

*Reflective journal for
artists and creatives*

Making through the mess.

Nurturing your creativity in challenging times.

Brought to you by Take Two,
featuring artists Cas Holmes
and Clarissa Callesen



Topics:

1. Art as a lifeline in crisis
2. The emotional power of repetition
3. Beauty in the broken
4. Creating in the face of absence
5. Quiet activism and making meaning
6. Courage, creativity, and community
7. Glimmers of joy in the everyday
8. Final notes



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Welcome



Dear fellow creative,

This is not a workbook packed with homework to complete.

This journal is a gentle companion for your creative life. It's designed to support you through emotionally heavy seasons, creative blocks or burnout, moments of transition or uncertainty, and the ongoing work of showing up for yourself.

Making through the Mess was born from a conversation between artists Cas Holmes and Clarissa Callesen – two creatives who know what it means to keep making, even when times are challenging. During our conversation, Cas and Clarissa spoke with raw honesty about grief, mental health, caregiving, and how their art held space for it all.

This journal continues that conversation with you.

How it works

Each section includes:

- A quote from Cas or Clarissa.
- A moment of insight drawn from their story.
- A creative prompt to guide your reflection.
- Open space for your words, marks, or ideas.

There's no one right way to engage with these pages. You don't need to finish every prompt. You can write, draw, collage, annotate, or simply reflect in silence. And you don't need to follow it in order. The prompts are starting points, not assignments. Instead, let your intuition lead. This is your space.

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Topic 1:

Art as a lifeline in crisis

*Creating has kept me alive... it helps me
make it through the day, the minutes.*
– Clarissa

Insight

During a long period of depression, fibre art became Clarissa's way of getting through the day. There were no big breakthroughs. No neat happy endings. Just small, steady movements. A stitch. Then another. It was about marking time when time felt heavy. Letting her hands lead when her mind couldn't. Creativity, in this context, wasn't about inspiration. It was self-care. Soft, repetitive, and quietly nourishing.

*If you had just ten minutes today to create
something for yourself, what would you make?*

Reflection space



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Topic 2:

The emotional power of repetition

Sometimes I'm not creating. I'm just thinking. But even that hour of stitching is absorbing.

– Cas

Insight

While her partner was in and out of hospital, stitching became Cas's anchor. It wasn't about creating a masterpiece; it was about staying steady in the waiting. The repetition gave Cas a way to be present without needing to solve or fix anything. In a time filled with uncertainty, those stitches were a kind of grounding – soft, slow, and just enough.

What's something simple and repetitive you could do with your hands? Maybe stitching, doodling, kneading dough, or tearing paper. Try it for ten minutes and just notice how it makes you feel.

Reflection space

Topic 3:

Beauty in the broken

I want to honour the story that I don't know.
– Clarissa

Insight

Scraps, fragments, found objects – all the things most of us would overlook or bin without a second thought. But in Cas and Clarissa's hands, these forgotten materials become a way to honour what's been broken, weathered, or worn, and give it a second life. Every collage, every sculpture is a quiet reminder that even the discarded can hold meaning.

*Find one object you'd normally throw away.
What story might it tell if you used it in your art?*

Reflection space



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Topic 4:

Creating in the face of absence

There's a lot of holes in my work – it's like Derek's holes in his brain are interfering in my art.

– Cas

Insight

Cas didn't set out to make art about absence. But when her partner's health began to decline, it started showing up in her work without her meaning it to. The gaps, the holes, the unfinished edges. Grief wasn't something she painted over – it became part of the process. Her role as a carer changed everything; her time, her energy, even her materials. And slowly, she began to see that what was missing could be just as meaningful as what remained. The absence itself had something to say.

What absence or silence in your life could inspire a new piece?

Reflection space



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Topic 5:

Quiet activism and making meaning

Artists lay a table and invite people in.

– Cas

Insight

Neither Cas nor Clarissa are loud about their art – and that's the point. Their work invites you in. A quiet thread of grief here. A flicker of joy there. They show that activism doesn't always look like a rallying cry. Sometimes, it's setting a table. Making space. Offering a moment of stillness to feel what needs to be felt. Their art doesn't shout, but it speaks volumes.

What quiet truth do you want to share with the world, even if only through thread, paper, or shadow?

Reflection space



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Topic 6:

Courage, creativity, and community

*Protect your creativity until it has the strength to
stand on its own.*

– Clarissa

Insight

Creativity might look bold from the outside, but in the beginning? It's tender. Delicate. It needs space to stretch and stumble without judgment. Clarissa reminds us that early creativity is like a seed; it doesn't need pressure or exposure. It needs protection and care. Before it's ready to be shared with the world, it has to feel safe enough to grow. And that safety often starts with you.

*What does your creative courage need
today: Support, space, or simply a reminder
that it matters?*

Reflection space



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Topic 7:

Glimmers of joy in the everyday

*Seek a little joy each day. Even if it's just a sketch
while you sip your coffee.*

– Cas

Insight

Joy doesn't always arrive in bold, dramatic ways. Sometimes, it's quiet. Blink-and-you-miss-it quiet. A patch of light on the floor. The warmth of a mug in your hands. The small satisfaction of putting pen to paper. These glimmers might seem insignificant, but they add up and ground us. When we start paying attention to them by naming them, and even honouring them through creativity, they become rituals and gentle reminders that beauty still lives in the everyday.

*Where did you notice a glimmer of joy today?
How might you turn that into a creative act?*

Reflection space

Final notes

Congratulations, you made it to the end of this journal! But this isn't really the end.

This journal was never about ticking off prompts or getting it "right." It was about meeting yourself on the page and making space for the tangled stuff. It was about noticing the small things, and holding your creativity gently, especially when life feels heavy.

Whether you filled every page or just sat with a few ideas, we hope you found something here. Return to these pages when you need them. Revisit them as often as you like. Let them grow with you.

And if something in these reflections stirred something deeper, we want you to know there's more waiting for you.

Cas and Clarissa's Take Two courses are self-paced, beautifully filmed, and come with lifetime access and a supportive online community. Tap on the images (right) or scan the QR code to find out more!

Thank you for showing up to the page, and to yourself.

With love,
The Fibre Arts Take Two team



Making Connections with Cas Holmes

Cas's course invites you to explore the intersection of material and meaning. Through layering, stitching, and storytelling, you'll learn to create textile art that reflects your unique perspective. It's about finding connections – in your materials, your environment, and yourself.



Creating with Courage with Clarissa Callesen

Clarissa's course encourages you to embrace imperfection and authenticity. Using repurposed materials and intuitive techniques, you'll discover how to silence your inner critic and create art that's deeply personal and environmentally conscious.