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365 Ideas to Ignite the Creative Spirit

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by

Danielle Myers

An Abstract of a Project
in
Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Science

May 2018

Buffalo State
State University of New York
Department of Creative Studies

Abstract

365 Ideas to Ignite the Creative Spirit

Everyone has creative potential but may not remember how to access it. Through encouragement and deliberate practice, the creative spirit can once again be ignited. 365 Ideas to Ignite the Creative Spirit provides a wide array of activities that enhance an individual's awareness of the creativity that surrounds them. Individuals develop mindfulness skills, playful attitudes, and build a tolerance for ambiguity through regular engagement with these activities. These skills are identified through a detailed review of the cognitive and affective skill sets related to the Creative Problem Solving Thinking Skills Model.

Keywords: creativity, creative spirit, cognitive skills, affective skills, mindfulness

Your Signature

May 11, 2018

Date

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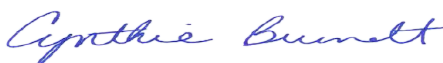Danielle Myers

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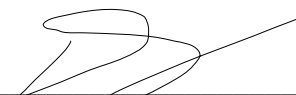for the Degree of

Master of Science
May 2018

Dates of Approval:

May 11, 2018   _____
Dr. Cyndi Burnett
Associate Professor

May 11, 2018   _____
Danielle Myers
Student

Acknowledgments

I would like to begin by thanking my partner, Mills Colbert, for supporting me through this journey. Your patience and understanding did not go unnoticed. Few people would likely have stuck around while I juggled operating a paper mill and pursuing a Master's degree at the same time. Our creative profiles could not be further apart but understanding one another's approach to a problem has brought us closer together so much so that I even entrusted you to edit one of my papers, the very paper that is now published, fancy that!

Esther Blakely and Rosemary Williams, our work together in the ArtWorks program inspired me to pursue further avenues in teaching artistry. This search led me to the Creative Studies program at Buffalo State. I look forward to future collaborations in creative programming.

Dr. Cyndi Burnett, as if my creative spirit was not invigorated enough! Your encouragement and enthusiasm sparked a whole new level of inspiration in my creative spirit. You pushed me to become better than better. Thank you for all of your support with the Big Questions paper and beyond!

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classroom. You encouraged everyone to be the best versions of themselves and would not settle for anything less.

My Creative Studies peers, you have become the greatest family one could ask for. I hope that we can all keep the creative spirit alive well beyond graduation. May we continue to push each other to excel and challenge one another.

Lastly, my friends and family. They have had to endure endless talk of what creativity is and is not. I am still not sure where they stand in their definitions of creativity. Only time will tell.

Table of Contents

SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

Purpose and Description

The goal of this project was to create a card set that will ignite the creative spirit and inspire daily creativity practices through a variety of tasks. The activities are fun, thought-provoking, challenging, and explore a wide range of creativity categories. With creativity playing such an integral role in our development and evolution, it is imperative that it not be extinguished. If our educational and professional environments fail to nourish the creative spirit, then it is up to us as creativity experts to continue the work of our founders.

Since creativity's value is not a consideration by many influential institutions, individuals must take the initiative when a creative opportunity is present. However, when you have not developed the appropriate skills to identify these opportunities, you can be left behind without a second glance. Outdated beliefs prevent creative development by alluding to this idea that creativity is for a particular class of people. Society has created an assortment of excuses as to why creativity is not worth the investment. Examples include a sense of incompatibility (you must be born with it), it is unteachable, only artists are creative, or that is child's play. My project is designed to create an approachable solution without feeling intimidated. I want people to be able to make the connection themselves until it becomes second nature. Creativity is a skill set available to all, and I will be doing my utmost to contribute my knowledge and expertise to those who are not adequately acquainted with the concept of the creative self.

It takes practice and repetition to cultivate creativity skills. This card set is one way to develop these skills. The first stage of this project was to identify its relationship to creative thinking and the essential characteristics that need to be present throughout. Creativity basics, such as divergent and convergent thinking, were included along with the affective and cognitive

elements of the Thinking Skills Model (Puccio, Mance, & Murdock, 2011). All FourSight

preferences (Puccio, 2014) are recognized throughout the set, meaning there is an activity for

every creative preference. The final product provides an expansive variety of activities to

develop these skills through educational but straightforward tasks. The target audience would be

any individual who wishes to challenge themselves, escape their comfort zone, take risks, change

perspectives, and overcome creative blocks. When a person practices creativity, they sharpen

their skills that affect not only their professional life but also their personal life. The results are

all-encompassing.

My objective is to make this a playful and educational experience. The cultural foundation

of this project has inspired me to make multiple languages available once the card sets are ready

for release. This is a tall order, but one I will strive to achieve.

Rationale for Selection

George Land conducted a research study in 1968 that tested the creativity levels of

children ages 3-5 (Land & Jarman, 1998). He went on to examine the same children at the age of

10 and again at 15. The results were astounding. The initial test results revealed a 98% creativity

level which then plummeted to an average of 12% at the age of 15. The same test given to a large

group of adults revealed a 2% creativity level. What Land showed in his study was that non-

creative behavior is a learned behavior. This study influenced the direction of my project. It

helped me to decide my target audience (adults) and how I could benefit them. Adults have an

issue with playfulness, ambiguity, and judgment. Schools do not teach creativity and society

discourages it, so how do we win?! We win by practicing in the safety of our homes, with friends

and family, or anywhere we feel free of judgment. These cards are designed to be a stepping

stone from one's home to the outside world, a world that exudes positivity. Creativity wants us to

better ourselves and help each other grow. It wants us to have an open mind and a tolerance for ambiguity. It wants us to learn how to fail with grace. I hope that the users walk away with these traits.

