

To be creative, what are the best habits to follow?



Hello,

What's on your mind these days? I'm **fascinated by the subject of creativity: both how to spark new ideas, and how actually to get work done.**

Last week on "[Ask Gretchen Rubin Live](#)," my weekly Facebook Show, we talked about the **habits that fuel creativity**, and viewers had many great observations. For instance, many people commented that nature inspires their creativity, and many people commented clutter detracts from their creativity (certainly true for me).

And of course, different things work for different people. One person said she was inspired by her Instagram feed to be more creative, while another said she was more creative when she spent less time on social media. **There's no one right way, only what works for you.**

It's helpful to ask, **"When have I been most creative in the past? What did my habits look like then – and how can I replicate them?"** Maybe you work more creatively with a team – or by yourself. Maybe you need deadlines – or maybe you feel strangled by deadlines. Maybe you like working on several projects at once – or you prefer to focus on one project at a time.

I've read a lot of advice about how to spark creativity. Everyone's creativity takes a different form, however, so the advice that works varies from person to person.

For example, I put a lot of pressure on myself to be efficient and productive. One of my struggles, therefore, is to allow myself to spend time on activities that don't pay off in an obvious, direct way. **Creativity often involves play, digression, exploration, experimentation, and failed attempts; it doesn't always look productive.**

For example, I recently allowed myself to indulge a somewhat random but intense interest in the life of Dolly Parton, [which led to me to share this story](#) on a recent episode of "A Little Happier." It sparked an interesting discussion on social media about [Dolly Parton and Oprah's conversation](#).

As ludicrous as it may sound, I have to [force myself to wander](#), and schedule time to goof off. That's why one of the items on my "[18 for 2018](#)" list is "Plan a perfume field trip with a friend." I've already visited several perfume stores (Kilian, Fueguia, [Frederic Malle](#), Perfumarie Discovery Studio), and after each visit, I feel exhilarated by all those beautiful fragrances.

What are your biggest challenges when it comes to creativity? What habits work for you? Let me know in [the comments on the Facebook show](#) or on the blog [here](#).

If you're "[designing your summer](#)", will you be including activities that spark creativity?

Creativity Inspiration:

WATCH

- [What habits are best for creativity?](#)
- Want to change your life? [Try writing a personal manifesto.](#)
- Do you want to "[design your summer](#)"?
- [Make something by hand.](#)
- [Take time for projects.](#)
- [Force yourself to wander.](#)

LISTEN

- I was a guest on [The Tim Ferriss Show](#). The episode was called, "Experiments in Happiness and Creativity."
- I was a guest on the [Beautiful Writers Podcast](#) a few years ago. We discussed "creativity-saving habits."
- Happier Podcast 22: [Creativity! Listen to Rosanne Cash](#), Save Your String, Fight Drift, and a Lesson from the Writers' Room.

READ

- [To be creative, what are the best habits to follow?](#)
- [Did Pablo Picasso paint fakes? The question of creativity.](#)
- [Frustrated? Stuck? Put Yourself in Creativity Boot Camp.](#)
- [How to spark your creativity by reading magazines.](#)
- [Revealed! 7 Brilliant Books About the Nature of Creativity.](#)

Onward,
Gretchen Rubin



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The image shows the front cover of the book 'The Four Tendencies' by Gretchen Rubin. The cover is primarily blue with a yellow circular graphic in the center. The title 'THE FOUR TENDENCIES' is written in white and yellow text within the circle. Below the circle, the author's name 'GRETCHEN RUBIN' is printed in white. The book is shown at a slight angle, giving it a three-dimensional appearance.

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