

*Twenty-Nine Ways to Take A
Creative Leap*

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Original Impulse, Inc.

I wrote this as twenty-nine blog entries to celebrate Leap Year 2008. Some of the entries have links, some don't, but each one should inspire you in some way, small or large. If you did some of them, your life would change. If you did all of them, your life would change dramatically. I did at least 25 of them when I took my Creative Leap and went to Europe in 2008. Try them and see what happens with you!

1. Get Some New Shoes or Boots

This may seem like an odd way to take a creative leap, but there are many among you who know the power of a good pair of kickums. After my 2006 Paris tour, I realized that I needed to treat myself with some boots. I had pined for a pair of leather boots for a long time. In 2003, I had made a collage that included not one but two pair of leather boots in the style I wanted. So, after my tour ended, with a couple hundred euro in cash that needed to be spent, I hit the Boulevard Saint Germain. It took awhile, but I was determined. I finally found my boots. Once home, I had to have them stretched twice so the left foot fit comfortably, but all the trouble was worth it. When I wear them, I strut. I am a woman who earned these expensive boots. I am a woman who knew what she wanted and went for it. People comment on them all the time. I never spend that much money on clothing, but this creative leap was well worth it.

2. Start an Automated Savings Account.

The biggest excuse or reason for not taking a leap is lack of money. (Guess what the second one is in the comments below!) But, bit by bit, you can raise cash for your leap. Start by identifying something you want – a trip to Paris, a new pair of boots, a workshop or retreat. Once you know how much you need, you can start

saving for it. Open an online INGDirect [savings account with high interest](#) and set it up so it's automatically deducted from your account on a regular basis. In short order you'll have earned your way to your leap.

My friend Deborah wanted to go to India for a yoga festival. That's a lot of money, you think. Yes, you're right. Between plane fare, the festival and lodging for two weeks, we're talking thousands of dollars. Would you have given up on it if you didn't have the funds readily available?

Deborah didn't. In November, she set aside 10% of the money she made for the India trip. She tapped into her frequent flier miles and got the ticket for free. Then, she kept manifesting more gigs and more money, and now she's booked her trip and leaves in February.

You can do this too. **What do you want? How much does it cost? Write it down, start saving for it, and let unexpected boons fuel your dream.**

3. Get a Creative Leap Notebook

I believe in the Write It Down, Make It Happen (book by Henriette Klauser) school of thought. Get a notebook for your big ideas and keep adding to it – notes, lists, ideas, rants, fears, costs, contacts, ephemera, anything that sparks your imagination. Having a place for your ideas gives them respect and holds a space for them is one step closer to reality.

Don't get all fancy and buy a notebook that's too pretty to write in. I have two of these, both gifts – leather bound notebooks with thick, perfect paper in them. I love these notebooks and the intent behind the gift but I don't know if I will ever be able to use them. I even (horror of horrors!) thought about cutting out the watercolor paper for use elsewhere.

My favorite notebooks are the Italian [Moleskine](#) notebooks or the French [Clairfontaine](#) notebooks. Get the Clairfontaine notebook with the colored paper that has about ten sections divided by tabs. This is a great notebook for those of us who have multiple projects going. I use the big softcover Moleskine notebooks for work and projects, and carry the small reporter's notebook with me to capture ideas and resources that others give me.

Chances are if you are reading this, you have a stack of notebooks waiting for your brilliance. **Go, now, choose one, and start your Creative Leap notebook. Use it to record any inspiration you may get from my 29 Ways to Take a Creative Leap.**

4. Break Up or Get a Divorce

Ouch! That's harsh! It's sad but true that our primary relationship can be like a tether keeping our hot air balloon on the ground. If you are blissfully ensconced in your relationship and your SO completely fuels your highest good, skip this one. If not, take an honest look at what your relationship is doing for you. **The biggest leaps are often precipitated by a breakup.**

Think [Eat, Pray, Love](#). What if Elizabeth Gilbert had stayed in that relationship out of duty or fear? She would not have taken her incredible leap and we wouldn't have that great book to read. I broke up with my dear boyfriend Cameron in November. I knew it was time, but I had no idea that once I did, a huge download of my next leap would be revealed to me.

