



**creative**

Flow

Tried & tested techniques  
to harness your creative energy

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## **Welcome!**

If you are yearning to be creative... feeling things bubbling inside which you can't reach...

### **You're in the right place!**

Or if your head is full of ideas... you have to-do lists longer than novels...and you need twenty lives to make them all happen. You need help finding focus and knowing where to start... and how to commit to action.

### **I can help!**

Or perhaps the problem is stuck-ness. The muse has stopped visiting and you're feeling dried up. You want to create. You love to create. But you're so stuck it's scary. And you're beginning to think you may never have an idea again.

### **I understand, love. I've been there.**

Perhaps you're a mum to young kids and trying to find the time, let alone the headspace... or physical space to create

seems more impossible than scaling Mount Everest right now...

**Oh mama, I remember that feeling well.**

Or perhaps you turn a little green with envy when you see the paintings or words of others. The word creative most definitely does NOT apply to you... but you wish with all your heart it did.

Or perhaps you're learning to call yourself an artist... a writer... but you're trying to find a way to consistently tap into your creative flow...

**Wherever you are at right now in your life, you're so welcome. I'm so glad you're here.**

The idea for this e-book stemmed from one question. It is the question that so many women ask me, all the time:

**How do you do it?**

**How do you consistently move from ideas to finished creative products?**

**And how do you practically make the time for creativity when you have young children?**

After nine years, three children, four books, four blogs, three art exhibitions, setting up a publishing imprint, as well as various creative businesses and years of teaching I have earned a bit of a reputation as a creative dynamo.

The intention of this e-book is to lift the curtain and show you a little behind the scenes. Not because I think you should make more stuff – that is up to you – but so that you can tap into your creativity more easily. So that it becomes a powerful, energising river in your life, which lights you up... and then will naturally flow on into our world in whatever way you choose – be it books or teaching or art or craft or simply your being more fully you in the world.

I'm going to share as many secrets with you as I can in the time we have together, so that you can kickstart your creativity.

There are no shortcuts. But there are superhighways.

You will not be the fully-wonderous creative person you dream of being in the next five minutes, or just by reading this e-book. That is beyond my powers I'm afraid! But applying these approaches day after day build up to an empowered, inspiring creative life.

This I know.

Because it's what I do!



## **Creativity...**

Creativity is your birthright.

As a human being.

And especially as a woman.

Breathe that in for a moment.

How does it feel? In your heart? Your solar plexus? Your belly? Your womb? Your head?

What parts of you are fighting the idea?

Creativity is your birthright.

Truly, it is.

I don't mean being a professional artist or published author. These are long-term end results for some highly creative people. Who choose to dedicate more of their lifeforce to the path of the Artist.

But creativity is open to us all.

Creativity is dipping a bucket into your inner well... your inner world... and then finding ways to express these visions and ideas in the world... Creativity is not JUST about the end products. It is a process. A natural process. Which we are all a part of as we live in the world.

## Creative Flow

The world is in endless creative process – seeds – both literal and metaphorical being planted, taking root, growing and dying which feed yet more new life. Animal and plant species constantly adapting and evolving to new circumstances. This is creativity. It is going on all around you. And within you. The only way you can be cut off from it is by wrong-thinking.

So you cannot BE anymore creative. You ARE creative.

It's whether you acknowledge this or not.

And then whether you tap into it and work WITH the natural creative force... what I call conscious co-creativity. Or whether you resist/fight/ ignore it/ insist on everything being on your terms.

That tends to lead to problems. Blockages. Stuckness.

Our natural state is creative flow. Of taking in the world around you through your senses. And being aware of your inner world, the endless stream of life – ideas, images, visions, possibilities streaming through you and emerging from you all the time.

This is how we all start out.

And then somewhere, something blocks it. Shocks us out of it. And we shut down... to the outer world. Or our inner world. Or both.

“Becoming” creative requires we consciously unblock, one bit at a time, the stories, voices, feelings and beliefs that stand between us and our inner world. And us and our outer world.

This is an ongoing process. We do it little by little. Not all at once. Not all right now. We access our free flowing creativity... THROUGH our creativity.

The easiest, most pleasurable, enjoyable (yes this IS supposed to be delicious fun, not miserable hard work!) is...



