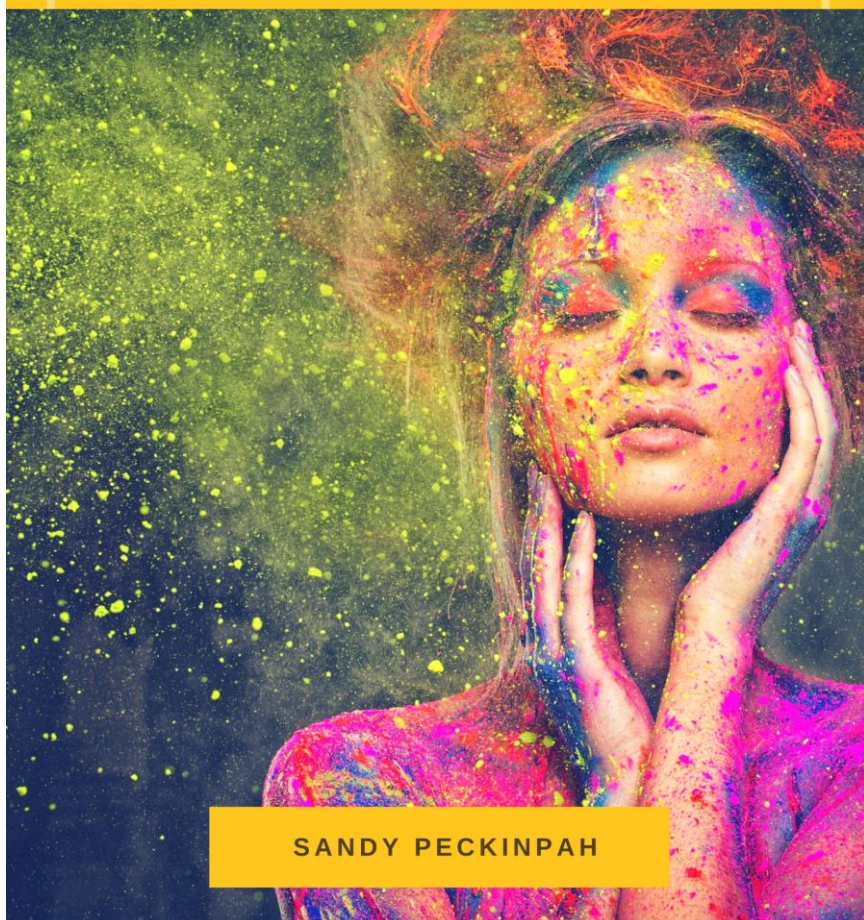


How to Develop The Creative Mindset

A CHECKLIST TO GET YOU STARTED
ON THE PATH TO A CREATIVE LIFE



SANDY PECKINPAH

Develop a Creative Mindset

A Checklist to Get You Started On the Path to a Creative Life

Sandy Peckinpah

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Checklist for the Creative Mindset

Are You Waiting on Inspiration, or is Inspiration Waiting on You?

For a video on this presentation, [visit my blog](#).

Many people believe they have to wait for inspiration to be creative, but what if I told you... ***your creativity is waiting on you?***

Steven Pressfield asks in his book, ***The War of Art***:

“Are you a writer who doesn’t write, a painter who doesn’t paint, an entrepreneur who never starts a venture? Then you know what resistance is... The resistance you feel is a force of nature.”

If you are stuck, you are not alone. Resistance is a normal and natural reaction to stepping into a creative life.

Inspiration lies dormant until it’s ignited. A creative calling is like building a fire. You have to lay down the paper and kindling, then the wood on top. But, the fire doesn’t light itself. *You* have to be the one to strike the match. The flame sometimes fizzles out, and you might have to strike the match two or three times. Keep going. Just strike again.

This is the perfect metaphor for writing, or doing anything creative. You feel the calling, but that alone won’t start the fire. Yet, a strategy for taking action will. I wrote 3 books and still couldn’t call myself a writer until I figured out the secret. I was waiting on inspiration, but I discovered inspiration was actually waiting on me.

