

The Compulsion to Create: Definition and Genesis of the Phenomenon

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ABSTRACT

Is it possible to speak of the *compulsion to create*? And if so, what underlies it? In this article, I set out to offer a comprehensive explanation of what may cause the strong desire for creative activity observable in many artistically-inclined individuals. To describe this desire, I use the term *compulsion to create*, and drawing upon examples from both pop-culture and the lives of famous artists on the one hand, and philosophical and scholarly writings on the other, I seek its sources in the individual's psyche. I discuss how the compulsion to create depends, among other factors, on an individual's personality and mental state (in the sense of Sigmund Freud's and Elaine N. Aron's theories), transcendental circumstances (in the sense of Carl Jung's theory) and character traits (as defined by Jordan Peterson). Then, I frame the phenomenon studied within the 4Ps Model of Creativity. I point to a significant correlation between the *compulsion to create* and high levels of an individual's creativity. Additionally, I discriminate between the notions of the *drive to create* and the *compulsion to create*. The article proposes a definition of the *compulsion to create* which allows for a clear understanding of this notion and its popular application in the field of creatology.

INTRODUCTION

"The writer has to write," asserts Joan Castleman (Glenn Close), a student with an immense literary talent and the main character of Björn Runge's 2017 movie, *The Wife*. "The writer has to have readers, my dear," wryly replies Elaine Mozell (Elizabeth McGovern), her more experienced colleague (Runge, 2017).

Is that really the case? Does the writer need readers, the musician - listeners, and the painter - someone to behold his creations? While it stands to reason that most artists

more or less openly dream of recognition and appreciation of others, it is doubtful - as illustrated by the fictitious character of Joan Castleman - that lack of this appreciation should seriously inhibit creativity, or actually, for that matter, it is doubtful that *any* factors at all should effectively dissuade an individual from creating (or under circumstances that are extremely uncondusive to self-realization, at least from indulging in persistently recurrent phantasies of creating) in the field in which he wants to create - and the urge is such that it seems more appropriate to describe this in terms of a *compulsion*.

Obsessions: a fuel for creating

While the aforesaid Elaine Mozell is disappointed with her inability to make a presence in the male-dominated literary world (and most likely wants to spare Joan this disappointment), she has been professionally active in her field all her life. One could think of a virtually endless list of “real-life” artists who, despite lack of recognition, adverse circumstances, and internal inhibitions (physical or mental conditions) were or have been actively creating. One of the most famous examples is Vincent van Gogh, who - putting up a daily struggle with escalating emotional and financial problems - was able to create hundreds of paintings and drawings throughout his lifetime. Albert Aurier, the author of the first press article about the painter (dated 1890), used such terms as “obsessive passion” and “persistent preoccupation” to describe the qualities which typified van Gogh’s work ethos (Charles, 2011, pp. 7-8). That implies that great artists (whose greatness is reflected in the appreciation of others, but also in above-average prolificacy) need more than the usual motivation to work, because rooted in their psyches is a kind of “creative obsession” which spurs them on. Elizabeth Gilbert, the author of the best-selling *Eat, Pray, Love*, even goes as far as advising aspiring artists to “follow your own fascinations, obsessions, and compulsions” (Gilbert, 2015, p. 101). And are obsessions - in line with their definitions originating in psychopathology - not precisely the feelings of an internal *compulsion* to perform a given action? Additionally, abstaining from these *compulsive* activities results in the building-up of an extremely unpleasant, intensive emotional tension.

Depth psychology on the compulsion to create

This is the idea of artistic creation espoused by, amongst others, Sigmund Freud, who saw its origins in the tension between consciousness and the unconscious drives and impulses, which the artist consciously orders and processes so that they will be accepted by society (Szmidt, 2018, p. 147). To describe this process, Freud coined the term *sublimation*, which refers to the transference of socially rejected drives to activities that are generally deemed more neutral (“nonsexual activities, like painting”; Gay, 1992, p. 36). According to Freud, artistic creation is simply an alternative to a neurosis or depression and,

similarly to these, has its origins in suppressed needs and the resulting emotions. According to a hypothesis of this kind, it seems tenable to conclude that creation is a necessity (*compulsion*) for an artist because it provides effective protection against mental disorders. Artistic creation may thus be seen as a primary need, almost on a par with e.g. physiological needs, which serve the purpose of preserving the vital functions.