This project caters to everyone and is considerate of today's time constraints. It would be naïve of me to ignore the fact that people have daily schedules and demands. All that I ask is that they meet me halfway. The cards provide a variety of creative activities that will help the user to develop their creative thinking abilities and opportunities to share the prompt with others which will build a support system for deferring judgment. Each card will also be equipped with a brief explanation of the connection creativity has with that particular activity. If a prompt doesn't fit an individual's schedule that day, that's okay! They can move on to a different one that will.

The benefit of this project is that it will help others develop essential creative thinking skills while gaining a long-forgotten sense of playfulness. Upon the release of the card set, a website will be available for users to post their experiences, reflections, and creative successes. This information will help me to determine what works, what does not, and how I could best improve for future projects.

SECTION TWO: PERTINENT LITERATURE

Introduction

The resources that provided the research-based material required for this project fell into three categories: creativity, psychology, and design. Puccio, Mance, and Murdock (2011) represented the field of creativity. The field of psychology was visited briefly and is described by Van Vlaenderen (2000) and Gaur (2016). As for the design aspect, I used ThinkPak (2006), Oblique Cards (1978), and IDEO Method Cards (2003) for their physical elements and Wolfel and Merritt (2013) for method card comparisons and general purpose. While there were other

sources of information, which I have acknowledged in the Bibliography, these sources provided

the majority of pertinent information that relates to this project. I aimed to gather information

that supported the use of card sets as a viable creativity tool, to research the creative elements

that would provide the desired breadth and longevity that I was after while creating activities for

the cards, and to decide on a practical and aesthetically pleasing design based on similar projects.

My research was a result of the following questions:

- What are the essential creativity skills everyone should have?

- What is the best way to reach people who are reluctant about the creative process?

- How much guidance will the target audience require?

- Are cards an effective creativity tool?

- Which design will best fit my desired project and how will this convey the
  message I am trying to send?

Essential Creativity Skills

Before I began to generate ideas for activities designed to ignite the creative spirit, I had

to determine the types of creative skills I wanted to emulate. I wanted the cards to be

informative, but also deeply felt. The Thinking Skills Model (TSM; Puccio, Mance, & Murdock,

2011) uses both cognitive and affective skills for the Creative Problem Solving process. These

skills associate with specific stages of the Creative Problem Solving process, but I have decided

not to go into further detail since it is beyond the scope of this project's intent. All of the skills

listed below utilize divergent and convergent thinking to enhance their creative capabilities.

Cognitive Skills

In *Creative Leadership* (Puccio, Mance, & Murdock, 2011), the key cognitive thinking

skills used throughout the Creative Problem Solving process are:

- Diagnostic: making a careful examination of a situation, describing the nature of a problem, and making decisions about appropriate process steps to be taken;

- Visionary: articulating a vivid image of what you desire to create;

- Strategic: identifying the critical issues that must be addressed and pathways needed to move toward the desired future;

- Ideational: producing original mental images and thought that respond to important challenges;

- Evaluative: assessing the reasonableness and quality of ideas in order to develop workable solutions;

- Contextual: understanding the interrelated conditions and circumstances that will support or hinder success; and

- Tactical: devising a plan that includes specific and measurable steps for attaining a desired end and methods for monitoring its effectiveness;

(Puccio et al., 2011, p. 71)

Affective Skills

Affective skills behave as additional support to the process-oriented cognitive skills listed above. Emotional attributes influence our creative thinking and, when used effectively, can benefit cognitive thought processes. These affective skills are:

- Mindfulness: attending to thoughts, feelings, and sensations relative to the present situation;

- Dreaming: to imagine as possible your desires and hopes;

- Sensing gaps: to become consciously aware of discrepancies between what currently exists and is desired or required;

- Playfulness: freely toying with ideas;

- Avoiding premature closure: resisting the urge to push for a decision;

- Sensitivity to the environment: the degree to which people are aware of their physical and psychological surroundings;

- Tolerance for risks: not allowing yourself to be shaken or unnerved by the possibility of failure or setbacks;

(Puccio et al., 2011, p. 73)

All of the affective skills play a critical role throughout the card set. Considering the target audience, untrained adults and the emotional involvement used to encourage creative expression and acceptance within this demographic will be challenging. However, I feel it is the most sensible route to engage the audience in these activities. With creativity comes a certain degree of vulnerability. To invite the new audience into a world of vulnerability will take incredible effort but learning how to direct these emotions will ultimately help this project succeed.

Attitude towards Creativity

In *Zig Zag: The Surprising Path to Greater Creativity*, Sawyer (2013) described the feeling of vulnerability and the appropriate attitude one must adapt to succeed in creative practices:

Creativity doesn't always come naturally to us. By definition, creativity is something new and different, and although novelty is exciting, it can also be a little scary. We're taught to choose what's familiar, to do what's been done a thousand times before. Soon we're so used to staying in that well-worn rut that venturing into new terrain seems an enormous and risky departure.

The bottom line is, you need to be extremely self-aware. Get familiar with your own

creative process by constantly listening to yourself, constantly reflecting on exactly what

you're doing at a given moment.

(p. 5)

This quote captures the essence of my approach of inviting others to this creative journey.

