

[Awaken Your Creative Intent](#)

The catalyst for internal alchemy is what I call "creative intent." This is your ability to find new ways of moving past obstacles while staying focused on your final goal.

Support Your Internal Creativity

Creativity is the feminine polarity of life, a sense of playful experimentation. Creative energy is the flow of art, and moves as a spontaneous response to stimuli. Creativity stems from dreaming and intuition, and a wide horizon of perception.

Creativity is the juiciness and flow of life. It is often unexpected, unexplainable, and unpredictable. Creativity is our unique expression of life, which we manifest for the pure joy of it. When we are in the river of creative flow, we seek neither reward nor recognition; rather, we tap into the unknown, and mystery moves through us into form.

Creativity cannot be forced or scheduled, but it can be enticed and allowed. As we make ourselves vessels and clear out our doubts, "shoulds," and rules, creativity often comes to fill and overflow us. We see new possibilities, new actions, and new ways of being. We are inspired to take the images, sensations, and taste of our inner world and make them tangible. This creative expression is not only what artists strive for; it is a vital force helping us move through our own internal obstacles and fears.

Our places of limitation often stem from the creative ways we tried to stay "safe" when we were children. For example, most of us grew up with a sense of scarcity in our lives: not enough love, resources, self-confidence, etc. In order to compensate, we create fantastic agreements or strategies, e.g., "I have to be in a relationship or I am not whole." "If I have a lot of money in the bank, I am safe." "If I make sure everyone likes me, I know I am a good person." (These are examples of wacky internal creativity.)

As we become more aware and strive to change these agreements, obstacles arise. Our old structure, which we created to order an unpredictable world, fights to stay alive. Our habitual response is to follow the old pattern, e.g., "That relationship just ended, so I must quickly find another one, or feel lonely and fragmented until I do." "I am feeling insecure, so I am going to go buy something expensive" (and later go into fear that I don't have enough money.) "My friend is disappointed in me, so I must have done something wrong."

When we are willing to risk being creative, there are a million different ways we can respond to stimuli. It is exciting, for we pull our heads out of our tiny box of responses and look towards infinity for our answers. We approach obstacles and fears with a sense of adventure: "What will I do today?" "Who will I be today?" "What will I learn about myself today?"

For example:

Your relationship ends, and you consciously choose to be creative, so you

o (and your former partner) have a divorce celebration with close friends to support you, where you cut the cords on this and all of your previous relationships;

o spend a week in retreat, nourishing yourself with good food and long hikes;

o take your new alone time to do something you have always dreamed of;

o get on the internet and create a personal ad, and then go on dates with fifteen people in four weeks with the agreement that you will not get into a relationship, but simply explore what you like or who how you act around others;

o shave your head and dedicate yourself to meditation for a year;

o volunteer to help a child in need;

o find a good therapist or spiritual guide.

In other words, you are creative, and you do anything that breaks the habit of your usual pattern. To cultivate your own creativity, try these activities for a week:

o Select a problem in your life and list at least ten different ways to work with it. Let some of your ideas be outrageous. Stretch your mind. If you cannot think of a problem, take the examples above (money in the bank or disappointing a friend) and list ten creative things someone could do. Then do at least one of these creative ideas this week.

o Pay attention to the ways your mind goes into habit. Constantly ask yourself: "How can I be creative in this situation?"

o Do at least one physical activity that opens up your creativity: paint a dream, visit a museum and wander through the hallways feeling the art, dance wildly under the moonlight, build a fire and speak to the flames, sing out loud in public.

Tapping into your creativity may feel awkward at first. Remember you are breaking your own box, which can feel frightening, liberating, or both. Enjoy and keep breathing through whatever arises. Pay attention to where you want to limit yourself, or where you are uncomfortable stepping out of your own comfort zone. Keep dancing towards the infinite.

Hone Your Intent

To stop undermining yourself and truly unfurl your wings means attending not only to the beginning, but also the perhaps uncomfortable middle all the way through the alchemical process of internal transformation. Intent is the masculine polarity of life, the movement of focused purpose. It is the determined questing of science, and it moves as a piercing force of transformation. Intent stems from disciplined stalking of the goal and strong action to stay on course.