A particularly strong desire to express one's inner experiences and to turn them into creative activities is characteristic of the individuals whom researcher and psychotherapist Elaine N. Aron labels "highly sensitive," i.e. having a particularly reactive nervous system. Such people are at all times unusually aware of, or even sensitive to, both changes in their mental and physical state, and external factors that they are exposed to. They process all this information in a particularly intensive fashion, which can lead to physical and mental overload (Aron, 1997). This is where artistic creation comes in handy: transferring one's emotions onto paper, canvas or a musical stave relieves overstimulation and keeps mental disturbances at bay. Aron (1997) remarks that emerging from most psychological analyses of top artists is the major significance of such individuals' extraordinary sensitivity. In the words of Kaufman and Gregorie (2015, p. 128), "to the highly sensitive person, the need to express and share these insights and observations can be so strong that creating art is not simply a passion but indeed a necessity." Thus, highly sensitive people would be those who most acutely experience the *compulsion to create*, and this compulsion would be a logical corollary of their quantifiable and unique personality traits (in other words, these people would be characterized by what Aron refers to as *sensory-processing sensitivity*; 1997).

The idea of the *compulsion to create* is even more prominent - though differently understood - in the works of another classic representative of psychoanalysis (chronologically later than Freud), Carl Gustav Jung. He categorically rejected Freud's theory that artistic creation is merely a defence mechanism against an individual's inability to fulfill some of his needs. Jung observes that "[i]f a work of art is explained in the same way as a neurosis, then either the work of art is a neurosis or a neurosis is a work of art" (Adler & Hull, 1966, p. 87). Jung, a leading representative of depth psychology, sees creativity as a transcendental issue (treating it on a par with e.g. the existence of God's will), which no psychologist can explain, but can merely describe. The artist is inspired and guided by a superhuman force, which only expresses itself through his agency. Jung draws comparisons between the process of artistic creation and the development of a foetus in the mother's womb: the woman is indispensable for the process as such to occur, but the very act of man's conception and development cannot be fully explained or comprehended by an individual's mind (in the words of van Gogh, "paintings

have a life of their own that derives from the painter's soul"; "Vincent van Gogh"). With respect to biological phenomena, it can be said that nature (meaning the forces of nature going beyond human understanding and control) plays the decisive part, while in the case of artistic creation this is the domain of nature's psychical counterpart, i.e. the collective unconscious, which - just like nature - can never be fully charted or tamed, and which operates on its own principles transcending individual experience (though at the same time these principles concern all representatives of a given species). The *compulsion to create* is thus not only present in Jung's theories, but also clearly defined as an "innate drive that seizes a human being and makes him its instrument" (Adler & Hull 1966, p. 133). According to this model, the artist's only job, rather than to focus on art's individual goals, is to let art - which is of supernatural or even, depending on the terminology adopted, divine provenance - manifest itself through his agency. Elizabeth Gilbert thinks that this is the only valid approach to describing artistic creation and vividly explains that "allowing one mere person to believe that he or she is like the vessel, you know, like the font, and the essence, and the source of all divine, creative, unknowable, eternal mystery, is just a smidge too much responsibility to put on one fragile human psyche. It's like asking somebody to swallow the sun" (TED, 2009). For Jung, similarly, artistic creation goes way beyond the limits of the ego: an individual creates not in order to cope with his compulsive impulses and psychical inhibitions, but in order to externalize the processes that occur inside him anyway (to once again use the metaphor of maternity - like in the case of pregnancy). As explained by Clarissa Pinkola Estés, a writer and a certified Jungian psychoanalyst, the need to create is vast energy which comes right from the psyche and from which there is nowhere to hide - nor is there any point hiding. Curbing one's own creative and artistic impulses makes an individual miserable and saps his vitality. In the meantime, the *compulsion to create* never expires because creative imagination, "[i]f it finds no inlet to us, it backs up, gathers energy, and rams forward again till it breaks through" (Estés, 1992, p. 395).

Additionally, Jung hypothesized that it is not the artist's psyche that determines the form of his creation, but the work of art that determines the artist's psyche and, consequently, his fate: "It is not Goethe that creates Faust, but Faust that creates Goethe" (Adler & Hull, 1966, p. 135). Thus, it may be said that Jung, one of psychology's leading figures, sees the artist as a subject, as an individual chosen - because of his talents - to execute the process of artistic creation, which undoubtedly sets him apart from the crowd, but on the other hand such an individual, having no free will or the right to choose, has no actual chance to pursue a career which is not artistic. It might be concluded that this scenario is the purest form of the *compulsion to create*.