## Opening up

You'll note that I didn't say "the first step of creativity is doing stuff."

Because it's not.

The first step is opening our outer senses more fully. Becoming more aware of the sensory information we are being bombarded with every day: tastes, smells, ideas, sights, sounds. The beginning of creativity is sensuality, sensuousness... sound good?

Absolutely!

You might:

- Take long baths and get a massage
- Pick some flowers and really see and smell each one
- Walk by the sea, a river, the woods
- Climb a mountain, a hill or a tree
- Swim in the sea or a river
- Walk barefoot in the mud
- Have a bonfire
- Visit an exhibition or performance which inspires you

- And then another... and another
- Dance... move your body
- Play... alone or together... laugh like a lunatic
- Clear your inner... and outer clutter until you feel you can breathe more freely
- Search out images and words that inspire you... and keep them where you can see them
- Pull out old work of yours that you're secretly proud of
- Listen to music you love, up loud... and sing at the top of your voice... maybe even shake your booty too!
- Make sure you are surrounded by colours that you love... in your clothes, your home...
- Read an incredible book... and then another
- Take part in a ceremony or festival
- Eat peeled fruit with your fingers and your eyes closed
- Paint your face
- Cook some delicious food and eat it with someone who lights you up
- Breathe deeply... every day
- Connect... or reconnect with at least three women who inspire and uplift you
- Have bliss filled sessions of pleasure and passion... alone or together

Creativity is juicy and luscious. Vibrant and expansive.

Do what lights you up, inspires you fills your well.

Do more of it than you think possible. Be greedy. And then some.

Be self indulgent. Be joyous. Have so much fun you think you might burst... allow your senses to be wide open.

**Learn to trust yourself. Fully.**

Allow yourself moments of freedom. And as you experience them, be fully aware of the sensations in your body, your feelings, the colours and sounds and smells...

Perhaps... just maybe you feel called to record them in some way to remember them – to keep a keepsake – a ticket, a petal, take a photograph, make a sketch of how it was, record it in your journal.... Shhhhh don't tell anyone but this is creativity!

You're doing it now. Right now. From your heart and soul. Embodied, passionate, meaningful creativity.

It feels good, doesn't it?

So keep doing it... as many times a day as you can...

Many people think that creativity means making stuff up from scratch. You do not need to create ideas. That is not where you need to put your energy. Ideas are everywhere. You simply need to learn to be aware, alert, with all your senses open to access them.

You need to do everything you can to become a woman in flow... in flow with yourself, your body, your inner world... and in flow with the outer world.

Creativity is the interweaving of these outer influences and impressions with our inner ones... expressed in our own unique way.

So we need to find ways of regularly...

## Reaching the flow

Once we have started to fill ourselves up and the flow within us is richer and deeper, it's flowing faster, there's more there, so you are more aware of it. It makes it easier to connect to.

This is your duty as a creative being – to create a life which allows the flow. And then get into the habit of opening up to the inner flow of images, emotions, ideas and dreams which run freely inside. Learning to tune into your intuition, to tune up the muse and turn down the inner critic.

Ways you can do this include:

- Walking in nature
- Dreaming
- Working early in the morning... or late at night
- Having a dedicated work space and/or regular creative routine
- Yoga or other movement work



- Meditation
- Becoming further aware of your body's inner weather and cycles...

## Creative Cycles

As women we have the most incredible, inbuilt creative mechanism: our menstrual cycle, which during the course of a month takes us from fertile ovulatory energy when we are fully open to the world, longing to drink it all up, be active and doing... through to the introverted, intuitive time of our menstrual bleeding when we are naturally drawn inwards and often have powerful dreams and visions. This menstrual cycle does not just empower us to create babies, we can also harness this consistent ebb and flow of energy to create whatever we wish. It is magnificent. But something so few women know about.

Now I know that even the mention of your menstrual cycle is a big turn off for a lot of women. There might be lots of physical or emotional pain wrapped up with it. Or shame. Or a general feeling of “the less I think about that the better.”

**But please hear me when I say to you that the biggest shift that happened in activating my creativity was in understanding the shifts in energy throughout my menstrual cycle, and harnessing them.**

Hands down.

And hundreds of women that I know of personally have found the same.

