Break the Rules:
How to do ‘The Artist’s Way' Your Way and Finish It

With Barbara Howlin

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INTRODUCTION

Let’s meet your inner trickster.

Dear Creative,

The book The Artist’s Way changed my life. It was the first crack in the hardened shell that was stopping up my flow, my intuition trust and my creative freedom. And now I’ve been guiding creatives in this process for the last 10 years.

During that time, some main themes became clear. The things that make people u-turn and stop this process part-way through. The nuance that is perhaps missing, knowing what we know now in the world. The shifts that can let this all be easier for you neuro-spicy folx.

In short, I now help people learn the rules to break the rules of this process. So that your inner rebel, inner trickster, is empowered and finds freedom. Instead of turning that rebellion on ourselves in self-sabotage or not completing this magical journey.

Simply put - The Artist’s Way works. It’s a game, life, everything changer. If only you can do it YOUR way to actually get it done. Here are all the top tips that have helped me and my hundreds of clients do The Artist’s Way our way. And finish it. Let’s break some rules, trickster creatives.

Barbara Howlin

GET IN TOUCH

info@thehowlinghive.org
@thehowlinghive
www.thehowlinghive.org

Who is the Trickster?

Tricksters come in a variety of forms from fables across all civilizations. An important symbol of our freedom of choice and a necessary force to question the systems that exist. The Trickster in us knows that nothing is right versus wrong, is not black or white. It's a rewilding call we all have within. If only we can invite their deep wisdom back and listen for their whisper of, 'There's an easier way! Your way. Follow me.'

Your inner trickster helps you question all the conditioning and 'rules' that were lopped on you from childhood. They can show you that the parts of you that felt oddball, too much, not enough, were usually your superpowers as a kid. Because Trickster lives with one foot inside the systems that be and one foot out. They embrace being the black sheep. Trickster knows that living at the fringes, one foot in and one foot out, is how you create real change. They are the God(dess) of the Threshold to something new. And what creative hasn't heard that call?

Sure, sometimes we have fear around the trickster part of us. Perhaps it's felt like your inner kiddo rebel and in the past they've rebelled on you, some self-sabotage. I feel that only happens because we reject their call. Tricksters are shiny object beings. Just like our inner kiddo. They know you can have your cake and eat it too. They're begging you for it. To release the old limits and find the backdoor of ease. If only you can trust your intuition and give them a listen.

Trickster also loves - rest. So may you answer that call when it comes up in this process. They live at the crossroads of possibility. And that is what this process opens us up to.

Take time now to marinate on who that inner trickster is. How do they whisper to you? What do they love? What's happened when you did give them a voice in the past? Affirm - It's safe to give them credence, here and now, for The Artist's Way. Then let's start walking.

Before beginning...

I suggest reading the starter sections of Artist's Way now. Then read the first sections here to invite in that trickster before you begin the whole process, that starts with 'Week One.'

After doing that and signing the book's contract with yourself, there will be a section here for each week of Artist's Way. To check in with rule-breaking or needed pivots so that you can keep moving ahead.

Does the 'contract' you have to sign at the start of the book already bring stuff up? If so, check in with your inner trickster, rebel and ask them what's making them skittish. Use this space to make your own addendums to the 'contract.' So you're already starting this process-your way. Then let's go!

Morning Pages Pivots

Morning pages are a top component and life-changer from Artist's Way. Yet, the 'rules' for these stop so many people in their tracks. You just need to get the jump-start from doing them your way to get the flow going with daily pages.

TOP TIPS AND PIVOTS TO HELP WITH THESE:

- You don't have to do them in the morning. BOOM. Is it helpful and different doing them first thing? Absolutely, science now shows we have about 45 minutes before our 'censor,' as Julia calls it, comes online. (Unless you pick up your phone first thing!) So it is beneficial to do them sooner in the day. But for many of us, that may feel daunting and so we don't commit to them at all. Commit to doing them as soon as you can in the day. Forget the 'morning' bit and just show up to the page. For you.

- Maybe they won't be written for you? Perhaps you cannot write with your hands. Or you stare at the wall and spin when you try. Try a walk-and-talk as your pages. Walk and voice memo them to yourself. Not just THINK, but move the energy out and speak it. See what can happen. The main thing is getting it all out of our head AND not by typing. Typed pages aren't activating the parts of the brain we wanna get to.

