



## CREATIVE FUTURES

### *BIAS*

#### **Jane Henry:**

All our brains are hard wired slightly differently

According to our particular experiences in life, so we all have these slightly different biases. Some of these biases are pretty common across people. We know that for example, people find it easier to remember the dramatic. We also remember the familiar and we're more likely to think our own opinions are right. We're biased towards noticing opinions that agree with us and against those that don't.

#### **Ronnie McCourt:**

Risk is often thought to be just a simple matter of the likelihood of something happening times the consequences of it happening. But research has shown that there's a lot more attached to it, there's a psychological element attached and that's what we might call imagine-ability. People imagining things happening to them. They're subject to bias where they see, for example, a plane crashing and they say: I don't wanna get on the plane next time. You can see how that might work with soldiers because on one part of the battlefield earlier in the tour something happened, you're imagining it happening again. So the way of overcoming that is obviously to give them a clear idea of what they're letting themselves in for and what they, what they ought to be doing and thinking about should that worst case scenario happen. So what we do is train for the worst and hope for the best. You keep practicing so that when the ... sort of get cognitive overload when things are at the most dangerous, then the training kicks in.

#### **Jane Henry:**

Creative thinking techniques; they encourage us to, sort of, question our assumptions. To reframe what we think is the main issue. So some of the ways are things like brainstorming and brain writing. Here you're basically listing ideas, but what you're really doing there is you're counteracting the biases in your own mind set by drawing on other people's mind sets. Another approach in creative thinking is to introduce some random input.

This is the kind of thing we associate with lateral thinking. It might be you think of a hero -- what you do here is basically you think of somebody who you respect and it doesn't matter if it's Nelson Mandela or Superman. And you think: How do they set about doing things? What kind of person are they? Maybe if it was Nelson Mandela, you know, you might think well, perhaps we should be more forgiving, perhaps we should be forgiving of mistakes.

Essentially, you've gone off on excursion, away from the problem, you've introduced some extra random elements, but in a rather fun way.

**Ronnie McCourt:**

If we carry on doing the same things we've always done and we're not getting the result we want, then what we have to do is come out of that single loop thinking and go through what Argyris talks about -- double loop thinking. You've now got to come out of that loop, where you spiral downwards thinking: I'm getting nowhere, and the harder and harder I try, I'm getting nowhere, you've got to break that loop and come out of the loop into a second loop, that double loop and really start to think about: Let's think about what we're doing and the assumptions behind what we're doing and see if we can come up and then come back in it again. By just the same old thinking going round and round ain't gonna get you there.