If you are in any way curious I suggest you simply observe how your creativity and energy is each day for a full menstrual cycle, writing down notes in a diary. If you're excited to find out more about this then do get your hands on a copy of my book *Moon Time: a guide to celebrating your menstrual cycle* as it's too big a topic to do justice to here.

Just as we have monthly cycles... our creativity also has seasons or cycles. We live in a digital and mechanistic world where things... and now people... are supposed to be at 100% productive efficiency 24/7, 365.

But creativity hasn't got the email. It still plays by traditional rules. It is shamelessly analogue!

It has seasons. Spring times of emerging ideas. Summers of vibrant expression. Autumns of bountiful creative harvests. And winters of desolation, darkness, no growth or movement. Stillness when all seems dead. When actually it is just in hibernation, resting, regrouping, metamorphosing. And there under the surface, unseen growth is being prepared for.

So many people when they hit a creative winter, or when they are premenstrual or menstrual, want to know what the magic spell is to turn it instantly to summer.

The truth is there is none. Anything forced at this time will be superficial. And will drain you.

**Creativity needs to come from our fullness.** It might be a fullness of ideas, or words or joy... but also anger or sadness. But we need to be bubbling over.

Your number one duty to yourself as a creative woman is to keep yourself bubbling over. To keep yourself in flow. And open.



It's not to work as hard as you can. Or make as many paintings as you can.

It is to fill yourself full in order to access the river beneath the river...

*Each woman has potential access to Rio Abajo Rio, this river beneath the river. She arrives there through deep meditation, dance, writing, painting, prayer-making, singing, drumming, active imagination, or any activity which requires an intense altered consciousness. A woman arrives in this world-between-worlds through yearning and by seeking something she can see just out of the corner of her eye. She arrives there by deeply creative acts, through intentional solitude, and by the practice of any of the arts.*

*Clarissa Pinkola Estes, Women Who Run with the Wolves*

You need to get used to coming here to this place of openness, or sensuous awareness, of fullness and intoxication. It has to become a familiar land.

For most women this requires a major shift. Into giving themselves permission. Permission to take TIME for themselves. To make SPACE for themselves. To open deeply. To accept what you find. And to know that you have permission to express this.

I am not underestimating what an enormous cultural shift this is for so many of us...

## Creating space

In order to allow space for creativity to emerge to find flow, we need to clear space: physically, emotionally, mentally. To clear the blockages and the barriers, and find... or create... a container to hold us, both space and time to support us in reaching our inner flow and feeling safe to express it.

In honoring a need for space, we honor our need for privacy and interiority, and the NEED for a place where your creations, materials and YOU the creator are completely safe and unobserved.

You could work in your bedroom, kitchen, office, sitting room, spare bedroom, up a tree, in a caravan, in a shared or rented studio, the local library, the park, a café... just pick a space, take yourself (and your materials) and TRY IT. You'll soon see if it's too noisy or quiet, hot or cold, inspiring or distracting. You can always choose again, and again. And again. As you, your work and your needs change.

Oh. And the most important thing is... YOU HAVE TO SHOW UP! AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN.



## Creating Time

Often finding time requires deciding what to give up or to do less of. To do this look for what I call “energy sinks”, activities which suck your energy and time with little reward. So you might choose to give up an hour’s TV in the evening, or limit your social networking time. You might choose to only iron smart clothes rather than all your laundry, cook meals for the week in bulk, to stop reading the Sunday papers or trashy magazines, or wake up half an hour earlier in the mornings.

When do you have potential windows in your day which you could enlarge a little further to fit some creative practice in?

Draw a timetable, broken into half-hourly slots. Fill in the time you wake up and go to bed. Fill in work times, meals, any fixed activities such as soccer practice or church, and any commitments your partner has, and if you have kids block off bedtime if your children are very small.

Where is the space? Grab a highlighter and highlight the gaps. These are your spaces for possible daily practice.

Now, depending if you are a lark or night owl, block off a two-hour window on one of the weekend days. This is for you: your creative time. Keep it there. Show it to your partner. Put it up on the wall. Get your partner to

put it into their schedule – mental or actual. Encourage them to do the same.

Once this is negotiated, it is just the same as you having a doctor’s appointment. It can only be broken in an emergency. It cannot be eroded, forgotten or ignored. Next you need to make sure in advance that you have all your stuff ready to go, if you are going out, or set up in your workspace. This is the beginning of getting your body and mind into the “zone”.

