

UNBORED zine

Unbored Zine highlights different activities to get you interested to try something outside of your normal routine. Each issue has a theme, so you can select which (or all) you'd like to try.

All issues are initially released for free digitally on my blog, larajla.com. They will be available for a week before they move to my Etsy shop, larajlacreates.com.

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Solo Endeavors

Create Your Own List

So, you don't like my ideas? Create a list of items you might do. Post it on your refrigerator to look at when you're bored.

Group idea:

Create a list with your friends. Have a contest for the craziest idea that's still possible to do. Perhaps break them out into individual and group ideas. Ask each person to select one and do it. You can also share the list with others to spread the fun.



Read a Book

You knew this would be first, right?

Your book doesn't have to be traditional in any sense. You can listen to an audiobook or read an ebook. Don't forget to look at comic books, graphic novels, fan fiction or even videos of the genre of story you're looking for. You never know when you might find something completely different that you really enjoy.

Start with the genres you enjoy. Then, expand your options into other areas. Usually, when you think of reading, you immediately go to fiction. Try a "how to" book or perhaps a biography. Moving beyond your "normal" will help you get out of the boredom trap.

Group idea:

Build a little free library in your neighborhood.





Take a Nap

We explored a lot of ideas. Perhaps there will eventually be a second “Solo Endeavors” issue to explore even more ideas. At this time, I’m thinking a nap would be a good idea. You agree? Great.

Zzzzzz.....

Boredom for One?

Many of the suggestions for the previous issues of the *Unbored Zine* series are activities for multiple people. For this issue, I’ll focus on things you can do by yourself. You can expand the ideas you see here to activities for multiple people, if you wish. I tried to give a group idea for each individual activity to give you a start for your own brainstorming session.

If you’re alone and bored, grab this issue for some ideas of things to do!

Learn Something New Online

From formal courses to YouTube videos, you can always find something to learn online. While much of it is free, the really good stuff may cost. I’m not saying it’s expensive, but what you find is completely dependent on what you’re looking for. Here’s a few ideas to start your journey.

- **YouTube** and **Vimeo** — both sites offer free videos.
- **Udemy** has free and paid classes online. Some of the free classes are clips of the paid classes so you can try them out. Paid classes are a charge per each. You can watch for sales and get them for as low as \$10 for a class. Just save the ones you’re interested in doing into your wishlist.
- **Skillshare** is a low-cost alternative to learning. You pay a flat fee and you can take as many or few classes as you like. Topics include business, software, graphic design, web design, leadership, crafts, culinary, writing, photography, film and more.
- **Coursera** offers free courses you can take. Certification costs, but the knowledge is free.
- Open Courses are those that universities such as MIT that offer free courses for people who just want to learn.

Try a New Look

Reinvent yourself. Your hairstyle, clothes and accessories say a lot about you. Is it what you want it to say? How might you take the items you currently own and combine them differently or add something in for a completely new look. See . . . there was a reason for organizing your closet.

You may want to look more serious, crazy or fun. You might also choose to cosplay your favorite character. Perhaps you decide to build a collection of hats or single gloves. Get some t-shirts and decorate them yourself. I have tried to convince others that there is not enough tie-dye in the world, but I have been told I’m wrong.

Group idea:

Discuss a new look with your friends. Share items you no longer wear with each other to lower the cost of your new look. Let others give suggestions . . . you never know what you might come up with.

Organize Your Closet

I heard that groan from here. Before you complain, think about all the cool new stuff you can get if you clean out your closet!

Start with getting rid of items that are damaged, stained or don't fit. No, deliberate stains still count as stains. Put it in the "trash" pile. You'll also want a "donation" pile for those items that are still in good shape. You could also do a yard sale, but that is a huge endeavor I'd rather not get into.

As you organize, you'll start by getting everything out of the closet. Now, start the fun (ahem) task of sorting through what's left.

Group idea:

Collect the items and have a fashion show. Let your friends help you decide if that sweater is too tight or the "used to be jeans but are now shorts" are too short. You'll have a lot of laughs. Be sure to take turns at everyone's house so you can share in the comment making.

Create a YouTube Channel

You can create text, take photos or talk about something — or you can show it! A video of "bad hair days" would be a lot more interest than writing about them. Look at the previous list again. Can you visualize how one or more of these could be done in video form? Try to make a few videos and start your own channel. You might like it.

Group idea:

Ask one or more friends to create a video on the same subjects for your channel. Discuss how they handled the subject, shooting, etc. differently. Work together to improve your video skills.



