

Finding Your Creativity again – 100 ways

Where oh where has my creativity gone?

Oh, where, oh, where can it be?

There are times when we paper-crafters, junk-journalers, mixed-media artists (and all the labels) find ourselves without enthusiasm for our art – and sometimes, our inner flame has gone out, or we have dipped down into the well of creativity and found ourselves scraping the bottom and there's only mud left. (And not the good kind of mud, either.)

How can we refill that creativity well?

Many times in all the Facebook groups, we'll see the post that asks others about what to do to "find their mojo" again... so, to help, I've mined all those threads, and come up with 100 ideas. Sure, some of them have small nuances which could have been all lumped into an overall category, but, you know what? Those small nuances are what make us all unique – so I've left them in – making it possible that you'll find that perfect little spark hidden under the ashes, or that last little bubble of fresh water at the bottom of your creativity well... in a nuance.

Here we go – 100 nuanced ways to find your spark again:

1. Do some fussy cutting of pretty images – either digitals you've printed, or from books/magazines. Lots of people have mentioned this idea as a way to stay involved until a new project shows up...
2. Use a famous painter you've long admired as your inspiration for your art. Find all the images you have in your stash that remind you of her/him. Maybe what reminds you of that artist is a color, or a texture or...
3. Make your own images reminiscent of one of your favorite artists/painters/sculptors etc.
4. Watch a video and do exactly as they're doing – make an exact replica. Many digital creators have videos that show you what to do with their digitals. Tracie Fox at Love Junk Journals is a great example.
5. Watch another video and make your *own* version of what they're doing. Riff off of their idea.
6. Collect/make a playlist of videos that you think you can do - I call my playlist "Try This".
7. Pull out a tool you haven't used in a while – maybe that envelope punch board, or the stamp platform, or your metal die cuts... Find some paper and just use the tool for a bit.
8. Organize your digital files – or go through a Facebook group who offers freebies in their group, and see what appeals to you.
9. Go on Etsy and just buy a new digital, print it and use it – challenge yourself to complete a project from that digital in an hour.
10. Do everything in the above suggestion #9 – and then find someone to gift what you made... put it in a package and mail it to that person. Right away.
11. Make 10 different mini notebooks.

12. Make 10 different styles of faux stamps.
13. Make a snippet roll that's at least 10 inches long from scraps on your desk/shelf/space.
14. Make 10 clusters from scraps – just keep going, adding as many elements as you can find. Can you make them with 10 items? Give it a try.
15. Make 10 simple envelopes in as many styles/sizes as you can.
16. Make 10 dangles from charms, buttons or paper beads and more.
17. Make 10 pockets in 10 different sizes.
18. Make 10 wax seals – and 10 more. Because they're fun!
19. Make 10 altered paper clips – all different styles. Or not.
20. Make 10 tags – all different sizes and all from different weight of paper. Or not.
21. Set a timer and neaten your space for 7 minutes. You can keep going if you feel like it, but it's more likely you'll find something you've forgotten you had, and will begin to use it.
22. Set a timer for 15 minutes and glue scraps down on a board. You can keep going if you feel like it.
23. Set a timer for 20 minutes and organize one craft category: glue, paper, fabric, lace, ribbon, etc.
24. Set a timer for 30 minutes and work on a project – tandem play... I like to watch Catherine's "30 minutes of my day" videos. Her channel is Sunnyside Journals.
25. Set a timer for 1 hour and look through your old projects. Don't do anything – just admire your work. Go slowly – notice all the areas in which your unique qualities as an artist show up.
26. Throw away the timer and binge watch crafting videos as long as possible.
27. Go for a walk and collect items that *could* go into a journal. If there's a realtor's paper for a house for sale, or some flower petals or leaves, pick up some coffee from a nearby spot, and ask for an extra napkin and/or cup... what's the most unique thing you could find to go into a junk journal? Find *that*!
28. Use those items from your walk to make something. And if you're stumped, just paste them down on a piece of paper.
29. Gather a whole box full of items (scraps, paper, embellishments, etc) you haven't used in a while and send it as happy mail to another crafter – don't think hard, just put them into the box with some love and a prayer for their well-being.
30. Sketch something – even if you believe you're not an artist and can't... just pick up a pencil. Or colored pencil. Make an outline, or a loose representation of a simple item...
31. Color something. At the very least, make your own shapes and color them in.
32. Doodle. Make zentangles. Flowers and leaves. Find a YouTuber who shows you how, and do it with them.
33. Try slow stitching something into a cluster. Find a needle, and some thread and bits of fabric, lace and ribbon and just make some stitches to connect them together.
34. Do embroidery. Remember? The floss, cross-stitch, the little hits of color on a plain background... all the different stitches?
35. Pull out the paints. (Even thrift/discount store paints count!) Splash down color on a page like a kindergartener.
36. Find your stamps and ink. All of them. Stamp with every single stamp you own and see how many pages you can cover... Do it in one color – or many... Be precise. Or carelessly stamp your images. Make a story – or just be random. Color in your stamped images. Or cut them out.