Somewhere „between” Freud and Jung - both in terms of chronological order of the most prolific scientific activity, as well as polarity of views on the roots of artistic creation - another psychoanalyst, Otto Rank, can be placed. He should be considered here as in his work the very term *creative urge* not only appears numerous times but is also a part of the title of one of his leading monographic works: *Art and Artist: Creative Urge and Personality Development* (Rank, 1968). Rank believed that the real sense of the creative process is "unlearning" mechanisms that cause an individual's suffering, that is, factors that curb one's development. A condition for, but also the result of expressing one's own creativity, is the gradual release from blocking beliefs and limitations connected with an excessively conformist attitude. Thus, the creative process is not the process of compensating for lower level needs with higher level needs (as Freud suggested) but a general transition into a higher level of functioning, due to the development of personality, which accompanies artistic activities (Rank, 1968).

Therefore, Rank rejected Freud's view on the creative process, deeming it too simplistic and reductive in terms of perceiving art as a mere consequence of unresolved conflicts. Though works of art may sometimes, as Will Wadlington puts it „reveal their creator's regressive fixation on the past”, they first and foremost help an artist to live his or her life to the fullest, boldly and with acute existential awareness (2012, p. 384). An artist is one that can create *in spite of* individual limitations, not *because* or *thanks* to them.

Moreover, art cannot resolve any psychological disorder as, according to Rank, there is no definite “cure” for neuroses, etc. because the finiteness and uncertainty of human existence inherently entails a certain degree of fear. Thus, “the only therapy is life. The patient must learn to live, to live with his split, his conflict, his ambivalence, which no therapy can take away, for if it could, it would take with it the actual spring of life” (Rank, 1936, p. 289).

Within the Rank's idea of expressing creativity there is the notion of the "divine attributes" of a creative human, which brings his thinking towards that of Jung. However, within this concept, an artist is not so much a "catalyst" of any supernatural power, but rather a creature having both "divine" ability to create and develop, as well as being tragically limited by the needs of bodily nature, and harassed by neuroses resulting from the constant fear of death (Rank, 1968). Thus, a *compulsion to create* or - as Rank himself put it - an *urge to create* would be a manifestation of the human longing to become more akin to God or at least of maintaining a balance between these two opposite human positions. A creative urge at its very core is the need for "growth" beyond individual and social limitations - that is, the need for self-realization (Rank, 1968).

Another psychotherapist who withdrew from Freud's radical psychoanalytical movement and developed his own concepts of human motivation, including motivation (need) to create, was Alfred Adler. His perception of the creative process was not so disparate from Rank's theory of striving towards transgressing human limitation by engaging oneself in the production of art. Adler, however, was not focused merely on art, but his ideas incorporate the need to create as part of his general concept of the universal human inclination to compensate one's inferiorities by specializing and putting much energy into activities that - paradoxically - require using one's most prominent weaknesses. For example, a person who is severely short-sighted, following Adler's way of reasoning, would be more likely to become a great writer or painter, as he or she becomes painfully aware of the importance of the visual aspects of life. Poor hearing might have corresponding compensation by, for instance, putting much effort into creating music - the most famous example being Beethoven's deafness (Stein, 2006). This was Adler's *compensatory theory of creativity*, according to which, the *urge to create* is a strong desire to compensate for one's inadequacies (May, 1994, p. 37). Therefore, Adler's idea does bear some similarity to Freud's perspective - especially in the sense that a work of art is a byproduct of certain suffering - although it is differently perceived by the two scholars. To adduce a particularly illustrative metaphor, adapted from the world of nature, according to Adler, the mechanism behind the creative process is similar to that of a pearl being produced by an oyster, which intends to cover up a painful irritant (e.g. a parasite) that has penetrated its body with a precious substance. The pearl is born in order to heal an injury in the oyster's tissue and it is a similar case with works of art (May, 1994). They are created as the result of a person's suffering from some inferiority in their organism - and if the inferiority is to be successfully compensated for, the work of art (or other creative endeavours) *must* be produced.

The curse of creativity?

