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# Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear



## Synopsis

Readers and listeners of all ages and walks of life have drawn inspiration and empowerment from Elizabeth Gilbert's books for years. Now this beloved author digs deep into her own generative process to share her wisdom and unique perspective about creativity. With profound empathy and radiant generosity, she offers potent insights into the mysterious nature of inspiration. She asks us to embrace our curiosity and let go of needless suffering. She shows us how to tackle what we most love and how to face down what we most fear. She discusses the attitudes, approaches, and habits we need in order to live our most creative lives. Balancing between soulful spirituality and cheerful pragmatism, Gilbert encourages us to uncover the "strange jewels" that are hidden within each of us. Whether we are looking to write a book, make art, find new ways to address challenges in our work, embark on a dream long deferred, or simply infuse our everyday lives with more mindfulness and passion, *Big Magic* cracks open a world of wonder and joy.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Talk about receiving the right message at the right time. Wow. *Big Magic* is one of the most honest discussions about the creative process that I've ever read. Gilbert strikes a playful and conversational tone, but make no mistake, this is all straight talk. Her no-BS attitude helps do away with the unrealistic expectations and unnecessary melodrama attached to the concept of "creative living" (like how she so expertly pish-poshes the "tormented artist" ideal). And in its place, she asks all people who feel called to create (writers, painters, musicians, ice skaters, WHATEVER) to quietly and joyfully accept their creative inclinations and ideas as gifts from the

universe. She reminds them to approach their creativity with curiosity and openness, with playfulness and joy—even when it's tough, even when there is no Pulitzer, no bestseller list, no Olympic medal, no call from the Met. Own that creativity, she encourages. Also, stay light with it. This was the message I (apparently) desperately needed to hear. I'm a stay-at-home mom with three young children. And when people ask me what I do, that is what I always tell them. But that isn't what I want to tell them—what I want to shout from the rooftops, in fact—is that I'm a writer. Sure, barely anyone reads what I write, I've never been published, and it probably goes without saying that I've never been paid for a single sentence. In other words, no one really gets anything out of my work but me. But I love it, straight up. So I keep writing, regardless. Yet it feels weird to declare yourself a "Something!" when that something doesn't earn you money or status or likes or hits or retweets.

Given the success of her earlier works, it's probably no surprise that Gilbert has now entered the self-help book genre. I can easily see how her editors and publishers might have pushed her along this path and into creating this book. It's not without merit but it's one of those things where it might never have seen the light had it NOT been written by a best-selling author who does intersperse her thoughts with her real-life experience with the challenges of the creative process and who has the creds to speak with authority. Your response to this book is likely to be based as much on how many books/articles you've read on the topic of creativity rather than on what the author actually puts forth here—or your personal feelings about her life. If you've read a lot already, you'll know that there isn't necessarily anything "new" here on the subject but rather, as always, some clever packaging and a unique POV—and, as you'd expect of a good writer, some memorable quotes. What may keep you more interested are the various personal insights Gilbert offers on her own life and its creative path. She is honest about the difficulties and that alone helps "ground" her book and give it the credibility it needs to be a true inspiration. *Big Magic* is one of those titles that turned me off and not on. It's only the subtitle that drew me in: *Creative Living Beyond Fear*. Yes, that's the thing about creativity. It requires risks and comfort with the unknown. Fear is the killer and the dragon we must face to shape our best lives. If you come away with nothing more than a bit less fear about living your daily life as you would like, then the book is worth your time.

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