

I'd love to help you along your creative journey! I have online classes, kits and patterns, tutorials, YouTube videos, and more coming soon!

www.onthetrailcreations.com

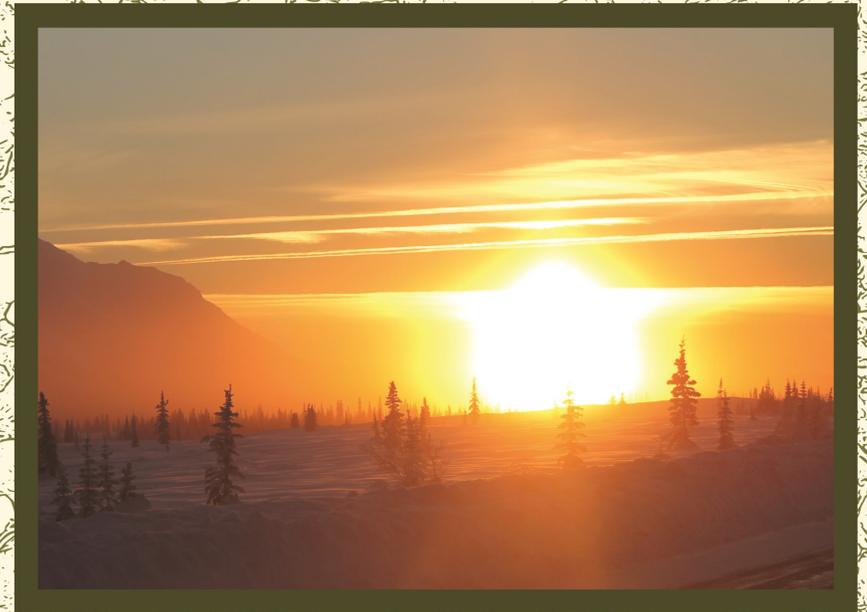
Framed Collage class



Simple Secrets for Starting Art Quilting class



Mining For Gold



Three Keys to Finding Your Hidden Creativity

Ebook by Beret Nelson
©2023

Top three steps to a more creative life

Have you ever wished you were more creative? Do you see yourself as less creative than other people? These are things I hear more often than I could ever count, and I'm pretty sure some of the times were me, ha! My mom and brothers both seemed to get a creative gene that I missed!

However, over the past few decades, I have realized more and more that everyone is more creative than we think! (I actually believe our culture trains us out of it, but I'll spare you my rant!) I knew I liked to make things, but I didn't really see it as creative. I was just making clothes because store bought clothes didn't fit me, or I couldn't afford them, I wasn't trying to be creative. And I for sure didn't see myself as an artist!

Gradually, however, I started doing things that WERE more on the art side than the practical side. And I decided that I would see if I could LEARN to be more creative, if I wasn't born with it!

As it turns out, I now know that pretty much everyone has a far greater capacity for creativity than they probably think, and cultivating that has benefits in ALL areas of life, not just creating art. It can affect how you do your job, manage your house, raise your kids, how you look, and even affects relationships.

My whole business now is focused on helping people find, cultivate, and apply more creativity in their lives!

So, here are what I think are the top three things we need.



Mindset/Overcoming Fear

I realized years ago that in my classes, I spent more time being a cheerleader than an instructor. For some reason, creating things generates a lot of fear for many people. Now, fear is something I can sometimes struggle with in other areas, but it has never really occurred to me to be afraid to create things!

I think it comes down to the fact that it is very personal, and can feel a little like baring your soul. But even when it's not, such as when you are following someone else's pattern, creating can still generate fear. So here are several things I think you can do or work on in your mind to overcome this if it is an issue for you!

1. Are you worried what people will think? Guess what? It not only doesn't matter what they think of you, most likely they ARE NOT thinking of you at all! They're all worried about what everyone thinks of THEM! It helps me to realize this, and that it can actually be prideful to think everyone is judging ME, they probably have much better things to do. And, there WILL occasionally be people who have to give their unwanted opinion. Just see if there is anything you can learn from it, and then move on. It's probably an issue in THEIR heart or life anyway.

2. In the same vein, comparing ourselves to other people can be a big hindrance to creativity, we are always our own biggest critic! We see things other people don't even notice. And, things we make almost never live up to how they looked in our heads. I'm sorry to be the bearer of bad news, but this doesn't really go away. But being aware of it helps you move past it. If you see artwork that someone else made that you love, I can pretty much guarantee that the artist can find several things

wrong with it. Also, everyone is in a different place in their creative journey, so don't compare yourself to someone who is years further into theirs!

If, in your practicing, you try to copy someone exactly, and it still doesn't look like theirs, guess why? Because everything you do has a bit of YOU in it! And that's how it should be! That's what makes your creations yours, and usually it's exactly what other people like the most about it. So, relax, keep your blinders on, and keep learning and growing. But remember, your own artwork will probably never live up to your own expectations, and that's normal!