It touches on the vulnerability and unfamiliar territory within creativity along with the need for

self-awareness, all of which are elements of the path to creativity. This card set embodies the

fundamental behaviors mentioned in this quote and my hope is that this will be reflected in the

individual's attitude following their experience with the cards' activities.

Behavioral Skills

Behavior and attitude are two crucial elements in determining the probability of creative

success. Van Vlaenderen (2000) defined local knowledge as,

The common sense wisdom that comes from everyday life rather than formal learning. It

refers to a whole system of knowledge, including concepts, beliefs and perceptions, the

stock of knowledge and the process whereby it is acquired, augmented, stored and

transmitted (p. 1).

It is essential to understand that how we obtain knowledge can influence our behavior and

attitudes.

Some meta-cognitive studies suggest that people's epistemic (validation of one's

knowledge) beliefs and the conceptual and procedural knowledge founded in their beliefs are

shaped by the relationship between the individual and their environment (Craig, 1990; Greeno,

1989; Kitchener, 1983 Van Vlaenderen, 1999). I have proceeded with the assumption that this

study has retained a high degree of merit and have approached my list of activities with caution.

Our actions and beliefs can influence the behavior and beliefs of others whether or not it was intended and I wanted to be sure that none of my activities have negative implications.

Gaur (2016) referred to the concept of empowered creativity in his article about creative potential:

Empowered creativity is concerned with the development of effectiveness, creativity and self-actualization potential of others. These others can be one's spouse, children, friends, colleagues, subordinates or customers. This is a very distinguished kind of creativity because powering it is often a strong altruistic motivation, a sense of mission and an exalted understanding of human-hood. (p. 290)

This concept reminded me of the importance of support systems. Support systems are encouraged throughout this project which will help individuals make deeper and more meaningful connections within their respective community.

Method Card Comparative Analysis

For me to achieve maximum effectiveness with this project, I needed to determine what message I am trying to convey through its physical properties. In the end, I will have a card set which will contain 365 different activities. How do I make them stand out? Will people understand the concept? Will they be drawn to it aesthetically? As the creator, how can I translate this creative concept into a physical product that embodies inspiration, motivation, and longevity? These were questions that I have been forced to reconcile. Individual examples were helpful but one-dimensional. I could compare notes regarding their purpose, the creative methods used, target audience, physical appearance, but it was difficult to get an accurate comparison of the different sets, of which there are many.

Wolfel and Merritt (2013) created a survey of card-based design tools that did the work for which I was preparing myself. They reviewed 18 card sets and determined their strengths and weaknesses. Their goal was to discover the defining dimensions of these tools, and this is what they ended up with:

- Intended purpose and scope

- Duration of use and placement in the design process

- System or methodology of use

- Customization

- Formal qualities

(Wolfel & Merritt, 2013)

Each card set had to report their placement in the design process (ideation, inspiration, engaging non-designers, etc.), the use of the cards, and their specific purpose and content (Wolfel & Merritt, 2013). The resulting categories are below.

Intended Purpose and Scope

- General/repository: provide inspiration and challenge designers to take another viewpoint; can be engaged with at any time and in any context; increases lateral thinking; stimulates design problem-solving; open-ended inspiration with little to no guidance on their use; *possible negative factors include: the individual depends on remembering/being acquainted with specific creativity methods, this can be particularly challenging for untrained individuals.*

    o Example: Oblique Cards (Eno & Schmidt, 1978).

- Participatory design: seek to develop sensitivity and empathy for context, engage designers and users in the process, designed for better communication between

users and designers, encourages criticism and debate, encourages collaborative work between designers and domain experts

- Examples: Questionable Concept Cards (Vines, Blythe, Lindsay, Dunphy, Monk, & Olivier, 2012) & Inspiration Cards (Halskov & Dalsgaard, 2006).

- Content specific/agenda-driven design: focuses on particular content and design agenda

  - Examples: Sound Design Deck (Alves & Roque, 2011) & Design Play Cards (Eco Innovators, 2013).

Duration of Use and Placement in the Design Process

- Anywhere/anytime: useful in all stages

  - Example: Oblique Cards (Eno & Schmidt, 1978).

- As needed: offers different methods which may be useful in certain stages (ideation v. evaluation v. implementation)

  - Example: IDEO Method Cards (IDEO, 2003).

- Beginning of process: provides input for further concept development

  - Example: PictureCARDS (Tschudy, Dykstra-Erickson, & Holloway, 1996).

- Specific point: when introducing a methodology

  - Example: Sound Design Deck (Alves & Roque, 2011).

System/Methodology of Use

- No method/system: no suggested structured process

- o Examples: IDEO Method Cards (IDEO, 2003), Oblique Cards (Eno & Schmidt, 1978), & SUTD Method Cards (Singapore University of Technology Design, 2012).
- Suggestion of use: comes with a small brochure, examples of how the cards can be used
  - o Examples: DSKD (Kolding School of Design, 2011) & PictureCARDS (Tschudy, Dykstra-Erickson, & Holloway, 1996).
- Specific instructions: authors introduce a specific method of how to use cards along with specific instructions (order, arrangements, etc.)
  - o Examples: Sound Design Cards (Alves & Roque, 2011) & Inspiration Cards (Halskov & Dalsgaard, 2006).

Customization

This refers to the degree to which the card-based tool provides customization.

