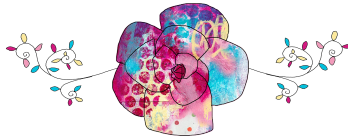


Make Your Mark

A Gentle Warm Up
with Tamara Laporte





Hello fabulous creative friend!

Welcome to our very first Life Book 2018 session! I hope you had a lovely holiday period and I wish you a wonderfully creative, prosperous and happy new year! :)

In this PDF/class I will go over some warm up steps, both for the mind and for the hand. :)

I know that some of you might be fairly new to the mixed media art world and you might be feeling overwhelmed and somewhat worried about beginning. Some of you might worry that your work 'isn't going to be 'good enough'' and you might feel "inferior" or "not worthy".

The inner critic can become quite loud when we start a new venture ("*Who do you think you are? Why on earth do you think you can do this?*" are only a few of her/ his unnerving comments!).

This year, you will learn to befriend and understand the inner critic better and through that friendship and understanding she'll likely become less critical of you, she might even start to cheer you on! :)

Further in this lesson, I hope to address some of your fears (we'll write them all down!) and I also want to get your warmed up by sharing some easy layering techniques with you.



I want all of you to feel empowered and not stifled by your inner thought stream telling you: 'it needs to be better'.

It's all about playing, learning, exploring and enjoying your journey. :)

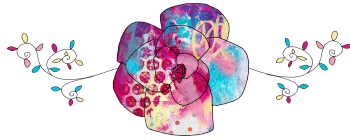
We will help you find the courage to be creative this year, dear friend. Breathe through it. You'll be fine. You can do this thing. I believe in you. :)

So to start off, I have a special message for you, read it gently and let the message settle in, you will enjoy your creative journey a lot more if you can relax, enjoy the journey and let go.

TAM

XOX :)





Dear creative friend,
I ask you to please be gentle
with yourself. Be kind.
Allow yourself to make art this year
without the heavy voice
of the inner critic judging everything you do...
Remember that you are here to play,
to have fun, to experiment
and most of all, to learn.
You are a worthy human being
even if the paintings you make now
are not to your likings quite yet.
With practise and a willingness to (let go) of outcome
you will eventually make paintings that you do like!
Your artistic abilities do not dictate your worthiness.
You are loved and beautiful as you are now.
Don't let other people's work intimidate you.
Everyone is at a different skill level.
Everyone started where we all started: at the beginning.
Remember that.
I know it's not easy, but try not
to compare your work to other
people's work.
Don't compare your beginning to someone else's middle
(-Jon Acuff)
You, your voice, your
you-ness matters so much.
Honour your personal journey.
Honour where you are.
Revel in where you are.
Remember it takes practice to learn
anything in life, most of all:
enjoy the process, enjoy the journey.
Everything can be learned.
give yourself time.
You are more able awesome
than you know.

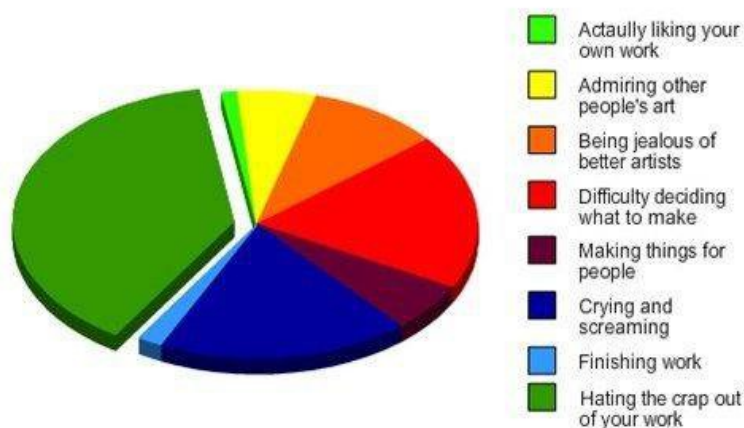
MAKE YOUR MARK!