- Think you don't have time for them? Try carrying a small notebook with you. Pull it out during the day when you feel you need to process. (Instead of that phone) Doesn't matter if it's a paragraph at a time. This helps to fall in love with the pages process.

- A new spot calling? Most of us need new stimuli to have something triggered in us, to be in response. Try different spots for writing. Different rituals. Rather than one dogmatic, militaristic discipline routine that gets - old.

- Find a talisman? Instead of picking up the pen when you think there's nothing to say, keep it down. Come up with a prompt for yourself to keep moving forward, writing in that moment. Like - What else? What ELSE? What else?! Something always comes from these moments. If we commit to keeping then pen down and letting *whatever* flow, these can take as little as ten minutes a day. 10 minutes for you.

Artist Date Freedom

Artist dates open the aperture of our vision in the world. They can help us see, receive, new possibilities. And just be damn fun. Yet, many people skip them. Maybe you think dating your inner creative once a week is frivolous? Maybe you already do that alone all the time? Let's embrace breaking the rules with them and these top tips.

Do you already spend the majority of your time alone?
For most recent years and my group members, this is the case. The more vulnerable, expansive option could be to invite a friend out on a joint artist date or activity then. We need more community connection now! If that's you, break the 'alone' rule and DO IT. If you have fear around eating at a restaurant alone or you're with a partner or a parent or- just have a lot of codependency things (Hi, Me) - then yes, try the dates alone to savor time with just you and your inner trickster creative.

What stops up most people with these?
The rules! Exactly what we're dismantling here. People spin and think 'that cannot be an artist date.' Anything- I repeat anything- that your inner rebel wants to do as an artist date IS one. For me, I was in burnout. My inner rebel wanted to - nap. That wouldn't be an artist date right? Hell yes it was. It was a first rule-breaker freedom and needed recovery that led me into many dates out in the world. What does your inner trickster want you to treat them with this week?

The other big ones - Time & Productivity Guilt:
These are loathed by your inner rebel trickster. Loathed! If they still stop you in your tracks, break the rules and let a weekly artist date be unplanned but on the calendar. When the time comes for it just - Go. Walk out the door. Or get in the car. Let it be a time of WANDERING and paying attention. See where intuition guides you then. No productivity. Presence and following the pings in the moment.

In Short:
There are no rules with this. Just affirm and set the intention to date your inner rebel, inner kiddo once a week. So they don't rebel on you. Let em out to play!

The Dogma of it All

This process is based on a 12-step program. As time has passed and new books, programs, have emerged around recovery, some people see the 12-step model as too dogmatic for them. So too people can and have with this process. Again- does it work? God yes, Artist's Way works. Yet, many people freeze and stall out when the text, rules, everything we're talking about here, starts to feel black & white dogmatic.

Maybe you'll get to one section, read it and feel frustrated that there's not more nuance. (This is different than feeling called out, triggered, a deeper uncomfortable ah-ha trying to come through.) Simply- yea, I need more nuance with that. Many stop there or think it's not for them then.

THIS is the time to invite in your inner rebel, that trickster and do that section of the book your way. What does resonate? What doesn't? There is no one way with anything. I don't want you following a formula. The only formula comes from listening to your own intuition. Take whatever arises to the pages and ask intuition in those moments what You want to do in that section. Leave the rest. Just keep moving forward.

THE G.O.D. THING

Yep, Julia uses the word God a lot. As someone who was raised Catholic and no longer is, this word triggered me. Big time. After all these years of group, I see how it does for many of us. The inner trickster gets very grumpy at some old finger-wagging parental God concept in the sky. Release it.

Focus on what she calls it later 'Good Orderly Direction.' Invite that in. What good orderly direction does your inner creative want to go and trust in? Focus the energy back in to your intuition. That is what most people walk away with from this process. Trusting their intuition more.

If it's still too much to even see the word, BLACK IT OUT. Deface the book! I've asked many people to do this and replace it with any word or name that feels like 'pure love' to them. One guy said his dog, Oliver, from growing up. We all then felt that pure spirit love in group. By the end of it, we were all declaring - In Oliver We Trust.

