

WORKSHEET: RECONNECT WITH THE JOY OF LIVING

A deep connection to life – to yourself, your friends and the planet we share – comes from regular *dis-connection*.

When we regularly break out of our habitual, unconscious patterns - when we purposefully step outside of our comfort zones - something very interesting starts to happen...we begin to feel more alive and indeed more connected. Not only that, but it **keeps our creativity alive**, and give our immune system a boost.



7 IDEAS TO MAKE THE MOST OF SUMMER

Here a number of ways you can take time to reconnect with the joy of living. **Decide what you ARE going to commit to doing this month and write it in the space at the end of the document.** Print it out and keep it somewhere you can see it!

1. Will you make time for solitude?

To get better acquainted with yourself, with the different (and often contradictory) voices within, or the quieter undercurrents of emerging ideas and possibilities, we need to find a way to regularly take time to be by ourselves.

- Put away all your electronic devices for several hours a day. Set yourself a challenge or buddy up with a friend to break this most pernicious of addictions.
- Write a journal or a blog.
- Visit a café on your own. Bring along something to read or a notebook to draw or write. People watching will give you new ideas. The buzz is very conducive to creativity. Can't make it to a café? [Visit Coffitivity](#).
- Meditate. [Click here](#) to find out what it will do for you.
- Practice gratitude in this beautiful virtual space <http://www.gratefulness.org> Gratitude literally activates your heart energy.

2. Will you take regular walks?

- The author Virginia Woolf would walk round London every day from 4 - 6pm. Mingling with people, being curious about them and focussing her attention outwards in that way, would give her new ideas and refresh her thinking.
- Getting out into nature puts everything into perspective. So, why not get out every day this month and watch the season come to fruition?

3. Will you get stuck in and use your hands?

Touch increases intelligence; touch directly affects the autonomic nervous system and calms us down. Touching and holding is the most natural thing to do through: Hugging, pottery, cooking, gardening, sewing, drawing, playing an instrument and so on - these are all ways to instantly transport yourself.

4. Will you make 'Artist's Dates'?

Julia Cameron's book [The Artist's Way](#) is still a classic. I particularly like her insistence on a weekly 'artist's date'. This is time you set aside to go on an excursion on your own. Yes, on your own; and once you've made the commitment you stick to it.

So, get out there and do anything out of the ordinary – go to a paint shop, walk down the beach, collect leaves on a walk, attend a concert – for at least two hours. You'll be surprised at how this 'non-tool' can rejig your inner landscape.

5. Will you create some order?

Tidy something, anything at all from a drawer, a file, a cupboard to a room. Go through your wardrobe, get rid of garments you haven't worn for a while, thank them for their service and give them a new destination elsewhere.

6. Will you be curious and talk to strangers?

Be curious about people you do not know. Find opportunities to strike up little exchanges or conversations with strangers.

Our social interactions can be very stagnant and predictable. Strangers invariably make you see the world in a different way.

7. Will you seek out your friends?

Connect with friends from the past who don't cross your path every day. Send them an email, give them a call for no other reason than to tell them you are thinking of them and want to know how they are.

These small gestures generate huge amounts of pleasure and inspiration. Give it a go!

Now, on the next page – write down what you WILL do this summer....





**Here's what I'm going to do to
make the most of summer:**