



# GOING AROUND THE (CREATIVE) BLOCK

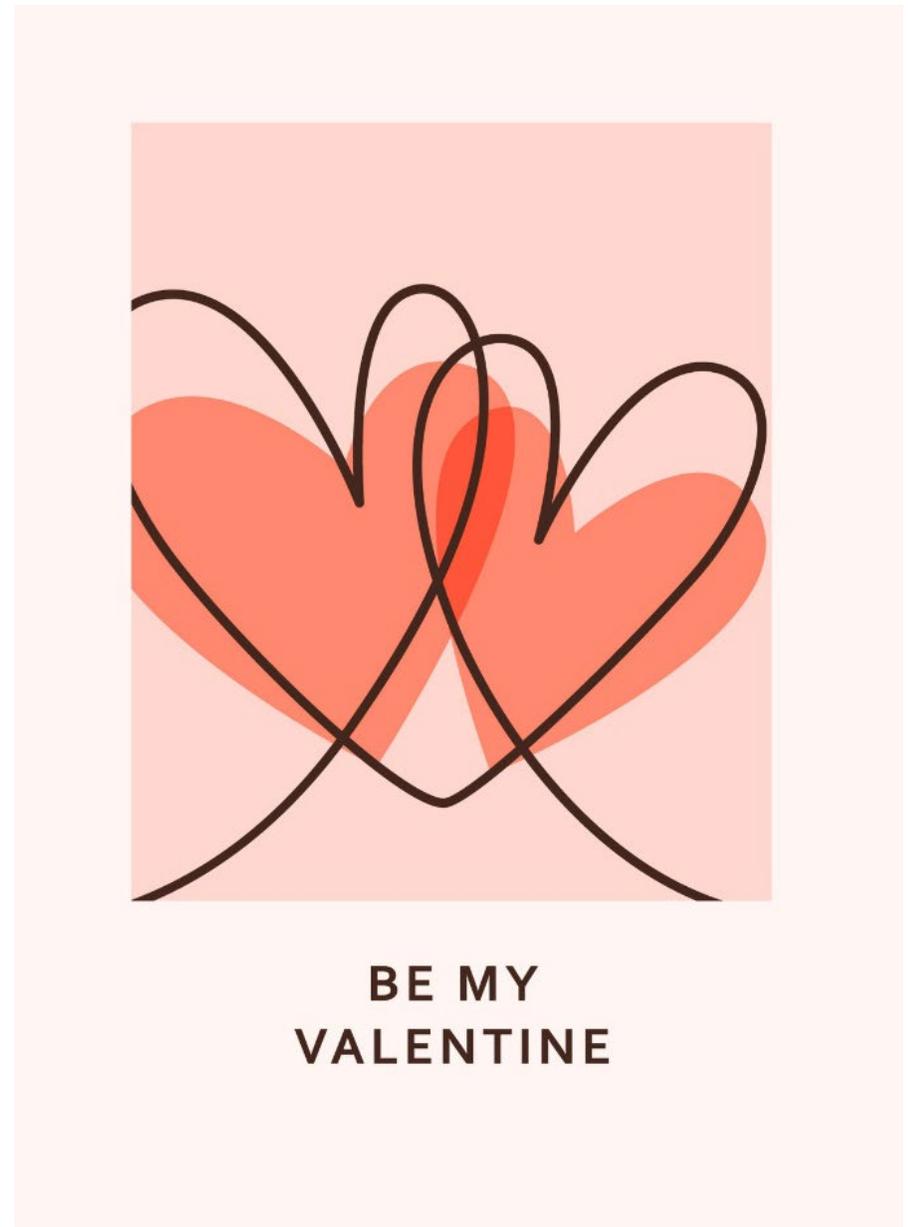
DR. MAGDALENA G. GROHMAN

DEPARTMENT OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY INNOVATION, UNT

OLLI LUNCH & LEARN

FEB 19, 2026

UNT, DENTON TX



# **OUR GOALS FOR TODAY ARE TO:**

1. Stretch our imagination
2. Flex our brain by creating unexpected connections
3. Write Hallmark Card sentiments like a pro!

# AGENDA



Approaching challenges

Card Writing Warm-up



Going around the blocks  
like creatives do

Unusual Connections  
Keen Observations, Diverse Interests  
Constant Iterations



Let's try one more time

Writing Hallmark Cards  
Like A Pro!