If you are staying home, get your partner to take the kids... or the dog... out – to the park, to visit family or friends, to do the grocery shopping...

This intention – both the marking out time and getting your materials prepared and the space ready and waiting is a strong way of visioning and setting intention for your creative spirit – it is like sending part of your spirit out ahead of you. This is your dreamer self – it can be planning, dreaming, visioning, scheming, whilst your daily self is going through the mundane life. Then, when you are in your creative space, you can reunify these parts of yourself, the doing part, which has been doing the daily practice, and the visioning part which has been working on a different level. Now you are ready to create, to step fully into your creative space, raring to go.

Oh. And the most important thing is... **YOU HAVE TO SHOW UP! AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN.**

Remember that?



## Getting Started

One of the biggest secrets about the creative life is that you're always starting again. There will always be another blank page. And it doesn't necessarily get much easier. The difference between the novice and the seasoned creative, is the seasoned creative has gathered a bag of trusty "getting started" tools, whereas a novice feels the fear and takes it as a sign to stop.

You may have a burning desire to paint but when you get there all you can think is – where do I start? What if there's nothing there? What if it doesn't work out? What if I make a mistake?

For those just entering the pool of creativity at the shallow end this can present itself as an expansive fear of anything and everything creative...where, we wonder, do we dip our toe in?...where do we make the first mark?...and then what do we do after that?

The only place to start is the beginning – just start – and keep going! **You can paint over it, rub it out, delete the words. You can start again, and again, and again, and no one dies. But you have to start somewhere.** You have to let go of every stroke mattering,

every word being important. This is the ultimate way to stop flow, as you are then in a place of analysis and paralysis... when you need to be in openness and trust.

**Moving from the perfect idea in our heads into re-creating it with our bodies is the biggest creative step we can take.**

When we start we want to be in control. We have such a strong sense of “wrong” and what it might be, that “right” has no chance to emerge because we are controlling and judging everything. The only way to start is to let the flow come through you, to let it start, to see what is there.

Think of it like warming up before sport – you have to get all your muscles, creative and physical moving again. So smear the canvas with paint with your fingers, doodle and scribble with your pencil, pour out a stream of consciousness with words. Then put them aside, start again, or paint over them, but whatever you do, don't go thinking that this is “it”. You're only just beginning!

Knowing that your vulnerable first strokes of a brush or first words on a page are not going to be judged removes a massive weight of expectations and frees us to create. This is why I put such emphasis on having a private space of your own to create. We need to be wary of others' expectations as we start out. So much of what we consider to be art is about the end result, the product. If you write, then people want to know when your first book is going to be out.

**Stop! Just Create! Let the flow take you where it will.**



## Ways In...

*The advice I like to give young artists, or really anybody who'll listen to me, is not to wait around for inspiration. Inspiration is for amateurs; the rest of us just show up and get to work. If you wait around for the clouds to part and a bolt of lightning to strike you in the brain, you are not going to make an awful lot of work. All the best ideas come out of the process; they come out of the work itself. Things occur to you. If you're sitting around trying to dream up a great art idea, you can sit there a long time before anything happens. But if you just get to work, something will occur to you and something else will occur to you and something else that you reject will push you in another direction. Inspiration is absolutely unnecessary and somehow deceptive. You feel like you need this great idea before you can get down to work, and I find that's almost never the case.*

**Chuck Close**

In order to get started, you have to let go of the finished product, let go of how you want it to be, let go of your perfect vision and simply find a way into the process. Once you are on the path, it will carry you through. It is a very Zen practice – you have to become non-attached to the product and learn to be one with the process in order for the product to emerge.

