

# Kevin Leahy

◆  
SENIOR DIRECTOR, CONTENT & BRAND STRATEGY



one north

A TEKsystems Company

# Stoking the Creative Fire



FIRE  
SESSION

Kevin Leahy

SENIOR DIRECTOR, CONTENT & BRAND STRATEGY





“The most important question anyone can ask is: what myth am I living?”

Dr. Carl Jung

FOUNDER OF ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY





(except for this guy)

**PARENTAL  
ADVISORY  
EXPLICIT CONTENT**



# Creativity Is:

---

◆ a muscle

---

◆ a practice

---

◆ a perspective you can cultivate

---



ARTS & CULTURE

# Fiction Issue 2015: 'Salvage'

"Never has he been so disappointed to discover something so incredible."

by Kevin Leahy  
January 13, 2015



Credit: Johnny Sampson

Drendan doesn't know about the swords vet. They're still in his future, buried

# THE BEST AMERICAN Mystery STORIES

LISA SCOTTOLINE

EDITOR

OTTO PENZLER

SERIES EDITOR



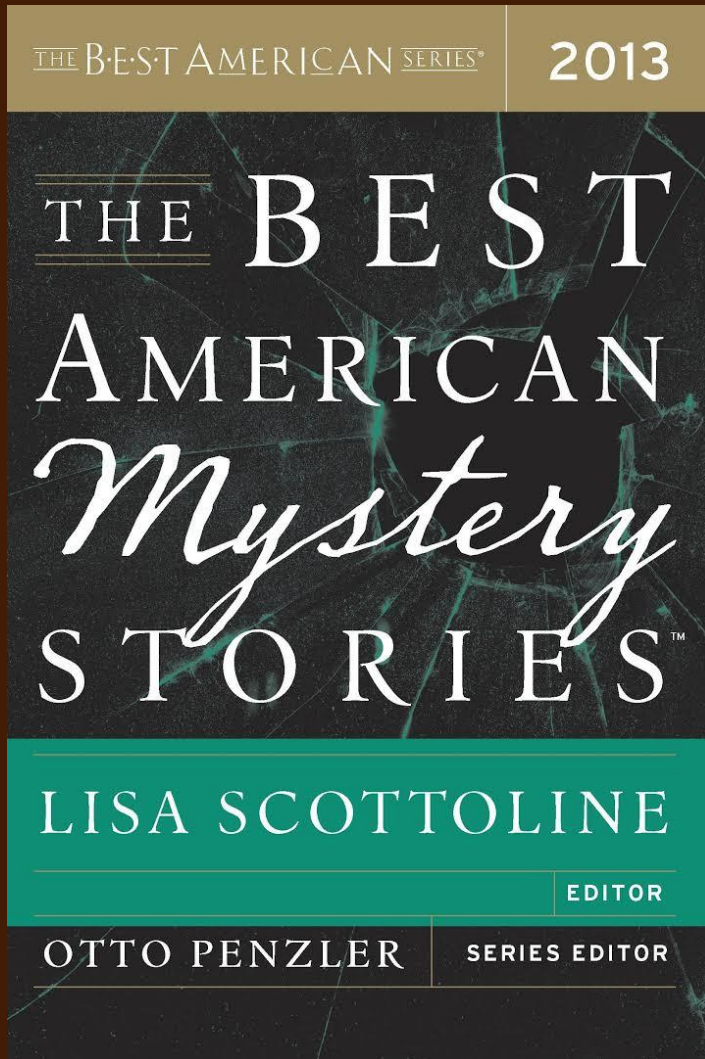
## "Simple Physics" by Kevin Leahy

That same June night, our parents bought us ice cream and balloons on the promenade of Buckingham Fountain. (Dad claims it was August, but I prefer to remember it my way, with the whole summer ahead of us.) We were greedy, ravenous: three boys fighting for the first scoop, catching elbows in our ribs. Every surface in the city bleeding heat into the sky. I grabbed the first cone but, to my mother's surprise, refused a balloon—I'd just turned eight after all, balloons were for babies—but she pressed a bright yellow one into my hand.

"For me," she said.

After the day we'd had, the need in her voice threatened to loose a rockslide within me, so I accepted the balloon





