Instructions

    In her chapter "Having Strong Reasons for Living" in Radical Remission, Kelly Turner writes: "In order to be excited about living, people often need to get in touch with (or get back in touch with) their deepest desires or callings. For many people, this third aspect of 'having strong reasons for living' means adding creativity back into their lives because creativity is something that, unfortunately, most adults have lost touch with. For example, many people's jobs do not provide them with much of a creative outlet," (260).

    However, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi in Flow says that if people really focus on what they are doing and follow the rules for flow, they can do ANY activity and find joy in it, from washing dishes, to playing a musical instrument, to reciting poetry, inventing a theorem, or exercising. The elements of Flow are the following:

The 8 Characteristics of Flow

Csikszentmihalyi describes eight characteristics of flow:

Complete concentration on the task;

Clarity of goals and reward in mind and immediate feedback;

Transformation of time (speeding up/slowing down);

The experience is intrinsically rewarding;

Effortlessness and ease;

There is a balance between challenge and skills;

Actions and awareness are merged, losing self-conscious rumination;

There is a feeling of control over the task.

Perhaps both authors are correct. You must pursue activities in a "flow" state for maximum enjoyment, but the activities can bring even more joy if they are something that you feel called to do and that fits in with your values and life meaning.

Impressionist painter Henri Matisse posited that “creativity takes courage.” I would like you to embrace that spirit as you undertake your final projects. Choose something that delights and inspires you in a domain in which you have something to share and something to learn. Make it a real research project where you do not already know the outcome before you start. You may choose one of the following options or come up with something original on your own (you must run it by me for approval).

Remember to use the four kinds of evidence: Personal experience, data and statistics, expert opinion, values. Alternate between direct quotes and paraphrase of your research, and cite your sources. Also, use one of the introduction strategies from the Introduction chapter in The West Guide.

Choose ONE of the following (they should all be 4 pages):

1.    1.      Write  a 4- page research paper on a creative person who has made a difference in his or her field.  What creative traits did they demonstrate in facing obstacles? Did their failures turn into strengths? What lessons did they learn? How did they demonstrate their values and the idea of Flow? How was this activity their calling? Use vocabulary from the course to discuss. (Use research to give context to their goals or struggles).

4.    2. Write  a 4- page research paper on creativity in your own life. What activities give you flow?  Discuss any obstacles you may have faced in pursuing your goals. What creative qualities did you demonstrate as you faced your challenges? What did you learn? How did you use a creative approach to overcoming the obstacle? Relate your story to at least one of the strategies in Radical Remission. If you failed, how did that experience shape you or lead you in a new direction? Use the Reisman creativity terminology we have learned in class such as “tolerance for risk,” or “flexibility,” etc. (Use research to give context to your goals or struggles). You may use this as an opportunity to discuss COVID-19. Please remember that ALL essays must include outside research, quotes, data and statistics, etc., even if you are talking about your personal experience.