

The Blank Canvas Challenge

A 6-day exercise in Creativity & Clarity



A Sharp Difference
SPEAKING & TRAINING WITH A POINT.

Materials Needed:

- Non-porous surface at least 12 x 12. If you think big, get a big surface. Suggestions: Canvas, wood.
- Acrylic craft paint in 2 – 6 colors of your choosing. Suggestion: Apple Barrel paints.
- Brushes or sponges
- PVA or white glue, glue sticks or canvas sizing
- Embellishments of your choosing. Suggestions: letters, papers, buttons—Anything that expresses you.

Day 1: Gather your materials, set up a spot where you can leave this activity untouched between days.

- Choose 2—6 colors—one that represents your past, and 2-4 that represent your future.
- Choose how you will paint your canvas—stripes, abstract blotches, squares, circles, blended?
- Working from left to right, and making sure to paint the edges, add each color to your canvas however you'd like—there is no right and no wrong. Use painters tape to get perfect lines if that's what you like, or blend all the colors side by side in an abstract fashion. Whatever represents you. Clean your brushes and let dry until tomorrow.

Day 2: Find a paper embellishment or two that represents who you are now—bits of newspaper if you're a news junkie, bits of map if you like to travel, glittered paper if you're into glam, sheet music, recipes, copies of old letters. Again, there's no wrong material. As it pleases your eye, add a few bits of paper embellishment—don't cover all your color, just think of it like a spice in a recipe—a little goes a long way. Glue down your paper embellishments with PVA, white glue or glue sticks. Clean your area and let dry until tomorrow.

Day 3: Choose an image that symbolizes your inner life and another that symbolizes your outer life.

- Find these online, in magazines, in clipart, and if need be, photocopy larger or smaller to fit your canvas.
- Using a very sharp scissors, precisely cut out the images.
- Arrange the images, one on each side of the canvas however it pleases you, and glue down. (PVA glue or canvas sizing will really help the images to lay flat.

Day 4: Choose a 2—4 word phrase that cuts to the heart of how you try to live your life. “Dream big, take risks” “Never Never give up” etc. Yes, 2—4 words is hard, but it cuts out all the non-essentials. Either hand letter, cut out words from a magazine, print the words and then photocopy them so the ink doesn't bleed, and design and organize them as they please you between your primary images. Glue down.

Day 5: Look at your piece. Is something off? What don't you like? Can you fix it without ruining the integrity of the piece? Can you learn to love its imperfections? Add anything you think it needs, fix anything you don't like, or be at peace with it the way it is. But do look at it and see your life between the lines.

Day 6: Every artist titles and signs their work. You should too. Sign somewhere on the front (lower right corner recommended if possible). On the back, title your piece in quotes and date it. Add 3M Velcro tabs, a sawtooth hanger or screw eyes and wire. It's not about the finished product, its about the journey. Kudos!