5. Find Your Creative Leap Ancestors

It's always scary to leap into the new, which is why I always suggest looking for role models. Those who have gone before give us inspiration, provide a map of courage, and prove to us that it can be done. My biggest Creative Leap Ancestor

is Sylvia Beach, the subject of my novel. Sylvia went to Paris in 1917 and opened a bookstore with a \$3,000 check from her mother. She kept the bookstore alive until 1942, when the Nazi Occupation of Paris forced her to close her doors. Sylvia devoted herself to helping writers, selling their work, hosting readings at her store, and connecting people when they came to Paris to live the writer's life. Her friend Ernest Hemingway said that she had 'a God-given gift for friendship.' You can see why I draw inspiration from Sylvia – her courage to move to France and become a businesswoman (and that was not a common thing at that time!), her ability to form a community of people who loved literature, and her sense of service to help others.

Creative Leap Ancestors can be dead or living. A few of my living Creative Leap Ancestors include: Ani DiFranco, Christine Kane, and SARK. These are creative women who do their work well and inspire others. **Who are your Creative Leap Ancestors?**

6. Get Real about Your Excuses

Before you can leap, you may need to address your fears and excuses. This exercise is like a psychic clearing. It's amazing what happens when you write down your fears and excuses. After a while, they evaporate and you realize they're not real.

Do this today. List 29 excuses or fears that prevent you from taking a Creative Leap. (Bet you won't be able to come up with that many!)

Once you've written them down, read them aloud. Do this in front of a mirror if you can. What do you notice? How real and true do your excuses seem when you get them out of your head, onto the page, and speak them aloud? I imagine that you'll discover how limp these excuses really are.

7. List Your Successes

Now that we've cleared out your excuses and fears, it's time to get real about your successes. Past Creative Leaps pave the way for future ones. See some in my post about [Creative Confidence](#) **List 29 Creative Leaps that have been successful for you.**

Once you've listed them, jot down the skills or qualities you were using when you did the leap. For instance, when I lead my first tour in France, I needed to call on my organizational skills, my willingness to step into the unknown, and my passion for France. I developed my ability to work with numbers and my French language skills.

As in the 29 excuses exercise, read your successes aloud while looking in the mirror.

8. Identify Your Fans

These are the people that say Go for it! when you tell them about your latest adventure. These are the people who would vouch for you in a reference, who would show up and speak at your funeral, who believe in you wholeheartedly.

List your friends, family members, and people from your creative community who believe in you. Then send a thank you note to at least five of them to let them know how important they are to your creative success.

9. Make Space for Reflection

'Busy' can be the bane of the Creative Leap. If you're running around on adrenaline all the time, you won't have space to make your Creative Leap real. Your dreams can get crowded out if you don't give them breathing space. When

you're cycling away on the gerbil wheel of life, it's easy to believe that your dreams are unattainable. **But when you give yourself a little space, possibilities creep in.**

It doesn't have to be a lot of space and time. Your reflective space might look like quiet time during your commute. Or 15 minutes at lunch to take a quick walk. Or one evening a week when you take yourself to a café or other place to spark your creativity. For me, I need unscheduled time on the weekends. If I don't have at least one of the days free of appointments, I get cranky. I need time to lie around reading, to walk along the creek path, to visit the library, to journal, and to do general creative noodling. Even though I get a lot done on the weekends, I make sure that there is space first. I've found that if I give myself time to relax, getting my household chores done is easier.

What kind of space do you need for your Creative Leap?

10. Get Your Creative Leap on Paper

You may have already written about your Creative Leap in your notebook. **Now use visuals to map your vision. Play with doing mind maps, or timelines, or collage.** Christine Kane uses Vision Boards in her retreats, and these are a great way to get a real picture of what you want.

I have been using big pads of newsprint to map my plans. Using big, cheap paper gives a sense of spaciousness. I can write and doodle on as many pages as I want without worrying about being wasteful or even coherent.

Do this with a friend. Invite her over to make a vision board or brainstorm your creative leaps.

11. Change Your Eating

Last month I posted about the cleanse I did. For two weeks, I abstained from dairy, sugar, alcohol, caffeine and processed foods. While this may seem extreme, it wasn't so bad. Perhaps because this was my second cleanse, it didn't seem so daunting or restrictive. Or maybe the fact that I already eat a lot of vegetables and whole foods already made what I was leaving behind easier. The interesting thing was the way I felt about leaving out the indulgences that I'm used to.

