

Embracing Failure

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Objectives



- Evaluate perceptions of Creativity
- Explore the role of failure within creativity
- Learn how creativity and failure are central to iterative design

1. Creativity

Activity

Go to <https://kleki.com/>

When I say doodle you will have 60 seconds to doodle something on the canvas.



Who here is creative?



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We are all creative

- Many of us have got used to being told we are not
- Creativity can be taught and developed
- Creativity is a skill that should be valued & practiced

What is creativity?



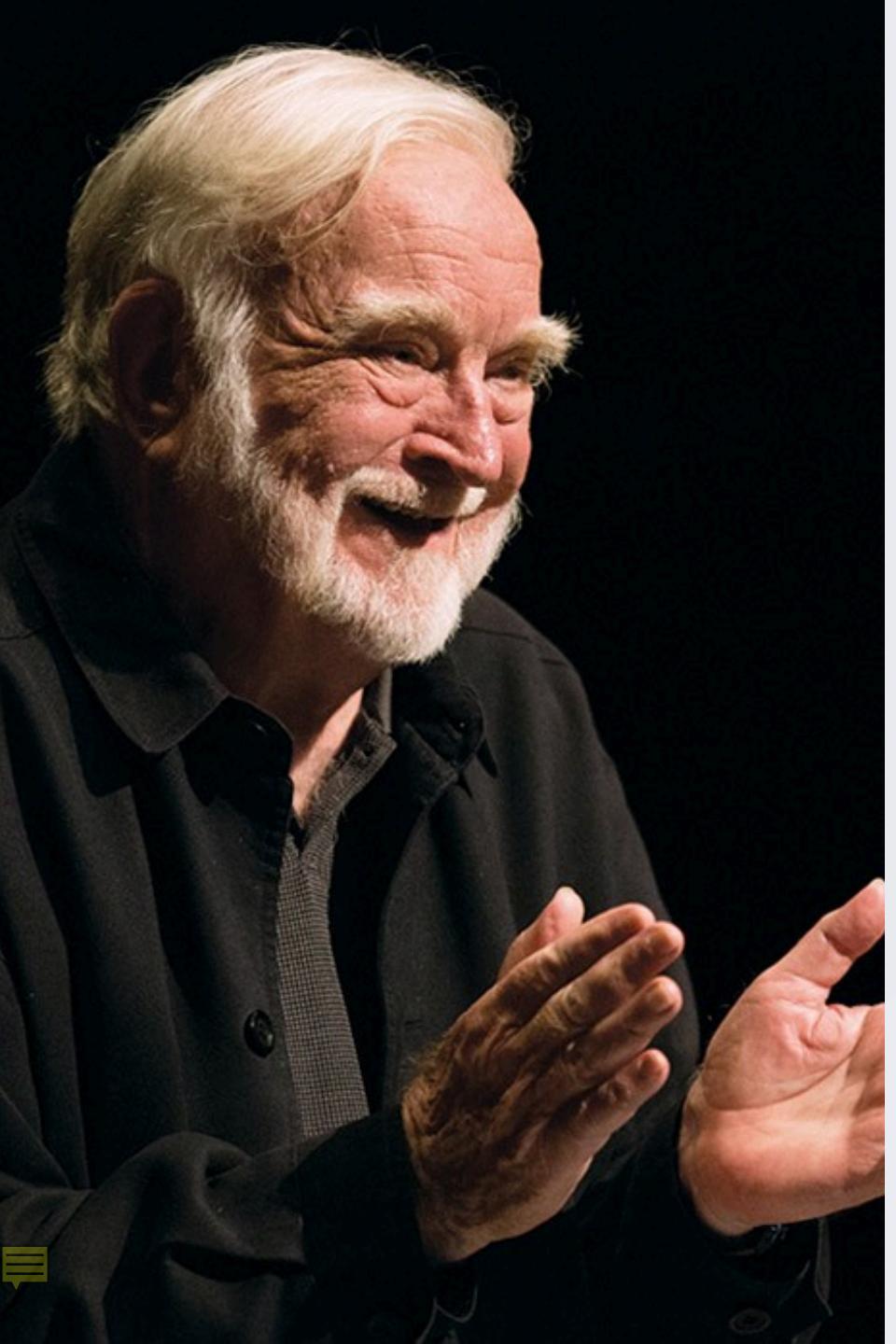
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Creativity

“The process of having original ideas that have value”

Ken Robinson





What is creativity?

