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**Don’t Fall in Love with Your Ideas**

Let’s be honest, graphic designers have amazing jobs. We get to solve client’s problems by creating and design thinking, and in the process we make the world around us a better looking place. We should absolutely love what we do. I know that sometimes we can lose sight of the fact that we can still love what we do without falling in love with every single idea that flashes in our minds or comes out on a sketch pad. The creative process is all about coming up with a ton of ideas, and realizing the most of them will probably not ever see the light of day, and we need to be okay with that.

There’s a few reasons why we designers can tend to fall in love with our ideas. But why shouldn’t we? So you’re thinking that it’s our job to love ideas. Well yes, sort of. I would say that our job is to love the pursuit of ideas rather than the idea itself.

**Why We Fall in Love with Our Ideas**

**Ideas don’t always come easy**

Okay, so I realize that great ideas don’t come easy. Sometimes we all hit a creative wall and even bad ideas don’t come easy. So when we come across something that we think could work, even if it’s way too early in the process to even tell if it’s our best idea, we latch onto it for dear life. The creative process is intense; it can take hours, or weeks, or even months.

**It can be really easy to get attached to our ideas when we have shed blood sweat and tears over them.**

When we know how much work the process will take after the idea or direction has been chosen, we make a commitment to stick by that idea because the road ahead can be a lot of work. But just because there’s hard work involved, doesn’t mean it’s something that can’t grow past what you think in the beginning.

**We get overconfident**

Another reason designers can fall in love with their ideas is by being overconfident. And by this I mean that they know that they make awesome work, they have a ton of clients or maybe even awards so they think that every idea is a golden egg. This is an even more dangerous approach because when you come to a point as a designer where you think that you have nothing more to learn or that every thing you create is genius, then you are in a sad state.

**Sometimes it happens that our design instincts can kick in and our first idea ends up being the best idea in the end. The only way to know this for sure however, is to sketch out and explore lots of possibilities for ideas that can solve our design problems.**

If you go back after a few ideas and find that your first one was great and go with it, awesome, good for you. But falling in love with your first idea is one of the worst things that you can do. When we are overconfident we think everything we do is awesome then we have no objective point of reference for the ideas that come into our heads.

**Why we shouldn’t fall in love with our ideas**

**You become less effective**

There’s actually some psychology attached to the notion of getting too involved with or to attached to our ideas. When people get attached to a specific idea, they become “selective” in the feedback that they receive. In other words, people that fall in love with their ideas only hear the good things when people say about their ideas, and they tend to filter out the possibly constructive criticism. Creative’s that remain objective hold loosely to their work and are able to really listen to the feedback that they get.

**Designers that can accept feedback will 100%, always end up with a better end product.**

Design is about solving problems, and if our designs only make us happy but fail at the problem-solving then we are failing at our mission.

**You look like a jerk**

There is another problem with being overconfident when it comes to falling in love with your ideas.

**When you are overconfident designer, the problem is that the you have ultimately fallen in love with yourself long before you fell in love with your idea.**

Nobody wants to work with a jerk designer like that. We all know those designers or artists who just can’t take objective comments or constructive criticism about their work. I know I’ve had students who I’ve given feedback to and they decided that they know best and end up with mediocre work. We have to realize as designers that there is no one right answer to a design problem and that if you get caught up in your own ego when there is potentially a better solution out there, you will end up looking like a jerk and losing the respect of a lot of people.

**You might actually end up with a better idea**

Designers who feel less attached to their ideas are able to view them more objectively, respond well to feedback, and eventually create better work than the designer who decided that they just couldn’t change the idea they have fallen so deeply in love with. I’ve written very briefly about not grieving our ideas. That some ideas are meant to die so that better ideas can live. Realizing this can be a life-changer for you if you really embrace that falling in love with the pursuit of ideas is the most fulfilling route to take.

**Chase opportunity, don’t get tied down and married to the first burst of creativity that comes your way.**

Be patient and take a look around at all the possible solutions to any design problem, without getting lost in them. Instead of falling in love with the ideas you create, become more open to receiving and incorporating feedback and you will end up with much better ideas than you ever thought you would. I would rather follow after an idea with the knowledge that it could morph into something even better than to dig in my heels on an idea that may not work.

Sometimes the first concept we come up with is incredible and sometimes it’s not. But whether it’s our first or 100th idea, any idea, especially a creative one, can always be improved.

**The minute we get married to one single idea, we are already on the road to becoming obsolete. Creative innovation requires flexibility and a willingness to change and learn.**

It’s okay to stand your ground when the client asks you to “make the logo bigger”, but when there is legitimate changes or improvements that can be made, don’t die on the hill of your “love”. Fall in love with the chase, follow ideas, but don’t fall for them. Falling in love with ideas always ends in heartbreak because no matter how grateful the client, no one will ever appreciate them as much as you did.

**It’s okay to love design. Love the creative process, love the chase and the pursuit of your ideas- and when you catch them, hold them loosely, or they will break your heart.**

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