It was so empowering.

I know that for most of us the thought of leaving sugar or coffee or bread behind makes us freeze in horror. But when you nudge past that initial grip of fear, you may find a great deal of satisfaction. It's very rewarding to eat more consciously. To notice what you are eating and how it affects your body and your mood. To be aware of your body and your habits in a new way.

Try it. Not the full-on cleanse! I wouldn't ask you to do that. Just try an experiment. For a week or two, leave one of your habits off the table. You might not go for one of the bigger ones (I see the coffee lovers out there, eyes rolling, hands gripping their coffee-stained mugs, shouting "Like hell!") Breathe. Try bread or pasta or sugar or alcohol. **It's not about depriving yourself. It's about noticing who you are without your habits.**

12. List Your Strengths, Qualities and Skills

Whenever we're stretching toward something new, all of our fears and excuses loom large. We, and our confidence can shrink like a deflated balloon in face of the journey ahead. This is the time to chart your amazing self in your Create Leap notebook.

Using lists, mind maps, drawings, charts, images, chart your skills and qualities.

Imagine you're applying for a really great job that you want and you're putting your best foot forward.

I use this tool with my clients to help them step outside of themselves and get a reflection of their best selves. They find (or remember) that they are resourceful, organized, imaginative, smart and kind. They also see that they are great at connecting with others, with seeing the big picture, and with asking for help. These are great qualities for any kind of leap.

What skills and qualities are you bringing to your Creative Leap?

13. Book a Ticket

One day my friend Denise emailed me that Radiohead tickets were on sale in France. Denise and I are planning a trip to Paris, so this seemed like the perfect thing to do while she's in France with me.

So I dialed her up. Together, we tracked down tickets. Alas, all the shows in France were sold out. I ruled out the British Isles, which left Berlin or Milan. We both pressed 'buy' at the same time. The thrill was immense, like some kind of weird internet porn with your friend. Once we paid our 50 pounds we jumped up and down squealing like teenagers. At one point we said we could always sell them on craigslist, but we immediately put the kibosh on that. We're going. On June 17th we'll be in Milan's Arena Civica with thousands of other Radiohead fans.

Next time you see a ticket for something you want to do, buy it.

14. Make 29 New Friends

New people in your life inspire a Creative Leap in several ways. They see you where you are now, not who you were five years ago. **Your new friends may be connected to your Leap, and may provide resources and conversations that fuel your new venture.** My basic tenet of life is that people are amazing, so finding new friends is like discovering a vast reservoir of treasures.

How to find new friends? Often you need to reach out to make the connection. Introverts, leave your shyness at home. In classes you take, if there is someone you connect with, ask her to tea. In cafes or shops, be in the habit of friendly commenting to others. Your new friend may be the person in front of you in line at Michael's.

Then there's the online world, with its innumerable chat rooms, social networking sites and avenues of connection. While I'm on the subject, visit my [Facebook](#) and invite me to be your friend. I won't refuse, promise!

You won't always connect. But don't take it as rejection or proof that you should stay in your circle and keep it that way. Think of the friends you have now. Don't they enhance your life in remarkable and surprising ways? Find the best and brightest friends you can, like looking for shiny pennies.

15. Go to a Conference, Workshop or Class

We sign up for stuff like this for many reasons: to learn our craft, to have structure, and to be around others following a creative path. Being around others who share your passion make the leap easier. Just signing up for a class or a conference is a leap. It means that you are serious about making movement in that realm. When my clients sign up, they always experience shifts even before our first call. **Taking the step to sign up for something is a leap.**

Whether you sign up for my workshops or other conferences, give yourself credit for taking the leap!

16. Ditch the Drainers

You know who I'm talking about. They're the people in your life who somehow manage to suck all the enthusiasm and vitality out of you and your ideas. They may seem like they're trying to help with all sorts of questions about the practicality or feasibility of your leap. They love telling you about all the other people who have tried your leap and who have crashed on the rocks below. Common drainer language: "Yea, but," "What about..." "I don't get it," "You can't do that." They just make you feel...bad.

