

# An Essay on Creativity: Thirteen Steps to Creativity

Having recently released my first official book *"A Piece of My Mind"* I thought that it may be nice to share the various processes that I use to create my material. I hope that you find inspiration within the words that follow.

There are many inspirational people in this world. Actors, Musicians, Painters, Public Speakers, the list goes on. These people touch our lives and our hearts in varying ways and as a result help to give our lives direction and meaning.

What each of these people possess is a creative spark that is evident either directly or indirectly through what they say or do. For a lucky few this comes naturally to them but for most others this is something that has been developed over a period of years.

The reason I mention this is that each of us has the potential to create however self limiting beliefs often inhibit this process. How many times in your life have you said one or more of the following:

*"I wish I could do that".*

*"I would never be able to do that".*

*"I wish I was as good as X".*

*"I wish that was me".*

The truth is that almost anything is possible if you put your mind to it. Don't limit yourself with self deprecating beliefs, wishing won't get you anywhere. Instead make a stand, take action, express yourself and unlock your true potential.

In this essay I wish to detail thirteen simple steps (yes that is a reference for the initiated few) which I have used personally to facilitate my own creative process. Each of these has been tried and tested, not just by me, but by several of my friends too. As a result each of them has become more confident in themselves and their own abilities, they are much happier and have each made or are beginning to make their own personal mark upon society.

The best thing about this is that it is fun and costs next to nothing. Simply put you have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

**1** Grab yourself a puzzle in fact better still, take up puzzling as a hobby. This is not only fun to do but you will soon find that your mind is conditioned to look at problems in a different way. When life places hurdles in your way you will discover a multitude of ways that they can be overcome. Science has proven that by simply examining puzzles you will begin unlock your neural pathways.

**2** Invest time in learning as many of the techniques within your craft as possible, they will become the tools from which you can begin to create. In many ways these are the equivalent to the colours in an artists pallet. The more you have the better picture you can paint. But please remember to use them sparingly.

**3** Very little time is spent on our own, we get too wrapped up in day to day life that we neglect to set time aside for ourselves. Those who set personal time aside for themselves for relaxation, meditation or similar have a far greater sense of well being. This also vastly reduces their chance of having mental health issues too. In a similar fashion you must dedicate a set amount of time each day (without distraction) to concentrate your thoughts upon the creative process. This could be before you go to bed or after other family members are wrapped up in their blankets.

**4** Engage with others who share your interests. By sharing your thoughts with likeminded people they will open up and reciprocate. By bouncing ideas back and forth you will quickly discover

any potential weakness in your ideas and they will soon shape up into something more workable. You will often find that by simply talking about something your mind will open further providing you with even more food for thought.

**5** Get out there and work your ideas. Test them at every opportunity, the more you test the more you will refine. If at first you don't succeed, try and try again. Perseverance will win each and every time and whilst the end result may not be anything like you first imagined you can be certain that it will be ten times better in every way.

**6** Each of your techniques should be thought of as building blocks, interchangeable in countless different ways. Test them one way, change one component for another and work through the various permutations until you are satisfied that each of the blocks fits together seamlessly and the resulting routine is built upon strong foundations. If you do this then you will soon find that nothing is impossible.

**7** Never be without a note book and pencil. As soon as you create a mind set for the creative process you will open the floodgates to a whole new side of your brain, when this happens ideas will pop into your mind at the most random of times. Jot them down at your earliest opportunity.

**8** Every day you must try your best to follow and complete one of these steps. In doing so you will bring yourself one step closer to automating the creative process that lays dormant within you. Once this has been attained creating will become second nature and through your work you will help to inspire others much in the way that I hope to inspire you.

**9** Read as much as you can, watch as much as you can and learn as much as you can (about anything). Inspiration often comes from the most surprising of sources and from my own experience this can often happen weeks, months or even years later. Your brain has an almost limitless potential to both absorb and retain information. Let it do its job.

**10** Open your mind. Don't restrict your thoughts based upon what has been created in the past. Take a different path, make it unique. There is no real right or wrong here, take a chance and run with it. Mix things up a little. Use the method for one routine for the premise of another. Experiment and have fun along the way.

**11** Understand that no two people are the same. No matter how hard you try not everyone will like what you do, and that is fine. Don't take offence and jump on the defensive, instead take the time to understand their objections. Learn from them, see them for what they are; another point of view from which much can be gained.

**12** Stop using negative language, replace the words, can't and won't with the words can and will. A positive mental attitude is the key to success. Every action you make in life is of your own choosing. Make the right choices, you are in control.

**13** Let your mind wonder, write down your thoughts no matter how silly they may seem. Give them time to ferment, come back to them and review them at a later date. I can guarantee that some of the most obscure ideas you will have will lead to the most amazing discoveries. By simply committing your thoughts to paper your mind will become more focused and will often provide you with further thoughts along the way.

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**14** You alone are the key to make all of this happen. In this sense the 14th step is not something that I can give you but instead is something that you need to find within yourself. They say that nothing in life is free and in this respect I only ask two things. If you enjoyed the read take action and make a change in your life for the better. If you did not please take a moment to think about those who could do with a better change to theirs. Read the first letter of the first words in each of the steps from 1-13. Thank you for your time.

Feel free to share this with anyone you feel may benefit from it!

Respectfully yours,

Michael Murray

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