(a gentle warm up with Tamara Laporte)

Many of us creatives have all sorts of fears when it comes to our creativity and making art. We worry about using our 'expensive supplies' in the 'right' way. We want to run away when we see the 'dreaded blank page'. We don't think we are 'worthy' of creating art, it's 'too frivolous', 'I should be doing better things with my time'. We think 'other people's art is oh so much better than ours, so let's stop it now before we embarrass ourselves even further'! The list goes on!

I want you to know that these fears are normal and ok and that **you are not the only one** feeling this way. I found this really 'fun(ny)' infographic on Facebook the other day that I think many of us can relate to:

Being an Artist



The fact that there is an infographic out there about this, let's us know that your personal fears and frustrations with the creative process are definitely *not new* and you are definitely *not alone* in having all these fearful feels! :)

So what can we do about it? We certainly don't want these fears to stop us from making art. We want to keep making art! Imagine yourself a CREATIVE WARRIOR and sing loudly at the top of your lungs: "THE ART MUST GO OHOHOOOON!! :D" This year we'll delve into all sorts of exercises that help us will help us deal with the voice of the inner critic: despair not!

For this warm up session we'll look at being present to our fears and we'll look at tackling 'blank-page' fear. :)



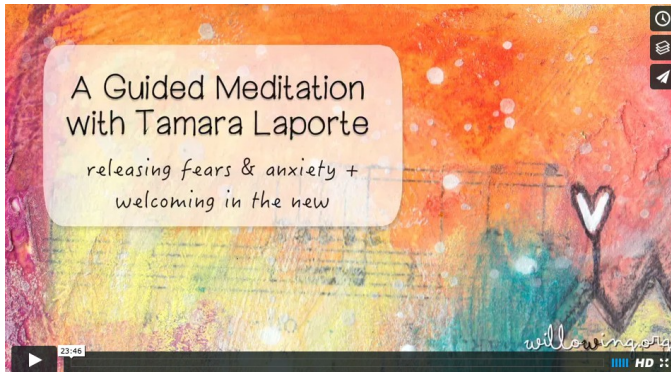
SUPPLIES USED THIS SESSION

Please note, below are the supplies I used, but you can substitute the supplies if and where needed if you don't have what I've used.

- 1 Sheets of hotpressed watercolour paper (140lb)
(I used 16 x 12" but you can use 9 x 12" if you prefer)
- Piece of scrap paper to write down fears/ current feelings on
- Any writing tool (marker/ pencil/ pen) to write down current feeling with
- Gel Medium
- Random collage materials of choice
- Watersoluble crayons (Caran D'ache Neocolor II) or any other water based paints like watercolour paints or watercolour pencils
- White Gesso
- Brayer or palette knife
- Alphabet stamps (optional) with ink pad (preferably waterproof)
- Scissors
- Optional: image that represents your word or intention of the year
- White uniball signo pen (or posca pen in white)
- Bubble wrap
- Some acrylics in colours of choice



Expressing our Fears, Loosening up and Simply Being Playful with our Art Supplies.



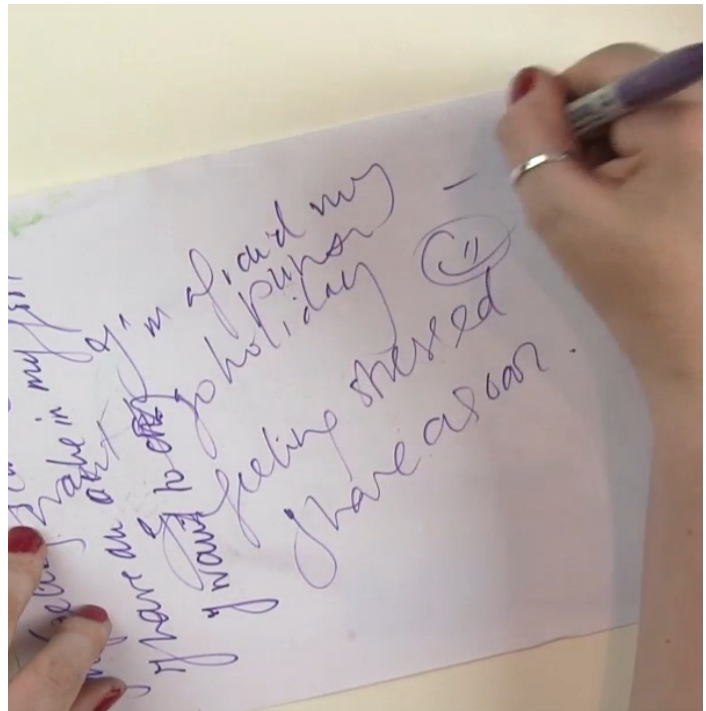
If you haven't yet listened to the guided meditation and you do experience quite a bit of fear, I invite you to listen to the meditation first.