I had to form a relationship with my creative self.

My next book was already there inside of me, taunting me to come out. I'd have fleeting ideas and sentences bombarding my daily thoughts. What I was missing was a strategy to commit to my creative work.

Your creative self is there inside of you. It's hanging around in the form of a whisper, a nudge, even jealousy when you see other people doing what you wish you could do.

Allow yourself to believe you have a creative destiny. Now, it's time to strike the match.

If you're uncertain, just read through this booklet and see if it sparks something inside of you. Remember, a calling is shaped and molded by taking small steps. With each step, a new one is revealed.

Following is the strategy you'll be using. These are important steps in forming a brand new relationship with your desire to be creative. You'll be applying these steps to your calling whether you desire to be a writer, an artist, an entrepreneur, a photographer.... The list is endless!

◆ **Create Your Calling**

◆ **Create a Strategy**

◆ **Create a Commitment**

◆ **Create a Contract**

◆ **Create a Ritual**

◆ **Create a Declaration**

CREATIVITY

CREATE YOUR CALLING

Create Your Calling

What is your heart's desire? What do you think about and know you've been evading because you just don't feel the inspiration flows as freely as it should?

Creativity plays a complex role in our lives. It's not just limited to the arts. It's a critical component to our success in all areas of life. It doesn't matter who you are or what your profession is, you use your creative mind to construct your world.

I believe that everyone is born with a creative destiny. It's an under acknowledged part of your brain's capability. We often dismiss it when we say, "Oh I'm not a creative person." But look at your childhood. You finger painted on white butcher paper and built sand castles at the shore. We are all creative. We were born that way.

You likely gave up on it when you stopped believing in your young magical life that creativity built. It's time to restore faith in your ability to create and lead an inspired life.

Art goes beyond the role you think it plays. It's not limited to a painting, or a song; it's the way you view the world and that view offers you potential to create it.

Creativity heightens your ability to expand your areas of expertise. It gives life to new ideas, and helps you see things in a new way. It opens the door to

possibilities in your life and career. It just makes you feel better about the life you are living.

Take the time to go through the discovery process.

Ask yourself these questions... and write down the answers:

- **What did you spend hours doing as a child? Acting? Drawing? Writing?**
- **What work from other people causes you to feel a creative yearning?
Envy? Jealousy?**
- **What do you love to spend hours thinking about, researching or reading?**
- **What artistic activities soothe you?**
- **What do others say you have a talent for?**
- **Ask the question you've asked before... *Someday I want to...* and fill in the blank.**

Make no mistake...

There is something calling you, otherwise you wouldn't have considered downloading this book. You might not know for sure what it is, but if you take one step toward finding it, then the next will be revealed.

Jeff Goins, in his book, ***Real Artists Don't Starve***, says...

"Your art is never beholden to a single form. You can always change and evolve, and the best artists do this regularly. They understand that in order to thrive, you have to master more than one skill."

Just as you were never meant to finger paint forever, your creativity has an evolution of it's own. The more you add to your life experiences, it will lead you to the next step that was just waiting in the wings.

Your creative calling is asking for your attention now!

All of us dream of what we want to be doing in life, and we *hope* the opportunity will present itself. But, while we're busy dreaming and unsure of what to do, the opportunity often passes us by.

Let me introduce you to the creative person inside of you who is fully capable of becoming creatively alive... and here is the very next step....

CREATIVITY

CREATE A COMMITMENT

Create a Commitment

What is commitment? It's telling your mind you WILL do something. But, how can you commit to something when you're not sure?

So much focus has been on finding that *one thing* you do well, that often people lose their courage because they are afraid it's not the right one.

That's simply too much pressure. From the list below, allow your mind to wander with possibility. See if you feel a spark and explore the thought of taking the next step... Making a commitment.

- Writing a book or a blog?
- Becoming an entrepreneur in any field of your choosing?
- Art? Drawing? Painting? Sculpture?
- Photography?
- Event Planning?
- Music? Singing? Playing an Instrument? Writing songs? DJ?
- Becoming a Fitness Instructor? Yoga? Running?
- Becoming a chef? A caterer?
- Gardening? Landscaping?