The bad thing is that these might be your friends, your colleagues, or members of your family even. The ones who are supposedly behind you all the way! But often they're not, or don't know how to support you. **It's time to clean house and make way for people who are enthusiastic about you.**

This is a leap because it can be difficult to release people from your life. How do you get rid of your nagging mom or whining sister? You don't get rid of them, but you can protect yourself from them. One simple way to do this is to not share your creative dreams and plans with them. Julia Cameron shares a great exercise for this in *The Artist's Way*. Here it is: draw a circle on a piece of paper. Inside the circle, list the names of people with whom you feel safe and comfortable sharing your dreams. Outside the circle are those who just don't 'get' you. They may still be in your life, but they don't have access to your tender dreams.

And if the drainers are friends or people that you are choosing to be around, try making different choices. See them less frequently. When you do see them, be private about your stuff.

17. Get a New Look

Maybe you've always worn your hair long, or you habitually dress in the same colors. While I don't think that what's on the surface is all that matters, I do know that having a new haircut can make me feel different. **This leap is less about cosmetic changes and more about being willing and able to shift into a new perspective, starting with your look.** Your new exterior may help change your outlook on life!

18. Change Your Language

Watch what you say. Once when we were hanging out, Denise busted me. I had said something like "*I can't, I would never.*" She said "Listen to yourself!" I stopped short and heard what I was saying, what I was making true for me. My words were forming a corral around my life and limiting my freedom. I was doing it to myself! I was so ashamed to be busted for limited thinking that it snapped me out of it like a whip.

As a writer and a coach I respect the power of words. When I write I am carefully choosing. When I listen to my clients I pay attention to the words they say and the way they say it. I bust people for wishy washy language like "I'll try to do that" or "Maybe I'll do that." Either you will do it or you won't.

Notice what you say that may drag you down or away from your creativity. If you have a habitual phrase that you default to, replace it with something that fuels you.

19. Be Imperfect

Many of us won't try something if we don't think we'll be perfect at it. We spend tons of time plotting, planning, figuring out, trying to navigate and negotiate so that when we make our move, we look good. I know, because I'm in that process now as I work on all the details to get ready for my launch. But I had a great reminder of imperfection when I accidentally posted a Creative Leap before its time. I was mortified when I looked up and saw it there, two days ahead of time. I rushed to take it down, shouting at my computer and wondering what people would think of my misstep.

Then I realized that no one cares like I do. No one is out there judging me and finding me lacking. (And if you are, lighten up!) The truth is that we're all doing the best we can. I earnestly take all the steps and act out of my commitment to excellence and professionalism. **But the bare-butt truth is that I will never be perfect, and here's news for you: neither will you.**

So if you have the Perfectionist Monkey riding your back to the degree that you're paralyzed and won't even take a leap, dump him in Montana and zoom toward your perfectly human imperfection.

20. Plunge in with a Running Start

Don't think about it or try to have it all figured out. Start then see what comes. This is how I do most things – just plunge in. It must be my penchant for diving in comes from growing up swimming in a lake in Michigan. There was no greater thrill than running down the hill, my feet dancing over the railroad tie steps, then dodging goose poop on the lawn, then slamming onto the wooden dock – only a few more steps – and you're into the air then the water. Plunge in for the thrill of the plunge. Not everything you do will make a bog splash, but it doesn't matter.

21. Speak Your Truth

Sometimes being honest is a huge Creative Leap. We're often taught to shush up, to keep our insights to ourselves. Stifled at an early age, truth-telling may not even seem like an option. It's like a sword we've unsheathed only rarely.

For some reason, I've been a wielder of the truth sword for some time. The problem is, I haven't always known how to use it properly and people have been wounded by my words. When I worked at the bookstore, my boss Val had to gently tell me the truth – that I could be harsh with others. This truth stunned me for a moment, but I was glad to get the feedback.

I've become committed to kindness in truth telling. My coaching training has helped me enormously with this. Now my friends and clients expect me to tell the truth. They value it. It still takes a lot of awareness and practice on my part to use the words that will best convey the truth in a way people can hear it and use it. There are, of course, many truths, and just because I see or say something doesn't make it the Truth. That's more about what I notice or see.

But I'm less concerned about you speaking the truth to others than to your own self. **Look at your life, your dreams, your excuses. What's really true?** Are you really unable to save for that trip? Are you really incapable of changing old patterns? Is it your job, or your kids, or your circumstances that are holding you back? Probably not. The truth may be buried underneath the excuses – you're afraid, you're unsure of the steps of your Creative Leap, you really don't want to leave the comfort of your known world and take a risk. That's okay. Just be honest about it. And kind.

