

# Thoughts on Creativity, by Loris Malaguzzi

*As we have chosen to work with children we can say that they are the best evaluators and the most sensitive judges of the values of creativity. This comes about because they have the privilege of not being excessively attached to their own ideas, which they construct and reinvent continuously. They are apt to explore, make discoveries, change their points of view, and fall in love with forms and meanings that transform themselves.*

*Therefore, we do not consider creativity sacred, we do not consider it as extraordinary but rather as likely to emerge from daily experience. This view is now shared by many. We can sum up our beliefs as follows:*

1. Creativity should not be considered a separate mental faculty but a characteristic of our way of thinking, knowing, and making choices.
2. Creativity seems to emerge from multiple experiences, coupled with a well-supported development of personal resources including a sense of freedom to venture beyond the known.
3. Creativity seems to express itself through cognitive, affective, and imaginative processes. These come together and support the skills for predicting and arriving at unexpected solutions.
4. The most favorable situation for creativity seems to be interpersonal exchange, with negotiation of conflict and comparison of ideas and actions being decisive elements.
5. Creativity seems to find its power when adults are less tied to prescriptive methods, but instead become observers and interpreters of problematic situations.
6. Creativity seems to be favored or disfavored according to the expectation of the teachers, schools, families, and communities as well as society at large according to the ways children perceive those expectations.
7. Creativity becomes more visible when adults try to be more attentive to the cognitive processes of children than to the results they achieve in various fields of doing and understanding.
8. The more teachers are convinced that intellectual and expressive activities have both multiplying and unifying possibilities, the more creativity favors friendly exchanges with imagination and fantasy.
9. Creativity requires that the school of knowing finds connections with the school of expressing, opening doors (this is our slogan) to the hundred languages of children.

Often when people come to us and observe our children, they ask us which magic spell we have used. We answer that their surprise equals our surprise. Creativity? It is always difficult to notice when it is dressed in everyday clothing and has the ability to appear and disappear suddenly. Our task regarding creativity is to help children to climb their own mountains. No one can do more.

From Malaguzzi, L. (1998). History, ideas, and basic philosophy. In C. P. Edwards, L. Gandini, & G. Forman (Eds). The hundred languages of children: The Reggio Emilia Approach-Advanced reflections 2nd ed.;pp.49-97. Westport, CT: Ablex.