Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn’t do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.
– Mark Twain

Artist’s Way Group – Week 1

Recovering a Sense of Safety

Welcome! I’m so glad you could make it.

Our group tonight will be splitting into groups of four. Once your group of four has formed and you have picked a table, I ask that you take a few minutes to buy something from the café. **Please feel free to stay as you would like and leave when you need to. The café closes at 9:00. Subs are only £3 for the entire run of our little group – please come find me and be sure to sign the sheet indicating that you have paid.**

Each week you will get a hand-out to help guide your group discussions. This week you are getting a whole bunch of hand-outs, including the Group Guidelines, a list of Artist’s Date ideas, and a short anonymous survey I would like you to complete and leave with me tonight. I recommend you find a folder to keep all the bits from our sessions is so that you can look back on them. If you need to miss a week, you will be able to access the worksheets through meetup.com.

If you need to reach me, you can text me at 07884147659 or email me at one.ordinary.human@gmail.com. If you want to contact me through meetup.com, please be sure to click on Kate Harris, not Kateboo.

Now, with all that said, let’s get on with the show!

In your groups, go around the table and discuss the following:

1. Briefly introduce yourself. Name, creative outlet of choice, etc.
2. How many days did you do your artist’s pages and how was the experience?
3. What did you do for your Artist’s Date? How did it feel?
4. Did you do any or all of the tasks this week? Did anything interesting come up that you would like to share with the group?
5. Were there any other issues this week that you consider significant for your recovery?
6. **Blocks.** We are all blocked artists, that’s why we’re here! But right now some of our blocks may be keeping us from diving into The Artist’s Way, which is a shame. Take a moment to write down the first three blocks that come to mind. With the help of your group, think of some creative ways to get unblocked.

7. **Commitment.** On the back of this page you will find a copy of the Contract from the book. Sign it and honour it – you are worth it.

You are your own Promised Land, your own new frontier. – Julia Cameron
**Artist’s Way Contract**

I, ________________, understand that I am undertaking an intensive, guided encounter with my own creativity. I commit myself to the twelve-week duration of the course. I, ________________, commit to weekly reading, daily morning pages, a weekly artist date, and the fulfilment of each week’s tasks.

I, ________________, further understand that this course will raise issues and emotions for me to deal with. I, ________________, commit myself to excellent self-care—adequate sleep, proper nutrition, exercise, and pampering — for the duration of the course.

________________________________________

(signature)

_______________

(date)

(source: The Artist’s Way, by Julia Cameron)
Artist’s Date Ideas:

Our Interactive Map can be found at: http://g.co/maps/b5xgw

- Occupy LSX - http://occupylsx.org/
- Greenwich Market - http://www.shopgreenwich.co.uk/
- Deptford Project Café - http://thedepftfordproject.com/
  - roller blading
- Somerset House - http://www.somersethouse.org.uk/
  - ice skating
  - ice skating
- Go to a Comedy Club - http://www.yelp.co.uk/c/london/comedyclubs
- Visit a Church - http://www.mygola.com/the-best-churches-to-visit-in-london/q8579
- Attend a Pentecostal Church Service
- Go to a Salsa Club - http://g.co/maps/28dr7
- Saint Paul’s - http://www.stpauls.co.uk/Cathedral-History/Climb-the-Dome
  - Peter Pan statue
- The Phoenix Garden - http://www.phoenixgarden.btck.co.uk/
- The Barbican - http://www.barbican.org.uk/
- The Temple Church - http://www.templechurch.com/
- Red Lion Square - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Lion_Square
- Take a Random Bus Ride
- Go to an unfamiliar part of the city
- Camden Arts Centre - http://www.camdenartcentre.org/home/
- Wellcome Collection - http://www.wellcomecollection.org/
- Borough Market - http://www.boroughmarket.org.uk/
- Primrose Hill Park - http://www.royalparks.gov.uk/parks/primrose_hill.cfm
- St. Katherine Dock - http://www.skdocks.co.uk/
- Design Museum - http://designmuseum.org/
- Queens Ice and Bowl - http://www.queensiceandbowl.co.uk/
- British Library - http://www.bl.uk/
- Science Museum - http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/
- Guildhall Art Gallery - http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/LGNL_Services/Leisure_and_culture/Museums_and_galleries/Guildhall_Art_Gallery/
- Tate Modern - http://www.tate.org.uk/modern/
- Petri Museum of Egyptian Archaeology - http://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums/petrie
St. Thomas Hospital - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Thomas'_Hospital](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Thomas'_Hospital)
Hampstead Heath -
[http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/LGNL_Services/Environment_and_planning/Parks_and_open_spaces/Hampstead_Heath/](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/LGNL_Services/Environment_and_planning/Parks_and_open_spaces/Hampstead_Heath/)
Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood - [http://www.vam.ac.uk/moc/](http://www.vam.ac.uk/moc/)
The Victoria and Albert Museum - [http://www.vam.ac.uk/](http://www.vam.ac.uk/)
Natural History Museum - [http://www.nhm.ac.uk/](http://www.nhm.ac.uk/)
Take a boat down the Thames to Greenwich
Covent Garden - [http://www.coventgardenlondonuk.com/](http://www.coventgardenlondonuk.com/)
Churchill War Rooms - [http://www.iwm.org.uk/visits/churchill-war-rooms](http://www.iwm.org.uk/visits/churchill-war-rooms)
  - photograph the ducks
Jump on a tour bus
Jack the Ripper walk - [http://www.jack-the-ripper-walk.co.uk/](http://www.jack-the-ripper-walk.co.uk/)
Go Shopping
Go to the seaside
  - collect pebbles
Go to your local Garden Centre
Learn to make Bread
Do some sewing
Take photos of real people
Take dance classes
Learn a new recipe
Go to the Opera
Go see a play
Visit a Chocolate Factory
Go bowling
Visit a National Trust House - [http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/)
Go to a Farmer’s Market
Find a bouncy castle
Richmond Park - [http://www.royalparks.gov.uk/Richmond-Park.aspx](http://www.royalparks.gov.uk/Richmond-Park.aspx)
Grab a Boris Bike
  - try it at 2AM!
Make a Collage
Paint
Go to Cass Art and buy art supplies
o Take yourself to a Pub for lunch
o Go to a Spa
o Bake a cake
o Go to a gig
o Go on a rowboat on a lake
o Have a fight
o London Zoo - http://www.zsl.org/zsl-london-zoo/
o Buy a drum and play it!
o Find a wacky meetup and attend an event
o Write a rap
o Hunterian Museum - http://www.rcseng.ac.uk/museums
o Take a pottery class
o Laughter Yoga
o Crystal Palace Park Farm - http://www.crystalpalaceparkfarm.co.uk/
o Mudchute Farm - http://www.mudchute.org/
o Aimlessly wander
o Go stargazing
o Make a snowwoman
o Make a sand Sculpture on the bank of the Thames
o Go to Southend on Sea - http://www.visitsouthend.co.uk/
  ▪ walk to the end of the pier
Group Guidelines
(from http://juliacameronlive.com/basic-tools/creative-clusters/)