You can also use this meditation throughout the year (and your life) if you ever notice you're experiencing fear and you want to spend some time releasing it.

[Click here to listen to the meditation](#)

A GENTLE CREATIVE WARM UP

Step 1. On a piece of scrap paper, using any kind of writing tool (pencil/ marker/ pen), start writing out any feelings that are present in you right now. They might be fears or negative thoughts or they could also be positive feelings & thoughts. Express and honour what is 'alive' in you by writing it down. Try not to judge what is there, simply allow the feelings to be. By writing them down and paying attention to your feelings and thoughts mindfully, they will likely feel seen and heard and dissipate/ transform more easily and quickly. Don't worry about writing legibly, this layer is intended as simply a way to 'express' yourself.



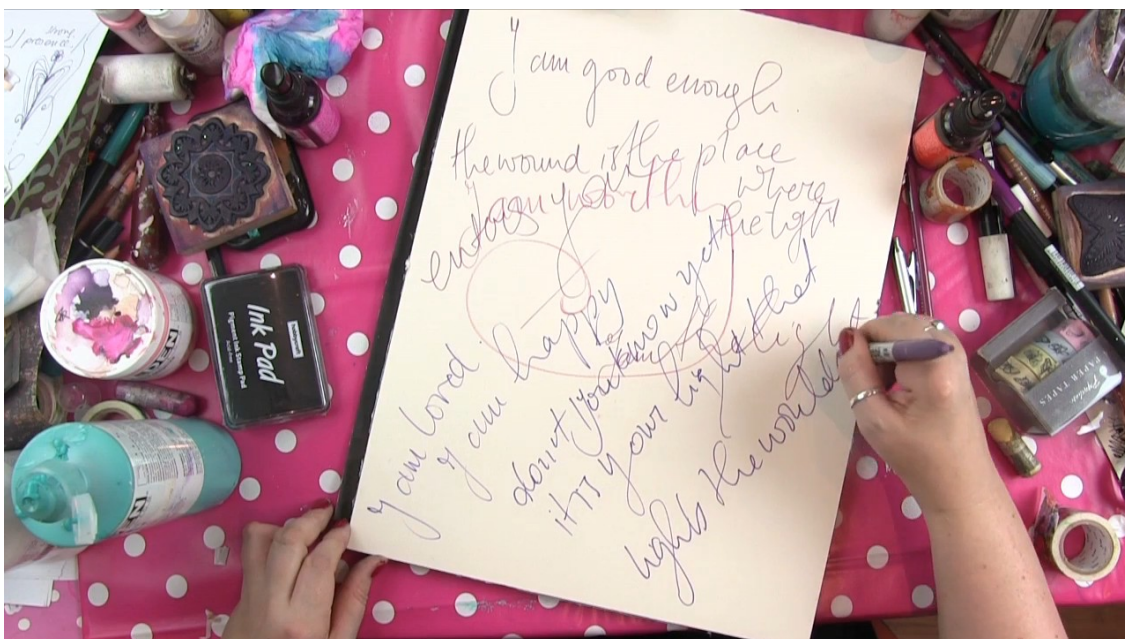
As you are writing down these feelings and thoughts, feel them, honour them and 'allow' them to be. Try not to avoid them/ neglect, repress or ignore them. By simply acknowledging these feelings and honouring them, they are much more likely to dissipate and will have much less 'hold' over you. Repressed feelings have a way of coming back: What you resist, persists.