3. Ok, those two were a little harsh, the rest of this little ebook is more fun! This one is: cultivate curiosity. If something didn't work, even if it's just in your mind, try to figure out why? What could you do differently next time? And learn to ask, "what if I tried this?" often. It's the best way to learn! Now, if you do this, will everything 'work'? Nope, some things will be epic failures by anyone's opinion! And this is just part of the journey. We have to be willing to take small risks, which means probably killing some stuff, and that's also normal. Wrecking a percentage of your attempts is just part of the process!

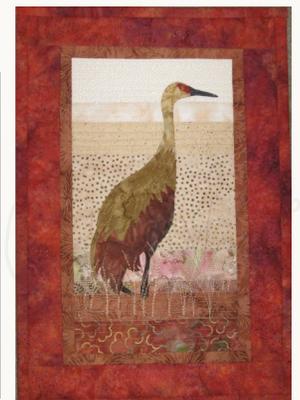
4. Along with this idea is becoming a little more adventurous. I have lived in several places, and I have definitely noticed a correlation between the general adventurousness of the local culture and the level of creativity. But you can be adventurous wherever you live. Again, being adventurous usually involves some risk, but really, what are we risking? A little time and supplies, hmmm...



Skills/Knowledge

The second thing that can help boost creativity is simply to learn as much as you can about it! And there are endless ways to do this now. Books, following people online, Pinterest, online classes, in person classes, memberships, magazines, it's pretty much endless. In order to avoid overwhelm, just start with a few (hopefully I'm one!) and start paying attention. Here are a few things to remember for increasing your knowledge and skills.

1. Observation- Learn to be observing all the time! Once you start looking, inspiration is everywhere. Learn to move from being inspired by other people's artwork to being inspired by things you see in the world. That way it will for sure be original! I take pictures of absolutely everything, and then I have no shortage of ideas for sketching practice, or new quilt designs. But also observe what it is you like about other art you see. The colors, the shapes, the subject, the techniques? Probably a combination of many things, but work on trying to identify them rather than just saying, "Oh, I love that!" Try to figure out why. It will go a long way toward developing your own style of creating. For example, I figured out pretty early that I really like gradations of color or value. No shocking contrast for me! So, if you look, most of my artwork contains a gradation of one or both of those. Here are a couple of examples:



There's no law that says I have to always do that, but I still like it, and it gives me an instant framework or starting point for my creations!

And there are many other tricks like that that you can learn simply by observing other artwork that you like!

2. Drawing- Many people don't like to draw, or think they are not good at it. But it is something you can learn! Again, there are tricks, or steps, that you can follow that really help. I like Johanna Basford's How to Draw Inky Wonderlands book. (No affiliate, need to work on that, I'm always recommending stuff!)

3. Art principles-color, design, other parts of art can be studied and principles learned. While there is no exact formula or list of rules to follow to create art, there are many principles that CAN be learned that give your confidence a big boost!

The bottom line here is, no one is born knowing how to do anything! We have to learn and practice anything we want to be good at, or really even do at all. I do believe people have natural talent in certain areas, but don't underestimate the power of learning principles that you can apply to your own talents!



Practice/Experience

And then, of course, after you have learned the things, you have to practice them! No amount of watching videos or reading books about playing the violin, or swimming, is going to really teach you how to do those things. Most of what you learn has to be done by doing! And again, this applies to everyone; no one is born knowing how to do stuff. We all have to put in the effort,

and risk the supplies, time, and the possible beating to our egos, in order to learn and then get good at anything.

1. Daily art practice- this is a great way to improve your skills. Whether it's sketching, painting, playing with choosing fabrics and seeing how you like them together, or whatever fits your media of choice. Make it easy for yourself: set up a corner where you can leave a few supplies out if possible, or at least a basket of things you can grab. Then set a goal of trying to do at least 10-15 minute per day. You will be amazed at your progress after a few weeks if you do this. It's actually impossible to keep doing something and not get better at it in time!

2. Play! This is still a hard one for me! Especially since my playing around turned into a business, it feels extravagant or frivolous to just play with fabric. But it's not only ok, it's absolutely essential. That's where all of my product ideas come from! If I don't do that, my creativity, and therefore my business too, will suffer. It's also very healthy and good for your brain! We get so caught up in the things that need to be done, but we will do all of those better if we are working on our creativity also. It helps every area of life!

I hope this little guide encourages you to work on cultivating your creativity! And of course, I'd love to help, this only covered the tip of the iceberg!. I have two classes so far, and I have lots of things in the works specifically designed to help other people in their creative journey. Happy creating!

Beret Nelson

www.onthetrailcreations.com