



THE ARTIST'S JOY

A Guide to Getting *UNSTUCK*,
EMBRACING Imperfection,
& Loving Your *CREATIVE LIFE*



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Printable Journal

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I'm so glad you're here.

Getting unstuck, embracing imperfection, loving your creative life? How possible do these things seem today?

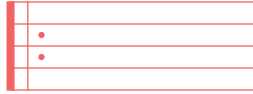
Let's begin by reflecting on the view from where you stand.

Write a metaphor, draw a picture, pick a quote, or choose a creativity recovery theme song. As we begin this work, create something simple to signify what it feels like to be you right now.

Now do the same for where you want to be when you finish this book:

How do you want to treat yourself during the work of creative recovery? What else feels important to name?

Chapter 1: Ode to the Inner Artist Child



Self-Coaching Questions:

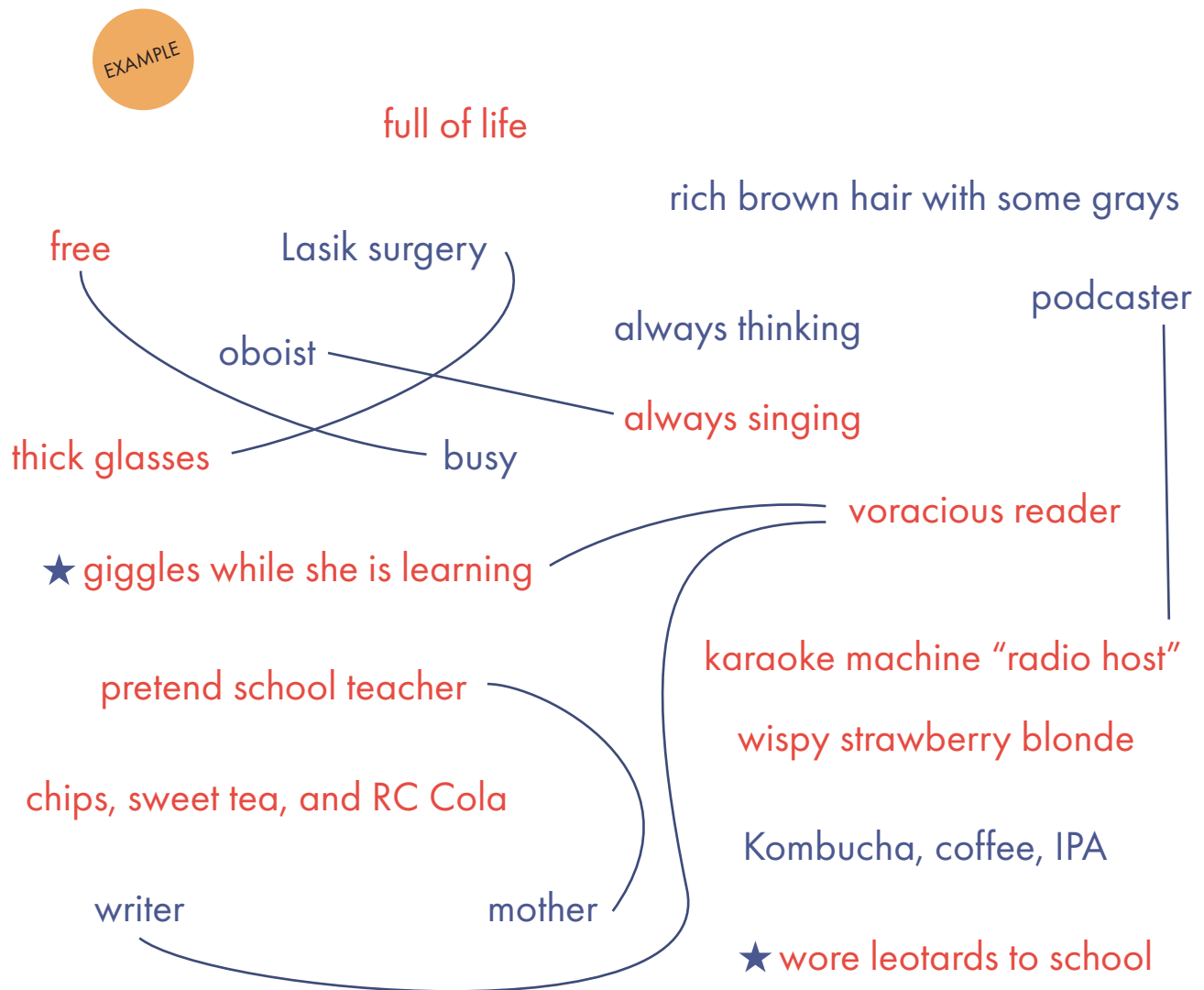
1. What did you like most about yourself as a child?
2. If not perfectionism, what creative blocks, internal and external, separate you from child-like joy?
3. List five things you would do if you weren't afraid of failure.
4. When was the last time you felt creative joy?
5. Who in your life can you come to when you feel shame?

