

Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear Book PDF Download



By:
Elizabeth Gilbert

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Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear Book PDF Summary -

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What people Say:

Ariel

I appreciate and respect Elizabeth Gilbert's attempt to inspire creativity, and can fully see why people could love this and take a lot away from it.. but there were too many fundamental things that I disagreed with/thought were done poorly for me.

1) Creativity as a type of religion: I don't know if "religion" is the right word here, but Gilbert's spiritualization of creativity is saturated in this book. She talks about our need to think of creativity as a spiritual entity, to believe that ideas

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1) Creativity as a type of religion: I don't know if "religion" is the right word here, but Gilbert's spiritualization of creativity is saturated in this book. She talks about our need to think of creativity as a spiritual entity, to believe that ideas can leave us and jump into other people, etc. It all seems extremely unimportant and clouded to me, muddy and distracting.

2) Everything was super cheesy: It's tough to write non-fiction, especially motivational non-fiction, that doesn't end up being preachy or cheesy, I understand that, but this book had me rolling my eyes all over the place. Maybe some of those moments were what some people needed to hear, but for me it was just extremely boring and anti-climatic.

3) It was extremely name dropping: every few chapters Gilbert would say "So, I have this famous friend," and it started to get really grating. I get that she has interesting friends with interesting stories, but it really just felt like a pile of name drops.

4) An uncomfortable anti-higher education stand point: Studying the arts is a very oxymoronic idea, I can absolutely admit to that. Art is about personal endeavour and creativity, and in many ways can't be "taught." But there was a section in this book where Gilbert is very against creative related higher education. I agree that no one should feel that they need to pay crazy amounts of money to feel like a proper artist, but I really disagree with the idea that higher education is useless or worthless and gives you nothing but debt. I think that would be true if higher education was about creating good artists, but that's not what it's about - it's about giving you new perspectives, ideas, references, people, time.. things that you can then use to make stuff you may never have been able to make otherwise. Of course it isn't necessary, but to say it's worthless rubbed me the wrong way.

5) The opinion that creativity isn't necessary: There was a big section that I found really confusing and counter-intuitive to her entire argument, where she argued that the arts aren't necessary. She

mentions how plumbers and janitors (for example) are roles that ARE necessary, but art isn't. And I just, shoot, I just really disagree with that. Of course art is necessary! If it wasn't necessary we wouldn't all wear different clothing, cut our hair in different ways, decorate our rooms differently, we wouldn't care about recording history, or sharing our experiences. Maybe someone could take from her writings a freeing lesson that "I can do whatever I want, because it doesn't matter!" but I disagree.

I

glad (contrary, perhaps, to this review's tone) that I read this because I do like hearing people champion creativity, but there were too many differences in mine and Gilbert's thinking. I recommend skipping this one and instead reading "Show Your Work" by Austin Kleon, a book I thought was super motivating and uplifting.

Lorilin

Talk about receiving the right message at the right time. Wow.

is one of the most honest discussions about the creative process that I've ever read. Gilbert strikes a playful and conversational tone, but make no mistake, this is all straight talk. Her no BS attitude helps do away with the unrealistic expectations and unnecessary melodrama attached to the concept of "creative living" (like how she so expertly pish poshes the tormented artist ideal). And in its place, she asks all people

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Well, this was the message I (apparently) desperately needed to hear. I'm a stay-at-home mom with three young children. And when people ask me what I do, that is what I always tell them. But that isn't what I want to tell them—what I want to shout from the

rooftops, in fact—is that I’m a writer. Sure, barely anyone reads what I write, I’ve never been published, and it probably goes without saying that I’ve never been paid for a single sentence. In other words, no one really gets anything out of my work but me. But I love it, straight up. So I keep writing, regardless.

Yet it feels weird to declare yourself “A Something!” when that something doesn’t earn you money or status or likes or hits or retweets. Which means even though this side passion feels so authentically “me,” I hide it so people won’t think I’m a loser, an imposter, a wannabe, an embarrassment, a failure—and the list goes on.

I guess this reality had been bumming me out more than I realized, because when I read the following words, they resonated with me in an unimaginably powerful and loving way—like I was receiving a cosmic hug:

“Shake yourself free of all your cumbersome ideas about what you require in order to become creatively legitimate! You do not need a permission slip from the principal’s office to live a creative life. Or if you do worry that you need a permission slip—THERE, I just gave it to you! Now go make something.”

In other words, Gilbert’s message is this: just accept that you need to create. Accept that this is a part of you, that you are ALREADY “creatively legitimate.” And just do what you naturally feel compelled to do. Do it with joy—even when it gets difficult—and don’t worry about how it will be received (if it’s received at all). If you are called to be a maker, then you will just have to make. Own who you are, for better or worse.

