



The Bardic Academy

Guide to

Leaping Free

of

Creative Blockades

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Hello, Creator!

Yes, that's **you**.

We Creators sometimes need a hand as we clamber over the blocks that spring up to hinder us.

Or we need a better set of glasses to help us see the blocks in a dazzling new way.

Or we need a magic spell to transform them into something better – energy, courage, commitment, and beauty.

This short guide aims to offer you a hand, better glasses, and a magic spell, along with a good dose of cheering on, warm company, and practical strategy.

Take the quiz on the next page and you'll have a pretty good idea of how you're faring with regard to your creativity and vitality.

Afterwards, dive into the fun and delicious ways I've cooked up to help you shift out of the stuck and swim joyfully into the flow. Listen to an inspiring song, consult an oracle, make instant art, treat yourself to an artistic feast, and perform a simple but powerful ritual.

Choose what calls your name and gives you the spark you need to make that breath-taking, energy-elevating, awe-inspiring, life-enlivening

LEAP!





How Do You Know You're Facing A Creative Blockade?

Answer yes or no to these questions and give yourself one point for each yes. Move quickly and trust your first response.

1. If you were a **lightbulb**, would you be **shining at full wattage**?
2. If you were a **wild animal**, would you be **leaping and frisking and flashing your teeth**?
3. If you were a **river**, would you be **flowing freely and joyfully**, spilling over your banks?
4. If you were the **sun**, would you be **rising with delight every single morning**, thrilled to begin the day's work?
5. If you were a **tree**, would you **trust the wisdom of the seasons** – letting yourself change with holy surrender?
6. If you were a **meal**, would you be a **bountiful, colorful, nourishing, delicious feast**?
7. If you were a **song**, would you **inspire other people** to leap up and dance?
8. If you were a **book**, would you **speak of delight, hope, and new ways to think and feel**?
9. If you were a **heart**, would you **beat with wild vitality and love**?
10. If you were a **question**, would your answer be **a heartfelt YES**?





How Did You Score?

0-3

This score indicates that you're now facing some blocks to your creativity and vitality. Please don't worry about this. It's familiar territory for me and for most other human beings at one point or another. You are in the right place, friend, and my aim in this book is to get you feeling frisky and hopeful right away. Your first assignment: *Wherever you are, stand up and shake your dear self like a dog would shake* (If you were a dog, would you shake off the bugs and blues? YES).

4-7

You're groovin' and flowing in some areas of your life and feeling a little dimmed and shut down in others. No worries at all! Right now, *look in the nearest mirror and make this declaration to yourself, "I salute you, dear [your name] for all the ways you are free and flowing right now. You rock!"* Now, read on and get ready to play with attitudes and activities that will help you turn up your joyful volume even more.

8-10

You're alight, you're alive, you're a-glow with glory and wild ju-ju. Shake that thing! Share the goods! Keep doing everything you're doing because it suits you to a tee. We love to see you shining and shimmying and showing all of us how delicious this life can be. What I offer here will help you keep your fire well-tended in some new ways. If you're game, *kiss your left hand and kiss your right hand, throw your arms wide and howl a howl of pure delight!*





Creative Vitality & The Grand Illusion

If you read only the words in italics in the quiz, you'll get a pretty good idea of what it feels like to be operating with your full share of creative vitality. When you are, you

- **Shine at full wattage** (no sense of being dimmed)
- **Leap and frisk and flash** (no sense of being de-natured)
- **Flow freely and joyfully** (no sense of being constricted)
- **Rise with delight every single morning** (no sense of dread at what the day holds)
- **Trust the wisdom of the seasons** (no sense of time as the enemy)
- **Are a bountiful, colorful, nourishing, delicious feast** (no sense of scarcity)
- **Inspire other people** (no sense of having to play small)
- **Speak of delight, hope, and new ways to think and feel** (no sense of despair)
- **Beat with wild vitality and love** (no sense of unworthiness)
- **Live a heartfelt YES** (no sense of resisting life)

And when you aren't flowing with creativity and vitality, you don't feel so hot. Your sense of self tatters, your relationships grow stale, your work feels like drudgery, and life itself seems tarnished and hard.

