Seven Surefire Ways

to Jumpstart

Your

Creative Thinking



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Seven surefire ways to jumpstart your creative thinking – using chunks of time otherwise wasted in everyday life

Do you have the feeling that you lose too much precious time during a normal day? You know, 3 minutes holding on a service line; 10 minutes queuing up at the bank or supermarket; not to mention the half an hour you spend seething in your car in the middle of an unexpected traffic jam. If you dared to count all those minutes of your life that kind of go down the drain (and never come back), you might be surprised. On a good day that might be half an hour, on an especially bad day more than an hour. **Precious time wasted every day.**

So, what do you do in those situations now? Do you get more and more pissed off by the minute? Do you wish some mean voodoo curse on the guy who had the bad judgment to park parallel and blocking traffic?

Do you get frustrated? Feel your blood pressure moving towards the sky? Your heart beating away at the speed you would love to travel? Or actually missing a beat? I understand perfectly.

But let's stop there. Before you do something that delivers two police officers to your doorstep, **I** want to show you some ways to effectively use those otherwise lost minutes to accomplish something that most of us doesn't even think about.

Are you getting curious? Your best bet?

No, it is not about how to make ends meet. And no, it's not about thinking about your own life and comparing yourself to other luckier Earth citizens. It is not even about coming up with creative ways to find out if your spouse is cheating on you or not. Or how to wish yourself rich, or...

No.

It is about jumpstarting and sharpening your creative thinking.

What?! Creative thinking in YOUR life? When you cannot even sketch a box not to mention a still life? When the last time you sang in the shower, family members were banging on the door insisting that you just stop immediately (only they didn't put that so nicely)? When the only artistic activity you do is decorating a piece of paper with your creations (mostly crosses or circles) during a boring meeting or phone call?

Yes, you've heard me right, creative thinking for YOU!

OK, so you are not an artist. And you have no inclination to pursue painting, dancing or writing even as a hobby? That does not mean that you cannot use creativity to make life easier, more colorful, enjoyable and fun for you.

"But I am not creative at all" – I hear you say. Now, who told you that?

We are all born intelligent and creative. You were born intelligent and creative. It is just part of the package we come to the world. We just forget.

Groundbreaking Harvard Study on intelligence

Howard Gardner, a Professor of cognition and education at the famed Harvard Graduate School of Education (the psychologist who first laid out the theory of multiple intelligences) took his revolutionary theory even further. Leading a research group at Harvard called Project Zero, his team made another discovery that shook the ground of psychology. One of Project Zero's key research programs was a study that involved developing intelligence tests for babies and for older children.

This is what they found: almost every single child is born a genius across multiple intelligences. This discovery from Project Zero wiped away any notion that hinted intelligence is an inherited trait. It also completely throws out the myth that "geniuses" are something eccentric that is far and few in between.

BUT... the Project Zero researchers found that by the age of 20, the percentage of geniuses within a population whittles down to 10%... and over the age of twenty, a mere 2% retained their genius ability.*

So let's entertain the thought that you have a sparkle of creativity still burning away in your system somewhere deep down. Even if you are 26, or 43 or 67 or... 85 years old.

The challenge is to find and nurture that spark of creative ability in you. To believe that from that tiny spark a small fire can develop. A fire bursting with creative energy that burns its way through your deep seated beliefs. So you can give yourself permission to enjoy a creative life with all its perks.

^{*} Summary created by author. On the basis of Burt Goldman's The Genius Dip Report 2009

Would you like to reap the full benefits of using your creative mind in everyday life?

- Solving your problems in new and exciting ways not to mention quicker and easier?
- Creating tons of original ideas at will?
- Being the leading force of innovation in your job?
- Creating the next mega successful product and launch campaign for your business?
- Enjoying the confidence of knowing that you figure out all challenges life throws at you as a result of your new found creative genius?
- Not to mention enjoying improved brain activity and clearer thinking?

Are you ready? Let's start immediately. There is no better moment as this one to take the first step on your path towards using creative thinking.

This report helps you to use otherwise wasted chunks of time to your best advantage and jumpstart your creative thinking in matter of minutes.

Could that really be done? You bet. And I show you how.

