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# Blocks to Creative Perception: The 'Mentalogics'

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*All Science depends on its concepts. These are ideas which receive names. They determine the questions one asks, and the answers one gets. They are more fundamental than the theories which are stated in terms of them".*

- Sir G Thompson, Nobel Laureate

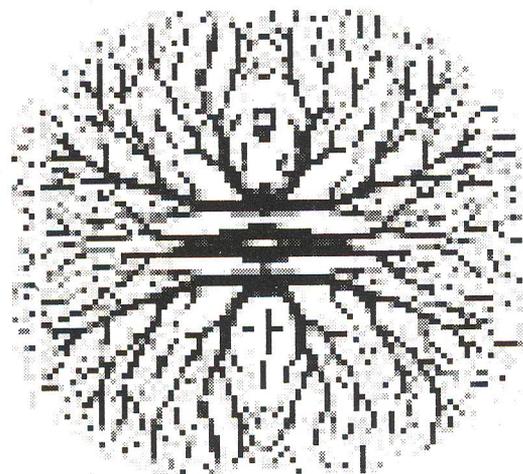
As an introduction, the two key concepts involved in this paper are briefly explained.

## **Creative Perception:**

Creative Perception refers to perception of linkages that would inspire and motivate an individual to discover, invent, modify, vary anything in the external world and/or within the self [competencies, knowledge, abilities, etc], work, actions, behaviours, and relationships.

Creative perception creates new perceptions about a thing that is already present or available. Individuals who happened to have creative perception explained their new perceptions. Art, philosophy, science, technology, and medicine; cultivation, shelter, and group activities; and institutions and organizations have all been evolved out of creative perception. Every item of human civilization and culture has been triggered first in the creative perception of a few individuals.

By normal developmental paths of the majority of people, the processes of creative perception are 'blocked' by [1] lack of stimulation and induction or [2] lack of motivation to prepare, incubate, and verify about whatever is 'creatively perceived' or [3] lack of supportive culture and climate or a 'holding environment' that does not identify and support the creative initiatives of people.



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## Mentalogics

The concept of 'mentalogics' is used to refer to the 'logical and conceptual frames-of-references' or 'logics' that mediate perception. Therefore, it may be presumed that mentalogics work behind every slice of human expression – whether it is a thought or dialogue, action or behaviour, job performance or inter-personal relationships. Mentalogics leads to individual differences of all kinds.

## Nature of mentalogics

By virtue of the processes of sensation and sensitivity, a human entity is bound to have a certain plane of mentalogics. Mentalogics may change and evolve, multiply or vanish, get attached or detached.

The development of mentalogics depends upon the following factors:

- [1] The processes and process-settings in which the sensations and sensitivities are triggered during early stages of growth – especially during infancy to early childhood.
- [2] The kind and quality of the inter-personal interaction events, learning, information, experience, etc. Therefore, mentalogics are created both consciously and unconsciously, and therefore, they function both consciously and unconsciously. [In general, it is relatively more difficult and complex to resolve a consciously devised mentalogic, than the unconsciously devised ones].
- [3] The quality and competencies of teachers, school environment, and the nature of subjects taught in the general curriculum at

school-university levels or liked by a person for reading-learning-research.

## Negative and Positive Mentalogics

By the nature of the 'output' - cognitions, thoughts, behaviours, etc - a mentalogic could be 'negative' and 'dysfunctional' or 'positive' and 'creative'. A mentalogic may cause 'dysfunctional cognition' that motivates a person to reject, dislike, hate, refuse a thing. Or, a 'positive cognition' by which the person may become open and highly receptive to a thing, a new thing, idea, person, phenomenon, and so on.

## Mentalogics as Blocks

Mentalogics are the decisive factors that block a creative perception as well as trigger and facilitate a creative perception. A 'block' is a peripheral expression of a behaviour or action, but the corresponding processes in the mind-setting is governed by 'mentalogics'. For example, if a person refuses to meet a stranger, it indicates a mental block [the 'fear of unknown']. But the inner process, rather the thoughts that mediated the given behaviour is governed by a mentalogic – which may comprise the elements of fear, parental instructions about avoiding strangers, lack of experience in meeting strangers, etc. Creative interviews with a person would reveal more or less clearly the precise elements of a given mentalogic.