Some of my favorite getting started exercises include:

- **Brain dump** – brain dump is my ultimate technique for creativity. Take a piece of paper and write everything out that is in your head. The to-do list. The chapter ideas. A thought about how to celebrate your anniversary. The name of the book you want for your birthday. EVERYTHING. Get it OUT of your head and onto paper. NOW.
- **Free write** - Take a piece of paper, a pen and a timer. Set your timer for ten minutes. Set yourself a topic, theme or question. Start the timer and start writing. Do not stop writing for any reason (except if your house is on fire or someone is hurt.) If you can't think what to write then write the previous line out, over and over again, just changing one word each time, until you think of other words to write.
- **Write or draw with your non-dominant hand.** So if you are left-handed do it with your right. This means you are gaining access to the less used side of your brain and have to focus harder on the act of making marks on paper, rather than the content.
- **Cut and paste** – grab a paragraph... or an image that you love. Cut and paste it. Then play... take out this part here, add an entirely new bit there. Change around the beginning and end. Keep shape shifting and revising, adding, subtracting and embellishing until it is fully yours.
- **Blindfold painting** – get your paints set up on a palette close to hand. Start just with warm, or cool colours, and make sure you have your paper or canvas within easy-reach and the surface beneath it protect. Pop on a blindfold, or just close your eyes, and with a paintbrush... or your fingers... start to apply paint. Turn the canvas and do this again. Turn the canvas and see what shapes or patterns you see emerging and start to enhance or embellish these.



- **Zen doodle** – Zentangles are a superb way to get your creativity flowing, getting the pen moving on the paper in a graphic way – allowing you to make shapes, patterns and forms within a prescribed format.

- **Beach walking** – I love to head down to the beach, with a question in mind... and a pen and paper in the car, or a Dictaphone, and walk, walk fast, maybe dance a little... looking to empty my mind, rather than answer the question. As my legs move the question is answered. I transcribe the answer... and then head home to flesh it out right away writing on my computer.

- Take some clay, start to mold it into a shape, keep working it, and working it...and then roll it back up into a ball. Repeat and repeat until something emerges.

- Paint a thick piece of paper with water. Using acrylics or watercolors or poster paints, put dots and lines of color on the

paper. Keep building it up seeing how the colors dance together and interact.

- Think of something you'd like to draw. Take a number of sheets of cheap paper or newspaper. Give yourself a minute to draw it on paper. Then screw it up into a ball. Take thirty seconds and draw it again. Screw it up. Take ten seconds and draw it again, screw it up... Now take all the time you want to do it.

- Write a word down the page, then write a quality for each of the words – you have made an instant poem. Like this: Colorful Reflective Energetic Artist Tentative Introspective Vivid Expressive
- Start with a dot in the middle of a page, then make a small circle round it, then a pattern around the circle, keep on building it up and up with pattern and color and shapes. There you have a mandala!
- Write a word and then start to doodle around it in color, adding patterns, representational imagery and branches onto to which you add more words that you associate with the initial word. You have a mind map! Now turn each of these branches into a sentence. Then a paragraph. Perhaps even a chapter.
- Get some magazines and rip out all the pictures and words that call to you and make a collage of them in your journal – add your own words, doodles, drawings too. You can do this with a question, or on a creative project that you are starting... or even stuck on... When you are finished do a ten minute free write in your journal about the words and colours that emerged for you.
- Take a class: online, with an artist in their studio, at a local college...

And lots of bite-sized ideas...

- Surround yourself with other creative people.
- Go to a gallery or museum.
- Go to a craft store and spend \$50.
- Get cheap stuff so you're not scared to use it.
- Get expensive stuff that makes your heart race when you see it. Make yourself use it up in six months!
- Get paper, close your eyes and swirl with pastels or paints with your hands.
- Join Pinterest and get pinning!
- Take out all the birthday cards you have kept and do something with them.
- Give yourself an hour to create something that you've been wanting to do for age, start to finish.
- Write down every word your intuition says, no editing.
- Write a blog post.
- String some beads.
- Take some close-up photographs.
- Go to the beach, woods or a park and make a pattern with the natural materials you find.
- Color a mandala... or another inspiring, and complex form.
- Put on your brightest outfit and dance.
- Take yourself to bed for orgasms... and dreams.
- Get wet – have a bath, jump in puddles, swim in the sea...
- Loosen up everything – your jaw, your heart, your yoni, your breathing, your shoulders, your ideas...



- Stop pretending you can fail.
- Do something completely different!

So put this book down, and go do: play, dabble, experiment, go wild, enjoy the process, make and keep, or if you must make and chuck, but just keep creating – don't worry about the products and do not invest lots of money in materials. This time is so important for finding your creative voice, your preferred media of expression. Try to put as few limits, or expectations on yourself. In every single way keep the pressure off yourself. Dive in headfirst. Have fun...start now!





