

The Bubbling Pot (Notes, March 2nd 2022)

Things to remember

- There is no right or wrong
- Be comfortable – this might mean lying down or walking about while you're doing these exercises
- These are just sparks, so if you find yourself on a different thread, follow it and don't look back
- Try to hold a sense of 'playing' rather than trying to make a 'finished' thing. These exercises are designed to help with the 'bubbling' bit of the creative process.
- Try to step around or move faster than your critical brain so that it can't get in your way.
- Setting a timer can really help if you're doing these exercises independently.
- Take a few seconds to come back to your body between exercises. Feel your breath. Wiggle your fingers and toes. Stretch.

Grounding in the Body (5 minutes)

Close your eyes and feel the ground beneath you, whether you're sitting, standing or lying down. Use your breath to guide you and take a short body scan to connect with your body. Be kind to the bits that feel sore. Be gentle with yourself.

Scribbling (3 minutes)

Think of this as a loosening up of the brain. Of a rubbing out of the critical voice we all have lurking somewhere. Just scribble. Maybe the lines make shapes, maybe they make words. It doesn't matter. Just let yourself follow the pen nib. If your brain is niggling, make a wee box in the corner of the page to drop 'to do' things or shopping lists so they can stop trying to draw your attention. Return to the flow. Use colours if you want to.

Random Word Triplets (10 minutes)

- One column – 20 words you might use to describe a beautiful view (2 mins)
- One column – 20 words you might use to describe a challenging weather day that you have to go out in anyway. (2 mins)
- One column – 20 random objects (2 mins)
- Pair three words, one from each column and write a line or a couplet. As many as you can. (4 mins)

Slowing Down (4 minutes)

- Begin a sentence 'when I slow down...' and keep writing. When you run out of words, write 'when I slow down' again and keep writing.

Beside the Fire (12 mins)

- Close your eyes and imagine yourself sitting beside a fire. Is it indoors or out? How does the fire feel? How does the room or outdoors feel? How does it smell and taste? How does it sound? Are you alone or with people? (2 mins)
- Write down some of what you just experienced in your imagination. (3 mins)
- Take out 10 words from what you've written and scatter them on the page. (2 mins)
- Start speaking rhythms of words from there – try different ways to say the same word or set of words - and begin to extend into singing from the rhythms you find that you enjoy. (5 mins)

Heartbeat (12 minutes)

- Put a finger on your pulse and find your heart beat. Listen to it. (1 min)
- Find a sound to make along with the beat and record that beat onto your Dictaphone for 1 minute. (1 min)
- Play back this recording and try and find a short repeated rhythmic pattern (no melody yet) that you find pleasing. Then record this in case you forget it! (3 mins)
- Now try to extend the rhythm into a melodic pattern for 4 repeats of the rhythmic pattern. Each repetition doesn't have to be the same melody, but try and keep the rhythm the same each time. Try taking the first melodic pattern and using the same pattern but starting on a higher or lower note. Record that. (4 mins)
- Play your repeated rhythmic-melodic pattern and find a held note melody over the top of it. Try not to put too many notes in, and stick with 'ooh' to start with. (4 mins)
- To extend this exercise, try using some of the words from previous exercises to bring lyrics into this wee song. (as long as you like!)