Forget any old concepts that make the trickster skittish. Focus on your intuition and love when the word comes up.

The Week of - Nothing

Here's the thing. Accept it now. There will be one week where you do - nothing. No pages, no tasks, no date. Probably didn't even read the chapter. I see this making you people pleasers, good students, perfectionists nervous. Turn inward to your trickster.

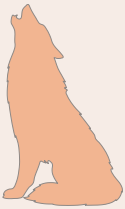
This can happen for many reasons, but often it's actually a good thing! Give self grace and move ahead. Top reasons:

~ You...didn't want to. Instead of beating ourself up, stopping the process and thinking have to go backward. Affirm that - You did what you wanted to. Let the trickster know you see them in this. And check in there: Do I want to keep going? If yes, then bam, you are back in the path. Keep going.

~ You were... living The Artists Way. Many people feel scared to show up to group this week like they did something wrong. Once they share we are all aghast because so much is going right in their life. They didn't get to pages because they took a day-long artist date, then were on a first date they'd been scared of and oh, they started their new screenplay. That's LIVING this process. It's flowing through you of its own accord then. Move on to the next chapter and keep going.

~ You read the chapter and... slammed it shut. Yes, if the chapter hit deep and felt triggering and then you didn't do pages, tasks, any of it - acknowledge that maybe the inner rebel got scared and turned on you a bit. The way to invite them back out and keep going? Affirm, it's totally fine. It's still working its way through you as its meant to. Keep. Going.

What's the antidote that week?
Grace with self. And to keep going.



THE SYSTEMS THAT BIND

In much of this book, we look to our family and school systems for the why. While important, we also need to jump beyond that to find real freedom in this process. Rather than the family ties, let's feel into the larger systems that bind us. If creative empowerment is rebellious and revolutionary, as it is, we must look at what it is rebelling against. Much of what stops up our trust, our ideas of freedom, of safety, have to do with the roots of the prejudiced, controlling systems we live within. To not face them head on here would be to spiritually bypass the truth we are living in.

Let this AFFIRM you in the import of unblocking and doing The Artist's Way process. When looking at these bigger systems, the inner trickster's fire gets lit to keep moving forward. For true self-care... that leads to expansive creation... that connects people in community care.

This creates change in the world.
That is the opposite of self-indulgence.

Take it to your daily pages and get to the root of the roots of guilt, limiting beliefs, anything stopping up your inner kiddo, rebel, creative flow.

We need whatever you want to create and share.
Light the fire.

Play is the Way

Play is the way to get through The Artist's Way and let your inner trickster kiddo enjoy it. While Julia says it can be playful, she keeps repeating how it can be heavy in this process. 'Emotional tumult,' as she says. And fear of the heavy, the 'unblocking' can stop many whose rebel's go, 'No thanks!' The recovery here can be light, it can be playful. Will big feels arise? Probably. But if our intention is PLAYFUL RECOVERY, it's far easier to greet them when they come and rage dance it out til we're laughing. Or take a pool noodle to your couch until your inner kiddo feels seen and giddy. Play is the way here. Don't let anything else make you skittish. In those moments, turn toward the play tasks and a playful artist date.

TRY INVITING THE PLAY WITH THESE PROMPTS BELOW, BEFORE EVEN STARTING ARTIST'S WAY...

As a kid I loved to play...				
On vacation I love to...				
With my silliest, free friends we...				
Toys that still light me up are...				
Films, TV, music that feel playful for me are...				

CHECK IN WITH WHAT'S ARISING FROM ALL THAT...

~ Is there something your inner trickster, kiddo wants you to know before starting Artists Way? A fear? Already a revolt to something I wrote above? Write it out and listen with curiosity.

Now- Let's begin The Artist's Way. All the next pages are a separate check-in for you as you go through each week of the book. Return here each week for some encouragement, some rebel affirmation or a different place to check in with yourself and - breathe.

You've got this. Get tricksy. Choose to ***savor*** the journey.

WEEK ONE

Sense of Safety

SHADOW ARTIST'S

Many resonate with this section just as it is. Deep breaths! Take it all in. Still others in my groups have gone, 'I got it but I am an actor/writer/etc already and doing it.' Then I ask about their parents. Were you parents shadow artists? If so, check in with that energy. We look up to our parents. We learn from their actions, not their words. If they were shadow artists, big chances are that you have deep seated limiting beliefs around jumping into creativity and trust fully. Maybe the whole foot was in the 'actor stream' and some of it was working. But what's keeping that other 80% of you on the shore?

