

BrainSTORM with a Brain Tornado!



The point of brainstorming is to generate ideas on a topic. There are a few standard methods for brainstorming: word association, mind-mapping, free-writing, etc.

Here is an exercise to try when standard brainstorming isn't helping you; a brain-tornado!

First of all, take a few minutes to **relax**. Have a cup of tea or take a short walk. If anything is on your mind, write it down and set it aside for later before your relaxation activity. Ground in your body and in the present moment.

Second, take some **index cards** or slips of paper, a good-size stack of them, and a timer. Set your timer for 60 seconds. Once your timer starts, write one word per card/slip and don't stop until the timer goes off. It doesn't matter what words you write, you're trying to get at your intuition here.

I came up with "desk, lamp, lantern, tent, mountain, river, cloud, eagle, egg, nest, Chinese food, dragon, soar, sore, bruise, muscle, ocean, boat, wave, shell, turtle, island, tree, monkey, banana, mango," etc.

Third, stand up and wiggle your body a bit to get out of your head. Then look at your cards/slips. Does any word in particular jump out at you? How might that word **relate** to your problem?

I love mangos, so that word jumps out at me. If my problem is feeling blah about a story I'm writing, what might mangos have to do with it? Mangos are sweet and bright ... how could I bring more sweetness and brightness to my story or my writing process?



If none of the words necessarily jump out at first, close your eyes and **swirl** them around in front of you (this is the "tornado" part of the brain-tornado). Then look for pairs or trios of words that make interesting combinations.

I got "mango, dragon, tent." Using the same story problem, the tent could represent my story structure, the dragon could represent my creative fire, and the mango could be a sense of the exotic; so, how could my creative fire infuse my story structure with a sense of the exotic?

Use your **imagination** and a sense of **curiosity**. You're trying to tap into the abstract part of your brain to get at new information, which your linear mind may never have thought up. Keep swirling your cards or write a new batch if the exercise doesn't work at first. The more you relax into it and make it a game, the more ideas you'll generate.

Your brain-tornado can whisk you out of Kansas
into a wonderful new land! Give it a try!

Cheat-sheet: Brain Tornado

You will need: index cards or slips of paper, a timer, a pen or pencil, and an open, curious mind!

1. Relax! Write down anything on your mind and set it aside.
2. Set your timer for 60 seconds and write one word per card/slip until the timer goes off.
3. If a word jumps out at you, look at how it might relate to your problem.
4. Swirl your cards/slips around and look for pairs or trios of words in interesting combinations. How might that relate to your problem?
5. Keep swirling or making new cards/slips until you hit upon a thread to follow.



From Cathy Carpenter, *Exploring Your Depths*, exploringyourdepths.com

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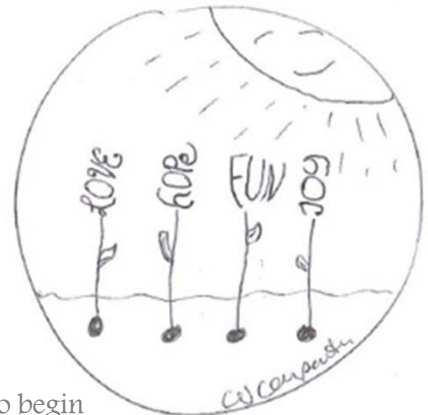
Creativity and Life Coaching

I have four coaching options including a free session.

Free

Free "Depth-Charge" Session, 30-45 minutes.
Set a Depth-Charge to shake things up!

If you are overwhelmed with the change(s) you want to make in your life and aren't sure where to begin



Paid sessions range from \$125-495 and focus on Work-Art balance, creative abundance and vitality, and accountability to make your creative dreams real!

See the [Coaching page](#) on Cathy's website for more information.

Tarot Reading and Classes

Are you confused, frustrated, and seeking answers? Have you over-thought an issue so much that you can't stand to think about it, but you still need to find a solution? Are you looking for outside help, a fresh pair of eyes, to help you work through your issue?

Let's ask my cards to help you with your issue! Book a reading today. Prices range \$25 to \$55.

Cathy also teaches a tele-class series, "Find Yourself in the Cards", based on the tarot archetypes of the major arcana. See [her site](#) for more information.

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