37. Do the same with your punches. Make a collection of all the options – find weird and wonderful things to do with your punched papers. Stencil with the negative space. Glue them together to make something new...
38. Pull out all your beads and sparklies... make some journal “jewelry” – something to hang and dangle. And if you don’t have any crafting beads – then find your old costume style jewelry and pull it apart to make something new. (enjoy the de-construction as much as the making).
39. Find all the books you’ve bought and planned to “gut” for junk journaling, and do it! Get serious with the scissors, craft-knife, snips and whatever else is needed.
40. Make “Washi Tape Book Pages” – use some of the ugliest pages you’ve just gutted and dress them up with bits of your washi stash. Something old into something new.
41. Dye some paper – or fabric or ribbon. If you have food coloring and vinegar, it’s possible! Just search the internet for dying easter eggs. And then there’s the standby of coffee & tea.
42. Go through all your scrap book paper and pull out the pages you hate – maybe they’re just not your style anymore, color or pattern. You’ll never use them. Now try some new techniques... maybe just paint them with acrylic paint, or punch them, or fold them into origami shapes, or tear them up into small bits, or...
43. Make a list of all – yes, all – of your tools. Be specific. Which ones do you use most often?
44. Now – which of these tools from #43 have you *never* used? (or rarely used?) Use it now.
45. Go to Pinterest and view your own “boards” – make something from there. Or, if you don’t have a Pinterest board for your craft... start one and do something you’ve “pinned”.
46. Go to Instagram and view your “saved images” – make something from there.
47. Go to Facebook and ask in a group what you should make next... (explain you’re in a lull and need direction) OR if that’s too intimidating, ask others what they’re working on, and choose one to do yourself. You could even exchange photos on the thread of comments...
48. Go to YouTube. Find someone new to follow – and explore their videos! What has that new-to-you person done that you haven’t? Try it. (self-promo here – check me out at “PositiveThanksLiving” 😊 -- I’d love to meet you!)
49. Do a “favorite things” search on google – what are your favorite colors, foods, flowers, phrases, etc.? Find images that remind you of your favorite things, print them and glue them in a book, or... (you can’t sell this. It’s just for you, because the images are probably copyrighted. Sorry.)
50. Take a break and read.
51. Take a break and eat chocolate.
52. Take a break and go for a walk.
53. Take a break and go to a museum or art gallery to revel in others’ art.
54. Take a break and play with kids. (Or adults with child-hearted spirits.)
55. Take a break and have tea, coffee, wine... 😊
56. Take a break and listen – listen to the waves, to the birds, to music...
57. Join a challenge – there are many groups with monthly challenges and free printables to incorporate. Sometimes the accountability helps.
58. Comment on all the pretty crafts others are posting pictures of... Instagram or Facebook groups. Being kind to others is a wonderful way to fill your own spirit. Find a unique adjective – a kind word – a specific thing to comment about that you admire in what they’ve done. We have an amazing community of kind people – add your voice to it!