'Positive Mentalogics' is a critical requirement for creative perception. Because, it requires certain 'logic of perception' to **receive** a new signal, to **cognize** its specialty or uniqueness and to **sustain the motivation** to incubate upon a creative perception, to prepare oneself more to develop whatever is cognized from that perception, and to

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verify or make final form to a feasible outcome [the so-called 99 percent 'perspiration'].

According to mentalogics the blocks to creative perception may be classified into: [1] Intellectual Blocks [2] Emotional Traps [3] Developmental Blocks

## I. Intellectual Blocks

Intellectual blocks refer to certain logics of the mind [mentalogics] that are created and sustained by knowledge, insights, learning, information, and experience. There are two kinds of intellectual blocks.

### 1. Defense Orientation - Escapism - Risk Avoidance - Anxiety of Failure

Refers to the following aspects:

- [a] Perceived incompetence to manage exposure or to maintain observation of puzzling and unexpected situations, contexts, dialogues, experience, etc. Which in turn is complicated by the self-perception 'why should I undergo this, or do this, etc.'
- [b] Using language competency to explain and interpret a thing according to the 'pleasure principle'.
- [c] Unconscious avoidance of creative perception, whenever it happens or conscious repression [or suppression] of a creative perception by comparing the perceptions of others [about comparable things or identical things.
- [d] The incompetence to self-manage the incidence of inspiration or creative perceptions.

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## Typical Expressions of this block

- Fear of failure, 'weak self-image', 'comfort zone' bound, 'good-boy' syndrome
  - Avoiding situations or events a person is likely to be compared to others, especially if such situations or events are of a competitive nature; primarily because the individual feels incapable of handling them.
  - Viewing failure at any task as a complete loss of face with the accompanying fear of being labeled as useless person.
  - Extremely cautious in all situations perceived to be critical.
  - Extreme difficulty in taking decisions. [In small doses, it is a powerful motivating factor that encourages one to work harder or think differently].
  - Inability to try out repair of things, try new style or pattern of action/behaviour/work/relationships
  - Lacking the courage to take risks especially in a competitive environment.
- ### 2. Normative Compulsion – bureaucratic mind-setting/rule bound/fear of 'powerful others'/fear of 'loneliness'/'external locus of control'

This block refers to the tendency to stick to 'correct and right' perceptions; to avoid competitive perceptions. An exaggerated fear of group disapproval: accepting group perceptions [which are all, once upon a time, the 'Creative Perceptions' of original-creative individuals].

Above all, the strong personality factor of ensuring one's perceptions to be in uniform with

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others. This block is sustained by high intelligence or excessive attachment with one's own learning, experience, insights, knowledge, etc. It prevents the formation of 'new linkages' between the new perception of a thing and existing mind-sets [of knowledge, learning, etc]. By consistent conforming to the norms of existent logic, thought patterns get adapted to that and results in perceptual conformity.

### Typical Expressions of this block

- Sub-conscious compulsion to go by the general and accepted practices,
- Rule bound; not sensitive to actual or relevant requirements
- Bureaucratic mind-setting
- Conventional attitudes, needs, interests, preferences
- Fear of 'powerful others', 'External Locus of Control'
- Obsessive concern for what is expected or regarded as normal; customary behaviour, appearance, etc
- Great fear of social disapproval - obsessed with socially acceptable behaviour.
- Fail to appreciate and reward new ideas, expressions, etc.
- A strong allegiance to customs, rituals, traditions, safe and guaranteed procedures and practices. etc without reflection [about its precise individual relevance]
- Prefer risk-free existence.
- No-appreciation for the perceptions [including the principles, ideologies, and perspectives thereof], of others or other disciplines.
- Preference for risk-free decisions, work, relationships, etc by which the scope for Creative Perception is delimited.

## II. Emotional Traps

When a person becomes 'attached' with an idea, situation, experience, etc it may result in a

strong adherence to them. That is, any instance that requires a change is perceived as threatening and may invoke subtle to severe emotional expressions. There are two kinds of traps:

### 1. Fear of Change - Rigidity – lack of flexibility in thinking - rigid and conventional thinking or 'parrot thinking'

Resistance to change: uncomfortable with the 'change' – possible from out of a Creative Perception Blind adherence to existent range and types of perceptions. Resigned with the current levels of functional competencies, life-work-relationship setting. Looking at the world through a formula approach, resisting any changes in such an approach.

