

THE TWENTY MINUTE ART PROJECT

This is an invitation but also a gift to yourself from yourself. It is free although there will be the purchase of an art workbook or two of a preferred size, though maybe not too big, various grades of graphite pencils, eraser. If we are inspired to use paint perhaps glueing a dried image into the workbook later is the most prudent option. Whatever medium we use it needs to be easy and not impede our freedom of expression. Pages of graphite do smudge after a time so that will be an individual choice to use fixative or insert leaves of tissue paper between surfaces.

Each day for a year and a day we will be making a twenty minute study (or abstract), not more or less (have a timer and if you're finished before the alarm goes off just add more detail or shading etc), just twenty minutes, not carried over into the next day. Each daily session will be a fresh start, a clean slate. We will be writing the date in a corner or below the study so as to keep track with our habit of sitting and doing art. When in a day we do this practice is up to the individual, whatever works best.

This is a personal and private commitment which is for our own well being not for public display on social media. It is confidential for our Self. Ideas can be a spring-board for other projects but just as with meditation, this is for our private pleasure and peace. There is in other words an element of self-discipline which supports our personal integrity. It may involve shuffling priorities, ie less time on FaceBook.

If we have a partner then he/she/they might like to come on board too! With small children who make it difficult for parent/s or care-giver/s to find time for the project they too can quietly sit with their own art book but firm boundaries will need to be established so you are not constantly interrupted. Children will most likely want to show you their work and discuss what has been created; a nice opportunity for closeness.

This project is a journey of pleasure honouring our creative Self. We are going to take particular care about dealing with the judgemental part of our mind. We will be asking it to step aside so we are free to relax, breathe and enjoy each session to the max. Simple. Immediate. Non-perfect. Just being. Big. Small. Original. Incomplete. Messy. Tidy. Quirky. Quaint. Stupid. Silly. Serious. Beautiful. Anything. Ideas can come from dreams, books we've been reading, other people's work but let's not do straight copies.

The import thing is this isn't work. It isn't meant to be hard and precise, definitely not stressful. We are to also pay attention to times when we are frustrated with what we create and in dissatisfaction want to rip out a page. Let's not do page removal. At such times we are to breathe and relax and allow imperfection to exist. These are the times that are useful for reflecting on what is happening for us.

Concurrently we might like to begin a new journal to document any thoughts and feelings that come up as we go along. Finding a new book with pages and a shape we love and will be happy to work in for the year will also honour the Self. Writing in the journal will need to happen outside our art session time but jotting down notes straight after sitting and then "fleshing it out" in the journal later may work for you. The important thing for us to remember is that the writing session not take up too much time either so that we can maintain momentum and persevere throughout the twelve months ahead, rain, shine, come what may.

Working with our non-dominant hand is also beneficial for our whole being, even if it's just a little and again definitely to be practised in a relaxed manner. We can extend the amount of time we use our non-dominant hand if we so wish. In time we will become less wobbly and develop more refined motor skills. It's true!

We who choose to participate are in a sense community and as such can if we choose be there for others on The Twenty Minute Art Project. It is a powerful process and deep so confidentiality is key. Teaming up with a friend/s we trust and know for mutual support might be something you would like to do. We can discuss ways in which we can stay connected. What do you reckon?

For myself, having begun just yesterday, I found myself feeling so excited for the next day to make another art work. I could have spent much of yesterday drawing but instead did other creative things needing to be completed. This is where I confess an ulterior motive! There are sure to be days when finding twenty minutes will be tough but knowing I've companions journeying with me will make this commitment more fixed and reassuring. I really want to go the distance with this adventure for 2021 and chances are this might even be something you've tried before but like me, fizzled out by about February. Just imagine looking back over 365 amazing pieces of artwork you have done? Love and best wishes! From Marg Whittle (03/01/2020). PS: Feel free to forward this pdf to other family members or friends whom you love and trust!