

CREATIVE PRESCRIPTIONS



Hi, my name's Allegra Chapman. I'm an author, columnist, creative wellbeing practitioner and creativity coach. Plus I love making art, crafts, jewellery, and magick!

I'm also an AuDHD mum of two, with fairly unpredictable mental and physical health.

These Creative Prescriptions will support your wellbeing and confidence when you're facing particular challenges or emotions.

Print them and cut them out, or save them somewhere accessible. When you need a lift, pull out the one that calls to you most.



Creative Prescription

For: *When you feel you need / don't have permission.*

Treatment:

A piece of paper and a pen.

Write "I [creative action], therefore I am [creative identity]."

For example:

"I write, therefore I am a writer."

"I paint, therefore I am an artist."

Repeat daily until you believe it.

Creative Prescription

For: *Negative stories about creativity.*

Treatment:

Write out (in full or in bullet points) a creative myth or negative story about creativity.

Now write an alternative. For example, instead of an artist who is constantly hustling and failing to make money to pay the rent, tell a story of an artist who is making a comfortable living. You could even seek out real life examples to inspire your story. (If writing feels too much, try voice noting it.)

You might like to draw / paint an image, or make a collage of images, to represent your new story.

Revisit your new story whenever the old one gets loud.

Creative Prescription

For: *When you worry you're "doing it wrong".*

Treatment:

Divide a piece of paper into three columns.

In the left-hand column, write down what you perceive to be the "weaknesses" of your way of thinking.

In the middle column, for each "weakness" on the left, write down an action you can take to support yourself. For example, if a weakness is being on time for appointments, an action could be setting several alarms leading up to an appointment to keep you on track.

In the right-hand column, write down your strengths. Push yourself to think of at least 10. You can do it, trust me. For example, perhaps you notice details that other people miss.

Now rip along each line, separating the three columns.

Throw away the left-hand column. You don't need that. Keep the middle column somewhere it will remind you of ways to support yourself.

Save the right-hand column somewhere you can refer to when you need a reminder of your awesomeness.

Creative Prescription

For: *When a standard routine feels too rigid.*

Treatment:

*Try designing your own creative ritual.
Elements might include:*

- *Scent (essential oils, incense...)*
- *Light (candles, lamps...)*
- *Taste (herbal tea, cacao, snacks...)*
- *Sound (music, nature, noise-cancelling headphones...)*
- *Touch (comfortable socks, cosy blanket, a smooth pebble, fidget toys...)*
- *Practice (meditation, stretching, chanting, breathwork, dance, walking...)*

You could state an affirmation to begin, like:

- *I am allowed to create imperfectly*
- *I will do what I can, and that is enough*

Creative Prescription

For: *Feeling sad about the past.*

Treatment:

Write a letter to your younger self. Talk to them with the knowledge, care, empathy and support that you wish someone had given you back then. Tell them what they need to hear, and what you wish someone could have said to them at the time.

When you're done, read the letter, with the knowledge that your inner child is reading it too.

Optional follow-up:

Write a letter to your current self from your future self. Reassure yourself about the self-confidence and self-understanding you have gained. Paint a picture of a time when it all feels a bit more under control. Read the letter and fully imagine living in that future.

Creative Prescription

For: *Questioning the status quo.*

Treatment:

Create a term to describe your unique way of being in the world. Think about the way you experience and process and communicate. What are the key elements that shape your needs and behaviours? What are the things you wish people knew about your experience? What attitudes would be more helpful to you than the ones you're usually faced with?

Play around with different words and terms (real or invented) until you've got something that feels right. You can always change later!

Optional follow-up:

Write your word or term on a piece of paper. Colour it and/or decorate it however you like.

Creative Prescription

For: *When you feel stuck creatively.*

Treatment:

Instead of beating yourself up for not being "good enough" or not working "hard enough", ask yourself: what's actually causing me an issue here?

What specific challenges are you coming up against? What can you do to support yourself right now?

What's working in your creative practice? What's not working? What can you try doing differently?