Practice kind and honest truth telling. Use a free write or a mind map to access what's inside. Looking at and breathing in your truth can give you more space to live, grow and act.

22. Clear the Clutter

All leaps require that you leave something behind. The stuff that we accumulate around us reflects a moment or a decision in the past. Does everything around you reflect who you are now and where you want to go?

Often when people clear stuff out, solutions arise that weren't visible with all the stuff in the way. Abundance can lurk behind the clutter too. You may have clothes, books or cds that you can sell and make extra cash, or other items that someone cruising ebay or craigslist might want.

Take a tour around your home. Before you start, sit quietly for a few minutes, getting centered. Then walk around your home, pausing in each room or area. Notice how you feel. Notice if any objects or areas tug at you. Perhaps you'll have a thought or feeling that always comes up when you see your closet. When you feel something strongly, ask yourself how that impacts your creativity. Is that draining feeling when you look at your closet like a dead weight on your hot air balloon? Ask yourself what it might be like if that stuff were cleared away. Do this without judgment. You're really taking an energetic inventory of your space.

If you're ready to clear some things away, do one room or area. Schedule time on the weekend or a couple hours during the week. Do one small project first. Then notice how you feel for a week afterward. Pay attention to any shifts that occur – calls that come in, unexpected windfalls, creative ideas.

23. Plan a Trip

Travel provides a big leap, one that pays immediate returns on your investment.

Just planning a trip forces you to think of yourself in a new way. You're called to stretch out of your comfort zone. You're challenged to take those fantasies of Paris or Bali or Venezuela real.

I think many of us want to travel but put a harness on our dreams. We believe we don't have the time or money to travel. This doesn't have to be the case. I've been traveling regularly since I can remember, and I've never had a huge income. Booksellers don't get paid a lot! When I was a bookseller in Denver, I took a road trip from Denver to Miami via New Orleans. I took a round-the-country train trip for three weeks, visiting San Francisco, Oregon, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Orleans. I lived for five weeks at the Omega Institute, camped out in a tent and participating in their summer work program. Since 2000, I've been to London twice, France six times and I'm going back this year. Not to mention Belgium and Italy.

I'm not trying to brag here. What makes these trips possible is my creativity and my hunger for travel. There are countless ways to make travel real for you. Step one: prioritize it. When I look at my life, it is clear to me that whenever I have had extra cash, I either took a trip or took a class. Travel and learning are huge values for me. I did not buy a car, a house, clothes or makeup. I did not buy furnishings or other stuff I didn't need. I lived within my means so I could live further and wider. I dovetailed work with travel and started leading tours. Step two: choose where you want to go. Step three: figure out how much it will cost. Step four: start saving. Step five: watch for opportunities like frequent flier miles, work exchange programs, volunteer programs, and alternative ways to travel. When you step toward making your fantasies real, things start showing up. Try it and see.

24. Draft Your Adventure Resume

How many times have you been at a job interview, longing to explain your adventure to Nepal, or to describe how you took responsibility for organizing the senior center softball team? You want to be seen for who you are, to recount some of the adventures that say more about you than the computer programs you know. Yet a typical job search doesn't seem to have space for your adventure history.

What if we made a place to explore the deeper part of ourselves? If we knew ourselves more at an essential level, a job search could gain a depth that acknowledges our values. You can find your way here by creating what I call an Adventure Resume, a map of your life experience. Not the jobs you've had and the practical skills you've acquired, but a course charting the peak experiences of your life. By embarking on this vital exploration, you can learn a lot about yourself. You see where you've made choices. You notice where you've taken risks or learned lessons. **Rather than a list of *what you've done*, let the adventure resume be a guide to *how you've been*. How have you created your own path and followed your original impulse?**

I created the Adventure Resume one afternoon when I was bored and wanted to draw. I soon was sketching a river and for landmarks I drew my experiences in the world. Here I had stayed in France after a year as a student to work as a dishwasher in the south of France. There I had hitchhiked from Amsterdam to Barcelona, meeting adventure every step of the way. There I had taken the graduate school plunge only to realize after one semester that the school was not for me. These were the turns that I had taken that make me unique, that mark my life as one of adventure.