CAUTION: contents are extremely out-of-the-box. Use with caution: using these techniques and games may cause user to become a creative thinker. Keep out of reach of anybody who wants to stay inside of the box. People expecting the same-old, same-old advice (like always color inside the lines) may experience shock upon reading. May cause a smile to appear on your face, energy to return to your life, and your mind to open up to unexpected possibilities. Might cause others who haven't read this report to beg you to share your secrets with them. Just send them to this link: http://creativitysage.com/sq-shgg/

Users' guide

I took seven everyday situations where you typically lose precious time (up to 30 minutes). I give you a game to play (it will be fun!) with examples for easy understanding. Last but not least, I give you a short explanation why the skill you are developing is important for a blossoming creative life.

What do you need?

- An open mind
- Paper (a notebook) and pen/pencil

Be prepared!

After getting some experience with these methods you will not even need a pen and paper. Still my best advice to you is this: ALWAYS have a notebook and a pen or pencil with you! Always and in every situation. Why? You never know when and where your winning idea might decide to hit you.

In my experience ideas tend to appear out of thin air and in the least expected instances. Like:

- while driving on the highway, or
- having a shower, or
- listening to a dead boring presentation at work or
- during cleaning your apartment, or
- in your dreams, or
- while walking or running, or
- in the gym, or
- while listening to the endless complaining of your neighbor, or
- (the list is endless on the outrageously inconvenient times ideas love to chose for their appearance)

And the sad fact is that **if you don't record and save your ideas somehow, you might remember them for a few moments or minutes but you will forget them eventually**. Trust me on this, please. Get this from somebody who lost many ideas because of not recording them. And then spending hours in vain trying to remember at least some of those winning ideas.

Do you find using pen and paper as a hopelessly outdated 20th century method?

No problem. You can use a digital recorder, your mobile phone, iPhone or iPad for recording and saving those smart ideas jetting through your mind.

And if all fails, writing with lipstick on your mirror will do the job, too.

Your challenge

Print out this report and take it with you for at least 3 weeks until you learn how to play the games and use them at will in any situation.

Are you ready? Let's start!

ONE

Timespan:

1 minute

Situation:

Sitting in your car and waiting for the lamp to turn green

Game:

Look at the driver sitting in the car next to yours. Come up with an introduction for that person. Or create a story around him/her. Give him/her a name, an occupation, put together his/her life story in 5-10 sentences. Family status, hobbies, successes, biggest achievements, life style, media usage, hobbies, relationships, etc. Anything that comes to your mind. Be funny! And be nice. This is not about putting anybody down.

Example:

"Please meet Mr. Retts, our next contestant on our "Save me but only if I let you" show. He lives in sunny Volcano on the east cost of Lemuria, and shares his modest dwellings with 25 rats specially trained to warn us before our island plans to go down. He is passionate about seismographic research and uses an innovative method of foretelling any approaching catastrophes.

Warning: the rats had a fight for Mr. Retts' 5 floatable tabletops last night.

Watch our show tonight and get ready for your best reincarnation ever into sunny Egypt! Only a few selected spots are open for aspiring Pharaohs! All others: expect to be trained in quantum physics as part of the Great Pyramid Project!

Don't miss this life changing show if you don't want to wake up in a dirty cave facing hungry leopards in a few thousand years!"

Tips:

If at first you don't manage to come with a whole story, just shoot for the headline: "Master of Rats takes you to Reincarnation Heaven"

Or a simple description: "Rat researcher shows the world the only way to learn the real secrets of Pyramids"

How will this game benefit your new creativity-filled life?

Story-telling was and remains a highly valued skill. Creating a story on the spur of the moment might take some practice, though.

If you can tell the right story to the guy/gal you have a crush on, you have easy access to their phone number. If you can tell a compelling story you might just have an easy access to the top of the charts or our bank accounts (just ask any successful copywriter). And who doesn't appreciate a great story-teller at a party? Coming up with fitting stories will add color and texture to your next presentation at work.

You learn to create little stories on the basis of few impressions (facial expression and looks of that person, their clothes, the feeling you get about them, condition of their car, etc) in matter of seconds. You need to be quick but don't worry this can be trained. This game also trains your virtual flexibility muscles and your imagination.

There are really no limits how you can use a good story. You can use somebody else's creation. OR you CAN come up with your own. How cool is that?

