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*We Help You Focus Clearly,
Organize Effectively,
And Act With Courage*

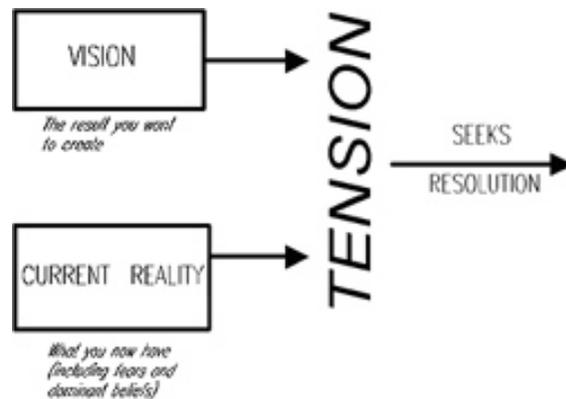
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How Can You Create Effectively?

- 1. Determine what you want.**
Be clear about what you want and describe it to yourself and others in as much detail as possible.
- 2. Acknowledge reality.**
Be objective and assess your reality much like a reporter would. Watch your denial systems! Ask others what they see in order to help you see different perspectives.
- 3. Choose what you want.**
This is a powerful step. There is a difference between want and will -- making an active choice puts your personal power behind it.
- 4. Determine what you have to do, today, to make this a reality.**
The act of creating something is not a one-time event. Seeing this as a process will help you become more of an artist.
- 5. Do it.** Take action!
- 6. Let go of the results.**
This may seem paradoxical, but if you worry or try to control outcomes you will only corrupt the creative process. Realize that reality changes and tomorrow you have another chance to act.

** Note: "Creative Tension" is a concept and theory developed by Robert Fritz in his books THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE and CREATING. Peter Senge further discusses it in THE FIFTH DISCIPLINE.*

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CREATING YOUR FUTURE

Have you ever noticed that when you have something clearly in mind you can't rest until it's a reality? Say that you really wanted a bright red sports car -- what would happen when you pulled out onto the highway every day?

That experience is called "creative tension" and is what artists feel when they stare at a blank canvas or an uncut piece of stone and can see exactly what they want to create. **Creative or structural tension* is the gap between what you want (vision) and what you have (current reality). It can be a powerful force** that you can tap to create what you want in your life and organization.

The key behind this is holding the tension until your reality matches your vision. That is easier said than done. Tension is uncomfortable and usually thought of as something to eliminate. The gap between a vision and reality can seem overwhelming -- so we compromise our vision ("We've set our sights too high") or deny our reality ("It's really not so bad after all") to eliminate that gnawing feeling that the gap produces. As a result, dreams and visions can become watered down over time and it's easy to settle back into mediocrity.

Cultivating creative tension means thinking like an artist. It means holding your vision firmly in mind and acknowledging and embracing current reality at the same time. It means making choices, taking action, and living with ambiguity.

Organizationally, it means developing

- **Shared vision** -- based on shared values and beliefs.
- **Shared awareness of current reality** -- looking at the whole picture including fears, limiting beliefs, and organizational filters.
- **Strategic choices** -- Based on leverage and what you can do, today.
- **Action-Reflection-Action** -- Including courage to do difficult things and wait for results. CMP