

FREE

One Alive Thing

A mini side quest.

LANE BELONE

One Alive Thing

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How This Works

One Alive Thing is built to be done. It takes about an hour, in one sitting. Every step works with pen and paper. If you'd rather work on screen, it comes as an AI-ready version too: drop it into any AI assistant and it walks the steps with you. The making is real either way. Turn the page and begin.

This Is How It Starts

You've got one hour and something in you that wants to move.

That's enough. What you need is already within you, and the structure here will help you find it, name it and make something real from it before the hour's up.

Here's what you're walking into: three short movements. In the first, you'll locate where your creative life is alive right now. In the second, you'll pick one small thing that wants to happen. In the third, you'll make it.

The pieces fit together in a way you'll only see from the other side. Trust that. Stay with what pulls. The pull is the information.

One real thing. One hour. Let's go.

Before You Begin

Give this one unbroken hour. You can split it across sittings if life makes you, but one sitting is where it works best. The whole point is momentum. Locate, choose, make, in one continuous motion, so the energy you build carries you past the moment you'd usually stop.

The first two movements are quick. Most of the hour belongs to the making.

Set the container:

- Set aside an hour. Just one.
- Phone in airplane mode. Out of reach if you can.
- Close the tabs, the notifications, the noise.
- Have something to write with, or a blank doc open.

That's it. An hour, a quiet space and you. Trust the picking as you go. It knows where it's headed, even before you do. The hour just makes it visible.

Movement 1: Locate

Where You Already Are

Before you pick anything, before you plan or commit or decide, there's a prior question. Where are you actually alive right now?

Not where you think you should be. Not where you were last year. Right now, in this creative life, what pulls and what drains? Where does time collapse, and where does it drag?

This movement is about that. You're not building anything yet. You're just getting honest about the terrain.

Here's how it works. Below is a bank of prompts. Not a questionnaire. Not a test. Scan it the way you'd scan a menu when you're actually hungry. Notice what snags your attention before your brain has a chance to explain why. Pick the three that pull.

Three. Not the ones you think you should pick. The ones that pull.

Work only those three. Write a line or two on each. That's the whole movement.

One note before you begin: none of these prompts is the answer. They're here to jog yours. The Alive Thing you're looking for is already in you. These are just the surface that lets it rise.

Catalyst Bank: Where Is Your Creative Life Alive?

Scan fast. Mark the three that pull.

- The last time you lost track of time while making something. What were you doing? What made that session different from the ones that felt like work?
- What do you make, write, build or do when nobody's watching and there's no outcome attached to it?
- Name something you've kept doing even when it made no strategic sense. What has that thing refused to leave you?
- Where in your creative life do you feel the most like yourself? Where do you feel like you're playing a role?

- What's the last idea that arrived and lit something up before you had a chance to talk yourself out of it?
- What have you been meaning to make or try for more than a year? Why hasn't it happened?
- Where are you genuinely curious right now, not because it's useful, but because it won't leave you alone?
- What's the one creative act you've done recently that you'd do again tomorrow for free?
- Where do you feel the most resistance? Sometimes that's fear. Sometimes that's friction. Sometimes it's the thing that's most alive.
- What would you be making right now if you believed anyone would care about it?

Your Turn

Scan the bank. Don't read every prompt carefully. Feel which ones snag, the way a song catches you before you know the words.

Mark the three that pull. On a screen, highlight them or tick the box. On paper, underline all three, then circle the one that pulls hardest. Use your hand. Make it physical.

Pick with your gut, not your logic. The three you'd defend before you could explain why.

Then write a line or two on each. Not an essay. Enough to name what's true.

These three are your coordinates. They're where this mini side quest begins.

Prompt I picked:

What's true:

Prompt I picked:

What's true:

Prompt I picked:

What's true:

Optional: AI Path

If you're working with an AI today, paste your three answers in and ask: "What do you notice about where I'm alive? Reflect it back without interpreting it."

Movement 2: Choose Your Mini Side Quest

The One That *Wants to Move*

You've got three coordinates. Look at them for a moment.

Don't analyze. Don't rank them by importance or pick the one you think you should act on. Just look. One of those three will feel different from the others. A little more urgent. A little more ready. Like it's been waiting for you to look at it directly.

That's the one.

This movement is about going from where you are alive to what you're going to make. Not eventually. Today. In the next half hour.

The mechanic is the same as last time. Below is a bank of tiny creative acts. Not a menu of options, not an assignment list. A field of sparks. Scan it fast. Let one or two snag before you can explain why. Those are the ones.

One reminder before you scan: none of these is your thing. They're here to jog yours. What you're actually going to do is already in you. These just help it surface.

Catalyst Bank: What Wants to Happen?

Scan fast. Mark the ones that pull.

- Write the thing you keep almost saying out loud. Get it all the way out, a few paragraphs, onto the page.
- Record a rough voice note walking through the idea you've been carrying. A few minutes, unscripted. Hear yourself say it.
- Make the first draft of something you've been postponing because it isn't ready. Start it rough.
- Write and send the message, email or reply you've been sitting on. Say the whole thing.
- Sketch the shape of an idea. Not a finished drawing. Enough lines to see what you're thinking.

- [] Name a thing you've been building, writing or working on that still doesn't have a name. Try ten names. Pick one.
- [] Write a short scene, lyric or description that came to you recently and hasn't landed anywhere yet.
- [] Build the smallest working prototype of a thing you want to exist. A skeleton, a placeholder, a rough first version.
- [] Arrange something: a playlist, a list of references, a mood board in a document, a set of ideas in the order they want to go.
- [] Write a letter you'll never send. To a person, to an old version of yourself, to the thing you keep not making.

