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See Beyond the Obvious

Boost Your Creativity with an idea from Success Magazine 1981

I came across a powerful exercise from a 1981 *Success Magazine* article, and I was struck by how relevant it still is—especially in today’s world of AI shortcuts, instant gratification, and "just-click-this-button" solutions.

When you're rebuilding, reconfiguring, starting a new strategy—whether from yesterday’s setback or something that happened a decade ago—your creativity isn’t just a nice-to-have. It’s a crucial part of shaping your Life Vision and rebuilding with intention.

At the end of this content, I’ve included an image of the original article (republished in the March/April 2025 edition of *Success Magazine*). It’s worth a look.

Here are a few quick tips to help you see beyond the obvious during your rebuild:

1. Be open to others’ ideas (spoiler alert you don’t have all the answers)

Real comebacks rarely happen in isolation. One of the most powerful mindset shifts is accepting that you need outside input—whether from mentors, teammates, clients, or even your inner circle.

Builder Connection: Use the Weekly Reflection pages to write down outside advice, feedback, or patterns you’re noticing from others. It’s a tool to process, not just plan.

2. Create a list of questions at the top of your daily note page (see builder)

The quality of your questions determines the quality of your comeback.

Each day in the Builder includes space for notes and journaling—don’t just use it to document tasks. Start with a short list of self-directed questions like:

- “What do I need to let go of today?”



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- "What conversation am I avoiding?"
- "What would this look like if it were easy?"

Builder Connection: Use the Daily Page Note Section to spark curiosity and create insight—This is not about tracking tasks (that is what Outlook is for).

3. Archive your ideas with a capture system (GTD system is done is great for this)

If you don't write it down, it's gone.

During a comeback, you'll have bursts of clarity and insight. If you don't capture them, they disappear.

David Allen's Getting Things Done (GTD) system is a great model, and the Builder supports this with:

Builder Connection:

- Use the Ideas Section in your Weekly Review to archive ideas.
- Treat your Builder like a "portable brain"—a place to dump and revisit thoughts.

4. Brainstorm and/or put in ChatGPT the list of questions you have come up with

You've got tools. Use them.

Take your list of questions and input them into ChatGPT, your mastermind group, or just a journal jam. The Builder gives you clarity—but that clarity multiplies when you process ideas with others (or an AI like me).

Builder Connection:

- Use your Weekly Builder Check-In to decide which question(s) to explore deeper that week.

5. You are learning about yourself the pain or gain you will have to accept to comeback

Every comeback requires a cost.

Whether it's letting go of control, enduring short-term discomfort, or embracing long-term discipline, your rebuild will demand either pain or gain—and often both.

Builder Connection:

- In your Pain/Reward Tracker, document what you're resisting, what you're learning, and what it's costing you not to change. This helps you take radical ownership of the comeback process.

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SEE BEYOND THE OBVIOUS: A VISUALIZATION EXERCISE TO BOOST CREATIVITY

To improve your powers of visualization, concentrate on the following illustration, and use your imagination. The question usually asked in connection with this design is whether you see the two figures: the vase and the two profiles. Go beyond the traditional fixed perception and try to see and imagine at least eight to 10 things. Look at the picture from as many different points of view and from as many angles as you wish. What else can you see in this picture? Check your answers below.



More Than Meets the Eye:

Here are some of the items that can be seen in the drawing: (1) an anvil, (2) an overpass pillar on highway, (3) champagne glass, (4) piano stool, (5) tower with revolving restaurant, (6) minute timer, (7) propeller, (8) chess piece rook or castle, (9) fruit holder, (10) birdbath, (11) chalice, (12) rubber grommet, (13) keyhole slot in door, (14) an extrusion die, (15) two cars facing each other, (16) jackscrew, (17) arrowhead going into an object, (18) two girls sitting back to back and holding parcels on their heads, (19) a balance wheel, (20) a modern version of the Illinois Central Railroad trademark, (21) a family crest, (22) filling a pen from an inkwell, (23) an island, (24) smoke rising from an explosion, (25) a one-armed person pushing a button, (26) an old X-ray machine used by dentists, (27) a needlepoint pillow design, (28) an end table, (29) an ice-cream dish, (30) two spaceships docking, (31) a hat for a costume ball, (32) stained-

glass window, (33) a mirror, (34) a suction cup, (35) swimming pool, (36) a chuck and piece of wood on a lathe, (37) a steer eating out of a food bin, (38) a saddle, (39) floor polisher, (40) a paper clipboard, (41) drawer pull, (42) a top spinning on a base, (43) reflections of mountains in a lake, (44) syringe filling a bottle, (45) design on a ceramic tile, (46) candleholder, (47) flashlight, (48) a bottle, (49) a paint scraper, (50) a doorknob, (51) cross section of a bannister or hand railing, (52) water fountain, (53) a reamer, (54) a bung puller, (55) a molehill, (56) eyewash cup, (57) a cave, (58) a staircase pole, (59) a UFO, (60) shock absorber, (61) coffee table, (62) two people rubbing noses, (63) a skull, (64) cross-section of the tire rim of an automobile wheel, (65) Buddha figure, (66) a radar cone, (67) shower-faucet handle, (68) top half of a half-buried anchor, (69) spun aluminum dish on a lathe, (70) a flower, (71) a shower head, (72) a windshield ice scraper, (73) a streetlight.



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Ready to help your audience rise again?

Book Bill for your next event, retreat, training, or fun time and give your group the spark they need to reset, rebuild, and rise.

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