Perform some creative experiments and see what impact they have. Make a note of your learnings, adjust accordingly, and go again.

Creative Prescription

For: *When the state of the world feels overwhelming.*

Treatment:

Draw three circles.

Label one of them, "things I can control"; label the second, "things I can influence"; label the third, "out of my hands".

Assign all of the causes and issues you care about to one of those circles.

In the first two circles, give each item a score out of 10 for how passionate you feel about it. (No judgement about low scores - you can't give to everything.)

On another piece of paper, list everything that scored 8 or above and write down actions you could take to contribute to that cause or issue.

Choose 3 things that you feel most drawn to - those will your focus, let the rest go.

Creative Prescription

For: *When you feel like your art isn't important enough.*

Treatment:

Look at an artwork you love. Your favourite book, painting, TV show, movie... anything that you feel a strong connection with.

Make some notes on how this work makes you feel. What have you learned from it? What inspiration have you taken? What insights has it given you? What new perspective or ideas has it shared? What emotions did it provoke? How did it influence your view of the world? What tough times did it carry you through?

Write a letter or note to the creator, telling them what their work meant to you. (You don't have to send it, but you can if you like and if it's possible.)

Now, imagine if your work had an impact like that for someone else...

Creative Prescription

For: *Opening up different perspectives.*

Treatment:

Take something you are sure is true. Something as basic as "grass is green", or something more complex like "women have the right to vote".

Imagine if that wasn't so definitely true anymore. Try one or more of the following:

- Argue against your original position*
- Write a story or create a visual image depicting an opposing or different truth*
- Depict (in whatever form you like) a discussion between three people: one believes passionately in your truth, one passionately disagrees, and one is undecided on this subject*
- If your original statement had been true, but suddenly stopped being true, how would you / society cope with the change?*

How do you feel about your "truth" now?

Creative Prescription

For: *Taking back your joy.*

Treatment:

For at least five minutes each day (or each week to start with, if daily feels too hard), do something just for the sheer joy of it.

It doesn't have to be anything big—especially if your health or energy are unpredictable, small might be best. It can be as simple as:

- *Drinking a cup of tea slowly while you listen to the birds outside your window*
- *Doing a guided meditation*
- *Doodling in a sketchbook*
- *Lying down and listening to music*
- *Lighting a candle and watching the flame*

Anything that feels good and has no particular purpose.

Creative Prescription

For: *Connecting with your physical senses.*

Treatment:

Sit somewhere quiet where you won't be disturbed, breathe slowly and deeply, and ask yourself, "What am I feeling right now?"

Whatever dominant emotion you detect ask yourself:

- *What colour is it?*
- *What shape is it?*
- *What texture is it?*
- *Is it hot or cold?*
- *What sound does it make?*
- *What does it taste like?*
- *What does it smell like?*
- *What movements would it make?*

Respond creatively to your answers.

Creative Prescription

For: *You need a creative boost.*

Treatment:

Go to a library, bookshop, gallery, cinema, craft fair, or just open your computer or turn on your TV.

Look at the work you find. If possible, look at work from a broad range of different people from varied backgrounds.

Ask yourself:

- *How do I feel when I engage with this?*
- *What surprised me about the work?*
- *What do I relate to about it?*
- *What did it teach me or show me that was new?*
- *What did I like about it?*
- *What didn't I like about it?*
- *Will I share it with someone else?*
- *What could I say about it to someone else?*

Creative Prescription

For: *Letting go of perfectionism.*

Treatment:

Set a timer for three minutes, and start drawing with your non-dominant hand. Don't worry about what you're drawing - just move your hand across the paper however feels good. Do not stop to rub anything out or "correct" anything. Change the colour you're using whenever you want.

Now set a timer and continue drawing with your eyes closed. Feel for the edges of the paper and try to fill as much of it as you can. Switch between hands and see how it feels different. Change colours whenever you like, but try not to look at which colour you're picking up.

When the timer goes off, look at your finished creation. You can't judge something you made with your eyes closed, so don't even try.

