

Brightlight Educational Series

Abstract Expression in States of Flow

with artist Austin J Smith contact: artist@austinjsmith.com

Discover a new depth in your creative potential with your own innate superpower. Artist Austin J Smith is excited to share some of his discoveries as an abstract artist. This energetic course will help demystify the ability to access flow states that will explore your ability to transform your work and life experiences. This course will give you practical tools and exercises to fan your creative sparks into flames and stimulate personal growth, discovery and transformation.

Course outline

1. Set the Stage
2. Access Flow State
3. Activate Creativity

1. Setting the Stage is a critical strategy for making creative gains.

Your Environment is a result of your intentions under focus. First consider your motivations, your desire to create, to discover new possibilities and potential. Begin to develop your intentions and move forward by carving out the necessary space and time for creative expansion. When you prepare your space you give yourself the opportunity to immerse into your personal creative path.

No matter what limitations you currently have, it's imperative to begin setting a foundation that serves you. Start with a space and make a bold claim. This is my studio space where I will discover personal growth, discover new potent desires and transform my life through creative revelation. This is a powerful shift. Once you begin, set your intention and open yourself up to discovering your unique potential as a creative force. The process we are about to begin will unveil new information and drive you to understand your own connections and responsibilities to bring your personal creativity

power forward. As you learn to move fearlessly through blocks and open up to the infinite creative force within, you will form new habits that will fuel your creative output and give you substantial reason to return to your flow state often. If this is new to you or your studio practice is in infant stages, you will need to fight for it until it has made an impression on your mind to truly fuel you.

2. Access flow states to unlock the depth of your potential.

Do you believe in magic? Well you don't have to... you can experience it! To be human is truly incredible. Our mind and bodies are wonderfully made and our human potential is a source of great mystery. Through my practice as an abstract artist and fascination with mindfulness, meditation, the art of breathing (pranayama), yoga and dynamic movement I have begun to realize the powerful effects it has on my ability to enter "States of Flow". I've put together some simple exercises in this course that I use to dramatically enhance my performance. This is especially helpful in my painting practice and I am confident these simple exercises will have a great impact on you as well. The more you practice the more value it brings to your experience.

- Body scan
- Breathwork
- Music/ Frequency/ Rhythm
- Movement (opening channels in the body)
- Emotional IQ and Intuition

In this course, we will have the opportunity to reflect and share our experiences. The beauty of abstract expression means you do not need an idea before you begin to paint. On the contrary, allow the process of creating to evolve into an idea. Letting go of fear, silencing your inner critic, tuning into your intuition, and exploring your own artistic style in a safe and supportive environment.

3. Activate creativity to build your confidence, discover meaning and disarm beliefs that are no longer useful. Discover the secret to overcoming creative blocks, fears, doubts and resignations. Here are a few that most creatives must consciously challenge and overcome.

- Fear of the blank canvas
- Fear that your idea isn't good enough
- Fear that your idea had not only been done before, but done better by somebody else
- Fear that due to lack of technical skill, you will not be able to give your ideas shape and form on the canvas
- Fear that your work will be judged
- Fear that your work will be rejected
- Fear that you will have "proof" that you aren't a real artist or really creative after all

Secret Sauce: The very first priority to focus on is the pleasure of painting and how FUN it is. I want to invite you to **PLAY, BE BOLD & GROW!**

Week 1

This week is all about growth mindset. The main objective is focusing on your current state and desires for growing as an artist. This outline directly relates to the first video.

Materials:

- 1 Large Canvas (I'm using a utility canvas)
- Charcoal
- Journal

Set the Stage

- Gather photos of your favorite artwork. Choose at least one of your own artworks and one you may admire of another artist. Email these to artist@austinjsmith.com Include your name and how long you have been painting.
- Journal your intentions of how you would like to grow as an artist.
- Identify with and journal about your studio space. Describe how it is currently supporting you creatively. How is the light? Is there enough space? Does this space bring you joy?
- Write anything that may be a distraction for your creativity.
- Write 3 things you can do to make your studio space evolve toward your goals.
- Prepare a canvas that you will use throughout the course. Larger canvas allows for a full range of expressive gestures and movements.

Access Flow State

(If you have any health concerns, have existing health conditions such as epilepsy or are pregnant PLEASE consult a doctor before these practices.)

- Eliminate distractions.
- Shoes off. Music on.
- Begin to explore **deep breathing** and focus inward for 3 min of mindfulness.

- Free dynamic movement with improvisation focusing on breath.
 - Open channels in the body.
 - Activate core strength.
 - Synchronizing breath and movement.
 - Find any tension or tightness.
 - Open and expand with deeper inhalations.
 - Create balance on each side of your body.
 - Pull the navel up and in.
 - Practice expressive movements.
 - Cultivate inner stability and strength for bold confident strokes.
 - There is no right or wrong way to practice... Have fun!
- Repeat daily and journal your experience with a focus on body sensations.

Canvas time...

- Ready to Play?
- With soft or medium charcoal, begin drawing on your canvas. (or substrate of choice)
- Allow creative force to expand and reveal new forms of **expression & feeling**. Creativity is a practice. Again, **breath focus is paramount!**
- Write your ideas about the importance of “Flow State” and your experience in this exercise.
- Photograph your drawing and send your image to artist@austinjsmith.com