



First Month of Flow Exercises

Welcome to Week 1: Establish

This week, focus on establishing your work space, your material, your creative goals, themes and direction of your work for the next month. Create your space, plan your work, arrange your materials and set the time and space in your daily routine where you will be creating your work. Got that done with time left in your week? Get started!

Homework: Picking a theme for your work. You will need to choose for yourself what you will be focusing on for the month. Be specific! How many works will you develop? How much will you complete each day towards your final goal? What will you be saying with this body of work? Will you set a target like entering a virtual or physical show, competition or performance opportunity? Let's set a goal to challenge ourselves and grow during this time.

With your Artist Group: This week use the Facebook group to introduce yourself to the other participating artists. I know each of the participating artists personally and this is great group! Please tell us 1) your name/how to address you 2) what type of creative work you do (eg music, illustrating, writing, painting) and 3) what your ideas are for a goal for the residency. I will be popping in and out of chat with some ideas of my own. I have already added my own introduction as an example and to break the ice. Remember- we are here to support each other! Take advantage of the space we have created together and do so!

Welcome to Week 2: Making Meaning

This week is a working week! Immerse yourself into your work! As you do, stay focused with meaning making. The creative mind derives satisfaction and wellness from making meaning from their life and the world around them- use this as energy to stay focused and motivated on your project. Advice? 30min to an hour of creativity EVERY DAY.

Homework: It is time to commit to routine and work. You have your space and time-of-day arranged to work in, you have chosen your project for the residency. This is where you show up for your creativity (read more about that [here](#)). The goal of your commitment is connect with your innate need to make meaning of the world around you (read more about that [here](#)). Simply through the commitment to your creativity, you will bring the powerful motivators of meaning making and flow online. Establishing routine and work is difficult, especially when the work is creative (the hardest work we do) so this may be the hardest week of your residency- but also exponentially increase the pay-off of the entire experience for your creative life, when you truly commit.

With your Artist Group: Plan to use the support of the group this week. This week is going to bring us face-to-face with the obstacles that get between us and our creativity. This is normal



and expected, and all Creative People face them. One of the most powerful aspects of group experience, is shared experience and normalizing these struggles- telling each other that we are not alone. I invite you to share with the group, when you struggle to show up for your creativity every day this week, what is happening. Share with us that you are tired. Share with us that you are frustrated. That you don't know where to begin. That you feel stupid. Or less-than. Because- I guarantee you- you are not alone- and hearing it from each other will be a powerful game changer.

Welcome to Week 3: Valuing your Work

Your ability to produce creative work is directly related to your intention to matter as an artist. What!? This is the part of your residency where you commit to yourself and your art and your value to the arts community at large. We are living through a historic time and your communication, creatively, of your experiences and views are invaluable! Creating the work as an artist is also your most important tool to staying well. I know it is challenging and vulnerable to put your work "out there" into the world- but it is so important and reinforcing to your identity as an artist. Here is your opportunity!

Homework: Now that you are in a good working routine, let's reinforce that work by affirming your creative identity and the work you do each day. I want you to take a look at the way you "start" your creative routine. It may be setting up materials, settling into your space, or a warm-up of some kind (which I highly recommend). This week, I want you to add taking a moment to acknowledge your identity as an artist and the importance of the work you are about to do. You might also choose to close your creative practice this way, if you wish, by acknowledging something about the practice that was meaningful. Years ago, I used to do this by keeping a journal in my studio and writing one or two sentences down in affirmation of myself and my work in general before I started, and in affirmation of myself and my work that I just completed working on at the end of the practice. I challenge you to make a version of this routine for yourself. This is such a simple suggestion that you may think to yourself, "nice, but I don't really have time and it won't have a big impact." I see and validate that. I also challenge you to practice it for just one week and reevaluate the impact.

With your Artist Group: Go back to the community of artists in residency with you- and your challenge this week is to share with us in the community what you are working on. I want you to take the opportunity to share with us with the rule of "3x3" this week: three times share with us your progress on your work. No explanation needed- but share with us context if you would like. Also during the week, I want you to comment 3 times on other community members' projects in a supportive way. Being supportive to other artists will emotionally liberate you as an artist to share your own work.

Welcome to Week 4: Inspiration Period



This is the last week of the Residency Challenge, Creatives! And this week I challenge you to focus on inspiration. How have you been inspired by the work you have done this month? How can you take that energy, the work you have created, and use it to inspire others? How can you take the creative energy you have generated and launch forward in to your next creative project? I invite you to participate in our virtual show of the work made this month! Submit the pieces you have made this month and hold yourself accountable to the goals you made for your residency!

Homework: You have a month of studio work accomplished- congratulations! This is an important accomplishment! Please take a moment to reflect upon the month. What were your obstacles? What can you address as you continue to move forward in the next month? This is the business part of being an artist- the "flow-y" part of planning where we look back at our work and address day-to-day problems with a forward-facing plan. Next- and most importantly- what went well? There is no scale to this- I want you to consider EVERYTHING that went well. This is your momentum and inspiration to KEEP GOING!! I will start you off: you went on this journey! No matter how it played out- you decided to go! If that is as far as you got this time- start here!! What spark inspired you to try?? This is important!! How can you nurture that to keep moving forward? As you think upon these questions, cement them into your mind with writing, more artwork, and conversation and communication with your community of artists.

With your Artist Group: Three important tasks at the end of your residency:

1. Share your insights! I want to know (selfishly for myself!) but mostly for the benefit of the group- what your thoughts are from your experiences from the past 4 weeks- and- invite feedback from your fellow artists! That done- go to x2 other shares and give support and feedback to your creative peers.
2. Share your work! This is accountability and vulnerability- such important pieces of why we are here! It doesn't matter if you didn't accomplish everything you planned- or all that and more- share it with us. We want to see and support you! And it is SO HEALTHY for your creative development to put your work out there! Once you have shared- send support to as many other shares of work as you have time to support- because sharing work is hard and we are here to make it easier for each other.
- 3, Get ready for next month! Take a reset if you desire, or, jump right back in. Recruit some fellow artists. Keep that daily creative practice rolling. Think about challenges or ideas for the next four weeks. We are here for you!