

# **Adventurous, Often Difficult, Creative People: Is EI Important for Creativity in the Workplace?**

Babis Mainemelis  
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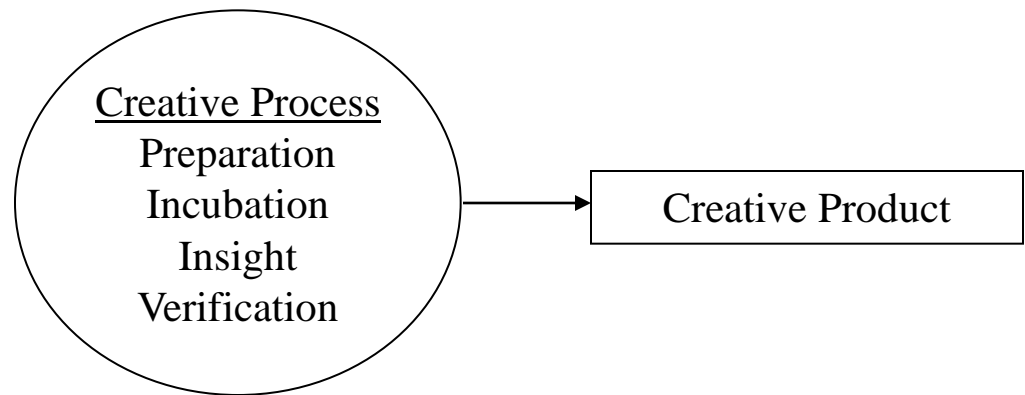
For the most part of business history, creativity was viewed as an irrelevant or even embarrassing quality. Today, it is considered embarrassing not to be creative.

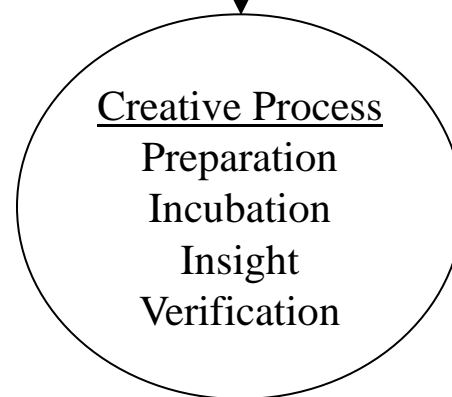
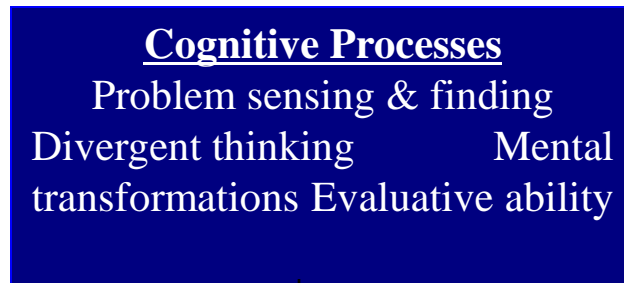
For the most part of business history, emotions were viewed as irrelevant or even dangerous to organizational functioning.