One true thing:

ÉTUDE: Word-Mosaic: Imperfectly Whole

On the next page, you will write adjectives, images, and memories that describe yourself as a child. Write them in no particular order but in present tense. They can be simple words or phrases, memories, or physical descriptors. Sprinkle these words about your inner child all over the page. If you need help remembering, contact someone who knew you as a child or return to pictures or videos.

Then, in another color ink, add words for yourself today. What are you like now as an adult? What visuals encapsulate you? How do you spend your time? What things do you love? Write them around whatever space is left around the inner-child words. Reading through both lists, what do you notice? Draw lines to things that are still true, connected, or otherwise related. Put stars by things from your childhood that are not present in some form in your adult life.



ÉTUDE: Word-Mosaic: Imperfectly Whole

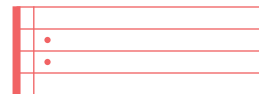


Draw Your Word Mosaic here:

What here is asking to be attended to, healed, or revisited?

Write a couple of sentences of reflection, perhaps as a letter to yourself as a child or a letter from your inner child to yourself today. What do you want your inner artist-child to know? What would your child self like to say to you? To anyone else in your memory?

Chapter 2: Ode to Self-Care



Self-Coaching Questions:

1. What is your relationship with your body like now? Where would you like it to be?
2. What spoken and unspoken beliefs do those in your art form or community hold about what a body should look like? Can you think of examples of people acting outside these prescribed norms?
3. How do you feel when you read: "Treating myself like a precious object makes me strong?" What other words or phrases communicate self-compassion and shame resilience? Write a few mantras for yourself and notice which ones are easier to believe than others.
4. What do you seek out of self-comfort? Self-care?
5. Who in your life do you know and trust that you can share body shame with?

One true thing:

ÉTUDE: Build Your Self-Care Team

What appointments do you need to make? Check off each one after you schedule it.

- ☐ Annual check-up with your primary care physician with blood work
- ☐ Therapy/behavioral health
- ☐ Reproductive health
- ☐ Dermatology
- ☐ Dentist
- ☐ Mammogram, colonoscopy, or other screenings
- ☐ Ophthalmologist
- ☐ Nutritionist
- ☐ Physical therapist
- ☐ Chiropractor
- ☐ Massage therapy
- ☐ Hair
- ☐ Nails
- ☐ Aesthetician
- ☐ Counselor
- ☐ Sponsor
- ☐ Spiritual director
- ☐ Coach
- ☐ Others? Write them here
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

What stops you from taking care of yourself?



When you are at the appointment, book the next one, even if it is a year or more out. You can always reschedule, but having it on the calendar keeps it front of mind.

ÉTUDE: Build Your Self-Care Team (continued)

Fill in the blanks. Talk to your doctor about what is right for you.

I need _____ hours of sleep to feel rested.

Lately, I've been getting _____ hours of sleep.

I drink _____ servings of coffee or caffeinated beverages per day.

I move my body _____ times per week.

What kinds of clothes make me feel like your best, most confident self?



(Reminder: Get rid of clothes associated with body shame and sadness.)

Describe your alcohol use. How many drinks do you have per day/week?

How many times per day/week do you use illegal drugs?

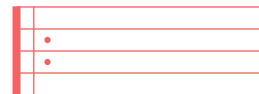
OK, what is the real number? In case you lied to the questions above, write the real answer here:

Could you stop? Do you ever lie or hide drinking or using?



