Describe a world where humanity has transitioned into a society where everyone is able to think freely and creatively and not be worried about survival.

Most people believe that creativity is a personality quality that each person possesses. We rely on creative individuals to create the songs, movies, and novels we enjoy, as well as to develop the new technological innovations that have the potential to fundamentally alter our way of life and the way we think about the universe. Social psychologists have learned over the past few years, however, that creativity is not only a trait of the individual, but may also vary based on the environment and context. Of course, the question is what those circumstances are that spur us on to be more inventive sometimes and less inventive other times.

Psychological remoteness is one solution. Everything that we do not perceive as happening right now, right here, and to us is considered to be "psychologically distant," according to the construal level theory (CLT) of psychological distance. It's also possible to create a condition of "psychological detachment" by simply altering the way we approach a particular issue, such as by attempting to see the situation from another person's point of view or by approaching the issue as if it were improbable and unreal. In a recent paper, Lile Jia and colleagues from Indiana University at Bloomington showed that putting a problem at a greater psychological distance can actually boost creativity.

Why does mental remoteness foster greater creativity? According to CLT, psychological distance has an impact on how we mentally perceive things,

making psychologically close objects appear more real while psychologically distant objects are represented in a relatively abstract manner. Think of a maize plant, for example. A concrete illustration would refer to the plant's form, color, flavor, and aroma and link it to its most typical application as a food item. On the other hand, an abstract description can describe the corn plant as a plant that grows quickly or as a source of energy. These more speculative ideas might prompt us to consider other, uncommon uses for maize, such as a source of ethanol or the utilization of the plant to make kid-friendly mazes.This illustrates how abstract thought facilitates the formation of unexpected links between seemingly unrelated ideas, such as fast-growing plants (corn) and automobile fuel (ethanol).

Jia and coworkers looked at the impact of spatial distance on creativity in this most current set of investigations. In the first study, participants were given a creative generating task in which they were to come up with as many various modes of transportation as they could. According to the introduction, either Indiana University students studying in Greece (a remote setting) or Indiana University students studying in Indiana produced this work (near condition). Participants in the remote condition came up with more unique and varied forms of transportation than participants in the near condition, as was expected.

Participants were informed that the questions for the insight problems were either created at a research institute in California, "about 2,000 miles away" (remote condition), or in Indiana, "2 miles away" (near condition). A third control group did not include any indication of location. Participants in the

remote condition, as predicted, solved more problems than those in the proximal and control conditions. The issues were simpler to resolve since they appeared to be farther away.

According to this pair of experiments, even very slight indications of psychological remoteness can boost our creativity. Even though it shouldn't have mattered where the questions came from because the geographical origin of the various tasks was absolutely irrelevant, simply telling them that they were from a distant location encouraged more creative thinking.

These findings rely on earlier research that showed distance in time, or projecting an event into the far future, and distance in probability, or supposing an event to be less likely, can both boost creativity. Participants were asked to first imagine their lives a year from now (distant future) or the day after (near future) before imagining working on a task on that day in the distant future. This series of experiments examined how temporal distance affects performance on various insight and creativity tasks. Participants who visualized a day in the distant future were more successful at solving insight tasks than those who visualized a day in the near future.They also performed better on tasks requiring the detection of coherent images in "noisy" visual input, such as those requiring creative idea generation (e.g., listing ways to improve the look of a room). For probability, comparable evidence has been discovered. When participants thought they were less likely than likely to see the entire task, they performed better on sample questions from a visual insight task.

The modern world helps us become more creative by exposing us to a range of styles and ideas as well as by enabling us to think more abstractly. This is because it has improved access to people, sights, music, and cuisine from distant locations. Therefore, if one runs into an issue that looks insurmountable the next time, don't give up. Instead, make the assumption that the issue originated from a very far location in an effort to create some psychological distance without thinking of survival.