## I have too many ideas... and don't know how to pick just one...

Also know as...*I start on one thing and then move on to another without ever really finishing any of them.*

This is a key problem I hear from a lot of creative women, and one I know well from personal experience. I currently have eight, yes, eight books on the go... both books I am reading... and ones I'm writing!

Learning to pick and choose between your ideas, as to which you're going to invest your energy, time and resources into is a major challenge. Most highly creative people have books full of ideas... but only so much energy and time to actually make them happen. I often joke that I need at least three lifetimes to fulfil at least some of the big creative ideas that I've had so far!

**Just because you have ideas, doesn't mean you have a moral obligation to make them happen.**

Read that again.

It's true. Often we feel some sort of obligation to the muse... or ourselves... or communities that we need to, **HAVE** to act on every idea that comes our way.

You could just admire it as an idea. Enjoy the burst of adrenaline you had as it came through. Bless it. Thank it. And leave it there. Just as it is. An idea. Maybe it was meant for someone else. Or you in another stage of your life – perhaps it is an echo from the past or future which you picked up on your inner radar... it may well not be meant for you now.

As we cultivate our creativity, as we open our inner and outer senses further, and become aware of more and more, we can find ourselves becoming overwhelmed with the sheer volume of information and ideas coming at us.

**This is when we need to learn to become responsible for being able to consciously tune in on what we want to focus our energy on, rather than automatically shutting down.**

Our instinctive, protective mechanism is ON/ OFF. We are born turned on to the world. And somewhere along the line we turn various parts OFF as a form of self-protection as we feel in danger, too vulnerable. This makes sense as small beings when we aren't aware of just how dangerous any threat is.

But now that we are more aware of the world and how it works, and have learned to turn our senses on again, to re-activate them, we need to be careful that we don't revert to instant shut-down if we feel vulnerable. Or that we don't stay too open all the time – for example when we are tired or overwhelmed.

We need to learn to be able to turn our openness up and down as required. **To consciously create boundaries, not unconscious blockages, to protect ourselves.** It takes practice.

Some of the ways we can do this is:

- By having a set “switch off” time. Both a time when you switch off your computer and allow yourself to only do non-creative, non-work related things in the hour or so before bed time, so that the muse knows not to call as you fall asleep each night.
- Set regular times where you are fully present and available for the muse. Be very clear about it this. Say it out loud. Write it in your diary.
- Removing yourself physically from situations that you are finding overwhelming, as soon as you become aware that you are getting overwhelmed.
- Take time to really focus on ONE thing at a time.
- Come back to your breath and your belly. Breathe in and out deeply here for ten breaths and allow yourself to stop everything else.
- Say No. When you feel yourself hitting overwhelm say NO to every single request that comes your way.
- Book in holidays and time off... and TAKE them!

Some ideas emerge as if from nowhere fully fledged and full of excitement. They move us instinctively to action. This is wonderful if you have the time, energy and resources to act on every one. But most of us have limited supplies of all, what with jobs or children, or caring commitments. And leaping with two feet into every new inspired idea can leave us zigzagging here and there, getting knocked off center, never getting

anything done, whilst getting burnt out in the process. If this is you what you need to do is apply some reverse-engineered procrastination into your life!

I now have a check list which I go through when a hot idea strikes:

- 1) How much does this excite me?
- 2) How far will the excited energy carry me? And how much more energy will it require after that to see it through to completion (be aware we tend to underestimate this by at least 200% as we are only aware of how it will be in a perfect world – not taking into consideration illness, disruptions, materials not working, delays outside our control...)
- 3) Is this MY idea? Often others try to get creative people to collaborate or do their ideas for them. If it is not your idea or it doesn't have your whole heart be extra cautious about committing energy.
- 4) What else do I have on now? How much energy do I currently have committed to other things? To what extent will they suffer? What can I drop if I want to commit to this?
- 5) How does it fit with my current intentions, ambitions and commitment – is it more of the same, does it add variety or contrast?
- 6) Where will it take me?
- 7) How will I feel next month? And in ten years if I don't ever do this?
- 8) How about if I do this in a month or a year... or ten years. Why not let it sit and see if the enthusiasm is still there?

