

I coach creatives.

(That would be you.)

Take a seat.



You.

Artist, author, filmmaker, performer. A hundred ideas a day, but not always the one you're trying to put your finger on, or the one that's going to get you through the next month or the next quarter.

You're great at starting things and not always so great at finishing them. You've got most of an outline or manuscript or screenplay or portfolio, but honestly the odds of anything happening to these this year are not looking stellar. It's hard to get an agent or credibility without a recent cornerstone of work.

**You know you can do it**, you just need a commitment, a champion, a cheerleader. A coach. Someone to keep you focused while you give your career the next big push.

Me.

**I'm a creative.** And, *by nature*, I'm not that well organized, I'm easily distracted by the next shiny idea; the promise and potential of the next project is always more attractive than the logistical steps and focus of finishing (including marketing and selling) of the project that's on my desk or my calendar or my screen.

It took me a very long time to understand that some of my habits and instincts were actually very effective in getting stuff done, just as my other instincts and habits were getting in my own way.

# Wake up.

In the early '90s I was teaching advertising design at University. My boss came to me and asked me to teach project management to database programmers. I always had a geek side, but this was way outside my area of expertise. Why me? “They like you”, she said. “Well, most of them. Some of them really think you're insane. And you're already teaching project management.”

She was right, I just hadn't been paying attention. I was teaching “iterative” project management; how an ad campaign goes from assessing the client's needs (and budget) through a creative brief, research, concepts, pitches, edits, testing, production, media buy and more research. That's not a straight line with milestones, but actually a spiral where you walk around all the basic territory several times, getting closer to the “bullseye” with each round. It's naturally how authors write books, how publishers publish them, how dancers choreograph a performance.

With a little tweaking, that method can be applied to “publishing” a building or “choreographing” a trade show for parking meter attendants. Teaching a creative project management course to linear tech professionals made me understand that, and also taught me about how incredibly creative technical staff can be if given permission. I ended up teaching that course for several years, and I walked away with a “story” that empowered me to use my strengths AND my weaknesses to get projects done and delegate my backburner tasks.

I used that process to manage multi-million dollar projects across multiple time zones in multiple languages; all by clarifying and acknowledging my natural strengths and – more importantly – natural weaknesses.

I leveraged that experience to publish my first book and find a publisher for my second book. I distributed my first documentaries on the web and more recent work on DVD. The momentum is tangible. **But my real passion is making it all come together for the creative people around me.**

Here's what we're  
going to do  
together..

Sharpen your tools.

# 1) Ego, Persona, Kool Aid.

People are always talking about destroying their ego. But ego is just the “I”, it’s the “you” that does stuff. It’s not *all* of you, but it’s an important part of your work. You just need to separate your ego from your *persona* (mask or roles or public perception of you) and keep these in perspective.

What you have to watch out for is *drinking the kool-aid* – the moment when your love of the mask takes over your passion for the work. This stuff is tricky or everyone would do it.

## 2) Hedgehog

Jim Collins in *Good to Great* has a wonderful visual he calls “the Hedgehog\*”. It’s the overlap of three important things;

- What you’re passionate about
- What you’re best at (better than anyone else), and
- What makes you money and keeps you working

\*<http://www.jimcollins.com/lab/hedgehog/p2.html>

During this process we’re going to nail down the intersection of these three areas and find the “sweet spot”. Together we’re going to build and execute a plan to throw as much energy as we can into this zone.

## 3) Gear

**So, what tools are at your fingertips right now to pull it all together?**

We'll explore workspace, your support networks, your processes, habits, friends, capital, and hardware. Your hardware might be your camera if you're a photographer, your mixing deck for a recording artist, or your physicality if you're a dancer.

As creatives we get too bogged down in technology and get distracted by shiny new toys. In this day and age, unless you're cutting video or scoring a soundtrack, a laptop is better than a desktop computer, a netbook is better than a laptop, and a smart phone such as an iPhone or Blackberry is likely the best solution of all. For tracking ideas, few things will ever beat a great pen and a moleskine.

I'm a fan of the Action Method\* but that might not work for you. We'll find something that does.

\*<http://www.actionmethod.com/>

$$O = \frac{m}{t}$$

Tell your story.

*Every signal you send out, from your website to your business card to your portfolio to your demo reel, must have an **objective** with a **metric** over **time**.*

**“I’m telling THIS story THIS way because I want THIS audience to do x by y amount by date z.”**

21st century North America is culture of storytellers. What glues us together culturally are in-jokes and references to television, film, theatre, comics, ad slogans. Our stories define us, brand us, metaphors and allegory cut through communications clutter.

What's your story? More importantly, does this chapter of your story have a clear beginning, middle and end? How does your story relate to the private stories of your audience?

## 4) Narrative Arc

An audience watches you. A network is an audience who watches you and themselves and each other. **It's an audience you listen to.**

So who's in your network? Who's stories are in your network? Who inspires you? Who is blocking you? Who will show up to opening night? Who's backing you up on your next recording session? Who's downloading your single from iTunes? Who's buying your novel on Amazon – and who's reviewing it on their blog?

## 5) Network

This is a great time for creative enterprise, because never before have ideas been more valued and easy to distribute. Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, blogs, and texting can all work together to connect creatives with networks.

This stuff is easy, and it's free. But you need to use it on purpose.

## 6) Socialize

Louder.

Launch! Perform! Show up! Tell your story! Get out there!

I've got your back, and I have amazing friends.

## 7) Risk

The raindrop wears away the stone by falling. Missing the ball only 20% of the time makes you a legend. You get amazing data from connecting with empty air. So together we'll develop in-advance strategies for dealing with failure and how we'll tune up your story.

## 8) Fail

Towards the end of this process some of your goals and gear will have changed, that “sweet spot” will have shifted a little.

We’ll need to re-evaluate, refresh and re-energize.

## 9) Learn

With a recent hit on your hands, it's time to plan the next project and build on your successes. Maybe we go another round, maybe you keep me posted.

You're the one in control.

## 10) Encore

# Here's how we're going to do it.

We're going to **connect**. Phone, chat via IM, video chat via Skype, and meet in person if you're in Vancouver, Seattle, Calgary or thereabouts. **You're going to invest in your self and your career as a creative.**

We'll touch base every week (or twice a week if you decide we need that) and we'll identify your strengths, weaknesses, vision, goals, deadlines and the tools at hand.

We'll talk about new tools, like social media, which will build you an audience and keep you on radar. We'll talk about the social good of your work and how we can use that to amplify your reach and deepen connections with your audience, clients, or buyers.

Your book will be finished and in print. Your script will be tight, registered and submitted. Your gallery show will have its invitations out. Tickets will be selling for your next performance, your song is selling on iTunes. We're going to stay focused together, stay energized, and take everything to the next level.

**Where do you want to be 100 days from today?**

# Pricing.

100 days of coaching – for which there will be clearly stated objectives) – is 3 payments of \$500. Fourteen weeks of check-ins, Q&A, networking, tune-ups, exercises, and focus, always with a crystal clear goal that gets closer every week.

We can also identify (and build) other things you might need: a web video, a coffee table book, a website, an event, a line of tee shirts, a DVD. But we'll make sense of those decisions together and it'll be on your timeline, your plan and your budget.

Let's get started...

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