- No customization: intended to be static, unchanged
  - o Examples: SUTD Method Cards (Singapore University of Technology Design, 2012) & Oblique Cards (Eno & Schmidt, 1978).
- Trivial customization: cannot add or modify content other than to structure/group the cards
  - o Example: IDEO Method Cards (IDEO, 2003).
- Optional customization: users can create their own cards
  - o Example: Sound Design Deck (Alves & Roque, 2011).
- Requires customization: cards must be created prior to use, applicable to a specific project

o Examples: Inspiration Cards (Halskov & Dalsgaard, 2006), Ideation Deck

(Golembewski & Selby, 2010), & Questionable Concept Cards (Vines,

Blythe, Lindsay, Dunphy, Monk, & Olivier, 2012).

Formal qualities

This refers to the physical properties of the cards (2-sides, paper type, size, shape),

connections to virtual systems, and appearance (images, words, color schemes).

- Only text or only images

  o Example: Oblique Cards (Eno & Schmidt, 1978).

- Combine text and image/illustration

  o Examples: Inspiration Cards (Halskov & Dalsgaard, 2006) & PLEX Cards

  (Lucero & Arrasvuori, 2010).

- Categories: provides thematic structure

  o Examples: IDEO Method Cards (IDEO, 2003) & SUTD Method Cards

  (Singapore University of Technology Design, 2012).

- Virtual component: connects physical cards to online forum providing additional

  information and example videos

  o Example: Sound Design Deck (Alves & Roque, 2011).

  (Wolfel & Merritt, 2013)

As far as the effectiveness of the card-based tool, Wolfel & Merritt (2013) posed two

questions. Are the cards living and evolving or at least serve as a lasting resource with common

methods? Is there a need for physical cards or can it have a digital supplement? I have

considered these questions for my own card set and I feel that my approach will allow for long-

lasting relevance and physicality with a complimentary digital source (website). After reviewing

the dimensions, I have concluded that my project will be for general use which is applicable anytime and anywhere. There will be enough structure to assist the untrained creative individual but kept to a minimum to allow for ambiguity. Building a tolerance for ambiguity is a creative skill that is a major theme throughout this project. The design will be kept minimal with text only, and they will not be made available for customization. I considered including images for Forced Connections but decided that the context level was high enough for those unskilled in the creativity field and did not want to complicate matters with an additional exercise for Creative Problem Solving (which is not introduced as a model but as a skillset in this project).

There are several other sources of information and prototype design used in my research. Their information provided supporting evidence for the topics mentioned earlier. A bibliography of these additional resources is listed below.

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SECTION THREE: PROCESS PLAN

Plan to Achieve Goals

Thus far, I plan to achieve my goal with a high degree of incubation time, persistence, flexibility, and adaptability. My schedule is tight, but I have been contacting my resources early on as to prevent timing constraints or obstacles. As of the moment, I have employed informal Brainstorming sessions and Forced Connections as my CPS strategies.

My work has consisted of incubation time dedicated to idea generation, prototypes, and research. Since I have decided on 365 ideas, I have had to make incredible use of brainstorming time. I have employed outside (friends, family, coworkers, social media) feedback for idea submissions as well as dedicating a minimum of an hour a day to generating prompts. StumbleUpon, a search engine designed for website discovery, has been my source of inspiration. StumbleUpon works by randomly selecting a website that I then use for Forced Connections to create a prompt inspired by the website's content. Once I have completed the prompts, I will read through and check for duplicates and make edits. During this time, I will have contacted various sources for content translation. Whoever is available and willing to work on translations will receive the file shortly after the edits are final. This will help me to achieve my goal of global outreach and community building.

While I have been generating ideas, I have been taking them out for a trial run by sharing them on social media and participating in them myself. This has allowed me to track feedback, suggestions, and likelihood of participation. Feedback will help me to make changes before submitting the prompts for printing. I have been gauging follower's interest in specific prompts

and their excitement to continue. This is important because the entire premise of this project is to inspire people to commit and practice creativity every day.

In addition to this, I have been researching literature on creativity prompts, card sets/decks, creativity tools and techniques, and the effectiveness of the latter. I feel this will give valuable information about the viability of such a product succeeding in a niche market. Prototype research has been an essential part of the process as well. I want a polished, professional look to these card sets, so I have been looking up examples of different card sets and recording their specifications. These will help me in the card design process. To determine the cost and timeframe for the prototype, I have been contacting the creators of the cards I have been researching to see if they would not mind sharing their print shop source and physical specifications.

I would like to see this project go beyond the prototype onto store shelves and online shops. The measure of success will be the number of pre-orders I receive on the onset along with store interest and online sales following the pre-order. I hope to create an interactive experience through a website dedicated to sharing one's creative experience using these cards along with their feedback. Once the card set has a prototype and the project finalized and approved, I intend to embark on a documented journey of my year of creativity – following these cards to the best of my ability.

Project Timeline

Date	Task	Time Duration
Jan 17, 24, 31 Submit: Jan 31st (SBP), Feb 2nd (Cyndi)	Concept Paper	12 hrs.
Deadline: Feb 7th	Idea generation for Creativity Prompts	50 hrs.
Jan 24, 31, Feb 7, 14, 21	Research literature & similar	20 hrs.

	concepts	
Jan 31, Feb 7, 14, 21, 28 Deadline: March 1st (prototype design & print shop booked)	Research prototype ideas & contact print shops (viability, cost, deadlines, time frame for printing)	10 hrs.
Deadline: Feb 2nd (email) Deadline: April 1st latest! (submissions)	Email possible translators (include project description, deadline appx) & contact peers for prompt feedback	2 hrs.
March 7, 14, 21, 28 Deadline: April 1st latest!	Design work (tutorial in a design program, create a template for cards & box, verify specs. match the print shop file spec., plug & play English followed by other languages, submit to the print shop for sample run!)	5 hrs.
March 7, 14, 19, April 4, 11, 16, 25, 30 Deadlines: March 19th (Sections 1-3), April 16th (Sections 4-6), April 30th (Final)	Final Paper (overview, rough drafts, edits)	20 hrs.
May 1 – 7th Deadline: May 7th	Final Project finishing work (presentation prep, website finishing)	10 hrs.
	Total Hours	129 hrs.