7

TWO

Timespan:

2-5 minutes

Situation:

Waiting for water to boil

Listening to that irritating music while holding for a service hotline

Game:

Poems, anyone?

You are not a poet? What, you are not talented? Let me differ. What I share with you will show you otherwise. Let me tell you about a special poetry form even you can follow and create short, near enigmatic poems in no time.

HAIKU is the magic word. But what is a Haiku? "A Japanese lyric verse form having three unrhymed lines of five, seven, and five syllables, traditionally invoking an aspect of nature or the seasons OR a poem written in this form"**

Go ahead and create your first Haiku! Remember: 3 lines with 5-7-5 syllables, no need to rhyme!

Examples:

Famous examples from the best Haiku poets of Japan:

An old silent pond... Over the wintry

A frog jumps into the pond, forest, winds howl in rage splash! Silence again. with no leaves to blow.

Basho (1644-1694) Soseki (1867-1916)

Not-yet famous examples I created in a minute:

Written-away nights Never-ending task

Bearing beautiful lies and Service line has got me laugh

Flights. More to the Light. Your turn. Have a blast!

Tips:

You might want to have pen and paper at your disposal at first but with practice you will not even need those to use this game.

How will this game benefit your new creativity-filled life?

How can we talk creativity without talking art? (OK, it's actually easy if you consider the practical creativity I promote through this e-book)

It is one thing to live surrounded with art, but creating your own art is the ultimate satisfaction. Writing a poem is possible if you take HAIKU as the form. It is easy, quick, and gives instant gratification. Although it has a structure, it gives you enormous flexibility. There is really no wrong way to create this poem form.

Challenging and sometimes breaking the rules will set your creativity free to roam the space and arrive back with more innovative ideas.

What do you think about this?

"Creative thinking may simply mean the realization that there is no particular virtue in doing things the way they have always been done." – Rudolph Flesch, Educator

Let your high standards for your own creations slip for a sec and just enjoy bringing an image or thought to life without screaming for perfection.

Just do it. Just for the fun of it.

Creative mind
The Sun is sparkling in the sky
Today is the day to try

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THREE

Timespan:

3-5 minutes

Situation:

Waiting for the commercial break to end during your favorite show or film. (Don't you hate those never-ending commercial breaks that feature the same ads, in the same order? Haven't those media planner guys heard about mix & match?)

Game:

Obviously take care of all your earthy needs first. Get your water management done: in and out. In the remaining few minutes: get another perspective not just on your surroundings, but on your life, ideas, problems, relationship, anything really.

We accomplish this mighty task by physically moving ourselves to experience different perspectives. (Warning! Please don't attempt to do these two exercises based on yoga if you suffer from high blood pressure or any cardiovascular illness. Do consult with your doctor before beginning any exercise even these simple ones I share with you here.)

Get moving! To see everything upside down, make a headstand. If it is too adventurous or difficult for your taste, try this: stand with feet wide apart, just roll down until you can look through the triangle your legs and the floor is forming. Keep hanging in there for at least 30 seconds. Take a look at the room, your favorite belongings, your partner, etc. If you feel dizzy or light in the head, do comeback to standing position very slowly

How often do you lie on your carpet and study the ceiling, or hop on your sofa and look around your room from above? It will amaze you how many interesting things you will able to discover: long-lost books or playthings behind the sofa, dirt mops below your cupboards, a rip in your wallpaper, and spider webs in the corner.

Change your position to get a new perspective on life.

Example:

I am sure you will be able to tackle the above exercises by recalling your early memories from PE class.

But don't stop at the exercise stage.

Let's take your new perspective to the next level. What if you asked all those nagging questions that bother you from a different angle?

Let me give you a few examples here:

Instead of asking:	Ask from a new perspective:
Why doesn't he call? (the guy you flirted	What are the 3 best reasons he would be
with last night)	stupid not to call me in 24 hours?
Will I get a raise this year at all?	How can I make my boss see that I am his
	most valuable employee?
How will I pay for the new Manolos now	What if I declared the ones from last year
that I maxed out my credit cards?	"vintage" and create a new trend?
Which book to buy (when browsing throug	h What if I gave up reading for a week?
Amazon one late night)?	(With maybe the exception of "must-be read"
	client and company related mail during working
	hours?)

How will this game benefit your new creativity-filled life?

