



The Deliberate Creative Podcast with Amy Climer Transcript for Episode #024: How to Use Climer Cards to Increase Creativity

November 12, 2015

Amy Climer: Hey everyone, welcome to The Deliberate Creative podcast episode [number #24](#). I'm your host Amy Climer and on today's episode we're going to talk about how to use [Climer Cards](#) to increase engagement and creativity in teams. Like I have done in some other episodes, I want to start out by sharing an iTunes review and this review is from Juniper435 and it is titled "Excellent podcast," five stars. Juniper says, "both interesting and thought provoking, I've listened to several of them a couple of times to make sure I grasp all the helpful points Amy makes. I'll definitely keep listening." Thank you so much, Juniper435. I really appreciate you sharing the review on iTunes. I also want to tell you all in case you don't know, that all of the episodes have transcripts written out, so if you want to read what I'm saying word for word, you can go to the show notes and download that transcript. It's usually available about a week after the episode has been aired. This is coming out November 12, as of today all of the previous episodes are up to date. If you want that transcript, wait about a week. That time may be shortened eventually, but for now that's where it is at. If that is helpful you can download the transcripts.

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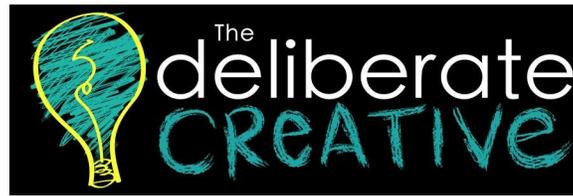
What Are Climer Cards?

Let's talk about Climer Cards. First of all let me tell you, there is a [free ebook](#) available to you all and it's about how to use Climer Cards. You can get that at climerconsulting.com/024. Let me tell you about Climer Cards and what they are. I know some of you listening already own decks, which is awesome. But basically what Climer Cards are is a deck of cards that I created. They look like a deck of playing cards at first. Same size, 2.5" x 3.5" , 52 images per deck, plus a couple of extra cards for instructions. One cool thing about them is they're made of PVC

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plastic which means if you get them dirty you can just wash them, which is cool. But anyway, on one side of the card is an image that I've drawn. It is a watercolor painting and the images were specifically designed to invoke metaphors, symbols and they have multiple meanings. Just to give you an example of some of the images there is a cactus, there is an iron, a candle, a spool of thread, a telephone, there's the globe, there's a mirror, there's a door that's halfway open so it could be like it is opening or closing, there's a mountain range, a lightbulb, etc.. There's 52 different images. I'm going to explain a few ways of how to use them. There's many ways, probably hundreds out there. What's really cool is that people who bought and have Climer Cards have come up with many new ways to use them sometimes they email me with stories and new variations, which is awesome. If you do get a deck be inventive, be creative and come up with some new ways to use them then email me because I'd love to know.

[4:02]

Using Climer Cards to Deepen Conversations

The first thing I want to talk about is how to use Climer Cards as a way to pull metaphors from people. You might be thinking "Well who cares, what's the point of a metaphor". Metaphors are really powerful. You may have heard the saying that a picture is worth a thousand words. I'd like to think of a metaphor as worth a thousand pictures because one metaphor can mean so much, it can be really rich. When we share metaphors with each other, it is a way for us to get a deeper understanding of where we are coming from. Let me give you an example, let's say, well here's an example that I used last week. I was teaching a class on conflict and I started off in the beginning of class with Climer cards. I spread out the cards on a table and the image side face up. I told people I asked people to please select a card that was a metaphor or symbol of their definition of conflict. It was great! Everybody selects a card and then we go around and share. It was just a great way to get people talking about what conflict was. What I quickly found out is that we all have very different perspectives on conflict, which really made the class very rich and interesting. Had I not done that activity, I might have moved forward with some assumptions about what people thought of conflict. I think that would have made the class less personal and less powerful really. That's one example. I often will do it that way, spread the cards out on the table and have everybody select a card about something, in this case conflict. I've asked the same question around leadership - select a card

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that would represent your idea of a good leader, or select a card that represents the type of leader you want to be, or you might ask select a card that represents where you see this team going in the future, what would be your ideal for this team, what would be happening, and then select a card.