I've been there many times, and doubtless will visit that sad island again. But here's hope, my friends.

Blocks to our creative vitality are sacred invitations right into the heart of our lives. That sounds counter-intuitive, I know, because before we can leap free of a block, we must confront a powerful and tricky illusion.





The Grand Illusion:

***Feeling this way means I can never feel the way I want to feel
because I'm well and truly stuck and I always will be.***

The truth is EVERY SINGLE HUMAN BEING will encounter blocks during his or her lifetime. The question isn't whether or not we will have them but when and how we will meet them.

Will we let them push us down and keep us dimmed, restricted, despairing, pinched, and small?

Or will we pause, gather our wits and energies, make a fresh choice, and say,

Now that I see clearly, I am ready to leap free!





Fun & Delicious Ways to Leap Free of Creative Blockades

For short-term, momentary blockades, when I just need a little energy tune-up, here are some of my go-to strategies. I bet you have your own.

- Go out walking.
- One-song dance parties in the kitchen.
- Make tea.
- Open a random book and read the page for its counsel or inspiration about what I'm stuck with.
- Play the piano.
- Do the dishes or tidy my desk; create order somewhere.

On the pages that follow, I offer other strategies, games, tips, and inspiration for re-filling your vitality tank and re-connecting with your creativity. Choose the ones that jazz you and try them. Adapt them freely. But most importantly, dance a bit with the whole thing, Twinkle-Toes.

Let it be light & easy, fun & delicious!





Dress the Part

Adorn your inner artist, peacock, wild woman or man, gypsy, bohemian, free spirit, most glorious self in clothes and jewelry that spark your imagination and announce to your own heart that you're alive and full of magic!

For me, this means donning my “poet’s clothes.”

Yes, I’m the poet in the flowing emerald green cloak. I’m the poet in the swirly skirts and peasant blouses. I’m the poet who sometimes wears a flower in her hair and big silver hoops in her ears.

When I take the time to “suit up,” I instantly feel I am living a poetic life. I am *in it*. I am very likely to grab my fountain pen and a piece of Japanese paper and start creating. That zest carries me through the day and makes everything feel more intriguing. More – yes, I’ll say it – *poetic*. What a delicious and fun way to live.

Does it feel like a costume?

Well, yes, I suppose it can sometimes. But when and why did we ever surrender our instinct to shape-shift into all our different selves? And it seems to me that surrendering this right has a lot to do with feeling diminished in our vitality and blocked in our creativity.

So take it back. Dress the part. Remember, you don’t have to go parading around on the Main Street looking like someone out of Harry Potter – unless you want to. ***The most important signal you’re sending is to yourself.***

(And if you don’t have what you need for this game, hit the second-hand store and let your fancy run wild.)

Have fun!





Woo Yourself Home

I wrote this song several years ago at the end of a creative drought. I wanted to meet my real self again, to offer her some tenderness and encouragement. That phrase, “on a lark,” signals to me the lightness and whimsy that often precede an act of creation, and also point me towards the fun and freedom that make me feel most myself. Please know I’m singing it for you now, inviting you to connect again with your divine spark, and that freedom to live and create “on a lark.” I hope it offers you a dipper-full of inspiration to woo yourself home.

You can listen to it here: <https://soundcloud.com/kate-6-1/on-a-lark>

(Just click the link or copy and paste it into your browser)

On a Lark

Besides the dark
there’s no one there to see you
when you spark
there’s no one there to hear you
when you cry “Hark!”
and hear “I came here
on a lark, on a lark.”

Over the river there’s a slice of moon
scooping up the darkness in a big gold spoon
Up in the pine trees there is only me
alone in hopes the river will confide in me.

Besides the dark...

