

RE-IGNITE YOUR CREATIVE SPARK

The Poetics of Imagination Toolkit

A creative companion from Joel McKerrow

● Key Ideas ● Spark Quotes ● Reflection Questions ● Creative Exercises

THE BIG IDEAS

Five frameworks to carry with you

❖ CREATIVITY AS OUTPUT

When your creativity is only ever used for campaigns, briefs and deliverables, it stops doing the inner work it's meant to do. The fire goes out — slowly, quietly, until one day you face the blank page and feel nothing.

❖ THE RESISTANCE

Steven Pressfield calls it The Resistance. Julia Cameron names the payoff in staying blocked — it becomes identity, martyrdom, a comfortable prison. Seeing the block clearly is the first step to walking out of it.

❖ THE AESTHETIC LIFE

A poet lives with senses awake — stepping into the world as though it's alive and burning with meaning in the smallest moments. The opposite is the anaesthetic life: numb, rushing, unseeing. Slowing down IS a radical creative act.

❖ THE POET'S EYE

A poet sees through the material to the deeper meaning. Like a kaleidoscope — the same elements everyone else sees, reassembled into something entirely new. This is what imagination actually is.

❖ THE INNOVATION ENGINE

Joel's framework for organisations: Inspiration → Creation → Construction → Choice → Invitation → Space → Belief → Risk. A living cycle. Not a one-time event.

WORDS THAT LIGHT THE FIRE

Pin these somewhere visible.

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When our creativity is only used for output, it stops doing the inner work that creativity is meant to do inside us.

— Joel McKerrrow

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Imagination is a thought process that allows the imaginer to consider possibilities beyond their current experience.

— Ken Robinson

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Creativity is a lot like looking the world through a kaleidoscope. You look at a set of elements, the same ones everyone else sees, but then reassemble those floating bits and pieces into an enticing new possibility.

— Rosabeth Moss Kanter

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Our perennial spiritual and psychological task is to look at things familiar until they become unfamiliar again.

— G.K. Chesterton

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There is a safety in being blocked. There is a RISK in showing up and believing we have something creative to bring into this world.

— Joel McKerrrow

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We are born with whirlwinds, forest fires, and comets inside us... but then we get the magic educated right out of our souls.

— Robert McCammon

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Sit with one. Write without stopping.

Pick a question that unsettles you. Give yourself 10 minutes. No editing. No judging. Just let it come.

ON THE BLOCK

1. Where in your life has creativity become purely about output?

2. What is the hidden payoff you get from staying creatively blocked?

ON FEAR & RISK

1. Can you remember the moment your creativity was shamed or shut down?

2. What would you make if you knew no one was watching — and no one would judge?

ON WAKING UP

1. When did you last slow down and notice something familiar as if for the first time?

2. What ordinary moment, truly looked at, might become extraordinary?

ON RE-IGNITING

1. What creative practice have you abandoned that once made you feel alive?

2. If you were a landscape — what landscape would you be, and why?

CREATIVE EXERCISES

Do them. Don't just read them.

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1** THE ONE-MINUTE STORY1
min

Look at any evocative image. Count to three, then speak a story aloud — improvised, unedited, unstoppable. Don't think. Just go.

◆ *If someone transcribed what you said, you'd have a full page of story. You're already more creative than you believe.*

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2** IF YOU WERE A LANDSCAPE...5–10
min

Stream-of-consciousness writing. Start immediately when you read the prompt. Don't stop until time is up.

◆ *What landscape would you be — and what does that reveal about you right now?*

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3** THE POET'S EYE WALK15
min

Go for a walk. Your only task: find five things you have never truly noticed before. A texture. A crack. A colour. A sound under the silence.

◆ *Write one sentence about each. That IS poetry.*

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4** NAME YOUR RESISTANCE10
min

List every reason you tell yourself you can't be creative right now. Be ruthlessly honest. Then next to each one, write: 'What payoff am I getting from this belief?'

◆ *Seeing the payoff is the beginning of choosing differently.*

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5** THE MAGIC INVENTORY10
min

When were you most alive creatively? List those moments. What were the conditions? What was present that isn't now?

◆ *You can't re-ignite what you've never named.*

Want to go deeper? Joel brings The Innovation Engine into organisations — training teams in the creative process, story-listening, and narrative intelligence. joelmckerrow.com • info@joelmckerrow.com • +61 413 331 673