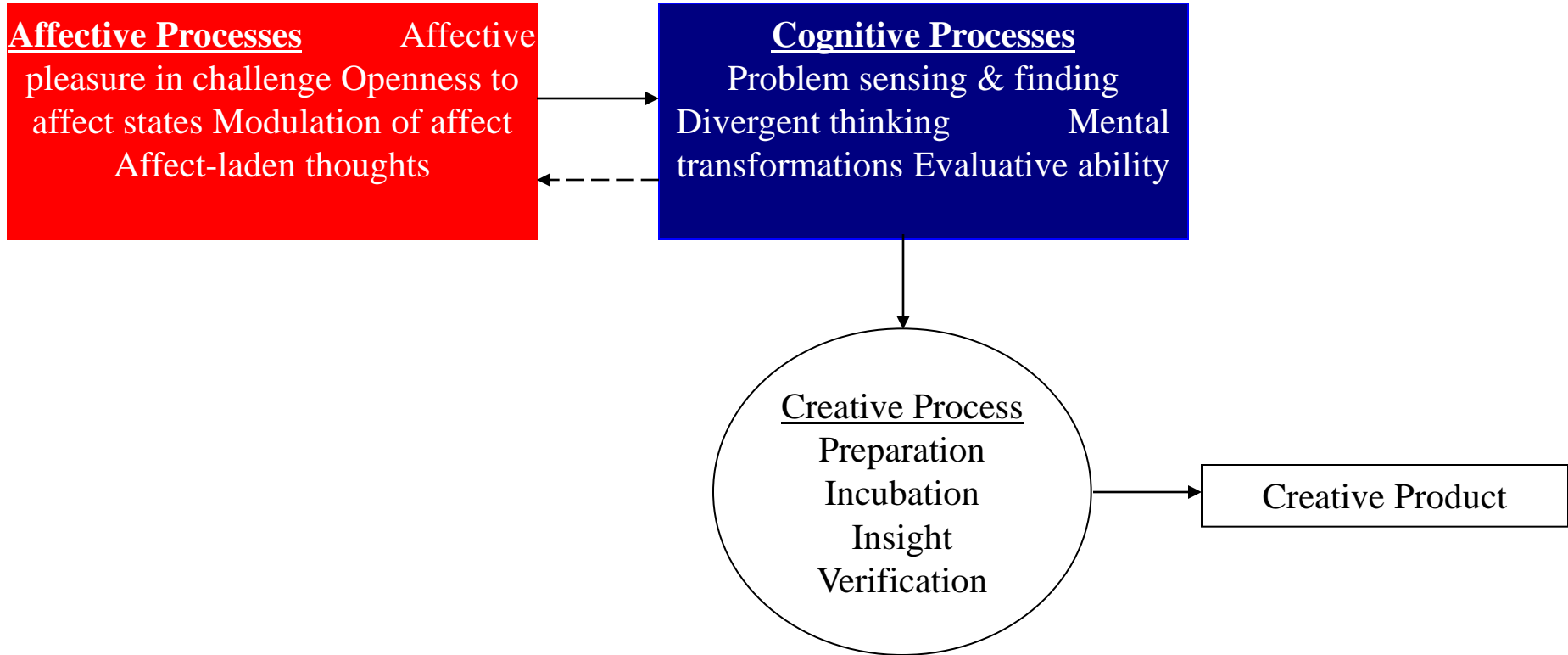
Today, emotion is considered a constituting element of several types of jobs, industries, and even organizational cultures; and the idea of EI has become extremely fashionable.

- What are the cognitive and affective processes that stimulate creativity? What personal and contextual factors influence them?
- Is EI related to creativity? Does it contribute something new to our understanding of managerial creativity?
- What can managers and organizations do to foster the affective processes of creativity?

Creative Product







Person-Level Factors    General  
Intelligence    Cognitive Style  
Personality Traits  
Creative Self-Efficacy  
Domain & Creativity Skills  
Motivation & States

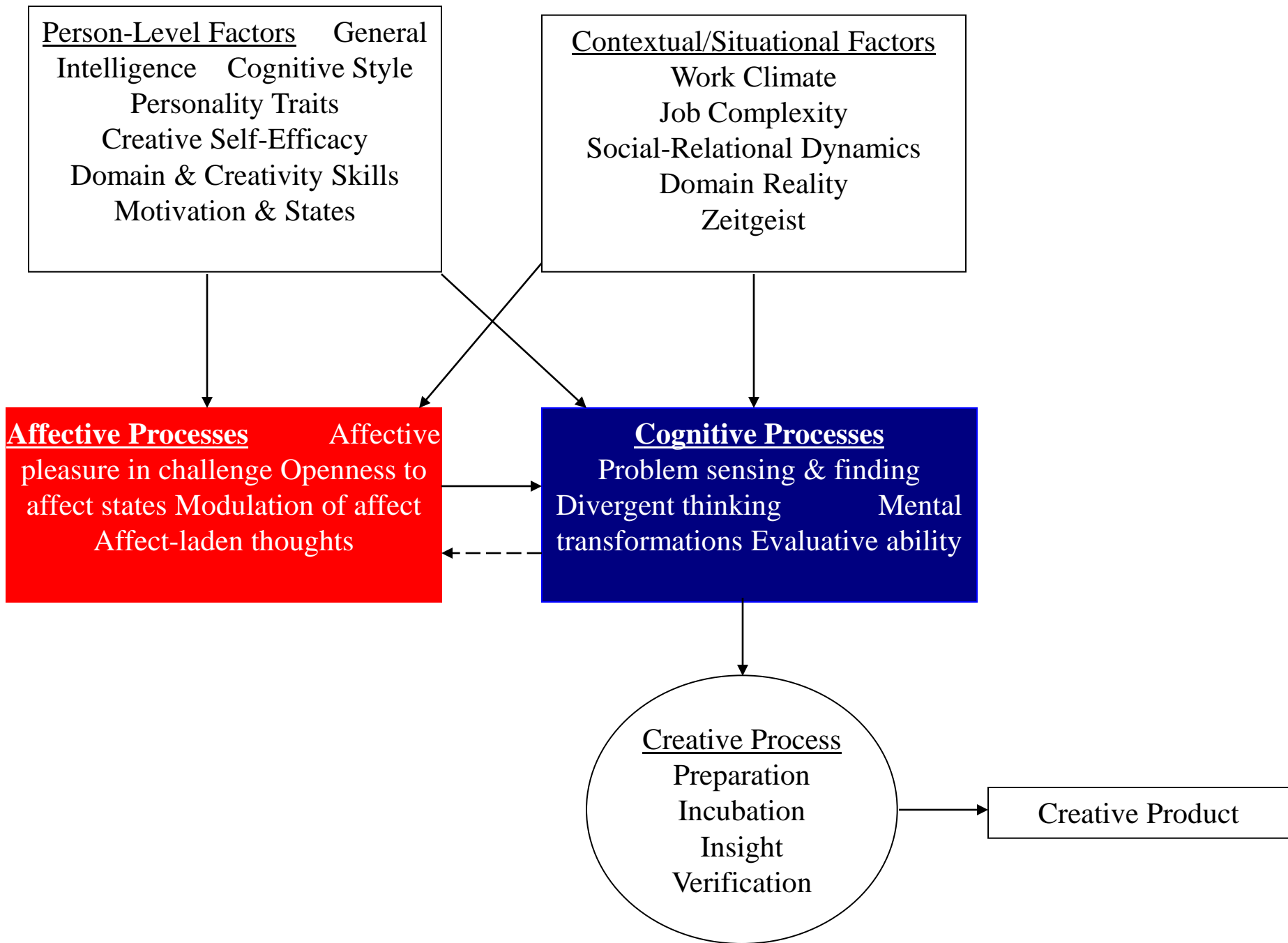
Affective Processes    Affective  
pleasure in challenge    Openness to  
affect states    Modulation of affect  
Affect-laden thoughts