SECTION FOUR: OUTCOMES

Overview of Outcomes

The outcomes of this project comprise of a card set, website, and social media feed. The website supports the card deck in a more in-depth manner as well as provides additional resources to explore further into the world of creativity. The social media feed is designed to grow my audience through informal networking connections.

Creativity Cards

365 Ideas to Ignite the Creative Spirit is a deck of 365 double-sided poker-sized cards. The front side of each card has one activity or prompt, which is designed to enhance the user's daily creative practices and inspire creative action. The back side has an explanation that ties the prompt to creativity. The cards are all the same color, and there is no categorizing system. The activities can be engaged with at any time and are designed to fit the user's schedule, which is

different for everyone. The purpose is to practice everyday creativity which engages all aspects

of creativity rather than focusing on a single angle of development (Richards, Kolva, Atkin,

Cheatham, Crocker, Davidovich Ockuly, Goslin-Jones, Jones, Kasian, Kenny, & Smith, 2011).

Front

Keep a journal to record your creative thoughts and growth.

Spend the day free of technology.

Go to the movies.
Have a stranger decide what you will see.

Make breakfast
using only six ingredients.

Create a list of 30 ideas on how to become more environmentally friendly.

Adopt one.

Teach yourself a new word.

Immerse yourself in another language.

Create a list of 10 things you love and explain why.

Observe how you express your gratitude.

Find a friend to switch routines with for a day.

Attend a poetry slam.

Keep a journal to record your creative Create a list of 30 ways technology benefits you, society,
and the world.

Invent a new cocktail inspired by your favorite national park.

Create a motivational playlist
&
exchange five playlists with five people.

Create a list of 30 ways to overcome a current challenge.
Choose the top five solutions and map out
ways you can achieve them.

Overcome an irrational fear

Dress up as your favorite fictional character.

Taste an ethnic cuisine you've never tried before.

Walk for an hour
free of distractions.

Back

Keeping an idea journal is more
than a physical record.

It begins a creative process which
may initiate an action plan.

Like everything, technology has its
pros and cons.
This exercise is for when you need
that self_control and to step away
from the many distractions
we have signed up for.

Our premature judgments have
a tendency to prevent us from
creative moments.

Take a risk on the element of surprise.

For some this may be a challenge,
for others a piece of metaphorical
cake.
It is important to find a way to
stretch your creativity when
experiencing limitations or boundaries.

When you master this activity,
think about how easily
you can generate ideas for your own

Repetition, repetition, repetition.
Creativity requires practice
and repetition.

Don't just memorize it, truly learn it.

Draw yourself away from the familiar.
Become aware of and immerses
in other cultures.

Learn new ways to communicate.
Diversity inspires creativity.

Practice articulation.
Emotions are difficult to translate
and describe.

This is a good place to begin.

This exercise is about gaining
a new perspective.

It is a simple and trusting place to begin.

These aren't your typical poetry readings.
Poetry slams are intense, inspirational,
and motivational to say the least.

I invite you to witness this craft in action
and challenge you to try your own
(at home, in the car, or even
participate in an open mic session).

While we may view technology as
a time_waster,
it also has numerous benefits.

It is important to revisit strong opinions,
especially those with
negative connotations,
to see if we have overlooked
hidden potential.

Combine imagination
and inspiration for this exercise.

Everyone needs a little motivation
from time to time.
By creating a playlist to share,
you also create a sense of presence
when it's played.
So even though your friend may
not be near, by playing their playlist,
you become energized just by the
very nature of the environment.

It is important to give yourself options,
or backup plans if you will.
The ability to envision all possible
solutions is an essential skill
for creative problem_solving.

Fear is a creativity killer.
Irrational fear is even worse
because it lacks reason.

Overcoming fear is the first step
towards regaining your
creative abilities.

Now and then you have to be playful.
As an adult, we are taught to
grow up and let go of
child_like behaviors,
another creativity killer.

There are a plethora of options
regarding ethnic food options.

Go beyond the ones
with which you are familiar.

This means no
music,
podcasts,
audiobooks.

Just you and your surroundings.
Allow your reflection time to
become your creative inspiration
and not outsourced to distractions.

Website

  The purpose of the website (www.dmyerscreativity.com) is to create a link between the card set and their creativity foundation. The site contains all of the supporting material for the cards as well as provides resources that the users may find helpful in growing their creative endeavors. The user can access the website online and is mobile-friendly. From there, the home page lists a variety of categories: *About, Events, Resources, Blog, 365 Ideas…*, and *Shop*.

  The *About* section contains my biography, professional history, and an introduction to the creativity card set. It briefly discusses my involvement in the Creative Studies program, the background behind the 365 Ideas to Ignite the Creative Spirit project along with its inspiration and purpose, and other creative pursuits. My curriculum vitae (CV) is currently its own tab but will eventually merge with this section.

  The *Shop* is where users will go to purchase card decks. It is unavailable at the moment, while I develop a plan for sales. The cards are expensive to produce and will need an additional plan to order in bulk to make the online store useful.