Intent is the clarity in life that keeps us focused on a specific purpose. Intent acts as the guiding force for our actions in the world. It gives us direction and the will to carry on, despite the obstacles that arise. Intent is a combination of determination and dedication. Intent is a science, a practice of getting from point A to point B systematically without getting distracted or straying from the course. Intent allows us to see beyond chaos, fear, and temptation. All of our senses align with our goal. All of our energy aligns with our senses. We are a pure point of perception, undaunted by the impossible. We know what we want and are not afraid to go for it.

One problem, however, is that our intent often flows from an unconscious place. When we act from unconscious intent, our integrity and truth are compromised. Our actions are colored by our experiences of the past. Old agreements and fears dictate how we react to life happening around us. Our intent then stays at its default setting, which is usually the setting we agreed to when we were very young.

We would never consciously say: "My intent is to sabotage myself and prove that I am not deserving," or "My intent is to never put my full heart and energy into any project, so I do not have to worry about failing," or "My intent is to blame everyone else around me for my inability to take responsibility for my life decisions." But we hold these types of unsupportive intents and live our lives from them.

There is a great little book that expresses perfectly the sort of intents we carry within us. "Today I Will Nourish My Inner Martyr" is a book of "Affirmations for Cynics," or really, for the unconscious. Some favorite samples are:

o "Today, instead of dealing with situations that upset me, I will create melodramatic diversions."

o "I have a right to be a victim after all that I have been through."

o "Because I demand that everything in my life is the best and beautiful, I will disown my body today."

o "Today I will remind myself that my friends and family are just waiting for me to fail."

o "Today I will cultivate a relationship with an especially needy person so I can fulfill my need to be needed."

The first step in honing your intent is to clear out the garbage intents that clog your system. They are heavy energies that weigh down the lightness of pure, conscious intent. Play with making up intents for yourself based on your unconscious beliefs. Keep this practice as play, for it will expose more of your unconscious heaviness. Notice where you are sabotaging yourself or acting in ways that go against your heart. Then make a joke of it:

o "Today, I will wake up depressed and then punish myself all day for it."

o "Today, I will make a mistake and repeat it in my head over and over again."

o "Today, I will say I want to write, but I will spend the day cleaning up someone else's mess."

Get these thoughts out in front of you so you can see them. Once you are aware, you have the power to make a choice and ask, "Is that really the intent I want to hold for my day/week/life?"

Once you have played with and felt your unconscious intents, rewrite what intent you actually want to be living from. What different action can you take? How can you bring the creative aspect in to this new intent? Write these intents when you are not in the pattern, i.e. before you get depressed, confused, anxious, etc. Action is best planned from a neutral or joyous space. Make three action steps you will take that oppose the old intent, or nourish your new one (preferably one of each).

For example:

o "Today if I wake up depressed, I will not believe the lies my mind tells me. Instead I will (a) call two people and ask them to tell me what they appreciate about me, (b) will email two people and share what I appreciate about them, and/or (c) go out and take a dance class."

o "Today I will write despite distraction or drama. If I get distracted or caught in drama, I will (a) take a deep breath and acknowledge my distraction; (b) get my butt back to the writing chair with minimal judgment, (c) drink a cup of tea while I read what I wrote before I was distracted, and continue onward, and/or (d) spend a few moments looking at what I felt like before I was distracted, and what uncomfortable feeling or thought arose that I can teach myself to sit through.

Write out your new intent, and new actions someplace you will have them handy when the situation next arises. Do your actions when you get off track; don't rethink them. Notice the results, and enjoy.

About the Author

Heather Ash Amara weaves powerful practices of shamanic traditions to help people reach their potential. She apprenticed and taught extensively with Miguel Ruiz, author of *The Four Agreements*. She wrote *Four Elements of Change* and founded the Toltec Center for Creative Intent. She runs [Spiritual Integrity Coaching](#) with Raven Smith. Read more [creative actions](#) from Heather Ash.

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