

Doodle your way to creative solutions

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Mindless scribbles? The experts disagree. In fact, daydream drawing could help free the brain to find ways around challenges and come up with novel ideas.



A labyrinth of circles, a series of interconnected boxes or even a cat in a hat? Are your subconscious squiggles just a way of zoning out while a colleague is droning on in a meeting, or could they be a relevant creative outlet? Expert graphologist Darren van Zyl believes these "pictures of the subconscious" are useful in revealing clues to personality and behaviour patterns.

"There is an axiom in graphology that handwriting is actually 'brain writing', and as such, doodles definitely allow the graphologist clues as to the creative abilities of the doodler. The axiom also works in the reverse in that specific patterns made on a script may also influence the brain. So, although mindless, doodling can spark creativity and open up neural channels. This liberation allows the writer a freer expression of their creativity, so an individual who is stuck in a creative rut can find relief and creative expression through doodling," explains Darren.

The pen is mightier

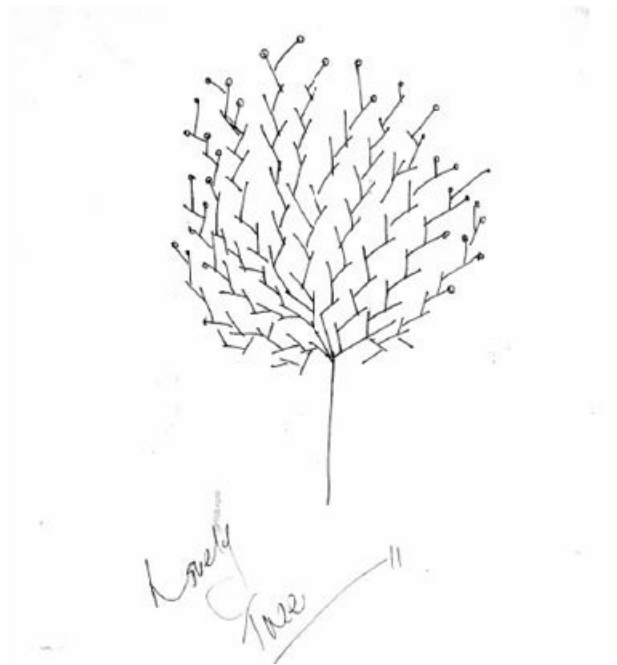
According to an *Inc.* magazine article, [3 Ways Doodling Will Help Your Focus and Creativity](#), by Peter Gasca, "research in neuroscience, psychology and design has demonstrated that people who doodle are often better at grasping new concepts and staying focused, using the page and the pen as a means of refining creative ideas." Scientists have also identified the following other benefits:

1. It can help you pay attention as you remain focused on a specific task.
2. It enhances creative thought in the space between awareness and daydreaming.
3. It's an outlet for your emotions, when it's difficult to put feelings into words.

What doodles say about you

Darren was asked to analyse the doodles of three DAN SSA volunteers, with a particular focus on creativity. He was given the images with no names. These are the results:

Dawn Rowlands, CEO Dentsu Aegis Network SSA



Analysis: The doodler is an ambitious 'ideas' person, who lives mostly in the realm of intellect. The person is direct when dealing with people and situations, and applies objectivity, aiming to keep emotions out of the decision. Furthermore, the drawer is analytical (demonstrated by the many angles) and there's a healthy ability to delegate to others while continuing to analyse the progress of a project.

Erica Hannath, Chief Talent Development Officer, DAN SSA



Analysis: The choice of blue indicates a person who is spiritual and reflective in nature. The spirals also demonstrate a desire for security and peace. The pastiness of the sample (i.e. the thickness or fullness) indicates a true creative, who is artistic and enjoys the finer things in life. The roundness expresses the person's sociability and generosity. Filling the page to the edges may represent a state of constant busyness. The hearts show someone who strives for the ideals of love and harmony instead of aggression and conflict.

Rayne Weiss, Content Creative Executive, Storylab



Analysis: This person is able to think quickly and doesn't get bogged down in unnecessary detail. The trees in the mountain range show that the person is able to meet and overcome challenges with minimal effort and adapts easily to plans that require change. The person has a good sense of humour and the general flow of the drawing indicates a preference towards progression – making things happen instead of stagnating and feeling stuck. Creativity is present and it's apparent that solutions to challenges often come from the person's ability to problem-solve in a creative manner.

The long and the short of it

If doodling comes naturally, keep doing it, and if you're inspired to start, put pen to paper and begin. There are no rules. You can't mess it up and you don't have to be an artist. You might be surprised when a solution to a problem you've been trying to solve is suddenly revealed when you let your creativity flow.

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