Cognitive Processes  
Problem sensing & finding  
Divergent thinking    Mental  
transformations    Evaluative ability

Creative Process  
Preparation  
Incubation  
Insight  
Verification

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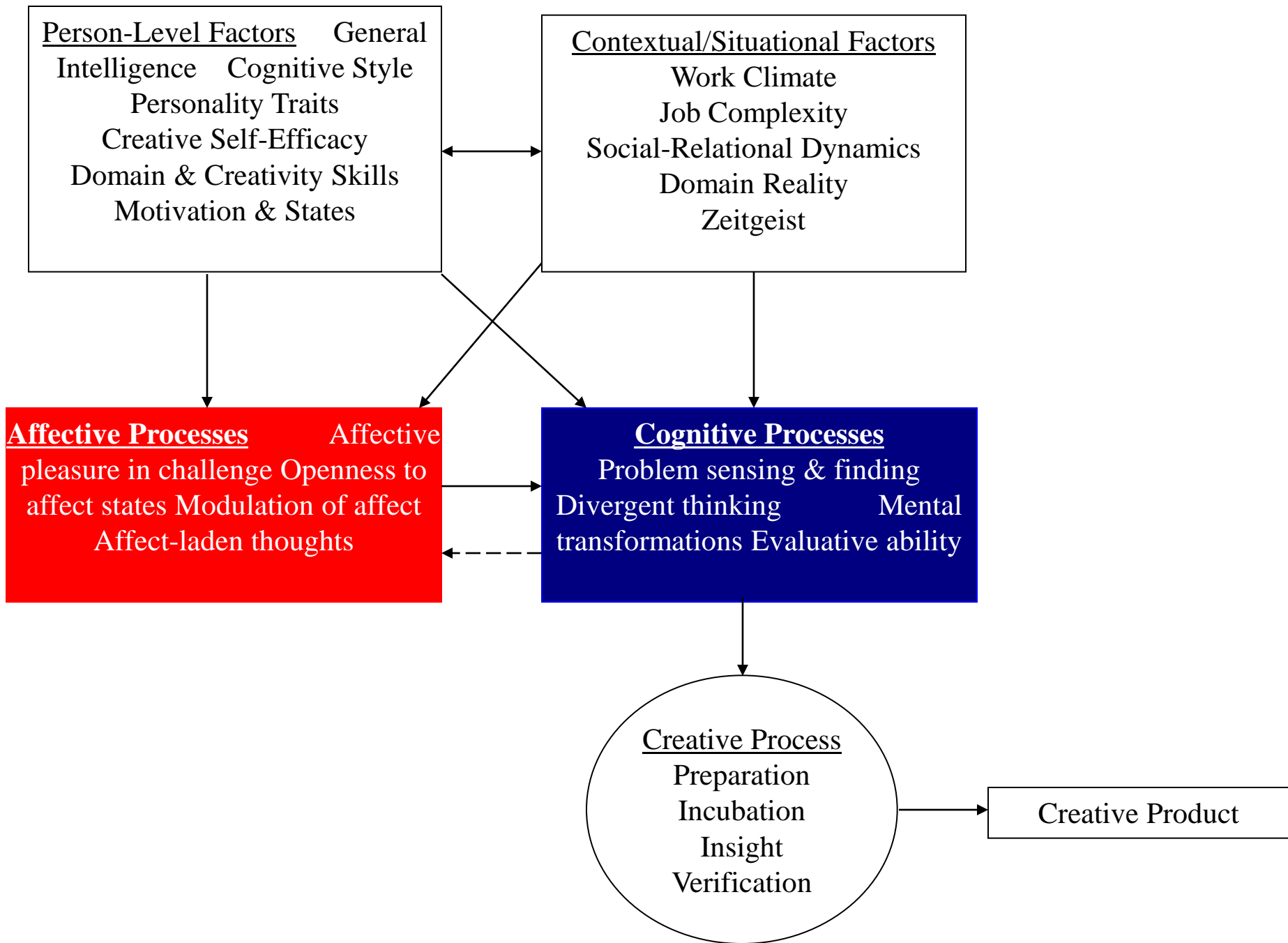
Contextual/Situational Factors  
Work Climate  
Job Complexity  
Social-Relational Dynamics  
Domain Reality  
Zeitgeist

