

Happy, Not Tortured



A Mental Health Guide For
Artists And Creative People

Céline Terranova

Workbook

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By

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INTRODUCTION

This workbook contains questions asked in Happy, Not Tortured: A Mental Health Guide For Artists And Creative People, and gives you space to write down your answers.

This guide exists in PDF, Word and OpenOffice format, so you can print and write, or complete the blanks by computer.

The aim is to help you, so use it the way you want! There is no good or bad way of doing this, it is your journey, your choice!

CHAPTER 1

MENTAL HEALTH AND CREATIVITY

Do you identify as a tortured artist? Do you feel like you are only creative if you suffer? Why?

CHAPTER 2

YOUR OLD MENTAL HEALTH DIET

What “bad habits” do you have that make your mental health worse? Follow the sections of this chapter and write down when something corresponds to you.

1) WHAT YOU PUT IN YOUR BRAIN

Do you spend hours ingesting content that makes you feel unhappy, angry or depressed? Do you open a news app as soon as you wake up in the morning? Do you watch the news several times a day? Do you keep yourself up to date on the latest celebrity scandal? How full is your “negative” bin on a day to day basis?

2) THE THOUGHTS YOU ALLOW TO THRIVE

Think about your own mind. Who are the regular customers? Who is always there, hanging at the bar, waiting to share their opinion? Who comes back, over and over, knowing full well they’ll find a place to thrive? Noticing rumination can be tricky, as most of the time we don’t realise the exact thoughts we think about. You might need a few days to do this work.

3) GRUDGES

Do you have a grudge, a past event or simply a resentment that, whatever you do, you can't let go of? Do you find that there is someone that you simply can't forgive, no matter how much time has passed? And how does it make you feel when you think about it?

4) FESTERING LONELINESS

Do you feel lonely? Is it a constant feeling, or does it pass? Right now, if you had a really bad day, could you call someone and talk about it? Or are you scared of bothering them? Can you confide in the people around you?

5) COMPARISON

How often do you compare yourself to other people? Do you try to be objective, giving yourself a break, or do you use other people to beat yourself up? How does someone else's success make you feel?

6) PERFECTIONISM

Do you have the same unhealthy aim of perfection as me? Do you think about the one small mistake you made when someone compliments you on an achievement? How much does it impact your life?

7) SELF-DOUBT

Do you constantly question your abilities, or whether you can really do what you dream of? Do you give up before even starting because you are sure that you won't succeed? Do you trust yourself? Do you often wonder if you made the right decision, or if you can do a thing at all? What has it cost you?

8) UNHEALTHY LIFESTYLE

If you had to judge from the outside, how healthy is your lifestyle? Do you indulge more often than not? Do you sleep enough? How is it impacting on your mental health?

9) INACTIVITY

What is your level of physical activity? Do you only walk between your bed and your desk, too? Do you sit all day long? Do you skip your workouts regularly?

10) CLUTTER

Look around you. Is your home relatively tidy? We all have busy lives, and a little bit of mess is not the end of the world, but where do you tend to stand on the spectrum between tidiness and chaos? Does clutter make you feel guilty, sad or morose?

11) BOTTLING UP

Do you tend to repress your emotions, or do you express them? Do you feel allowed to stand up for yourself or does it bring guilt or shame? Have you ever exploded because you had been repressing too much or for too long?

12) THE WRONG TRIBE

Let's assess your "tribe": do you feel accepted and supported by your family/friends/colleagues? Do you feel like you can talk to them when you feel down, or share your hopes and successes? If not, why not?

13) NEVER SAYING NO

What is your relationship with limits? Are you a people pleaser? Do you overcommit, even when you know you should rest? When was the last time you said no to a friend or a partner? How did it make you feel?

14) CONSTANTLY CONNECTED

When was the last time you switched off your phone? Not just to restart it because it was buggy. Not just put in silent mode. Switched. Off. For several hours. A day, even, without checking any social media. Do you find it difficult to be completely disconnected from the world? Do you feel stressed if you haven't checked your account for a couple of hours?

15) USING DISTRACTIONS

Do you procrastinate often? Do you use distraction to avoid thinking about what you should do? If procrastination is your first reflex when facing a hard task, ask yourself: why is that?

16) SELF-DEPRECATION

What is your go-to reaction to compliments? Is your humour only self-deprecating? And do you feel bad when someone else teases you, as you are the only one allowed to put yourself down?

17) DRAMA

Do you have a habit of arguing with people? Or do you catch yourself fighting with people in your head? Do you react to problems by acting out? Do you feel like fighting is the only way you can be heard?

18) TAKING EVERYTHING SERIOUSLY

What is your relationship with humour? Do you find that life is something to be taken seriously? Do you hate people who laugh at everything?

