

Applied Creativity

Small Actions,
Big Transformations



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INTRODUCTION

THE CREATIVITY THAT ALREADY LIVES IN US

“CREATING IS A LEAP INTO THE VOID, TAKEN WITH THE BOLDNESS OF SOMEONE WHO BELIEVES THEY’LL CATCH AN IDEA BEFORE HITTING THE GROUND.” I ONCE READ THIS SENTENCE SOMEWHERE, AND IT RESURFACED DURING ONE OF THOSE MOMENTS WHEN I HAD TO MAKE A DECISION THAT SCARED ME. IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FEAR, I FELT AN ALMOST IRRATIONAL SENSE OF TRUST — A STRANGE CERTAINTY THAT SOMETHING GOOD WOULD APPEAR IF I JUMPED WITH INTENTION. AND THAT SENTENCE STAYED WITH ME BECAUSE IT PERFECTLY REFLECTS WHAT I’VE LEARNED (AND LIVED) OVER THE YEARS:

CREATIVITY ISN’T MAGICAL, EXCLUSIVE, OR RESERVED FOR A CHOSEN FEW. IT’S A FORCE THAT WALKS WITH US EVERY DAY, EVEN WHEN WE DON’T NOTICE IT.

THAT’S WHAT THIS BOOK WANTS TO SHOW: THAT CREATIVITY CAN BE APPLIED IN EVERY CONTEXT — AND THAT IT CAN BE SIMPLE. THAT IT CAN CHANGE THE WAY WE MAKE DECISIONS, SOLVE PROBLEMS, AND EVEN HOW WE RELATE TO OURSELVES AND OTHERS. THAT YES, THERE IS SCIENCE BEHIND IT — BUT THERE IS ALSO ROOM FOR IMPROVISATION, FOR STUMBLING, FOR CURIOSITY.

AND HOW DO I KNOW THIS? BECAUSE MY PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL JOURNEY HAS BEEN A CONSTANT ACT OF REINVENTION.

I’VE WORKED IN DIFFERENT FIELDS, WITH DIVERSE TEAMS, IN PROJECTS BIG AND SMALL — AND EVEN WHEN IT LOOKED LIKE I WAS “FOLLOWING THE PLAN,” I WAS CREATING SOMETHING NEW, APPLYING IDEAS IN UNEXPECTED WAYS, GROWING INSIDE AND OUT. SOMETIMES WITHOUT REALIZING IT, OTHER TIMES WITH SO MUCH ENTHUSIASM THAT I LOST TRACK OF TIME (AND OF HOW MANY POST-ITS I HAD STUCK ACROSS MY DESK).

IT WAS THIS APPLIED CREATIVITY — IN WORK, IN CONVERSATIONS, IN EVERYDAY CHOICES — THAT HELPED ME FIND MY PATH.

AND IT’S THIS PERSPECTIVE — PRACTICAL, CURIOUS, AND FULL OF ROOM TO GROW — THAT I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU NOW.

INTRODUCTION

WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS E-BOOK

EVERYDAY CREATIVITY DOESN'T NEED A STAGE OR AN AWARD. SOMETIMES ALL IT NEEDS IS A SMALL MOMENT — A BLOCK, A DOUBT, A BORING ROUTINE — TO SHOW UP AND DO ITS WORK.

IN THIS DIGITAL BOOK, YOU'LL FIND FIVE OF THOSE MOMENTS, ALONG WITH SIMPLE BUT EFFECTIVE IDEAS TO REINVENT THEM THROUGH CREATIVITY:

- HOW TO UNBLOCK YOUR MIND WHEN EVERYTHING FEELS FOGGY
- HOW TO MAKE LIGHTER, CALMER DECISIONS
- HOW TO FIND CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR ANNOYING PROBLEMS
- HOW TO BRING MORE AUTHENTICITY INTO YOUR WORK
- AND HOW TO USE CREATIVITY AS A LENS TO LIVE BETTER

ALL WITH PRACTICAL EXAMPLES, SIMPLE TOOLS, AND A PROMISE NOT TO MAKE THIS BORING - QUITE THE OPPOSITE.

EVERYDAY CREATIVITY

Creativity is everywhere — and, more importantly, it's already in you.

It might show up in how you solve a problem at work, how you help two friends make peace, or even in how you invent a new recipe using whatever is left in your fridge. This is what we call everyday creativity — or, as researchers Ruth Richards and Paul Torrance put it, “Everyday Creativity.”

It's the creativity we all use, often without noticing.

It's spontaneous, practical, and frequently invisible.

Creativity Isn't Just for “Creative People”

For a long time, people believed creativity was a rare gift, reserved for artists or geniuses like Da Vinci or Einstein.

But today we know creativity comes in many forms — and that it's actually a skill that can be practiced and cultivated.

