

CREATIVE AGENCY: MEASUREMENT, MECHANISMS, FOSTERING

Creativity is the highest form of human functioning. Without it, not only we would not be able to cope with the coronavirus pandemic, but also our everyday life would be much poorer. Creative activities bring several benefits: psychological (creativity improves mood), social (creating opens us to others and increases tolerance), educational (creative thinking allows us to learn more effectively), economic (there is no innovation without creative ideas), and finally: political (doesn't solving the conflict in Ukraine require non-stereotypical solutions?).

Contemporary psychology does not limit creativity only to outstanding discoveries or great art. Albert Einstein and Marie Skłodowska-Curie were once kids, too; growing up, they did not lose their curiosity and willingness to change the world. The potential to create—curiosity, noticing problems that others do not see, creativity, and originality of the generated proposals—is a universal characteristic, present not only in the case of geniuses but also in ordinary people: children, adolescents, and adults. However, it is a paradox that although creativity as a trait is important and appreciated, our creative potential is usually not fully used. The reasons vary; this research project focuses on the motivational sources of lack of creative activities, a better understanding of them, and finally, the possibilities of eliminating them.

The program of planned research focuses on the category of "creative agency," understood as readiness for creative activities, based on creative confidence (the "I can" perspective) and the centrality of being creative as part of an individual's identity ("I am" perspective). Therefore, the project assumes that the reluctance to undertake creative activities has motivational sources. The research is based on the theoretical model of creative behavior as an agentic action (CBAA) and research on the effectiveness of simple and "wise" psychological interventions.

The project will be conducted in three comprehensive lines of research. In total, 12 extensive studies (with many smaller pilot studies) will be carried out over four years, including correlational, experimental, longitudinal, and interventional studies. All studies will be pre-registered, with materials, scripts, and data available anonymization in line with the principles of Open Science. This research will pursue three main goals: (a) complement and refine existing methods of measuring creative agency, including new indirect methods and measures adequate to measure agency in children (Research Line 1), (b) in experimental and longitudinal research, key deductions derived from the CBAA model will be tested, allowing for the description of the mechanisms of shaping agency (Research Line 2) and (c) new ways of enhancing children's creative agency will be developed (interventions based on "gamification" methods—the use of newly created, narrative board games), similarly as methods developing new interventions among adolescents (gamification-based intervention methodology with the use of mobile applications) and adults (intervention methodology based on diary studies) (Research Line 3).