

26 Weeks to Higher Creativity

Think you're not creative? This list has been designed to increase your creativity by reminding you to pay attention. There are 26 weekly activities to try. When you finish the list, start over again (think of this as creativity recycling). Most of the ideas require little more than your commitment and some time. Some of them require a few supplies; a few will take a small investment; all of them can be accomplished over a lunch hour.

Some will be easier than others. Some will feel awkward, some silly, some just too strange. Try them all.

Keep track of your reactions. Devote a space in your daily planner or PDA for your notes, discoveries and feelings. (You could start a journal, but if you already use a planner regularly, you're more likely to follow through by keeping track in it.)

1. Don't change your morning routine this week except for the first thing you do when you get into the office. As soon as you arrive, record 3 new things you noticed as you got ready and went to work.
2. Smell one or more of these things each day this week: a rose, a fresh lemon, an orange, or a grapefruit, an aftershave, a perfume, crayons, vanilla, and fresh air. Make certain you smell them all at least once during the week. Record your reactions.
3. Spend at least 30 minutes each day this week walking outside. Record your observations.
4. Identify seven people who are important to you. Focus on one of them each day this week. Record the new things you discover about them and your relationships.
5. Eat breakfast food for dinner each day this week. Record your reactions and conversations explaining what you're doing to others.
6. Put a plant or a goldfish (in a bowl) on your desk. Each day this week, spend five minutes looking at this living thing. Record the lessons it teaches you.
7. Buy a disposable camera and take at least four but not more than five pictures each day. For five days, take pictures of interesting things, people, and places. Have the pictures developed at a 1-hour photo shop over the weekend and prepare a showing of your photographs.
8. Write a paragraph describing something beautiful each day this week. Record how your paragraphs change over the course of the week.
9. Visit a travel agent and find some brochures about a place you've always wanted to visit. Put a picture of that place on your desk or carry it with you. Spend at least 5 minutes each day day-dreaming yourself there. Record your musings.
10. Deliberately initiate a conversation with someone you don't know or work with each day this week. Talk with the intention of learning something new from them. These things don't have to be practical or useful, just new. Record what you learn.
11. Sit in silence for 15 minutes each day this week-during the workday. Record your thoughts at the end of each silence session.
12. Buy a pen with an odd-colored ink (purple would be perfect) and use it all week. Record your responses to other people's reactions.

13. Wish upon a star each night this week. If it's cloudy, imagine the star you're wishing on. Record your wishes.
14. Buy yourself a box of crayons or markers and a notebook/tablet of blank paper. Draw and color at least one picture each day this week. Record your favorite color each day.
15. Ask a librarian or bookseller to help you find a book set in an exotic location. Read it this week. Record your feelings about the place.
16. Get rid of yellow legal pads this week. Replace them with graph paper or blank paper. Record how your notetaking changes over the course of the week.
17. Listen to a different radio station for more than 15 minutes each day this week. Try all news, country, classical, rock, oldies, all talk, easy listening. Record how each made you feel.
18. Pick a time when you'll be in your office for most of the week, and significantly rearrange your furniture or the items on your desk. Record your reactions daily. When do the changes become invisible?
19. Spend 30 minutes watching the sun rise and/or set each day this week. Record your feelings.
20. Read a different poem out loud each day this week. Yes, you can do it in the privacy of your bathroom. Record your favorite phrases from each day's poem.
21. Write a poem each day this week. Limericks are ok, and no, they don't have to rhyme. Record how you feel about writing poems.
22. Buy or borrow a new (one you've never read before) magazine each day this week. Record something of interest from each magazine you read.
23. Carry something small and significant in your pocket each day this week. It can be the same thing all week. Hold it in your hand often and spend a few minutes understanding its meaning. Record your thoughts.
24. Think of and record a great question each day this week. Ask it of at least one person.
25. Look for joy each day this week. Record what you found, and where and how you found it.
26. Spend 15 minutes each day this week looking for something new. Are you seeing the world through new eyes? Record your discoveries!

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