- Floral Designer?
- Interior Design?
- Interior Design? Architecture?
- Podcasting? Webinars?
- Teaching what you know? Coaching?
- Creating Courses for things you know and can teach others?
- Creating a Travel Itinerary... seeing the world!
- Training animals? Dog rescue?
- Image Stylist? Makeup? Hair stylist?
- Bee keeping?
- Creating Bath Products? Handmade Soaps?
- Anything that makes your heart flutter... write it below:

The list above suggests a handful of ideas in the arts, but there are so many more! Did the list nudge anything inside of you? Just choose one thing to get you started.

I began with writing a children's book, but it led to me wanting to write my personal story of survival after loss.

If you commit to the discovery process, one thing will lead to another and another. Then, one day you'll wake up knowing what your art is. You'll recognize the flutter of excitement when the sun rises and it's the joy you feel when you realize you get to spend another day doing what you love.

It is normal to be resistant to a creative commitment. Steven Pressfield calls that resistance *a force of nature*. It can exist forever until you are willing to say yes to your creative endeavor.

That's what this checklist is all about, defining your next step and taking it.

CREATIVITY

CREATE A STRATEGY

Create a Strategy

Start thinking of your creative work as non-negotiable. For my 4th book, I strategized my writing time instead of waiting for inspiration. I booked it into my calendar just like it was an appointment.

I committed to the work process between 4:00 pm and 8:00 pm every night. It takes approximately 21 days for a practice to become a habit. Once writing became a habit, I looked forward to it!

If you haven't realized your art yet, you're not making it important enough.

The key to making your artistic expression come alive is to craft a strategy to make it happen. Make it as important as showing up to work on time.

We all have a work life. Whatever your job is, it demands a *creative you*. If you're a real estate agent you have to master the contract, the negotiations, and solve problems. These are learned strategies that come to life through creativity.

Build creativity into your week. Create spots that are devoted to the process of creating.

You have to show up for creativity just as you show up for your job.

Below is the page of a planner showing how I schedule writing “appointments” into my creative workweek. (I also put this schedule into my iPhone Calendar.) I hang this planner sheet on my bulletin board next to my desk.

My Creativity Plan


ACTIVITY:
Writing

RITUAL:
*Desk cleared
music
Cappuccino*

<p>TIME COMMITMENT:</p> <p>M <i>Start blog outline 4:00 pm – 5:00 p.m</i></p>	
<p>T <i>6:00 pm – 8:00 pm book chapter</i></p>	<p>OBJECTIVE: <i>Finish chapter 4 of book</i></p>
<p>W <i>blog completion draft 4:00 – 5:00 p.m</i></p>	<p><i>Complete 1000 word blog for Medium.com</i></p>
<p>TH <i>9:00 a.m – 12:00 pm book chapter</i></p>	<p>NOTES: <i>Research photos for blog.</i></p>
<p>F <i>9:00 a.m – 10:00 am Edit book chapter Final blog edit</i></p>	<p>WEEKEND: <i>Submit blog to publish Monday morning</i></p>

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On the next page is a planner page you can print out multiples of, three hole punch them, and put in a binder to use.

Now create your own strategy in the planner.

My Creativity Plan



TIME COMMITMENT:

M

T

W

TH

F

ACTIVITY:

RITUAL:

OBJECTIVE:

NOTES:

WEEKEND:

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CREATIVITY

CREATE A RITUAL

The Ritual

This is one of my favorite tools. The Ritual.

There's a reason why people use rituals... because it works. Rituals create patterns of behavior to trigger certain outcomes.

I'm so grateful my late husband taught me the value of rituals to begin the writing process. Since he was a professional writer for television and movies, he had to write every day. He couldn't wait for inspiration... he had to *create inspiration*.

He started his writing day with a cup of coffee and then read a few chapters of a book. He loved westerns, mysteries, and biographies. Then, he wrote a letter to someone. Usually it was handwritten. The process of handwriting opens the flow of the mind-body connection. He'd address the envelope, walk it to the mailbox and send it on its way.