  Events are where users go to find out more information on upcoming creativity events. The events include workshops, lectures, conferences, and any other creativity-related activity. This will give users information on creative opportunities that they can actively participate in to continue their creative growth. My target audience is untrained and trained alike, and I think it is important to provide additional information to maintain momentum. Sometimes people do not know where to look or even keywords to begin their research, so I wanted to gather updated event listings all in one place.

  The same applies to *Resources*. The section provides a wide variety of creativity links. The links include scholars, journals, programs, educational opportunities, and miscellaneous, and

are sectioned into those categories for organizational purposes and ease of access for the user. Each link has content descriptions.

The *Blog* has the most up-to-date information on what is happening in the world of creativity. This is where events and news are announced. On this page, users can subscribe to the RSS feed so each time I post something new, the user will receive an email featuring that post, keeping them up-to-date on the website's activity.

Lastly, *365 Ideas…* is both the introduction and personal documentation of this creative journey. Each post will feature one specific activity where I will give a more in-depth explanation of the activities' relationship to creativity along with my experience with the activity. The purpose of this is to help with the intimidation element of some of the activities. When creating the list of ideas, I kept it in mind not to include anything I would not be willing to undergo myself. To prove this, I chose to add my real-life account as the maker to adhere to my rules of tackling these activities. This page also has an RSS feed subscription in the event a user wanted to track my progress. Supporting material is provided to make the connection to creativity and explain the importance of living creatively. Creativity themes mentioned throughout the card deck are addressed here and tied into everyday creativity scenarios (Richards et al., 2011).

DANIELLE MYERS

HOME   365 IDEAS...   ABOUT   BLOG   SHOP   EVENTS   RESOURCES   CV
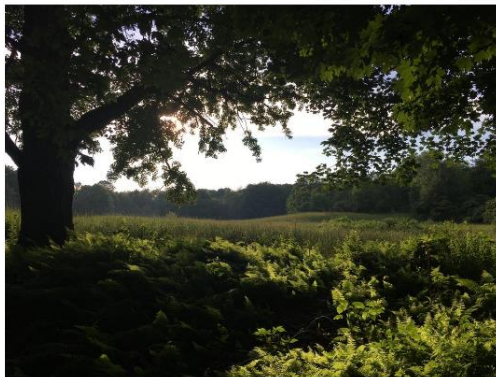
All photos on this site were taken by Danielle Myers unless otherwise noted.

Powered by Squarespace

Social Media

 @dmyerscreativity is the Instagram profile that features 365 Ideas… in its entirety. It is a digital version of the card deck. The Instagram platform allows for some interaction between the user and me through comments and direct messaging. The comment section is where users give feedback and suggestions, share their experience with the activity, and ask questions in the event a prompt is not understood. A link to the www.dmyerscreativity.com website is in the Bio section making it easily accessible for users who would like to know more about the project and order their own set of cards.
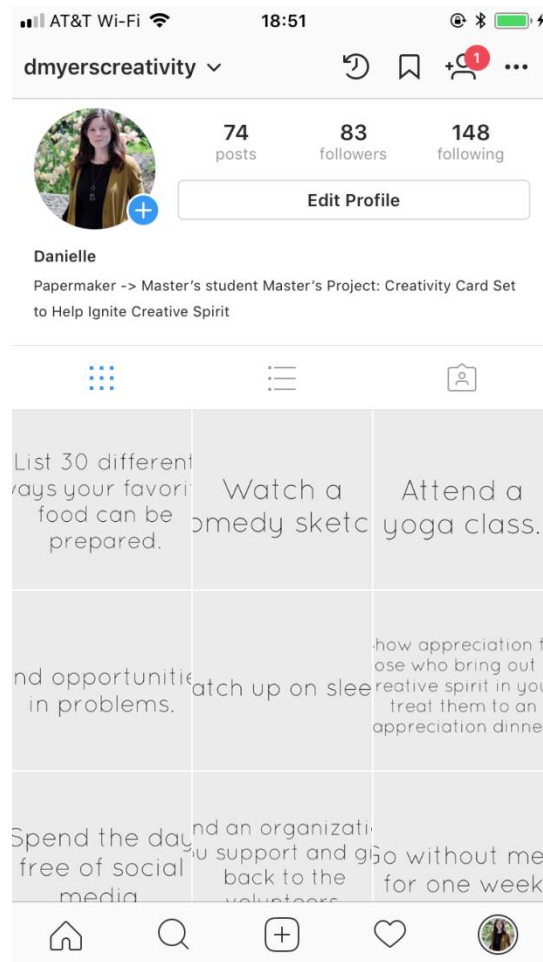
Additional examples of the page layout and featured posts are included in Appendix A.

SECTION FIVE: KEY LEARNINGS

Overview of the Key Learnings

This project began as a post-graduation creative pursuit while I figured out what would be my next step in life. It quickly became service-oriented when it gained the attention of my peers and their friends and families. All of a sudden I heard stories of creative droughts, inadequacies, and self-doubt. It was then that I realized this needed to move beyond my scope of focus to become more inclusive. Creativity is highly personal and protected within every individual. To create a card set that people could utilize to banish their feelings of ineptitude, I needed to consider my empathetic approach to an individual's personal creativity (Runco, 2003).

Personal creativity focuses on the creative process and its underlying behaviors. More than that, I needed to create ways that would keep the momentum going as to practice creativity every day, and to do this, I had to collaborate with others and gain feedback. The key learnings reflect this learning process and are divided into process and content-oriented categories.

