



## CREATIVE FUTURES

### MOOD

#### **Ronnie McCourt:**

It's crucial to creativity to be in the mood. The American psychologists, Csíkszentmihályi who talked about the concept of flow; and flow is where you lose all sense of time, where you get so absorbed in what you're doing, you're enjoying it so much that work becomes play. So a small example of how you might do that - when you're training soldiers. Perhaps you're going on range and it could be a sterile thing you say, right, here we are trying to check how well you can shoot. But if you give them a good, what we call a battle picture -- a sense of a scenario they might face themselves where they have to change the magazines quickly, if the weapon jams you've got to clear it because somebody's coming around the corner and will do harm to them unless they clear that quickly. You get the juices, you get the imagination going. If you're creative in the picture you paint, that gets people going.

#### **Jane Henry:**

There is some very interesting pretty new work on mood, which suggests it may well play a part in creativity. The basic idea here is that if you're in a happier mood it is easier to make wider associations, so you're more likely to come up with creative ideas. Now if you're less happy, in not such a good mood, your focus tends to be narrower, you're more likely to think along familiar lines. So you're less likely to come up with creative ideas.

#### **Ronnie McCourt:**

And that is closely, as far as I'm concerned, tied in with morale. I mean: how are you feeling about your job? Morale is the cornerstone of what you do. It's not just about the concepts of what you're doing or about your equipment doing it, it's about giving them a sense of purpose. And I think that's really important. So you talked about mood and about emotions -- we're all emotional creatures. If you can engage those people's emotions, people do extraordinary things.

#### **Jane Henry:**

O Another factor which can affect creativity is your state of mind and is a state of mind called 'relaxed attention', where you are not searching definitely for the right answer. You're tolerating ambiguity in a state, you're more playful, you're more open, you're just basically accepting whatever your unconscious mind thrusts forward to you. In a sense it's sort of slightly more a state of reverie. And in this kind of state it can be easier for those little

knowings, the tacit knowledge just on the edge of your mind to come forth so that your conscious mind can become aware of them.