

# LIFE REFINED

living life well

fall 2015



When you hear the word “creativity,” what comes to mind? Perhaps it’s a great artist such as Picasso or the lyrical works of Maya Angelou. But although the term “creative” is often associated with certain fields in the arts, you don’t have to be an artist to be creative. Creativity is important for all aspects of life, from brainstorming fresh business ideas to troubleshooting at home. Follow these top three tips to cultivate your creative side.

### 1. Redefine what it means to be creative

First, think about creativity in a broader sense. “If you define creativity as the ability to problem solve or the ability to see an opportunity or the ability to innovate, then people can be seen as creative and this skill can be applied to any field,” says Amy Marks-McGee, marketing professional and founder of Trendincite LLC, a consulting company that helps clients innovate.

In fact, creativity can be thought of as nothing more than an output of ideas, and a simple idea can have a lot of power. As Bryan Mattimore, co-founder of The Growth Engine Co. , asserts, “A great idea can re-energize a company or nation, and those with ideas can rise quickly to positions of authority in their work.”

### 2. Get out of your routine

Roger Wood, co-founder and head of product at Orion, believes one of the most helpful ways to stir up creativity is to look for different vantage points throughout your day. If you always enter your office building

through the west door, switch it up and take a stroll to the east entrance. If you don’t like a specific kind of music, pick a song in that genre and listen to it. “Select vantage points that you would not normally select,” he advises. “Every once in a while you have to go in through the out door. Even if it’s something small, forcing yourself to try something that’s a bit outside your norm will open up your mind to new ideas.”

### 3. Do nothing

Wood believes that experiencing the world is the most important step to fostering creativity. “Engagement is the enemy of creativity. You don’t engage the paintbrush; you dip the brush in paint and then you experience,” he says. “So many times in our 21st-century haste, we’re in a haste to engage, but it stifles the creative flow.”

Mattimore advises that those who are suffering a creative block practice what he calls the “Paul McCartney technique.” When faced with a difficult creative challenge, the singer would just give up. Mattimore says that when you give up, the mind can simply relax, enabling ideas to flow or allowing you to see the challenge in a new, solvable way.

Make creativity a part of your everyday life, whether you block off some time to relax or change

up your daily routine. You might be surprised to discover how these few small changes can open you up to a new world of possibilities and success.



# Cultivate Your Creativity

By Melissa Matthews