CORE NEGATIVE BELIEFS

Feel overwhelmed by them? Maybe there are too many to name or focus on? Simplify it for this process. See when your brain goes to either/or thinking. 'I can be an artist but then I can't have a healthy relationship.' etc. Does your brain go to either/or questioning often? Observe all of that and open the aperture to wider possibility. Focus on this one simple thing and reframe for this process. TIP: There's usually a 'But' that comes out of our mouth or in the pages. Focus on the BUT and question it.

YOUR ALLY WITHIN - AFFIRMATIVE WEAPONS

How do you feel about doing affirmations? This is a top one to play with and break some rules. For a huge swath of the population just writing them out in pages over and over isn't going to do it. Many people need movement with it to metabolize it and let them take root. Is that you? Try going for a walk and speaking affirmations aloud. Or look in the mirror each morning, blast your favorite song and dance, scream sing them out. There is something about saying them aloud while moving that is far more potent. And yep, do them in pages then too.

END OF WEEK ONE CHECK IN:
So how did you feel at the end of week one? And how does your inner trickster feel? Is there some part of the process that can be more *satisfying* to them next week? Take note now. You did it. Keep going.

WEEK TWO

Sense of Identity

POISONOUS PLAYMATES AND CRAZY MAKERS

Yep, we all know these people as she describes them. And yes, also, many people feel there is some nuance lacking in this section. Still, we know these people. What I hear most often now though is ‘I don’t have anyone like that in my life. But I am just my own crazymaker!’ Take a breath. I encourage anyone who feels that way to look back to the SYSTEMS THAT BIND section above. Because #1 we are at a place where systems have left us hanging and we all feel like we’re chickens running around with our heads cut off. It feels off balance and like crazy maker energy? Yea, the They did that to us. Please be gentle with yourself. #2 There’s usually an unconscious GUILT thing there. It sounds like a lot of the shoulding all over ourself that she describes. Release calling yourself a crazy maker and please keep turning to that inner trickster who wants to find the backdoor, walk off the path, invite in the *ease* during this process.

SKEPTICISM

YES to all of this section. And also- I encourage people to befriend that inner skeptic and flip them on their head. I was quite skeptical my whole life. What changed from this process? I am now a questioner. You? Great, the trickster IS a questioner. There is a huge difference between being the curious questioner who wants to get tricksy and find their own way - and the skeptic who contracts and rebels against us. Feel into the difference.

ATTENTION

This is a top section of the book to take in. If there’s one thing, to tack up, put on the mirror, remind self during The Artist’s Way it’s ‘PAY ATTENTION.’ I encourage some unplugged walks- task from week one. To look up and not down, navel gazing. The inner trickster likes shiny things and delights. Pay attention to what lights them up for you in this process. What else does paying attention do? The presence relaxes us and gives us space to receive. Stay present and see what ease, flow wants to shift now.

END OF WEEK TWO CHECK IN:
So how did you feel at the end of week two? Instead of SHOULDING on the inner kiddo right now- what’s one desire you can follow next week? However you did it - You did it. Keep going.

WEEK THREE

Sense of Power

ANGER

If you're someone who's been denying that inner kiddo, intuition, trickster a lot of your life - there's gonna be anger. Accept it as Julia says. But remember! An honored release with it can be a damn fun dance. Is there a ridiculous, kid-like way your trickster wants to let out anger right now? DO IT. Also- examine your connection to The Universe and how come you may hold anger in. Think you're going to be smited? I sure did. Instead when I finally raged (I mean, raged) at the Universe, my trickster finally felt - free. And I had space to receive. Wow, the Universe showed up. Try some 'rage pages' this week of true release. See how you feel after.

SYNCHRONICITY

The best concept of this process. Once we allow and metabolize the anger, we have space to receive and these synchs start to roll in. If your skeptic pops up, find a friend to experiment with this synchs concept with. And get even more active with them than Julia suggests. Both ask for specific signs each week and share them with each other and then - pay attention. Gamify it with the Universe and your inner trickster! Then buckle up. Share the synchronicities when they come to you.