According to the **4 C's Model of Creativity** (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009), there are four levels:

- **Mini-c:** The small personal insights that help us make sense of our experiences (like a child discovering a new way to stack blocks).
- **Little-c:** Everyday creativity — solving a problem at work in an original way, or reinventing your daily routine.
- **Pro-c:** The creativity of people who specialize in a field and apply creative solutions professionally (designers, teachers, chefs, entrepreneurs... maybe you).
- **Big-C:** World-changing creative contributions that become part of history (Mozart, Frida Kahlo, Einstein... depending on your taste).

A CRIATIVIDADE DO DIA A DIA

The focus of this digital book is on **Little-c** and **Pro-c**, because these are the levels that truly shape our real lives - the ones that create concrete, meaningful, and often quiet change.

Creativity isn't just something you do. It's a way of being.

Creativity is curiosity.

It's paying attention to what's around you.

It's being willing to try something new — even if it feels strange at first.

And that's why we block so often.

Because the world shouts, “Be productive!”

but forgets to whisper, “Pause for a moment and notice.”

Creating is listening.

Exploring.

Connecting unlikely things.

And sometimes, doing something that makes no sense at all - only to discover that... it actually works.

WHY WE GET STUCK (AND HOW TO START UNBLOCKING)

You know that moment when you have the time, the notebook, the motivation... and absolutely nothing comes out? You stare at the screen, at the page, at the void... and all you can think is: “Nothing. I’ve got nothing.”

Creative blocks are like mental traffic jams and just like the real ones, they tend to show up precisely when you need flow the most. But why?

Science tells us that our brain loves patterns. It loves knowing what to expect, repeating what worked before, and avoiding the unknown.

But creating requires the opposite: leaving the pattern, trying something new, dealing with uncertainty.

And how does the brain respond? With resistance, with the classic “this won’t work”, or worse... with silence.

The (Almost Always) Silent Origin of a Block

In one of the classes I did from the course “Ignite Your Everyday Creativity” (State University of New York), Dr. Cindy Burnett from the University at Buffalo shared a story I’ve seen play out so many times.

During a workshop with children and their parents, the facilitators brought out several bags of popcorn. The challenge for the kids was: “What can we do with popcorn, besides eating it?”

The children immediately started firing ideas:

- “Make a popcorn tower!”
- “A sculpture!”
- “A popcorn racing game!”

Until a mother suddenly interrupted:

- “That’s not going to work...”

Silence. One of those heavy silences that freeze even the warmest ideas.

The facilitator walked over and gently reminded her:

- “Here, we’re practicing creative non-judgment.”

PORQUE BLOQUEAMOS (E COMO COMEÇAR A DESBLOQUEAR)

“Deferring judgment” is one of the most important practices in creativity. It means choosing, just for a moment, not to decide whether an idea is good or bad. It’s letting the idea grow a little before pointing out its flaws.

But we, rushed adults, struggle with this. We live in a world of quick answers, efficiency, and productivity, and we end up applying those filters to everything, including our creative thinking.

A small challenge for you (and for me too)

For the next 24 hours, try this:

- Notice your creative judgments.

Whenever an idea shows up, even a strange, silly, “where-did-that-come-from?” kind of idea, don’t throw it away immediately.

The goal?

To train your creative muscle. To give your ideas a chance to become something with potential, or to reveal what’s underneath them.

5 REAL-LIFE SITUATIONS WHERE CREATIVITY CAN CHANGE EVERYTHING

Creativity shows up in the most ordinary, everyday situations - and it can be the key to unlocking something that has felt stuck for weeks. Here are five of those moments. Chances are, you've already lived at least one of them.

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At Work: When a “creative meeting” feels like déjà vu with no new ideas in sight

How many times have you sat in a meeting where everyone agrees but no one actually contributes anything new? There's silence. Or the classic: “Let's just do what we did last year.” Or the famous: “We don't have time to reinvent anything.”

That's exactly where lateral thinking comes in.

It replaces “the way we always do it” with questions like:

- What if we did the opposite?
- How would a 5-year-old solve this?
- What would happen if we only had \$5 and thirty minutes?

A real example: In the creative team of a company, someone once suggested: “What if the entire campaign were completely silent?”

The result? A visually striking concept, no sound at all - a campaign that drew far more attention than any jingle could.

Check the example: [2024 Election - Calm Silent Ad](#)

5 REAL-LIFE SITUATIONS WHERE CREATIVITY CAN CHANGE EVERYTHING

At Home: When Everything Feels the Same (and Boring)

Doing laundry, making dinner, picking up toys... Yes, routines are exhausting.

But the truth is, they can also become a surprisingly good creativity training ground.

What if you created tiny daily creative challenges?

- Today I cook using only 5 ingredients.
- I'll organize my books by color, not by theme.
- I'll set a "creative alarm": when it rings, I have 10 minutes to do something unexpected.

Small experiments that won't change the world but will change your mood. And the way you move through your day.