Obviously doing some movement will get your circulation going, blood traveling to your head nourishing your brain cells. No blood= no oxygen=no working brain cells. Doing some exercise even simple ones will increase your oxygen intake so open the windows wide, please. If you feel sluggish, it is a great way to have some energy moving through your body. This works like a booster snack for your brain.

Being able to change perspectives is one of the most important creativity skills. It will benefit you in so many different ways. If you are looking for original solutions to nagging problems, look at the issue from a different angle. If you try to solve a dispute in your workplace or at home, getting the perspective of the other party or participant will help you to understand their point of view, hence bringing you closer to finding a mutually acceptable, win-win solution.

FOUR

Timespan:

5-10 minutes

Situation:

Queuing up to pay for your groceries in the supermarket

Game:

This little game is cut out for supermarkets. At the cashiers all supermarkets love to present you with a wide array of products that you actually don't need. Ogling that chocolate bar and leafing through a magazine might take off your mind of the frustration you have to suffer as a result of waiting and waiting. (Or maybe they just want to give us parents the opportunity to present our excellent crisis management skills just before our offspring throws him/herself on the floor and delivers a Hollywood worthy tantrum?)

So here is what I would like you to do:

Concentrate on a decision to take or problem you face in any area of your life. Pick up a magazine. Go to page 12. Take the last paragraph at that page. Search for the 5th word or sentence. Now comes the creativity inducing part: come up with a possible connection between that random word/ sentence and your problem. How can the word apply to your situation? What are the different ways that it relates to your decision? Go for many answers, not stopping at the first one, please. Use that random word as fertilizer for your imagination, as the spark that gets the big fire going. View it as an oracle. Let your mind to look for associations and opposites.

Tips:

You can open any magazine or book at any page you feel like, close your eyes and point to a word or image on the page. Open your eyes and let creativity take over!

Feel free to set up your own way of selecting a word or sentence. Vary it every day or stick with one method you like. You make the rules!

Example:

Let me give my example. My question is: what type of product do I develop for my customers?

I picked up an old Oprah magazine and the word I found as per the instruction above is Disney. How fitting! It is actually too easy.

My ideas that came up as the result of getting Disney as my "fertilizer":

- 1. get some Walt Disney quotes to inspire
- 2. read his biography
- 3. find a film from Disney studios that is connected to creativity
- 4. look for old films
- 5. study Walt Disney's brainstorming method.

I like 4 and 5 and go after them. This helps me to come up with a general direction for my new product and generate ideas on the content.

If I might get stuck again during developing my product, I can always go back and look for a new "fertilizer" word or sentence. As it was really too easy with Disney, I picked randomly another word: "sit". Now this is more of a challenge. I let my mind to ferment this word for now.

How will this game benefit your new creativity-filled life?

We humans are excellent at finding patterns and meaning in anything we see. How can you otherwise explain that tea leaves are used for future predictions or that we believe that a black cat brings misfortune into our lives?

You will find words that you feel have no connection to your situation at all. Those are the best! Don't reject that word yet. There is a connection among all things in the world; you just need to find it. It is OK to let yourself ponder or just let that word sit in your mind for sometime. Let it ferment and fertilize so the seed of that hidden idea can sprout through the noise and distraction of life.

Use this technique as often as possible, please. Letting your mind get stimulated and challenged by a random word or other random information will bring wonderful rewards into your life.

FIVE

Timespan:

10-30 minutes

Situation:

Queuing up at the bank or at the dry cleaner, etc. Waiting at the doctors office for your appointment

Game:

Look around you or use your imagination and pick one object or material as the first step. This could be anything. A piece of orange, a book, a screwdriver, a brick, sea salt, computer chips, fertilizer, etc.

Now comes the exciting part. I would like to challenge you to come up with as many usage possibilities as possible for that item. Go beyond the obvious. Do not judge any ideas that come up for usage. The fact that nobody used that thing for your intended idea, does not mean that you are "stupid" (Did I hear that word? Please don't be your harshest judge! There are more than enough people happily taking that position in your life!)

If you come up with something really out-of-the-box, take it as a compliment for your creative abilities.

I you think you had all the possible usage listed at that point in time, move to the next object or material. If you have no idea on how to use one thing, just move to the next.

