



Are YOU continually frustrated that
your creative talents are
underused and underdeveloped?

Explode Your Creativity!

Action Workbook

By

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Welcome...

Welcome to “*Explode Your Creativity!*”, an Action Workbook designed to help you understand exactly what creativity means to you and how you tap into your own inner resources and explode with creativity!

The fact that you are reading this means that you’ve recognised a desire within yourself to express yourself in creative ways, and you know you’re capable of being highly creative. You’re probably also aware that being creative is a vital part of your life and your personality.

But, again because you’re reading this workbook, it’s possible that your creativity levels are not what you want them to be, and you feel in some way unfulfilled and that your creative talents are being underused. You may also believe that exploring and developing these creative abilities will bring you greater fulfilment and happiness in your life.

The benefits of expressing ourselves regularly in creative ways, whether we choose to share our creations with the rest of the world or not, are vast. Creativity and self-expression are fundamental elements of what makes us human. To suppress them is unnatural and unhealthy and inevitably leads to frustration, anger or depression.

Speak to any genuinely happy and fulfilled person and you will find that creativity, in whatever form it takes for them, is a crucial element in their lives and their continuing happiness.

You may already feel you’re creative in a variety of different ways in your life, and if those work for you and you enjoy them, that’s fantastic - keep doing them!

In the content of this workbook we're going to look at exactly what creativity means to you, how creative you feel you are currently, how creative you'd like to be, how you can begin to move towards these desired levels, and how you can truly *believe* you are endlessly creative, all using a series of action based exercises.

To get the most from this Action Workbook, you're encouraged to be open minded and to trust your instincts, your judgement and your own creativity. You know yourself better than anyone else, so above all, be completely honest. It serves no purpose to deceive yourself.

If you give your full attention and commitment to each exercise and to challenging and discovering more about yourself and your creativity, you can't help but benefit immensely from this workbook.

To make it easier to use, you may wish to print out this book and put it into a folder or binder so you can refer to it quickly and easily.

One final thing - don't forget to enjoy yourself and have fun discovering some new ideas and approaches along the way!

What does Creativity mean to you?

Before we can begin to look at how you can be more creative, it's first essential to understand what creativity actually means to you.

There are many activities and professions that are traditionally considered "*creative*" such as being a painter, musician, writer or graphic designer. But creativity can actually begin on a much smaller and more subtle scale.

For example, maybe today you could take a different route home from work. Maybe you could cook a recipe you've never tried before, or experiment with one of your favourites. Maybe you could move your furniture round and organise it in a way you've never done before. Maybe you could wear odd socks!

The point is that though these may sound trivial examples, all of them are creative, in the sense that you are doing some new, something different, creating something that wasn't there before, and therefore expanding your experience and your openness to new activities, and new ways of seeing things.

So let's look at this idea of creativity in more depth and what it means to you.

Your Creativity Map

For this first exercise, set at least 15 minutes aside and try to make sure you'll not be interrupted so you can really let your ideas flow naturally.

Start by getting a large piece of blank paper and writing the word "CREATIVITY" in the centre and circling it. Now, brainstorm **all** the possible things you relate and connect to creativity and being creative, both in terms of what you do and what others do, and write these on branches coming out from the word in the centre.

You can have sub-branches if you wish too. For example if you had "Writing" as a branch, then sub-branches could be "my autobiography", "an idea on my hand every morning", "a musical" or "a diary entry each day". Be as open minded and as imaginative as you can and fill the page with creative ideas and associations. Don't censor yourself, just write down all that comes to you.

Think too about creativity in all it's many different contexts - at work, in how you dress, in your relationships, in your leisure time, in how you do your weekly food shopping! Every context you can think of.

Use colours, pictures, symbols, whatever you want to stimulate you and help you get as much from this exercise as possible. Saturate the page with ideas and let your own creativity in doing this exercise explode!

When you've finished and feel you can write no more, put your Creativity Map somewhere prominent so you can add to it as further ideas come to you over the next few days.

Stick it on your bedroom wall or on the fridge, somewhere where you'll see it often and your mind will be prompted to keep generating new ideas. What you're aiming

for is a complete picture of what creativity and being creative means uniquely to you.

So, what did you learn about your ideas and beliefs around creativity? Did your Creativity Map throw up any surprises? Does your map contain more or less than you thought it would?

As you were coming up with different connections, which did you feel most resonated with you most, and were things you have already done, or could easily do in the future?

Now you have a good idea of what creativity means for you, let's look at the importance of what you currently believe about your own creative abilities and how you can develop it to new levels.