Once you've given yourself and your feelings some time, you may feel like crunching up or burning your piece of paper, or you can keep it, either is fine. Just spend some tender, compassionate time paying attention to your inner world.



Step 2. Now start working on your watercolour paper. Take a moment and consider what kind of words, sentences, quotes, poetry, affirmations and any other symbols or shapes you may want to write down to uplift you and support you into the new year. Consider what you need to hear in the moment that could support you for the next hour, week or year. Examples:

I am worthy, I am good enough. I love me. I am loved. My light is big. I will shine my light. I am strong. The wound is the place where the light enters you. Compassion, kindness, love, strength, focus. My light, lights the world.



Step 3. Gather together collage materials and paint materials in your colour scheme of choice. If you struggle with colour theory, on a basic introduction to [here is a video](#) colour theory.



Step 4. Tear your pieces of collage into smaller pieces and start gluing them down with a gel medium of some sorts. I used a gel medium to glue my pieces down. Overlap your collage pieces here and there but don't worry about covering up the entire page. Be sure to use an old card or something hard to smooth out air bubbles under your collage pieces. Let air dry or use a heat-gun or hair dryer.





Impasto Gel
Glossy or Matt



You can also use a golden gel medium, avoid using things like modge podge and glue stick as they are waterbased and will dry out over time.

Step 5. Add watersoluble crayons or paints over your collaged layer. The watersoluble crayons can be 'activated' with water and a brush! :) You can create some cool colour patches or drip. After you're happy with your layer of paint; let dry.



Step 6. With a brayer and some white gesso, create a milky 'overlayer' to mute down some of the previous layers. Don't apply a thick layer that covers your previous layer completely, allow the brayer to create that beautiful milky transparency which will create depth and it will unify your previous layers.

Brayers are LOVE! ↷



I absolutely LOVE brayers, they can create some really versatile pull/push textured layers.



Step 7. Start creating contrast by adding concentrated colour patches and or more collage pieces in certain areas. I also used bubble wrap with acrylics paint to create contrast and new marks.



CHOOSING YOUR MEANINGFUL SYMBOL, WORD, IMAGE OR ANIMAL

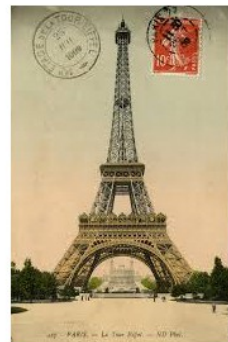
At this point we are going to add a meaningful (to you) symbol to the page which will contain your word/ focus for the up and coming year. If you did the meditation earlier, and a symbol came to you, you could go with that one. If you didn't do the meditation, simply choose a symbol that is meaningful to you and might support your intention for this year. My words for the year are strength & transformation. I chose to work with a butterfly. But let's say, if you want to travel to Paris next year, and your word of the year might be 'travel' you could use an image of the Eiffel Tower to work with.

You are look for an image/ symbol/ word that encapsulates what you want to focus on next year, like an overarching/ umbrella 'aim'. Your word will function as a 'compass' for the year. :)

Ideas for words of the year:

Trust, Light, Shine, Focus, Deepen, Travel, Grow,
Strength, Presence, Joy, Slow, Abundance, Health, Happy,
Transformation, Compassion, Kindness.

Ideas for symbols/ images/ animals of the year:



CONSIDER COMPOSITION

I wanted my painting to include an image of my animal and word and I wanted it to be compositionally a focal point. At times I use the rule of thirds to help me decide where I want to place my focal point, particularly when I've been working quite abstract for a while and then want to bring in a focal point.

The rule of thirds is a handy compositional rule (or guideline, rather) which encourages the artist to divide their canvas space into 9 equal parts. The idea is that the artist (or photographer) places the main elements of interest (the focal points) in the piece of art (or photograph) along the grid lines or right on the 'tension points' (or "hotspots" as I like to call them - see the crosses on the image below). This creates a more effective/interesting piece of art with character and tension.



