

The War of Art by Steven Pressfield

- Source of creativity is found on the same plane of reality as Resistance. It, too, is genetic. It's called talent: the innate power to discover the hidden connection between two things — images, ideas, words — that no one else has ever seen before, link them, and create for the world a third, utterly unique work.
- What keeps us from sitting down is Resistance.
- Most of us have two lives. The life we live, and the unlive life within us. Between the two stands Resistance.
- "Peripheral opponents"
- Resistance is the enemy within.
- ***Rule of thumb: The more important a call or action is to our soul's evolution, the more Resistance we will feel toward pursuing it.***
- The danger is greatest when the finish line is in sight. At this point, Resistance knows we're about to beat it. It hits the panic button. It marshals one last assault and slams us with everything it's got.
- The best and only thing that one artist can do for another is to serve as an example and an inspiration.
- Procrastination is the most common manifestation of Resistance because it's the easiest to rationalize.
- ***Never forget: This very moment, we can change our lives.***
- ***Fear tells us what we have to do.***
- Remember our rule of thumb: The more scared we are of a work or calling, the more sure we can be that we have to do it.
- My friend Tony Keppelman snapped me out of it by asking if I was gonna quit. Hell, no! "Then be happy. You're where you wanted to be, aren't you? So you're taking a few blows. That's the price for being in the arena and not on the sidelines. Stop complaining and be grateful." That was when I realized I had become a pro. I had not yet had success. But I had had a real failure.
- ***The professional shuts up. She doesn't talk about it. She does her work.***
- ***The professional knows that fear can never be overcome.***
- The professional knows that Resistance is like a telemarketer; if you so much as say hello, you're finished. The pro doesn't even pick up the phone. He stays at work.
- The field is level, the professional understands, only in heaven.
- Sometimes, as Joe Blow himself, I'm too mild-mannered to go out and sell. But as Joe Blow, Inc., I can pimp the hell out of myself. I'm not me anymore. I'm Me, Inc.
- ***"Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, magic, and power in it. Begin it now." Bottom of Form***
- Another way of thinking of it is this: We're not born with unlimited choices. We can't be anything we want to be.
- A hack, he says, is a writer who second-guesses his audience. When the hack sits down to work, he doesn't ask himself what's in his own heart. He asks what the market is

looking for. He tries to anticipate what the market (a telling word) wants, then gives it to them.

- He writes what he imagines will play well in the eyes of others. He does not ask himself, What do I myself want to write? What do I think is important? Instead he asks, What's hot, what can I make a deal for?
- My best guess is this: I trusted what I wanted, not what I thought would work. I did what I myself thought was interesting, and left its reception to the gods.
- ***Here's another test. Of any activity you do, ask yourself: If I were the last person on earth, would I still do it?***
- If you're all alone on the planet, a hierarchical orientation makes no sense. There's no one to impress. So, if you'd still pursue that activity, congratulations. You're doing it territorially.
- We must do our work for its own sake, not for fortune or attention or applause.