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**Creativity in Everyday Life**

By Shelley Berc

Why is creativity important in everyday life? Simply put, it is because it makes life infinitely interesting and fulfilling. Creativity is a way of living life that embraces originality and makes unique connections between seemingly disparate ideas. Creativity is about living life as a journey into seeing and communicating the extra-ordinariness of the simplest, most everyday acts.

We often think about creativity as making something, but in fact the root meaning of the word means ‘to grow’. When we are creative, we feel as if the world and all that is in it is vibrantly alive. Creativity’s by-products are some of the major achievements of civilization - from the invention of the wheel to Mozart’s sonatas.

Human beings are essentially born creative - from infancy on we find innovative ways to negotiate life. The most creative people find ways around obstacles because they see them not just as roadblocks but also as opportunities. Creativity expands our perceptions, and along with expanded perceptions come new ways of problem solving - from making an exquisite meal, when you don’t know how to cook, to painting an extraordinary landscape, when you are living in a freezing attic and can’t afford a full box of paints.

15 ideas for expressing creativity in everyday life:

1. Make your immediate surroundings as beautiful or eccentric as you can. Experiment with your sense of color, texture, and line. Add an element of surprise or quirkiness to your home decor. The unexpected can jolt you out of complacency and into inspiration.

2. Go somewhere new - as close as a restaurant you’ve never tried or as far as China. New places excite the mind and senses; and when we are excited, our creative abilities soar.

3. Spend 10 minutes a day dreaming out the window.

4. Don’t censor yourself.

5. Do something new or something old in a brand new way. As Picasso said, “I am always doing that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it.”

6. Slow down your perceptions, so you savor them; that means, eat slowly and taste your food, look closely at the flowers in the garden, spend time writing down and drawing your perceptions.

7. Believe in and follow your ‘What ifs’ - what if I was an amazing writer? What if I could make a revolutionary spaceship? What if, when I walk across a room, it feels like floating?

When we ‘what if’ ourselves, we start to believe we can achieve our dreams. That is the first step to making them come true.

8. Spend 15 minutes looking around with the eyes of a child. Remember that sense of wonderment, love of color, surprise, curiosity and hunger to explore. It can get your creativity going because you are remembering how you were once very imaginative.

9. Take a notebook and pen everywhere you go and jot down your observations. We often have innovative ideas, but we forget them if we don’t record them.

10. Don’t over-criticize yourself. At worst it will kill, and at best cripple your creative hopes and dreams.

11. Make up a visualization in which you observe yourself imagining and creating effortlessly. Picture yourself loving the process.

12. Just Do It! Creativity is a muscle: use it or lose it. Dance, draw, brainstorm, change your life. The more you use your creativity, the easier it becomes and the better you get at it.

13. Collaborate creatively with like-minded friends: write a journal together, make a quilt, design a new play-space, choreograph a dance piece, start a new business.

14. Dress wildly - revel in color and texture. Buy or make a fabulous hat. Don’t be age-appropriate.

15. Remember the words of Samuel Becket on the secret to life-long creativity: “fail, fail again, fail better”!