SHAME AND CRITICISM

I don't feel that shame can be healed between you and the pages. If you started Artists Way alone, here is where I suggest to start sharing things that the inner kiddo has been pulling on your shirt with. The real healing light Julia describes here usually comes from sharing, being seen and heard in all of this. Is there a trusted, judgement free friend you can share with now? Let's do it. And on criticism - be extra aware of when people around you speak critically (of anything) right now. Avoid jumping into those convos and pivot away from them. Watch how your inner critic gets quieter.

GROWTH

All this. Keep doing this one step here- 'Ask yourself how you're feeling and respond kindly.' Only addendum- ask the inner trickster, rebel too. If they have a voice and get heard, they won't rebel against you.

END OF WEEK THREE CHECK IN:
Did you get a freeing anger release? How do you feel? If it hasn't come yet, it might next week. So accept and honor all feels that come. And KEEP GOING.

WEEK FOUR

Sense of Integrity

READING DEPRIVATION

For those that know this process, this week is often called ‘Deprivation Week.’ Alright- screw that. The word alone makes the trickster in me want to gag. And leads to thoughts of extremes, which do not work or stay sustainable or healthy for all of us. (AKA Diets are harmful. No no.)

I call this important week BOUNDARIES WEEK. It’s a week where many people don’t commit to it and then fall off the process. How do you want to do it your way? What is it to invite in boundaries with yourself as an act of self-love now? That’s a huge intention shift. And - the main one - the universal addiction now... that phone. Put the phone down this week. And yes, you will and perhaps need to, feel bored this week. Daydream and simply - be.

Here are some suggested guidelines, but set the boundaries that work best for you:

1. Off social media- Helpful to delete or hide the apps. Or set daily time limit.
2. Avoid phone games, video games or youtube scrolling. Or set daily time limit.
3. Avoiding reading - aside from work related things (still set some boundaries there, though?), emails, and yes, this chapter. Or set daily time limit.
4. Releasing TV binging - one movie/night maybe? Savor it when you do watch.
5. Feel you block things in another way? Go ahead and add that in.
6. For the phone addiction, try making a box to put it in on the counter. Place the phone inside of it often. Out of sight out, of mind.

Note - we can still read. Or watch the movie. Or whatever TRULY will light you up. The answer is to be more present this week. Savor. With presence. Or see what it in fact doesn’t feel good and pivot from that thing sooner.

END OF WEEK FOUR CHECK IN:
How did unplugging and loving boundaries feel? Is your inner trickster a little grumpy? Or did the rebel go against all this? Honor how they feel. Then listen deeper to your intuition: Is there one part from this week you know will feel good to shift moving forward? Do that one step. You’re here. You’re doing it. Gently we go. Keep going.

WEEK FIVE

Sense of Possibility

LIMITS

My inner trickster does leaps over this section. Shouting YES THAT! The rule-breaking clarity here comes from new- balance. Feel into and write about the balance of trusting ‘letting the flow go where it wills, not where we will it,’ as Julia says. And what aligned action you’ve been avoiding. It’s not passive. But it’s not forcing. How do you befriend the trickster sans limits and take aligned action? And then, can you make peace with the *surrender* part of process now?

FINDING THE RIVER

Our soul, our intuition already lives at the river bank. It’s said that Trickster is the God(ess) of the Threshold. Marinate and write on that for this section. How does it feel to release this ‘fork in the road’ mentality and instead sit calmly with trust at a crossroads? See your trickster there, sitting with ease and ‘shaking the apple tree’ as Julia says. In this acceptance, the aligned actions can be oh-so small. Shake one branch a day and receive what comes. No running down the road. Rest at the crossroad and be the Goddess of the Threshold this week. How does it feel?

THE VIRTUE TRAP

This right here is the death trap of our inner rebel creative. The section elicits a lot of feels for people. Don’t avoid them, playfully move through them in the pages. If you are this often, climb off that martyr’s cross and return to the sacred crossroads of possibility, per above. And say some NO’s this week. Trickster loves to say ‘Nope’ and run away and rest. Check in with how often you go to the ‘drama triangle’ this week: Being the martyr or victim or hero. The more you say No when intuition calls for it this week, the more new Yes options will arrive next.