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The Best American Mystery Stories 2013	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company
The Best American Mystery Stories 2019	Jonathan Lethem	Lethem, Jonathan; Jonathan Lethem
The Best American Mystery Stories 2015 - Introduction	James Patterson	Patterson, James; Patterson
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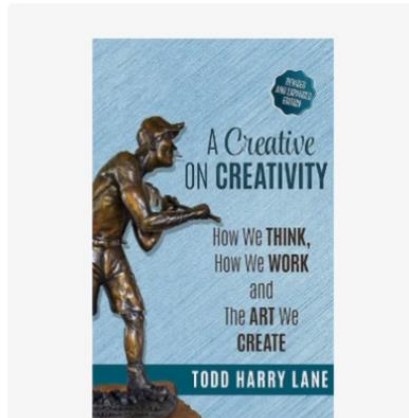
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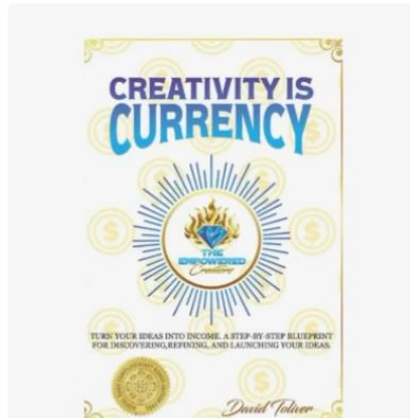
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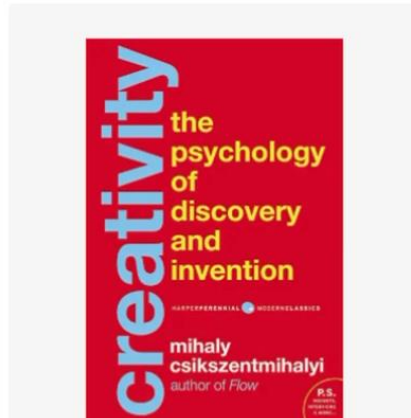
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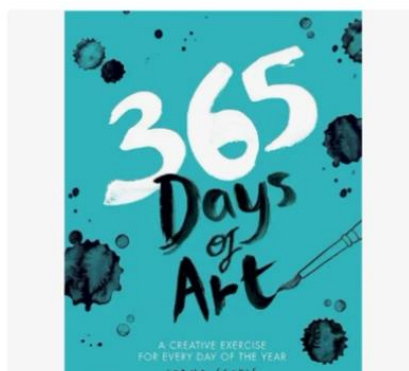
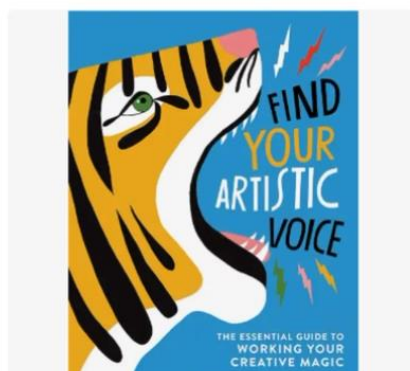
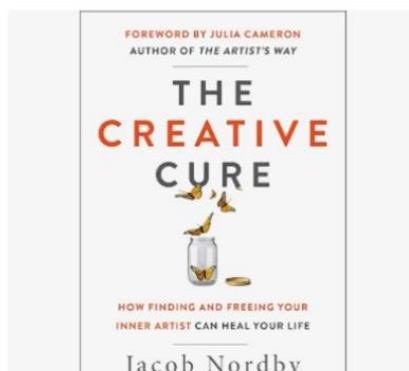
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Part One:

# The Gift of Fire



◆  
Neat  
Structured  
Predictable

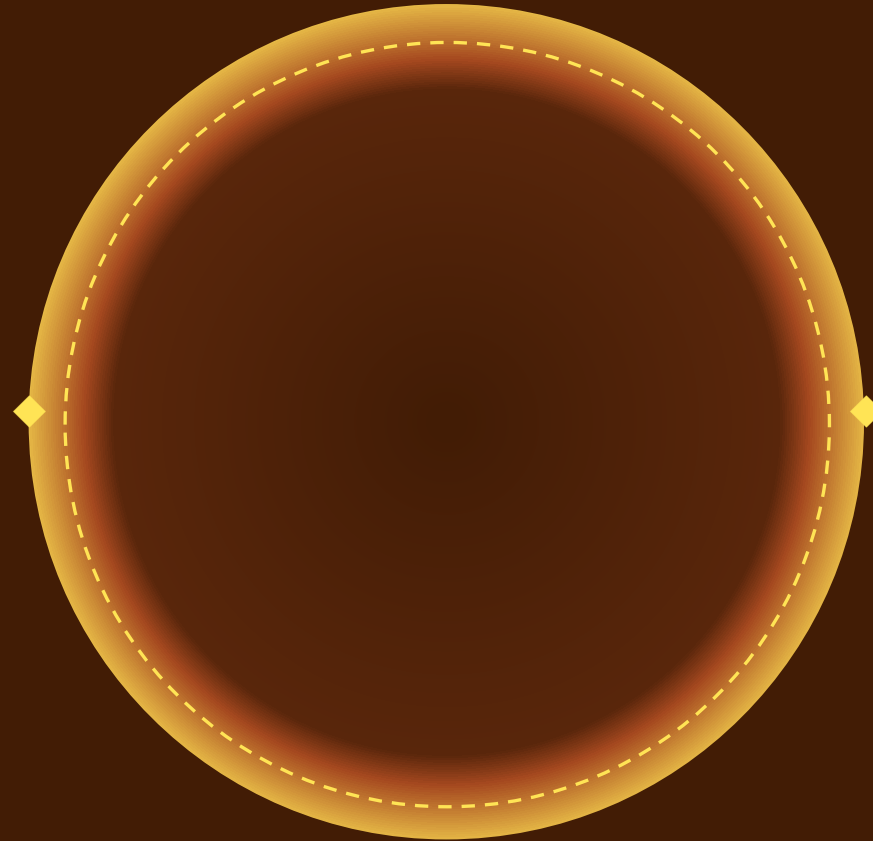
Innovation

Creativity

◆  
Messy  
Unstructured  
Unpredictable



**Conscious**  
Makes it useful



**Unconscious**  
Generates novelty



Innovation is  
creativity's  
*finishing school.*



Creativity is  
innovation's  
*Jungian shadow.*



Conscious  
Makes it useful

# The Reframe

Unconscious  
Generates novelty



Part Two:

# Why Creativity Matters More Than Ever



# AI Is Great For:

---

◆ Efficiency

---

◆ Scale

---

◆ Pattern Recognition

---



# People Remain Critical For:

---

◆ Imagination

---

◆ Insights

---

◆ Meaning

---



How might we  
define creativity?