Do you practice behaviors that are destructive to your health? If so, you're not alone. Find a recovery group through Alcoholics Anonymous, Eating Disorders Anonymous, Drug Addicts Anonymous, et cetera. Most have daily online meetings. Do not believe the lie that you need the addiction to be creative. You can't create anything if you're dead. Recovery is possible.

Chapter 3: Ode to Creative Routine



Self-Coaching Questions:

1. Does anything about your artistic practice feel like a spiritual experience now?
If not, what does it feel like to you?
2. What currently motivates you to practice? Shame? Fear? Joy? Curiosity?
3. Do you have a “discipline button”? How do you get yourself to do things?
4. How might you be benefiting from staying in the practice rut?
5. Who do you call upon for support when you feel unmotivated?

One true thing:

ÉTUDE: Build a Creative Devotion Routine

Use the following questions and prompts to develop a routine of creative devotion that works for your life season. See page 42 in *The Artist's Joy* for examples.

1. What is at the fundamental core of your art? How could you break it down to the simplest of skills or reflexes? (Examples could include music = scales or long tones; writing = free journaling, haikus; theater/dance = physical movement/stretching. These are just ideas; there is no one answer.)
2. What makes you feel most nimble, relaxed, prepared, and ready to work creatively?
3. What kind of time do you have to give to the above in this season? What kind of energy do you have to give? When can you carve out time? Be honest but hopeful.
4. What creative work sounds fun? What would feel like playing?
5. What obstacles get in your way? What can you do now that will make showing up easier later?



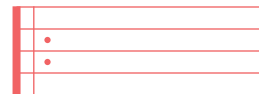
Write Your Creative Devotion Routine here:

EXAMPLE

From a children's book illustrator:

"I will hand-letter one of my 'Five True Things' for fifteen or twenty minutes after I make coffee, but before I unload the dishwasher. I will leave my materials out the night before for ease and display the finished project to encourage me."

Chapter 4: Ode to Ear-Training



Self-Coaching Questions:

1. Look back at the answers from the Étude in chapter 1. What truths are you hearing your life speak through your history?
2. What are the themes of your life? How do your responses to circumstances reveal what matters to you?
3. What gives you energy? What parts of your life make you come alive?
4. Write a list of your wildest dreams. What do you want?
5. Who in your life allows you to show up as your true self, and who are the “crazy makers” who usurp your energy and time?

One true thing:

ÉTUDE: Listen to Your Life

The greatest way to hear your life speak is to listen to your own thoughts. In chapter 4, we explored different methods for doing so, like Morning Pages, Homework for Life, and more. “What is wrong/right lists” are another quick way to let off steam. Categorizing items as right and wrong might seem simplistic or the very definition of binary thinking, but the point is to see everything you carry. Resist the temptation to start problem-solving. Think of it like checking the trunk before a long journey. It helps to know what’s onboard before you set out.

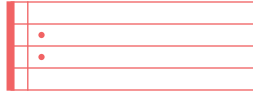
What is wrong . . .

What is right . . .



Often, this exercise reveals something we are still carrying from many years or months ago. Or we see how we’ve picked up something that is not ours to carry. How can you care for yourself as you face these heavy wrongs? What on these lists is not yours to shoulder? What would it feel like to put it down? Who can help?

Chapter 5: Ode to Dreaming



Self-Coaching Questions:

1. How do you most want your life to be different in this season?
2. What stories are you telling yourself about any of the wildest dreams you listed in chapter 4?
3. What are your dreams buried under? What do you use for blocks?
4. Have you had a tantrum lately? What was it about? What did it feel like?
5. Who in your life do you share your creative frustrations with?

One true thing:

ÉTUDE: A Well-Crafted Goal

In this framework, we will:

Create process, not product

Recruit the help you need

Align work with your values

Frame the work with constraints that enable

Twist and turn, but keep stepping forward

1. Choose a dream from the coaching questions in chapter 4. List things you are already doing toward this dream.
2. Read each of the prompts below and translate the dream into goals or actions to take within the C.R.A.F.T. parameters. (I've written a real-life example for you from my life and one from an imaginary guitarist coaching client.)

EXAMPLE

Dream—Traditionally publish a nonfiction book about well-being for artists.

Dream—Win a Grammy by age fifty.

Create process, not product

You know a goal is helping create a process when it feels sustainable, open, consistent, and repeatable.

EXAMPLE

Goal: Write every morning.

Goal: Practice scale patterns every night before bed.