In Your Personal Life: When You Want Change but Don't Know Where to Start

"I want to do something new... I just don't know what." Sounds familiar? This is where creativity can become your internal compass.

Useful techniques:

- **Morning Pages** - writing everything that comes to mind, without any filter.
- **Listing your superpowers** (even the ones that feel simple or obvious).
- **Imagining your ideal day** and noticing what parts of it you could bring into the present.

The goal isn't to decide everything today. It's to make space for new directions and trust that when you move one piece, the rest starts shifting too.

5 REAL-LIFE SITUATIONS WHERE CREATIVITY CAN CHANGE EVERYTHING

In Time Management: When You Have 100 Tasks and Zero Clarity

If your schedule looks like a tangled scribble of lines... or if you don't even have a schedule, it might be time to bring some creativity into this area too. Sometimes the first step isn't planning better, it's looking at things differently. Reorganizing your day the way you'd assemble a puzzle, where rest also has a place, and where priorities are written calmly, not in a rush.

Creative suggestions:

- Create an "Energy Map": When are you most creative? Most operational?
- Most social?
- Build a routine with themed blocks (e.g., mornings for thinking, afternoons for doing).
- Use a technique like Time Boxing, but give each block a fun name ("Focus Mission," "Zen Block," "Creative Chaos Hour").

Creativity may not give you more hours but it can give you better quality in the time you already have.

These examples show that creativity isn't "out there."

- It's in the way you choose to live what you already do.
- It's in relearning how to see with fresh eyes.
- It's in seeing what everyone sees and thinking what no one has thought yet.



MINI APPLIED CREATIVITY KIT

Quick ideas to unblock your thinking (even on the grayest, heaviest days)

Creativity needs space, yes But sometimes... it just needs a little push. When you feel blocked, stuck between “I need to be productive” and “I have no idea where to start” this mini kit is your go-to. No ceremony. No excuses.

These techniques are simple but effective and most importantly, they’ve been tested by real people in real situations.

Like Marta, in our mini workshop “Creative Events – DIY”, where we created original event concepts using simple, accessible resources.

1. Creative Dice

Make a little paper cube with 6 sides.

On each side, write one creative challenge:

- Do this with humor
- Simplify it completely
- Make it visual
- Solve it with a metaphor
- Flip it upside down
- Explain it as if it were for a child

When you feel stuck, use the dice. Roll it and apply the challenge to your situation. You won’t always like the result... and that’s exactly the point

2. Unlikely Questions — “What if...?”

Creativity is also about asking different questions - the ones that sound ridiculous... until they suddenly make sense.

Choose a situation or problem you want to solve.

Now answer:

- What if it were forbidden?
- What if you only had 10 minutes to solve it?
- What if it had to be done in total silence?
- What if you could only use emojis to explain it?

This exercise forces you to step outside your logical patterns. That’s where the surprise starts.

3. Creative Journey

Sometimes the problem isn't a lack of ideas, it's having too many, or not being able to see the bigger picture.

Draw a simple timeline with:

- Where you are right now
- What brought you here
- Future possibilities
- Real and imagined obstacles
- The emotions present in each stage

This helps you separate noise from direction. It may look simple, but it's genuinely transformative.

These techniques seem simple - and they are. But simplicity is a form of wisdom. The hard part is stopping, breathing, and applying them with intention. But when you do... everything shifts.

CONCLUSION

Creativity isn't just a tool, it's a lens. A way of looking at the world with more possibilities, even when everything seems exactly the same.

Throughout these pages, we explored small everyday moments, from chaotic schedules to productive silences - and we saw how applied creativity, even in its most subtle form, can become a turning point.

We're not talking about divine epiphanies or Nobel-worthy ideas. We're talking about simple, conscious, intentional actions.

Lighter decisions.

More fitting solutions.

Seeing with new eyes what was already right in front of you.

And now? Now it's your turn. Choose one idea from this book and try it. Just one. Test it in your routine, in a problem, in a conversation. See what changes, and if something shifts, even a little, it was already worth it.

If you ever need more inspiration or someone to walk with you through the process of giving shape to your ideas, you know where to find me. Creativity doesn't have to be lonely, and it has everything it needs to be transformative.

ABOUT ME

Hi, I'm Mónica.

I'm passionate about ideas that solve things - big or small.

I've worked across different fields, in solo projects and in teams, and along the way I've realized that creativity isn't just a tool, it's a way of living with more intention, lightness, and purpose.

I'm a trainer, translator, social entrepreneur, and a facilitator of Social Design Thinking workshops, with a postgraduate degree in Business Design.

I created this small digital book because I believe creativity shouldn't be saved for the "right" moments or the "right" people.

It's already there, in your everyday life, waiting to be activated.

If you felt aligned with this perspective and would like to explore how to apply creativity to your project, business, or personal life, reach out.

Together, we can design something that makes sense - whether it's a personalized guide, a workshop for your team, or simply a good conversation with post-its and tea.

See you soon!

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