**Saying NO is as sacred, important and GOOD as saying YES.**

NB.... Do NOT however get out of the habit of writing down ideas when they come. It's really important to keep taking notes. Just remember writing them down is not a commitment to DOING them.



## Seeing Ideas Through

Next on the list of “to-many-ideas” gals is **HOW** to get started on one once you’ve decided to do it. How to move from initial inspiration to action? From spark to art... and **SEE IT THROUGH TO THE END**.

So take your idea and break it down into parts. Next to each write 1-3 actions that need to be taken for it. And next to that write how long you think it will take. See what the possible work flow might be. And pick one thing that you can do right **NOW**. And then go do it.

*Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.*

Often the first step is research. You have the idea and have no idea if it’s been done before. Or how it is possible. So you need to go looking.

There are two forms of research – wide net trawling... which brings in all sorts of interesting outlying things you had never considered or come across – however this can turn into weeks of directionless internet searching which quickly becomes procrastination.

So you also need to be sure that you are doing some quick dip fishing – going to a specific site, company or person, searching a key word on Amazon. And take notes.

Don’t go underground!

Use your research and your action plan as a scaffold and then fill in the blanks as you go. As soon as you can create a prototype – a sketch, an article or blog post on the theme, a simpler version of your grand vision and try it out. Give yourself a deadline for this. Tighter than you would expect you could do it. This will help you to figure out the process for it, you'll soon see what works and what doesn't, whether you actually enjoy it or not to invest more sustained energy, time or resources into it.

And then share it.

Get feedback. From as many people as possible. Play with all the possibilities and variations you can... either in your head as thought experiments, as sketches... or by physically trying them out. Look at it from lots of angles. Fill in the gaps. Improve on its weaknesses. **Dream. Make. Reflect. Dream** and so on *ad infinitum*.

Listen to feedback from outside. And always, always listen to your intuition and measure one against the other.

Do not mistake first drafts for finished articles. Finished pieces tend to require many attempts and revisions.

It is easy at this stage to get impatient. Despondent. To want to start something new... We long for the buzz of first love... the adrenaline of desire, when it all seems so easy, and practicalities don't bind us at every turn.

This requires hard work. Vision. Courage. Conviction to see your work through to its finished state – and take responsibility for showing the fruit of your labors... rather than just burying it at the back of the drawer.

Finishing... the invisible destination of creativity. How to get there... and know when we're there. How to push ourselves onwards when the amount of work seems overwhelming. How do kiss goodbye to perfection and hello to celebration...

I am a lover of Leonie Dawson's Wild Donkey technique for finishing work. Simply put, you grab the work with two hands, finish it off and launch it, with flaws, rather than procrastinating and perfecting it forever more.

Yes, you share it... With the world! Even though it is NOT PERFECT. Phew!

As creatives we often long for the time when our work is "FINISHED". But in truth it never is. One piece may be completed. For now... But what about all the other things... Because creativity whilst deeply challenging is also intoxicating...

Chances are if you're creative you usually have MULTIPLE things on the go at once. And then some.

I know you!

And you also are a little impatient.

As in you want this thing done NOW...

So you can DO more stuff. So if you just work a little harder and a little longer, or a little faster... then, maybe THEN you can create at the rate of the river flowing through you.

It is the hurdle almost every creative falls at again and again. We do not work at the same speed as the flow. And so we become overwhelmed. So I counsel you (and myself!) to:

**Always come back to flow. Keep rooting your work in your deep flow. The flow will always be there. Always. And you can return to it whenever you need.**

If you are respecting and working with your body's cycles. And creativity's natural cycles.

If you are replenishing yourself. And saying NO.

If you are choosing, rather doing everything, because you should and you ought... then by all means have a number of projects... some which take half an hour. Some a week... and some which will carry on open-endedly for the rest of your life. Different projects which feed different parts of your soul.

Absolutely.

But if... or rather when... it all gets too much... know which ones you will drop first.

**And return to flow.**



## Endless Flow

I have so much more to share with you... so much more... but I could write forever and still not be done. The flow of creativity is endless. The words fall from me like the petals off a cherry blossom tree in late spring. They fall as books, as e-courses, as classes, as conversations, newsletters and blog posts... I give as much of myself as I can... for the more I give, the more I learn, the deeper I go, the more profoundly magical and interconnected it all is. I look forward to sharing what I learn with you on this awe-inspiring co-creative journey.