Your Goal:

Recruit the help you need

You know when a goal is helping you recruit when it feels resourced, supported, unstuck, and motivated.

EXAMPLE

Goal: Take a nonfiction book proposal writing course. Find a writing coach.

Goal: Join an online songwriting critique group.



Your Goal:

ÉTUDE: A Well-Crafted Goal, continued

Align the work with your values

You know when a goal is aligned when it feels resonant, inspiring, aspirational, and hopeful.

EXAMPLE

Goal: Create coaching resources that help artists thrive (motivated by my deeply held belief that all people are capable and whole).

Goal: Take some lessons from a Latin jazz specialist (motivated by the deeply held belief that music from all cultures has something to teach me).



Your Goal:

Frame the work with constraints that enable you

You know when a goal uses frames when it feels contained, boundaried, achievable, and non-overwhelming.

EXAMPLE

Goal: Publish something small every Friday online.

Goal: Take on a few more private students so I can phase out of wedding gigs to have more time to write music on the weekends.



Your goal:

Twist and turn, but keep stepping forward

You know when a goal makes space for the twists and turns when it feels: fun, playful, experimental, curious, and adaptive.

EXAMPLE

Goal: Send queries to literary agents in rounds so I can implement the feedback I receive.

Goal: Pick songs for the album by playing them one by one with curiosity instead of judgment.

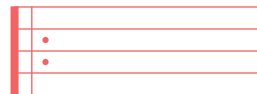


Your Goal:



Some of these goals will overlap. Creative process-driven goals from step one have a lot in common with goals that frame (step four). Run goals through the framework to gently recast them in ways that feel more gentle and aligned with your core values.

Chapter 6: Ode to Belonging



Self-Coaching Questions:

1. When do you feel safe to be yourself?
2. Write a short list completing the prompt: “In this family, we . . .” What kinds of things did your childhood family believe? What unspoken or spoken rules did you live by growing up?
3. As you create your own life (and in some cases seek out another iteration of family), what are the rules you choose to live by now?
4. What communities belong to you? How are you working to help others sense their belovedness and experience true belonging?
5. Who in your life reminds you of your freedom to belong?

One true thing:

ÉTUDE: Self-Portrait

In this exercise, I'll just ask you to answer with what comes to mind first. Answer in bulleted lists or however the information comes; consider who you are today, at this moment. These prompts are not aspirational but informational.

After you answer the first prompt, choose a few words that encapsulate what is at the heart of your answer. Beside each one, narrow it down to one or two words or a simple phrase and write it in the heart column.

Write your favorite...

Movies: _____ Heart: _____

Shows: _____ Heart: _____

Color: _____ Heart: _____

Item of clothing: _____ Heart: _____

Weather: _____ Heart: _____

Works of visual art: _____ Heart: _____

Music: _____ Heart: _____

Time in history: _____ Heart: _____



Movies: The Godfather trilogy

Heart: family, loyalty, tradition

Shows: The Sopranos

Heart: finding my people

Color: green

Heart: nature

Item of clothing: fedora

Heart: sun protection, vintage things

Weather: rain

Heart: cosmic interruption

Works of visual art: anything with trees

Heart: heaven meets earth

Music: Dave Matthews Band

Heart: faith, joy, dance

Time in history: early America

Heart: revolutionary spirit, new ideas

Complete these prompts with the first thing that comes to mind:

1. I feel most like myself when I'm _____ and _____.
Heart: _____
2. To me, it is more important that someone is _____ instead of _____.
Heart: _____
3. If I could snap my fingers and be anywhere in the world right now, I would choose _____.
Heart: _____
4. It isn't fair when _____. Heart: _____
5. Everyone should _____. Heart: _____
6. I cannot stand it when someone says _____. Heart: _____
7. It is so frustrating when _____. Heart: _____
8. What I really want is _____. Heart: _____
9. I want people in my presence to feel _____. Heart: _____
10. I want people who experience my art to know _____. Heart: _____



It is so frustrating when I am running late.

Heart: Being late brings up feelings of being inconsiderate, unprepared, and living in chaos.

When I say I want punctuality, what I mean is that I don't want to be rushed. I want to feel ready for whatever is happening next. I want more space and flexibility in my life.

Heart words: punctuality, readiness, space, flexibility.