"A process by which a **symbolic domain** in culture is changed...

...creativity results from the interaction of system composed of three elements: a culture that contains symbolic rules, a person who **brings novelty into the symbolic domain**, and a **field of experts who recognise and validate the innovation**"

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

What is ideation?

“Ideation is the process of generating a broad set of ideas on a given topic with no attempt to judge or evaluate them”

Nielsen Norman Group





What is ideation?

*“Ideation is the process of generating a **broad set of ideas** on a given topic with **no attempt to judge or evaluate them**”*

Nielsen Norman Group

Worst Possible Idea...

NomNom Foods want to enter the canned soup market. What is the **worst possible idea** you can think of...

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Don't Fear Failure

*You tried your best & you failed miserably.
The lesson is 'never try'*

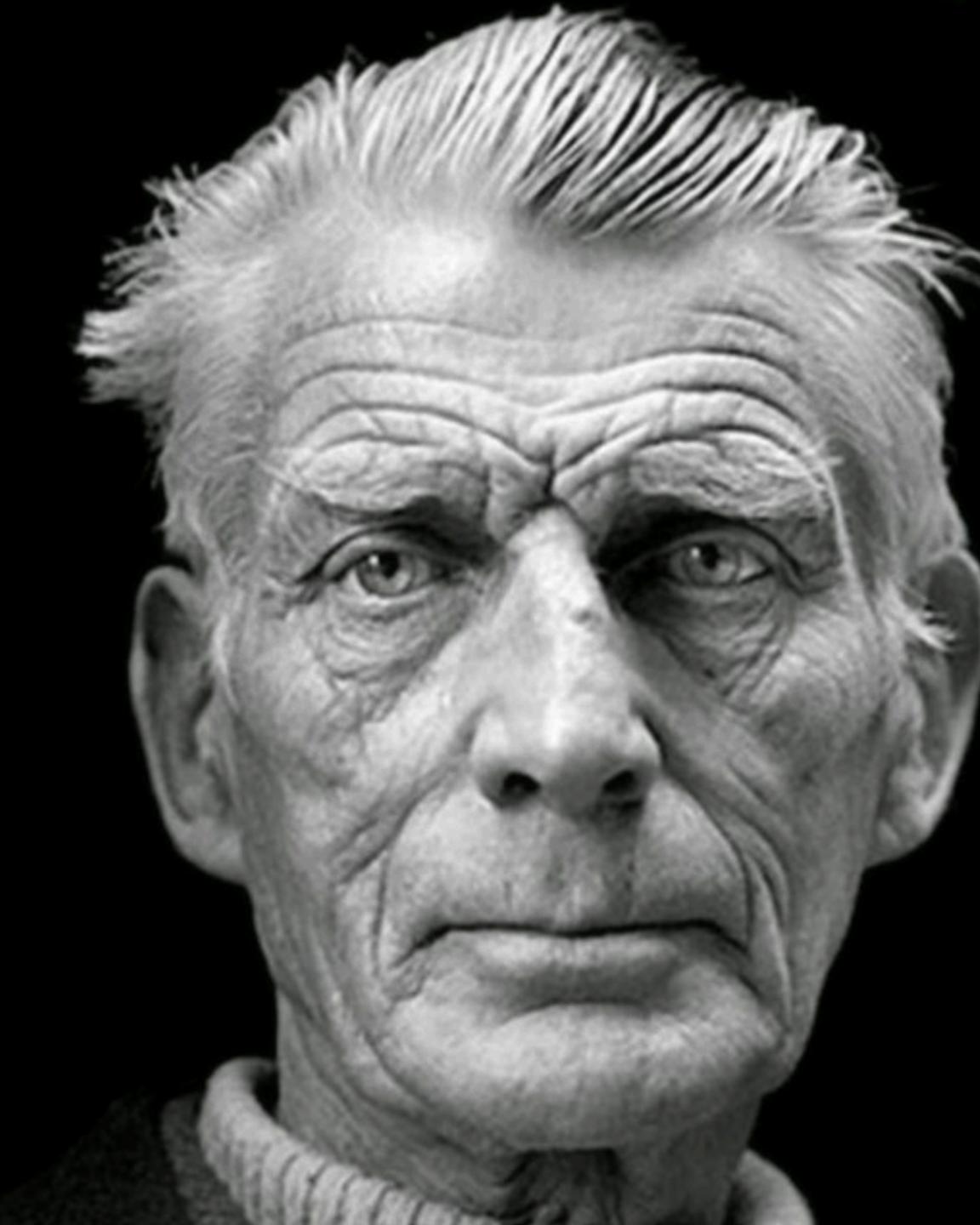
Homer Simpson



Be prepared to mae mitakes...

Be prepared to make mistakes...

The person who never made a mistake, never made anything

A black and white close-up portrait of the Irish writer Samuel Beckett. He has thin, light-colored hair that is slightly messy at the top. His forehead is deeply wrinkled with many fine lines. He has a serious, contemplative expression, looking slightly off-camera to his left. The lighting is dramatic, casting deep shadows on one side of his face while highlighting the other.