Believe in your own creativity

A scientific study looked into the behaviours and psyches of a number of creative people, in an effort to discover what it was that made them so creative, and to find why some people are far more creative than others. The scientist found no reason, except for one –

Creative people believe they are creative.

Think about how this applies to you. The fact that you're reading this workbook suggests you have a strong interest in your own creativity. And from the previous Creative Map exercise, you'll have seen what your beliefs and associations about creativity and being creative are generally.

But what about your own creative ability? Exactly how creative do you actually believe you are in your life overall right now? Give it a rating between 0 and 100.

Perhaps more importantly, how creative do you think you can be? Be completely honest, what do you truly believe about yourself and your potential to be creative in all areas of your life? Write a few sentences stating and describing your current beliefs about your own creative potential.

How large is the gap between how creative you are now and how creative you believe you can be? Whatever your current beliefs, doing the following exercise can help you increase and strengthen them positively.

Creativity Affirmations

Write in large letters on some postcards or pieces of paper the following statements-

I am a truly creative person

I am constantly looking for new and better ways to do things

I express my creativity in a number of
different and interesting ways

I readily embrace change

Creativity and being creative is a core part
of my identity and my personality

I am imaginative and resourceful

I enjoy experimenting with my creative abilities

New ideas flow to me constantly

Add any other positive statements you want to, and adapt any of the above into your own words so you're comfortable with them.

At this point it doesn't matter if you don't believe these statements. Write out the ones you'd like to totally and utterly believe about yourself. **Whatever** your current beliefs are, the more you read these affirmations and say them over to yourself, the more you will believe them and subsequently your actions will naturally fall in line with these powerful positive beliefs.

And then the easier it will become to explode that creativity from inside you!

The only way affirmations like this can work is if they are used repeatedly. So put them somewhere visible where you can use them as much as possible. Say your affirmations at least 3 or 4 times a day until they become engrained in your mind, a part of your unquestioned beliefs about yourself.

Now let's get more specific with your levels of creativity, by looking at how they currently are in each of the areas of your life that you consider important. The next exercise is called the "*Creative Life Wheel*".

Creative Life Wheel

This exercise will enable you to see exactly how creative you feel you are right now in all the important areas of your life. As you will have seen from your own Creativity Map, creativity is not simply about being a painter or a poet. Truly creative people incorporate creative elements into every area of their lives, it's inseparable from their personality and their identity.

As for the previous exercises, find somewhere you won't be interrupted. This exercise can be very challenging and to do fully can take anything from half an hour to many hours, so for it to be of most benefit to you, be prepared to give it your full time and focus.

Here are the steps for your own Creative Life Wheel -

1. Take a large blank sheet of paper. Start by thinking about the different areas of your life that are important to you. Choose the 8 that are **most important to you right now**. Some suggestions you may wish to use are:

Career, Family, Personal Relationships, Finances, Social Life, Spirituality, Contribution, Personal Growth & Development, Health, Home & Physical Surroundings, Fun & Leisure.

Add any others to this as you wish, it's important that they're the 8 key areas of **your life right now**, not anyone else's. Don't be too concerned if you can't think of 8 straight away, they will come to you. Write the 8 most important along the top of the page.

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2. Now, draw a circle in the centre of the page, the size of about a third of the width of the page. Divide it into 8 segments and in each of these segments write one of the 8 key areas of your life you've just chosen.
 3. For each area, think about how creative you feel you are and how satisfied you are with how you're using your creative abilities and talents. Give it a rating from 0 to 10, 0 being completely unsatisfied and 10 being completely satisfied. Write this number somewhere with the segment.

Don't spend a long time analysing, just be honest with yourself and give an instinctive answer about how you're feeling about your creativity in that area of your life right now.

4. Next draw an arc in the segment to represent the rating you have just given it. If you take the centre of the circle as 0 and the perimeter as 10, then draw the arc parallel to the outer edge of the circle, so the closer this arc is to the outer edge of the circle, the higher your satisfaction rating for this area. Then do this same rating for each of the other segments of your wheel.
5. You'll now have a clearer idea of how you feel you're utilising your creative abilities in each of the important areas of your life. You can see which areas are working well and you're most satisfied with, and those you may wish to focus on improving.

You will also be able to clearly see how balanced your creativity is in your life overall. The ultimate aim is for your Creative Life Wheel to have all the arcs of equivalent size and near to the outer edge of this circle. This represents a high level of satisfaction with your creativity in each of the key areas of your life, and a balance and harmony between them.

6. The next step is to draw another circle, a bit larger than the first, and extend the 8 sections out to the edge of this new circle. You'll need to leave enough space to draw two more circles after this.