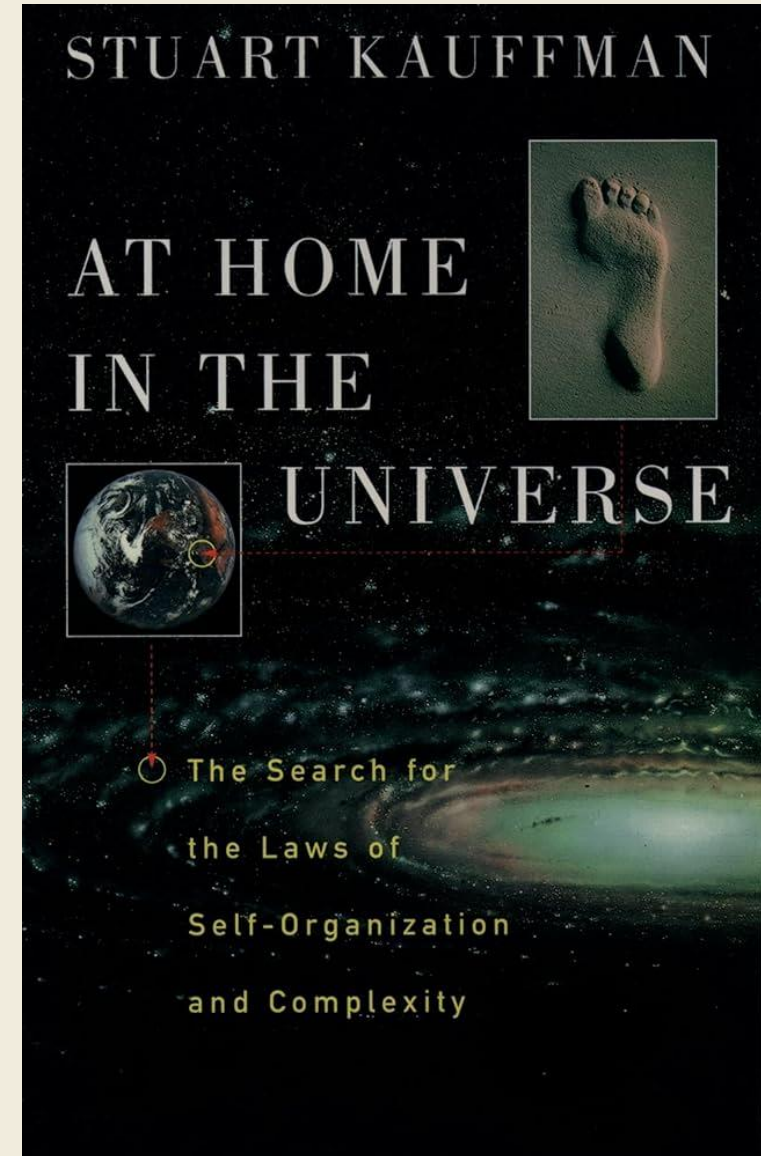
Creativity—  
useful novelty.



**“The adjacent possible is a kind of shadow future, hovering on the edges of the present state of things, a map of all the ways in which the present can reinvent itself.”**

**Steven Johnson**

*GOOD IDEAS*



Not infinite—but *indefinite*.



You can list the answers on a nominal scale but not a *numerical scale*.



# Creativity Is Non-Algorithmic



Creativity—  
non-algorithmic  
*useful novelty.*



Part Three:

# The Art & Science of Fire-Starting



# Remember, Creativity Is:

- 
- ◆ a muscle
- 
- ◆ a practice
- 
- ◆ a perspective you can cultivate
- 





# Clear the Campsite, Gather Kindling

Curiosity  
over  
Certainty

Questions  
over  
Answers

Relaxation  
over  
Effort





# Into the Problem

One North Resource

## Brand & Content Team Planning

### Agenda

---

20 min Professional Goals: One Chill Thing

---

20 min Personal Goals: One Great Thing

---

15 min Ask & Offer

---

5 min Wrap-Up & Next Steps

# Agenda

---

20 min Professional Goals: One Chill Thing

---

20 min Personal Goals: One Great Thing

---

15 min Ask & Offer

---

5 min Wrap-Up & Next Steps

Psychological safety  
*is oxygen for creative fire.*



Part Four:

# Fanning the Flames





# Clear the Campsite, Gather Kindling

“What  
if we...?”

“How might  
we...?”

“What would it  
take to...?”



# Divergent Thinking Lights the Fire



At this phase,  
“no” is a fire extinguisher.