Your Turn

Scan the bank. Don't read every one carefully. Let your eyes catch.

Mark the ones that pull. On a screen, highlight them or tick the box. On paper, underline all that snag, then circle the one that pulls hardest. Use your hand. Make it physical.

Now look at your three coordinates from Movement 1. One of them is probably pulling toward one of the sparks you marked. Feel where they connect.

That's your quest. You didn't plan for them to point here. They just did.

Name It

Write your mini side quest in one plain sentence. Naming it is choosing it.

My quest for the next 25 to 30 minutes:

Size Check

Read your sentence back. Does it finish in one sitting?

Right-sized: "Record a rough ten-minute voice note walking through the idea I keep circling." Or: "Draft the opening section of the piece I've been putting off." Or: "Sketch and label the structure of the thing I want to build."

Too big: "Launch the newsletter." Or: "Write the whole piece." Or: "Figure out my creative direction."

If yours sounds like the second kind, shrink it. One finishable action from inside the bigger thing. The goal isn't to solve it. The goal is to make one real thing that didn't exist thirty minutes ago.

Optional: AI Path

Paste your sentence in and ask: "This is my mini side quest. Is it small enough to finish in 30 minutes? If not, what's one finishable action from inside it?" Let it help you size, then you decide.

Movement 3: Take It

The Making

You've named the thing. Your phone is already gone.

Now you make it.

Set a timer for 25 to 30 minutes. Then put this guide down and go.

A few things to hold as you head in:

It doesn't have to be good. It has to be made. The goal isn't a finished product. The goal is a real thing that didn't exist when you sat down.

Keep it rough. Rough is honest. The first version of any alive thing is almost always messy, and that's not a flaw. That's what first versions look like when they're real.

If you finish before the timer rings, you're done. Let it be done. Sit with it for a moment.

If the timer rings mid-flow and something is still moving in you, ride it a little longer. You'll know when it's finished. The timer is a container, not a lid.

One last thing: stay in it. When the urge to check, revise or second-guess shows up, let it pass. The only task is to keep your hands moving until something real is on the other side.

Begin.

(Come back when you're done.)

The Shift

Welcome back.

Before you do anything else, pause. Notice your body. Not in a clinical way. Just check in. What's different from before you started?

There's usually something. A loosening somewhere. A quietness that wasn't there. Maybe a flicker of something closer to pride than you expected. Maybe just a sense of having crossed something you weren't sure you could.

That's the shift. You went toward the thing instead of around it, and the body registered it.

The heaviness you carried in with you around this thing, what is it now? Something changed on the far side of the doing. Take a breath and feel where it landed.

The Proof of Life

You made something. Name it. This is the part you can share: the one alive thing you made today and the shift you felt when you got to the other side.

Keep it short. Two lines. Screenshot-worthy, if that feels true.

What I made:

What shifted:

(Optional: paste both lines into your AI and ask, "Help me say this in one shareable sentence." Use it or don't. The two lines you already have are enough.)

One thing to carry out: a person who made one alive thing today is a different person than the one who walked in. The evidence is in your hands.

The Close

What Just Happened

You came in with something unfinished. You're leaving with something made. That counts. Most people circle the edge of this for years. You crossed it today.

Here's what's worth naming, quietly: what you just lived was one rotation of a creative flywheel. Aliveness in. Something real out. A shift on the far side of the doing. You didn't map it. You didn't plan the loop in advance. You lived it, and the wheel turned anyway, because the loop is built into the structure of going toward the thing instead of around it.

That's what a flywheel is: a machine that runs on the same fuel you just used.

One rotation doesn't install the machine. One rotation is how you know the machine is real.

Pass It On: Leave a Marker for the Next Person

You just crossed something. And somewhere right now, there's a person standing where you stood an hour ago, unsure whether to begin. You know what they need. You just figured it out the hard way, which means you now know the shortcut.

If you want, leave them something. A note from someone who showed up and made the thing. Three short questions. A few lines each.

1. What did you make, build, create or express?
2. What shifted in you when you reached the other side?
3. What would you say to someone standing where you were an hour ago, unsure whether to begin?

This is optional. The hour is complete. Your proof of life is already in your hands. But if something moved in you, passing it forward costs nothing and changes everything for the next ready person.

Leave your marker here: sidequesthq.co/one-alive-thing/share

Where This Goes Next: The Machine That Runs It

You just felt the loop turn once. There's an architecture to why it worked, a real machine with named parts, a trigger that makes it self-starting and a design that means each rotation gets smoother instead of rougher. That machine is the Creator Flywheel Playbook.

It's the other end of the same spine. This product let you feel the turn. The Playbook shows you how to install it so it runs on purpose, every time, across every creative thing you build. If you're curious what the structure underneath today looked like, that's where it lives.

[The Creator Flywheel Playbook →](#)

The Mirror (*optional, beyond the hour*)

This one is past the hour. Your proof of life is already complete and the core is done. The Mirror is for the curious. Bring what you made to your AI or sit with a longer reflection. Paste in your proof of life and ask it to mirror the pattern back. What it reflects will help you polish your two lines into something more shareable. And if you want to see the loop that was running underneath, you can ask that too.

- *"Here is what I made and what shifted. Mirror the pattern back without interpreting it. What do you notice?"*
- *"Help me say what I made in one sentence someone else would understand and feel."*
- *"I want to understand the creative loop I just ran. What was the structure underneath it?"*

Use any of these, all of them or none of them. The thing you made is already real. The Mirror just lets it tell you more.

A Note Before You Go

This came from a simple belief: you come alive by making. One real thing, made today, changes how the next one feels.

I'm Lane. I build things that help people live and create on their own terms. If this resonated, there's more of it at sidequesthq.co.

Go make your next alive thing.

Lane

