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How Can You 10x Your Team's Creativity & Productivity?

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What could you accomplish as a group if you were all “in the zone”? How do you get your team in a flow state?

That’s the focus of today’s blog: Part 2 of a series on how to get into a flow state more often and reliably.

In [Part 1](#), we discussed flow’s psychological and environmental triggers.

Today, I’ll share a summary of the social and creative triggers to get you and your team be more creative and productive. (Most of the research and insights about flow that I share in this series come from the work of my dear friend and writing partner Steven Kotler, a leading expert on peak performance and the Founder of the Flow Research Collective.)

Let’s dive in...

NOTE: Want more practical tips and tools to help you navigate this era of exponential change? Join my [year-round Mastermind and Executive Program Abundance360](#).

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FLOW’S SOCIAL TRIGGERS

“Group flow” is what happens when a bunch of people enter the zone together.

Think of a fourth-quarter comeback in football. Each member of the team is in the right place at the right time—the results look more like a well-choreographed dance than what normally happens on the football field.

That’s group flow in action.

But it’s not just athletes who can play this game.

Group flow happens in startups when the whole team is driving toward a singular purpose with incredible speed.

So, how can you get your team into a state of group flow?

This is where the social triggers come in:

Serious Concentration: Remember: flow follows focus. Being in a flow state means that your focus is so intense that everything else falls away.

What you want is the kind of intensity that is energizing—not draining.

When was the last time your team brought this kind of concentration to a goal or a project?

Shared, Clear Goals: Is everyone on your team rowing in the same direction? Do you have a single Massive Transformative Purpose (MTP) that your team is working toward?

As we discussed in Part 1, you want to emphasize the *clarity* of your goals. When goals are clear, the mind doesn't have to wonder about what to do or what to do next—it already knows.

This is true for you as an individual *and* for your team.

Good Communication: Constant communication and immediate feedback across your team allow for real-time course correction.

If your team knows how to improve performance in real-time, then you don't have to go off searching for additional clues. The group can stay fully present and focused, increasing the likelihood of entering a flow state.

Equal Participation: Group flow is more likely to happen when all members of your team have an equal role in a given project.

This also means that everyone should have roughly similar skill levels.

As my dear friend and peak performance expert Steven Kotler points out, “Think of professional athletes playing with amateurs. The professionals will be bored and the amateurs frustrated.”

Element of Risk: Risk means the potential for failure. And a risk-accepting mentality is key to innovation and ultimately entrepreneurship.

If you're not incentivizing risk for your team, then you're denying access to group flow.

Familiarity: This means that your team has a common language, a shared knowledge base, and a communication style based on unspoken understandings.

Everyone is always on the same page, and when novel insights arise, you don't lose momentum because of some lengthy explanation.

Blending Egos: Think of this as a collective version of humility.

When egos have been blended, no one is hogging the spotlight and everyone is thoroughly involved.

A Sense of Control: This combines 2 factors of high performance:

- 1. Autonomy**: the deep-seated desire to direct our own lives
- 2. Mastery**: the desire to extend and expand our own abilities

It's about getting to choose your own challenges and having the necessary skills to surmount them.

Close Listening: This occurs when we're fully engaged in the here and now.

For example, in conversation, it isn't about focusing on some witty thing to say next or what cutting sarcasm came last.

Instead, it's generating real-time, unplanned responses to the dialogue as it unfolds.

Always Say "Yes, and ...": Interactions should be additive more than argumentative.

The goal here is the momentum, togetherness, and innovation that comes from ceaselessly amplifying one another's ideas and actions.

It's a trigger based on the first rule of improv comedy. If I open a sketch with "Hey, there's a blue elephant in the bathroom," and you respond with "No, there's not," the scene goes nowhere.

Your denial kills the flow. But instead, if your response is of the "yes, and . . ." variety —"Yeah, sorry, I had no idea where to put him, did he leave the toilet seat up again?"— then the story can go somewhere interesting.

FLOW'S CREATIVE TRIGGER

If you look under the hood of creativity, you'll see the following 2 factors:

- 1. Pattern recognition**: the brain's ability to link new ideas together
- 2. Risk-taking**: the courage to bring those new ideas into the world

Both of these experiences produce powerful neurochemical reactions and the brain rides these reactions deeper into flow.

So how do you boost your creativity and create more flow in your life?

Think differently—it's as simple as that.

Instead of tackling problems from familiar angles, go at them backward and sideways.

Go out of your way to stretch your imagination.

Massively increase the amount of novelty in your life. Research shows that new environments and experiences are often the jumping-off points for new ideas (more

opportunity for pattern recognition).

Most importantly, make creativity a value and a virtue.

This is also relevant for developing a Moonshot Mindset and pursuing your Moonshots.

As Alphabet's Captain of Moonshots Astro Teller puts it: "You don't spend your time being bothered that you can't teleport from here to Japan, because there's a part of you that thinks it's impossible. Moonshot thinking is choosing to be bothered by that."

So, how do you instill this Moonshot thinking in your team?

There's no one better suited than Astro Teller to teach how to build and lead a Moonshot team.

He'll be sharing his insights about how to develop a Moonshot Mindset and how to build a Moonshot Organization during the upcoming [Abundance360 Summit in February](#).

FINAL THOUGHTS

As my dear friend and Exponential Organizations expert Salim Ismail says, "Because entrepreneurship is about the nonstop navigation of uncertainty, being in flow is a critical aspect of success."

Flow allows you and your team to stay open and alert to possibilities, which could come in the form of a customer interaction, partnership, or product insight.

And the more your team is in group flow, the higher the chance of your success.

As Salim puts it: "In fact, if your startup team is not in a near-constant group flow state, you will not succeed."

Now that you know the 17 triggers to get into a flow state, what will you accomplish?

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What breakthroughs and technologies in longevity science am I most excited about?
How realistic is the prospect of age reversal? What are my practices for extending my own healthspan?

Join me for a live Longevity & Age Reversal Ask Me Anything (AMA) session on Reddit tomorrow: **Monday, November 1st at 1:30pm PT.**

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