Unchain your mind and begin to think like a visionary

Recently, I was visiting a dear friend who works in Silicon Valley. He holds a Ph. D. and has developed computer technologies for a number of well-known companies. He's been instrumental in the production of a number of computer devices that most of us use on a daily basis. Currently, he is working ontechnologythat could potentially interface with and control any device from your personal computer.

From time to time, my friend consults with me regarding a project. I find it fascinating and most enjoyable. Our consultations are more imagination sessions than they are factual analyses. A good bit of our time together is spent in silence, with both of us reflecting and pondering as we search the various possibilities that may enter our mind. The process is almost the opposite of focusing. We don't zero in on a particular point or issue and try to come up with solutions. Instead, we allow our minds to expand and search the whole arena of life, and see if any notions of those various arenas may connect with the technology he is currently developing.

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Instead of starting with things for which we already see the possible connection, we do the opposite. We think of things that may seem completely unrelated and ponder the possibility of weaving them together. Instead of getting caught up with or blocked by facts and details, we allow our minds to float freely around the facts and details to explore how they may come together. We are not trying to find a solution. And usually, at the end of the discussion, we haven't come up with anything concrete -- yet the consultation is still considered a great success.

This is called conceptual thinking. It's a process that simply explores and ponders, just to see if something may precipitate out. It creates a mindset that perpetuates indefinitely and is completely abstract. It doesn't look for anything concrete; it's freeform thinking. It can be years before anything concrete and practical manifests. However, conceptual thinkers are fine with that.

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Conceptual thinking is not just something abstract thinkers do; it's the world they live in. It's the stuff visionaries are made of. It's the place where great innovations and inventions are born.

Some great visionaries include Walt Disney, Jeff Bezos, Warren Buffett, Bill Gates and Albert Einstein. When creating, they all had the ability to think in the abstract. Instead of looking at details, they looked beyond the details, then wove those details together to align with their vision. America has a great history of creative thinkers.

There is a rebellious component to being a visionary. Their thoughts typically include, " Don't tell me who I am," " Don't tell me how or what to think," or " I'm free." However, to be a visionary, that mentality has to be tempered by, and integrated with, an ability to think clearly and rationally. This is a rare combination.

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Some people are abstract thinkers. Other people are very pragmatic and concrete in their thought. Visionaries are people who weave together these

different ways of thinking. They have the ability to allow their mind to flow freely, unencumbered by programmed channels of thought. Yet a visionary also has the ability to bring everything together and seamlessly integrate it with the real world. An abstract thinker is like a kite without a tail, spinning wildly in the wind. A concrete thinker is like a tail without the kite, unable to soar freely in the conceptual skies above. A visionary integrates the two -- a kite with a stable and unshakable tail that soars freely into the heavens.