END OF WEEK FIVE CHECK IN:
How did this week feel at the crossroads? Were you aware of when you were in that virtue trap or that drama triangle? Is there one intention from all this for next week? Something is becoming unbridled inside.
Keep. Going.

WEEK SIX

Sense of Abundance

THE GREAT CREATOR

Yep, in this section people get funny around money. Could this now use some more nuance around late-stage Capitalism? Sure thing. Forget any triggers you have around that and listen deeper. This section isn't really about money. Focus to hear within - What is the concept of the Universe, God, etc you were told to believe in and what you choose to put trust in moving forward? Ask the trickster within, from that crossroads. For me, it's far more expansive and loving than I thought. Then affirm the enoughness of WHO you are. Right here, right now. Start with that. Inner trickster knows that you don't owe anyone anything for your existence here. You are inherently worthy and loved.

LUXURY

Again, this isn't about money. Focus on small things that make you *feel* abundant. This gets you out of the head spin, old abundance concept and back to the embodied, intuitive present. What's truly yummy and satisfying to your inner kiddo? The root here is tiny empowerments and then savoring. That is a radical act of self-care for many. I see you.

THE TASKS

This feels like a turning point for most and these tasks help pave the new way. Don't skip them. Ask inner kiddo which ones feel satisfying or empowering this week. Specifically - let go of some things. What do you hold onto for too long and your inner trickster, kiddo groans? Clear the closet? The junk drawer? The relationship? This week wants to be a sacred release to trust that the 'other shoe' never drops for you. As you release sooner, you can receive sooner. And on and on the dance of co-creating, reciprocity can go.

END OF WEEK SIX CHECK IN:
What little luxuries lit you up? What did you let go of or will next week?
How do you have a deeper trust or see the glimmers of it now?
Keep Going.

WEEK SEVEN

Sense of Connection

LISTENING

Alright here is the chapter that I did not highlight at all my first time through and almost stopped at. If it's a big trigger for you, I feel you. This may be one where the inner rebel REALLY tries to rebel on us to get us to cease this. Remember to listen to them, but then listen deeper to what your intuition is whispering. This listening section is *true* freedom for your creation moving forward. So the ego wants to have a release here and may want to fight. Yet, when we accept what Julia says and simply listen to being the 'conduit more than the author' of the work- it gets far easier. Affirm that and listen now.

PERFECTIONISM

Yea, all of this. The addendum here? Again- the systems that bind. The bigger systems at play. Feel into how those systems pushed you to conformity. Reading this section could lead to more guilting, shaming of self. Hell no. See the root of the roots here and how that conformity is put on us to fall in-line. The trickster in you is and was and always will be wild and free. Focus on - Is there a part of me from childhood that wants to be rewilded now?

RISK

That rewilding bit above? Let em loose and get messy this week. The rule break here is - release comparison to anyone else's 'risk.' A true risk for you could be picking up the phone to call the person. Or send that email. For another what's calling could be sitting down to write the film synopsis. Feel into what is an uncomfortable risk that's calling and yes, accept that you're ready to get vulnerable. Know the difference between unsafe and the discomfort of being *bad* at something new, so we grow.

JEALOUSY

Reframe: We now know even the word usage between 'jealousy' and 'envy' is quite different to our brain. Jealousy can feel like lack and 'they have it, so none for me.' Focus on ENVY. Those people want to be expanders for you. They're showing you something is possible, past that perfectionist ego.

END OF WEEK SEVEN CHECK IN:
Did you do that first task? Tack it up if need be. How was listening and being the conduit? Is there one ping from the envy check in that's inviting a new risk? Keep going.

WEEK EIGHT

Sense of Strength

SURVIVAL

For lots- this is the ‘week of nothing.’ And shocker, then it’s about TIME. Take a little extra time for yourself this week and let that inner kiddo, trickster lick their wounds. Acknowledge the scar tissue. And focus on the main theme - How come I settle for less than I really want? What do you feel would happen if you got all you desire? Remember- Try to stay at the trickster crossroads of possibility. Not linear, either/or thinking now.

THE IVORY POWER

I’m sorry that teacher said that thing to you growing up. Truly. Guess what - they were probably a shadow artist. Tell your inner kiddo it was not acceptable. Tell them you see and hear them. Ask them- What encouragement do you need from adult me now?