When I had sketched out the whole map, I realized a profound lesson: I could die and I would have already accomplished something. I had always hated the

thought of dying, afraid that I wouldn't do what I was meant to do. After looking at my Adventure Resume, I recognized that I traveled, I taught and inspired people, and I had learned. I had already lived the kind of life that was important to me. This was a huge relief. While I am not truly ready to pass on, I lost some of the anxiety about not living up to my potential.

You can also see your personal values reflected in your Adventure Resume. The first thing I do with my clients is to help them create a list of their values. This represents a pivotal piece in creating a fulfilling life: when you are living according to your values, you tend to be more happy and satisfied. You can make decisions according to your values, not someone else's. Some of my most treasured values, travel and learning, were honored throughout my Adventure Resume. Your own Adventure Resume will reveal some of your values.

Take some time to create your own Adventure Resume. **Yours will express your unique path and should reflect your values.** You may express this in any way appeals to you. It may be written chronologically. It could be drawn, painted or colored with pencils or markers. One client envisioned a three dimensional Adventure Resume, with little figures representing experiences.

What to do with your Adventure Resume once you've completed it? Ask yourself the following questions:

- What have I learned from this process?
- What values can I see from the choices I made?
- How does this affect the way I live my life today?

Is this something you would show to a potential employer? Perhaps. It depends on the kind of job you are applying for and how much you are willing to share who you are. More likely you would show it to close friends or family as a way to encourage discussion about the bigger picture of life. More and more we are invited to express our creative selves. Employers look to hire creativity; creativity

has become one of our greatest assets. Your Adventure Resume will show potential employers a more dimensional you.

This is a valuable tool that can help you when you are looking for a job, when you are reassessing your priorities, when you are making big decisions. **Drafting your Adventure Resume will give you perspective, confidence and renewed energy for future adventures.**

25. Launch a Blog

I've been a big fan of the blogosphere since I plunged in in May, 2005. I launched my blog as a way to write about my tour in France, so people could follow along and enjoy the trip vicariously. I had no idea how much fun it would be. Blogging is a powerful way to tap into your creativity and connect with people around the world.

The biggest fear I encounter when I talk about blogging is that it takes a lot of time in what may already be a booked schedule. It's true, blogging does take time and effort, but if you frame it as a creative act rather than an obligation, it can feed your creativity in many ways.

Blogging is an excellent way to develop good writing habits. During my tours, a thousand new impressions come in every day. How do I write about them all? I don't. I focus on one aspect or theme and write 300-500 words about that. Perfect writing exercise! Finding an interesting angle is one of the biggest challenges writers face, and having to do this on a daily basis or at least a few times a week is like taking a class in essay writing.

Blogging also presents a challenge to express your ideas visually. Blogs with images are more interesting to a wider audience. Taking photos for my blog has

helped me develop my photography skills, something I've always wanted to do. With a digital camera, it's easy and inexpensive to play with posting images. Then there's the amazing power of blogs to connect you with the world, or at least with your area of interest.

You can always launch a blog and keep it private. It's a great way to practice writing and posting without the public commitment. Another thing about blogging - it's a building process. You don't have to have everything figured out perfectly to launch.

If you're ready to launch a blog, click on the Typepad banner to the right and get started. I recommend Typepad because it was easy for me to use, they have great support and I love all the features that allow me to stretch my creative muscles. (And I've become an affiliate, so if you sign on to Typepad using the link to the right, I get cash and will be very happy.)

If you need support with how to blog effectively, Beth Hayden of [Blogging with Beth](#) is a great resource. She consults with people and teaches classes on blogging.

I hope I've encouraged you to take the blog leap. I have so much fun blogging and this amazing way to connect creatively is a big part of my Creative Leap, which you'll hear all about on Friday!

26. Quit Your Job

This is a big leap and I don't advocate it without creating some kind of cushion before you leap. Your cushion may be a new job, several months of savings, or a spiffed up resume. But beware thinking you need a cushion the size of Texas before you make this leap.

I'll never forget the last job I quit. Truly, I was fired (can you imagine!?) but on my last day I took a stand. Before I left, I announced that I would never punch a time clock again! I was fired up about my leap into my own work full-time. I'd been coaching for two years and I was ready to do it full-time. That was February, 2001, and now, seven years later, I am delighted to say that the leap paid off.

