

**Message: “Intentional Creativity”**  
by Rev. “Twinkle” Marie Manning

“We must move into the future creating ourselves as we go”  
Sue Hoya Sellars. American sculptor and author.

*“We must move into the future  
creating ourselves as we go.”*

How we move into that future  
Entirely depends on the choices we make

The choices we make, serve us best, when they are in alignment  
with the future we wish to create

In alignment with the parts of our intellect and spirit  
We wish to grow or transform

In alignment with our values and principles and  
In alignment with that which we claim to hold dear.

I say “claim” to hold dear,  
Because if or when our choices and our actions are not in  
alignment with what we claim to hold dear  
What we say is sacred and true for us,  
The evidence of our actions  
Uncovers a fallacy in our colloquial truths  
That, when scrutinized  
Are no longer self-evident.

No.  
When we find ourselves making choices that are not in alignment  
with that which we claim to be our truth  
About life and about how to live it

About our priorities and our purposes  
We are called to re-examine that which we claim to hold true  
Claim to hold dear  
Claim is our truth.

What is your truth about the future you wish for yourself?  
Are the choices you are making and the actions you are taking in alignment with that future you say you wish to create?

If they are not in alignment with the future you wish to create, are you willing to take the actions needed to adjust course?

How will you discern that which needs adjustment?

**Tonya Leigh**, founder of the School of Self-Image has some thoughts on this,  
and it equates out to how our Choices *feel*,  
How our Thoughts feel and how using those feelings as **a guide** to help lead us to the choices we make.

Tonya offers mentorship to help people improve how they view themselves so that they are able to live **fully expressed lives**.

She refers to heavy vs light thoughts  
Each with the potential to lead to very different destinations.  
Very different outcomes should we be guided by them.  
She asks us to **measure and weigh** our thoughts.  
As well as to restructure them based on  
the **kinds of results** we are seeking.

For instance,  
Tonya Leigh asks

“Which one feels better:

*“I’ve got a lot of problems I need to fix.”*

**Or...**

*“My life is a series of creative choices.”*

One thought **feels heavy**. One **feels light**.

One leads to dissatisfaction...

While the other inspires **possibility & change**.

Here’s another thought, she says:

“Maybe, just maybe...

The way we’ve been going about improving our lives has been totally backwards this whole time?

It’s true.

If you want a life that feels richer, more vibrant, luxurious, spacious and surprising...

If you want to love the process of becoming who you want to be, instead of being dissatisfied with where you are right now...

And if you’re tired of letting another year go by where **your dreams** took a backseat to **your to-do list**... I have a bold suggestion,” Tonya says:

“Let go of that long list of everything you need to **“fix”**.

Because setting your life on **FIRE** and trying to become a new person overnight is a recipe for disaster.

“What if you could become the (PERSON) you dream of being...

And create the life you dream of living...

**One** intentional **“edit”** at a time?

What if you could “try on”

the most extraordinary version of your life ...

By curating your days with the eye of an editor — and deciding with conviction what goes and what gets to stay?  
You can. Because  
your life really is a series of creative choices...”

“**Life is a series of creative choices**” is a quote made popular by couture fashion designer and MasterClass instructor, **Marc Jacobs**.

Hey says:

“Design (as in life) is a series of creative choices – it’s a collaborative effort, an evolutionary process.  
You choose your fabrics depending upon what you want to say, then you work with mills to get those fabrics.  
Through the process, **you realize** what you want it to be.”

*“Through the process, **you realize** what **you want it to be.**”*

We may come to crossroads in our lives,  
Where we know we want **something different**,  
**something more**, but do not necessarily know fully what that  
“different,” what that “more” is.

Sometimes it is in the doing -  
In the moving forward in the direction that feels right -  
The fullness of our dreams becomes clear.

Yet all too often, we remain in stasis, as if **frozen in place**, either  
in **fear of making a wrong choice**, or out of  
utter uncertainty of which way to go,  
or because the world, or our current circumstances in it,  
seem hopeless or hazardous.

In a sentiment Marc says is drawn from Nietzsche in a commentary about art in the face of the harsh realities of life, Marc describes why in his designs, *in fashion and in life*, determine **not only their outcome**, but a mutual purpose. And a reason for moving toward hope and toward creating **something beautiful**.

He says,

“We share our choices in contrast to the ongoing brutality and ugliness of a world beyond our insulated but not impermeable walls.”

Marc Jacobs encourages people to  
Create your own voice;  
Create your own style;  
It is part of the Art of Living.

And, as **Tonya Leigh** would say,  
**“You are The Editor in Chief.”**

What choices would you make if you embodied being the Editor of your own life?