If you have a preferred learning platform, use it! Be sure to bookmark the sites you want to return to later. You might want to keep a list of the classes that interest you so you don't have to go back and look through course listings more than once.

Group idea:

Take classes locally or online with a friend or more. Take the knowledge you gain and try something new like starting a band, designing a web site or creating a zine.

Deep Dive Software

Find an app that you want to explore. Choose a software program that you want to master. Figure out how to create a skill. Practice, find tutorials and just do it! You might even want to make your own tutorials to help others as you experiment with your chosen software.

Of course, you could also learn to make your own app, skill or software. Not my thing, but you might enjoy the experience.

Group idea:

Plan an app or skill together. Design and create it.

See a Movie

Indoor theater, drive-in and even Netflix can offer movies for your viewing pleasure. Step outside your favorite genre and try something new. Also, check your theaters for times when you can get in cheaper or when not as many people attend so you can have a more personal experience.

Group idea:

You can take this a step further. Set up a movie experience in your backyard or in your home. Invite others over to enjoy the movie with you. Perhaps create themed treats or items to extend the enjoyment of the movie.

Take a Walk or Hike

From around your neighborhood to specific areas where you live, a walk or hike is very beneficial. It allows you to get exercise, enjoy the outdoors, reduce stress and break away from boredom. You can create a walking plan or find a trail to enjoy.

Group idea:

Start a walking club. Plan to walk on a schedule so others can join you.



Go to a Museum

When you go by yourself, you can look at your favorite exhibits for as long as you want. There's no one to pressure you to hurry or skip over exhibits. Don't limit yourself to the large museums. Often small museums and exhibits can be just as interesting.

You also might see an unusual display. For example, a local university has outdoor sculptures across campus. Like a museum, they have different artists represented and a variety of pieces. They do tours or you can look at them on your own.

Group idea:

Using information online, create a list of questions from current exhibits as a type of scavenger hunt to do with your friends at the museum. Stick some really challenging questions in there . . . your friends will thank you.

Explore Local Parks

Local parks might have waterways, walkways, play areas, sport fields, historical markers . . . well, you get the idea. Start by researching your local park and see what amenities they have available. Do you need to bring your equipment to use on-site items or is it provided? Do you need to reserve it or pay in advance? Or is everything "first come, first serve?"

When I say local, it does not necessarily mean small. One of our "local" parks is a National Park — Indiana Dunes. It's only a 20-minute drive and not only has many of the items listed, but also provides programming to enjoy for free or very low cost. You can camp, hike, learn crafts, earn patches and more.

Group idea:

Ask each person to pick and plan one thing they'd like to do at a chosen park. Provide a set time for each activity. Go for the day and have fun — just remember to stay hydrated!

Volunteer

Find a group or organization that could use a helpful hand like a community garden or a soup kitchen. Craft items for a women's shelter. Offer to help your neighbors with chores. There are so many things you can do that help others that I can't list them all here. In return, you can enjoy the warm fuzzies of knowing you helped someone else.

What do you mean you don't have any ideas? Talk to your friends, family and neighbors. They can tell you about areas in your community that need a helping hand.

Group idea:

Look for larger projects where multiple people can be beneficial. We've helped put mulch on paths and pulled invasive species at a National Park, collected food drive items and supplied monthly activities at a local nursing home.

Start a Blog or Podcast

Do you have something to say or share? Do so!

From neighborhood safety to your views on politics, there is a plethora of ideas to choose from. Start with a brainstorm session of what things interest you that might be fun to do multiple posts or episodes on. Here's a short list to start:

- Stupid laws still on the books
- Bad hair days
- Clothing choices that should be avoided
- Chalk street art tips
- Vintage comics updated for today
- Favorite public domain books
- Challenges for your friends and family
- Volunteer possibilities in your area
- Adding flame to your favorite foods

That should give you enough variety to realize you can create content on just about anything.

Group idea:

Do this same activity with one or more friends. With supporting each other, it's likely to last longer and be done in a timely manner.

Paint a New Way

Yes, you can paint with a brush. What else can you paint with? Here's a list to start your painting journey.

- Plastic drinking straw and air
- Marbles
- Pencil erasers
- Bubble wrap
- Plastic wrap
- Comb
- Make up sponges
- Spatula

Get the idea? Look at things around your home and try painting with it. Experiment with colors and textures. You never know, your masterpiece might be better than the chalk drawing you made for street art. Share your unique art and process.

Group idea:

Ask a group of people to bring items to "paint with" and host an art session for everyone to experiment with what they brought as well as others' items.

