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7 Lies Creative People Believe

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7 Lies Creative People Believe

Abstract

"If every human has been given some measure of imagination and creativeness, what keeps some people from living creatively?"

Posting about roadblocks that prevent people from using their gifts from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/7-lies-creative-people-believe/>

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Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service at Dordt College](#).

7 Lies Creative People Believe

 [all in allthings.org /7-lies-creative-people-believe/](https://allthings.org/7-lies-creative-people-believe/)

John MacInnis

If every human has been given some measure of imagination and creativeness, what keeps some people from living creatively? What lies do we believe that cause us to restrict our existence and to neglect fruitful, creative flourishing? A few ideas are listed here; please add your own suggestions in the comments below.

1) I don't have the capacity for creativity. Two thoughts on this: first, as humans we express the image of God, and God is most definitely a creator. Consider how, on the first page of the Bible, the statement, "Let us make humankind in our image" begs the question, "So, where's the resemblance?" Dorothy Sayers famously argued in *The Mind of the Maker* that our likeness to God is found in the outstanding assertion about God in Genesis 1: "God created." Secondly, creativity is surely a matter of gifting, but [creativity can be fostered and taught](#). And there is no time limit on when you can begin to cultivate your own creativity. If you've always dreamed of playing the guitar or the trumpet, go for it.

2) We can't afford it. Sometimes, sadly, businesses, institutions, and families seem resigned to failure, living in a perpetual culture of scarcity that emphasizes lack. Creativity can help us break out of such a lifestyle. Contrary to what we may assume, fostering personal creativity is generative — it adds to the total system instead of draining it. In his book, *Culture Care*, the artist Makoto Fujimura describes such creative, generative living as "a contribution to the greater good. Generative paths will birth resourcefulness, patience, and general creativity in all of life. They lead to cultural — and human — thriving."

3) I may appear odd. Well, you just might, but is that so bad?

4) I don't have opportunities. Creativity is actually already a natural part of our daily life. Creative choices range from what — and how — we eat, to the clothes we wear, to how we choose to address ourselves to those around us. It's called a personal style. If all of life is to be lived *coram deo*, before the face of God, there is something to be said for choosing to live beautifully, playfully, and with zest. As a musician, I've found that with planning and discipline, I can create opportunities and spaces in my schedule to make music, by myself and collaboratively with others. Those opportunities generate others, and I've found that my life is richer as a result.

5) It is selfish. On the contrary, creative living should really orient us outward — toward others. Karen DeMol writes in her book *Sound Stewardship*, "In our creativity, we realize that we are dependent creatures in that we need other people and community for support, for ideas, and for the benefit of others' gifts. 'It is not good for man to be alone' applies to our creative work too." It is a rare musician who reserves her art only for herself. More often, musicians are eager to share their work and insights with others, and they need the encouragement of their community to keep at it.

6) It is irresponsible. Imagine for a moment that your entire way of life is challenged suddenly and is potentially lost forever. Now list the things that make that way of life worth preserving. Is it the security you enjoy? The affluence and comfort? The productivity? These things are fine, of course, but *how* we live while pursuing the many duties of adult life adds definite value and meaning. The composer Franz Schubert no doubt broke his father's heart when he chose music composition over the stability of a teaching career. But [Schubert's musical creations](#) have enriched the lives of countless and ennobled Western civilization ever since. No one would now call his investment of time and effort irresponsible, since so many are the richer for it.

7) I have nothing to offer. This lie stems from a mistaken idea about the nature of creative living. If creative living is a performance, a show, or, God forbid, a competition, in which the stakes are either perfection or nothing, we'd have every reason to throw our hands up. On the other hand, if living creatively is the right of everyone, and, in fact, a necessary component in the sort of flourishing God intends for us, we can set aside false humility and participate in the creative lives of those around us. Calvin Seerveld, in his book *Normative Aesthetics*, writes, "Imaginativity is not pivotal to human life, but it is integral to normal creatural well-being, *shalom*." If Seerveld is right, we all need a healthy dose of creativity for our own well-being, and creativity is best cultivated in community with others. So, why not join the crowd at the middle school band concert this spring or sign up for the church choir? You might find that you actually do have something to offer — yourself.