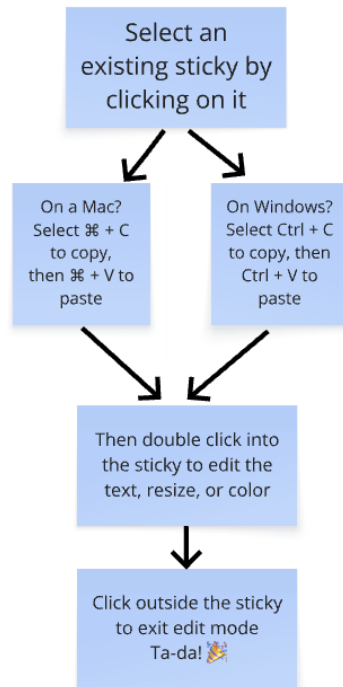




**Failure mode**  
**Shut it down**

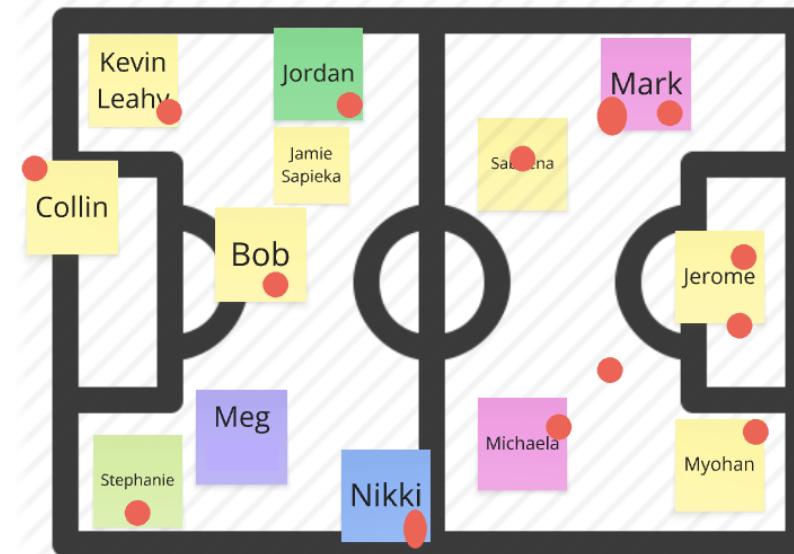
# Invite People to Play—Can We Gamify Training?

## Option 2 Copy and Paste



## Materials

### 01 Voting Dots



# “What Do We Like, and Why Do We Like It?”

## Favorite Brand / Product Names

Tell us your favorite brand names and product names. Why?

- Are the names direct and to-the-point?
- Are they made-up words?
- Are they descriptive to the brand or product?



# Use Quantity to Get to Quality

## Take Heart

The soul of **Care** is its culture of Care. This foundation is the pathway to encouraging inexperienced planners to plan with confidence, taking heart in the face of challenges. And—importantly—capturing the rising joy of planning a well-designed event.

### Narrative:

This. This is the moment you've been waiting for. Every step led you right here—all the decisions and dreams that came true.

It takes heart to orchestrate the details, to weigh the options, to take the reins. But you, you've made this moment momentous.

We are with you every step of the way, making the bets and turns feel effortless. From choosing the perfect venue to crafting the perfect place setting, Hyatt is here to give you the tools to plan perfectly.

You bring the heart. We'll bring the care.

### Visual Inspiration:

deeply relational focus on the moments of connection candid

### Tone:

- Intimate
- Connected
- Warm
- In the moment

Kathy Concept 2

## Eventing is easier with

Eventing is easier with **Care** makes curating meetings and events simple. This concept is playful, sparks imagination and aims to get at the delight of coordinating events (all core components of the brand's tone), as demonstrated in the term "eventing." Making the process easy gets to the heart of a consistent problem among planner personas.

### Narrative:

Relax. You can exhale now. We understand how stressful event planning can be. And we're here to help you navigate through the complexities that lie ahead. Get in and out in a snap and focus on what you're looking forward to most: leaving a lasting impression.

Let **Care** do the heavy lifting, so you can sit back, enjoy the experience, and take the credit. You deserve it for choosing us, after all.

Eventing is easier with

### Imagery:



Diego Concept 2

## Personal Planning Concierge

Like a hotel's concierge, **Care** site guides visitors to destinations they may not have considered, anticipating questions, inspiring creativity and simplifying the planning process along the way.

### Narrative:

You're planning a gathering that must be perfect.

But there's only so much time you can invest from your busy schedule. There are seemingly infinite details to consider, so many things you might overlook.

Don't worry. We can help. Our team has curated a comprehensive collection of tools and resources to help share the stress of planning and make your meeting or celebration unforgettable.

**Care** supports you by maximizing your time and effort, culminating in a successful event. We care about making your vision a reality by anticipating your needs, inspiring your creativity and simplifying the planning process.

Collaborate with **Care** and let's plan the perfect event together.

### Imagery/Mood Board:



Brendan Concept 2

## Plan THE Event

There's no such thing as a small event. We understand that to planners, it's THIS moment that counts. **Care** is there to give planners everything they need to superize the memories with easy planning tools, quick answers, and host-in-class experiences for the topics and pros alike.

### Narrative:

There's a reason it's called THE BIG DAY. It's not just a party, it's YOUR party. It's not just a meeting, it's YOUR meeting.

From the nitty gritty details to the postcard views, **Care** is with you every step of the way, making it easy to find, book, and plan THE event. Watch the moment unfold knowing Hyatt's got your back.

Don't plan an event. Plan THE event with **Care**.

### Visual Inspiration:

1st person POV see everything through the eyes of the planner look on happily where the work is done and the planner gets the excitement feel up, sweat off the brow, cooling the book kind of imagery

### Tone:

- Staccato
- Simple
- Bold
- Happy

Kathy Concept 3

## Come together

Power to the planner! Whether you're a novice or a pro, all event planners need support and **Care** streamlines that process for customers. By joining forces with **Care** planners get a gladiator in their corner that helps supercharge their efforts to make a real impact—one that can only be achieved together.