Affective Processes    Affective  
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*EI is “the capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions to enhance thinking. It includes the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth.”*

**Salovey, & Caruso, 2004 (p. 197).**

**Mayer,**

Is Emotional Intelligence, as conceptualized by Salovey & Mayer, and as measured by the MSCEIT, related to creativity?

*“The person with emotional intelligence can be thought of as having attained at least a limited form of positive mental health... In contrast, many problems in adjustment may arise from deficits in emotional intelligence. People who don’t learn to regulate their emotions may become slaves to them... Such planning deficits may lead to live lives of unrewarded experience lived by individuals who become depressed, even suicidal.”*

**Salovey & Mayer, 1990 (p. 201)**



Kostas Kariotakis



Sylvia Plath



Anne Sexton



Emily Dickinson



Vivian Leigh



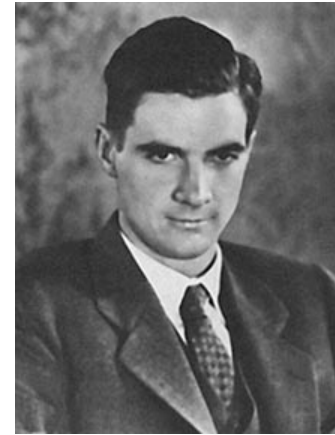
Virginia Woolf



Ernst Hemingway



Maria Callas

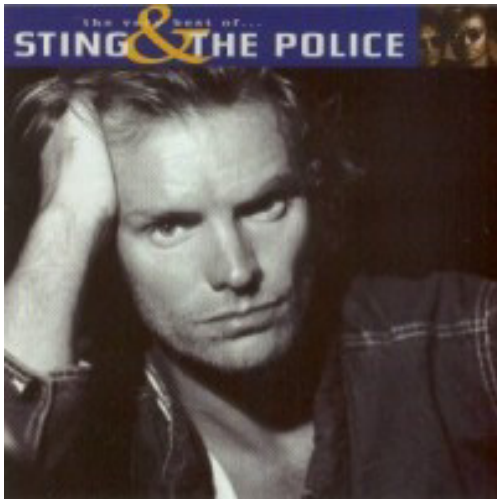


Howard Hughes



Phil Graham

Guastello, Guastello, & Hanson (2004) did not find support for the hypothesis that EI is an intervening condition between bipolar disorder and creativity. The effect of mood disorders on creativity persisted after EI (and personality and cognitive style) were statistically removed.



*"...during that period with the Police, the most successful time of my life, I was suicidal. My first marriage and my relationship with the other members of the band were collapsing. I just felt adrift. I was manic-depressive and I just wasn't chemically balanced enough to enjoy it. I was out to lunch."*

**Sting**

(interview with *Live! Magazine*, May 1996)

