

## The Artist Way

### 1. Week 1:

#### 1.1 TASKS

- a. Every morning, set your clock one-half hour early; get up and write three pages of longhand, stream of consciousness morning writing. Do not reread these pages or allow anyone else to read them. Ideally, stick these pages in a large manila envelope, or hide them somewhere welcome to the morning pages. They will change you.
  - i. This week, please be sure to work with your affirmations of choice and your blurts at the end of each days morning pages. Convert all blurts into positive affirmations
- b. Take yourself an artist date. You will do this every week for the duration of the course. A sample artist date: take five dollars and go to your local five and dime. Buy silly things like gold stars, tiny dinosaurs, some postcards, sparkly sequins, glue, a kid's scissors, crayons. You might give yourself a gold star on your envelope each day you write Just for fun.
- c. Time Travel: List three old enemies of your creative self-worth. Please be as specific as Possible in doing this exercise. Your historic monsters are the building block of your core negative beliefs. (Yes, rotten Sister Ann Rita from fifth grade does count, and the rotten thing she said to you does matter. Put her in.) This is your monster hall of fame. More monsters will come to you as you work through your recovery. It is always necessary to acknowledge creative judges and grieve them. Otherwise; they become creative scar tissue and block your growth.
- d. Time Travel: Select and write out one honor story from your monster hall of fame. You do not need to write long or much, but do jot down whatever details come back to you—the room you were in, the way people looked at you, the way you felt, what your parent said or didn't say when you told about it Include whatever rankles you about the incident. "And then I remember she gave me this real fake smile and patted my hand". You may find it cathartic to draw a sketch of your old monster or to clip out an image that evokes the incident for you. Cartoon trashing your monster, or at least draw a nice red X through it.
- e. Write a letter to the editor in your defense. Mail it to yourself It is great fun to write this letter in the voice of your wounded artist child: ' To whom it may con-Sister Ann Rita is a jerk and has pig eyes and I can too spell!"
- f. Time Travel: List three old champions of your creative self-worth. This is your hail of champions, those who wish you and your creativity well. Be specific. Every encouraging word counts Even if you disbelieve a compliment, record it. It may well be true.
  - ii. If you are stuck for compliments, go back through your time-travel log and look for positive memories. When, where and why did you feel good about yourself? Who gave you affirmation?

iii. Additionally, you may wish to write the compliment out and decorate it. Post it near where you do your morning pages or on the dashboard of your car. I put mine on the chassis of my computer to cheer me as I write.

- g. Time Travel: Select and write out one happy piece of encouragement. Write a thank-you letter. Mail it to yourself or to the long-lost mentor.
- h. Imaginary Lives: If you had five other lives to lead, what would you do in each of them? I would be a pilot, a cowhand, a physicist, a psychic, a monk. You might be a scuba diver, a cop, a writer of children's books, a football player a belly dancer, a painter, a performance artist, a history teacher, a healer, a coach, a scientist, a doctor; a Peace Corps worker, a psychologist, a fisherman, a minister, an auto mechanic, a carpenter, a sculptor, a lawyer, a painter a computer hacker, a soap-opera star, a country singer, a rock- and-roll drummer. Whatever occurs to you, jot it down. Do not over think this exercise.

iv. The point of these lives is to have fun in them— more fun than you might be having in this one. Look over your list and select one. Then do it this week. For instance, if you put down *country singer*, can you pick a guitar? if you dream of being a cowhand, what about some horseback riding?

- i. In working with affirmations and blurts, very often injuries and monsters swim back to us. Add these to your list as they occur to you work with each blurt individually. Turn each negative into an affirmative positive.
- j. Take your artist for a walk, the two of you. A brisk twenty—minute walk can dramatically alter consciousness.

1.2 **CREATIVE AFFIRMATIONS:** *An affirmation is a strong, positive statement that something is already so*

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- a. I am a channel for God's creativity, and my work comes to good.
- b. My dreams come from God and God has the power to accomplish them.
- c. As I create and listen, I will be led.
- d. Creativity is the creator's will for me.
- e. My creativity heals myself and others.
- f. I am allowed to nurture my artist.
- g. Through the use of a few simple tools, my creativity will flourish.
- h. Through the use of my creativity, I serve God.
- i. My creativity always leads me to truth and love.
- j. My creativity leads me to forgiveness and self-forgiveness.
- k. There is a divine plan of goodness for me.
- l. There is a divine plan of goodness for my work.

- m. As I listen to the creator within, I am led.
- n. As I listen to my creativity I am led to my creator.
- o. I am willing to create.
- p. I am willing to learn to let myself create.
- q. I am willing to let God create through me.
- r. I am willing to be of service through my creativity.
- s. I am willing to experience my creative energy.
- t. I am willing to use my creative talents.

1.3 **CHECK-IN** : You will do this check every week. If you start running your creative week Sunday to Sunday, do your check-ins each Saturday. Remember that this recovery is *yours*. What you think is important, and it will become increasingly interesting to you as you progress. You may want to do check-ins in your morning-pages notebook, It's best to answer by hand and allow about twenty minutes to respond. The purpose of check- ins is to give you a journal of your creative journey. It is my hope that you will later share the tools with others and in doing so find your own notes invaluable.

- a. How many days this week did you do your morning pages? Seven out of seven, we always hope. How was the experience for you?
- b. Did you do your artist date this week? Yes, of course, we always hope. And yet artist dates can be remarkably difficult to allow yourself. What did you do? How did it feel?
- c. Were there any other issues this week that you consider significant for your recovery? Describe them.

*Go confidently in the direction of your dreams! Live the life you've imagined. As you simplify your life, the laws of the universe will be simpler. –Henry David Thoreau*