



Creativity needs the simple commitment of showing up, repetition and trust that something is happening. And just like fish do best in the sea and monkeys in trees, there are certain creative habitats where we find ourselves in our flow zone. (Doran, 2021)

Creative Reboot: Catalysing Creative Intelligence (2021) by Doran, Watson & Vo is a comprehensive creative toolkit including a book, gamification cards, and extended online references and resources. It is designed to be a portable kit suitable for personal and professional settings. Each of the six chapters is framed with primer and extender exercises, followed by case studies from practitioners who have applied chosen activities to solve complex problems in their respective fields.

Creativity is crucial in shaping everyone's future. It is in demand as the key driver to solving the complex problems we have carved out across all sectors, human-made environments, our communities and especially in the ongoing chaos we have created in natural environments we undermine for our purposes. Creativity is a powerful source that can enrich and sustain us if applied with care

and kindness. In the case of *Creative Reboot*, Doran's gentler approach to creativity to harness change does not diminish the powerful effect creativity can have on our daily practice if we are attuned to the enriching wisdom and application we can foster through practising her carefully researched and curated methods.

Creative Reboot differs from other 'how to' creativity books, as many of the practices and methods suspend what we already know or assume and allow for the emergence of frames not determined by rules or outcomes. There is a familiar sense of divergent and convergent processes; however, this is not a toolkit that gives you step-by-step problem-solving – there is a sense of slowing down to tune into this emergent process where solutions reveal themselves – in time. This is a more patient approach, as there is an extended aftereffect, which, speaking from experience using Doran's methods, can lead to more breakthrough thinking if you are committed to engaging deeply in the practice. It goes way beyond the familiar incubation process of creative thinking so that when you use these methods, it awakens you to many more possibilities you may not have considered.

Creative Reboot draws from transdisciplinary practice across neuroscience, philosophy, psychology and the creative arts. Doran adeptly underpins her methods in these disciplines throughout the practice. Creativity naturally crosses disciplines, knows no boundaries unless imposed, and can lead to significant change if we trust and embrace it. *Creative Reboot* offers activities for different perspectives on how to address complexity. Each activity can stand independently or be combined across the whole set, so there is always a dynamic rhythm running through the core of these practices that you can test, re-test and integrate.

A *reboot* suggests that something has been lying dormant. For a reboot to happen, a source of energy and action must catalyse something. *Creative Reboot* challenges you to energetically catalyse your thinking, doing and being to shift your perspective and embrace complexity by embedding meaning and context to your situation within workplaces, community spaces or personal places. Some methods may be more familiar, such as Toyoda's 5 Whys, McKim's 30 Circles (Stanford d.School) or the simple practice of Journaling. However, Doran invites you to go deeper to open reframing pathways to problems in other ways, such as self-regulation framed as a creative practice, using *Metaphor Catching* for sense-making of the world around us, or the more familiar process of attuning to interoception (inner sensing) and exteroception (sensing outer conditions) – more commonly known as intuition.



This toolkit takes you on a journey through six phases of creativity: play and flow, probing and blitzing, visualising, scaling, conversations, and stories. It stretches you to consider creativity's qualities and let go of concerns for outcomes or conclusions. It is a gentle, more intuitive kind of creativity tapping into cognitive reframing practices that complement other creative problem-solving processes. The activities are open-ended and exploratory; in

Doran's words, we need to 'let go of the landing pad'. Even as we implement an idea that has grown into a worthy solution, change is constantly shadowing it with good intentions. The beauty of this toolkit is that the activities linger, and if you practice them and give them time to 'land', they lead to surprising insights.

Doran encourages an 'open' mode of practice using the analogy of creativity as a muscle that needs strengthening to build awareness, confidence and endurance. She believes creativity is a 'honing process' so that over time, you reveal and refine your strengths, improve on your weaknesses and choose creative practices to test within settings that benefit collaborative growth. You gain expertise in knowing which activities can be applied to your situation personally and professionally. In many exercises, you trust imagination as your highest level of thought to lead to innovation and creative action.

In *Creative Reboot*, Doran highlights a different approach to problem-solving in a reframing process and through pragmatic creativity and transdisciplinary innovation. Transdisciplinarity is becoming a more relevant way to tackle problems in organisations that are becoming increasingly more difficult to navigate in our 21st Century open, complex, dynamic and networked society by working together across disciplines or sectors.

Creative Reboot is a sophisticated playground that will challenge you. The look and feel of the book is playful, colourful, beautiful to hold and inviting. There is a need for books like *Creative Reboot* that bring us back to what creativity catalyses within us – how it filters and resonates through our senses to build our emotional intelligence and strengthen our metacognition to powerfully affect our creative practice in any future setting.

Reviewed by Katie Ravich, Creativity Researcher, Writer, Artist and Designer

Further links:

[More about Dr. Barbara Doran](#)

[Creative Reboot online references and resources](#)

[Buy Creative Reboot](#)

[The Creative Intelligence Catalyser: microcredential with Creative Reboot](#)



Images courtesy of Barbara Doran