### Narrative:

Event planning isn't rocket science, but it can be demanding and complex. What you need is someone in your corner to streamline the process. That's where **Care** comes in.

We're your secret weapon in the battle against meetings that could've been emails and gatherings that don't bring people closer. And we do it with the care your event deserves.

We plan together.

We celebrate together. Think of what we can accomplish together.

### Imagery:



Diego Concept 3

## Customized Care

Planning a successful event often comes down to the specifics, the special details that make your event unforgettable. **Care** provides the individualized attention and commitment to care that results in the most memorable meetings & events.

### Narrative:

Your special event is unique and requires a personalized, tailored approach.

**Care** creates unforgettable experiences that go beyond expectations, driven by our commitment to customized care. We avoid a one-size-fits-all approach and instead, dedicate ourselves to understanding and fulfilling your event's bespoke needs.

Through our comprehensive resources, creative approach and personalized touch, we strive to make every moment of your gathering count.

Experience our attentive approach for planning your extraordinary events.

### Imagery/Mood Board:



Brendan Concept 3

## Make the Magic

### Brief Rationale

### Narrative:

Making magic isn't easy.

No one told you you'd need juggling skills to plan an event. **Care** is here for you.

From wrangling the guest list to crafting the program, **Care** is here for you.

Don't worry, we've got a little pixie dust to make this moment magic.

make this event a smashing success

fairy tale tongue in cheek playful

### Tone:

- Lighter
- Humorous
- Witty
- Cool

## An open invitation

This concept addresses three of the biggest persona pain points: head-on, being overwhelmed with details, lack of experience and pricing. **Care**'s culture of Care resonates through the reassurance that we're here to remove barriers and not build them.

### Narrative:

You're cordially invited to experience how easy wedding, meeting, and social event planning can be with **Care**. No more guesswork. No more unresponsive partners. No more surprise fees.

If you're ready to turn fleeting moments into lasting memories, be our guest.

RSVP for your next successful event with **Care**.

### Imagery:



## Servant Leadership

Leading the way through the planning process, **Care** focus on serving our customers first by prioritizing their objectives epitomizes our culture of care.

### Narrative:

Planning an event is exciting, but you're not sure where to start.

You're looking for a guide, a leader. A co-captain that can point you in the right direction, but also roll up their sleeves and put in the work. You require a partner that leads through actions, not words, and focuses on your needs before their own.

At **Care** we believe that every well-planned event holds the potential for deep human connection and we care that your voice is heard while we lead you through the planning process.

Our team serves your needs by delivering the most helpful, relevant information designed to help achieve your goals and create the most memorable, effective gatherings.

### Imagery/Mood Board:



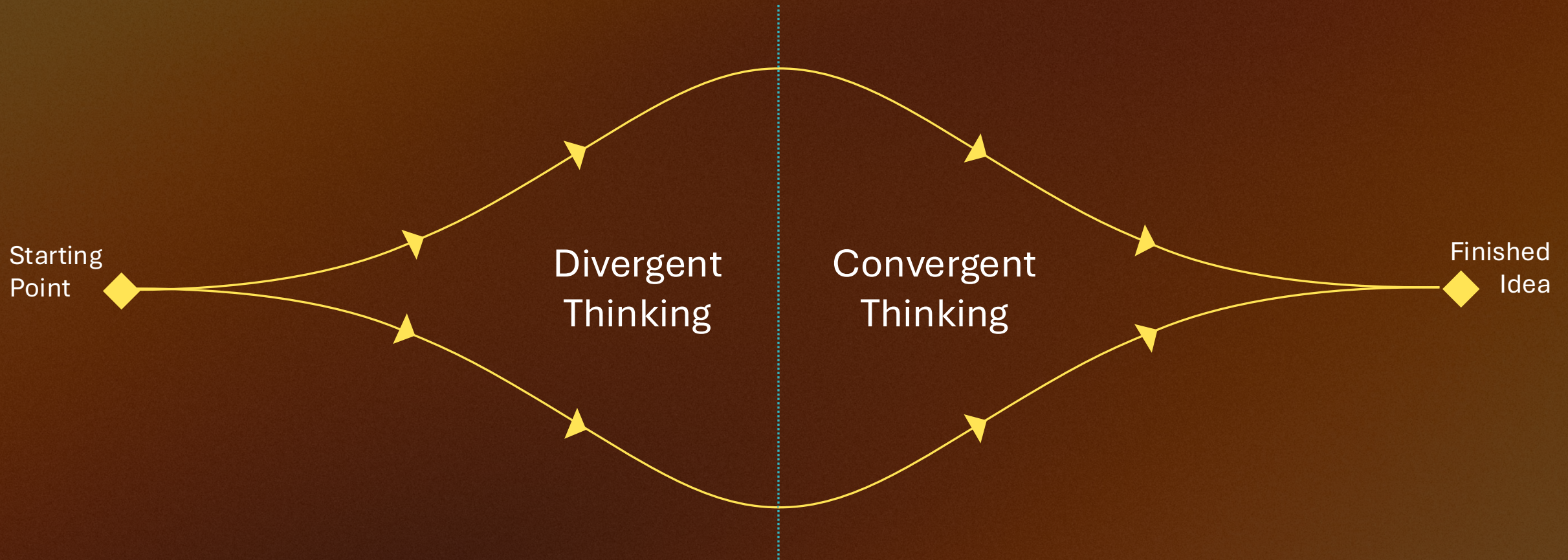


Once the fire's roaring,  
*it's time to pour on the gas.*





# Convergent Thinking Channels the Fire



# Accelerant Techniques

“What would  
need to be true  
for this to work?”



