

Grit and Grace: Reflection Questions from Other Creativity Materials

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Introducing Creativity

How do you define creativity? What are your favorite examples of creativity? What do you understand the benefits of creativity to be – in your own life, in the lives of others, in the world more broadly?

Paradoxes of Creativity

Reflect on the paradoxes discussed in this essay. Where have you found them in the creativity you have encountered in your life? How can you live paradoxically in these (or other) ways?

Consider your own creative breakthrough moments. Does the idea of creative paradoxes help you understand those moments better? If so, what lessons can you take from this general idea or its specifics?

Creativity as Relationship

Do you experience yourself as having a relationship with your creative projects or processes? If so, how is that relationship going? Is there anything you could do to deepen or improve it?

How, if at all, do your relationships with other people, ideas, and/or material things impact your creativity? How, if at all, does your creativity impact those relationships? How could you deepen or extend that impact?

Creativity as a Spiritual Discipline

Do you experience creativity as a spiritual discipline? If so, what is spiritual about it? What is disciplined or disciplining about it?

Does your creative life include a sense of voluntarily restricting your own freedom to create? Does your appreciation of the creativity of others include acknowledging how they voluntarily restrict their own freedom to create? If so, what does this sense of restriction feel like to you? How do you experience it? Is it a challenge? A blessing? Some of both?

Spiritual Benefits of Creativity

What spiritual benefits do you think creativity offers? Have you experienced any of these in your own life? If not, how could you go about trying to experience them?

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The Ethics of Creativity

Do you find there to be a relationship between creativity and ethics (whether in the form I've described or in some other form)? If so, how would you describe that relationship? Does your creative work or your appreciation of the creative work of others make you more moral or ethical? Do your ethical or moral strivings help your creativity? If you wanted to strengthen the relationship between the two, how might you go about doing that?

Towards a Progressive Christian Theology of Creativity

Does creativity play a role in your understanding of or experience with the sacred (however you define the sacred)?

Does it matter whether you understand the sacred to be creative and creativity to be sacred? If so, what difference does it make? How could it deepen your spiritual life, religious thinking, or creativity?

Creativity in the Life of the Church

In this essay, I drew a distinction between routine creativity in the life of the church and creativity born out of changing circumstances or extreme situations. Is that distinction helpful? If so, in what ways?

Liturgical, pastoral, and prophetic creativity are only three kinds of creativity that might come into play in the life of the church. Where else might organized religion have need of creativity?

How does church creativity work outside of the congregation? Where is it at work (or where would it be useful) denominationally?

I did not discuss church history, but one could make the case that the history of the church is an inherently creative history, that the doctrinal and cultural changes, schisms, new denominations, and other substantive changes in Christianity (and, arguably, in other religious traditions) all have something to do with creativity. If you find this idea interesting or useful, in what ways?

Prophetic Creativity

What do you make of the idea that creativity is political? If this claim seems plausible to you, how (if at all) does it change how you think about either creativity or politics?

What do you make of the idea that creativity can be prophetic? Can you think of any ways creativity can be prophetic beyond those I mentioned?

Per my confessional psalm "Oh, My Shepherd," in what sense are confession and repentance political (or in what ways could they be)?

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Example of a Creative Process

What is your creative process? How did you come to develop it? How well is it working for you? Does it need any tweaks or revisiting?

Using Your Truth to Create

What is your truth? When did you know it? How did you come to know it? How has it impacted your creativity?

For more reflection questions, please see this essay.

Amanda's Advent and Christmas Music; "Hell Is a Human Invention"

Reflecting on these examples of creativity and the stories behind them, what examples of your own creativity, or of the creativity of others, are most compelling to you? Why? What are the stories behind these examples (if you know the stories)?

Tips, Tools, and Techniques for Developing a Creative Heart and Mind

What concrete steps can you take in your own life to develop a creative heart and mind?

If you found any of the ideas in this handout useful, how might you adapt them to your own circumstances?

Emotional and Spiritual Growth Work for Creativity

What have you done to grow into your best self? Has this work deepened your creativity?

For more reflection questions, please see this essay.

Spiritual Preparation for Creativity

Do you engage in any spiritual practices in preparation for creative time? If so, what are those practices? How do they help ground you, free you, or reassure you?

If you tried any of the practices in this handout, how did they work for you? Do you need to modify them to make them work better?

Creativity Exercises

Do you already use any creativity exercises to get you going when you feel uninspired? If so, what are they and how do they help you?

If you tried any of the exercises in this handout, how did they work for you? Do you need to modify them to make them work better?