In this new section, write what a rating of 10 would look like for you. If you were completely satisfied with how you were using your creative talents and abilities in this area of your life, what would it be like what would be happening? What would it look like, sound like and feel like?

It's important to reiterate this is relative to **you** and **your life**. How creative you wish to be in each area of your life is entirely up to you. In some areas of your life you may be happy being more or less creative than in others. A rating of 10 represents your ideal in each section, and of course may not be the same level of creativity in every section, but a level that you're happy with.

So for each section, write what your ideal 10 is like. Write it as a short statement, and in the present tense, as if you have it or are doing it already. Repeat this for each section, fill in as much as you feel necessary. Again, be honest with yourself, just write what comes to you, don't be concerned with analyzing.

7. Now we come to the third circle - "*Why is this important?*". Draw another circle and extend the lines again. For each area of your wheel, write why you want the things you stated in the previous circle, the ideal 10. Another way of thinking about this is "*What will this give me?*".

Look at each of the statements you wrote in the ideal 10 circle and ask “*What will this give me?*”, “*Why is it important for me to be like this or to have this?*” and write the answers down.

The purpose of this third circle is to check your motivation and to ensure what you wrote in your ideal 10 section is what you **really** want, and what will really bring you greater fulfilment. If it isn't, you simply won't have that fundamental motivation and desire to change and move towards it.

You may write a single word, such as “*contentment*” or “*confidence*” or “*freedom*” or you may wish to write phrases such as “*a sense of purpose*” or “*a better relationship*”. As with every part of your wheel, be honest with yourself and write in your own words **what's important to you**.

If you find you're struggling to write anything in this section, it may be that what you wrote in the previous section isn't actually what you want after all, and may wish to go back and redefine this part. This is what this circle of the wheel is designed for, and it's easier to do this at this stage than realise months into the future.

Once you're happy with what you've written, move on to the final section.

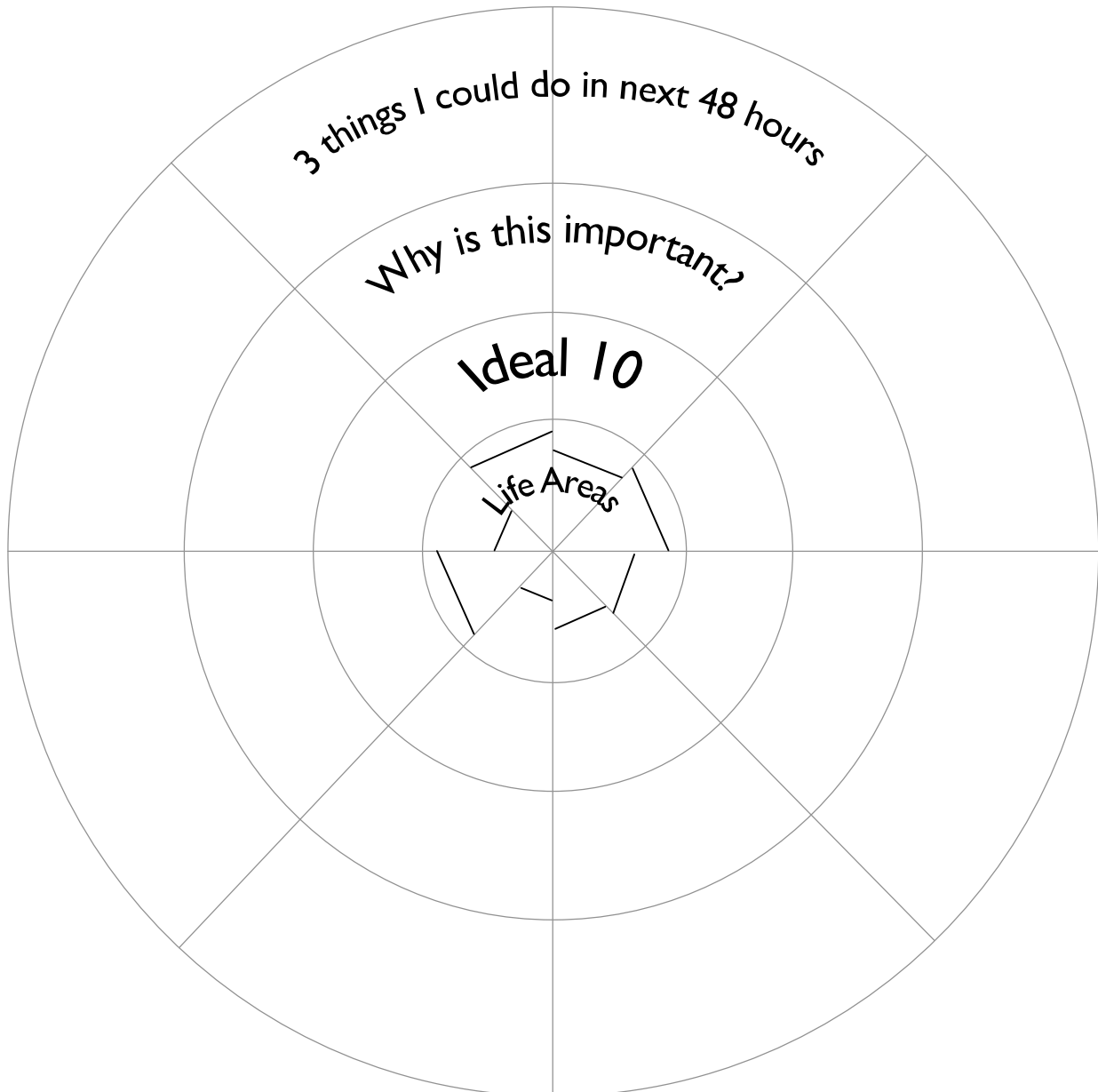
8. Now, here's where we get to the crucial part - taking positive action. Draw a final circle, larger than the first three, and again extend the segments out to the edge.