Start a Photo Challenge

A photo challenge can be limited taking a specific type of photos for a day or an afternoon, or the same type of photo for every day for a year. A person I follow online has done personal challenges involving sky shots and abandoned buildings. Currently, he is working on taking pictures of miniature toys in interesting compositions.

Determine what you want to take a picture of. You might want to take the same picture of your backyard on the first of every month for a year to see the changing of the seasons. You might want to do a series of selfies or even the steps as you work through a project.

You can even take an item like a lawn gnome and place it in odd places and take pictures of its "travels." Write snippets up to go with your photos. Don't write . . . we went to the park. Boring!

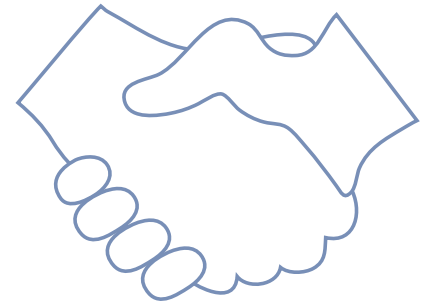
Go Fishing

Depending on your area, you might have different ways of fishing. These might include fly, bobber, lure, magnet . . . Sorry, I didn't mean to go off on treasure hunting. Anyway, you probably have the equipment necessary to do this activity. If not, find a friend to borrow some from. Sitting, watching the water and waiting for a bite is very relaxing.

NOTE: If your area requires a license to go fishing, get one before you go. In our area (and I'm assuming across the US), the DNR can take your fishing equipment if you don't have a license on you. This would be worse if you were borrowing gear.

Group idea:

Plan a fishing trip with friends. You might choose to go camping as well.



Meet the Neighbors

No, it's not bad. Your neighbor isn't a vampire or circus clown . . . probably.

Meeting your neighbors not only helps build relationships, but allows you to see your neighborhood in a new way. A family with children will see it differently than one without. Even the elderly have a view. You can identify those people who might need help. For example, an elderly neighbor might not be able to shovel snow or could use someone to take their dog for a long walk once a week. A family with both parents working would really appreciate you mowing their lawn so they can spend that time with their kids.

Group idea:

Start a service club in your neighborhood. List the neighbors with the most need and help with larger projects such as painting a fence or hosting a kids afternoon to give parents a break.

Fly a Kite

You might choose a cheap paper one or go crazy with a more professional version. You might also choose to design and make one yourself. Don't stick to the traditional design, but look at what is available and use your imagination.

Group idea:

Fly with others. Challenge each other to see who can get theirs up the fastest, go up the highest, stay up the longest, etc.

Dance as Exercise

Dancing is a great exercise. From learning how to do different dances to following along on Just Dance, you're sure to have hot, sweaty fun! Doing this yourself allows you to get in shape and learn to do the steps yourself. Then, when you're ready, jump to the group idea . . .

Group idea:

Prepare a dance challenge or contest for your friends. Brainstorm the ideas and possibilities together.

Local Activities

Do you have a roller skating rink? Skateboard park? Miniature golf course? Water park? Start by compiling a list of the possible places you can go that are designed for a specific activity. Visit first. If it looks interesting, try it! You're sure to make new friends and learn something new.

Group idea:

Do the activities not only individually, but as a group. An activity can feel different by others.



How about . . .

During our trek through the urban jungle, we chanced upon a wily gnome staring longingly at a group of large, white mushrooms. We wanted to know why he was so interested in them . . . but we didn't want to spook the gnome.

Or even . . .

The great gnome hunter found a natural circle of white mushrooms. He frowned, glancing around the area. He muttered something about fairies before heading off to the wood.

Group idea:

Create a photo challenge that everyone can do. Set a specified time limit. Provide a place online for everyone to upload their best photos. You might want to limit the quantity of photos allowed.



Create Street Art

It's not just about chalk drawings . . . wait! Come back! Nevermind, I'll just wait until you're done with your masterpiece.

Street art can be placed or created on-site. Printing a sign to put up to bring a smile to someone's day can completely change their outlook. Placing a book in a public place with a note to share it when that person is done can also be an idea. Of course, then you have those mad knitters and crocheters who love to make trees colorful. Others take things found on-site and decorate them from painting walls to decorating sculptures and even placing free-standing art.

NOTE: Before you do this, check to see if there are any rules or laws dictating your city's views of street art. It may be illegal to do some things . . . or perhaps they don't allow street art at all. Remember — jail is bad.

Group idea:

Create a street art challenge. Guidelines limiting size, area, materials or even type of art can help narrow down the challenge so everyone has the same information to start. And take pictures! Oh, hold it, that's the next one.