

Why Can't the Sky be Pink?

by Ria Pati



Ria Pati, a member of Mahabharat group, Odisha, India, gave an experiential presentation there on "Awakening Creativity" in a workshop on 5 November 2016

The atmosphere is happy and cheerful, with lots of kids between the ages of 6 and 10 years. Their assignment is to replicate a template created by the instructor consisting of the sky, mountains, birds and mounds of land in the foreground. On one such occasion I overheard a 6-year-old run up to the instructor to show him her work. After a brief pause the instructor asked her –
“Why have you made the sky pink?”

The question caught me off-guard. It got me thinking. Really, *WHY* can't the sky be pink after all? In the little girl's world, the sky could be orange, purple, red, or green... anything that she imagined it to be.

Non-Conformity

It is well known that the imagination of a child knows no bounds of our so-called real world. The most beautiful aspect of being a child is that they don't strive for artistic perfection. They strive to create a glimpse of an unimaginable world that exists in their mind. Nothing holds them back. They are immersed in the experience and aren't bothered if the drawing follows basic rules of scale, proportion or colour harmony. What matters to them is putting down what they *saw* or *felt*.

But when we try to curb this gift, we dampen their creativity. There is no doubt that one must learn the ways and rules of what is considered traditional art. But often a strict adherence to these rules is what stops us from even trying in the first place. This kind of conditioning has turned away many talented artists who were too afraid that they weren't good enough.

Growing up

As we grow old, we tend to lose the childlike enthusiasm and the hope that anything is possible.

So herein lies my purpose. To help create a space that encourages creative expression without the bounds of what we consider 'art'. Because art is very

personal, subjective and is a journey that we embark upon in order to find ourselves.

Finding your unique expression

For the artist, the subconscious mind is the direct source of all that can be created. Your subconscious mind is the storehouse of all your belief systems, your sense of identity, habits, values and your memories, while your conscious mind is connected to will power, analysis and the ability to take decisions.

When we get into the rhythm of creating art, writing, composing music, dancing or even cooking, the conscious mind takes a back seat, and the subconscious mind begins to express itself.

So in such a scenario, meditation is an excellent tool to help get into the “space” or the “zone” as many writers and artists would call it. Whether its relaxation by taking deep breaths, or listening to soothing music, the conscious mind begins to relax, giving you space to “download” ideas.

The between slumber and wakefulness

Creative geniuses such as Einstein, Salvador Dali and Edison all had this in common. They knew this secret method of receiving ideas. They knew how to achieve the *hypnogogic* state. *Hypnogogia* is a thin line between sleep and wakefulness. It is known that this state is highly conducive to incubate ideas. You rid yourself of the day-to-day stresses by going into a deeply relaxed state. Dali would hold a set of keys in his hand and begin to doze off, just as he went into the first stage of REM sleep, the keys would hit the floor waking him up from his half sleep state, giving him ideas far better than his wakeful state.

I'll leave you with a passage from a letter by Kurt Vonnegut, a celebrated author, to students of Xavier High School in New York. In the letter he said:

“Practice any art, music, singing, dancing, acting, drawing, painting, sculpting, poetry, fiction, essays, reportage, no matter how well or badly, not to get money and fame, but to experience becoming, to find out what's inside you, to make your soul grow.”

Bio: Ria works as a Senior Art Director with J. Walter Thompson, an advertising agency, formerly known as Hindustan Thompson Associates that has seen the likes of artists like Satyajit Ray. In her free time Ria enjoys researching lost ancient knowledge and has a keen interest in finding common ground in mythology across cultures.