

TRANSCRIPT

Inspiration

Many people have emailed me and shared that their biggest challenge is having too many ideas and not enough time. Again, I always encourage you to take things one chunk at a time. Having too many ideas is not a problem. Being overwhelmed by your ideas is the problem. One of the big habits that I've been doing for many years now is trying to manage the flow of ideas and inspiration that I get. There's always some new weave structure that I'd like to try another combination of colors that I'd like to work with, or another sweater that I'd like to knit. There are so many shiny new things to make, but if I chase down every single new project idea, as soon as the idea struck, I would be incredibly exhausted, spread thin, spend too much money on project yarn and I probably wouldn't finish many projects. It's for this reason that I believe it's important to have the ability to track your creative ideas without overwhelming yourself with all the possibilities.

It's wonderful to have tons of ideas. Absolutely wonderful, but not every idea is something that should be executed immediately. Many ideas require more planning. And when you're saving up your creative decision, making power for current projects, you don't want to expend that energy by getting distracted by other new ideas. So I like to just put a pin in it. Basically, I like to keep a running list of all the things that I would like to make. You can put this list in your bullet journal, if you like, sort of like an analog format, or you can put it in some online productivity software. We like Click Up right now. If you are a knitter or a crocheter, you might use something like Ravelry to keep track of your wishlist of things that you want to make. But since my range of crafts also includes weaving and spinning and sewing and sometimes quilting or whatever, I need something outside of Ravelry to track my project ideas. So if you use a digital format like click up or Evernote or Trello, you can also clip things that you've seen online. So this allows me to keep track of ideas that I've seen on Pinterest and Ravelry and Instagram and blogs. Then I can view them all in one place rather than having to go to a specific board on Pinterest and a queue on Ravelry and a collection of saved posts on Instagram. They're all in different places. And I don't really know where everything is, put it all in one place. So in either case, whether it's analog or digital, just brain dump, all of your ideas, big or small onto this one list, this idea backlog might include 10 things or a hundred things. But I put every single thing that I think that I might like to make on this list so that I can see it all in full. And sometimes I'll organize it by craft, so I can see that I have 15 things that I want to knit and seven things that I want to weave, but ultimately it allows me to have a bird's eye view of what's really going on in my mind. What is it that my creative spirit is craving? What is it that I really want to make? And so whenever I'm having an idea, I just pop it into this running list. And then I generally ignore it. Then and only when I have the creative decision making power to really think about the next project, I'll go to the list and parse through to see what I'd like to make next and how I will execute on it. So taking that break between capturing the idea, and then coming back to reflect on that idea is key. So if you jot down 10 new ideas for a sweater project, and then you come back two weeks later and you look at your list, I doubt that you'll still be inspired by those same 10 sweaters. No doubt. You're going to go down that Ravelry rabbit hole again, to find more sweaters, to add to the list. But the point is that every idea can be revisited, reviewed and reconsidered.

So this is an ongoing process of collecting and capturing ideas as you move through life and then coming back to review and reflect on those creative project ideas, you cull and you clean up your list, and then you keep going. And this way you feel safe and secure, knowing that everything that you might like to make is on a dedicated master list, but you don't need to be overwhelmed by the list because you can just take it one by one picking and choosing the most appropriate or appealing next project.