Tips:

One variation is use the same object over and over again for creating usage ideas. It is just amazing how many different ways you will find and the new directions you might take depending on your environment (the place and people around you).

This is play-time, you don't have to be a seasoned, serious innovator to engage yourself in letting ideas flow. Although you might find that your idea has a real practical value in which case please do yourself a favor and make that idea manifest into the world.

Example:

I personally love brick as this seems to be one object that I always find new usage opportunities for. I come back over and over again to this. This morning I made a list of 22 new opportunities for brick to serve my life. E.g. using as decoration with cut flowers sticking out of its holes, or presenting all spices on a piece of brick at the table so everybody can see them – just to mention two of those ideas.

But stop. Did I hear you ask this question? "Why doesn't she calls it what it is and tells us to have a brainstorming session over brick?!"

Why? Because I don't want you to get stuck on the popular image of brainstorming: serious suits sitting around a roundtable, only uttering well-thought out and tested ideas in order to keep their image and save their faces in front of the bosses.

What I propose is to leave your image behind and create a new one!

How will this game benefit your new creativity-filled life?

The major learning with this type of exercise is to come up with ideas without judgment stopping you. In the creative process there is a space and time to judge our ideas at a much later stage. The stage you are at now, is the idea generation phase. You will notice that the moment you begin judging the ideas that enter your mind, the idea flow might stop immediately. If this happens, just remind yourself that this is actually a fun game to entertain yourself while wasting time waiting for something to happen (like to get serviced in this lifetime).

This is also an excellent way to deal with your inner critic. You know the one that makes fun of you and questions your abilities with its never-ending comments?

Maybe like this: "You are just stupid. Do you think you are so smart? What did you think? But that is not practical! That's not the way we do it around here. You made a fool of yourself! You cannot even write a paragraph and you think about novels?! Just stop before you embarrass yourself. I've told you already, you just cannot sing, draw, learn languages, learn good manners, etc..." Yes, your inner critic can go on forever. And it is very difficult not to listen to him. Why don't you give him/ her a name? Mine is called Gabe (Sorry guys, all the Gabes out there, no offence, OK?)
Try to invite your inner critic to play with you. You can say something like this: "Hi, Gabe. I just want to have some fun now that we have to wait an extra 20 minutes for Dr.

Iknowwhatswrongwithyou. We could have some ideas flying the space. It will save us from working ourselves into a serious headache, you know. Why don't we make a deal, you let me create for 15 minutes and I let you bitch about life, doctors and the way the Universe is organized for 5. How does that sound for you?"

Idea generation is such a valuable skill and has limitless possibilities to put is into practice in your everyday work or private life. Enjoy the practice!

SIX

Timespan:

10-30 minutes

Situation:

Driving your kids to practice, to school, to friends, to shopping for school supplies.

Game:

First try to have a meaningful conversation with your off-spring. Wait till you get to the customary: "Yeah", "No", "Oh, my God Mum", "Hmmm?" It might take between 10-60 seconds depending on the age of the child. You have a choice now: shut up and listen to the newest CD or hit, or scream your kid loves. OR you can get them and yourself active in some creative thinking. Besides being able to hear the precious voice of your kids and saving your ears, you might learn a fair amount about their values, current thinking, ideas, problems, issues and problem solving methods.

Throw in some outrageous "What if" questions and ask for their ideas. Be the first to offer an idea then let them roll with it. Go in rounds until you reach your destination.

Brace yourself: your kids know more about everything than you ever suspected.

Example: Some outrageous "what if-s" that will get you thinking:

What if cows were purple like in the MILKA ad?

What if kids ruled the world?

What if it turns out that we are not alone in the universe?

What if we could all transport ourselves to a different space, time or reality? What would be the magic world to get us there? ("Beam me up, Scotty" style)

What if there was life after death? And Grandma' in heaven could really see what happened to her most prized possession in her Earth times: that Chinese porcelain vase she got from her first love? What if Jurassic Park was a reality and an unexpected guest, the lovely Dino Tyranno arrived at your party tonight?

What if it turned out that chocolate is actually the healthiest food choice for you?

What if you got a magic wand delivered to you in the mail?

What if cars ran on air?

What if gravity ceased to exist?

What if Leonardo da Vinci visited your school?

What if the Earth stopped to turn?