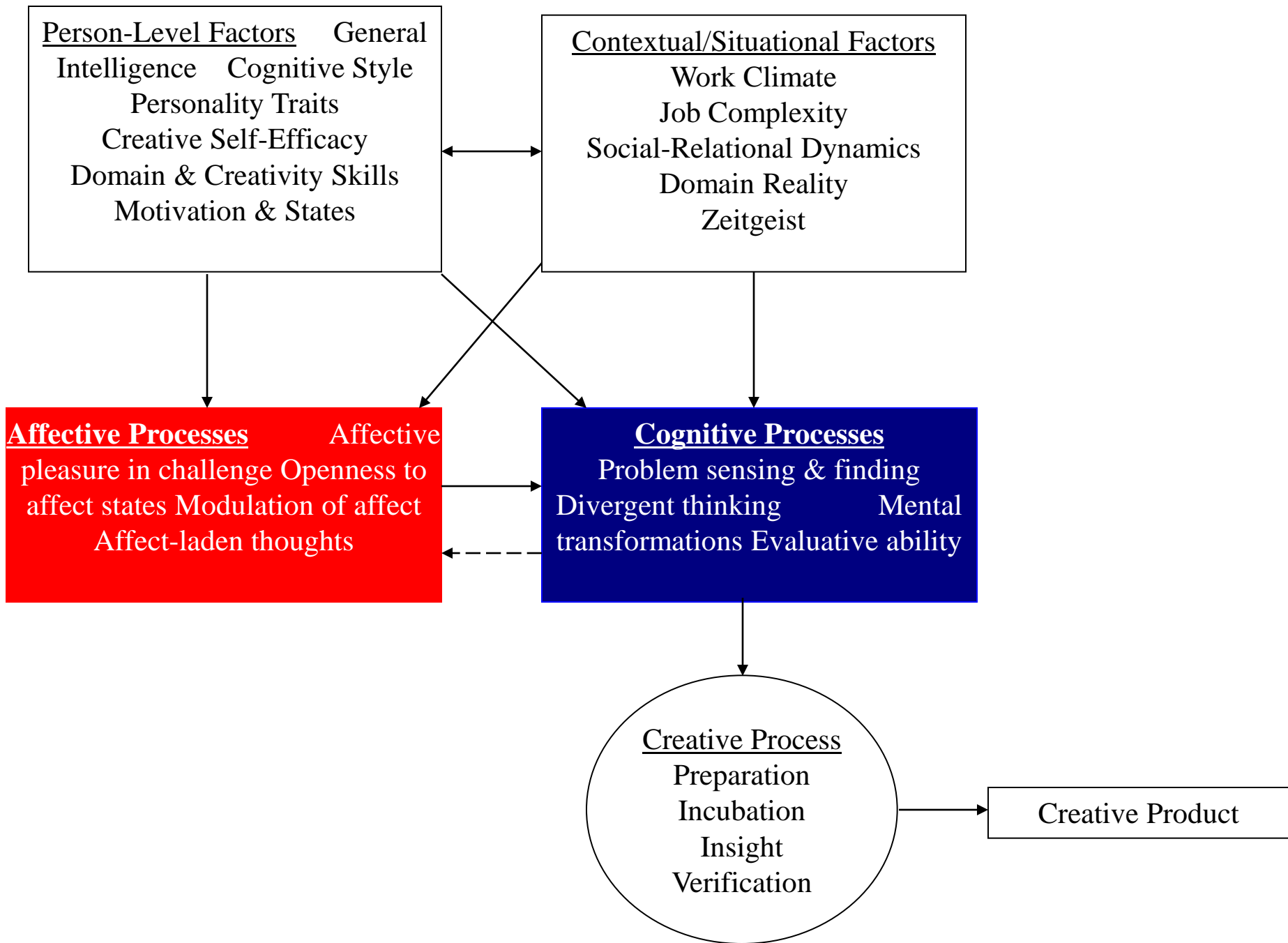


Table 3  
Partial correlations between Emotional Intelligence and Life Space Scales

Life Space Scale		Emotional Intelligence					
		Experiencing EI		Strategic EI		Total EI	
		M	F	M	F	M	F
Remained significant	Illegal Drug User	<b>-0.37***</b>	0.12	-0.21	0.02	<b>-0.34**</b>	0.09
	Alcohol User	<b>-0.29**</b>	0.02	-0.13	0.01	<b>-0.26*</b>	0.02
	Deviant Behaviour	<b>-0.35***</b>	-0.04	-0.08	0.00	<b>-0.27*</b>	-0.03
	Best/New Friend Relations (-)	<b>-0.28**</b>	0.06	-0.08	-0.05	-0.22	0.02
Became non-significant	New Friend Positive Relations	-0.11	0.01	-0.03	0.02	-0.12	0.01
	Care of Physical Appearance	-0.10	-0.02	0.01	0.07	-0.05	0.02

Sample size for males = 74  $\leq N \leq$  89, for females = 209  $\leq N \leq$  242. M = males, F = females. All significant correlations are shown in boldface.

\*  $P < 0.05$ .

\*\*  $P < 0.01$ .

\*\*\*  $P < 0.001$ , two tailed.