# **APPROACHING (WRITING) CHALLENGES**

WRITING WARM-UP ACTIVITY

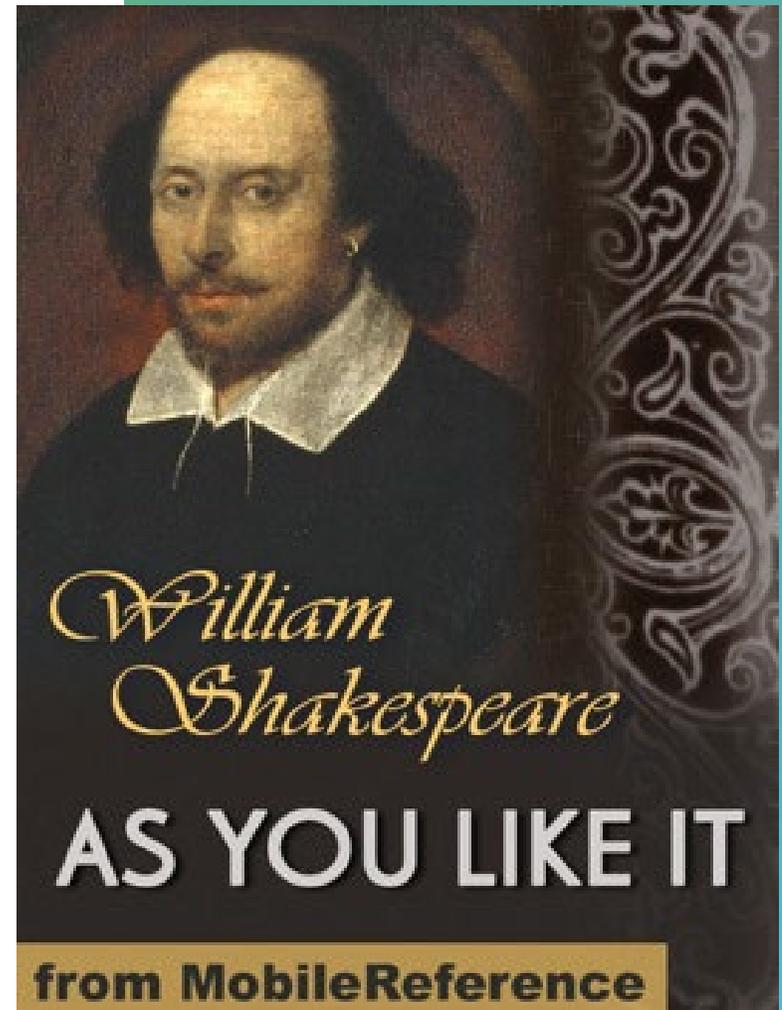
# GOING AROUND THE BLOCKS LIKE CREATIVES DO

1. UNUSUAL CONNECTIONS: METAPHORS & ANALOGIES
2. KEEN OBSERVATION, DIVERSE INTERESTS
3. CONSTANT ITERATION

# METAPHORS IN LITERATURE

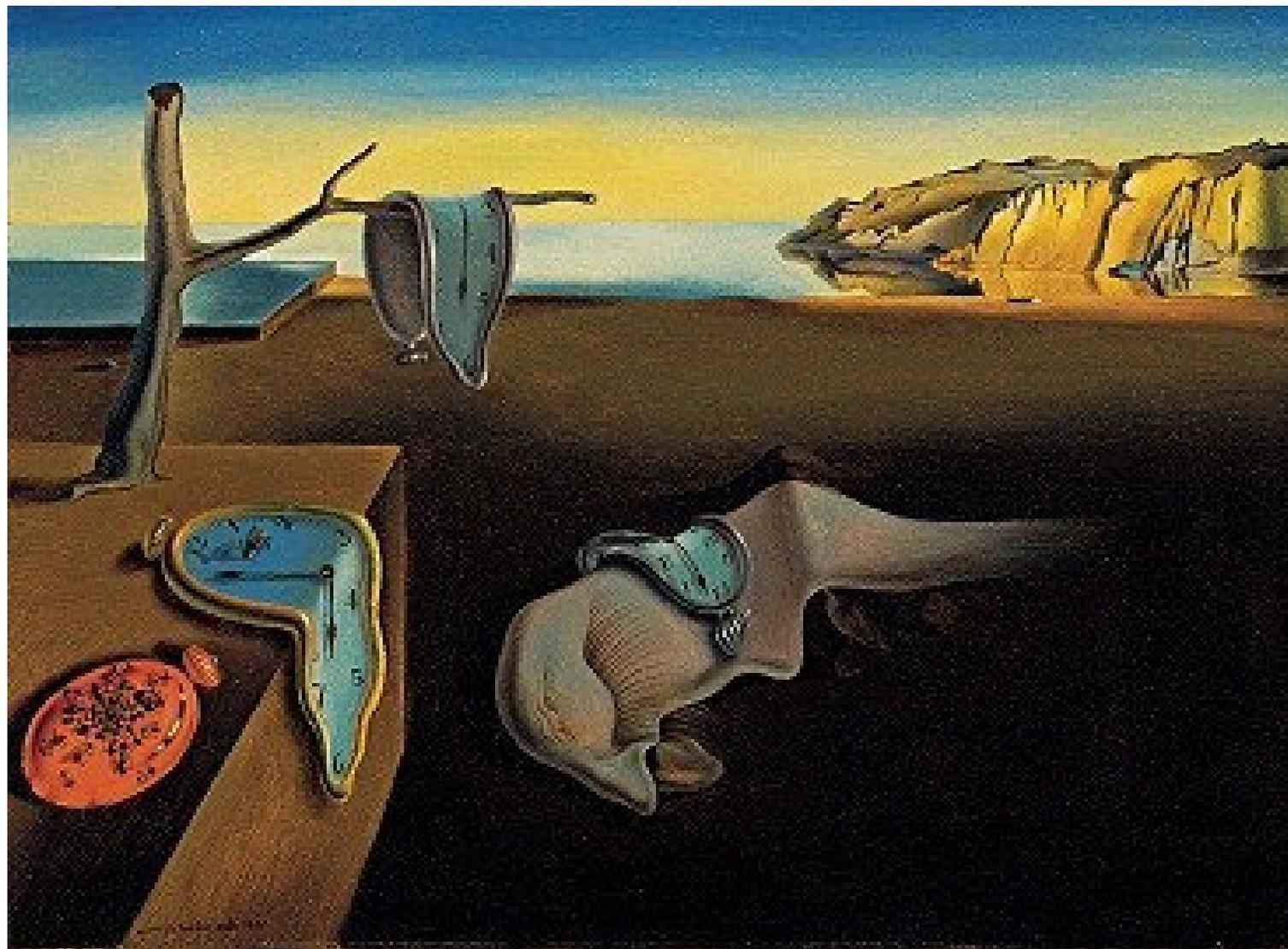
*All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players; They have their exits and their entrances; And one man in his time plays many parts, His acts being seven ages.*