GAIN DISGUISED AS LOSS

Focus on the main word here- metabolize. If it becomes the week of nothing, we do want to metabolize what’s coming up at this point of process still. Is there a playful, freeing artist date way to do so calling? Ask kiddo within, ask trickster? To me, trickster cannot wait for you to release the fire within. Don’t hold the hot stone of it and keep hurting yourself. Rewild again with this.

AGE AND TIME: PRODUCT AND PROCESS

It’s never, ever too late. Trickster knows this. They don’t care what your friend has ‘done’ by now. They are focused, bouncing up and down, asking ‘What are we going to play today? Which path do you want to try right here, right now?’ Invite adventure this week. You’re here to savor the process of life again.

FILLING THE FORM

This! Take all of this to heart. Read it twice. The only way to creative freedom is affirming the enoughness of filling the form daily. Celebrate the small steps.

END OF WEEK EIGHT CHECK IN:
How did your awareness of time feel this week? Is there one new awareness of encouragement you need now? Did you fill the form and CELEBRATE? Please celebrate how far you’ve come now. And keep going.

WEEK NINE

Sense of Compassion

FEAR

Be the parent now. This inner kiddo, inner trickster we've talked about and to. They need you to be gentle and call out the fears for what they really are. Look them in the face, then give them a hug. In that, with self-sovereignty and self-trust, the fears start to lose any power.

ENTHUSIASM

Then after the hug and fear release- ask how they want to play this week. Let the play get weird now. Invite surprise. Invite the mysterious. Question any last brain blurts on 'discipline' that arise. Refocus on being the parent you want to be with inner kiddo you.

CREATIVE U-TURNS

We've all done them. You are not alone. Now that we know it's never too late, it's also never too late to reclaim these. The one key is - admitting the need for help now. Trickster never wants to do it all on their own. Exhausting! Who is a genuine co-conspirator you want now? Or if that belief in the Universe has been shifting a lot here, ask BIG from the Universe this week?

BLASTING THRU BLOCKS

Let your inner kiddo write to you in the third person for these prompts. Listen to ALL their feels or fears. Accept. Then ritualize throwing them all away and letting the Universe take it. Enter into the deal Julia writes fully - 'You take care of the quality, creative force. I take care of the quantity.' What small ways will you create and blast thru blocks this week?

TASK ONE

Yep, read the pages. Most people avoid it. In truth, it's clutch to reparent your self here. To see how you were writing differently or harshly to self just a few weeks ago. To see what keeps repeating. Rip the bandaid off. Do it gently. Read as much of em feels right.

END OF WEEK NINE CHECK IN:
What do you feel enthusiastic about now? What fear did you say BYE to?
Keep going, tricksters.

WEEK TEN

Sense of Self-Protection

DANGERS OF THE TRAIL

Many people skip this chapter. I'd encourage that inner trickster to simply focus on how you stay 'busy' or distracted. Is that still blocking? Is there a deeper questioning of trust coming up at this point in the journey? Where do you push to have control? And is the idea of ease, joy, happiness hard to grasp and accept? Invite in the EASE this week.

WORKAHOLISM

Look, Julia was ahead of her time with this section back in 1992. Multitasking is no good. Staying busy is the 'systems that bind' at work- productivity guilt galore. Focus on what play that inner kiddo wants this week and make time for it. Affirm that taking that and releasing the workaholism keeps that trickster free.

DROUGHT

I'd like to propose a new word for this - recovery. What is it to accept that a slow, restful, recovery bit is needed after each new creation? Or at certain parts of our process? Maybe there is no drought for you there. Maybe we want to recover and fill our well. And yes, still show up to the pages in those times. So when the next brainchild wants to ping our intuition, we hear it. Gently, gently.

FAME & COMPETITIONS

Here's the deal - a lot of people want to be famous. Feel into the difference of the addictive, external validation side of it - versus - the largesse of a purpose calling you. The shift to embrace the latter does feel like what Julia says here- little self-love acts, affirming the purpose calling you in your pages. Releasing the snap judgements that you have to be the best or it's the worst. If you can invite the trickster in to claim the path they're calling you to, your own unique path - there is NO competition. If you are walking your own path, lit up in your own purpose, there is no one in front of or behind you. It's your path. Welcome some trickster freedom, clarity of purpose and smooth sailing then!