Write all the heart words and phrases from both parts of the exercise here:



You may notice that some of your heart words, which in coaching we often call values, are in dissonance with one another. Put a star beside any heart words that don't seem to go together. You can honor a particular value or not in each moment of your life.

One last read-through: take the heart words you settle on as most important to you and make sure they are precisely the right word.

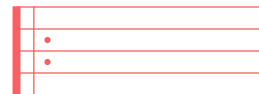
- What does security mean to you?
- What do you mean when you say you value connection?
- Consider aspects of your personality that the prompts above may not have represented. What else is important to you? What other things do you value that are not reflected on this list?



Now take this list and create a simple work of art, a self-portrait. Try a medium that you do not usually use. Compose a song, write a poem, or take a selfie that captures something about you today. Create your own artistic rendering of your heart words and display it somewhere you can see it.

Where in your life are your values being honored? Which ones are being ignored? Where can you connect with others who hold similar values as you? Where can you most safely be yourself?

Chapter 7: Ode to Reception



Self-Coaching Questions:

1. What fears do you have about your creative work's reception in the world?
2. What numbers are you trying to reach? What number will feel like enough?
3. Where in your life have you been attempting to move up and to the right?
4. Look at the Jonathan Jones quote at the beginning of this chapter. Have you witnessed the "looping spiral" of art in your lifetime? Where have you seen art's story retracing its steps?
5. Who connects you to or reminds you of all the ones you are creating for?

One true thing:

ÉTUDE: The One

Take a work of art you have finished, have recently performed, or something you are currently working on.

Who is the one that this work was/is for?

Fill in this profile below, envisioning the one.

(If the work of art is for you, fill it in with information about you. If a real-life one does not exist yet, dream about who they might be.)

Title of work of art:

Name of the one whom it is for:

Age:

Hometown:

Current location:

Emotional state before experiencing the art:

Emotional state during the art:

Emotional state after the art:

Struggles:

Joys:

The work of art helps them feel:

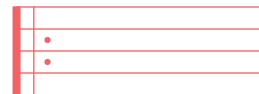
The work of art invites them to:

Lasting impact of the work of art on their life:



You may feel silly about making up these details about your reader/audience member if you don't know them, but in my experience, the truth of the impact that your work has on the ones that it is for is far more interesting and meaningful than anything we could imagine.

Chapter 8: Resilience



Self-Coaching Questions:

1. What needs to be grieved?
2. What action can you take or ritual can you try to give time and attention to your grief process?
3. What direction is this failure pointing you toward? Is this the direction you want to go?
4. Where does the failure reveal your values, deepest longings, and weaknesses? What will you do with that information? Return to your heart words in chapter 6. Which values need honoring now?
5. What can you control, and what can't you control? In what ways were you wrong? In what ways were you right?
6. Return again to your heart words in chapter 6. Who are you outside of your creative performance?
7. Review the self-care needs from Chapter 2. How are you doing with taking care of the creative instrument that is you? Double down on self-care when you fail.
8. Who can help you grieve and process the failure? Who can help you read the map by offering some much-needed perspective?

One true thing:

ÉTUDE: Create a Ritual to Process Your Grief

Rituals help us make sense of the world, express our feelings, and experience connection to others around us. What physical action can you take to be present to your pain or sadness?

EXAMPLE

One writer, Dheepa R. Maturi, who bought a bag of beads that looked like pearls and diamonds and, with each rejection, she put one in a clear dish on her writing desk. She believed the pressure of the writing life was creating something beautiful in her.

ÉTUDE: Retrospective Map Reading

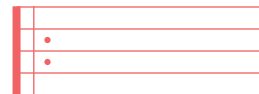
It is often easier to read the map in hindsight. Remember a time when you failed in your past. Starting from the year and month you failed, write a short timeline of the steps you took next and how you arrived at the present day. What were you learning about yourself in the process of rebounding? (If you need example, there's one on page 108 of *The Artist's Joy*.)

ÉTUDE: "Dear Me" Letter

Write a letter of condolence to yourself when you feel rejected or face failure. In the letter, be as specific as possible, reminding yourself of your strength and resilience. Name a few things you love about yourself, especially those unrelated to your creative expression. Say all the things you long to hear. Read the letter out loud to yourself in the mirror.



