

# **7 Common Mistakes People Make When They Have A Yearning To Engage In A Creative Passion**

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From time to time, many of us will have a yearning or an impulse to be more creative. We want to tap into a part of ourselves which we are not currently accessing.

What is your creative passion...?

Maybe you want to start writing short stories.

Maybe you'd like to get some paint and start working on a canvas again.

Maybe you have dreamt of learning to make sculptures or perhaps you'd just love to revisit the past when you were always drawing things.

It can sometimes be scary to start thinking about a part of you that you've neglected.

Is it even worth it to think about what might be possible?

Many people are able to successfully bring their creative passion back into their life.

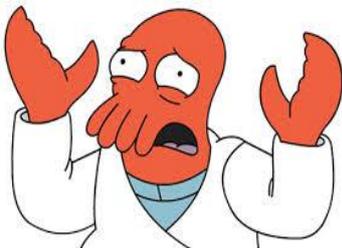
For others, it's just plain painful. I've discovered that there are 7 main mistakes that people make time and time again when they start moving in the direction of a past passion. These mistakes mean they trip up and fall before they've even found out

what they were moving towards and what they were capable of accomplishing.

These mistakes prevent people from tapping into a truly meaningful part of themselves and stops them from living the fulfilling life they deserve.

## MISTAKE No.1

### Believing Things Are Okay As They Are, So Why Bother?



Things may seem okay as they are, but that's exactly the problem. Things that are just okay indicate that there is something lacking. A person who is okay with just

plodding along, they are not challenging themselves or exercising their potential. Do we want a life that lacks potency and vitality? Given the choice I would imagine most people would want to have something beyond the average. When we believe things are okay we are in resistance mode to the challenges of life. We submit to the ordinary and never dare to open ourselves up to a world of possibilities. The real challenges of life are the things that stretch us and pull us. If we try something new or different, it is inevitable that we will feel some discomfort, it is part of what makes us human, but that doesn't mean that we should resign ourselves to being just okay.

To believe that things are okay and will always okay be is a false belief. It is just a statement of fear and a denial of the inevitability of change. **Change is always**

**happening.** Beliefs change, attitudes change, people's circumstances change.

Change will either work for you or against you. We can effect change through our behaviours and actions or we can sit back and allow circumstances to dictate the changes that influence our world.

We often see big companies changing or updating their branding. It might seem unnecessary, especially if it is a well known and loved brand but the changes are crucial in keeping their brand relevant to consumers. Often the changes that companies make are in anticipation of a particular trend or market response. They are not waiting for change to happen before they do something, they are adapting in advance and in anticipation of the changes that are happening around them.

We all have the option to do the same in our own lives. We can act on our urges to do something different or allow regret to seep in later. It's all a choice.

*'If you don't like change, you're going to like irrelevance even less.'* – General Shinseki

## **MISTAKE No.2**

### **Wanting to Fix it Alone**

To attempt to go it alone is one of the biggest mistakes people will make when trying to make major changes in their lives.

There is often a mindless bravado that accompanies the lone ranger approach to life. To think you can make significant shifts in your life without support, guidance and resources from others is a poor assumption.

There is nothing wrong with seeking guidance. In fact gaining input from others allows a more objective approach and is likely to produce better results in the long term than if you were to go it alone. A lot of the most successful people in life have had some kind of coach or mentor to help them reach their goal. An example of



this is world leading tennis player Andy Murray, whose coach is former women's no.1 Maria Mauresmo. She gives him discipline and strategy. Andy puts his own demands on himself but Maria holds him accountable and fills him with a sense of responsibility. She provides the motivation to continue shifting to the next level.

One of the most important reasons for support is the offer of a different perspective.

### **Do you think that other people can see things which you can't?**

Many people feel that if they can't do something themselves then they are just not good enough. This is a lie. The more you limit your connectivity to the world, the more you breakdown the flow of ideas. A lack of flowing ideas limits your potential to create. It seems that artists and creatives do much of their work alone. Picture the dedicated focused writer in her silent study focused on her work in solitude. In the case of re-engagement with creative passions, we must realise that our connectivity with others is a necessity for us to create and reach our potential. A connected world allows all things to flow better. The idea of giving to receive is well known but connecting (or reaching out) to receive is just as important.