59. Take a class on a craft you've never done. Sure, it may cost a bit, but you'd spend it on wine or coffee or chocolate anyhow. 😊 This way you'll have something to show for it. LOL
60. Be in the moment and walk around your space and find something to "up-cycle". Something that may be headed for trash (an old tissue box?) could make a great spot to store your tools – or ephemera – or...
61. Go really, really, really big! Enormous – something you'd never, ever try. Time to try it. A huge tag, or glue page or card, or make your own wrapping paper...
62. Go really, really, really small. Miniature. Teeny-tiny. So small your fingers can barely make it work. Think of what would go into a journal that would be in a doll's house.
63. Go old. Really old. Find everything in your stash that has a history that's older than you! Use it!
64. Go young – childhood vibes. Make something from your childhood – use items that children love. Think colors, images, words, stories, textures and more.
65. Make something that's all about noise – what will make noise that you could put into a journal? Crunchy sounds, squeaks, bells? I don't know – explore your options.
66. Use every kind of texture you have in your stash to make something unique – think rough, soft, metal, cloth, feathers, and more...
67. Make a rainbow something – every color you have – even the ones you don't like. See #42
68. Make a "jump start" jar – with slips of papers with 10x the words "fabric" "paper" "ribbon" "metal" "paint" and whatever else you think of... and draw 3 or 5 of the slips of paper and make something with those things. It's a game!
69. There's a "world day" for every single date on the calendar. Look up today's day (or tomorrow), and make something that corresponds to that special theme! For example, as I'm writing this list, it's March 22nd... some of my choices are: As Young As You Feel Day, Coq Au Vin Day, Gryffindor Pride Day, International Day of the Seal, National Bavarian Crepes Day, National Sing Out Day, National Water Day --- see? So many choices. LOL
70. What are all the countries you'd like to visit? Find out their national flowers and make something with them. Maybe incorporate their flags – or the colors of their flags. (what immediately comes to mind is a bunting row of flags and flowers – or a game with match the flower to the flag or...)
71. Food. Need I say more? Find all your favorite food packaging and make a journal or ephemera as an homage... I have all the Tim Hortons ephemera (Canadian coffee shop) just waiting for this prompt! (Ha! You thought I'd say eat, didn't you? I use my crafting to *not* eat. 😊)
72. Try a new "theme" – you've seen all the themes that other journalers have created, right? Well, which ones haven't you tried yet? Here are some ideas to get you started: Vintage Roses, birds, clothing, cooking, school, lace, medieval, castles, all the different holidays (Christmas, Valentines, etc.) French, boho, ocean, cottages, botanical, your favorite book, an English high tea, music genres or instruments, animals or insects, countries, or crafts like knitting, crocheting or quilting, sewing or hot-air balloons (that's on my list), decades or seasons, or...
73. Clean. (yeah – not my fav, but it may work for some of you.)
74. Organize. (There's a great collab I was part of with all kinds of videos to spark some ideas – Check out Cara Brandon's playlists)
75. Do a tech free day! No phone, no TV, no tablet, or no anything that needs to be charged. Get bored. Embrace the boredom. Embrace the mind-numb. Let your brain rest. Yup. This may be harder than you think, but it has a number of scientific-based benefits for rejuvenation. Or, if

you dare, do an entire week... see [this article](#) for the basics:

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/five_reasons_to_take_a_break_from_screens

76. Do some introspection - look through all the things you've made and decide what exactly you love about each item... be specific and detailed. Make a list.
77. This is going to sound kooky – but hang in there with me... try using your sense of smell to spark something. Think of a scent you love – vanilla, oranges, bergamot, lavender... and try it in your space. Just sit and inhale... you can put some orange peels and cinnamon in a pot of water to simmer on your stove, brew some tea (FYI - bergamot is the scent in Earl Grey tea), or if you want to, then go the route of essential oils... Just try it! (Watch out if you have migraines – sometimes the scent of oranges can be trigger for some people.) Our sense of smell can bring back memories, influence our moods, and impact productivity. Sometimes our creativity just needs a boost. It's an easy thing to try...
78. Craft with someone else. If no-one you know does any crafting, then just ask them over to hang out. Sometimes those that are extroverts find their energy drained by being alone too much... And if we're still battling that stupid pandemic as you're reading this, or your mobility is challenged, then you can always do an online live group experience...
79. Try doing a jigsaw puzzle. Putting the pieces together is a way to practice visual-spatial reasoning, hone attention to detail and many use it for a "be in the moment" stress reliever. We use all these skills in crafting... just shift a bit.
80. Change your crafting spot. Do different activities in different spaces – different tables, in front of a different window... Use your space, no matter how small, differently. Maybe even go somewhere else – a coffee shop, a church basement, a friend's kitchen. A change of scene might work!
81. Teach someone else (or a group of others) one thing you've learned to do in junk-journaling. Sharing what we know how to do is both kind and a tangible way to give back to others.
82. Make a reference journal with all the fun ephemera you see other crafters make. Some in our Junk-journaling community have entire playlists filled with videos of options to add to a reference journal.
83. Make yourself some positive affirmation cards – words of encouragement to yourself. Too often we speak with great censure and down-right meanness to ourselves. (Stuff we'd never say to other people, we say to ourselves in our heads.) Flip the switch – make kind words to yourself. Kerry Fellows has a lovely free digital kit just for that... [go to her site](#):
<https://whichcraftdoyoudo.com/collections/digital-downloads/products/freebie-positive-affirmation-collection-set-one-di-10048-digital-download>
84. Give yourself the gift of achievement – some people are rejuvenated by that kind of thing. Do a 5 or 30-day, or a 52 week achievement. As an example, Anne Brooks Textile Artist was the originator of #52tagshannemade in 2021 – over 1000 videos on 83 channels for 52 weeks of making slow-stitched tags... does that sound motivating? There are also other crafters who have made 52 altered playing cards. Go forward and conquer!
85. On the other hand... give yourself the gift of no purpose, and no outcome with no deadline. The act of creating can be scary, especially if you're feeling "judged" or have had a negative set-back. Maybe what you need is some awful art. Just some permission to do hideous, horribly ugly art. *I hearby give you permission.* Consider yourself free of all expectations to do anything of beauty.

