

# CULTIVATING CREATIVITY

In today's busy world, it's common to put our hobbies and creative interests at the bottom of our to-do lists. Pastimes like painting, gardening, writing, or playing games with friends can feel like things that only little kids have time for.

Thankfully, there are many reasons to make room for playing and developing creative skills in our daily lives! People in all stages of life can benefit from these activities, whether you're a busy student, parent, business owner, retiree, or anyone in-between.

So, why should we make time for creative hobbies & activities? Here's just a few of the reasons:

1. **Creative activities improve brain function and memory.**

Creative pursuits exercise many parts of your brain and allow you to build new connections between them. These new connections have been shown to improve your memory and to make it easier for you to learn new things and adapt to new challenges more comfortably.

2. **Doing creative things makes it easier to solve problems & make plans.**

Creative pursuits of any kind, whether it be writing a poem or fixing up a vintage car, give your brain the chance to think outside the box. Projects like these require you to plan ahead, making sure you have the right materials and time to complete them. However, even the best laid plans can fall apart sometimes. Learning to solve small issues in creative projects helps us become more comfortable with solving some of life's bigger problems, as we build patience, self-compassion, and resourcefulness.

3. **Creative activities are great for our mood, health, and communities.**

Being creative has many benefits for our physical and mental health. There is more and more research showing that building creative skills and seeking out a sense of "mastery" is extremely good for us, as it provides a sense of accomplishment and purpose, motivation for the future, and an opportunity to relax and unwind from daily stressors. Creative activities also strengthen communities, as creative people are often able to connect with others by sharing their work and seeking out groups with similar interests.

It's never too late to pick a hobby back up or get started on something new! Libraries and online communities are a great place to begin. If you're ready to reconnect to your creative side, take some time to think about what you'd like to do, look for some resources on how to get going, and then set yourself a small, attainable goal to start with. The sky's the limit from there!

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