What is the best version of you and your life that you could make **one creative decision** at a time?

Whether you desire to transform your fashion sense, lifestyle, health and wellness, home-life or work-life, or the quality your relationships.

Whether you want to take back control of ***your time***, learn new skills or enhance your expertise in a creative outlet.

Whether you simply wish to **feel comfortable** in your own skin and speaking your truth aloud.

Whether it is any or all of the above, what can you do, one small step at a time, to bring you closer to the future you desire,

To the YOU you desire?

Perhaps a prerequisite question is:

What do you need to let go of first?

As

**Marion Woodman** says,

“A life truly lived  
constantly burns away  
veils of illusion”

Human Beings are wonderful at creating illusions **for and about** themselves.

What illusions have you created for and about yourself that are prohibiting you from realizing your **greatest visions** for the future?

Have you decided you can't sing, *so don't*.

Determined you can't sew a straight line, yet crave to make a custom garment for your self or for someone else? **But don't**.

Don't have a green thumb, so don't garden.

Even though your vision of your front walk way is one filled with the perfect flowers **you have yet to plant**, or your backyard feels empty and you long to grow your own food there, but don't.

Do you have words longing to come out, in memoir, poetry or fiction, yet you restrain yourself for fear of failure, because, *afterall*, who are **you** to write a book?!

What versions of yourself have pre-determined you will not get to have the future you wish for your self?

What illusions would you be well served to discard, so that you can let your creative self flourish?

**“We must move into the future creating ourselves as we go.”**

**Sue Hoya Sellars** is one of my artistic foremothers.

She and artist **Lenore Thomas Straus** promoted the ideals of **‘Intentional Creativity’** - which has been adopted as a spiritual principle and practice of many artists and writers alike, *including me*.

**Intentional Creativity** is about creating a connection, connecting to your inner guidance.

Listening and creating,  
asking and seeking  
from the space within  
that knows your truest hopes and dreams for yourself.

The **expression** of our *intentional creativity* is life affirming.

**Shiloh Sophia McLeod** is at the modern-day forefront of this lineage of *Intentional Creativity* partitioners.

She says,

“When we create with intention, we activate both sides of the brain. When we activate our brain, we gain **greater access to** our own information, how to articulate it and how to move it from the stuck places.

Creating with intention is simply working with mindfulness in whatever we set our hands to.

Whether it is creating a soup, a garden, a business plan or a painting.

We are more present because we choose to be and the results are different than if we are not paying attention.

Intentional Creativity is an approach to creating that yields **greater access to** who we are now



and who we are becoming,  
and what is possible for us  
and our unfolding future.”

Through all manner of art:  
paintings, photographs, writing, singing and more.

The freedom to share our joys, triumphs and metamorphoses,  
as well as vulnerably and bravely

**disclosing**

betrayals,  
sorrows and griefs,  
are valuable narratives people around the globe  
continually seek to discover.

Sourcing and imparting universal wisdoms.  
Distilling truths.

Processing our human experiences,  
in particular the ability for us to tell our own stories,  
from our own perspectives  
and with the intention of helping others,  
can be a source of healing - for author, artist and reader, viewer.

Create your future with that in mind.

Intentional Creativity is a framework, a chosen approach,  
a viewing window and a portal of inquiry.

Intentional Creativity does not necessarily refer only  
to painting or writing,

rather it expands on a philosophy of being, living, and falling in love with our lives, one another, and creation itself.

There are, in Shiloh Sophia's iteration of this lineage, 13 core teachings based on **chosen conscious transformation**. They are:

CURIOSITY  
ACCESS  
AWARENESS  
CONNECTION

INTENTION  
INVITATION  
CREATION

CATALYZE  
COMPASSION  
AWAKENING

COHERENCE  
BELONGING  
CEREMONY

As with all things, they each remain conceptual until brought into form.

It is a path of self-discovery even as it is a journey of intentional creativity.

Each part active, even when focusing on an individual one.

**Intentional Creativity** works with image and word.

In the 1930s **Lenore Thomas** sparked the framework of the Intentional Creativity Lineage.

1952 she began to pass it down when she took on her youngest and longest-standing art apprentice, **Sue Hoya Sellars** who at age 13 was recognized with exceptional, *yet publicly ignored*, talent.

**Lenore** eventually became **Sue's** legal guardian as well as her artistic mentor.

Concepts in art outlining the importance of intentionality in creating art became an important creative focus for both women as artists.

Later on, **Sue** in collaboration with artist **Caron McCloud** shared the teachings with Caron's daughter **Shiloh Sophia**, who has since shared it with hundreds of thousands of people around the globe.