Emily Dickinson lived all alone
“Who are You? I’m Nobody,” was what she wrote.
She saw a coffin in her single bed
but flew alone to Heaven where her fancies led.





Besides the dark...

I'm going to take a little time
I'm going to get myself alone
I'm going to look into my eyes
and take my hands and woo me home
I'm going to whisper to my soul,
"My dear Kate, where have you been?
"I've been hoping you'll return
because you are my oldest friend."

Don't go too far

Don't go too far away from me.

(You might like to listen to this song in the dark and to imagine yourself calling TO yourself. I also sometimes like to imagine a tiny version of myself riding between the beautiful wings of a lark. Please let this be a launching pad for your own imagination and self-love).





Dine Creatively

Something wakes up in us when we offer ourselves hospitality.

Imagine that you are a beloved friend who is coming to eat a meal. Preparing this meal is for you an act of creativity and love. Ask yourself:

- Where would your beloved friend – you – most like to dine?
- What foods and drinks would your beloved friend most enjoy?
- What prayers or poems would your beloved friend savor as a prelude to the meal?

Today is the day, my friends. Light the candles or spread the special picnic cloth. Break out the Waterford flutes and pour the bubbly. Marinate the guinea fowl or the tofu. Make it special. Make it memorable. Spare no trouble in creating an occasion that reminds you of the giant honor of being alive. Use all your creativity in preparing a meal that tells you:

I am worthy, vital, and creative.

When you sit down at the lovingly set table (or on the welcoming mat or blanket), take a moment to feast upon your own care.

Then, after saying grace or a prayer of thanks, eat every morsel of your creativity.

Let it nourish every cell of your body. And remember: *you are what you eat!*





Make Instant Art

I love timers. I am always surprised by what can happen in a very short time. In three minutes, you can create something fresh and interesting. In three minutes, you can light your pilot light again. You remember that you can create easily, with very little fuss or time. At the end of three minutes, you feel your blood singing again.

Here is a “poem form” which you can fill in again and again, differently every time. Set your timer and give yourself three minutes to complete this.

Afterwards, look in the mirror and smile rakishly. You, poet, you!

Treasure

I _____ into the _____ and

Discovered a _____ of _____.

It _____ in my hands and _____ in my eyes.

I felt as _____ as _____.

What is possible now is _____.

I can _____ and _____.

If I wish, I can _____.

What’s precious to me is _____.

I am _____.

Oh, this treasure of _____!

(Play with this. Adjust the blanks as needed or desired. You can’t do this wrong).





Consult an ORACLE

What is an oracle but another way to hear your own counsel? I play with many decks and oracles but what they all have in common is that they help me hear myself – and they often bust me out of some tired groove I’ve been treading too long.

Choose one of the four “cards” below. Trust your first instinct. Let yourself have the one you really want without second-guessing yourself. Because guess what? You are ALWAYS right when you choose what you most desire!

Afterwards, turn to the next pages to read your fortune!





Cloud ⇒ Air

You're on the verge of an amazing breakthrough!

Your special ally today is AIR, the realm of new thoughts and ideas, deep breaths, and the wind. Now, before you think too hard, write down the five most exciting ideas you can think of. Select one of them and perform this small ritual. Step outside or go to a window and conjure the wind. This is easily done. Simply say this charm:

"Wind, Wind, I beckon thee. Sail your silver ship to me!"

Once the wind starts blowing, speak your favorite idea aloud. Your words will be carried and set something in motion. Within 24-hours, look for and commit to finding favorable signs that your intention is manifesting.

Sun ⇒ Fire

You're blazing with passion and life!

Your special ally is FIRE, the realm of excitement, change, desire, and wild energy. Now, before you think too hard, write down the five things you most desire with all your heart. Select one of them and perform this ritual. Light a candle and summon the soul of fire to be present in the tiny flame. Simply say this charm:

"Fire, Fire I beckon thee. Passion, lend your blaze to me!"