Chapter 9: Ode to Feedback



Self-Coaching Questions for When You Receive Feedback:

1. What can I learn about myself here?
2. Do I agree with this person's assessment of me? What parts of their feedback have some truth in them? What parts are categorically wrong?
3. Am I taking this personally? What other tender spots or creative wounds does this touch on in me?
4. Do I know, respect, and admire this person criticizing me?
5. What boundaries do I need to set around when and how I receive feedback?

One true thing:

Étude: Naming Everybody

(This one is inspired by Martha Beck's exercise in *Finding Your Own North Star: Claiming the Life You Were Meant to Live*.)

List the top five most painful pieces of feedback you have ever received and the names of those who gave them.



If you can't think of specific words they said, write the names of those who have been most critical of you.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

List the top five most positive pieces of feedback you have ever received (could be a compliment or helpful constructive criticism) and the names of those who gave them.



If you can't think of specific words they said, write the names of those who champion you most.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



If you can't think of five, leave them blank. Let the fact that you can't remember reveal the lasting impact it has had or hasn't had.

What kind of relationship with feedback do you have now?

Étude: Naming Everybody continued

My Creative Everybody Committee:

List the individuals whom you trust to give feedback and counsel on your creative endeavors.

Questions to ask before adding people to this list:

- Are they calling me toward my truest, most joyful, creative self, even when that means bucking the status quo?
- Do they have a conflict of interest? Meaning, if I behave or perform in a certain way, would it affect them in some way, positive or negative?
- Do I feel shame (less-than, somehow flawed) when I am in their presence?
- Do I respect and admire them?
- Are they in the “ring,” doing creative work themselves? Do I like or admire their art and their career?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Étude: Naming Everybody continued

My Personal Everybody Committee:

List the individuals who you trust to give feedback and counsel on your personal life.

Questions to ask before adding people to this list:

- Are they calling me toward my truest self, even when that means bucking the status quo?
- Do they have a conflict of interest, meaning if I behave or perform a certain way would it affect them in some way, positive or negative?
- Do I feel shame (less-than, somehow flawed) when I am in their presence?
- Do they have a joyful, stable, fulfilling life?
- Martha Beck: “If you had a baby and were forced to leave your child to be raised by other people, whom would you choose?”

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

If you have trouble listing five, that’s okay. There is no designated number of Everybody committee members needed for a joyful life. What matters is your intentionality and awareness about whose feedback you absorb.

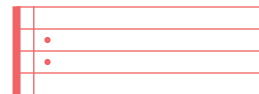
Write a couple of words or phrases of encouragement that your Everybody Committee might say here:



Bonus Étude: Create a Smile File

Collect meaningful feedback (compliments or constructive criticism that help you) and put it somewhere on your computer or in a specific journal with the date and person’s name. Work to hone your skill of discernment at all costs.

Chapter 10: Ode to Abundance



Self-Coaching Questions:

1. In what company or around which people do you feel most competitive?
2. What fears are behind your feelings of scarcity?
3. What areas of your life could benefit from creative problem-solving?
4. Does competition motivate you or burn you out? What other feelings does it bring up?
5. Who are your biggest competitors? Have you reached out to them in friendship and community? What would that feel like?

One true thing:

ÉTUDE: Lens Shifting

This Étude is adapted from “The Anatomy: The Foundational Coaching Course,” created by Quinn Simpson and McKenzie Cerri, founders of Graydin. It allows you to state where you stand today and what stories you are telling yourself about your situation, and it offers a fun way to try on new lenses for seeing things differently to overcome creative block.

First, let's name your situation and current lens.

1. Choose one creative challenge you are facing right now. Write the facts about what you are experiencing without using any adjectives (descriptive words).



I am editing my book. I spend three or four hours daily working on this project of 50,000+ words. It takes time, but it also takes energy.



Your Challenge:

2. Now write all the adjectives (descriptive words) that come up when you think of this challenge.



hard, time-consuming, overwhelming, exhausting, seeming never to end, creatively draining.



Your descriptive words:

3. Pick one lens that best describes the way you see your challenge.



Current Lens—overwhelming.



Your Current Lens:

ÉTUDE: Lens Shifting continued

For this exercise, you will need three works of visual art (by someone besides you). They can truly be from any time period, medium, or style. I've given you some examples you can do a quick internet search to view, but if you are sitting in a coffee shop or anywhere there are works of visual art, use those. (For a full description of this Étude, including examples of each prompt, see page 137 of *The Artist's Joy*.)