[6:05]

Stories About Using Climer Cards

Let me give you a couple of examples of stories I've heard from other people. This first example is from a friend of mine who is a social worker and she uses Climer Cards with her clients. This one particular situation she was at a family's house during a family counselling session. This is a family she had met with a few times already. She spread out the cards out on the table. There was a dad and two sons, one of them 9 years old. She said, "pick a card that represent your idea of this family, what card is a symbol for this family." Now, you might be thinking, can a 9 year old do that? Absolutely. In fact he picked the cactus. He said, "I picked this cactus because I feel like my dad is prickly." This picture where kid have not been very talkative before, it was difficult for my friend to get him to share just like how things are going she said that was incredible breakthrough moment because they never have conversation about "Okay let's talk about what do you mean by prickly?" He did not mean physically prickly. You might be thinking of, you know, five o'clock shadow on his face. No. This was more about his behaviour, his attitude. So it was really powerful. I love that story.

Another story came to me at the conference I was presenting at about probably a year or two ago. It was the Association for Talent and Development. That particular conference attracts people who are trainers, facilitators, speakers, sometimes they work in corporations doing training for a specific corporation and then other people are freelance, kind of like I am. Anyway, this woman came up to me who I knew, but I do not knew well. She came up and said "Amy, I want you to know I love Climer cards." I said, "Oh, that's awesome. Great!" She said, "No, listen. Everytime I use them, somebody cries." "Like what? What do you mean somebody cries?" She says, "No, it is just amazing we have this conversation that ends up being so powerful that often it would move somebody to tears." I thought "Wow! That's impressive." This makes sense for her specific context and she was designing or using them in a context where that was appropriate. Don't worry I am not saying every time you use Climer Cards somebody's gonna cry. That still doesn't happen to me. That has happen on occasion if

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it's appropriate with the context, but anyway, the point is that people often share things they wouldn't share if the images weren't out there to prompt their thoughts. That is the power of the metaphor and the power of using Climer Cards. By the way I am talking about Climer Cards today, but you can use something else. You could use images you cut out of the magazine, you could make your own drawings, you know you can kind of get creative and get inventive, you don't have to buy deck of Climer Cards. You certainly can they are only \$20. Anyway, my ultimate point here is to think about how to use images to spark metaphor, to get to deeper conversation.

[9:24]

Generating Ideas with Climer Cards

The next activity I want to share with you is about how to generate more ideas. I may have shared the same activity in [Episode #5](#) along with many other techniques. This is called associations. Very similar to before, you spread the Climer Cards out on the table, image side face up, and you're going to ask people to use the images to spark new ideas for the specific challenge you are working on. What ideas come to them when they look at the iron, or the elephant, or the giraffe, or the farm image, or the mountain range. This is where you're really pushing people to get crazy, wild ideas and that's what you are looking for at this point. If you want more thoughts about how to help people generate more ideas, listen to [Episode #5](#). I have gone into that in depth. There's also a free ebook, a free workbook that goes along with that episode you can go to climerconsulting.com/005 and you can listen to that episode if you want. Anyway, you can use that images as a way to spark new ideas because what happens is sometimes people would just be staring around the room trying to come with ideas and they are going a little bit blank. The Climer Card images are specifically selected to generate those ideas and the cards might be used in a very literal way, in fact somebody might look at the bike and say "Oh I know, what if we promote this whole biking to work program?" It depend on what their issue is. They might get a little bit more metaphoric, or the bike might spark something about gears or the wheels might make them think of working in pairs or might make them think of exercise. The images can lead to a lot of other things that may be unexpected, which of course is what creativity is all about. That's another technique and how you can help your team be more creative.

