

# Traditional Mentality

Elias Howe (1819-1867) was born in Massachusetts, USA. He died at the young age of 48. Although his life was short, his contribution to the world of clothes --- that of the sewing machine --- will always be remembered.

قوم ثمود کا انجام کیا ہوا؟ آج بھی قوم ثمود کے تراشے ہوئے گھر سعودی عرب کے تاریخی مقام مدائن صالح میں موجود ہیں۔ اس مقام کا سفرنامہ [پڑھنے کے لئے یہاں کلک کیجیے](#)۔

The sewing machine invented by Elias Howe was at first utilized, not for sewing clothes, but for stitching shoes. The main breakthrough was the development of a lock-stitch by a shuttle carrying a lower thread and a needle carrying an upper thread which passed through a hole situated at the tip of the needle.

For thousands of years, people had been accustomed to make a hole at the base of the needle. So, following their lead, Elias Howe made the needle of his machine with a hole at the base, instead of at the tip as is now the practice. The placement of an eyelet, simple as it may seem to us now, remained a big hurdle for its inventor for quite some time. It was only a dream which finally brought about the desired solution.

*Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds.*  
Albert Einstein

As he was racking his brain to perfect his machine, Howe dreamt that he had been captured by a primitive tribe and was ordered to produce an operational sewing machine within 24 hours, failing which he would be speared to death. He tried hard, but could not accomplish it. When the deadline was up, the tribesmen surrounded him and raised their spears to kill him. Scared, yet still concentrating, he observed that each spear had an eyelet at the tip. He kept on gazing at the eyelet and then woke up with a start: the solution was right before him

For the machine to work, the placement of the hole had to be neither in the middle nor at the base, but at the tip. His lucky dream helped him, in 1845, to produce a sewing machine that would complete 250 stitches a minute.

What is a dream? It is the result of complete involvement. What we think about during the day, we dream about at night. Howe succeeded in inventing a machine only because he had engrossed himself in it to such an extent that he came to dream about it. Such is the case with any undertaking, whether one wants to invent a machine, or bring about a revolution in human life. One achieves success in one's aim only after complete involvement; only when the thing one has set one's mind on becomes a part of subconscious existence that is reflected in one's dreams.

(Author: Waheed-ud-Din Khan, Translation: Dr. Farida Khanam)

Another lesson we can learn from this story is the traditional mentality developed over a long period of time often becomes a hurdle in creativity. One has to break down this mentality to perform a creative job. *Mubashir Nazir*

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## **Think about it!**

- Why Elias Howe initially made an eye at the base of needle instead of its tip?
- In order to develop a creative personality, what changes are required in our mentality?

Please send your answers through email to post your comments on this web page.