### Typical Expressions

- Lack of flexibility in thinking, speech, action, relationships, etc
- Rigid linear thinking - 'parrot thinking'
- Strictness, severity, and harshness in thoughts-ideas, attitudes, etc.
- Strict in opinion, observance, procedure, or method; admitting or allowing no deviation; scrupulously exact or precise, unchanging, unvarying; not adaptable in outlook or response.
- Blind adherence to certain beliefs and notions without bothering to question their validity or usefulness in today's world.
- Believing that everything or every individual has a specific function within which it/he will have to function with no room for change.
- Looking at life or work through a formula approach, resisting any changes in such an approach.
- Uncomfortable with new ideas and new ways of behaviour; unexpected events.

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## 2. Anxiety about Self-uniqueness or embarrassment about being 'special' - fear of humiliation - Inspiration Suppression - 'tender-self/'touchiness':

Refers to the special kind of fear or embarrassment to accept the uniqueness of oneself vis-à-vis thought, speech, action, relationship, etc. people often complain about lack of recognition and appreciation [from others] still maintaining the tendency to reject or denounce appreciation.

Such a mind-set is the outcome of aspects, such as:

- [a] Early environment of constant blaming and fault-finding, extreme reactions especially to 'poor academic performance', and parental blocks that do not allow the child to express his or her uniqueness, chance special behaviours, and unique-creative relationships
- [b] A teacher-school culture that is mediocre and pretentious, that gives importance to 'uniformity [- in ideas, learning, 'way-of-doing-things' and 'majority behaviour'] than the uniqueness of the child.
- [c] Lack of opportunities to 'fully-develop' skills, abilities, and competencies in extra-curricular activities; to work out or develop oneself so as to result in a firm-complete confidence in self.

### Typical Expressions

- Expressed or subtle fear of uniqueness, fear of 'being different', 'tender self'
- Quick irritation, reaction [either of anger or depression and withdrawal] in situations of humiliation or 'expecting' humiliation
- Difficulty in team 'adjustment' and 'relationship management' [not necessarily team 'work'], 'emotional vicious circle' due to early environment of 'double-bind'.
- Interactions restricted to the familiar, comfort-zones, like-minded people, etc.

- Unrealistic self appraisal and the negative aspects [of self] are overlooked for fear of 'self humiliation.'
- Frail self-esteem or lack of ego strength to hold and sustain the uniqueness of one's thought-speech-action-relationships
- Anxiety about the 'loneliness-of-uniqueness' - about maintaining unique or creative perceptions [vis-à-vis the environment setting, which is unlikely to be supportive].
- Closed even to constructive criticism.

## III. Developmental Blocks:

The mentalogic involved are created during early development - from embryonic stage to late childhood - till 10-13 years, therefore, named 'developmental blocks'.

### 1. Signal Myopia - higher Signal Detection Thresholds/ 'Apparent Sensitivity'

This block refers to lack of sensitivity to the hidden, subtle, and invisible aspects and linkages of things [the potential signals that may lead to a Creative Perception are not sensed or not perceived even if sensed, or not cognized even if perceived].

Such a mind-set or mentalogic is the outcome of aspects, such as:

- [a] Lack of direct exposure or experience with 'Nature' and its subtleties
- [b] Lack of unique experiences during developmental processes.
- [c] Uninspiring parents, environment, community, culture, etc.
- [d] Uninspiring teachers, school climate, friends and peers, etc

This block is due to the disuse of the core processes involved - rather than suppression or rejection of a function. But, the 'typical expressions' of this block are 'justified' and explained by a person by using relevant mentalogics [developed consciously].

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## Typical Expressions

- Lack of 'Sensitivity' – trapped by the obvious and apparent
  - Poor attention-observation-reflection-conceptualization
  - Higher Signal Detection Thresholds
  - Lack of Wider Perspective - lack 'rooms inside' or narrow mind-setting.
  - Lack spontaneity; importance to being 'civilized' at all times.
  - Fail to fantasize, aversion to 'rich' experiences, and ecstasies of life, etc.
  - Lack of interest in reading or quality reading
  - Narrow 'outlook' vis-à-vis things, events, people, situations, etc - lack 'rooms inside'
  - No meaningful hobbies and interests.
  - No dreams, visions; give a lot of importance to being 'precise' and 'sticking to facts'.
  - Poor interest in the arts, poetry, nature, mysteries, aesthetic aspects, creative activities, etc.
  - Suppress expression of emotions; exert pressure on self and others to keep emotions under control and to be rational and mature.
  - Dry, rigid, overly ritualistic-religious thoughts, speech, behaviour, relationships, etc.
- 2. Resistance to the 'new' - Anxiety of Ambiguity - Lack of Tolerance for the strange, unexpected, unfamiliar, and the new**

Refers to a collectively justified irritability about ambiguity, uncertainty, and lack of clarity [according to the perceivers] in: situations, plans, ideas, methods, objects, events, experiences, people, etc.

