

Start  
to Draw  
Your  
Life

Now including the popular:

75 Ways  
to draw More

an eBook by

**Michael Nobbs**

A quick guide to start you on a lifelong drawing journey.  
Go on, pick up a pen and some paper...

# Introduction



Hello, I'm Michael Nobbs, an full-time artist , blogger and tea drinker living on the west coast of Wales. I [podcast](#) about creating and living gently. In the late 1990s I was diagnosed with [ME/CFS](#) and in the years that have followed I've learnt a lot about managing a sustainable creative life with drawing at its heart. I regularly publish [The Beany](#), an illustrated journal of my life.

Both *Start to Draw Your Life* and *75 Ways to Draw More* were originally released as a sort of DIY publishing experiment. The spreads for each booklet were made available via Flickr, where they could be downloaded with a set of instructions to be printed out and assembled at home. Together, the two booklets were viewed over 30,000 times, which feels like an exciting achievement.

I've now decided to combine the two booklets into a single eBook. I hope you enjoy the convenience of this format, and if this is your first time reading the content, I hope it encourages you to draw more.

If you would also like to make a paper version of either or both booklets you can find the necessary files and instructions on my [Flickr pages](#).

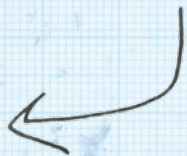
**The content of this eBook is copyright free. Please feel free to share it in part or in its entirety. An attribution and/or link back to [my website](#) is always welcome but not necessary. Happy drawing!**



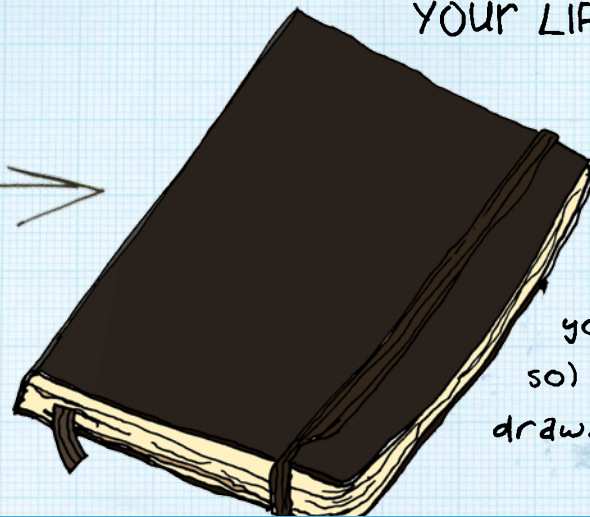
Boy:

1. Pen./pencil
2. Sketchbook.

I prefer  
a pen



and  
a hardback  
sketchbook



I've been drawing my life for quite a few years now. First as a way to cope with illness and then simply as a pleasure, a way to record the passing years. Some people have photo albums, I have drawings. I've drawn the people I've loved, the places I've been, the world around me (and an awful lots of cups of tea). I hope that this little pamphlet will encourage you to start to draw **YOUR LIFE.**

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It's never too late to start to draw and (even though you might not think so) **EVERYBODY** can draw.

# Become Inspired

Read lots of great books about art and look at some wonderful websites. Go to galleries, watch arts programmes on TV. In short immerse yourself and discover what you love!

## Read some of these

A couple of good places to start on the web are:

[dannygregory.com](http://dannygregory.com)

[kerismith.com](http://kerismith.com)

[moonlightchronicles.com](http://moonlightchronicles.com)



Some more recommended reading (click on the titles to find out more):

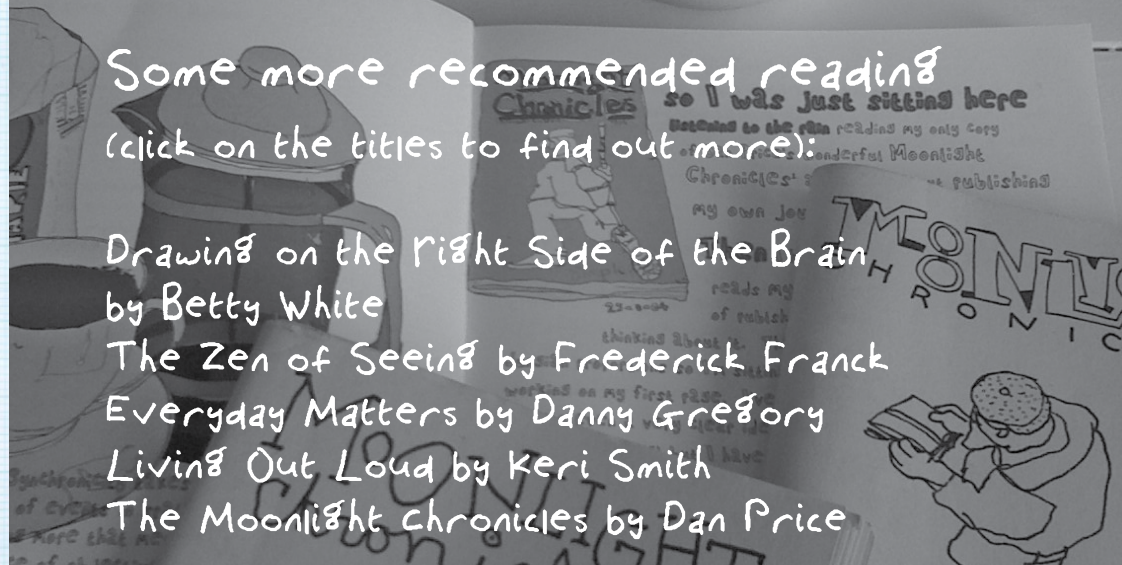
Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain by Betty White