END OF WEEK TEN CHECK IN:
Were you aware of how you stay in the busy, go-go? How come? Is it clearer affirming your purpose and walking your own path?
The path is clearing. Keep goin'

WEEK ELEVEN

Sense of Autonomy

ACCEPTANCE

Declaring we are an artist is powerful. And- I always want specific words that hit for me. Maybe the word for you is a Creative? Or is simply owning what we've had here - a Trickster? Whatever acceptance word is calling, the important thing is to own it, speak it, claim it now. It is your gift and you're here to share it. What word resonates to declare to the Universe now?

SUCCESS

Redefine success for yourself here. Ask that trickster! Sans rules. If you didn't do the Ideal Day Task before, maybe that could help. Focus on how it will *feel*- What's your feelings' emotional true north right now? And here, when asked to expand so you don't contract, or that when we want to rest the answer is No... Um, I vote nope. Flowers have to contract daily. The answer is knowing your true north. So, like the flowers, you choose to open again daily and stretch toward that sun.

THE ZEN OF SPORTS

Yes to the daily walk, the exploration, the looking up and not navel-gazing so much. An addendum, focusing on the western pitfall she describes. We now live in a time when your healing is being warped by Capitalism. You are already whole and worthy- right here, right now, today. You are capable of creating magic and sharing- now. The inner trickster doesn't want another trending tonic shoved down their throat. Just set them free! 'Healing' has become it's own addiction for many. When is enough enough? Go for an unplugged walk and see how connected the world truly is. You are connected to it and so held. Begin.

END OF WEEK ELEVEN CHECK IN:
In what way has your acceptance shifted? Did you declare a word for yourself now? Is that clarifying your emotional true north of success? Did we walk and feel connected? You're ready. Keep going.

WEEK TWELVE

Sense of... Faith

Yes, this last week is super short. And oh how part of me wishes this section was earlier in the book. Yet it's right where it needs to be. This has been a journey of trust. We don't trust from KNOWING in advance. We walk. We ended up at the crossroads with that trickster and found our own path on this journey. How does your self-trust feel now?

TRUSTING

My inner trickster bounces up and down, feeling seen in this section. Yours? Moving forward, how do you affirm and trust your own sense of direction now? And I'd like to put the full Joseph Campbell quote she has a bit of. This to me is the affirmation of the trickster way: "Follow your bliss. If you do follow your bliss, you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while waiting for you, and the life you ought to be living is the one you are living. When you can see that, you begin to meet people who are in the field of your bliss, and they open the doors to you. I say, follow your bliss and don't be afraid, and doors will open where you didn't know they were going to be. If you follow your bliss, doors will open for you that *wouldn't have opened for anyone else."*

MYSTERY

In walking the trickster way, we've befriended a lot of this already. There is no formula. The algorithm changes daily. When we stand at the dark crossroads and embrace the adventure of the mystery of it all - we can feel and hear our intuition's next calling. And surrender to it with trust. Savor the mystery of it all moving forward.

IMAGINATION AT PLAY

This is it - we started this text here with it. Just affirm it again for moving forward... Play is the way!

ESCAPE VELOCITY

This potent concept is one to return to. Affirm that moving forward, you won't reach for that old wet blanket. You will look forward at the crossroads of possibility, not backwards. Evade the test and go YOUR way.

You did it. Take a breath. Touch that heart. Bow to that inner trickster with a full grin.

CELEBRATE!

You did it. You finished The Artist's Way. However you did it, you did. I hope that inner kiddo, trickster feels seen and heard in new ways.

This path laid out in the book is never-ending. This is not an ending. But a beginning. I'm excited for the door of possibilities opening for you now. Please- celebrate yourself for all this. It's no small feat.

And if you want to dive back in, with supportive community, we're always here for you at The Howling Hive. You're welcome to join a group for 10% off with code: TRICKSTER

The trickster in me bows to the trickster in you.
Then hops right on to the next creative threshold.

See you at the crossroads,

Barbara Howlin

info@thehowlinghive.org
@thehowlinghive
www.thehowlinghive.org

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