If you are unsure of how you might begin to engage with an old creative passion then it will help to share your thoughts and ambitions with someone else. Talk about it with others who would be open or eager to hear about your creative yearnings. Get yourself around an environment of those doing the same or similar thing. Again, this is a form of reaching out to others. It is often said that when you have passion and clarity for something then you begin to attract opportunities and people to help you. We often believe in others more than we believe in ourselves. To get encouragement from someone else can move us more to action than our own self-belief.

## MISTAKE No.3

### Believing You Are Too Busy to Get Involved with “Creative Stuff”



One of the unfortunate things that has crept into modern society is the idea that you are elevated to some kind of higher status when you proudly declare from the mountain top, ‘I am so busy!’ It is a selfish statement which presents the idea that your schedule is the supreme centre of the world. We are so deeply preoccupied with hurrying and busyness that we are blind to the destructive nature of our own statement. Ask yourself this... **‘When is that going to change?’** Busyness is the most popular and the easiest excuse not to do something. We all have responsibilities and things that fill up our day but when we proudly declare that we are busy, *we are giving up our opportunity to change.* We can always shift things if they are important enough. If we need to be up at 4am to catch a flight, we make the simple decision to try get to bed earlier, set our alarm and wake up at 4am. The other issue with busyness is that it’s an excuse that stands in the way of being flexible.

We are fooled into the idea that it’s not possible to have one without the other. When we get down from the mountain top our heart beats differently. We’ve probably calmed down, our vision becomes a bit clearer now that we’re away from the mist and clouds. We see that maybe there is room for something else in our lives.

There are many different techniques out there for managing time effectively. Goal lists, to-do lists, not to do lists, life lists, checklists etc. What most of these techniques will point to is the idea of being able to see what your priorities are and

manage them accordingly. Being able to understand and evaluate priorities is what makes it possible to dispel the myth of mutual exclusivity. We see that it is possible to integrate something else into our existing pattern of life based on its level of relevance to our own bigger picture.

## **MISTAKE No. 4**

### **Believing the Solution is to Start a New Hobby**

Creative impulses are indicators of something deeply important to us. It needs more than just taking on a hobby. It's ok to pursue hobbies and they can be a valid part of your artistic rediscovery. However, we need to be careful that we are not just throwing more fuel onto the busy fire. To integrate is different to adding on top. Integration is the idea that we can bring something else into our world and make all the other parts brighter, more wholesome, and simply better. In order to sustain our good intentions and get the most value from our yearnings we need a better understanding of our relationship to the things we are attracted towards. These relationships potentially provide clues to what our life purpose is.



Let's define what our inner artist is all about and what it is doing inside of us. It is not going to war with us. It is nudging us in the ribs. It is providing a gentle poke, especially when we pause in life or enter a path off of our day to day trail. It is full of energy but has not been allowed to breathe. It wants to give you a warm hug. It wants you to know that everything is going to be just fine. When your inner artist is

brought to life, it does not only take you by the hand and offer comfort, it fills you with excitement and takes you to doors that you had not even noticed. It is able to unlock those doors and allow you to experience more of what you are about. When we decide to re-engage with a creative passion we are re-engaging with our self, our soul, our true being. That's where happiness lies.

## **Mistake No.5**

### **Having a Misguided Definition of Success**



There is much to gain in the pursuit of achievement. In having goals, challenging our self, and aiming to do better than we are presently, we forge direction in our lives and move forward in reaching our potential. Where we can sometimes slip up is when we pursue a picture of success painted by someone other than ourselves. One of the biggest misconceptions of success is that it is gained by achieving a certain level of income. It is ok to use money as a measure of success in our business and career pursuits but not as a measure of success in itself. There are countless examples of people who have made a fortune but would say that there is so much wrong in their life. Money offers options, security and lifestyle but there is an even longer list of things money is not able to provide. If the world around us is saying that money is the key to everything you want, then we perhaps need to reject that world.

