

THE CREATIVE HABIT: LEARN IT AND USE IT FOR LIFE

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1: I Walk into a White Room

2: Rituals of Preparation

- Five Big Fears
 - People will laugh at me.
 - Someone has done it before.
 - I have nothing to say.
 - I will upset someone I love.
 - Once executed, the idea will never be as good as it is in my mind.
- Exercises
 - Where's Your Pencil?
 - What is the one tool that feeds your creativity and is so essential that without it you feel naked and unprepared?
 - Build Up your Tolerance for Solitude
 - Face Your Fears
 - Give me one week without clocks, mirrors, newspapers, speaking

3: Your Creative DNA

- What is the first creative moment you remember?
- Was anyone there to witness or appreciate it?
- What is the best idea you have ever had? What made it great in your mind?
- What is the dumbest idea? What made it stupid? Can you connect the dots that led you to this idea?
- What is your creative ambition? What are the obstacles to this ambition? What are the vital steps to achieving this ambition?
- How do you begin your day?
- What are your habits? What patterns do you repeat?
- Describe your first successful creative act. Describe your second successful creative act. Compare them.
- What are your attitudes toward money, power, praise, rivals, work, play?
- Which artists do you admire most? Why are they your role models? What do you and your role models have in common?
- Does anyone in your life regularly inspire you?
- Who is your muse? Define muse.
- When confronted with superior intelligence or talent, how do you respond?
- When faced with stupidity, hostility, intransigence, laziness, or indifference in others, how do you respond?
- When faced with impending success or the threat of failure, how do you respond?
- When you work, do you love the process or the result?

- At what moments do you feel your reach exceeds your grasp?
- What is your ideal creative activity? What is your greatest fear? What is the likelihood of either of the answers to the previous two questions happening?
- Which of your answers would you most like to change?
- What is your idea of mastery?
- What is your greatest dream?
- Exercises
 - You can observe a lot by watching
 - Pick a new name

4: *Harness Your Memory*

- Exercises
 - Name that muse
 - Trust Your muscle memory
 - Mining for memory in a photograph

5: *Before You Can Think Out of the Box, You Have to Start with a Box*

- Exercises
 - Begin

6: *Scratching*

- Exercises
 - Chaos and coins: Arrange coins
 - Read archaeologically
 - A dozen eggs: 12 poses and names for types of eggs (tall egg, Jackknife egg, etc.)
 - Give yourself a little challenge
 - Take a field trip

7: *Accidents Will Happen*

- Exercises
 - Pick a fight: Creativity is an act of defiance
 - Our perfect world: Quiet, no observer, time, no goal other than trying, no obligations other than to do your best, No fear of failure, Entertain each other. Each day completes itself. The next day is new.
 - How to be lucky: Be generous
 - Work with the best

8: *Spine*

- Exercises
 - Make a picture that is worth ten thousand words
 - Spinal tap: pick a favorite work of art and try to determine what spine the artist built into it. This is an exercise in seeking out the hidden architecture of a piece.
 - What is your MQ? (Metaphor quotient.)

9: Skill

- Exercises
 - Take inventory of your skills
 - Play 20 questions: Write 20 things you want to know about a topic?
 - Take away a skill: Could you still create?

10: Ruts and Grooves

- More often than not, a rut is the consequence of sticking to tried and tested methods that do not take into account how you or the world has changed.
- When you are in a rut, you have to question everything except your ability to get out of it.
- Identify the concept that is not working
- Write down your assumptions about it.
- Challenge the assumptions.
- Act on the challenge.
- Exercises
 - Do a verb: Pick a verb and act it out physically
 - Build a bridge to the next day
 - Know when to stop tinkering
 - Brew ruts into grooves: pick a bad habit and do something to make it good. Realize that you do not need elimination, just moderation, so it's working for you. Exorcise the rut. Exercise the groove.

11: An "A" in Failure

- Failure of skill
- Failure of concept
- Failure of judgment
- Failure of nerve (best part of living to 100: no more peer pressure)
- Failure through repetition
- Failure from denial
- Exercises
 - Give yourself a second chance
 - Build your own validation squad

12: The Long Run

- Even in the worst of times, such habits sustain, protect, and, in the most unlikely way, lift us up. I cannot think of a more compelling reason to foster the creative habit. It permits me to walk into a white room...and walk out dancing.