom from fear of social reprisal. It is a fearless acceptance of the responsibility of being what we are, of knowing what we know and do not know, and of taking the steps required to insure our own development. Self-discipline encourages an ever-enlarging knowledge, an increased sensitivity, and the formation of a true philosophy of freedom...not the false freedom of pride through autonomy, belonging or ownership. Through self-discipline, we constantly strengthen our own positions; through pride we weaken them.

Self-discipline does not mean "doing your thing" contrary to the needs of the group, and it does not mean that we cannot tailor our approach to the specific situations within which we find ourselves. But it does limit unreal behavior, untrue or devious behavior, "kind lies," and self-righteous behavior. It does not restrict us from performing tasks that we believe to be necessary although unpleasant. But it does eliminate the wasteful acting-out of many irrelevant social demands.



BELIEF IN ONE'S ABILITY TO SUCCEED

Ego-strength is not an ego-trip. A belief in one's own ability is not a license to become a blowhard: It is simply a necessary trait for the further development of creative behavior. **ENCOURAGE YOURSELF. GET YOURSELF moving (motivated).** If you wait for someone else to move you, it is possible to find yourself headed in an uncomfortable direction.

Contrary to developing this necessary trait, we often spend much of our time playing the social game of self-denial; of publicly denying our abilities and potentials; of enjoying the "popularity" of being "humble;" and of generally declaring that we don't think we'll make it. It is simply not socially acceptable to construct ego-strength or unique personal beliefs while it is acceptable to express a

total vulnerability to the group. Because of such pressures, we are often forced to express self-belief in private. The result is that self-esteem must be "dragged out of us;" the more deeply we bury it, the more remote it becomes from being part of our behavior pattern. "Begin to believe in your own creative potential and you will begin to be more creative" is a requisite attitude to creative growth.

CONSTRUCTIVE DISCONTENT

Arrival at adolescence is usually all that is required for achieving half of this important attribute of creativity. It is unusual to find a "contented" young person; discontent goes with that time of life. To the young, everything needs improvement. Yet, it is usually the lack of a constructive attitude that wins out in the end, turning all of that healthy "discontent" into nothing more than a "bunch of gripes."

As we age, our discontent wanes; we learn from our society that "fault-finders" disturb the status quo of the normal, average "others." Squelch tactics are introduced. It becomes "good" not to "make waves" or "rock the boat" and to "let sleeping dogs lie" and "be seen but not heard." It is "good" to be invisible and enjoy your "autonomy." It is "bad" to be a problem-maker. And so everything is upside-down for creativity and its development. Thus, constructive attitudes are necessary for a dynamic condition; discontent is prerequisite to problem-solving. Combined, they define a primary quality of the creative problem-solver: a constantly developing Constructive Discontent.



WHOLENESS

Everyone both senses and knows. It is natural both to feel and to decide. Yet, it's also normal to tend to smother our sensitivity in favor of strengthening our expression of judgment. Growing up in society we learn that it's better to know that it is to feel. It just seems more "grown-up" that way because that's the way most people are. We learn that creative people are different from "most people." Why don't we learn that we can be more creative ourselves if we don't stifle our emotions, but instead allow those "feelings" to enter into the conscious world of our knowing responses?? To become more sensitive doesn't mean we have to diminish our logical abilities or that we must

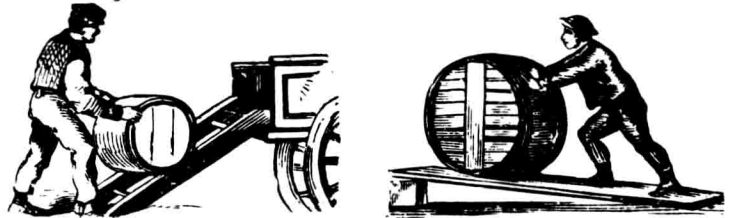


forget all about knowing. It simply means that we could attempt to redesign our behavior into a more balanced whole--to alternate between feeling and knowing, between sensing and deciding in a conscious way--and thus be more in control of our **WHOLE** potential.



ABILITY TO CONTROL HABIT

The things that keep most of us from behaving creatively are our habits. A habit is behavior that is preconceived; when you have a habit, you already know how to do something. Of course, there are good habits and bad habits, and the value judgment is determined by how helpful or hindering your habits become to your problem-solving ability. For instance, all of our intuition (sub-conscious response) is previously-learned behavior (or habit) that works at times for us and at other times against us. From the beginning of life we learn, and we commit that learning to our memory. Afterwards we tend to behave in ways that reflect our learning. It's perfectly O.K. to be intuitive...in fact it would be impossible not to be...almost all of what we do is intuitive, and we learn most of that before we reach eight years. But it is very important to the creative process that we don't allow ourselves to get locked into our intuition and its preconceived approach to life. 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 take a chance on the unproven and to discard them by developing new, replacement habits when the old ones get in the way of our intentions.



STEADY CREATIVITY REQUIRES A STEADY, DETERMINED EFFORT. The more consistently we behave in ways that encourage creativity, the more likely we are to be consistently creative. Creativity is a learnable state of behavior patterns. It is not magic. And it is not a quirk of birth. Some people don't "just have it." Creativity demands listening to your own logical and sensitive conclusions, not only to the dictates of the immediate environment or society. In a mass society, conformity is the shortest route to acceptance by our peers. To become unique is a sure way to become an outcast...a stranger outside the