Once he sat back down, he was ready to start writing. He also built breaks into his writing day for lunch and phone calls. It's important to build these breaks to give your mind a chance to rest.

He never went home until dinnertime, even if writing wasn't going well. His commitment to his work kept him writing.

He considered a “good day” as completing 10 pages of a script. Even if it needed massive rewrites, it was still a creative accomplishment.

Most of the time he was under contract, so he had to deliver. However, even when he was working on a script he hadn’t sold yet, he used the same rituals, strategies, and commitment to keep writing.

My own ritual begins with making an afternoon latte, lighting a candle, and playing music. Then, I close my eyes and ask to be open to words flowing.

Often, I add the reading of affirmations. (I’ve included them on the next page.)

Affirmations are positive reinforcement for the brain, and they allow you to affirm what you want in the present and your future. By speaking as though they’ve already happened, it sends a message to your brain... and it starts the momentum!

*“When you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.” – Paulo Coelho, author, **The Alchemist***

A ritual can be simple or complex. Do whatever works for you.

Now, Use the secret strategy of “rituals” to begin and continue your creative commitment.

Write Your Ritual Here:

Creativity Affirmations

Say these aloud... you're planting the seeds of creativity as you read them!

I am grateful for the infusion of creativity into my life each and every day.

I am grateful for the words that flow into my writing, speaking, and every day interactions with people.

I appreciate the connections I am making and continue to make and know this leads to greater influence and impact on the world.

I am open, willing and eager to learn from others and act on opportunities that come my way.

I am keenly aware that I'm here for a reason and every life experience has enriched and enhanced my purpose, no matter how difficult or challenging.

I know, without a doubt, the universe is my endless resource for resilience and its wish is for me to use my creative work to motivate others through my words.

I am grateful I have the words, fortitude, and attitude to keep sharing my message and so grateful to be earning money doing what I love.

I'm appreciative that I am constantly learning new ways and creating new things to help my audience and my clients grow and transform.

I am so thankful for those who love my work and creativity. It's their continued support and expectations of me that help me stay inspired and in the flow so I consistently enjoy creating new content.

It feels good to know that who I am and my creativity is enough to make a difference in this world.

I know creativity comes from my beliefs, my willingness, and my experiences, and I am forever thankful to be able to tap into that flow through commitment, rituals, and dedication.

Love for myself and others is what drives me, keeps me on track, and inspires me to continue.

I AM a creative being.

Inspiring and Uplifting Books On Creativity and Mindset

I've used the words and wisdom of others as part of my "ritual" in creativity. Sometimes it feels like you read just the right page, or just the right quote, and it kicks you into gear.

Here are some of my favorites. Most are available in libraries or through bookstores or online. Some also have audio versions available, too.

Big Magic, Creative Living Beyond Fear, by Elizabeth Gilbert (author of *Eat, Pray, Love*)

The War of Art, by Steven Pressfield, (author of *The Legend of Baggar Vance*)
Turning Pro, by Steven Pressfield

Real Artists Don't Starve, by Jeff Goins

You Are a Writer, So Start Acting Like One by Jeff Goins

The Art of Work, by Jeff Goins

The Artist's Way by Julia Cameron

It's Never Too Late to Begin Again, *Discovering Creativity and Meaning at Midlife and Beyond*, by Julia Cameron

Steal Like an Artist: 10 Things Nobody Told You About Being Creative,
by [Austin Kleon](#)

On Writing, a Memoir of the Craft, by Stephen King

The Book of Awakening, Having the Life You Want by Being Present to the Life You Have, by Mark Nepo (This is Oprah's daily thought insight. I've been using it for years.)

Bird by Bird, Some Instructions on Writing and Life, by Anne Lamott

On Writing Well, The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction, by William Zinsser

I'm sure there are others that you could recommend to *me*! Please email me with your favorites, sandy@sandypeckinpah.com .