Jordan Peterson, a Canadian professor of psychology and clinical psychologist, reaches very similar conclusions (especially in relation to Jung, but also the other above-mentioned thinkers) regarding a certain lack of free will in exceptionally creative individuals. However, Peterson bases his theory on psychometric analyses and sees high creativity and openness to experience (according to the five-factor model of personality, or FFM) as closely related - or even identical. His rationale is that openness entails interest in abstract ideas and concepts, and frequently, high aesthetic sensitivity, i.e. attributes that very frequently typify people involved in artistic activities. Moreover, Peterson emphasizes that these features (openness and its corollaries), being deeply rooted in the

psyche and physiology (meaning the structure of the nervous system, of the brain, and the genes), are characterized by non-susceptibility or low susceptibility to change, and determine an individual's personality throughout his lifetime. Based on this observation, Peterson posits a certain *tragedy* which befalls creative individuals, and which has two main causes (National Gallery of Canada, 2017).

First, a creative individual is likely to experience frustration and lack of recognition resulting from difficulties in breaking through with their novel ideas and projects (and consequently, in monetizing them) since there are obviously no criteria for evaluating such ideas and projects that go beyond existing systems or structures. This is why the initial reaction of those entrenched in these systems or structures will most likely be to reject an individual offering novel ideas, whose usefulness - especially in the early stages - is difficult to evaluate, and the process is often energy-intensive. Therefore, unlike in the case of individuals characterized with high conscientiousness (under the FFM) and low creativity, who have a chance to succeed in the existing solidified structures (and who feel no urge to either upset or overhaul it), the criteria of success for a highly creative individual are vague, and the chances that his groundbreaking projects will flourish are statistically low. Peterson calls creativity, or rather its active implementation, a high risk strategy (National Gallery of Canada, 2017).

The second cause of the *tragedy* of highly creative individuals is the necessity to express one's own creativity, which Peterson terms *the curse of creativity*. On the strength of the above observations concerning the socio-psychological threats facing exceptionally creative people, one could conclude that such individuals would be, in many respects, better off not risking frustration and resigning from a tenuous career based on creating art or inventing novel concepts, whose reception is and always will be uncertain. However, such a conclusion is completely wrong because it is precisely the *compulsion to create* that needs to be taken into consideration. Creative people, Peterson asserts, "don't have much choice. If you are a creative person, you're like a fruit tree that's bearing fruit. You can suppress it but it's very bad for you. ... If they [creative people] aren't creative, they are miserable so they have to do it (Bite-sized Philosophy, 2017).

To get an even more illustrational description of the situation of creative individuals, especially artists, a reference can be made to Abraham Maslow's legendary pyramid presenting the hierarchy of human needs. The need for artistic expression is at the very top, which suggests that individuals operating in this area achieve a high level of self-realization and self-fulfilment. Certainly, on this level, all this is highly likely and achievable, on condition that the individual is not simultaneously at the very base of the pyramid, where - e.g. being unable to monetize his or her artistic endeavours or innovative ideas -

he or she struggles on the level of physical survival and sense of security, especially financial security (Kerr, 2009; Maslow, 1971). If this is the case, it is justified to speak of certain “tragedy” or a “curse” befalling talented people, who, regardless of the outcomes, experience a persistent and (at least for most of their lives) inextinguishable inner *compulsion to create*.

Compulsion to create with in the 4P's Model of Creativity

If an attempt were to be made to frame the phenomenon of the *compulsion to create* within the 4Ps Model of Creativity, then - depending on the interpretation of a particular thinker or scholar - it would fall either within the personal aspect (whereby emphasis is placed on an individual's personality traits) or the processual aspect (pointing to the description of the process of the development of a creative idea; Rhodes, 1961, p. 305-310). The aforementioned leading representatives of depth psychology - regardless of their drastically different views on the genesis of works of art - both focus on the processual aspect (for Freud, this is the process of sublimation, and for Jung - drawing inspiration from the collective unconscious). On the other hand, Aron is a scholar who understands creativity through the personal aspect (seeing creativity as a result of high sensory-processing sensitivity) and so is Peterson, who links creativity to high levels of openness to experience (under the five-factor model).

Sometimes, the personal and processual approaches are combined, e.g. in the works of Kaushal Kishore Sharma. This scholar, analyzing the approach to the artistic creation of Rabindranath Tagore - an Indian writer, painter and Nobel Prize winner in Literature - repeatedly uses the terms *creative urge* or *artistic urge*, which describe the strong need for expression in certain individuals. Such an individual - an artist - is, or should be, equipped with “a keen sensitiveness which overwhelms his mind with the awareness of the natural and human world around him” (Sharma, 2003, p. 7). This personal trait - sensitiveness - is connected with having a “surplus of emotions”, which needs to be revealed in the form of art and which is characteristic of certain individuals only. Thus, a work of art arises as the result of “emotional forces” which drive a human being to create (Sharma, 2003, p 28). And this very “driving” or *drive* can be seen as the beginning of a process of creation (so we have an explanation of the process factor behind creativity).