## What does EI predict?

**TABLE 6: Partial Correlations Between Measures of Emotional Intelligence and External Criteria Controlling for Big Five and Verbal SAT Scores**

	<i>Drug Use</i>	<i>Alcohol Use</i>	<i>Cigarette Smoking</i>	<i>Social Deviance</i>	<i>High School Rank</i>	<i>College GPA</i>
Measures of emotional IQ						
MSCEIT	-.07	-.01	.02	<b>-.20**</b>	.04	.05
EQ-i	-.12	<b>-.19*</b>	-.08	-.06	-.12	-.08
SREIT	.05	-.05	.04	-.05	<b>-.16*</b>	-.10

NOTE:  $N = 173$  to  $183$ , missing data for verbal Scholastic Aptitude Test. For high school rank,  $N = 140$ , and for college grade point average (GPA),  $N = 164$ . MSCEIT = Mayer-Salovey-Caruso-Emotional Intelligence Test, SREIT = self-report EI test, EQ-I = Emotional Quotient Inventory. Only significant correlations are shown in boldface.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

*“Preliminary findings suggest that lower EI is related to involvement in self-destructive behaviors such as deviant behavior and cigarette smoking...whereas higher EI is related to positive outcomes such as prosocial behavior, parental warmth, and positive peer and family relations.”*

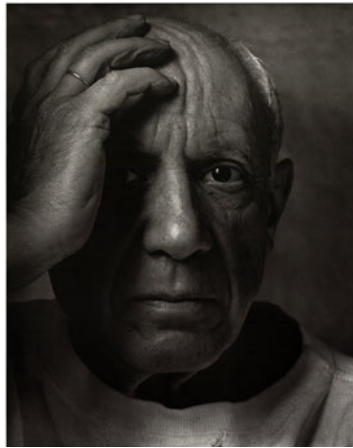
**Brackett,  
Mayer, & Warner, 2004 (p. 1387)**

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**Brackett,  
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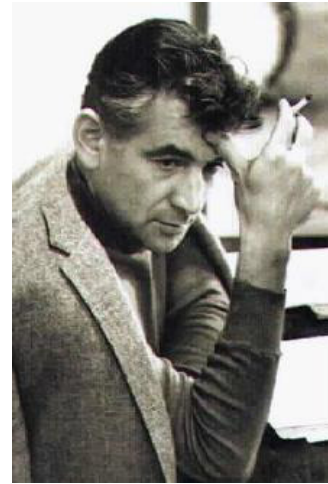
Amedeo Modigliani



Pablo Picasso



Elvis Presley



Leonard Bernstein



Melina Mercouri

*“Complex personality does not imply neutrality or average. It is not some position at the midpoint between two poles... Rather it involves the ability to move from one extreme to another as the occasion requires. Perhaps a central position, a golden mean, is the place of choice, what software writers call default condition. But creative persons definitely know both extremes and experience both with equal intensity and without inner conflict.”*

**Csikszentmihalyi, 1997 (p. 57)**

*“A conformity construct is of real-world relevance, but it is highly misleading to label it is an intelligence, because it relates to person-environment fit rather to any characteristic of the individual. Indeed, in some instances it is the non-conformist who should be deemed emotionally intelligent, for example, a writer or an artist who finds a new and original way for expressing emotion.”* **Roberts, Zeidner, & Matthews, 2001 (p. 227)**

*“...should the nonconformist--a writer or an artist who finds a new and original way for expressing emotion--be deemed emotionally intelligent? Absolutely, but note that discovering a new way of expressing emotion doesn't necessarily involve inventing new emotional rules or having idiosyncratic emotional reactions.”*

**Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2001 (p. 238)**

*“...our scales [MSCEIT] measure emotional intelligence, not, in fact, emotional creativity... Averill ’s measures of emotional creativity outperformed the MSCEIT in predicting creative artistic behavior. We believe that emotional creativity provides a very useful comparison variable to study along with emotional intelligence and a welcome reminder that emotional skills extend beyond the intelligences.”*

**Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004 (250)**

In a recent study in a creative design firm, George & Zhou (2001) found that:

- Negative mood was positively related to creativity when recognition for creative performance and clarity of feelings (meta-mood) were both high. Negative mood was negatively related to creativity in the other conditions.
- Positive mood was negatively related to creativity when recognition and clarity of feelings were high. Positive mood was positively related to creativity in the other conditions.