Picasso, *Girl in the Mirror*

Sherald, *Portrait of Michelle Obama*

Pollock, *Autumn Rhythm*

Take each of the paintings above or those you have chosen and go through the following exercise:

1. Close your eyes and put yourself into the work of art.
2. Imagine embodying the image.
3. What does it feel like to be inside this frame?
4. How does whatever is depicted in the image see or experience the world?
5. What lens is the artist or the creator of this work of art peering through?

Jot down a few adjectives that describe the lenses each work of art evokes for you.



Lenses for

Work of art #1

Work of art #2

Work of art #3

Circle one lens per image you'd like to explore further.

ÉTUDE: Lens Shifting continued

Now, take each of those lenses and return to your current situation from page 28.

Look through each of the lenses you parsed out from different works of art.

Ask yourself, what would it be like to look at my current situation through the lens of each one?

Name your lenses here and explore how they shift your perspective.



Lens 1:



Lens 2:

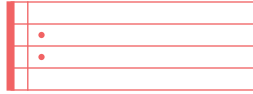


Lens 3:

What have you learned in this Étude?

What lens was helpful today?

Chapter 11: Courage



Self-Coaching Questions:

1. What would you do if you were not afraid of failing?
2. Look at your creative routine: how is it working for you now? Revisit chapter 3 for ideas about deepening your creative devotion.
3. What do the negative inner voices say to you when you step beyond your comfort zone?
4. Are your thoughts generally encouraging or discouraging you? How would your positive inner voices answer the negative outbursts? Write a short letter to your negative inner voices in your journal.
5. Who in your life seems to have a lot of creative courage? Interview them like I did Emmie. How do they do hard things?

One true thing:

ÉTUDE: Your “Why (for Now)”

Review the Études responses for chapters 4, 5, and 6 and read your responses. By now, you should have a fairly good idea of what matters to you and a list of your dreams and goals you have on deck.

Follow the prompts to name the Why (for Now):

Describe the current season of your life:

What are your biggest goals in this season?

What do you need most right now?

What natural barriers in life are framing this season (i.e., graduation day, kids starting school, residency ending)?

What is possible in this season? What is not?

Who is walking alongside you on the hard days?

Season title:

ÉTUDE: Your “Why (for Now)” continued

What makes you feel most alive lately?

What is uniquely yours to do in this moment of your life?

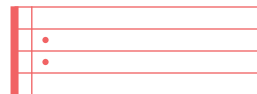
Where do the world’s needs meet your gifts?

What do your friends/colleagues/random strangers say they love most about you?

Name your Why (for Now): Why do you do what you do in this season? What is your purpose in this season?

My Why (for Now):

Chapter 12: Ode to Self-Forgiveness



Self-Coaching Questions:

1. What is hardest about self-forgiveness for you? Anger? Pride?
2. Which parts of your creative practice feel most personal to you?
3. How are love and forgiveness connected in your life experience?
4. What decisions are ahead that will require courage and compassion? How will you know when it is time to leap?
5. Who in your life knows about your creative failures or U-turns? Whom do you trust enough to share them with?

One true thing:

ÉTUDE: Self-Forgiveness List

In column 2 to the right side of the paper, list all the painful things that sting in your creative life. And then in column 1, to the left of that, write: I forgive you for . . . by each one



1

I forgive you for...

I forgive you for...

I forgive you for...

2

Not winning that audition

Failing to follow up

Not being able to please her



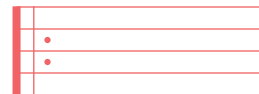
Remember to fill in column 2 first.

1

2

Read them out loud to yourself. What is coming up for you now?

Chapter 13: Ode to Worthiness



Self-Coaching Questions:

1. What moments besides salary negotiations make you question your worthiness?
2. How do you satisfy your ego when you're feeling insecure? Write down any thoughts you have that begin with "at least I . . ."
3. What messages are being sent in your art form about the "if onlys"? What practices might help us stop equating our work with our worth?
4. According to Brené Brown, courage, compassion, and connection are three things we do to practice worthiness. On the next page, make a list of activities, relationships, creative endeavors, and other things you are doing already that fall under each category. How courageous, compassionate, and connected do you feel? Give yourself a score for each one. from 0 to 10. Write your total here:
5. Who do you know that needs reminding of their innate worthiness?