19) GIVING UP

Are you guilty of “slashing the other tree tires” too? Do you give up as soon as an obstacle appears? Do you use any setback as an excuse?

20) CYNICISM

When something positive happens, do you immediately find the flaw? Do you think there’s always a reason behind niceness? Do you believe that there’s a “catch” behind good news?

CHAPTER 3

HOPES AND EXPECTATIONS

WHY THE BAD DIET?

| Bad Habit | Do I Do It? | Why? |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Bad Brain Diet | | |
| Rumination | | |
| Grudges | | |
| Festering Loneliness | | |
| Comparison | | |
| Perfectionism | | |
| Self-Doubt | | |
| Unhealthy Lifestyle | | |
| Inactivity | | |
| Clutter | | |
| Bottling Up | | |
| Wrong Tribe | | |
| Never Saying No | | |
| Constantly Connected | | |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Using Distractions | | |
| Self-Deprecation | | |
| Drama | | |
| Taking Everything Seriously | | |
| Giving Up | | |
| Cynicism | | |

WHERE YOU WANT TO BE

Make a list of your goals related to mental health. Where do you want to be? What are you aiming for? Are these goals realistic?

WHERE YOU SHOULD BE

Make a list of the expectations you had when you were younger about where you should be today. Try to remember what you dreamed about, such as, “by the time I’m twenty/thirty/fifty, I’ll be this”. Did you achieve all of it? What happened along the way? What went right, and what went wrong?

Now make a list of all the things you have done that would have been completely unexpected for teenager-you. What have you done that you would have never thought about in a million years? Did you choose to go in a different direction than your early goals? Why? And what did it bring you?

FINDING A PURPOSE

The objective is to answer the question, “What is the meaning of *my* life?” To make it clearer to you, I’m going to list questions that will help you centre on finding the answer:

What do I do all the time without feeling tired?

What would I do if I had millions in the bank and didn’t need to work?

What do I do very well?

What did I do last time I helped someone?

What do I feel concerned about?

What bothers me?

What are my strengths?

What makes me feel good about myself?

What comes easily to me?

What do people say about me that makes me feel accomplished?

Now, try to summarise your answers in one or two paragraphs: what is the purpose of your life?

KEEPING UP WITH YOUR PURPOSE

How are you going to keep your purpose fresh and alive? Take some time to design a way to keep your purpose alive, and make sure you include a contingency for when your purpose may change.

CHAPTER 4

YOUR NEW MENTAL HEALTH DIET

BUILDING NEW HABITS

Which habits have you decided to adopt? In which order/priority will you tackle them? And how?

| Good Habit | Priority | How? |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Thought Reprogramming | | |
| Reframing | | |
| Forced Positivity | | |
| Morning Briefing | | |
| Breaks | | |
| Daydreaming | | |
| Healthy Lifestyle | | |
| Mind Exercises | | |

| | | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Giving Back | | |
| Spirituality | | |
| Better Connections | | |
| Role Models | | |
| Technology | | |
| Feeling Alive | | |
| Hobbies | | |
| Health Checks | | |
| Professional Help | | |

CHAPTER 5



CRISIS STRATEGIES

CRISIS BUDDIES

Make a list of people, organisations and professionals who could help you in time of crisis. Add contact details and any relevant information.

| REAL LIFE PEOPLE | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Name | Contact Details |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| ORGANISATIONS | |
| Name | Contact Details |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| PROFESSIONALS | |
| Name | Contact Details |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

CHAPTER 6

KEEP CREATING

KEEP INSPIRATION ALIVE

Which one of the three techniques (inputs of creativity, record your ideas and creative exercises) do you think will be the most beneficial? What can you apply right here, right now? Which ones are you guilty of never doing? And why?

REINVENT YOURSELF

Have you already had different periods in your artistic life? Or perhaps you feel like your current period is coming to an end and you don't know what comes next?

What makes you passionate right now? What can you spend time researching, reading about, watching videos or documentaries?

How do you feel about your previous work? Would you do something similar again? If not, why not?

Do you feel pressured to keep on going?

HAVING FUN

How can you make your art “lighter”? How can you call back to the feelings you had when you started? Is there a small project that you can do purely for the joy of it?

CONCLUSION

Thank you for joining me on this adventure. I hope that you found this workbook helpful!

What's next? If you are interested in knowing more on this subject, you can join the discussion on The Part-Time Artist website:

<https://theparttimeartist.com/>

Why not attending one of my workshops or have me work with you on your artistic career?

I have different solutions, from individual sessions to group ones, online or IRL, for all ranges of budgets. Let me help you achieve the right balance and do more with your life!

If you are interested, drop me an email:

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Or connect with me on social media:

@CelineTerranova ([Twitter](#), [Instagram](#))