

# Ten Ways to Tickle Your Creativity:

Or How to Write While Struggling in the Mundane World



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There is no use trying," said Alice. "One can't believe impossible things."

"I daresay you haven't had much practice," said the Queen. "When I was your age, I always did it for half an hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

--Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll

# INTRODUCTION

Creativity is free. Yes! You heard me: FREE. You have it, even when you don't feel creative. It's there, trying to break out.

A child has a natural, uninhibited ability to tap into his or her inherent creativity. As a child matures, this natural function can diminish. One of the biggest killers of creativity is your own "inner critic," that voice that whispers that you're never good enough. This can lead to fear of failure thinking.

Conventionality is the adversary of creativity. Look beyond the mundane world to find that which is magical.

Let's explore some ways that you can free your creativity.

## TRUST YOUR INTUITION

Beyond your inner critic and any other voices that tell you what to think and feel, is a voice striving to reach out to you. This is your intuition, your instinct, your inner voice.

Find this voice and latch on, believe and act upon your intuition. The more you trust what it tells you, the stronger it becomes.

Use your intuition when you write. Do you have a "vague feeling" that something is wrong with the story you're trying to write? Don't ignore your feeling. Explore it, let it out. Your inner voice is trying to tell you something important.

## BE OPEN AND FLEXIBLE

Don't be quick to judge. Let your mind be like a river, flowing along, taking in all that comes its way, going with the tide as it journey into larger bodies of water.

When we are open to new ideas, the floodgates move from a trickle to a flood. Be ready for ideas to rush forth. Have something to write on no matter where you are or what you are doing. Jot down brief thoughts and ideas. Remember that great idea you had and you told yourself: Oh, I'll remember this one? And later, you couldn't recall that great moment? Write them down!



Learn to bend and twist, to stretch yourself into new positions, take in new ideas, listen to new ways, and explore new possibilities.

## **STANDING OUT OF YOUR WAY**

When you "stand out of your way" you allow your strengths to blossom, your thinking to clear. You see other possibilities; multiple possibilities that you can explore. Instead of one path before you, there are now many paths for you to consider.

Some call this "thinking outside the box." One way to accomplish this is by metaphorical thinking.

Writers love words. A turn of a phrase or a single word can set our racing minds into motion. Take some familiar phrases and create new metaphors. Combine words that normally might not be used together. Stretch your thinking.

## **TAKE RISKS**

Consider this: risk is about passion.

What are you passionate about? What excites you? Hopefully, one of your answers is your writing. Passion can drive us to take risks, where otherwise, we might not. Risk-taking doesn't seem so impossible when we see it through eyes of passion.

Use your passion to push your writing to the next level. To try something different. To submit your work. To reach out to others. To dare to go (emotionally, physically, socially, spiritually) where you didn't dare to go before.

There are words, emotions, stories, and poetry in you fighting to get out. Listen to your passion. Taking a risk won't seem so scary or impossible. Risk-taking is one way to realize our dreams.

## **EMBRACE DISORDER**

Embracing disorder is living outside your typical, mundane self. Seek out that which pushes your limits.

If you always write in your office, choose another location. If you normally write at night, try writing in the morning, or other time of day. If you write from an outline, try freewriting. If you record your stories using a keyboard, pick up pen or pencil instead. If you read or write only mysteries, try read and writing romances, fantasies, science fiction, or from some other genre.

When you try something new, you will feel "out of place" and disordered. Create new and different orders for yourself and out of this disorder, creativity grows.

## **BE SPONTANEOUS**

Many people find they function differently, depending on the situation. At the day job, we might be practical, logical, and analytical. When relaxing with friends we might be playful, associative, and intuitive. One mind, two ways of thinking. Both are important and both should be nurtured.

Much in our world is about being practical, logical, and analytical. As a writer you need to embrace, encourage, and allow the other side of your thinking to grow. Welcome the child-you-use-to-be into your adulthood. Mingle the magical you with your mundane world.

When you act on your spontaneity you allow the magic of creativity a place in your world. Use this as a place in which you can write without questioning what you've written. Treat yourself to that child-like, carefree feeling.

## **FEEL YOUR EMOTIONS**

When you write you pour your heart out and you hope your readers FEEL what your writing is about. You need to dig deep into your emotions in order to find that which will embrace your readers.

Emotions are the waves as they come ashore. Feel your emotions in the soul of your inner being. Feel your emotions as they wash through your body.

One way to explore different emotions is to listen to different types of music. Music is emotion in motion. Try writing to different types of music (classical, jazz, rock, blues, country, gospel, etc.) and explore what emotions and words you are compelled to write, what stories evolve.

## **DREAMING**

You dream at night, you dream during the day (daydreaming), and you have dreams (goals) you work to accomplish.

Do you remember your nighttime dreams? Most creative people have a vivid dream life and remember many of these dreams. Not only is dreaming healthy, but a great resource of ideas for any writer. If you wish to further this skill, try keeping a dream journal.

Daydreaming can also enhance your writing. When you find yourself standing in line at the grocery store or waiting at the doctor's office, use your daydreaming skills to create new scenes, shift through multiple plot possibilities, or develop new characters. Imagine the possibilities.

Dreams are also massaged into goals. What are your writing dreams? How might you develop your dreams into achievable goals?

Use the magic of your dreams to the benefit of your writing.

## **BE OBSERVANT**

Watch everything and everyone. Become *AWARE*.

Listen and watch. Go to places where you can observe people. Listen to how they talk. Watch their body language. Learn to read the emotions in their facial expressions.

Watch nature: how the wind moves through a tree, how squirrels behave, how a bird walks and flies, how the grass grows in the crack of the pavement, etc.

Be aware of sounds and smells around you and how others react to them.

A writer is the ultimate observer. One who can sit in a corner watching the world, plotting the story behind the observations.

## **ASK "WHAT IF. . ."**

A writer should become the master of "what if. . ." A young child naturally asks "Why" and "What if."

To expand your writing, to be at your creative best: Never stop asking questions.

This is especially helpful in developing characters and plots. You're developing a new character, Marcy. She's middle aged, a college professor who's marriage is breaking up, and dealing with her elderly parents. How might you learn more about Marcy? Ask questions!

Who are her friends? Is she having an affair? What problems is she having with her husband? Do they have children? What problems is she having with her parents? Does she feel torn between her many relationships? How does she deal with this? How does she feel about life? What are her personal issues? What dreams and goals does she have?

Now, take some of these questions and look at "What if..." to see the possible plot directions.

What if she left her husband? What if she left her job? What if she disappeared from her current life and started over somewhere else? What if she killed her husband? Her parents? What if she tried to commit suicide? What if she had an accident and her perspective on life changed? What if she became religious? What if she was diagnosed with an incurable disease?

Learn to question. Do it often.

## **IN CONCLUSION**

Creativity is a gift of magic in a mundane world. Embrace all that encourages and expands your creativity. Let the magic of creativity become the life-blood of your writing.



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The book is also available at amazon.com: (or search for "June Diehl")  
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Creativity is contagious. Pass it on.

--Albert Einstein