Use this one to *burn away*  
*analysis paralysis.*



# The Proximate Objective

“ The truth was, the team didn’t know what the lunar surface was like—miles of powder, razor-sharp needles, or a rocky surface. So, they chose a proximate objective: a problem the engineers knew how to solve, and decided that it must be like the desert of the Southwestern U.S.

Richard Rumelt

*GOOD STRATEGY, BAD STRATEGY*



“The Moon is made  
of cheese.”

Our Team

# Accelerant Techniques

“What would  
need to be true  
for this to work?”

“What if  
the opposite  
were true?”



Use this one to  
push your ideas to the  
creative edge.



# “Don’t Worry, Planning Isn’t Rocket Science.”

## Come together



Power to the planners! Whether you're a novice or a pro, all event planners need support and streamlines that process for customers. By joining forces with planners get a gladiator in their corners that helps supercharge their efforts to make a real impact--one that can only be achieved together.

### Narrative:

Event planning isn't rocket science, but it can be demanding and complex. What you need is someone in your corner to streamline the process. That's where comes in.

We're your secret weapon in the battle against meetings that could've been emails and gatherings that don't bring people closer. And we do it with the care your event deserves.

We plan *together*.

We celebrate *together*.

**Think of what we can accomplish together.**

### Imagery:

Imagery that shows people engaged and having fun at gatherings--corporate, weddings, etc. Everyone is smiling no matter the setting



# “...It’s Way Harder.”

## Power to the Planners!

Whether you're a novice or a pro, all event planners need support and streamlines that process for customers. By joining forces with planners get a gladiator in their corners that helps supercharge their efforts to make a real impact--one that can only be achieved together.

### Narrative:

Event planning isn't rocket science—it's much harder.

Ever listened to astrophysicists argue about who's sitting next to Uncle Eddie at the family reunion? Or how thoughtfully sourced the vegan wedding entrees are? Or how to collate 30 recyclable business proposals before the team finishes breakfast?

What you need are the tools to cut through the chaos and streamline the process. That's where comes in.

Whether you're an event MVP or rookie of the year, puts an arsenal of tools at your fingertips. Use what you need and regain control of the ship. We call shotgun.

**Power to the planners!**

### Imagery:

Clean, modern and bold imagery and typography that conveys momentum and progress.



# From Dozens Down to a Solid Few

## Revised Concepts

### Power to the Planners!

Whether you're a novice or a pro, all event planners need support and streamlined that process for customers. By joining forces with planners, get a planner in their corner that helps supercharge their efforts to make a real impact—one that can only be achieved together.

#### Narrative:

Event planning isn't rocket science—it's way harder.

Ever heard two astrophysicists argue about who's sitting next to Uncle Eddie? Or where to find thoughtfully sourced wedding courses? Or how to cobble 50 recyclable business proposals by sunrise?

What you need is the support to cut through the chaos and streamline the process. That's where we come in.

Whether you're an event MVP or rookie of the year, we put game-changing tech solutions at your fingertips. We're with you every step of the way, making it easy to find, book, and plan THE event. Watch the moment unfold knowing you've got your back.

**Power to the planners!**



### Take Heart

#### Narrative:

This, this is the moment you've been waiting for. Every step led you right here—all the decisions and dreams that came true.

It takes heart to orchestrate the details, to weigh the options, to take the reins. But you, you've made this moment momentous.

At Hyatt, we are with you every step of the way, caring for you so you can be your best. Our commitment to care is the heart of our business. From food thoughtfully sourced and carefully served to putting wellbeing, mindfulness, and inclusion at the center of our service, supporting you is the essence of a successful event.

You bring the heart. We'll bring the care. **It takes heart.**

#### Team:

- Michelle
- Catherine
- Nancy
- Christine

#### Values inspiration:

• deeply relational

• always the heart of everything

• candid

### You're with us

#### Narrative:

Event planning can feel like stepping off a plane in a distant city. Where do I start? Where do I go? How do I get there?

Take a deep breath. We're here to show you around.

But we're not a tour guide. Our approach to events is more personal. We're your good friend who lives in another city and is excited to show you the place we know and love.

When you're with us, the pressure to figure out all the details is off.

From securing the perfect location for your event to creating the right menu to managing your tech requirements, you'll have the support of a caring team of experts who are committed to helping you create a memorable experience you'll talk about for years to come.

Plan your next event with someone who cares as much about your well-being as they do planning the perfect event—and will walk with you every step of the way there. We're with you for all your meetings and events. **You're with us.**

#### Team:

- Catherine
- Berni
- Harri

Tim

1/16/25

•

•

•



# Accelerant Techniques

“What would  
need to be true  
for this to work?”

“What if  
the opposite  
were true?”

“What  
relationship  
exists between  
ideas?”



Use this one to  
*reveal game-changing  
insights.*



# Case Study: Singapore Digital Bank

NewCo. is a digital bank seeking to recruit and retain Singaporean financial professionals. We need to show up with the story of this new bank...

Next week.



