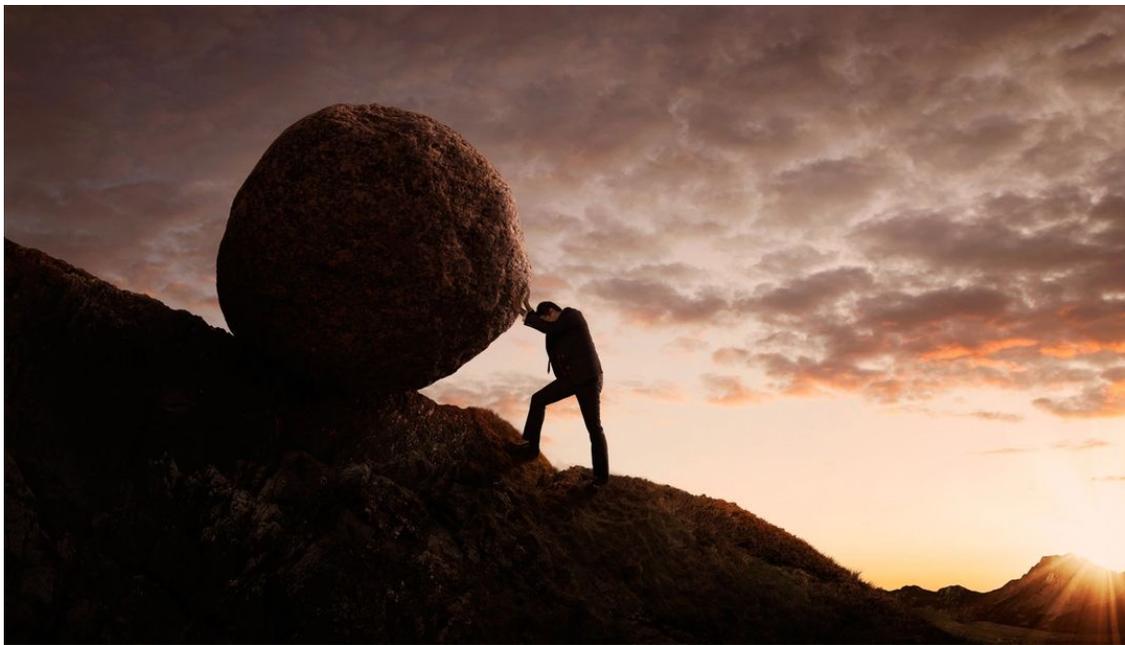


Block-Buster

Info and Inspiration for Creatives: September 2017



FEATURE

The Boss of You

Does your creative work sometimes feel like a joyless task imposed on you by a tyrannical boss? Are you by chance the tyrant?

Drive is an admirable, necessary quality for creatives, so how can we maintain drive without feeling driven? We've achieved our dream of being our own boss,



but we risk flogging ourselves like a sweatshop foreman because we've internalized the punishing work ethic some of us grew up with.

We're born with the desire for self-direction, which is why it's so hard on us when we end up mimicking the bullying bosses we've suffered under.

Make It Easy on Yourself

In his book *Drive*, Daniel Pink says that once our survival needs are met (for many of us, that should read IF our survival needs are met), we can seek flow in our work. Flow is fueled by intrinsic motivation, not the expectation of external rewards. Meaningful goals chosen by you let you tune out distractions and enter flow, described by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi as an optimal state in which work feels effortless and enjoyable.

Working in a flow state may allow you to work longer and achieve more over the long term than you would by pushing yourself into overwhelm, and then beating yourself up when you can't meet your self-imposed deadlines and quotas.

Try scaling back the volume of your output so you don't exhaust yourself. If you can, extend the timeline on a project so your pace of work can be more measured, and more likely to feel like play than work.

The I's Have It

Would it serve you better to ditch the Type A over-achiever model and adopt what Pink calls the Type I style? Type Is are energized by self-directed pursuits and devoted to continuous learning, and they connect their work to a higher purpose.

While Type As can burn out from years of driving themselves mercilessly, Pink says "Type I behaviour is a renewable resource...the motivational equivalent of clean energy."¹

Type Is don't expect superhuman performance from themselves or others, and they tend to have greater self-esteem, better relationships and increased well-being overall. Wouldn't you like to be your own Type I boss?

1. Pink, Daniel. *Drive (2009): The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*,

New York, Riverhead Books, 2009.



BOOKSHELF

Young Leonardo: The Evolution of a Revolutionary Artist, 1471 - 1499

by Jean-Pierre isbouts and Christopher Heath Brown

St. Martin's Press, 2017.

Leonardo da Vinci's time in Milan is the focus of this book. As a Florentine, he was an outsider who found it difficult to attract the patronage of the ruling elite in his new city. Time after time, Leonardo's ideas and finished works, though often superior to those of his Milanese counterparts, were passed over in favour of artists in Duke Ludovico Sforza's inner circle.

The book is well illustrated with Leonardo's drawings, concepts for public projects, and of course, the paintings he completed while in the north of Italy.

Isbouts and Brown provide some insight into how Leonardo's artistic genius evolved during his time in Milan, though like most art history books, it leaves

the creative reader hungering for more “How did he do it?” information.



BRIGHT IDEAS

Creativity and life coach Dolly Muzer (www.thecreativepioneer.com) offers a fresh perspective on handling the items on your creativity to-do list.

Deadline pressure can spark a full-on rebellion from your inner teenager (or leave you prostrate with anxiety). So instead of planning what you have to get done by a certain date, decide when you'd like to start.

“That way it’s more of an invitation,” Muzer says.

There’s a big difference between the “should” of a deadline and the “I think I’d like to” of an invitation. The former feels like a command, and don’t we creatives just hate to be ordered around? If a deadline looms, it’s easy to feel hostage to it. Inviting yourself to start something feels more joyful, fun and inspiring – and it makes you feel that you’re in charge.



COACHING NEWS

I'm one of three Awesome Annapolis finalists. I'll be pitching an idea for contributing to the betterment of Annapolis County in Nova Scotia. If I'm selected, I'll be providing free creativity coaching sessions this fall for five local creatives.

Pitch night is Wednesday, September 6 at 7 pm, at the Annapolis Royal Legion. If you're in the area, come cheer the finalists and cast your People's Choice vote.



WISE WORDS

“I thought my success in writing would finally win me love. That wasn’t a conscious wish, but it was a strong one. Below that desire, I found a cleaner one, a more grounded one. I wrote because I wanted to, because I wanted to step forward and speak.”

– Natalie Goldberg

Wild Mind: Living the Writer’s Life

Clare Thorbes

Clare Thorbes is a creativity coach and a visual artist specializing in portraiture. She helps writers, artists and performers overcome

creative blocks and build a fulfilling life in the arts.

[About Clare](#)



Learn more about Creativity Coaching

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