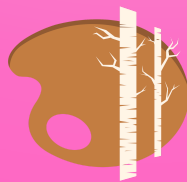


Mess it *up*



A guide for making the “bad” art.



Created by art therapist
Connor MacPherson, DKATI, RP

Outline



Introduction

Disclaimer

Mess it Up

Activity 1


Blank Page

Activity 2

Stuckness

Activity 3

A Note to You



Introduction

When we are young we make art so freely. We don't worry about being inside the lines, if it looks good. We focus on the fact that making art is fun and that it feels good.

Somewhere along the way we are taught that art needs to look a certain way. I am all for learning a creative skill, but I don't believe that "being good" at art is a factor for being able to participate in art making.

You can make art solely because you want to. Because it's fun, it feels good and we can express ourselves through it. But a lot of the time we worry about what it is going to look like, if it is "worth" it, that we can make art even if we aren't going to sell it and become full time artists.

This workbook briefly goes through 3 topics with each having their own art prompt and helping to guide you through a creative process.

I am an art therapist and I tell clients all the time that art making can be about the process, not the product. I hope that this guide provides you with a introduction to what that could be like to shift a little perspective!

Happy Creating!

Connor



Disclaimer

This is a reminder that social media, workbooks, guides, blog posts are not replacements for therapy. Therapy describes a relationship between a client and a mental health practitioner, therapist or counsellor where you work collaboratively together to reach goals that you have set together within sessions.

This guide's intention is to be educational and entertaining and does not reflect what happens in an art therapy session.



Mess it up




So, what would it be like...**if you messed up your art?** What is the worst thing that could happen?



Your art will not judge you.

If you have these thoughts that your art isn't worth making because you know it won't be perfect, you really are not alone in that. It's scary to do something knowing that there is a chance it isn't going to turn out the way we want it to.



Here is an opportunity to notice that judgement and see if you can shift it more into a curiosity about yourself. There is no right or wrong way to make art.

While in reality, there is no way to “mess up” your art, when you feel it's happened, be curious.

Activity 1



Prompt: Purposely make the *WORST* piece of art

There is no way to do this prompt wrong. What makes a bad piece of art? Is there scribbling? Is the paper ripped? Is it unsymmetrical? Did you use materials you never use? Maybe you closed your eyes while making it.

If you're feeling stuck like "I don't even know where to begin". Start by grabbing a single piece of paper and ask yourself:
"How can I ruin this?"

Reflection



Take a minute to journal about your art.

What did you notice?
How did you feel?
Was it easy?
Was it difficult?
What might you do differently?
What can you be curious about?

Blank Page

There is something that happens when we see a blank page. An anxiety that comes over when we are faced with the emptiness of it. Even if we have the intention of filling that page, it can feel really daunting to begin.

Well, here is a reminder, that your art
has no expectations of you.

Using what we talked about before, being open to curiosity about WHY this might be coming up for us. Are we concerned with wasting materials if it doesn't work out? With not being able to complete it? With not being able to visualize what we want on the paper?

Take some time to journal about this and see what might be coming up for you when you see a blank page.



Activity 2



Prompt: The art of the scribble

To help us practice stepping outside that scary space when we are faced with a blank page and unsure of what to do, I encourage scribbling.

Why? There isn't a wrong way to scribble. It's also a way to move some anxious energy and it's an easy go to when we want to create but aren't sure what to put on a page.

So grab whatever drawing materials you want, a blank sheet of paper and completely scribble until there is no white space left.

Reflection

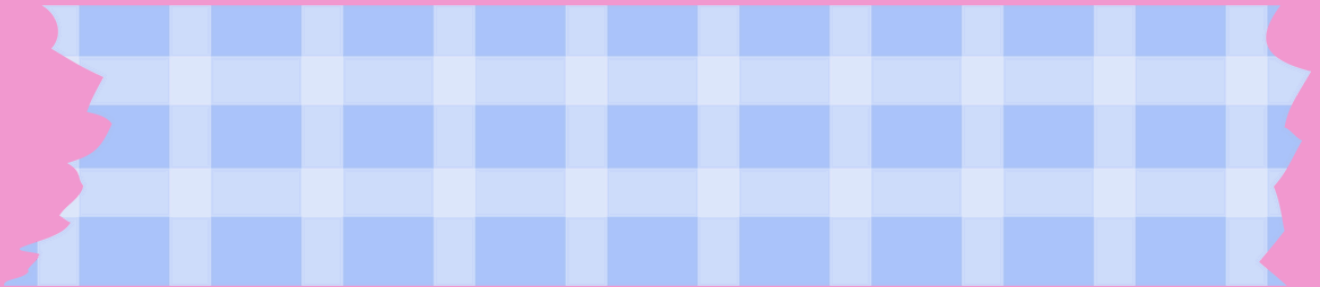


Take a minute to journal about your art.

What did you notice?
How did you feel?
Was it easy?
Was it difficult?
What might you do differently?
What can you be curious about?

Stuckness

Does feeling uninspired stop you from creating? Maybe you have all these materials around you but you just don't know where to begin. You know you want to create, but you just feel...*stuck*.



We can grab inspiration from all around us. It may include stepping outside our comfort zone a little and trying something new. Here are some ideas:

- Go to a library and take inspiration from book titles
 - Go into a cafe and take inspiration from people
 - Try a new art material you never have tried before
- Do some free writing (writing about anything that pops into your head without editing)
- Get close to your stuckness, make art with glue, tape, anything sticky.

Activity 3



Prompt: Painting to Music

Maybe this sounds simple, but it is also a great activity for fueling inspiration. Put on your favourite song for this activity. Really focus in on the music and imagine if it were to take shape, what might it look like? Paint is flowing, and lets us explore motion as opposed to this feeling of being stuck.

If you don't have access to paint, you can mimic a flowing motion with any drawing materials and you can still create along to music this way.

Reflection



Take a minute to journal about your art.

What did you notice?
How did you feel?
Was it easy?
Was it difficult?
What might you do differently?
What can you be curious about?

A note to you

If there is one thing that I would like for people to take away from a guide like this, is that art is for everyone.

Your art doesn't need to make you money, it doesn't need to be shown to the world or be considered a masterpiece.

It's for you to spend time with yourself to be curious, explore and enjoy.

Thank you for trusting in this process and joining me along in creating.



Connor



More Art Therapy Content...



@BirchwoodArtTherapy
www.BirchwoodArtTherapy.ca