



**CREATIVE
PROCESS**
THE MADNESS IN THE METHOD

Your Creative Process is the way you get your work done.

At the core of a Creative Process are essential details that inform a plan. This includes knowing what days of the week you work and at what times. We'll cover where your work takes place, how long a creative session goes for, and what tools and materials you need in arm's reach. Defining these basics might feel simple, but the impact of this clarity is no joke.

Once we have a strong foundation, we can start customising it by incorporating more nuanced steps. This could be a specific warm up routine that get you into flow, establishing rules on your media consumption, or cultivating lifestyle habits, like exercise and meditation, that significantly impact the way you create (despite the fact they happen off the clock).

THE AIM:

To establish a core Creative Process that you can mould over time.

OUTLINE

1. Five Minute Primer
2. Rough Definitions
3. Schedule
4. Workspace
5. Rut Rules

YOU WILL NEED

- The previous worksheet complete (*i.e. the Set Your Scope Worksheet*) as these insights will inform your Creative Process
- This Worksheet (check!)
- Something to write with
- A solid hour or two

WHO'S THIS WORKSHEET FOR?

If you already have a process you are happy with, you can skip this step. If you'd like to build a method from the ground up, or strengthen your existing process, then this is for you.

why • when • where • what if

5 QUESTIONS IN 5 MINUTES

1. SET A TIMER FOR 5 MINUTES
2. ANSWER ALL 5 QUESTIONS BEFORE THE CLOCK HITS ZERO



1 LOOK AROUND YOU AT THE SPACE YOU'RE IN...
DESCRIBE SOMETHING YOU CAN EASILY SEE
BUT YOU'VE NEVER NOTICED BEFORE:

THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS

FEEL FREE TO DRAW IT!

A FRIEND TELLS YOU THEY'RE FEELING A BIT LOST IN LIFE.
THEY'RE LOOKING FOR A BRILLIANT BOOK/MOVIE/PODCAST/ALBUM
TO HELP THEM REDISCOVER THEIR SPARK!

2 WHAT DO YOU RECOMMEND?

3 WHY DID YOU RECOMMEND IT?

MULTIPLE ANSWERS = TOTALLY FINE

MULTIPLE ANSWERS = FINE HERE TOO

4 DESCRIBE THE BEST POSSIBLE OUTCOME OF YOU
DOING THE ALPHABET SUPERSET - DREAM BIG!

5 WHO WOULD YOU NEED TO BE TO MAKE THAT DREAM
ACTUALLY HAPPEN? NO, REALLY: WHAT WOULD IT TAKE?

WHY START HERE?

This exercise is a simple way to prime your brain.

The 5 minute timer:

- kicks us into action
- removes the option to overthink

Q1 gets us out of our head by focusing on the present moment

Q2 empowers us by putting us in a role where we're valued for our practical answers to complex problems

Q3 makes us reflect on what qualities make something meaningful

Q4 pushes us beyond our limiting beliefs and has us put words to a pipedream

Q5 makes us see this pipedream as a legitimately possible outcome

ROUGH DEFINITIONS

Defining your goals, motives, and metrics can be a life-changing practice, but most of the time it's just daunting and weird.

Articulating “*your purpose driven mission*” often results in 3 hours of unsuccessful soul searching, a vague mess of lofty words, and a complementary guilt trip.

To ground these esoteric questions in reality, we're going to write each of our answers to specific people in our lives.

NOTE: This is a mental exercise only - there's no need for those people to actually read it!

WRITE THESE 2 ANSWERS TO A REALLY GREAT FRIEND:

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THIS PROJECT, WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO?

WHAT MENTAL BLOCKS DO YOU MOST WANT TO WORK ON?

WRITE THESE 2 ANSWERS TO SOMEONE YOU ADMIRE:

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

WHAT DOES FAILURE LOOK LIKE?

WRITE THESE 2 ANSWERS TO SOMEONE WHO UNDERMINES YOU

WHY ARE THEY WRONG ABOUT YOU?

HOW'S IT GOING TO FEEL WHEN THEY SEE YOUR SMILING FACE WINNING?

WRITE THESE 2 ANSWERS TO A YOUNG SCHOOL KID:

WHAT'S YOUR "WHY"
THE REASON YOU'RE DOING THIS PROJECT

WHAT'S THE BEST OUTCOME YOU CAN IMAGINE COMING FROM THIS?

SCHEDULE

“TO ACHIEVE GREAT THINGS, TWO THINGS ARE NEEDED; A PLAN, AND NOT QUITE ENOUGH TIME.”
LEONARD BERNSTEIN

START AT THE DEADLINE AND PLAN BACKWARDS

What day of the week will you post your finished work?

168 HOURS

When you say yes to a project, you don't get more time. Something has to be chopped or changed to make room.

So what's it gonna be?

To work this out, think about how you currently spend a typical week. Then, identify the negotiable activities and the time sucks (definitions 4 and 5 below). This is where we'll find our time.

from your scope worksheet
How many hours are you giving to your project each week?

CURRENT NEGOTIABLES

1. DEADLINE

YOUR ANSWER FROM ABOVE (TOP LEFT)
(IF YOU CAN'T PICK, JUST PICK FRIDAY)

2. NON-NEGOTIABLES

WEEKLY THINGS YOU CAN'T OR WON'T MOVE,
E.G. SLEEP, WORK, FAMILY STUFF, GYM, EDUCATION

CURRENT TIME SUCKS

3. PROJECT HOURS

YOUR ANSWER FROM ABOVE (TOP RIGHT)
(SPLIT INTO BLOCKS OF TIME, AS YOU SEE FIT)

4. NEGOTIABLES

WEEKLY THINGS YOU LIKE TO DO, BUT YOU'RE
HAPPY TO TRADE THEM FOR THIS PROJECT

5. TIME SUCKS

THE TIME YOU LOSE TO UNWANTED HABITS
(E.G. SCROLLING, BOOZE, & HITTING SNOOZE)

TO PUT IT ALL TOGETHER, PLAN A ROUGH OUTLINE OF YOUR IDEAL WEEK.
ADD YOUR ACTIVITIES IN CATEGORY ORDER, 1 TO 5. WHEN YOUR WEEK IS FULL, STOP.

