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WORKS

# Un glued

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## Everyday Creative

Most people think their “creative” endeavors require a certain block of time when they can set aside other worldly concerns and get into a groove that is receptive to their muse. While it does often help to relax and be playful when you want to create a work of art, let us not forget that even the most mundane things we do in life can be approached creatively.

Let’s say, for example, you must give your staff member her evaluation and you’re dreading the conversation because she always gets defensive even when the evaluation is, overall, pretty positive. Instead of doing it the same way you’ve always done it, change any element of the encounter and you’ll likely change the dynamic and the results. Want to put her at ease? Think about your options: Take her out to lunch. Let her do the talking – ask her what she’d especially like to improve. Invite her to bring to the evaluation something that she feels symbolizes her year and then ask her to tell the story of her year. Anything you do to change the process (within legal guidelines and good HR practices, of course) will likely change the flavor of the meeting.

The same principle applies to interactions with your spouse, your children, and even your pets! And it also applies to relationships with money, food, exercise or anything else you encounter every day. Want to save money? Look at the mindless habits you’ve gotten into – daily latte, drinks after work, M&M Peanuts (I know, I’ve been there) – and become mindful. Count the coins and calories you save by *coming unglued* from old habits.

This subject has been much on my mind recently as I learned that I will need to stay with my parents for a while as my mother goes through cancer treatments. When I go home, even though they’re no longer in my childhood home, I revert to old habits, some of which are unhealthy. The fact that I’ll be entering a particularly stressful situation won’t help. So I’m analyzing the situation (as much as I can anticipate), identifying the landmines, and planning my strategies for avoiding them.

I’m challenging myself to do something creative every day – for my sake and for my parents. I intend to laugh a lot, to help them relax, to exercise, to read funny books, paint, listen to jazz, and eat healthy food. And slipping these activities in between caregiving, laundry, doctor appointments, and other daily maintenance tasks will clearly require some creativity.

I’ve started a blog – <http://creativesue.blogspot.com> - if you’re interested in following my progress. On the days you can tell I’m pulling my hair out, an encouraging word will be appreciated!

Sue Martin