My mom called the other day and told me that she had quit her job so she could travel more. I was sad to hear this because I know how much she loved working at my brother's company. My mom has a lot of talents and I liked to see her using them at her job. Then I woke up and realized that she had just taken a Creative Leap and that I was actually happy to know that she would be traveling more with my dad.

You may notice that this leap to leave a job brings up a lot of issues in you and others. It's our income, after all, the source of our survival. But if your job doesn't honor who you are, you're barely surviving. If this is the case for you, look at taking the leap to new work. Start now, as this leap can take some time to put into place.

27. Try a new medium.

If you're a writer, try painting. If you're a painter, take a stab at ceramics. Stretching beyond your known art form will stimulate your brain and your creativity in powerful ways. I liken this to using my left hand (I'm right-handed.). It's a bit awkward. The left side of my body isn't so coordinated. It's like a toddler learning to walk in a straight line. But even though it's awkward, I want my left side to be coordinated. I want that sense of power that comes from learning something new and expanding beyond my known capabilities.

I've taken oil painting, watercolor, drawing, calligraphy, dance, singing, and illustration classes. It's so much fun to take a class where there is nothing at

stake - no concern about being good or becoming a professional. It's an opportunity for play. A stretch for me would be to take a pottery class. Another stretch but a fun one would be an improvisation class.

If you were to take a class in a new medium, what would it be?

28. Find Your Tribe Online

I'm blown away on a daily basis by how cool and amazing the Internet is. It's ridiculously easy to connect with people in your creative tribe.

Some of the groups I have joined: Couchsurfing.com, EDMGroup (Everyday Matters, Danny Gregory's book and the group it spawned); Moleskine FLCKR groups, writing and coaching groups. I use craigslist to search for new opportunities and friends in foreign lands. I find great apartment rentals in Paris this way.

If you haven't been online looking for your tribe, take a leap. Type your interest in the google search box plus the word 'blog'. You'll find a blog that will lead you to other blogs and other groups and soon you'll be rubbing keyboards with new friends around the world.

29. Support Someone Else's Leap.

This may not seem at first pass like such a big leap, but it is.

As a coach, I've been supporting people's leaps for the past eight years. The hundreds of clients and students I've worked with have given me more than I think I gave them. Witnessing and encouraging others has challenged me to keep an open heart and open mind. I've had to cultivate compassion, patience and respect for the small steps we take. I've developed a deep respect for our basic humanity and how humbling and inspiring it is to make our way toward our

dreams. **Just showing up for every day of our lives is a leap – a leap of faith that our mundane actions and daily presence are making something marvelous.**

It's also been an incredible check for me to keep making my own leaps. What kind of coach would I be if I didn't live large? When I went to Paris in 2003 for the Shakespeare and Company Literary Festival, I was terrified. I called my friend Rachel for support. She came through as always, and left me with a funny and powerful phrase that I still use: **"Go big or go home."** It's become my rallying cry when I quake in the face of a big leap.

Who knows where I would be now if I didn't support others' leaps. I've gained enormous courage and insight from helping others. I'm sure if you're reading this, you are the kind of person who supports others' leaps. Give yourself credit, and keep spreading the love.

##

By now you've noticed that you're already taking Creative Leaps in your life or you're inspired to take even greater leaps. If you were leaping off from where you are now, **what would your Creative leap look like?** It may be taking up a new art form or learning a new language. It may be buffing up your resume and quitting your job, or taking steps to launch that new business you've been dreaming about. **Whatever your leap, no matter how big or small, I encourage you to take it sooner rather than later.**

Other ways to get support from me for your Creative Leap:

- [One-one coaching](#), customized to your Creative Leap
- [Consulting](#) to laser in on what you need and how you can make your Leap happen
- E-books to enhance your journey juju and help you be a fulfilled creative:

- [Go For It: Leading Tours for Fun and Profit](#)
- [Unleash Your Writing](#)
- [Creative Toolkit for Travelers](#)
- [Cross the Finish Line: Five Steps to Leap Over the Hurdles to Completion](#)

Thanks for taking your Creative Leap, whatever it is. Your world and the world are better for it!

To your creative success,

Cynthia