Process-oriented

According to the MBTI, I am a highly introverted individual who is deeply in touch with her thoughts and feelings (Myers & Briggs, 2018). This assessment fits perfectly with my FourSight creative profile as an Integrator (Puccio, 2014). Integrators tend to be flexible, easily accommodating, and steady. They are excellent team players, but that is the catch. I relish in my solitude. I have always stood by my arguments that I work best alone. That was not the case for me in regards to this project, or any project now for that matter.

The catch is that my Integrator profile contains a shadow profile of a Finisher. Finishers are a two-way combination of high Developer and high Implementer styles (Puccio, 2014). They are so good at getting the job done that sometimes the quality is sacrificed to the satisfaction of completion. My love of working solo and finishing jobs can prove detrimental when I need polished, professional results. This can make me stubborn and difficult to work with. However, I promised myself that I would be a better creative practitioner as a result of the work put into this project.

To begin, I faced the fact that Ideation (idea generating) is my weakest link. Ideation would prove to be my first challenge. Not only do I find generating ideas to be extremely difficult I had committed myself to producing 365 ideas within a few weeks. For a while, I found inspiration from my surroundings and the internet but eventually I needed help. I began opening up my work to close friends and family for ideas. It was difficult because all of a sudden this

project no longer felt like it was my own. But this was the crucial moment that I realized how beneficial this card set would be for others.

That brings me to feedback collaboration. My list of 365 ideas was complete and ready to send to the print shop for prototype production within the first month of the semester. If I had not reminded myself of the personal goals I was hoping to accomplish, the ease of haste and commitment to collaboration, then I would have been significantly disappointed by the outcome. Instead, I chose to send my list to ten different people (friends, family, colleagues, and co-workers), of which eight replied. Four users were untrained in the field of creativity, and the other four were trained in the program at ICSC at Buffalo State. Their feedback allowed for questions, concerns, comments, and suggestions regarding specific prompts, final design elements, additional ideas if others no longer felt suitable, and their initial reaction to the idea collection. This feedback altered many of my ideas and changed the entire layout design that I had in mind and it was the best decision I could have made.

In summary, the key learnings of my process related to my willingness to collaborate with others. The collaboration allowed me to overcome my creative limitations to produce a creative product that embodied my vision.

Content-oriented

When I began this project, I had a grand vision of a two-sided card deck. One side would have a single creative prompt with a solid color background. On the other hand, an original image captured by me would be used as a Forced Connection (Puccio, Mance, Barbero Switalski, & Reali, 2012). The design became complicated quicker than I would have imagined. Not only did I need to create 365 ideas for the prompts, but I would also have to capture 365 images to go on the backs of the cards. In addition to that, I would have had to explain the

concept of Forced Connections to the untrained individual without becoming sidetracked from the original mission: igniting the creative spirit through everyday creative practices.

Feeling overwhelmed, I knew I had to revisit my objective and begin from scratch. I realized that less is more and decided on a layout of a single prompt with a solid background and nothing on the other side. Following my feedback exercise, I realized I would need more information for some of the prompts. Aside from including a small booklet that would explain how to approach the more abstract exercises, I decided to redo the layout to add a second side where I can include a brief description of how the activity relates to creativity.

After beginning with too much information followed by not enough, I was able to reach a balance of minimal aesthetic with the right amount of information to remain effective. There is enough information to get started and not get distracted.

The key content-oriented lesson is to keep the objective in focus. It is easy to get caught up in the aesthetic elements. More information did not provide value; instead, the product became saturated, and less information made the product confusing. By reminding myself of what the real objective was, encouraging creative action and inspiration, I was able to find a balance to produce a product that is aesthetically pleasing as well as an effective tool.

Feedback

The process used to evaluate the compiled list of ideas has been outlined in Section Three above. The key learnings from this feedback secured the idea that more information was needed for some of the prompts to be understood. Rather than providing a brief description for a select few cards, I decided to include a brief description on all of the cards. The descriptions are all different and applicable to the specific prompt found on the other side of the card. This decision

was made to cater to any additional clarifying that the user may require. The feedback that was received is reported below:

- Some of the prompts were duplicates (majority response: both trained and untrained)

- They are unique and fun activities (majority response: both)

- There were some concerns regarding the prompts that would take planning and increased involvement beyond the daily creative experience (majority response: both)

- Some of the ideas were too simple (majority response: trained)

- Consider further instruction for specific prompts (majority response: both)

- Some of the ideas were too abstract (majority response: trained)

- Adjust the consistency of the writer's voice (majority response: both)

- Some of the prompts are intimidating (untrained)

This feedback was essential to providing users with a product that exemplifies the creative spirit and ensures a rewarding experience. It was important for me to consider the source for specific feedback. For instance: the untrained users never made mention that any of the ideas were too abstract or simple but instead suggested additional instructions to further understanding.

One aspect that stood out to me that I had not considered was the idea that the prompts could feel intimidating. I think this will be mitigated with the additional description on the back of each card. Many of the guidelines provide words of encouragement and suggest an environment that is free of judgment which the feedback users felt would be a practical solution to this issue.

As for the big planning prompts, many of the untrained users mentioned that they liked the challenges and that there were plenty of everyday activities that can be done while planning for the more involved activities. Working beyond the scope of daily creative activities was another concern of mine, but the untrained feedback gave me the confidence that they would succeed in the card set.

Room for Improvement

My most prominent room for improvement would be to have a better design for feedback collection. My approach to this collection of data was not as formal and organized as I would have liked. In the future, I would prefer to supply a questionnaire of specific feedback points for the users to rate followed by a comment section.