## What if the Creative Process itself were Emotionally Intelligent?



*Unlike ancient Greeks, we don't believe any more that creativity is magically given to us by daemons and muses.*

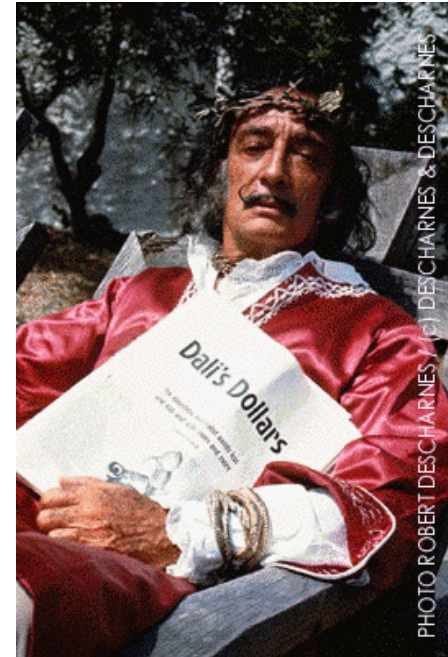
*In the phenomenology of creativity, however, people historically talk about "getting lost" in the creative process and about being possessed by something larger than themselves.*



What if the Creative Process itself were Emotionally Intelligent?

*“The only difference between me and a madman is that I’m not mad.”*

Salvador Dali



*“It is the split self, it seems to me, that is the mad woman. When writing you make a new reality and become whole... It is like lying on the analyst’s couch, reenacting a private terror, and the creative mind is the analyst who gives pattern and meaning to what the persona sees as the only incoherent experience.”*