One true thing:

Make a list of activities, relationships, creative endeavors, and other things you are doing already that fall under each category. Give yourself a score 1-10. How courageous, compassionate, and connected do you feel?

 Courage

Score:

 Compassion

Score:

 Connection

Score:

ÉTUDE: “If Onlys” and the Information They Give

Write down a couple of your “if only” statements and how you would feel if you’d accomplished them (see page 179 in *The Artist’s Joy* for examples.)

1. If only I was. . .

2. If only I had. . .

3. If only it was. . .

4. If only there was. . .

If I achieved these or if these were true, then I would feel. . .

What dreams are at the heart of these desires?

What fears appear when you consider these dreams?

ÉTUDE: "If Onlys" and the Information They Give continued

Things that do not make me worthy:

Worthiness words

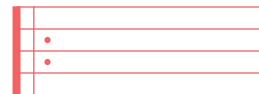
I am _____ even if I am _____.

I am worthy of _____ even though _____.

My _____ is good, even when _____.

Write more:

Chapter 14: Ode to Healing



Self-Coaching Questions:

1. How are you benefiting from staying creatively blocked? What pain might be hiding underneath your block(s)?
2. Creativity is one resource for healing. What are others?
3. What synchronicities have you experienced in your life in general? Any while reading this book?
4. What do you believe about the existence of a Higher Power? How do these beliefs inform your creative life?
5. Who do you discuss spiritual or philosophical topics with? Do you feel accepted and seen in these interactions?

One true thing:

ÉTUDE: Name Your Creative Impulse Metaphor

Choose a metaphor for your creative impulse.



See page 192 in *The Artist's Joy* for examples.

What does creativity feel like to you?



Write a metaphor here:

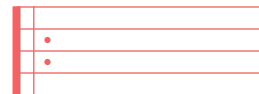
What resonates with you about the metaphor you chose?

Does it feel like a different metaphor in different art forms? How so?

How has it felt different at other points in your life or stage in your development?

Name the lens that lies under your metaphor. Return to the Étude in chapter 10 for tips on shifting your lens if needed.

Chapter 15: Ode to Joy



Self-Coaching Questions:

1. How do the actions in your life reflect your deeply held beliefs?
2. What beliefs of others have you found most inspiring? Harmful?
3. Do you associate your creative practice with a particular physical space? Describe it.
4. What unspoken or spoken ways of being are there in your art form? Do you uphold these with joy or begrudgingly?
5. Who in your life can you ask to witness your oath signing? Who can you stand as an accountability partner for?

One true thing:

ÉTUDE: Your Artist's Oath

Flip back in this journal and use your responses, heart words, helpful lenses, creative impulse metaphor, et cetera, to name how you want to show up in your creative life.

Here are a few questions to guide you:

What do you “joyfully swear”? What promises feel important to keep?

Code of Conduct: How do you want to show up? What do you want always to do or sometimes do? What things are prohibited?

Name any challenges and helpful lenses from the étude at the end of chapter 10 and explore how you'd like to respond to them specifically.

Who is this oath for? Who isn't it for? What wise words from any artist saints do you want to remember, and what quotes or memories do you want to shape how you treat yourself and others?

True Things: Pull all the true things you wrote from each chapter and add them to your oath.



When you're done writing your oath, make space for your signature and the signature of a witness. Consider asking someone from your Everybody Committee. Share with a friend when you're ready. Put your oath somewhere you can see it.

ÉTUDE: Your Artist's Oath continued



Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness signature: _____

Date: _____

BONUS ÉTUDE:

La Cuarentena—A Ritual for Being Done

The Curtain Call Questions

Celebrate What and how will you celebrate?

Grieve What do you need to grieve? What do you wish had been different?

Notice What synchronicities showed up? What surprised you? If you are a person of faith, ask: Where did God show up in this work?

Hope What hopes do you have now? What prayer or wish do you send future “ones” who will experience your art?

As an act of celebration and self-care, create your own ritual of *la cuarentena*. When you finish something, how will you rest, reflect, and listen—to your body, life, and spirit?



Brainstorm ideas here.