We have been trained to adhere to the materialistic view of success because the media and advertising industry are more effective if they feed us the idea that we

need to have a certain position and own certain things in order to be viewed successful in the eyes of others. The key phrase here is: ‘In the eyes of others.’ We search for approval and validation from others in order to feel good about ourselves. There HAS to be something wrong here. We seek connection and support and encouragement from others but if they project an unhealthy perception of what is good or bad or what is an achievement or non-achievement and we internalise it, then we can never be happy. Career success, added responsibility and financial gains provide fleeting moments of happiness and satisfaction, but do they satisfy our souls?

## **MISTAKE No. 6**

### **Believing You Are Not Good Enough**

Julia Cameron in ‘The Artist’s Way’ says *‘Once we are willing to accept that anything worth doing might even be worth doing badly our options widen.’*



The belief that we might not be good or talented enough to engage in a creative pursuit is another misconception. This is very much connected to the notion that achievement requires validation from others. Some people may be more technically gifted, but when it comes to artistic pursuits, who really has the authority to impose value on a personal expression of creativity? After all, art is subjective. It is our regular experience with failure from a young age that leads one to believe that they may not ‘have it’.

**You possess everything you need already.** When we live in our head as most of us do, we learn and develop an infinite amount of reasons, thoughts, doubts,

questions, problems, issues and barriers that prevent us from accessing ourselves. Our self can become the enemy. Our questioning of our self comes from a place of fear and in particular a fear of failure. If we accept that failure is not what we really think it is and that even the deepest and darkest challenges presented to us are simply an opportunity for personal growth, then we would smile at failure.

When you are truly being yourself then you are unlocking the door to freedom – freedom from a false belief that you are not good enough.

## MISTAKE No.7

### Worrying That You Don't Know What Your Creative Passion Is



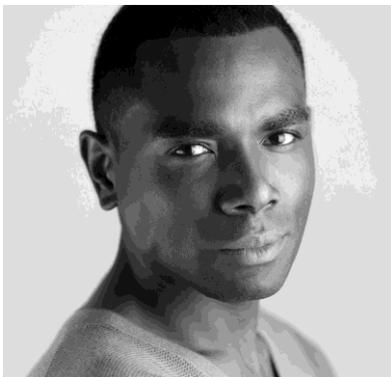
Saying you don't know what your creative passion is, is much the same as when people say they don't know what they would love to do with their life. Trying to figure out your whole life is like crawling through mud in the dark trying to find a lost possession. It is on the whole a mammoth and mostly unnecessary task. **You don't need to know what your passion is before you act.**

Where we mostly trip up is when we demand the answer from our self (or expect it to one day fall out of the sky). We beat ourselves up about it because the answers don't arrive. 'Figuring out your life' becomes the major goal and becomes too much of a daunting task.

What we need to do is follow our excitement. When we think about following our excitement it is freeing, it is fun, it is colourful. It appears achievable, it has life, it has power, it holds vitality. Most importantly it is the first sensible logical step towards working out what your passion might be. Think about what it is you like or love NOW (you don't have to love it) and move in the direction of that thing. Test the water, start getting involved with the thing you like. Get feedback and reflect. What did you like about it? How did it make you feel? Hang around people who do that thing. Ask them about their journey.

You can become paralysed by wanting the perfect answer to the "what's my creative passion?" question. Don't set the goal to be a fortune teller, demanding to know what your calling is. Feel something now and take action towards whatever that is.

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**Vernon James** is the founder of *The Casual Artist*, working to helping busy professional people successfully integrate art back into their life. After graduating in Philosophy and Literature at university he embarked on a career working in fast paced sales environments. He has also spent over ten years working in creative industries. Alongside that he enjoyed a number of his own creative pursuits, in particular writing and performing with his signed band, *Isaw*. His continued personal evolution has seen him further deepen this relationship with his own authentic creative nature bringing an immense amount of satisfaction, joy and adventure into his life. This abundant state has naturally begun to catalyse and facilitate other people to act on their creative impulses so you too can live the life you truly want. He has trained under the world's leading creativity coach *Eric Maisel* and plans to publish his first book 'Your Inner Artist' in early 2015. He enjoys running, yoga, theatre and voluntary work.

Visit [www.thecasualartist.co.uk](http://www.thecasualartist.co.uk) for more inspiration.