The monologue spoken by the character Jaques in Act II, Scene VII.

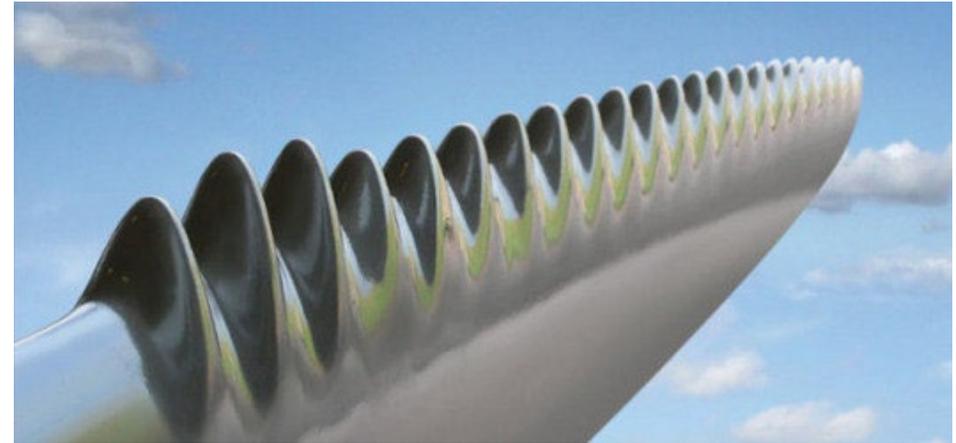


## TIME AS MELTING SUBSTANCE

# METAPHORS IN VISUAL ARTS



Salvador Dalí, *The Persistence of Memory*. 1931, Oil on canvas.  
Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Persistence\\_of\\_Memory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Persistence_of_Memory)



