



Intuitive Painting Journey

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Step 6: Intuitive Painting and Self-Criticism

We have reached lesson six, halfway through the first stage of working with soft pastels.

This stage is the breakthrough: the first discovery that we can create directly from our emotions with freedom. The more we give ourselves to it, the more alive it becomes, the more it becomes part of our daily life.

And what a joy it is to now paint on quarter sheets. By the way, whether you keep your paintings or throw them away, it doesn't matter. You may keep them for a while and look back to see your journey, but not with judgment, only curiosity. Or you may discard them a day or two later. What matters most is that you keep going, that the flow of work continues.

This lesson is dedicated to what may be the very core of intuitive painting: exaggerated self-criticism.

Everyone here has met it. Many of you came precisely because of it. In fact, it was the reason intuitive painting was born in the first place.

I remember myself in my early thirties, in a small apartment, searching for healing. Through creative experiments, I realized how much I was trapped by self-criticism. It stopped me, blocked me, cut me off from expression and freedom. Seeing it clearly was a huge step.

Self-criticism shows up in three stages:

- Before creating, it prevents us from starting. "You're not good enough, don't even try."
- During creating, it interrupts the flow. "That will ruin everything, don't do it."
- After creating, it judges harshly, refuses to give credit, dismisses the work.

That is exactly what intuitive painting is designed to bypass. It teaches us to trick the critic, distract it, turn it into part of the game.

How?

- By limiting time, the critic focuses on the clock, not on quality.
- By requiring the page to be filled, its energy is redirected: “Make sure there is no white space left.” Criticism becomes creation.
- By setting a fixed number of paintings, there is no endless debate. The frame is set; inside it, we are free.

And the greatest gift: we are allowed to scribble, to ruin, to cover, to rebuild. Destruction is part of creation. This is healing.

The more we practice, the more we receive this gift in daily life: living with less inner hostility, less judgment. And that is a gift of immeasurable value.

Painting Assignments

First painting, A big scream and a small scream

Divide the quarter sheet into two halves.

On one side, draw a big scream: bold colors, wide strokes, loud energy. On the other side, draw a small scream: little dots, soft trembling lines, minimal marks.

The task is to move back and forth between the two. Spend time in one, then the other, alternating again and again until both halves are absolutely full. Leave no millimeter blank.

Second painting, The party of criticism creatures

Imagine your self-criticism as a gang of small creatures, funny or grotesque monsters. Now paint them all together, as if they are having a “party.”

Give them all kinds of shapes, big and small, thin and fat, upside down, twisted, stacked on each other.

Fill the entire sheet with them. Play with them, scribble over them, add or erase. Anything goes.

Important: stay with it for a full 10–15 minutes.

Third painting, painting on painting on painting

This is the classic exercise for working with self-criticism:

1. Start with a free, energetic painting using 3–4 colors. Fill the entire sheet quickly and with intensity.
2. After 3–4 minutes, take different colors and paint a completely new picture over the first one, covering it entirely.
3. After another few minutes, repeat once more with yet another painting in different colors, covering everything that came before.

Each layer should last about 3–4 minutes. Build, destroy, rebuild. Show your inner critic that nothing is forbidden, that this, too, is part of creation.