CREATIVITY

CREATE A CONTRACT

Create a Contract

Create a contract with yourself. Contracts are created for accountability and closing the deal. For you, closing the deal with your creative self means picking a project, committing, strategizing, then creating a commitment for completion.

My husband worked under contracts most of the time. He had to meet the target dates and the only way he could do this was to closely follow the contract for completion dates of outlines, first draft, rewrites, and completion.

Choose a quick project to begin. For example, if your desire is to start a blog, create a contract for that first blog. It would go something like this.

On the next page is an example of a writing contract for you to complete. Print it out, fill it in, sign it and date it. You can rework it to read according to your chosen creative endeavor.

Hang this up where you see it every day. If you can't trust yourself to complete a contract, then ask someone to hold you accountable. This can be a friend, colleague, or coach. Ask them to check in with you. The following page has an example of the Writer's Commitment Worksheet I use with my clients.



EMERGING WRITER MASTERMIND™

“I Am a Writer”

This is my declaration and commitment to writing.

Working Title:

I will commit to writing _____ per day, _____ days a week

Writing Completion Date:

Editing Completion Date:

Published Book in Hand:

Signature: _____ Date _____

CONGRATULATIONS...

You’ve just made a commitment you will never regret. It’s the wish and the dream you’ve had all along! Honor it, trust it, nurture it, and enjoy the process. You’re about to change lives... most of all, yours.

CREATIVITY

CREATE A DECLARATION

Create a Declaration

It took me the longest time to feel comfortable calling myself a writer. If you struggle with declaring yourself a writer, a chef, an artist... whatever your expression of creativity is... you're not alone.

Studies show that 70% of the population feel like a fraud at one time or another and tend to downplay their gifts and accomplishments. I wrote a blog for Thrive Global about it: [Stop Feeling Like an Imposter](#)... How to Gain Confidence and Credibility.

Can you relate to that feeling? It's very common, but also something you *can* change...by taking control of your creative destiny.

Steven Pressfield in his book, **The War of Art** says you can turn self-doubt into an ally if you let it:

"Self-doubt is an indicator of aspiration. It reflects the love, love of something we dream of doing, and desire, desire to do it."

I often think of Jeff Goins, a popular blogger and author, who shared the same doubts we all do when he first started out. One day while having coffee with a friend he said, "I just want to be a writer."

His friend replied,
“You *are* a writer, you just have to write!”

And that’s the difference!

You already *are* what you desire to be... you just have to do the work and start declaring it!

For the longest time, I never felt like a writer because my inspiration alone wasn’t holding me accountable. It wasn’t until I started *acting* like a writer that I felt I’d earned the title.

You’ve already taken the first step. By reading this booklet, you’ve just laid the groundwork for creating and implementing systems and accountability to achieve your creative momentum.

I’ve borrowed from Jeff Goins... My declaration now:
I am a writer... I just have to write.

Now take a moment to craft your own declaration:

I am a _____

I just have to _____

I’ve finally hit my stride and proudly wear my badge as “writer.” I *am* a writer, and I do write... every single day.

It took *a strategy, a commitment, a ritual, and doing the work.*

Now it's your turn.

Just close your eyes and imagine how great it will feel, then begin.

Along the way, don't be surprised when a "creative high" emerges. It's the best feeling in the world.



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I am so excited for you!

Let me know about your successes! sandy@sandypeckinpah.com

For more information on meeting your creative goals, visit:

www.SandyPeckinpah.com

You can read more about inspiration. Below are clickable links if you have the Kindle or PDF version of this booklet.

[It Begins With One Sentence](#)

[13 Concepts Picasso and I Agree On, Quotes From the Master on Living a Creative Life](#)

[Jump Starting Your Next Creative Project With 5 Intentional Strategies I Learned From a Successful Screenwriter](#)

[Stop Avoiding Your Creative Destiny, Get Started Now](#)

[What If Your Creative Calling Doesn't Back Down](#)

[How To Use the Power of Your Imagination to Create the Big Magic](#)

Happy Creating!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sandy". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large, looping 'S' and a trailing flourish.