# ANALOGIES IN ENGINEERING DESIGN

HUMPBACK FIN AS WIND TURBINE BLADE

PART OF A WHOLE  
HUMANS SUBSERVIENT TO NATURE

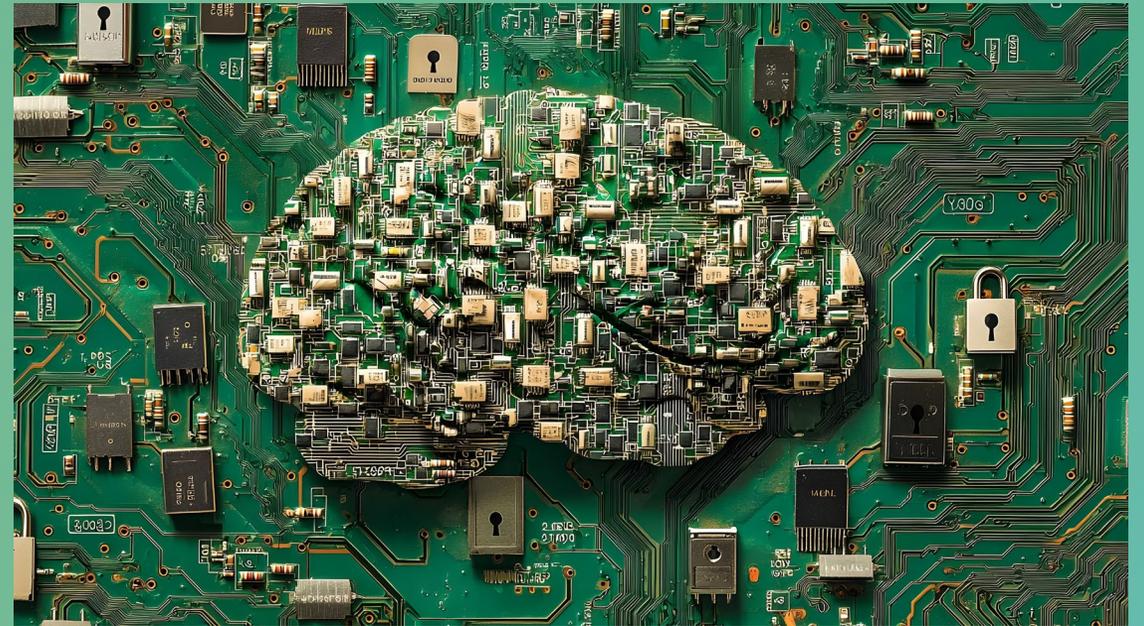


Salk Institute, La Jolla, CA; designed by Luis Kahn

METAPHORS IN  
ARCHITECTURE

# METAPHORS IN SCIENCE

THE BRAIN/MIND  
AS A COMPUTER



# POWERFUL TRICKS

- Power to Frame

- Driving design in Architecture, Engineering
- Framing conceptual approaches: *War on Cancer*
- Storytelling & symbolism in literature and the arts

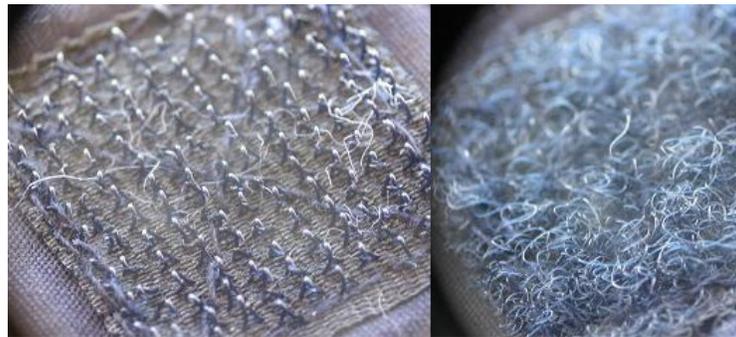
- Power to Simplify

- Relating complex concepts to familiar ones: *Life as Theatre Stage, Heart as a Pump*