Write your heart's desire on a small piece of paper and carefully feed it to the fire. Watch the flame devour your words and know that within 24-hours you will see evidence related to your desire, especially in places where there is fire, sun, stars, light, lanterns, and electricity.





Moon ⇨ Water

You're flowing with intuition and wisdom!

Your special ally is WATER, the realm of feeling, mystery, deep knowing, and refreshment. Write down the name of someone you love and who loves you, too. Pour a glass of water and summon the soul of water to be present. Simply say this charm:

"Water, Water I beckon thee. Flow like a river of love to me!"

Wrap the paper around the glass and hold it there for five breaths until you know that it has infused the water with the name of your loved one. When you feel ready, slowly drink the water and feel your cells fill up with love FOR this person and the love OF this person. You will immediately feel connected with this person and more loving to yourself and to all others. Today is the right day to speak your love.

Heart ⇨ Earth

You're becoming a powerful mover and shaker!

Your special ally today is EARTH, the realm of growing things, action, and sensuous pleasure. Write down five steps you can take today to create the life you desire. Select one of them, draw a symbol that represents it, remove your shoes, and step upon the earth (or imagine it). Invoke the Earth's power with this charm:

"Earth, Earth, I beckon thee. Send strength and power into me!"

Stand upon the symbol and feel an influx of energy, strength, and help flowing up into your feet from the earth. Within 24-hours, act upon the step you chose, knowing that you have secured the help of a powerful ally.





Ask a Juicy Question

For a long time now, I've steered my life by questions. Sometimes, the best way to get flowing again is to ask a juicy question that illuminates possibility and desire. Here are some of my favorite questions. Remember to add your own.

Who do I want to be?

This is my key-question and I apply it to particular situations and to my whole life. When I don't know how to respond or what to do, I ask myself "Who do I want to be?" and the answer that springs to mind guides my action.

How do I want to feel?

This is a great question to ask at the start of the day or before beginning a specific activity. For instance, "How do I want to feel today as I work?" gives me ideas and options that usually make for a much happier day. After I've found my answer, I like to write it where I can see it, and it helps me choose, steer, and stay on course.

How can I make this fun and delicious?

An essential question, especially before commencing anything I dread. Anything – I repeat, **anything** – can be made more fun and delicious with just a few tweaks. Put on the music, bring the thermos of tea, park your car and go exploring, light the candles, invite a favorite someone...

What do I truly want?

Desire is holy, friends. Knowing what we want and choosing to have it is a sacred and powerful act.





Perform a Star Ritual

Magic is powerful, effective, and quite simple. Words spoken with full presence and intention carry surprising power.

Getting unblocked can often be as simple as saying that you are unblocked. At any rate, it's worth a try. Speaking my intentions to the stars has worked for me many times and I feel quite sure it will work for you.



For this ritual, you will need a marker – preferably gold or silver, but any color will do. And since you'll be marking yourself, you may prefer to use one that is non-toxic.



Walk outside on a starry night.

Bask in the beauty and mystery of the night sky. Let your intuition guide you to focus upon one star with whom you feel a kind of kinship. Admire its shine. Recognize its courage. Also recognize that this star is your brother or sister. Say aloud these words:

Brother/Sister Star, please witness the truth of my words.

I am no longer bound. I am no longer dimmed. I am no longer constricted in any way. I am free. I am brilliant. I am creative and alive. I declare myself a star among stars!

With that, draw a small star on yourself, wherever you like. Thank your brother or sister star and know that you have been witnessed in speaking the truth. Draw a star anytime you need to remember that you ARE one.





Inspiration

Sometimes a blaze and
sometimes a bolt of pure darkness

Sometimes a sudden hush and
sometimes a bout of trembling

Sometimes the gentlest kiss,
sometimes a blow

Sometimes the word of heaven,
sometimes infernal singing

Sometimes a speck of nothing,
sometimes a glimpse of All

Sometimes a welcome guest,
sometimes a troubling visitor

Sometimes the thunder and
sometimes a bird with a letter
furled in his wing

~ by Kate, who wishes you a lifetime of inspiration





Create Your Life

Creativity and Vitality are sisters: Dance with one and you invite the other onto the dance-floor. That dance will leave you thrilled, amazed, grateful, and passionately connected with your own essence. It's glorious!