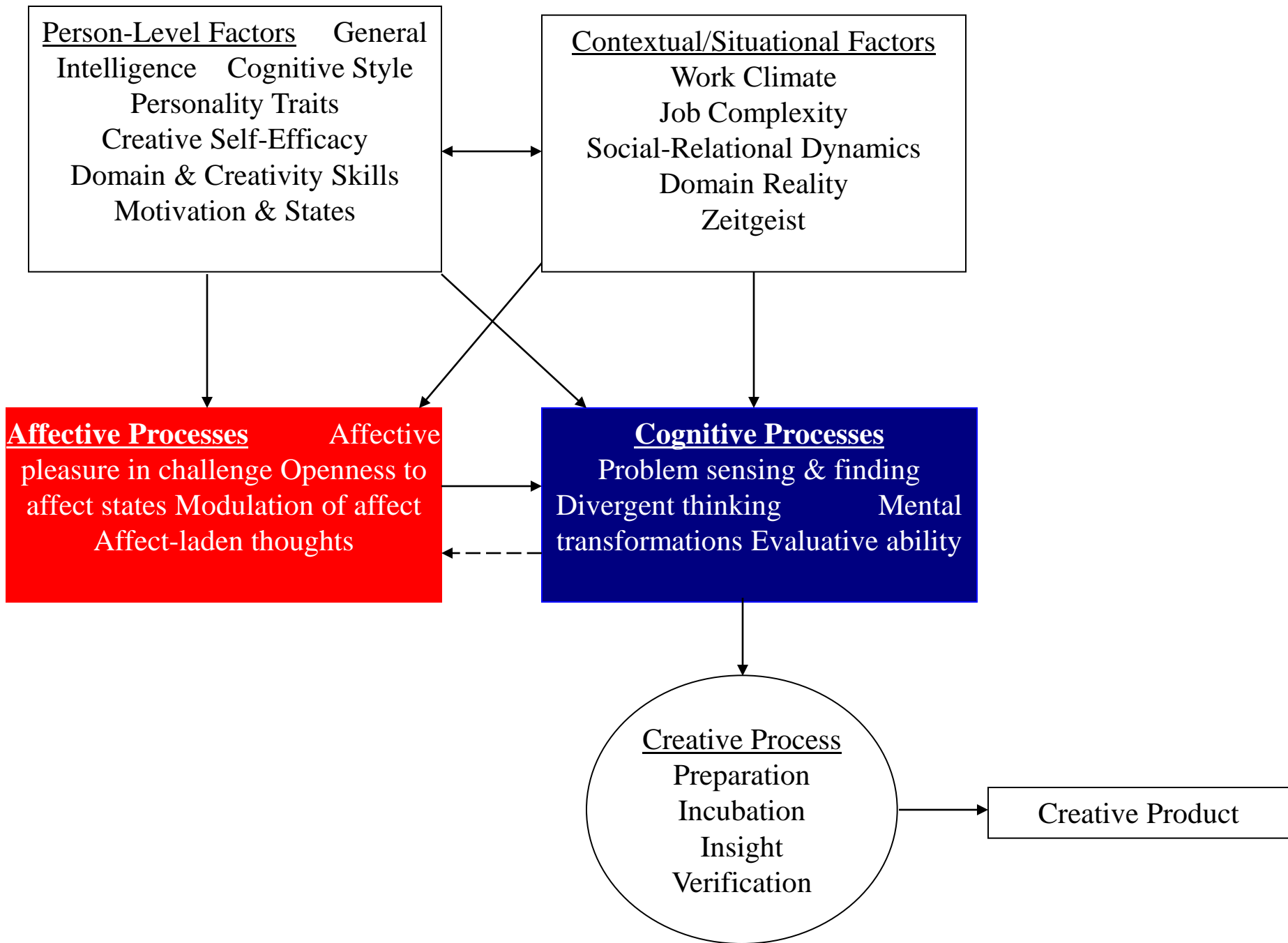
**Anne Sexton (in Russ, 1993: 66)**



“Genuine creativity often involves a tortured search to put together or repair in the outside world things that have been damaged in the private world. Great works of creativity have this characteristic in common... People who do not understand the creative psyche often dismiss creative people as being unbalanced, off the wall, living in another world.

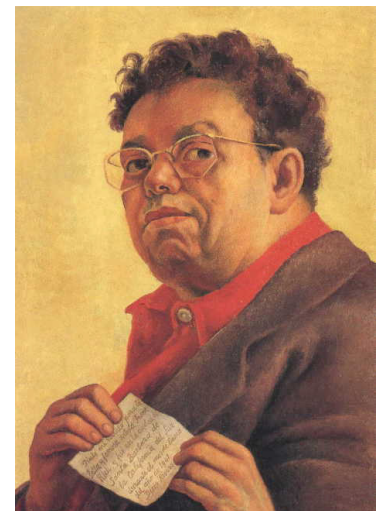
The challenge of managing creative people is further compounded by the fact that they feel compelled to be “creative people”. The very nomenclature adds an inherent pressure. You are called “creative”, therefore you feel compelled to be creative. Real creativity cannot be forced. The implied demand that you are going to be creative is likely to trigger a caricature of real creativity, leading to work that is altogether thinner or less substantial.”

**Richard Hytner,**  
Chairman & CEO,  
Saatchi & Saatchi/Europe, Africa, & Middle East

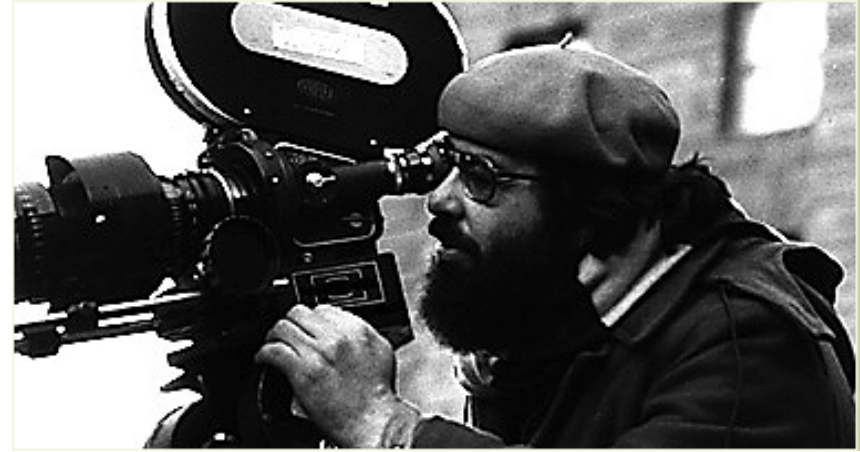


*“When people approach life tasks with emotional intelligence, they should be at an advantage for solving problems adaptively... For example, such individuals are more likely to ask not how much they will earn in a career, but rather whether they will be happy in such a career. Having framed a problem, individuals with such skills may be more creative and flexible in arriving at possible alternatives to problems... Such an approach will lead to behavior that is considerate and respectful of the internal experience of themselves and others.”*

**Salovey & Mayer, 1990 (p. 200)**







*“They didn't like the cast.  
They didn't like the way I was shooting it.  
I was always on the verge of getting fired.”*

**Francis Ford Coppola**  
(on the filming of *The Godfather*).



Managers of creative individuals play a tremendously important role in organizations. Among other things:

- They manage people who are usually committed more to their creative identity and less to their organization.
- They have to understand, nurture, and channel idiosyncratic motivations, work styles, and variable moods.
- They have to manage against the assumptions about the primacy of fixed purpose, rationality, and consistency in human behavior.
- They have to translate ideas for other parts of the organization.
- They have to protect their team from external pressures and, at the same time, connect their team with idea sponsors and key network players.

## “I’ll Catch You If You Fall”

Effective managers relate to creative people as colleagues and mentors, not as bosses. They often say that their role as a manager is to be the “safety net” that protects their group from too much error.



Creativity is the Art of Effective Surprise



Creativity is the Art of Effective Surprise



Creativity is the Art of Effective Surprise



Will this Surprise be Effective?