Thank you for being here. To committing to creativity. To living out loud.

The world needs you to be yourself in all your shining colours.

So here's to our dreams – yours and mine – let us paint them in bright colours and inhabit them as our lives.

Lucy x

Parts of this e-book are extracted from my Amazon #1 best-selling book:



Paperback and Kindle versions, published by Soul Rocks from Amazon and all good bookshops. Signed copies are available to buy from [www.dreamingaloud.net](http://www.dreamingaloud.net)

***The Rainbow Way*** is your complete guide to creating whilst you have children. Like ***The Artist's Way*** for mothers, it covers so much that is missing from all other books on creativity, including:

- Renaissance – exploring the spiritual and hormonal reasons for the rebirth of creativity in mothers
- Understanding your own Personal Creative Inheritance

- Carving out Time and Space for Creativity
- The Creative Process
- Overcoming Procrastination, Fear and the Inner Critic
- Nurturing and Supporting your Creative Self
- Exploring the connections between Creativity, Sexuality, Women's Hormonal Cycles and Birth
- Nurturing a Culture of Creativity in your Family
- Discovering your Unique Feminine Creative Voice
- Interviews and original contributions from over fifty creative mothers, including many of my heroines:
  - Jennifer Loudon,
  - Julie Daley,
  - Pam England,
  - MaryBeth Bonfiglio,
  - Indigo Bacal,
  - And a forward from Leonie Dawson, founder of the Amazing Life and Biz Academy.



## About the author

Lucy H. Pearce is a third generation Creative Mother – who has to relearn on a daily basis how to find balance and minimise the visits from her inner Crazy Woman.

She started the blog Dreaming Aloud.net in 2010, where she writes about women's creativity.

The mother of three children aged 9,6 and 4, she lives in a little pink house with white shutters, in the village of her birth on the coast in County Cork, Ireland. They sit on the white picket fence which divides the mainstream world from that of the hippies – and they like the view!

Walking the path of the Creative Rainbow Mama is where it's at for her – trying to honour her diverse creative urges (writing, publishing, painting, teaching, community-organising, baking, editing, world-changing...) and her need to be a hands-on, engaged mama to her three young children.

After a liberal arts education, she travelled the world for a couple of years, with her husband-to-be, living in Japan for seven months, before having their first baby at home aged 25, followed by two more in only four years.

At 29 she was mother of three, with a growing career as a freelance writer and editor at a natural parenting magazine (JUNO), when she started to blog. Her blog is named after her JUNO column.

Her first book (and fourth baby) ***Moon Time: a guide to celebrating your menstrual cycle*** emerged, in the space of just four months – from first idea to being on the shelves of internet and bricks and mortar retailers around the globe. It is considered “life changing” by the women who contact her every week, “the guidebook to my cyclical self.” It was rapidly followed by ***Moods of Motherhood*** and ***Reaching for the Moon***, a girl’s version of ***Moon Time*** for girls aged 9-14. They have been warmly received by women around the world – check out the Amazon reviews!

The founding editor of Womancraft Publishing, her mission is to co-create life-changing, paradigm-shifting books by women, for women. A respected speaker on Red Tents, she leads women’s workshops in the UK and Ireland. She is the former contributing editor at JUNO magazine, and teaches blogging at the prestigious Ballymaloe Cookery School.

## **Books:**

**Moon Time: a guide to celebrating your menstrual cycle** – Lucy H. Pearce (2012)

**Moods of Motherhood** – Lucy H. Pearce (2012)

**Reaching for the Moon – a girl’s guide to her female cycles – Lucy H. Pearce (2013)**

**The Rainbow Way: cultivating creativity in the midst of motherhood – Lucy H. Pearce (2013)**

**Earth Pathways Diary (2011, 2012, 2013)**

**Note to Self: the secret to becoming your own best friend – Jo MacDonald (2012)**

**Musings on Mothering – La Leche League GB, [mothersmilkbooks.com](http://mothersmilkbooks.com) (2012)**

**Tiny Buddha’s Guide to Self Love – Hay House (2013)**

## **Online:**

Dreaming Aloud.net

Juno Magazine.com

Rhythm of the Home

Tiny Buddha

Wild Sister Magazine

The Happy Womb.com