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Such Pretty Things

by Jessica Elmgren

From Dreaming to Doing



Being creative and artistic has always been an integral part of my life. As a child, I was always making or designing something—whether it was costumes for my little sister or colorful napkins for my dad, embellished with a million tiny sequins. I took art classes and spent most of my free time drawing or painting.

In college, I majored in fine art and spent those years sketching, sculpting, and taking photographs. I interned with design magazines and advertising agencies, and dreamed of life as a designer. My life was rich and full of creativity.

After college, I made the decision to go to graduate school and study clinical psychology. I loved being an artist, but the practical side of the work—knowing that I didn't want to be a "drawing" artist.

I eventually married my college sweetheart, and we took photos for ourselves and had two beautiful daughters. I loved my family more than anything, but at some point during those early years of motherhood, I began to notice that my creative self was slowly starting to fade away. It wasn't that I didn't want to be creative. Oh, I did. It was just that the realities and demands of daily life made it nearly impossible to do much of anything. I was frantic and frustrated to have chosen my own profession, given a future tomorrow—today.





By the time my girls got a little older and headed off to school, I found myself juggling more and more family formal events occasions. Unfortunately, life just wasn't cooperating. If anything, I was only getting busier! — now there were playdates, homework, and carpools to manage. I found myself becoming increasingly frustrated. I began losing and forgetting about implementing the things that were so exciting and making special memories. As a way to cope with my frustration, I started keeping a design journal. Whenever I saw a recipe that I wanted to try or a tutorial or how to make something that interested me, I would take it over to the journal. Over time, I was building with photographs, drawings, fabric swatches, and wallpaper samples. I told myself, “You may not have the time right now to do all these things, but someday . . .”

Then, one evening, while I was surfing the Internet, I stumbled across something truly incredible. It was a blog — a beautiful, wonderful blog named *Peace, Calm, Creativity* by Missy Peacock. I didn't realize what a blessing it truly was, but I was instantly captivated. I just didn't realize that there was another world of talented people out there who were willing to share and to help me. It wasn't long before I became seriously addicted to reading blogs, often incorporating previous steps in the pursuit of some inspiring eye candy.





Interestingly, while I found writing the blog immensely enjoyable, I also found that they were causing another emotion to well up within me — anxiety. I was anxious of those around me who seemed to be able to make decisions so fluently. Things that look seamless to other business owners, my perception of that anxiety was a real life torment for me. All my years studying psychology had taught me that anxiety isn't always a negative emotion. It can actually help you better adapt to that you really want in life, and I knew exactly what I wanted. I was trying to do what all those bloggers were doing. I was being creative, flexible. And maybe just made, I could pull it off. After all, many of the bloggers were busy other businesses, just like me. (Should I could do it, too.)

So, in the summer of 2008 I got up all my courage, tucked myself away every afternoon in the computer to write my very first blog post. It wasn't easy in the beginning. I didn't know what where to blog about. I had several other business projects that I desperately wanted to do, and now the time had actually come to do them. Where was I going to start? Fortunately, I still had all my design journals and I quickly realized what invaluable resource they were. I just had to put something out there.







I am happy to report that in the two plus years (and 200 plus blog posts) since I first began blogging, those "silly" parties are a few of my favorite projects, including making homemade marshmallows. I've also made some incredible friends, learned to photograph, been published in national design magazines, and even opened my own own shop. And those bloggers to thank for all of it? Blogging forced me into action and catapulted me back into the creative life that I had been missing for so long.

Today, my life is once again filled with art, design, and creative possibilities. I've learned that dreaming is a wonderful, fun thing to experience. **Hi!**

Join me this Wednesday, March 24. All photos shown are by Jessica and can be viewed in her blog, www.jessicainstyle.blogspot.com.