Tips:

Match the what-if questions to the age of your kids. Let your kids come up with the what-ifs and get you come up with some outrageously smart answers.

How will this game benefit your new creativity-filled life?

A very fitting quote form French philosopher, Emile Chartier: "Nothing is more dangerous than an idea when it is the only one we have."

When faced with a problem and looking for solutions we tend to take the first "right" answer that comes to mind. How many times have you looked for the 2nd, 3rd or ...7th "right" answer to any issue you have? Especially if time is at premium we often settle for the first acceptable idea we come up with. But this is a dangerous practice. How do you know if it the best solution? What do you compare it to? Having just one idea pushes you to have only one plan of action. I guess you noticed already that we need a bit more flexibility nowadays even for mere survival. You need to be comfortable with entertaining different point of views if you don't want to stay stuck looking at the "same old-same old" answers and solutions that didn't manage to solve your issues in the first place.

The more ideas you can create, the biggest is the chance to find the best solution for your challenge.

Other golden nuggets of wisdom to ponder, both from Albert Einstein:

"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."

"We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if mankind is to survive."

SEVEN

Timespan:

5-30 minutes

Situation:

You are alone on the way to something important. Then it happens: unexpected traffic jam on the highway, or in the city. You know the one: you stop for no apparent reason and let the car running hoping for a quick move which of course never happens. Traffic gets moving at the speed of a snail only after you cancelled your meetings and took serious scolding from your boss. Or you called the kindergarten/pre-school to inform them that you MIGHT be a bit late just to hear the teacher explain to you how you are an irresponsible parent while hearing your kid scream in the background.

Game:

Let's move to higher powers on this one. I encourage you to keep some type of oracle with you in your car. It can be a Tarot deck. There are many different Tarot decks out there, feel free to pick one that you like.

If you are not attracted to ancient wisdom, you might substitute the card deck with magazines with a lot of images in them (not just fashion magazines have a lot of pics, think outside of the box, select a magazine that speaks to you and has tons of interesting images or photos). Randomly select a card from the deck you have with you or an image from the magazine. Look at the image you selected from different perspectives, long and hard or just fleetingly. What does this image has to do with your problems? How can this image guide you to the solution to your issues or questions?

Example:

You are late from pre-school. Again. You picked out card 19 from the Major Arcana of Tarot. This card is called The Sun. Look at the illustration: most of the time it includes a garden image. What could that mean for you in this situation? Maybe you could present the teacher with a bunch of flowers the next day? Or offer to volunteer to plant new seedlings for the windowsills in the classrooms? Or offer to run a science project on plants and seeds? Or buy a tray of summer plants that the kids can plant out and take care of them? Teachers love parent involvement. You can move to hero (very proactive) parent status in no time!

Tips:

This is an excellent way to recycle your magazines before you decide to throw them out. You can swap magazines among friends for more challenging associations. If you are into tarot crads, using a golf magazine you got from your neighbors might be just the kick you need to get some serious creative flow going.

How will this game benefit your new creativity-filled life?

Take tarot cards and ponder the meaning of each card and the images on them for creative problem solving. The images on the cards are loaded with symbols. Buy yourself a deck of Tarot cards. It is an excellent tool.

Do you find Tarot cards too esoteric or too spiritual for your taste? Not a problem. You don't have to believe in them to use them to boost your creative thinking abilities.

Free associations and connecting totally unrelated concepts might bring out your best ideas. Many great inventions were created this way throughout history. For example the idea of printing books came from marrying the coin punch and the grape press..

Are you ready to put these methods into practice? I hope you are.

If you have any questions about this e-book or need clarifications of the games I introduced to you, please contact me at creativitysage@hotmail.de

Please visit my blog at http://creativitysage.com/blog to share your experiences after reading this e-book. I am very interested to hear about the winning ideas you created as a result of using the different creative thinking boost methods I outlined here.

Wishing you outrageous success with your creative endeavors! Judit

CreativitySage™



CreativitySage™ (aka Judit Mueller-Kiss) is an Idea Strategist. She helps entrepreneurs to profit from their winning ideas: from idea generation & selection to taking action & turning ideas into outrageously successful business ventures. Her clients are ideamaker action takers. Currently she supports clients with setting up businesses, writing books, and creating other creative ventures.

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