# Typical Brief Inputs:

## Who is the client?

Background

---

Segmentation

---

Targeting

---

Positioning

---

Value Props

---

Brand Story

---

Competition

---

Business Goals

---

# Typical Brief Inputs:

~~Who is the client?~~

~~Background~~

~~Value Props~~

~~Segmentation~~

~~Brand Story~~

~~Targeting~~

~~Competition~~

~~Positioning~~

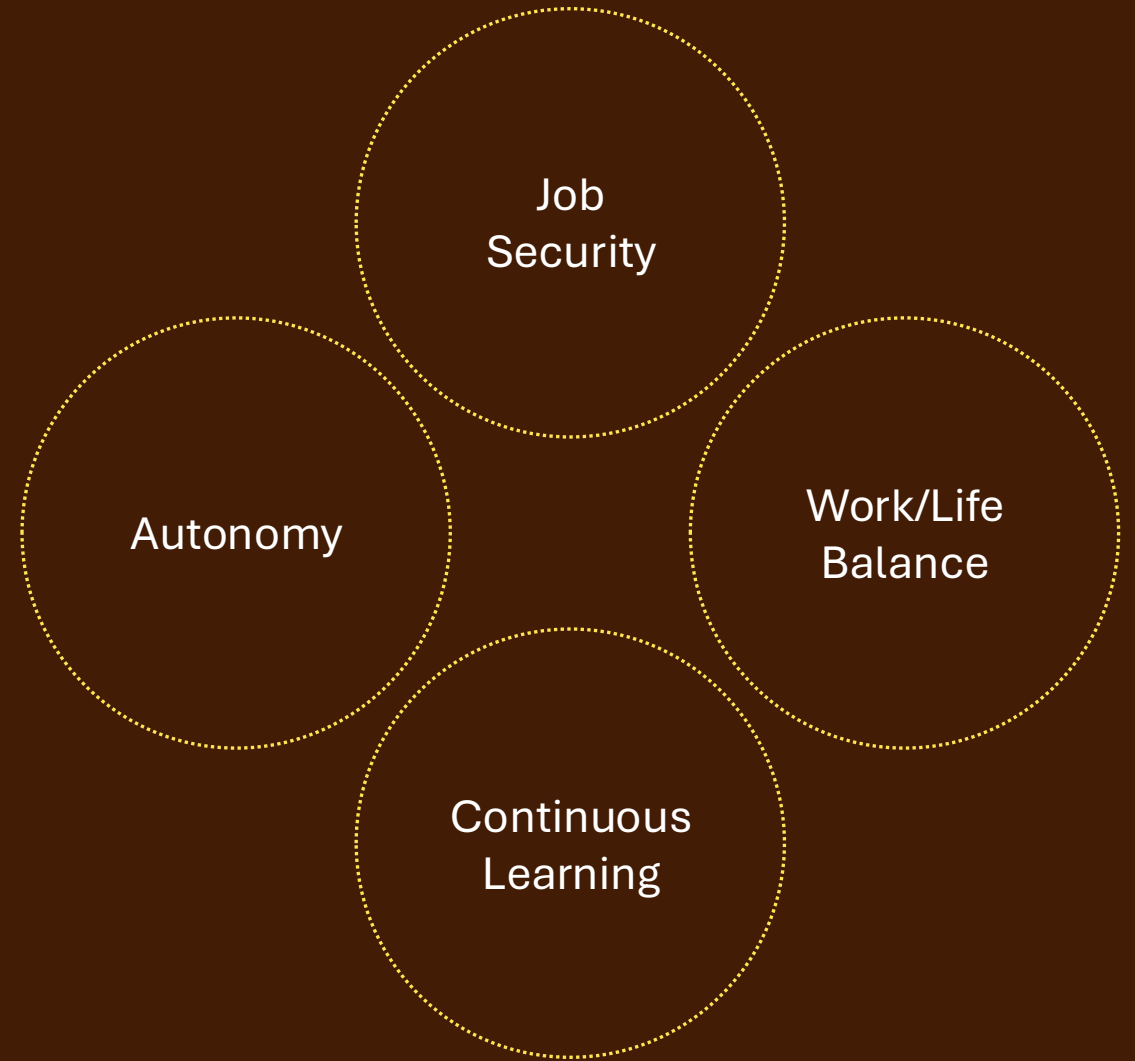
~~Business Goals~~



**“Just tell the story!”**



Our target audience are ***intrapreneurs***. Though they range from entry-level to mid-senior professionals, they share common professional goals.



NewCo. must  
*give loyalty to*  
*get loyalty.*



Get Singaporean financial  
talent who keep searching  
for the next great thing

---

50% technology,  
25% operations/support functions  
25% front office

To stop job-hopping  
and invest in  
NewCo's story

By showing that  
NewCo is totally  
invested in *them*



# Make yourself at home.

We combine the freedom of a startup with the scale of an incumbent—without the tech-debt and legacy systems.

We want you to stay and grow with us. That's why we've engineered everything here to help clarify your path, develop your skills, and give you the resources to explore what's possible. You'll work with the brightest minds in finance using the latest collaboration tools. Push boundaries with innovations like blockchain and predictive service.

And you'll keep learning with continuous professional development through both formal mentorship and hands-on experience. Together, we'll create new possibilities for years to come.

Because your career is what you make of it.

## NewCo.





# Let's bring loyalty back to banking.

It's time for a change in finance. You need more opportunities for professional development. Work-life balance. Flexible hours and scheduling.

Clear job responsibilities—with enough latitude to skate to where future value's going to be.

It's time to earn back your trust. To bring back real relationships. To remind everyone that banking doesn't have to be merely transactional.

