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# CREATIVITY + ACTION IGNITES CHANGE



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CREATIVITY COACHING \* PRIVATE OR GROUP



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Thank you for downloading *Creativity + Action Ignites Change*. In this e-book I aim to help you find clarity in your dreams and empower you to take action.

The great news is that just by reading this, you've already taken one action to improve your life! So let's keep that action chain going and get started!



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In one of my favorite romantic comedies, a bit player opens the film with “Welcome to Hollywood, what’s your dream?” and the same character closes the film with “This is Hollywood. Some dreams come true, some don’t. But everybody has a dream...keep on dreamin.”

In Los Angeles, we are inundated with dreamers. I was one of them. I am STILL one of them. This club of dreamers knows exactly what our dreams are. What so many of us don’t know, is how to live that dream, or rather, how to live life to the fullest on the path toward our dream. Often times, the dream serves as a beacon, a distant guide, calling to us; however, on the path between our present reality and the dream, we face hills and valleys, that are sometimes necessary for a well-rounded life path.







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I've faced the mountains and the valleys, and at times I've stayed in the valley and set up shop. I was not ready to face the rejections of this life. But always at the lowest points, I'd hit bottom, and think, "there is something I can do. I can start on a creative recovery. And that alone will make me feel better enough to start climbing out of this valley of depression."

The first time I worked through this process I was in my early twenties fresh out of a dysfunctional, abusive relationship. I bounced back and became a theatre artist, focused on my gifts, and achieved success doing the thing I loved, acting. I broke my face in four places, years later, and was forced to hurdle another difficult time. I didn't hurdle until after I hit bottom, but by this time had an incredible support system of other artists and we met every week, until we were all vibrating with success. I got married, and miscarried 10 weeks into my first pregnancy. Sure enough, I plummeted again.

My most recent valley was a debilitating autoimmune disease diagnosis. This disease not only crippled me to a point in which I had to use a cane to walk, but it crippled my brain chemistry as well. The struggle was real. Before this time, I figured that if my circumstances were amazing, my mindset would usually run parallel.





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My life's circumstances were ideal and beautiful. I had two young babies, I had married the love of my life, I was touring a classical show, and I was miserable. It was then that I started to realize that if my brain chemistry was off, I'd be off. I had to control my own thoughts, and I could choose to be happy, or wallow. Circumstances were a great push, in either direction, but they were not the "be all, end all."

I am still working on this, and believe it is a life long quest.

So, let us begin. Let us begin slowly, and for the sake of your vulnerable self, gently.





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## What is your dream?

Write it down.

Now read it. Out loud.



Now, what if you read this and think “wait, that’s not it.” Or “how on earth is this going to happen?” or maybe, you are confused and don’t even know if you have a dream anymore or at all? Or perhaps your dream has shifted. Your life has changed. You have gotten married, had kids, or gone through the heavy challenges of divorce, or losing a loved one; and your perspective has dramatically changed.

The celebrated author, Elizabeth Gilbert, of *Eat, Pray Love* fame, does a speech on Oprah Winfrey’s series, and offers up an example of someone who does not have a passion, or any idea of what they want out of life. Elizabeth had known what she wanted to be since she had been in Kindergarten. I too, remember very distinctly listing “Actress, Writer, and Teacher” in that order. That sheet of paper with my projected dreams was my blueprint for all three. At different times, I have enjoyed working in all three arenas, but I know



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several people who were and still are not so sure. They are not to be dismissed as the “non dreamers.” In fact, some of them are so interested in so many things, it is difficult for them to consolidate and exist with just a couple.

With or without a concrete dream, we can excavate a path. The path is simply a throughway to a more well rounded life of joy and happiness. Plan out your entire “Perfect Day,” based on the given circumstances of your reality. If you are waiting tables every day to make ends meet, when are you going to carve out time for what truly makes you happy? Plan out, down to the minute, what your day would look like with a subtle infusion of your dream. Plan out the entire week. Now truly, sometimes our given circumstances don’t allow for unending leisure and luxury. The mother who cares for her differently abled child full time, does not have the same luxury as the mother with full time help, who might be able to try sculpting classes in her spare time. The student who has to work evenings waiting tables, has a much different reality than the student with the scholarship, or the trust fund. Design the day for your given circumstances, and give yourself room for surprises. I go into each day with an idea of how I want the day to look, but even with a clear trajectory, something minimal (or extreme) can knock us off course. Yesterday, my youngest was struck with the stomach flu, and my day





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became about laundry, the BRAT diet, and cartoons. There will always be hiccups, but once everything gets back to “normal,” do your best to plan a perfect day, week, month...