<div align="center">

SECTION SIX: CONCLUSION

Creativity

</div>

How do we, as creative practitioners, inspire creativity in others, or more importantly, how do we motivate others to ignite their creative spirit? What tools can we provide? Will our expertise be understood? How can we teach people about creativity when they do not believe that they are capable of living creatively? These were questions that I had to ask myself when deciding to navigate this project towards a social setting as opposed to focusing on my personal exploration.

The only way I could see connecting my vision to the lives of others was through empathic understanding. An individual's personal creative experience and definitions are fragile and should be considered as well as respected. People are too worried about being judged to express their sincere feelings making it challenging to develop a trusting creative relationship.

After reviewing the prompts and their accompanying descriptions, I am confident in the relationship I would be developing with others. Notes of encouragement and patience are present throughout the card set, building a layer of trust and support. Although that may seem like an unnecessary detail, I would argue that it is a vital component for the success of this project. Inviting adults who are not trained in creativity nor believe that they are capable of being creative is a task that requires psychological preparation. The users need to feel like they will not be judged when participating in some of the more silly activities. If the prompts are designed successfully, the users will feel comfortable letting down their guard.

Feedback from the untrained users assured me that the prompts would be an effective way to raise awareness about personal creative abilities and the attitudes that influence them. Through engagement, an approachable demeanor, and empathetic nature, the card set should feel like a mentor, therapist, best friend, family member, and the person they imagine themselves to be.

Becoming creative does not have to be a dreadful experience. By opening our minds to all possibilities, we increase our chances of experiencing creativity on a personal level. It will require daily practice and incorporation of the creative skills to grow. However, if the card set is engaging enough the likelihood of continued practice is great.

Change Leadership

Impact on others

As a creative change leader, I hope to inspire adults to give creativity a chance. Adults are a vulnerable demographic when it comes to creativity levels. They develop creativity-suppressing habits, fall victim to other's opinions, avoid risks, and avoid playfulness. The further adherence to these practices, the higher the chances are of a diminished creativity skill set.

I believe, following the feedback group for the card set, both trained and untrained users, that the activities will not be seen as child-like. The cards offer a balance of playfulness and contemplative activities which are ideal characteristics for this population.

Impact on the self

Becoming a creative change leader requires confronting uncomfortable qualities about myself. Working on this project, I had plenty of time to analyze my approach towards creative pursuits, my habits, my attitude towards creativity, and my personality as a whole. Was I happy with the results? How have I changed from the start of this project to its conclusion?

Safe to say, I have grown as a creative practitioner. From the conception of the card set idea, I knew I wanted to work on my incessant hastiness for project completion. It has caused me problems in the past, and I utilized this time to slow down and be mindful of the quality of my work. Taking my time allowed me to address my shortcomings.

Ideation was mentioned earlier as being my weakest link so when deciding on a total quantity of cards I wanted to stretch my ideational capabilities. 50 - 100 seemed reasonable, so I knew that would not help me work on my idea generating skill set. 365 is an associative quantity. It brings to mind the number of days in a single year. One year is an investment of time and energy which is what this project is requesting, both an individual's time and energy. 365 ideas would ensure a compelling and diverse collection of ideas. It took several weeks to complete the list, and it was certainly a challenge, but my skill set within Ideation has improved tremendously.

As an introvert, collaboration and group work are not inviting circumstances. However, if there was one thing I have learned during my time at ICSC, is that collaboration is one of the most valuable, and accessible, resources around. It is not natural for me to invite others into my

creative process, nor do I suppose it ever will be, but I understood that I needed to gather diverse perspectives for meaningful feedback for this project.

I have become a more open collaborator as a result of my Master's work. My support system incorporated diverse individuals from a variety of backgrounds and levels of experience. They were honest and encouraging. Most importantly, they offered solutions when they had concerns. When I choose to surround myself with others, I prefer people who see potential and have an open mind. The feedback participants gave constructive responses along with support when I felt overwhelmed. My experience in a collaborative setting has developed in a way I would never have imagined.

The Master's project had me confront personal and creative constraints. Through welcoming others' strengths to help me where I am least proficient made me a better producer of creative work. The experience was gratifying, so much so, that without a doubt I will continue to assess my weakest channels and reach out whenever necessary.

Next Steps

The growing interest in the 365 Ideas to Ignite the Creative Spirit card set has inspired me to pursue selling these on the open market. The following steps will be to:

1. Print the prototype and assess the product.

2. Make any changes to the prototype before releasing images to the public.

3. Launch a crowdfunding campaign to raise funding for bulk printing.

- Kickstarter and IndieGoGo are two viable options for a crowdfunding campaign, but I will explore additional outlets to determine the platform that will best fit my production needs.

- The purpose of the crowdfunding campaign is to help offset the production costs with the end goal being reasonable pricing for consumers.

4. Publish through an approved print shop.

5. Market the card set through my website's online shop, as a vendor at various conferences, and through additional outlets if contracted.

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Appendix A

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<   **Photo**   ↻

dmyerscreativity   •••

Practice mindfulness
while cooking.

♡ ◯ ◁   ⊓

Liked by **debeck01**, **cdesignscards** and **7 others**

dmyerscreativity Cooking is a familiar activity. Consider the ways you can become more familiar.
#creativity #creativityeveryday #creativityforlife #creative #dmyerscreativity #mindfulness #mindulnessinthekitchen

cdesignscards I always try to do this!

5 DAYS AGO

⌂   ◯   ⊞   ♡   ◉

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_____
Danielle Myers

_____May 11, 2018_____
Date