Use a Twelve-Week Process with a Weekly Gathering of Two to Three Hours. The morning pages and artist dates are required of everyone in the group, including facilitators. The exercises are done in order in the group, with everyone, including the facilitator, answering the questions and then sharing the answers in clusters of four, one chapter per week. Do not share your morning pages with the group or anyone else. Do not reread your morning pages until later in the course, if you are required to do so by your facilitator or your own inner guidance.

Avoid Self-Appointed Gurus. If there is any emissary, it is the work itself, as a collective composed of all who take the course, at home or otherwise. Each person is equally a part of the collective, no one more than another. While there may be “teachers,” facilitators who are relied on during the twelve-week period to guide others down the path, such facilitators need to be prepared to share their own material and take their own creative risks. This is a dialectic rather than a monologue – an egalitarian group process rather than a hierarchical one.

Listen. We each get what we need from the group process by sharing our own material and by listening to others. We do not need to comment on another person’s sharing in order to help that person. We must refrain from trying to “fix” someone else. Each group devises a cooperative creative “song” of artistic recovery. Each group’s song is unique to that group – like that of a pod or family of whales, initiating and echoing to establish their position. When listening, go around the circle without commenting unduly on what is heard. The circle, as a shape, is very important. We are intended to witness, not control, one another. When sharing exercises, clusters of four within the larger groups are important: five tends to become unwieldy in terms of time constraints; three doesn’t allow for enough contrasting experience. Obviously, not all groups can be divided into equal fours. Just try to do so whenever you can.

Respect One Another. Be certain that respect and compassion are afforded equally to every member. Each person must be able to speak his own wounds and dreams. No one is to be “fixed” by another member of the group. This is a deep and powerful internal process. There is no one right way to do this. Love is important. Be kind to yourself. Be kind to one another.

Expect Change in the Group Makeup. Many people will – some will not – fulfil the twelve-week process. There is often a rebellious or fallow period after the twelve weeks, with people returning to the disciplines later. When they do, they continue to find the process unfolding within them a year, a few years, or many years later. Many groups have a tendency to drive apart at eight to ten weeks (creative U-turns) because of the feelings of loss associated with the group’s ending. Face the truth as a group; it may help you stay together.

Be Autonomous. You cannot control your own process, let alone anyone else’s. Know that you will feel rebellious occasionally – that you won’t want to do all of your morning pages and exercises at times in the twelve weeks. Relapse is okay. You cannot do this process perfectly, so relax, be kind to yourself, and hold on to your hat. Even when you feel nothing is happening, you will be changing at great velocity. This change is a deepening into your own intuition, your own creative self. The structure of the course is about safely getting across the bridge into new realms of creative spiritual awareness.

Be Self-Loving. If the facilitator feels somehow “wrong” to you, change clusters or start your own. Continually seek your own inner guidance rather than outer guidance. You are seeking to form an artist-to-artist relationship with the Great Creator. Keep gurus at bay. You have your own answers within you.
Quick Survey:

Just a few questions to help me out. You can hand this sheet in at the end of group or email your answers to one.ordinary.human@gmail.com

I was hoping we could mix it up a bit this session and meet in a few different spots for our weekly sessions. Do you have any suggestions, is there a spot you know of that would be just perfect?

Are there any events, shows, exhibitions, gigs, etc. (either something of your own or something you enjoy) that will happen between now and July 12 that you think we could/should attend as a group?

Are there any topics you would like us to focus on? Either broad things like Procrastination or Self-Care or something more specific. This is YOUR group and it should reflect that.

What is your main goal for this group?

What are you hoping to get out of it?