So that’s what I’m doing from now on. I’m owning it. This is me stating my intent:

Darth J

You know, I didn’t enter into this as a “hate-read”, despite being such a cynic. I don’t like to waste my time and money on things just to have something to snark at (I can already hear the snickering in the audience as I write that). You see, with any of these advice books I actually want to learn something useful; that’s the whole reason why I would pick it up in the first place. Despite being utterly let down with her

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To paraphrase the late great Myrtle Snow,

"has a dreadful case of the me, me, me's." Now with any sort of autobiographical work it's expected that the author draws on their own experiences; but the part that bothers me is the unhealthy levels of

that this contains. I don't know why I expected Gilbert to be any less full of herself this time around, but perhaps I thought she would have matured a bit at least in the narcissism department. I was wrong, my friends. So wrong...

Moving past that, this book seems to be written for artists. No, strike that:

! With the pretentious pronunciation and all. It's mainly written for other writers, so her advice is not universal. Even then, the very best thing she can come up with is to not let bad reviews or rejection get to you. That's probably the only useful thing she says throughout this book made up of 2-3 page vignettes. When she isn't writing as if staring lovingly in the mirror at herself, she constantly contradicts herself with pendulations between

and

Diane

Thank you, Elizabeth Gilbert, for writing this much-needed book on creativity. It was practical, helpful, comforting and inspiring. I know it will be a book I recommend over and over again to writer and artist friends, and anyone else who wants to live a more creative life.

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I've been struggling for a week over this review, and I'm still a bit overwhelmed. Sometimes books are so powerful that trying to cobble together a few paragraphs about them seems both trivial and also maddeningly crucial. How can I express how much this book meant to me?

I'll begin by summarizing a few lessons from this book. First, if you are lucky enough to be visited by a creative idea, pay attention to it. You have to nurture that idea and give it some of your time, otherwise it will leave and go elsewhere. Elizabeth says ideas want to take root, and if you aren't the best person for them, they will find someone else. She has a few good examples of this, including an amazing story involving another favorite writer of mine, Ann Patchett.

Second, make time to be creative wherever and however you can. Don't procrastinate because you think there will someday be a "perfect" time to write your book or create music or make that piece of art. There is

a perfect time, and everyone has to balance jobs and family and other obligations. Elizabeth gives numerous examples of successful writers who have struggled to find time to write. You squeeze your creative work in anywhere you can. If that means getting up an hour early or staying up late or cutting your lunch break short, do it. Find pockets of time for your creativity.

Third, after making time to be creative, don't fret about whether or not you can make it perfect. Just get to work on your idea. Play with it. Expand it. Follow your instincts. Don't waste precious time being paralyzed by fear about whether something is good enough. Elizabeth has a great line that I have since adopted: "Done is better than perfect."

Finally, if you don't have a big idea right now, don't worry. Just follow your curiosity. Give time to anything that interests you, because it may lead somewhere inspiring. Elizabeth shared the story of her last novel, "The Signature of All Things," which she said finally came to her after she decided she wanted a garden. That's all it was — she just wanted a few flowers in her yard. But her interest grew as her garden grew, and she did more research on flowers. Later, she had an idea for the novel.

A few other gems from the book are not to quit your day job and expect your art to pay your bills. Elizabeth said she kept her day job for years and did her creative writing in her free time, because she didn't want the pressure of making her writing pay the bills. (But eventually it did, thanks to Eat Pray Love, which I'll get to in a moment.)

Chris Blocker

Is it mere coincidence that BIG is synonymous with FAT and that MAGIC is one of those oblique

words difficult to put your finger on, like CHANCE? Because I think that's a better title for this book:

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I get it, some artists are confused about the outcomes or reasons for pursuing creative ventures. It's true, most of us are going to fail and fail again. Many of us will eventually give up trying. Gil

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I get it, some artists are confused about the outcomes or reasons for pursuing creative ventures. It's true, most of us are going to fail and fail again. Many of us will eventually give up trying. Gilbert's aim here seems to be getting people to think differently about art, to force them to realize that the business sucks and the process isn't always easy, but we should all be happy because we're like children, finger painting our hearts out.

Somehow the fact that this advice comes from someone whose net worth is \$25 million doesn't make it any easier to swallow.

The very fact I read this book is a testament to Gilbert's brilliance. It was her 2009 TED Talk that turned me onto the author, a writer I had written off previously solely because of her wild success. Not surprisingly, it is Gilbert's wonderful, well-presented argument about the elusive genius that opens up

. The message in these chapters is more inspirational: we all have creativity; relax, it's not your fault if your genius eludes you.

But the rest of the book gets lost in Gilbert rubbing our faces in her success. I know it's not easy, she seems to be saying, creativity won't pay the bills, so just quit thinking about it as a occupation and think of it more as finger painting!