Whatever you produce will not be judged. It can go straight into the trash bin. You have permission to create for no purpose at all, and no reason to show anyone.

86. Give yourself the gift of finishing. Pick up that project you've abandoned and do something with it. Give yourself a number – say 10 ? – do ten things with that project. Then, call it complete. It's done. Here's your star. ✨
87. On the other hand... Give yourself the gift of starting something new. 😊 Just begin again if it's fun for you. Learn by doing.
88. Use up your scraps. Just scraps. And as you're creating, throw away anything cut off of the original scrap. (In other words, don't make more, smaller scraps.) Give yourself the gift of playing a game to find the bottom of the box/bin.
89. On the other hand... just ditch every scrap you have. Done. Finished. Gone. Give yourself the gift of a fresh slate. Now take a breath – you're free!
90. Create a ring binder – filled with examples of every paper you own, and all your lovely digitals printed out. (Yes, if you own a lot of digital files, then the cost of ink/printing might be daunting – only you can decide if that's within your budget.) It's like a walk through a museum of paper for inspiration.
91. Do for others... that's what will finish up these last few items to take us to 100 ways to find our creativity again... Focus on the junk-journal people you "meet" online, on Facebook and Instagram, and see if you can connect to add value to their life in some small way.
92. Find a person older than you who could use some supplies. Ask if you can send them something they would like to try. Then do it. Maybe buy two of the items and you both can try something new and compare notes. Working together as a help, can refocus your own creativity.
93. Identify a struggling newbie to this junk-journaling community. Reach out to praise their work – offer suggestions with a kind heartedness. Send them something to include in the project they're working on. Helping those who are beginning helps us to view our own crafting in a new light. Sometimes we've been paralyzed by too much knowledge.
94. Send a thank you card to a YouTuber you follow all the time – some of them have their Amazon wishlists, or "buy me a coffee" options in their description. Try in some way to show you value what they do. Gratitude is a powerful way to open your own heart and mind for new possibilities.
95. Participate *fully* in a group of your choice. (Notice, I said "a" group – pick one. This idea is not to overwhelm you.) Participation takes nothing more than time and an optimistic, kind heart. Commit your attention to that one group and help in any way you can; do for one what you'd love to do for all. Focus on others ensures there is less time to get bogged down in our own creativity sludge. Your own mojo can surface without you even noticing...
96. Do you make videos? When you see someone struggle, or ask a question, then make a video to answer a question or demonstrate a skill. The video doesn't need to be long. Yes, there may be many other videos out there on that topic, but no one can explain in your voice, and with your insight. We are each unique and have a valuable skill to share. Even if one person gains a burst of "I can do this", then your video and effort has had a purpose. Creativity likes to feel useful.
97. In number #81 we put our attention into the idea of teaching others one thing... once. Maybe, by trying that idea, you'll find your sweet spot. Perhaps you can meet up with other crafters in real life and do a bit of co-teaching, or sharing. Could you create a group that meets regularly? Maybe with the focus of creating items for the elderly, or others who could need a "pick me up"

– maybe some health care professionals or moms of young children could benefit? When thinking of the needs of others, our ability to create can be rejuvenated.

98. Use your metal die cuts, your Cricut or other machines and create a plethora of items to gift to another crafter – just because. Go overboard – be generous beyond what they could ever imagine. We sometimes overlook what we have, and don't think it has value, until we gift it to someone else who sees the possibilities.
99. Go through your supplies and create "project bags". Then host a party and give one bag to each person – watch to see what those people do with your stuff. I'm guessing even your least "crafty" friend will have a hoot. And so will you. Laugh lots. Creativity needs a bit of levity.
100. And the last idea to find your spark of creativity, to fill up your well of inspiration and craft again without any barriers... sometimes it takes time. Yes. *Give yourself time*. Try a few of these ideas, and see where you go you over time. You'll find your creativity again. In time. I wish you well.

This was part of an article by Lori Ferguson

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