Working Through These Challenging Times: Keeping Organized and Staying Focused on Your Goals in the Global Pandemic

Presenter: Suzy Kopf

studio@suzykopf.com
www.suzykopf.com
www.bmoreart.com
Description of This Session:

In this 50 minute Zoom session, artist, writer, educator and spreadsheet-devotee, Suzy Kopf will present strategies for staying organized in the new work landscape of 2020. How can we make working from home work for us as creatives? How do we keep making measurable steps towards our career goals in a time when it’s hard to focus? How do we recenter our work to insure we are reinforcing our values daily? Suzy will present a Powerpoint talk and then we’ll break into smaller groups to discuss your personal goals and ideas for achievement. Attendees should come prepared to participate in discussion.
Why You Can Trust My Advice:

• I’m an artist but I’ve done pretty much every other art world job too.

• Because being an artist is a being an entrepreneur; it’s running a company even if the goal is not to make money.

• Take the endorsement of my friends and colleagues!

• You can copy everything I’m doing.
After This Presentation You’ll Be Able To:

• Make working from home work for you as a creative.

• Keep making measurable steps towards your career goals in a time when it’s hard to focus.

• Recenter your work to insure you are reinforcing your values daily.
Have a Morning Routine.

Consider:

• Is your current routine optimal for you?

• Experts agree that will power is strongest in the morning, so tackle the biggest mental tasks first.

• How can you decrease your mental load in the morning by planning ahead?

• Know yourself: Are you someone who always feels rushed in the mornings? What tasks do you mean to do but don’t get to later in the day?
What Kinds of Activities Might Go Into Your Morning Routine?

• Making your bed
• Taking a shower or bath
• Having a gratitude practice
• Engaging in some sort of exercise
• Preparing and or eating breakfast
• Caring for children and pets
• Preparing food for the day
• Reading
• Mediating
• Engaging with a creative practice
Establish a Routine that Works Right Now

• Don’t wait for a perfect future after COVID— make a routine that works for the life you’re living right now.

• Elements of the routine can change daily if necessary but consider what your priorities are because those are constant.

• A good routine is self care.
Common Obstacles to Establishing a Routine:

• “I don’t have time in the morning to do anything extra, no matter what Goop.com might recommend!”

• “I can’t not check social media/email/texts first thing because there could be a work emergency!”

• “People are going to judge me for taking this time for myself, it’s selfish to structure my day this way.”
Set Clear Boundaries in Both your Personal and Professional Life

Consider:

• Good boundaries are essential to preventing burnout as a creative.

• What might a professional boundary be for you and how would it ideally function?

• Boundaries establish expectations and help everyone plan for achievable and consistent outcomes.
What Kinds of Boundaries Might Work Well for You?

• With my students: I will not respond to emails received outside of business hours and on weekends.

• With my colleagues at the magazine: I will not schedule interviews on weekends.

• With a fine art client: I will not be able to complete a commission in less than 1 month.
How to Hold Onto Your Boundaries

• Forgive the forgetful and remind them gently to reset course.

• Be extremely specific when introducing a boundary why it is important to you. People like to know why as well as what.

• When scheduling, offer limited choices that include times and dates.
Write Better To Do Lists That Make Your Goals Achievable

Consider:

• A good list is a road map and can serve as an outline for a period of time be it a day, month or year.

• Lists remind us of our priorities but they require some level of organization to be made optimal.

• What items have been on your to do list for the longest period of time? What would it take to get them done?
The Four Kinds of Lists I Use to Manage My 4+ Jobs

• Yearly/Monthly
• Weekly
• Daily
• The Anytime List
Acknowledge That Surviving Might Be Thriving For Now

• Adjusting your expectations for yourself in 2020 is not giving up, it’s being realistic for the global pandemic we are currently experiencing.

• Redirect yourself to work on different tasks when you feel burnout approaching.

• Use what I’ve covered today: Establish or curate a morning routine, practice setting boundaries that serve you and write effective to do lists that break down tasks to make them more manageable.
## Your Questions and Personal Examples

### 2020 Goals

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<th>JANUARY</th>
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<th>APRIL</th>
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<td><strong>Read at least 12 books for fun this year</strong></td>
<td>Reading through build up of old books from nightstand. Purchased There there and I’ll be Gone in the Dark.</td>
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<td>Reading magazines and Gutsy Women book. Reading III be Gone in the Dark.</td>
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Additional Resources and Readings

- Tips to Increase Your Willpower
- A Step by Step Guide to Building Your Own Morning Routine
- Strategies for Limiting Distractions
- 9 Art Admin Tasks You Can Do When You’re Not Feeling Creative
- Artists Share Tips on Overcoming Burnout
- Gretchen Rubin’s Onward Project