Shiloh Sophia collaborated with me on one of my ***Women of Spirit anthologies*** and she taught one of my art teachers, mentors and friends: ***Suu Feathers***.

In this lineage, of the core teachings, there is the call to Inquire within with the AWARENESS that you are not who you think you are:

We ask: ***‘Who lives in here?’***

There is the call to **claim** that you are **editor-in-chief** of your own life path and a **co-creator** in the greater circle of sacred life.  
And to affirm that CONNECTION.

There is the call to Lovingly collaborate with the collective through your offerings.

This is the COMPASSION that leads to the AWAKENING that calls one to Explore and expand the infinite palette of your many senses.

In that space there is a clear sense of BELONGING – because we Choose to and are welcomed into **a tribe of creatives**.

And, there is the call to CEREMONY – the call to **Design experiences** which mark transitions, honor milestones and cause reasons to celebrate!

**Intentional Creativity** is often seen as ***Intuitive Creativity*** as the reliance on listening to that which calls us forward and responding to **that call** are inherent **cause and effect** of choosing to follow one’s intuition in mindful ways.

**Intuitive, intentional and mindful** practices are demonstrated in the works of artists like:

**Flora Bowley**  
**Whitney Freya**  
**Lori Mirabelli**

Each **spiritual pioneers** in their own right as they share their artistic talents with their students and within their commissioned works.

**Flora**, known for her style called “***Brave Intuitive Painting***” says,

“I believe creativity has the power to awaken, empower, heal, and transform, and I know *deep down in my bones* that creative expression is a crucial part of holistic well-being.”

Canadian Artist, **Lori Mirabelli**, uses a personal language of form, color and line to express her love for the mid century modern movement.

Her premise is to inspire people to live their lives with **more truth, honesty and key values**.

She, with her art, calls on us to remember that, “At a time of hardship, despair, and minimal resources, society used **innovative practical methods** to rebuild itself.”

We can too! Individually and as communities.

**Whitney Freya** offers what she refers to as “***Inspired Living***” coaching, providing practical tools & practices that free your mind from limitations and scarcity.

Of her work and her teachings, she says,  
“I want you to live your MOST inspired Life.  
To do that **you**, *first*, want to remember that life is an INSIDE OUT experience.  
You are creating in each and every moment.”

She encourages students to get to, “creating MORE of what you want on the inside, so it can finally be reflected on your outside!”

One of Whitney’s programs is the **22 Days of Tara** which combines painting with meditation.

I used this course  
as an approach to coping with grief  
as one of its goals is using the power of creative intention  
to access liberation from that which is causing us pain.

Whether you desire to heal grief, overcome an obstacle, or transform some aspect of your life into **something you desire**, it can feel overwhelming as to how best to approach it.

How do we ***truly know*** what is best for us?

Author of ***The Seeker’s Guide***, **Elizabeth Lesser** reminds us,  
“Your deeper longings are your compass on the search.”

“Your deeper longings are your compass on the search.”

This is consistent with the teachings of many **Intentional Creatives**.

There is this idea *and ideal* that holds  
**Creativity as Sacrament**

Experiencing The Mystery,  
Grace, and Power of Self-Expression  
As stepping stones to better understand,  
*or at least process, Life* through.

In my practice, one of the things I teach is a  
5-step approach I call “**ArtSeek**.”

**Step One:**

**Heartfulness** - *Asking: what is your heart, your longings, telling you?*

**Step Two:**

**Your Story** -

*What illusions can you let go of, to begin to embrace that which you wish to have made manifest in your life?*

**Step Three:**

**Understanding the Connection:** *Mind/Body/Spirit/  
Element/Choice*

**Step Four:**

**Creating Your Own Practice** - *unique to you. Incorporating what your deepest desires are for your present and future.*

**Step Five:**

***Transcend*** - embodying fully your creation. Be it in the form of art, or in the form of a life transformation.

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creating ourselves as we go.”*

***“We must move into the future  
creating ourselves as we go.”***

*May it be so.*

*Amen.*



## Pastoral benediction/Closing Words

**Julia Cameron**, in her teaching of *The Artist's Way* method, implores students to affirm this:

“I understand that I am undertaking an intensive, **guided encounter** with my own creativity.

I commit myself to **the duration** of the course.”

Whether you are diving deep by embarking on a 12 week course or an immersive experiential week or long-weekend retreat or workshop series.

Or if you are taking one step at a time

As you explore **Intentional Creativity**  
First by identifying that which you wish to create

Then by making choices and actions that are in alignment with it

May you **hold true** to what **your inner compass** is telling you;  
May you follow your heart's desire  
to create the future,  
and the version of yourself,  
you desire.

Blessed Be.