Drive and creatology

Referring to Freud once again, I will focus on one term he uses - which is actually synonymous with *compulsion* - namely, *drive*, or *impulse*, a concept which naturally and intuitively entails the feeling of a necessity (compulsion) to act. This association is based on

paradigms concerning this term which are used in numerous exact sciences and humanities. In physics, for instance, and more precisely in classical Newtonian mechanics, impulse is a vector quantity which (when particular conditions of a force acting in a given time obtain) leads to the change of the position (i.e. forces change) of a rigid body on which a force is acting. In psychology (and more precisely in the psychoanalytic theory), a *drive* entails a necessity to find a release for an individual's needs, which are based in the psyche and conditioned by physiology; therefore, it is also an obvious stimulus for movement and change.

In terms of the above rationale, how should the term *drive* be used in creatology? The very existence of the frontal cortex (referred to as the “organ of creativity”; Fuster, 2015, p. 379) means that man is capable of creative thinking and - in general terms - feels the urge to use his creative resources. Creativity can be said to be the feature which defines our humanness and the validity of this statement is even borne out by European legislation, and more precisely by the UE Charter of Fundamental Rights. The right to express one's creativity is one of the components of freedom - and freedom is probably the value which most accurately defines our humanness. In the chapter under this very title, “Freedoms”, such rights are listed as the freedom of thought, expression, and information, freedom to choose an occupation, freedom of the arts and sciences, all of which - and the latter two in particular - are closely related to an individual's expression of his own creative resources (*Charter of Fundamental Rights, 2000*).

Compulsion and need to create

The above discussion suggests that using one's creative potential - i.e. changing and improving the surrounding reality, exerting influence on social processes, and changing our surroundings - seems to be a natural and inalienable (also under the applicable law) need. In broad terms, every healthy individual, to some extent, *must* create, or at least feels the need to do so - from more down-to-earth or prosaic issues, such as e.g. furnishing one's personal space in an original way, preparing a meal based on one's own recipe, or choosing extraordinary clothes for a party, to activities involving more complex cognitive processes, such as e.g. writing a book or running a company. A hypothesis may be posited that the degree of the inner *compulsion* or *drive* is informed by individual personality traits which are components of creativity. The higher the level of creativity - allowing an individual to create works of art of high value to wider audiences - the more pronounced this need becomes. A highly creative individual is going to need to express his creativity more than a person of average or low creativity (whose *compulsion* or *drive to create* will be, under Maslow's model, limited to primary creativity; Szmidt, 2018, p. 226), while the mechanics of the psychical process will be similar in both cases. To illustrate

this with a simple analogy, a person with a fast metabolism will need a larger daily intake of calories than will a person whose metabolism is slow, just as a highly creative individual will crave more inspiration, more new stimuli, and then more space for self-expression than will a person of lower creative potential. Sharma, remarking that everybody has the need to create, indicates that this results from the natural need of expressing one's personality. However, he is very clear in pointing to the varying intensity of this need (also using the term *compulsion* in reference to highly creative people) and to different attitudes to creativity in artists and common men: "The fact is that man cannot help expressing his personality. And yet an artist is strikingly different from a common man in that he feels the compulsion to reveal his personality and thus is absorbed in creativity, while for the latter self-expression is not the primary aim and he seldom feels the deep urge to express himself under the irresistible pressure of 'emotional surplus.' It is from the artist's surplus emotionalism and the subsequent compulsion to express himself - viz. human personality - that art springs" (Sharma, 2003, p. 28).

In artists, i.e. typically individuals who are characterized by a high degree of openness and who have special talents - or alternatively, in the words of Sharma, who are possessed by the "emotional surplus" - the need to express their unique personal resources in the outer world is exceptionally high. Then, it is justified to speak not only about a *drive* but also a *compulsion* to create. The term *compulsion to create* may thus be understood as an extremely intense *drive* to express one's creativity and be limited to a description of exceptionally creative individuals.

Creating at any cost?