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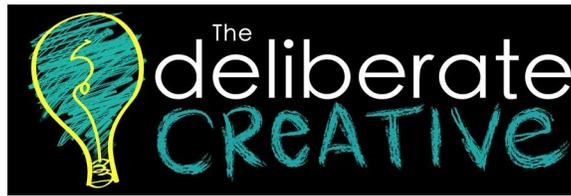
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How to Use Climer Cards to Form Small Groups

The third technique is really just how to use Climer Cards to group people into smaller groups. So, let's say you have 25 people. You are doing some sort of training or you have people together and you want them to be in groups of three or four or five. On the other side of the Climer Cards, there is a shape. Each card has a circle, square, triangle, pentagon, or star. Inside the shape is a number one through ten. Each shape also has a different color so there's red, green, blue, yellow, purple, and orange. You can have people group up according to shape, find everybody with the same shape, or find everybody with the same color or number and then you'll have groups of different sizes. All of this is explained in the package, there are directions in the package and it breaks this all down. Or you might just want people to pair up so sometimes what I do is tell people to find somebody where both of your number adds up to greater than five. It must work out with everybody in the room. Sometimes I add that last piece, because it makes people get out of themselves a little bit and it makes them think about like, "Ok, well you have a ten, I have a three. Great! we will be partners because we will be 13." Meanwhile, there is another pair over here that's a one and a two, that only adds up to three. But, if those two partners got together and switch it up, then they could both be in groups where the number is greater than five. Sometimes I add that extra piece sometimes I don't. Then if there is one person or one pair that doesn't add up, I just say, don't worry about that because really the point is pair up with someone they won't naturally pair up with. That could be helpful if you want people to just talk with somebody different about a specific topic, or you are trying to do an activity and you want people to be grouped with people they don't work with that much, etc.

Anyway, that is a fun way to get people into different groups and then of course from there, you could then lay out the cards, for ideation techniques or you could do the metaphors. I'd like to whenever I'm doing either the metaphor or ideation or associations, is to have at least twice as many cards than people. So if I have twenty people of course I use the whole deck and that's 52 cards. But if I'm breaking them up and I only have one deck, say it's a group of five, I want to give them like ten, fifteen or twenty cards so they have a lot of options especially if you are asking them to select from a metaphor. I find you don't need as quite as many if you are going for associations. I know of some people who just get a few decks and

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they can work with really big groups, it's not an issue. I certainly do that when I'm working with big groups during ideation techniques so with 100 people, you are going to need more than one deck for that.

[14:30]

Summary

So those are three different ways on how you can use [Climer Cards](#). I could go on and on. Instead, I encourage you to go to the [shownotes](#), download the free ebook, you don't need to own a deck of cards to use the ideas in the ebook, so climeconsulting.com/024. You can also go to climercards.com and you can order a deck there. Like I said before, only \$20 and I can ship internationally, but you just got to email me ahead of time so tell you what the shipping will be. It's so cool, I have shipped this to China, Taiwan, Brazil, Jamaica, Austria, Canada, Mexico, and I'm in the US. It has been cool that they are going out all over the world, which I think is so awesome. The other thing that is kind of cool these are made of PVC plastic so you can hand wash them. If you are a ropes course facilitator, or an outdoor educator, where these are going to get dirty, no big deal you can wash them. I have tried putting them in the washing machine and the dishwasher, and I don't recommend that. They are going to shrink up from the heat of the dishwasher and they just get mangled in the washing machine. I put them in one of those mesh laundry bags they just got all mangled and bend up so I don't recommend. They are easier to handwash so that's a pretty good option.

I hope this was helpful, I hope this gives you some good ideas. Next week's episode, I'm going to build upon this and talk about some facilitation tips. If you are someone that facilitates small groups or large groups, I think you could benefit from the little tips I'm going to share with you next week. Your challenge this week is to buy a deck of Climer Cards, then use one activity that we talked about today or that you found in the ebook and shoot me an email or make a post on the [shownotes](#). Let me know how it goes, what happened, what did you do, what are the responses from the groups. I would love to hear that. That's your weekly challenge. You all have a great week and I'll see you next time. Bye.