**Try again,
Fail again,
Fail better!**

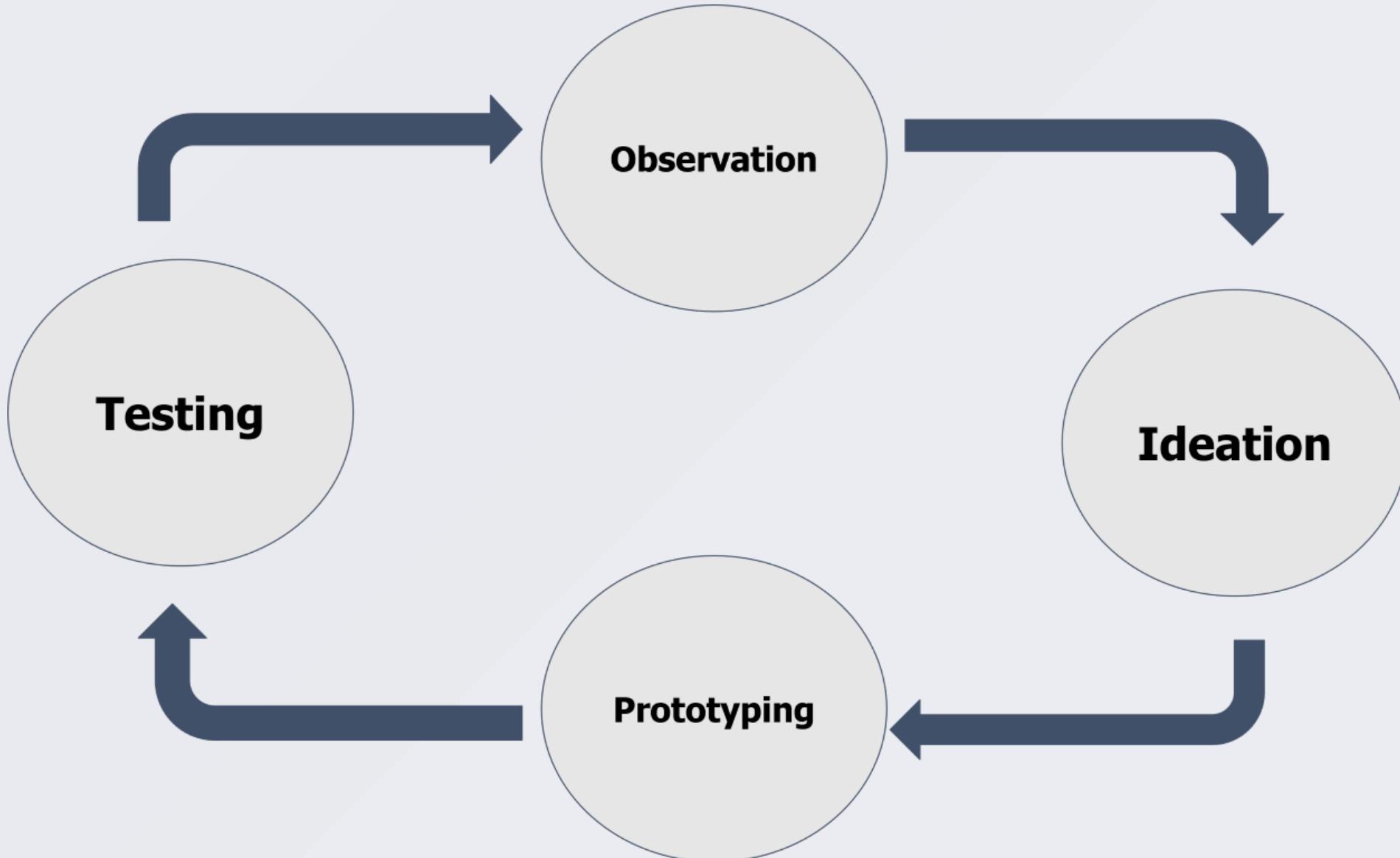
Samuel Beckett

Creativity is a process

- Sometimes things go wrong - Creativity is a process of iteration.
- Try something, evaluate it, refine it, try it again...
- Many of the projects through your degree are as much about the process as it is the product
- It doesn't matter if the thing you make 'works' it's the journey that's important

Break

2. Iterative Design Cycle



Every phase invites failure

- **Observation:** Discovering what is failing with the current solution, what is the problem we are addressing
- **Ideation:** Invites quantity and encourages bad ideas.
- **Prototyping:** Provides a safe space to fail, prototypes are meant to break as this provides new data to move forward
- **Testing:** You are not seeking praise, but criticism. Failure in testing highlights disconnect between the design intent and user reality
- **Iteration:** Failure drives each cycle of iteration and leads to success

3. Case Studies

Infant Baby Warmer

The Embrace infant baby warmer is a low cost incubator designed for use in developing countries where access to traditional incubators is not feasible.

The product was designed by students at Stanford as part of a design for extreme affordability module.





Infant Baby Warmer

The Problem

20 million premature or low-weight babies are born each year. In developing countries deaths rates are high due to lack of access to incubators. Students were tasked with creating a low-cost alternative

Infant Baby Warmer

Observation

By travelling to Nepal to observe the actual users the team observed two key things.

- Majority of babies born in rural areas
- Majority of babies never reached hospital





Infant Baby Warmer