# GOING AROUND THE BLOCKS LIKE CREATIVES DO

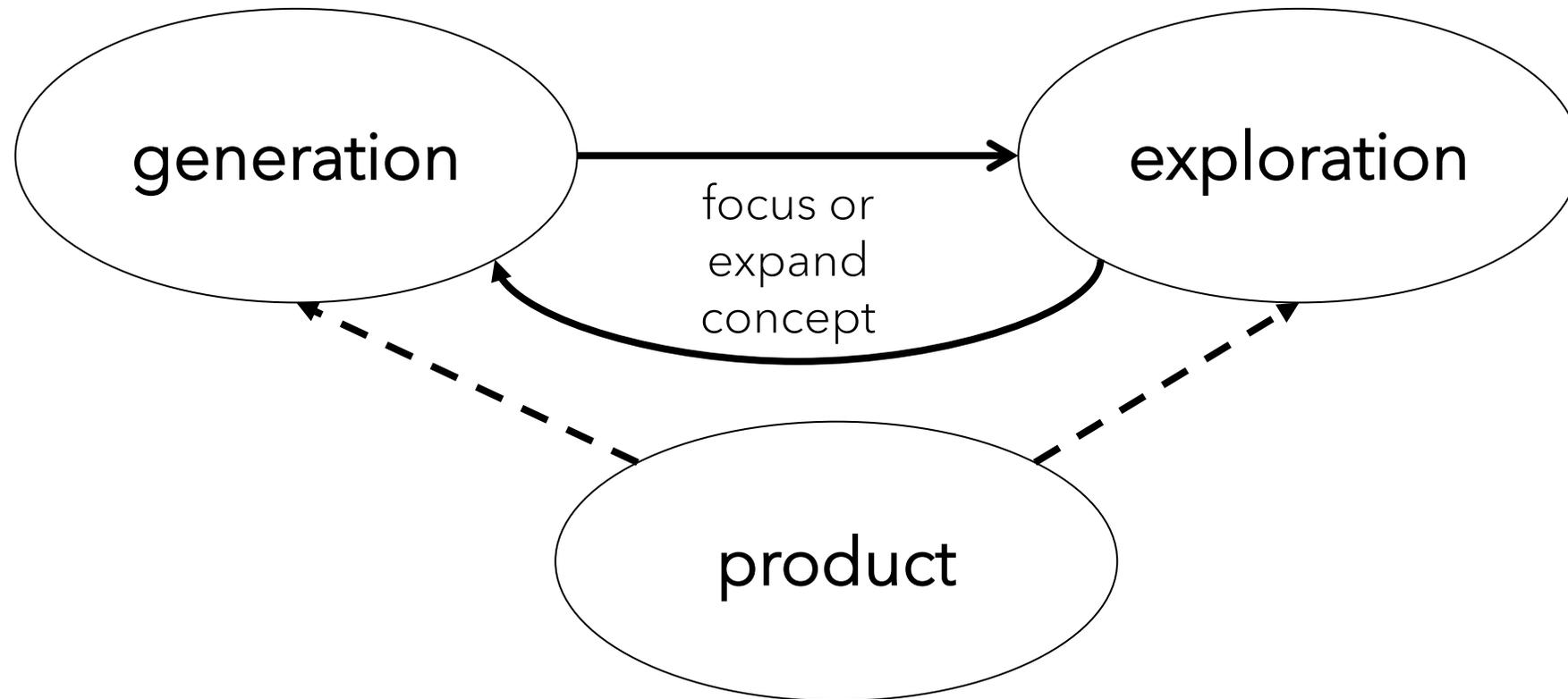
1. UNUSUAL CONNECTIONS, METAPHORS & ANALOGIES
2. KEEN OBSERVATION, DIVERSE INTERESTS
3. ITERATION & REFINEMENT

# KEEN OBSERVATION, DIVERSE INTERESTS



Albert "George" de Mestral (1907-1990), Swiss engineer, inventor of fastening materials

# ITERATION AND REFINEMENT



**LET'S TRY AGAIN!**

WRITING HALLMARK CARD SENTIMENTALITY  
LIKE A PRO

# PART 1. PREPARATION

1

Think about your favorite person and words that can describe them.

2

Choose the occasion for the card.

3

Write down 3 - 5 words that describe your favorite person

# PART 2. INSPIRATION

1

Choose one  
"postcard" and  
look at the image.

2

Write 3 - 5 words  
that the image on  
the postcard  
inspires.

3

Think about the  
image and the  
words. How can  
you use them as  
an inspiration?

# PART 3. WRITE LIKE A HALLMARK PRO!

1

Consider humor or satire or be genuine.

2

Use the words from Part 2 as inspiration.

3

Add 2 - 4 lines to the opening line of your NEW card sentimentality.

# LET'S SHARE OUR DISCOVERIES

- How did it feel to write the sentimentality the first time?
- How did it feel to write it with the help of the “postcards” and unexpected connections?
- What are your main insights?

Thank you for going around the  
(creative) block with me!

[magdalena.grohman@unt.edu](mailto:magdalena.grohman@unt.edu)