A ROUGH SKETCH OF AN IDEAL WEEK

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
EARLY BIRD HOURS							
MID MORNING							
ARVO							
EVENING							
NIGHT OWL HOURS							

BEYOND THE WORKSHEET: REFINE THE PLAN USING A CALENDAR/SCHEDULING TOOL OF YOUR CHOICE, AND CHANGE IT BY TRIAL & ERROR

WORKSPACE

YOUR ENVIRONMENT

The environment you create for yourself has a powerful impact on your life... for better or worse.

Design your space to align with your values and goals and you've unlocked a super power.

Neglect the place you live and treat it like trash and it'll slowly poison your soul.

For creative projects, a well crafted workspace makes all tasks easier, the art better, and you happier.

YOUR WORKSPACE

For this exercise, we're going to focus on 5 areas:

1. Core Functions
2. Add & Bad Friction
4. Tangible Evidence
5. Methodically Good Vibes

These are broad categories, so whether you work at a recording studio, in your car with a laptop, or in a gigantic underground bakery, the exercise can be made to fit.

WORKSPACE: PHYSICAL & DIGITAL

As you plan your physical workspace, include actionable ways to optimise your digital workspace too.

Mattress ads love to remind us we spend a third of our life in bed - so choose your mattress wisely. Phone ads aren't quite as proud of their share, but the same rules apply.

CORE FUNCTIONS

A SIMPLE LIST OF THE TOOLS YOU NEED & YOUR BASIC WORKSPACE REQUIREMENTS

e.g. laptop, desk, chair, notebook, pens, internet connection, various programs, camera + tripod + mic setup, various cables and chargers

GOOD & BAD FRICTION

HABITS, GOOD AND BAD, YOUR WORKSPACE ENABLES BY DESIGN

If you want to quit drinking, don't put beer in the fridge. Hell, don't even bring it into the house! With enough inconvenience, a bad habit becomes a chore. This concept is called **Friction**. While **friction** can be a tool that separates us from a vice, **friction** can also be the unseen force that keeps us from exercise, sleep, and making brilliant art.

We want our workspace to make good habits feel automatic, and bad habits feel impossible.

Identify the habits and their environmental triggers:

- What habits stop you from unlocking your full creative potential?
- What habits will unlock your creative potential? What will stop it?
- What can you change about your environment to make the good ones easy and the bad ones hard?

Write your answers to that third question as actionable plans above

TANGIBLE EVIDENCE

WAYS YOUR WORKSPACE CAN REMIND YOU OF THE PERSON YOU WANT TO BE

This is the idea of self signalling. If you want to become an author, having a poster that says "you'll never be an author" might be a subtle source of conflict.

Less ridiculously, if you're looking to become a painter, an easel with a canvas, a postcard of a Kandinsky, and a nice quote from Kusama will all reinforce the person you are becoming.

METHODICALLY GOOD VIBES

ALL THE DETAILS THAT MAKE A SPACE "YOURS"

e.g. plants, artworks, candles, speakers, lights, trinkets, your framed first dollar like mr krabs, a nice rug to tie the room together

"THE QUESTION OF WHAT YOU WANT TO OWN IS ACTUALLY THE QUESTION OF HOW YOU WANT TO LIVE YOUR LIFE."

- MARIE KONDO

RUT RULES

pre-made tactics so *future* you can quickly get unstuck

THE PRE-MORTEM

a hypothetical designed by Astro Teller

Imagine it's 6 months from now, and you've failed the Alphabet Superset. You messed up. You have no one to blame but yourself. In simple words, **why did you fail?**

TURN IT INTO TACTICS

Using your answer from the pre-mortem, list a few tactics that can help you prevent and overcome the problems you identified

CONGRATS - THESE TACTICS ARE YOUR FIRST RUT RULES!

DEFAULT FIRST ACTION

CREATE A RUT RULE TO STOP PROCRASTINATION

Choose a small easy ritual that will take you from inaction to action. Use it when you're stuck at the start and overwhelmed by choice.

TO USE MYSELF AS AN EXAMPLE...

if i'm stuck in inaction, i'll speed draw by filling an A4 page of weird little creatures with a 0.6mm fineliner pen in <5 minutes

PANIC PREVENTION

IN THE LEFT BOX:
Over the next 6 months, what are 3 to 5 things that are likely to cause panic, burnout, or angst?

IN THE RIGHT BOX:
For each panic-item, list a simple actionable step you think might help you when you're mid-breakdown.

*No one knows
Panicked You like
Emotionally Sober You!*
*(and it never hurts to put
ideas like these into words)*

CHARGED BATTERIES

A RUT RULE FOR ENERGY

What are some lifestyle habits and factors drain you of energy?

focus on things you have the power to change, then write the solution as an actionable tactic

What lifestyle habits and factors make you energised and excited?

focus on things you have the power to change, then write the solution as an actionable tactic

WHAT'S NEXT?

you have your **constraints**
you have a **creative process**

but there's one last thing left
to do before you take off...

it's called

The 27th Letter

write it,
send it,
then it's time to start!

see alphabetsuperset.com for details
and download the weekly progress tracker