Pick an area of your life that has one of lowest satisfaction ratings. In the new outer circle in this area write at least three things you **could** do in the next 48 hours to move you nearer to your ideal 10. Be imaginative and creative in doing this, write as much as feel you can.

Remember these are things you **could** do, so write all the things that come to mind, however minor they seem.

9. To finish the Wheel, repeat this last step for each of the key areas of your life. You will now have loads of action points to take, some will be things you can do right away, others may be long term goals that you want to break down into smaller chunks to achieve.

On the next page is an outline of what your wheel may look like –



10. Choose three of the action points, from any of the sections of your wheel and **make the commitment right now** to following them through. Give a specific time and day when you're going to do each one. Do whatever's necessary to help you remember, write it in your diary, tell a friend or someone in your family, write it out in large letters and stick it on your bedroom wall, whatever it takes to ensure you follow the action through.

After you have taken a few positive actions in certain areas of your life, inevitably it will have a positive impact on other areas. You can redo your wheel as often as you want, every month or so is a good starting point. You will be amazed at how much you're life can move forward within just one month.

Each time you come to do the wheel though, don't try to update or adjust a previous one, start again from scratch. Action taken since your previous wheel, and the various unforeseeable changes that come into all our lives will mean you're in a different place to where you were before.

As you become more experienced, adapt the wheel in whichever ways you feel will benefit you. The final section here, where you looked at the actions you could take in the next 48 hours, was an example to show just how much is possible, and how much is in completely within your control to change. You may wish to extend this to a week or a month as you progress, and as well as small independent actions, begin to consider larger goals and break them down into a series of smaller manageable steps.

The Next Step...

Congratulations! Well done on reaching the end of this *“Explode Your Creativity!”* Action Workbook.

Which parts of the workbook have you enjoyed the most? Which did you most benefit from? What did you learn that was of use to you? What did you learn about yourself and your creativity?

This workbook is designed to be an introduction to exploring and developing your own abundance of creative talents and resources.

I’m the author, Dan Goodwin, myself a highly creative person, as well as a Qualified Professional Coach.

Through creativity coaching I enable people to get to the heart of exactly what creativity means for them and how they can begin to explore and apply it in all the areas of their lives that are important to them. I help creative people, those who know their creativity is a core element of who they are, not simply people who happen to do creative things.

My combination of proven coaching methods, and the fact that creativity is so core to my own personality, gives me a unique insight into exactly what it means to be set free from the frustration of underused potential and how I can help you to successfully achieve this in your own life.

If you found this ebook useful and you’re ready to take the next step in putting your creativity into action, check out ***“Stop Doubting, Start Creating!”*** - A practical step-by-step guide to overcoming your resistance and getting started on the creative projects that matter to you.

To find out more, visit:

<http://www.coachcreative.com/products/stopdoubtingstartcreating.html>

Whatever has been stopping you from creating the projects you want to create, "Stop Doubting, Start Creating!" can help you to overcome these barriers by leading you step-by-step through a structured series of exercises.

Here's that link again to find out more:

<http://www.coachcreative.com/products/stopdoubtingstartcreating.html>

If you have any questions, comments or queries about this ebook, or anything else in your creative life, please just drop me an e-mail –

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Thank you once again for taking the time to use this Action Workbook, I hope you've gained much from it.

Best Wishes,

Dan Goodwin.