Now, with no thought regarding your reality, plan out a perfect day in the idealistic world of your “dreams realized.” This is your fantasy. This is the day you visualize every night before going to bed. Visualize that you have all the money you need to fulfill your fantasies, money to take care of everyone on your “caregiver’s list,” glorious, ample amounts of time to do what you love, and resources to live out creative projects you’ve been mulling over for years. What would your day look like? Don’t be surprised if people that you would assume would be in your Perfect Dream Day, somehow are edited out of the final version. Pay attention to all of it. Parents love their children more than anything in the world, but sometimes an



ideal day is all about much needed autonomy. Don’t judge the final exploration. Allow it to unfold organically. Now look at the two days and compare them with each other. Does anything cross over/intercept?



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What is the same? What is different? Is there anything that you can start exploring now, from your Dream Days?

Now, what if you are one of those individuals who might not know WHAT their passion is? If you are this person, and feel as if you have been on an aimless wander, start listing activities that interest you.

Even if it is a minimal glimmer of interest, and you think, "I sure do enjoy watching movies. What would it be like to make them?"

WRITE it down. List classes that you never in a million years would DARE to actually take. And then ask "why not?" If it's something that you are afraid to do because of how you will appear to your friends or the people who pose as "friends" on Facebook, it's time to examine that fear, and find out why it is embedded in your psyche. If you've listed trapeze class, and won't ever take it because your shoulder was recently dislocated, then that's what I refer to as a "healthy fear." You're protecting yourself. But if you have always wanted to do stand up comedy, and are afraid that people will laugh at you (or in this case, they won't laugh at you), then we need to start removing the blocks and fears that keep you from doing something you may love, and will ultimately transform your life into one of meaning. If your dream is to have a family, then you need to do



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everything you can to get out and meet people that you will respect and ultimately love. It always floors me when someone whines that they want marriage and children, or even just a meaningful relationship, but refuses to leave the comfort of his/her couch and that soul sucking series on Netflix. Where does this fear that keeps us glued to that couch come from?

When facing a possible Renaissance in our lives, we sometimes close off and sink back into the familiar landscape of depression.

Depression, however, is a liar. It will tell you that anything you try is futile, and frankly, sometimes it is more comfortable (translation-less work) to stay in that familiar dark place. However, more and more we are learning, as illustrated in the book *Flow*, written by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (how can you be depressed after reading a name like that?) that levels of joy are within our control.



Apathy and depression are often times a result of a handful of lies we have told ourselves. And over time they change shapes, and ultimately become beliefs. When examined and re-examined, false beliefs do not equal fact. For example, as a woman, it is difficult for me to ASK for something, or to make negotiations for myself. It is a





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proven fact that women find it more challenging to negotiate for themselves than it is for other people. I can negotiate for other people extremely well, but in attempting to be an advocate for myself, I have faltered so many times along the way. I don't want to seem "pushy" or as if I'm "nagging." However, the reality of the situation, is that I deserve whatever it is I am negotiating for, and the only thing I should fear is my lack of action to feed my dream. The fear of being "too strong" is embedded deeply into my subconscious. Although they vary from artist to artist, human being to human being, we all have a certain number of beliefs. The beliefs, when positive, can serve our confidence and strengthen our sense of self, but the minute someone dashes those beliefs (usually sometime during our adolescence), the negativity has its own power, and those beliefs can be misinterpreted as fact.

Without too much thought of the past and negative circumstances, identify a fear of yours. Now, next to this fear, list the reasons you believe it exists. Who convinced you that your fear was/is based on fact? Is it merely a belief? And is there a kernel of untruth that you can find? If not, that's ok. But it is necessary to identify what scares us about launching forward toward our goals. What stops you from moving into action? What have you practiced and excelled with in the past? Self sabotage? Procrastination? Overwork? Health Negligence?



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In order to move past these fears, we have to find joy in our creativity. Creativity is the source of 99.9% of dreams, and even when an aspect of a dream is missing, an active creative person, is in constant motion. There are swerves, sometimes rewinds, but ultimately when the heart is infused with the passion for life and creative endeavor, not much can stand in the way of marrying your dream with your reality. Circumstances can slow things down, and circumstances can pose hurdles. To quote Julia Cameron, author of *The Artist's Way*, (and my hero), she talks about "gains disguised as losses." This happens all of the time. Everyone fails, but not everyone can rebound. Instead of allowing failures and negative circumstances to level you (I'm not talking about heavy duty trauma), if you can brush yourself off, and get back into the flow, you're better equipped than most.

After you have planned out your perfect day, and named your fears, it's time to start finding joy in your creativity. We are all creative. You may have buried it awhile ago, with the help of those fears that you have named, but it's in there. Most likely it peeked out during your Perfect Day, and now just needs a more obvious role in your day to day life. I am a big fan of journaling. Julia Cameron calls them "Morning Pages." Whatever you want to label it, writing in a journal helps to affirm and clear out the mind garbage. Write three pages a



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day. Ideally in the mornings. Complain, dump out, emote all you want on those pages. That is what they are there for.

Commit yourself to one month of journaling every morning (or afternoon, or evening), and examine yourself at the end of those 4-5 weeks.

It's time to get to work...

Visit me at [www.JenniferSeifert.com](http://www.JenniferSeifert.com) to continue this journey.

