

# The WorkLife Journey: Journal

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## Squish-Up For Summer



Dr. Squish, P.H.D. in BS

As the summer approaches and the year starts moving faster and faster I find it important to remember just how critical it is to find time for fun, experiment and discovery. It is easy to get into a routine of work and life that does not allow for those moments of discovery and creativity that can not happen on a spreadsheet, budget, or regular schedule. Creativity is a muscle that can be grown, but unlike the common work mantras of "No Pain, No Gain" or "Keep your nose to the grindstone", creativity does not flourish in those high pressure high stress environments that seem to exist in our work world. You have to actually find time to step out of your schedule and rules and boundaries and let your creative candle burn. This month I have also asked the esteemed Dr. Squish from the Squish Institoot to offer some suggestions for how to break the cycle and infuse some intense fun and creativity into your daily life. - Dave

### **Squish Institoot Project #1 Community Creativity Scavenger Hunt**

How many artists do you know in your community? What are the creative happenings in your community? When was the last time you went to see a play, a museum, or merely took a moment to really look at and form an opinion on the local artwork on the walls of your local coffee shop? Every community is teeming with artists of all sorts that are showing work and commenting in their own way on the world in which they live. In this "Scavenger Hunt" you will get to know 1 artist in your community and maybe discover activities that tap into your own creative side.

Step 1: Look in your local paper for exhibitions, play listings, or music events. Pick one place or event to go to and explore a new "unknown" artist's work.

Step 2: Bring a pen and pad of paper to the event and take any notes or ideas that come to mind when you are seeing the work. Does the painting evoke any feelings in you or remind you of something in your own life? What do you think that the artist is trying to say with their work? Do you think that the artist has achieved what he or she was attempting to say?

Step 3: Take all of your research and use it to write a short essay on a topic of importance to you, your community and/or your workplace. You will find new connection to your values and also discover opportunities to contribute that will give you a sense of satisfaction.

### **Squish Institoot Project #2 Make a Mix of Your Life Story**

Have you noticed how a song can instantly transport you to a time in your life? Almost all of my really important moments in my life have the soundtrack of the music that I was listening to at the time. We are undeniably connected to music as a part of our present reality. I am also surprised at how much I can find out about a person just by the music that they listen to. With so much great music so accessible, each journey into my [itunes](#) library is a trip into my past. For this next exercise you will need to find at least one other person to do this with you (and a whole party can be fine too).

The goal is to make a "remix" CD that takes you through your entire life up until the



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## Finding the Grail...



The Broadway Musical "Monty Python's Spamalot" was recently nominated for 14 Tony Awards. The main theme of the show is a resurgence of the search for the "Holy Grail" from Monty Python's "The Holy Grail". Why is this so popular? Number 1- there are great actors. Number 2 - there are great writers. Number 3 - it speaks to all of us as we are continually searching for our personal Holy Grail. How do the actors search for the Holy Grail? They travel forever, over hills and mountains, throughout many villages, experience a multitude of challenges only to find out that the Holy Grail (in "Spamalot") is found under the seat of a member of the audience. Doesn't that sound familiar? How often are we in search of something we think is out of reach only to find the answer and solution nearby and many times within ourselves.

present. Pick key moments and the perfect soundtrack to accompany the story. You can fit your entire life onto one CD, your moments translated into songs on a disk. Now get at least one other person to do the same.

Plan an informal get together with all of the "players", I suggest a potluck dinner so there is some food to go along with it, and each person takes turns playing their disk and telling the story of the song for them. By the end of the evening, I bet that even the closest of friends know more about each other. This is also a great game to play with a family. Some of the mixes might be shorter for the younger players, but you may be surprised how your family members tell the story of their lives.

In addition, there are two great board games in this vein that you can play over the summer that use music and film clips - **Songburst** and **Scene It!** Taking time for these games builds family and community relationships. Try sponsoring a "game night" with neighbors and make pizzas together. See the links to the games below.

### Squish Institoot Project #3 Break Down a Border

I feel that it is easy to get caught in a cycle of comfort when going through the routines of the work day. There are usually many people that I interact with over the day that I know nothing about. This exercise is simple and covert.

Step 1: Make a habit of noticing the pictures, artwork and memorabilia (trophies, statues, etc.) around other people's desks. Ask questions, listen to the stories and show interest in these little things that have meaning.

Step 2: Use your own collection of mementos to start a "Legacy Journal". Write down brief descriptions of where the object comes from, how you acquired it and why you kept it. Take a digital picture of it and paste it in your journal along with any other connections (like a scrapbook). Someday, all of these little memories will make a great gift to a family member, or who knows - you might end up being famous!

### Squish Institoot Project #4 Squish the System!

My Squish hero of all time is Copernicus. His willingness to challenge the conventional wisdom and change the system at risk of life and limb is a great role model for us today. We have so many systems that were conceived and built for an earlier time, we are unable to even see that many of them are out of date and inefficient. The same is true of our own concepts of our abilities. Self limiting beliefs hamper our growth and prevent us from getting what we want. Try this "Copernican" exercise: listen to your own statements and look for limiting beliefs you may have had since childhood like "I'm not creative" or "I can never win board games", then write out answers to the following questions: When and where did I acquire this belief?, What real evidence do I have that it is true?, What's at risk for me if I let go of it?. Make a plan to try a new way and form a new statement that reflects your changed view. Squish! Have a great summer!

Most Squishingly Yours,

Dr. Squish,  
(to see some video clips of The Doctor in action, please [visit WorkLife Online!!!](#))

ourselves.

Our personal search for our Grail can be exciting and challenging or mundane and boring. It's our choice to put as much or as little into the quest. We each have our individual boundary which draws the line between going over the top, which causes us to shut down when we experience too much stress, or too far below the boundary line, which creates boring and blah experiences.

Through coaching, we help clients balance the boundary line by a mental "hovering" over the line. Through self-awareness the individual learns where the boundaries are both personally as well as with those he or she comes in contact with.

So, are you up to the challenge? Are you ready for the journey? The grail for "Spamalot" was winning the Tony award for 2005 Best Musical. Where will your travels take you as you search for your grail? Is it a goal that you can stretch and reach towards or does it simply need to be brushed off, polished and acknowledged as being found? Maybe it's a discussion with co-workers over a can of spam (not online spam). Try practicing the philosophy of Dr. Squish of the Squish Institoot and "infuse some intense fun and creativity into your daily life" and never lose sight of your Holy Grail.



[\(click to visit Monty Python\)](#)



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Games	Book	Website
<a href="#">Scene-It</a>	<a href="#">Legacy</a> by Linda Spence	<a href="#">Sodaplay</a>