The fictitious character of Joan Castleman comes across precisely as just such an individual: gifted and "writing persistently", despite a rather grotesque situation whereby all credit for her work is given to her husband (who officially is the author of the books Joan writes and eventually receives a Nobel Prize in Literature). Therefore, the woman has readers who do not even know she exists, and if they do, they only see her as the partner of the author whose work they admire. Joan gives up potential fame in exchange for the very process of creating, so in a sense she sacrifices her own personality for the sake of her husband's (were it not for the agreement with her husband concerning the fake authorship, she would most likely have had to commit to family life to such an extent that writing would have been impossible or at least much more difficult; Runge, 2017). This "divestiture of identity," which the movie in question depicts in a rather literal manner, was already noticed by thinkers and scholars, who considered it to be something that might happen to an artist. According to Jung, "the creative impulse can drain him of his humani-

ty to such a degree that the personal ego can exist only on a primitive or inferior level A special ability demands a greater expenditure of energy, which must necessarily leave a deficit on some other side of life” (Adler & Hull, 1966, p. 135). This is what the lives of many artists looked like throughout the centuries: they almost literally sacrificed *themselves* (their salaries, appreciation, family life, or even physical and mental health) because of this enigmatic voice which told them to invest a large part of their vital strength in creative work. But what else is there for an individual facing such a powerful *compulsion*, even if it “only” comes from within?

Final remarks

As we know from numerous biographies, autobiographies or other sources providing knowledge about less or more famous and prominent artists’ lives, there have been hundreds or maybe thousands of painters, writers, composers, etc. who suffered because of (or less directly, in connection with) their persistent need to create. And most probably, nowadays there are also many gifted individuals who are “haunted” by an intense inner force with which, they - more or less successfully - struggle to cope. Therefore, it seems worth examining the phenomenon of the *compulsion to create* - its roots, consequences for artists or would-be-artists and their immediate social environments (family, friends).

Being an artist has always been a difficult life-long task, which Robert Sternberg’s *triangular theory of creativity* (2018) brilliantly illustrates. According to Sternberg, an individual (apart from obviously having some talent in a given field) must show an active assertion against the crowd (that is, to adopt a non-conformist attitude), the self (individual limiting beliefs and inhibitions) and of the *Zeitgeist* (the sometimes unconscious but dominant worldview of the particular field within which an individual is active; 2018), which altogether seem to be a challenge that not everyone who simply has some artistic abilities or even talents would be ready to take. Therefore, the *compulsion to create* could be seen here as high intrinsic motivation, eagerness and ability to defy these three inhibitors of creativity - an attitude, which quite likely would also be an indicator of a strong and individualistic personality.

This understanding of the *compulsion to create* would be to some extent similar, though more “extreme” (as the creative process requires in this sense, a particularly great strain on the part of the individual) than the approaches described above. But we could also adopt a completely different point of view and instead of perceiving the *compulsion to create* as a strong inner calling, characteristic only of highly creative and artistically-inclined individuals, describe it as - following the Krzysztof J. Szmidski’s way of reasoning - the general social trend of instantly sharing in public numerous products of amateur creativity, however shallow and mediocre they might be (2015). Szmidski mentions, for in-

stance, the existence of a common “compulsion to photograph” (mainly in the case of tourists), which results in the „flood of photographic creativity” of second-rate quality. This kind of instant and rather thoughtless process of creation obviously translates into poor effects (photographs), unlikely to provide recipients with any form of aesthetic experience, which is, all in all, one of the most important, commonly understood, functions of art (2015, p. 91).

Thus, in this sense the *compulsion to create* might be perceived as rather a *compulsion to present* (*share, show off...*) because presenting one’s creations seems more important here than the creative process itself. And this phenomenon is part and parcel of the nature of the current society, oriented on instant gratification, which is being shaped by new technologies, omnipresent social media and a fast-paced lifestyle. Unfortunately the effect that we get, according to Szmidt, is “culture of excess, kitsch and lack of taste” (2015, p. 79).

The most important question that arises is: are there any other possible ways of understanding of the phenomenon of the *compulsion to create*? And if so, what are they? Also, what kind of other implications of the *compulsion to create* can we observe - for the creating individuals, the recipients of their artistic creations and society and culture in general? How else (apart from the explanation suggested above) is it - or is not - connected to the theory of human needs? And what are the possible correlations of the strong need to create with the self-realization of individuals, feeling this type of urge...?

There are certainly many more questions, many interesting answers to the ones asked and also numerous fresh perspectives on this phenomenon, which - if not *must*, as the topic of *compulsion* would call for - at least *should* be explored.

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