Creative Prescription

For: *Reprogramming your mindset.*

Treatment:

Find an affirmation that is meaningful to you, or create your own. Write it on a piece of paper. Make it big so that it fills the majority of the paper.

Decorate the words any way you like—go over them in paint, colour around them, doodle images or shapes around them, sprinkle them with glitter...

If you like, draw or collage images or quotes around the affirmation that represent and reinforce the meaning for you.

Add any other decorations or embellishments that feel good and celebrate the central idea.

Display your affirmation somewhere you'll see it often, and try to repeat it to yourself so that it really sticks in your mind.

Creative Prescription

For: *Connecting to creativity on tough days.*

Treatment:

In a box or container, collect ideas on slips of paper for creative activities you can do when you feel like shit. E.g.:

- *Make notes, sketch, or take photos of things you can see from your window.*
- *Write a list poem by listing items in a category of your choice.*
- *Voice-note some ideas for your current work in progress.*
- *Read through something you've written recently.*
- *Listen to some music and draw any shapes or colours that come to mind.*
- *Colour in a colouring sheet.*

When you have a rough day, pull a slip out at random.

Creative Prescription

For: *When you doubt your path.*

Treatment:

Make a list of "rules" that seem utterly fundamental to your craft, even as basic as, "a writer has to write words".

Choose a rule and jot down a few ideas for how you could approach things differently. Maybe a writer doesn't have to write words, at least not all the time. Maybe they can dictate their work. Maybe they can make "notes" in the form of doodles, sketches or collages. Maybe they act out scenes from their work in progress.

Choose one of those different approaches (whichever most appeals to you), and try it out. Enjoy breaking a rule, just for the sake of it.

Use this experience as a reminder that no rule is sacred when it comes to creativity. You can always find a different path.

Creative Prescription

For: *When you worry that you're "not doing enough."*

Treatment:

Take a project you've been working on previously (it doesn't matter if you haven't touched it for ages), or been wanting to start.

Look at what you've done so far (or think about your vision for it, if it's not yet begun).

What's one tiny thing you can add to it right now?

One word, one line, one stitch, one pin, one note to your future self. Add one tiny thing. Just one.

That's enough for today.

Congratulations, you made progress!

Creative Prescription

For: *Falling back in love with your creativity.*

Treatment:

Spend a day (or a week) collecting things that make you feel joyful. A photo of the afternoon light on your floor, a leaf from a beautiful flower, a brightly coloured pebble, a tea bag, a thread from your comfy old cardigan, a lock of your loved one's hair, a picture of a holiday in a magazine... Whatever says "joy" to you.

Once you've collected a bunch of joyful things, make some art with them.

You could create a collage or a model, you could sketch your items, you could take photos of them, you could write about them...

Make it messy, make it playful, experiment.

Creative Prescription

For: *When you're struggling to rest.*

Treatment:

Note down ideas you'd enjoy for each type of rest:

- *Physical rest (relaxing your body)*
- *Mental rest (giving your mind a break)*
- *Emotional rest (processing your feelings)*
- *Social rest (nurturing connection)*
- *Sensory rest (respite from stimulation)*
- *Creative rest (free self-expression)*
- *Spiritual rest (feeling part of something bigger than yourself)*

You could turn your ideas into a visual reminder to put up on your wall.

When you feel the need for rest, ask yourself which type is most calling to you in this moment, and what would answer that call.

Creative Prescription

For: *A creative spark to get you started.*

Treatment:

Roll a 6-sided dice or use a random number generator. Whatever number you get, work on the activity at that number in the list below.

Set a timer for 10 minutes (or however long you want to spend), and get stuck in.

1: Write a story that includes a bike, a cake and a TV.

2: Create a scene using only the colour blue.

3: Write a poem from the point of view of a public bench.

4: Draw something you can see from the nearest window.

5: Image search "unusual doors" and count along to the 12th image—write a scene or story inspired by that image.

6: Find a book. Find page 24, line 12. Write that sentence down, then write your own words from there.

Creative Fix

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