

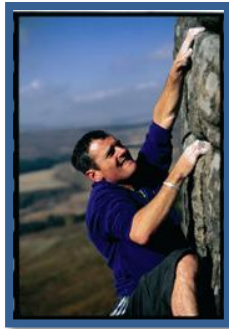
# YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 45

*Warm laughter typically identifies an idea worth exploring and explore you should...*

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## Identify Which Ideas To Explore...

*"You picked a fine time to leave me, Lucille." Lyrics, Bynum and Bowling sung by Kenny Rogers*



**"Joe Simpson"**

***Are you exploring the right ideas in your idea generation sessions?***

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Here is another hotel story, this time from Rwanda, home of many gorilla tribes, where I facilitated a course last week. On Wednesday morning I swam in a lovely pool, the tiles fetchingly specked with white where the blue paint had flaked off. Refreshed, I returned to my room to find the shower running at five drips per minute. Frustrated, I turned to the bath and realised there was no shower attachment but a good head of water in the tap.

I hate baths so, stymied, I decided to wash my hair under the tap. In the bath I realised that the tap, sited half a metre from one end of the bath, only extended a couple of centimetres from the bath side. My frustration grew. I shampooed my hair and tried to rinse it by cupping water in my hands and pouring it over, but the water being soft, my hair wouldn't rinse.

Frustration at danger levels, I squashed my head against the bath under the tap and rinsed one side. But to rinse the other I had to contort my body in the short end of the bath. Then I saw my arms and the soles of my feet were covered in blue paint from the pool. I imagined my children seeing me squeezed into one end of the bath, head under the tap with blue arms and feet. I began to giggle.

Afterwards, my mind wandered to the next Gorilla article and where we use humour in creative thinking. One use is when facilitating an idea generation session.

In these sessions people generate a broad range of ideas. This can be productive, but my experience is that it is better to explore some of the ideas in depth. For an analogy, imagine exploring a city by walking down the main streets but never the side streets. Or you listen to the chorus of many songs, but never the verses. When facilitating, I look out for the "side street" ideas the group can explore in depth.

### SO

How do you recognise which "side street" is worth exploring? Often it is my intuition, sometimes there is a gasp as people connect with the idea and the best clue is when the idea produces gales of warm laughter.

I always encourage the group to explore these ideas as laughter indicates people have made a real connection. If it is an impractical idea, a

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“springboard”, (e.g. “shoot the managing director”), I challenge the group to find a number of practical ideas based on it. This tends to produce some radical but practical ideas.

## ACTION

When you next facilitate an idea generation session, explore some ideas in depth. When the group finds an idea amusing, definitely explore that.

## TO CLOSE

Later, at the training centre, the sound technician greeted me with a loud rendition of “Lucille” by Kenny Rogers [Please click [here](#) to hear it.] He then played it (and similar Country and Western songs) at breaks, lunch and close, by which time I and an English delegate were in fits of laughter, finding Country and Western music completely incongruous in Central Africa.

In my room that evening, I watched the end of a riveting, true story about [Joe Simpson](#), a climber trapped alone and suffering from a broken leg, in a mountain crevasse in Peru. He managed to crawl out of the crevasse and drag himself for days across the mountain to his camp.

On the fifth day, exhausted from hunger, dehydration and pain, he began to hear the Boney M song “Brown Girl in the Ring” in his head. It became so loud he thought it was playing and at that point burst out laughing, thinking “I can’t die to Brown Girl in the Ring!” “I can relate to that,” I thought, “Lucille” springing to mind.

On Thursday, I was in the hotel lift when Bono from U2 (most famous song, probably “I Still Haven’t Found What I’m Looking For”) stepped in with a group of aid workers. I asked him to sing a chorus of “Lucille”. No, I didn’t really, but the thought crossed my mind!

To round off this slightly surreal week, I have just checked Joe Simpson’s web site to discover he is hosting a programme about endangered gorillas in the Congo! They’re the creative ones no doubt.

May you have a song in your heart this week, Any song but “Lucille that is.”

*[.John Brooker | Facilitate, Innovate, Transform.](#)*



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