The Product

After realising the product would need to be transportable, sanitizable and work without electricity the team prototyped a sleeping bag style incubator.

This was warmed by pouches heated in boiling water and could maintain heat for four hours.

Infant Baby Warmer

The Impact

The teams solution costs on \$25 dollars compared to \$20,000 for a traditional incubator, has won multiple design awards and helped hundreds of thousands of infants survive.



AirBnB

AirBnB has a valuation of over \$30 billion, operates in over 81,000 cities and has over 150 million users. But this wasn't always the case, in 2009 a year into operation the company nearly went bankrupt....





AirBnB

The Problem

In 2009 the company is losing money, fast! With few bookings being made revenue struggled to break \$200 per week.

After analysing listings for places to stay in New York the discovered the problem:

Bad Photos

AirBnB

Observation

By observing the problem from the perspective of users the founders realised the bad photos meant you couldn't see what you were going to pay for.





AirBnB

The solution

Go to New York visit all the listings and take better pictures.

AirBnB

The Impact

Within a week the site double its revenue making \$400 dollars instead of \$200. A small tweak based on empathy made the difference that continued over the following decade...



Can you think of any examples?



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Takeaways

Failure is the driver for success

- To enhance creativity we must embrace failure
- Failure = Feedback
- Prototyping = Permission to fail
- Iterative Design & Design Thinking = Experimentation Framework

Thank You

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