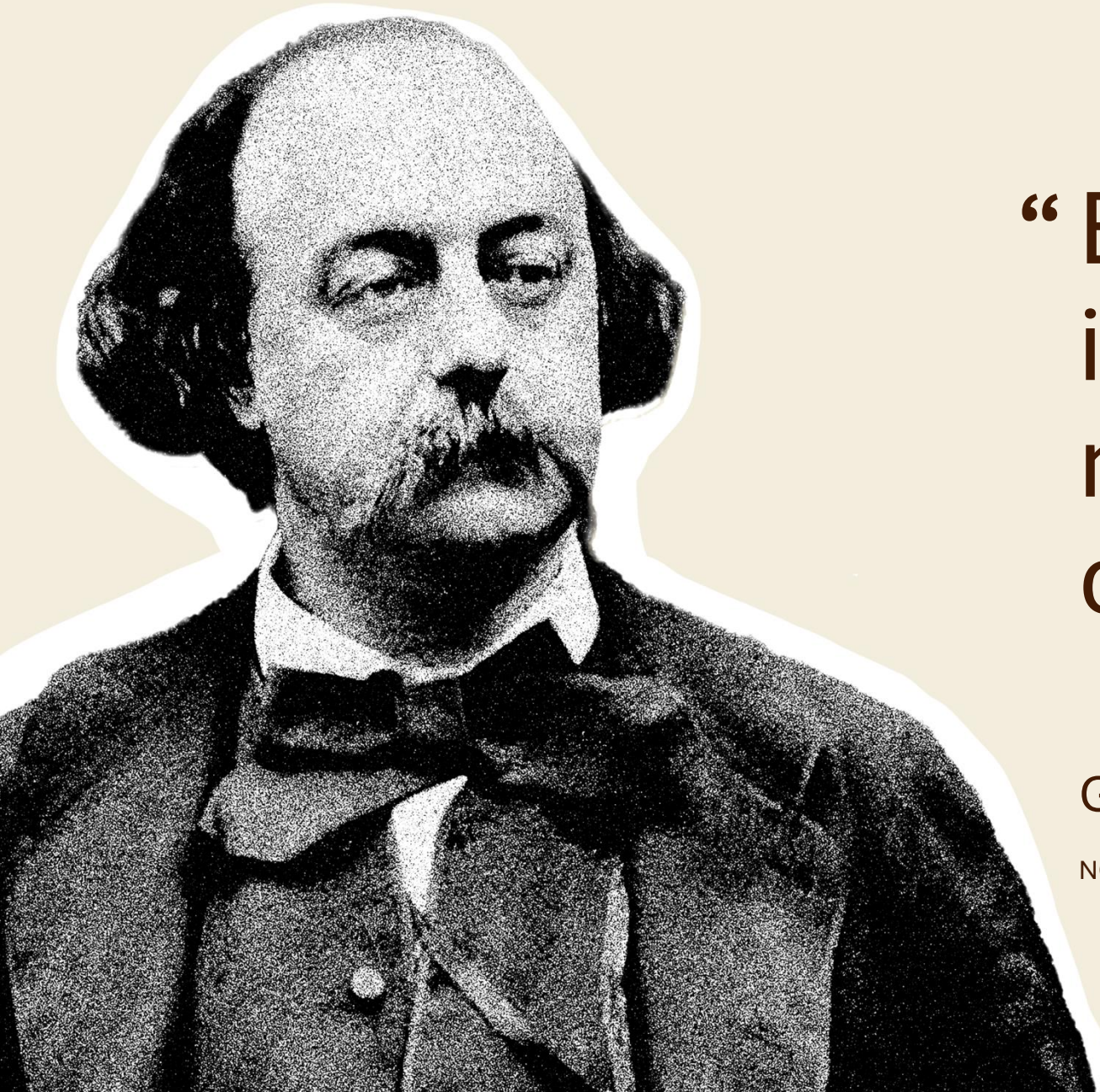
We're the agents of that change. We want you to be one, too.

NewCo.



This balance between unconscious, playful creativity and conscious, disciplined selection can be tough to get right—but the rewards are substantial.





“Be regular and orderly in your life, so that you may be violent and original in your work.”

Gustave Flaubert

NOVELIST

Part Five:

# Tending the Fire Daily



# Creativity Is:

---

◆ a muscle

---

◆ a practice

---

◆ a perspective you can cultivate

---



Invite the  
Unconscious  
to Play

Relax  
into the  
Problem

Create and  
Sharpen  
Meaning

Continuous  
Learning





Carl Bloch 1864

# One Last Thing:

What about applying creativity to our own professional development?



◆  
Incredible  
attention to  
detail

Strengths

Opportunities

◆  
Benefits from  
coaching  
on seeing the  
big picture





Strengths **The Reframe** Opportunities



Oftentimes, strengths and weaknesses are two sides of the same coin.



The perspective we gain is a better, more empathetic understanding of ourselves, and one another.



# Thank you.

One North is a digital experience agency that combines curiosity, scale, and agility to shape the future.

As part of TEKsystems, a leading provider of business and technology services, we offer boutique solutions to solve complex problems. Our multidisciplinary teams of strategists, designers, and technologists excel in research and discovery, experience strategy, design, experience management, and technology implementation. Whether clients are establishing a vision for an experience or optimizing an existing one, we help businesses understand their audiences, design experiences, maximize technology, and bring their digital ideas to life. The world's most successful companies rely on us to forge the future through electrifying work that sparks innovation and drives results.

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