The most wildly alive people I know are the most wildly creative – and vice-versa – and not always in the ways you'd suspect. Yes, creativity includes paintings and poems, songs and dances, and all the arts, but it encompasses a whole lot more, besides. Finding solutions, navigating transitions, building loving relationships, making a welcoming home, a nourishing meal, a moment of lightness in the midst of the dark – all of these are profoundly creative acts and worthy of honor and admiration. There is nothing in our experience which cannot be touched with creativity's magic wand and made more wonderful, and that includes most especially ourselves.

If you encounter blocks and blockades, it may well mean that you're on the cusp of something new and fresh. Remember, a block does not mean that you must cease and desist, or that it's not your "destiny" to go further.

A block means that you're ready to enlarge your field of power.

A block invites you to think about the possibilities you can't quite see, but which you know deep in your bones are there.

I know this territory. I keep practicing the art of leaping over blockades – but before I do, I'm stuck, scared, miserable, and sure that this is the end of the line. And then: I LEAP!

On the other side of each blockade is a huge gift of energy and confidence. Gaining this is worth the fear and trembling. Every time I leap, I feel my world grow a little larger and a little brighter.





The Bardic Academy Guide to Leaping Free of Creative Blockades

I'm passionate about making these leaps, and I love to help others make them, too. In [The Bardic Academy](#), we use artistry and natural magic as our springboards to leap over blockades of all kinds:

- Creative blocks
- Career blocks
- Relationship blocks
- Personal growth blocks
- Health and wellbeing blocks

If you feel blocked from having or achieving what your heart desires, I invite you to investigate a mentorship with me in the Bardic Academy, my school for great-hearted people at the crossroads of artistry and magic. Feel very welcome to contact me directly at:

[*kate@katechadbourne.com*](mailto:kate@katechadbourne.com)

I'll be thrilled to hear from you!

Thank you for reading and playing with these ideas. As STARS, we are family and I look forwards to staying in touch with you! I wish for you a joyful lifetime of leaping over blockades and gaining the amazing gifts that lie just beyond them.

May you shine and flourish always!

Love,

Kate





About The Author

I'm Katę Chadbourne and I live at the crossroads of
artistry and magic. Care to join me?



If you are eager to grow in your ability to work magic – yes, real magic that actually effects positive change in your life – and if you yearn to more deeply engage your artistry – the very individual choices and intentions that make you feel fully *yourself* –

I am a skillful, clear-eyed, loving guide.

I've been a practicing Bard for decades now –

A singer, storyteller, poet, harper, composer, pianist, writer, and performer
with four solo CDs, two books of poetry, a giant doctoral dissertation on the Celtic Otherworld,
and a slew of published poems, essays, and stories to my name.

I'm also a passionate, devoted, and award-winning teacher.

I'm wildly in love with **The Honey Flow**, that blissful state

From which springs artistry and magic.





*And I will help you find it, feel it, trust it, and live in its
Sweetness, power, meaning, and JOY!*

I guide women into spirited places where they access their own power and wisdom. We draw on Irish tradition, intuition, play, imagination, and the beauty of sisterhood to create more JOY and freedom for ourselves.

It's fun and light-hearted, it's rooted in love and kindness, and it means the world to each of us who enters into the journey together.

*It would be an honor and a delight to welcome you into the enchanting world of
The Bardic Academy!*

If you'd like to sign up to receive inspiration, gifts, and uplifting words in my monthly letter,
or if you'd like to explore the delicious possibilities of The Bardic Academy

Please visit:

www.bardicacademy.com

If you'd like to learn more about my music, poetry, and flourishing creative life

Please visit:

www.katechadbourne.com

LEAP FREE!