The relevant mentalogics are imbibed out of:

- [a] Early environment of protection, possession, and parental blocks, 'safety-security obsessions and compulsions'.
- [b] A teacher-school culture that gives importance to quick and easy memorizing rather than patient understanding through reflection and insight.
- [c] 'Guided experience' in viewing an ambiguous situation / task insurmountable or avoidable rather than as a challenge or a new learning experience.

## Typical Expressions

- Aversion to unclear, unfamiliar, unexpected, and strange things and phenomena.
- A mental attitude of opposition or repugnance; a habitual dislike; antipathy, unwillingness about the *new* and *unknown*.
- Avoiding new situations, challenging, ambiguous, strange, or unfamiliar situations
- Compulsive: everything to be structured or organized.
- Panic about approaching or dealing with the unknown.
- Get offended, irritated, deviated, defensive, defeated, disappointed, frustrated, panic, etc with unexpected situations, contexts.
- If a creative perception occurs, by context or by requirement, thought process searches within to identify an already available description in order to place and position the new – instead of observing the new reality till its attributes or linkages are perceived.
- The tendency to force-fit a new perception into an existent structure or organized format as quickly as possible – the interim period is interpreted as 'confusion', boredom, disinterest, difficult, useless, waste, etc. A mysterious problem of the educated mind-set.

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### 3. Self-blindness - lack of self awareness/ 'sleeping beauty' syndrome/fear of Genius or originality arising from with in/ fear of 'self-evolution'/fear of 'Success'; Self Displacement'

'Myopic' about one's own competencies, insights and knowledge, unique experiences, the 'subtle processes of entity', etc. leading to self-limiting, dysfunctional thought-speech-behaviour-work-relationship linkages.

The relevant mentalogics are evolved out of the following:

- [a] Early environment of protection, possession, and parental blocks that do not allow the child to undergo new experiences, readings, etc that prevent exposure to difficult, complex, strange, ambiguous tasks, people, situations, etc.
- [b] A teacher-school culture that gives importance to quick and easy memorizing rather than training the competencies of observation-perception-cognition-thinking etc.
- [c] Lack of opportunities to develop skills, abilities, and competencies in extra-curricular activities; to work out or develop oneself; to prepare and incubate upon creative perceptions or inspirations

#### Typical Expressions

- Lack of self awareness, doubtful about resources one's own
- 'Sleeping beauty' syndrome – waiting for 'savior'
- 'Self-Compromise'
- 'weak self-image'
- Lack of curiosity and exploratory attitudes, values, behaviours; no 'search and find' orientation.
- Poor understanding of potentials or underdeveloped potentials.

- Accepting majority perspectives at face value.
- Untapped 'original search response'.
- Inability to sense the resources of others.
- Excessive dependence on others.
- Poor problem solving competencies.
- Belief in fate; inferiority feelings.
- Aversion to subtle and invisible realities of self, existence, Nature,
- No higher order motives [for wisdom, self-realization, etc]
- Imitative attitudes-values-behaviors.
- Poor understanding of the variety of possible-probable competencies [lack of sensitivity or lack of awareness about the nature of the core processes of the human entity.

#### Final Note:

These blocks of mentalogics prevent the original flow of the river of creative perception [that would otherwise constantly evolve the entity into its firm-correct-complete-elegant-taoic blooming - as in the case of every other entity in the Universe] and re-direct it to known territories, where comfortable and familiar perceptions, thoughts, motivations, and actions are recognized, cultivated, and perpetuated.

By understanding the nature and expressions of these blocks it is possible to develop new strategies and methodologies to manage and overcome these blocks, new mentalogics can be identified and reinforced.

#### *A note on the Research Methodology behind the formulation of this paper:*

The 'qualitative data' for this condensed paper were generated mostly by the method of 'Behavioral Event Interview' and 'Competency Assessment Interview' [David McClelland, et al], 'Creative Feedback Interview' [Prasad Sundararajan] over a period of three years covering a sample of 150 persons and

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'Concept Analysis' [Giovanni Sartori] of the interview protocols and concepts and ideas chosen especially from Wittgenstein and Encyclopedia of the Mind.

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