I like making my own rule of thirds grid on transparent cellophane so I can look through the cellophane and see where my focal points might be best placed.



I decided I want to create a circle that contained my butterfly and my words for the year.

Using a collage piece, a die cut of a butterfly and rubber stamps I added my elements to the bottom right 'hotspot'.



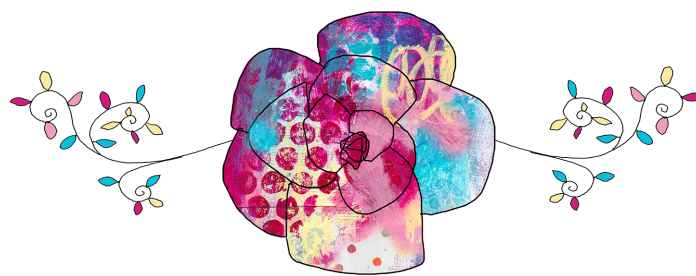
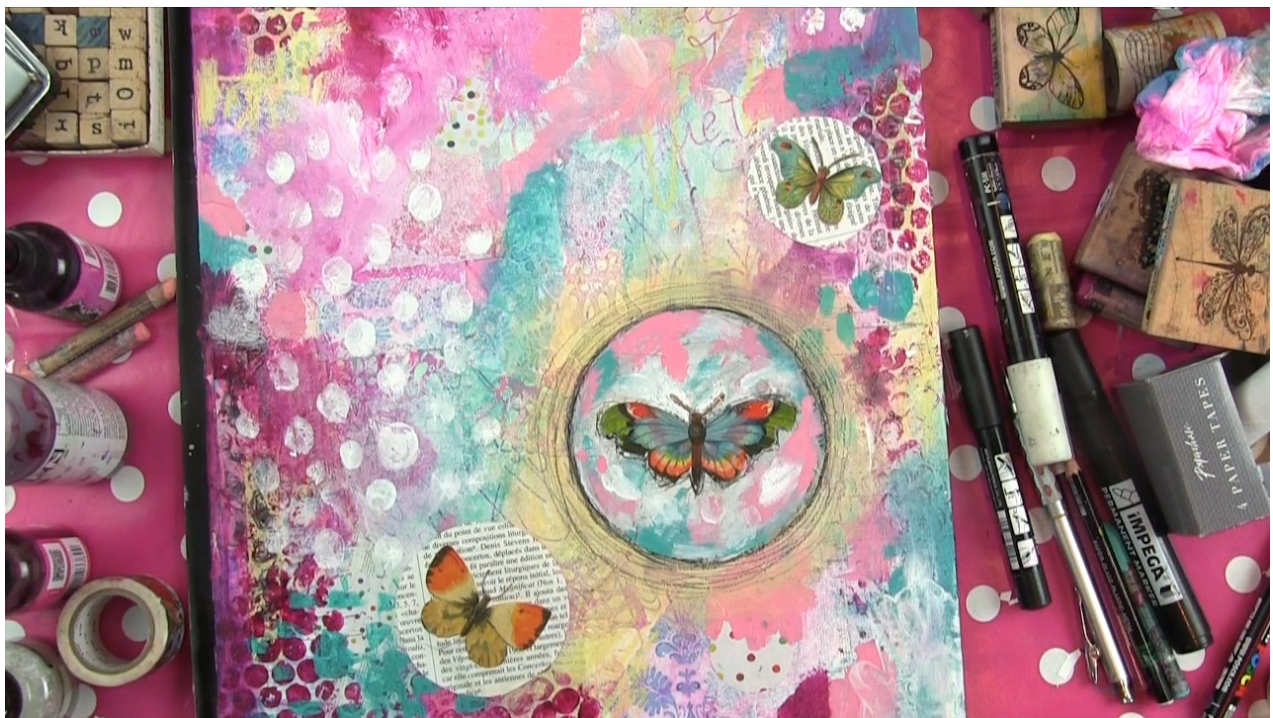
For extra emphasis I added a layer of yellow crayon around the circle:



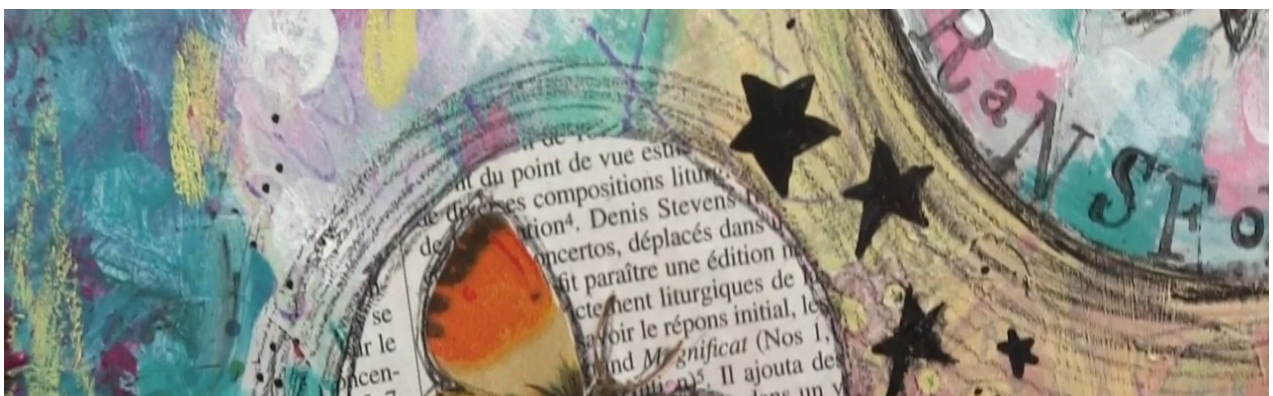
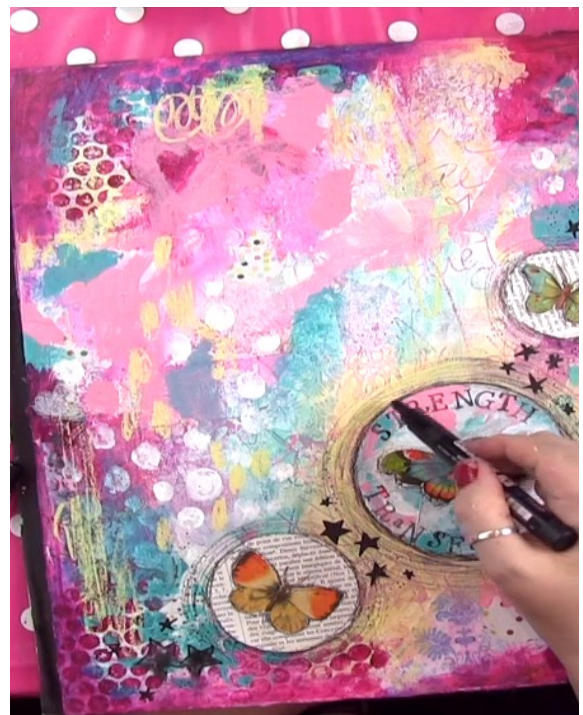
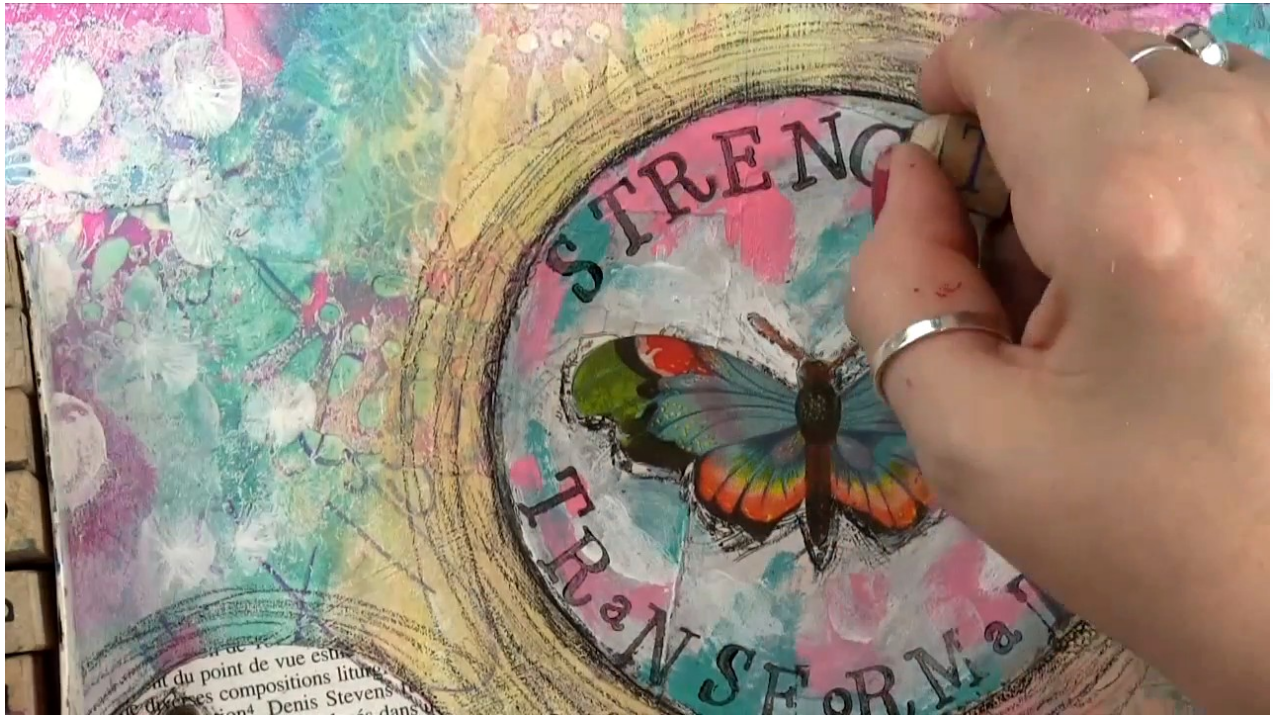
I wanted my words to stand out more so added paint around the butterfly:



I added two additional circles with butterflies around my main circle which emphasised the composition of the focal point, as they are smaller and they form a line/ path.



To finish off my painting, I added my words in the circle by the butterfly and tidied up the abstract areas, look to create/ enhance harmony and value contrast. The stars between the circles help create connection and emphasise the 'path' between circles.

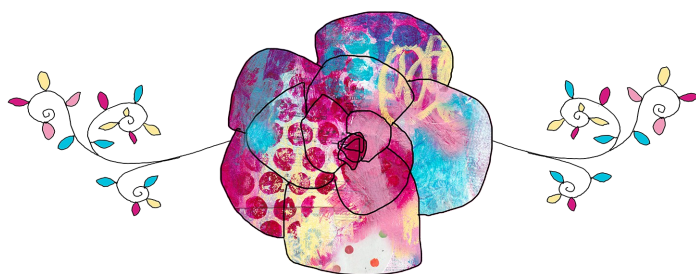


AND HERE IS THE FINAL PAGE:



Below some detail shots of the painting too!





DEAR AWESOME
LIFE BOOK PARTICIPANT

* You are Fabulous *

Well done for getting through this first session! I hope this warm up exercise helped you loosen up a bit and perhaps helped get rid of some of your overwhelm.

Remember that this year is all about **being kind** to yourself, taking it easy and allow for playful learning.

You are not in competition with anyone. We are each at different stages of our creative process. Remember that 'comparison is the thief of joy' and 'don't compare your beginning to someone else's middle!' Compare your work to your own (older) work and marvel at how much you are progressing! :) You can do this thing. I'm right there with you, holding your hand! :D

Can't wait to see what you do this year!

Tam
xoox

I APPRECIATE
YOU! MUCH
LOVE, TAM X



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