The Zen of Seeing by Frederick Franck

Everyday Matters by Danny Gregory

Living Out Loud by Keri Smith

The Moonlight Chronicles by Dan Price



My art is that of  
living. Each second,  
each breath is a  
work which is  
inscribed nowhere  
Marcel Duchamp

There's no need to  
change your life in  
order to start to draw  
it. It is perfect and  
unique and interesting  
just as it is.

You are the art!

That boiled egg you ate for breakfast is the  
art. that cup of tea you drank with a slice of  
cake is the art. that trip to the shops is the  
art. The contents of your bathroom shelf is  
the art.

Embrace it all. Record it all.

Embrace  
your life  
(Just as it is)

# Assignment

# 1

Draw  
Something!  
(anything!)

Just pick up a pen and start to draw. Don't think about it, just draw whatever happens to be in front of you. Your shoe will do. Your half finished cup of tea. The book you're reading.

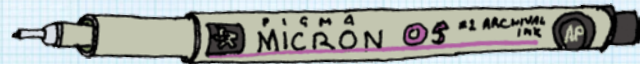
Don't be scared.

No one is marking or judging you!

I AM

AN ARTIST

Draw something  
here

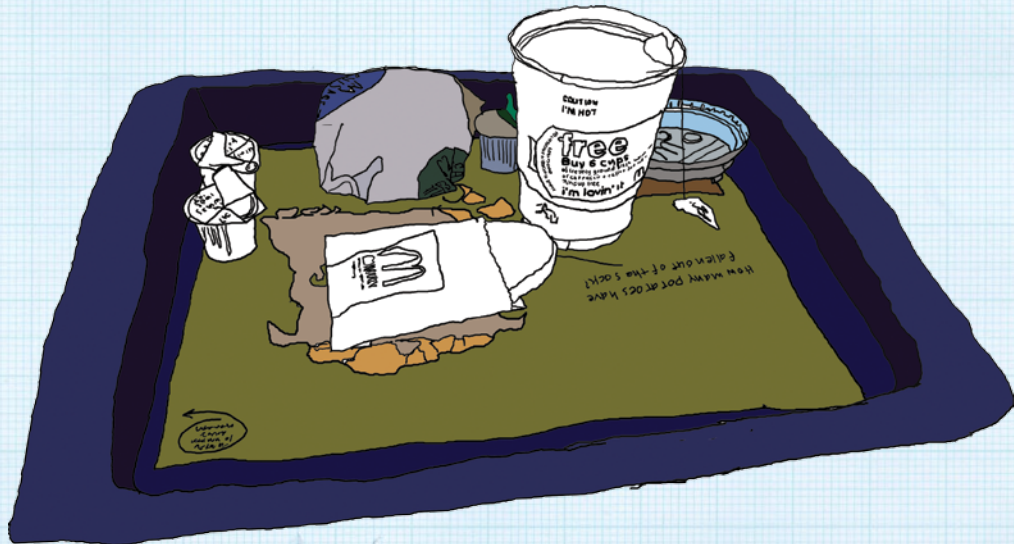


(you have absolute permission to make the worst drawing ever here. It will be perfect just as it is)  
(you can print out this page over on Flickr if you'd like to draw on it. [click here](#)).



Assignment  
# 2  
Draw your  
BREAKFAST

Why not treat you and your sketchbook to breakfast out somewhere (you don't have to go to McDonalds!). Draw your plate of food. Alternatively, if you're really hungry draw your empty plate. You could even take a photo of your breakfast to work from later.



What did you have  
for breakfast?

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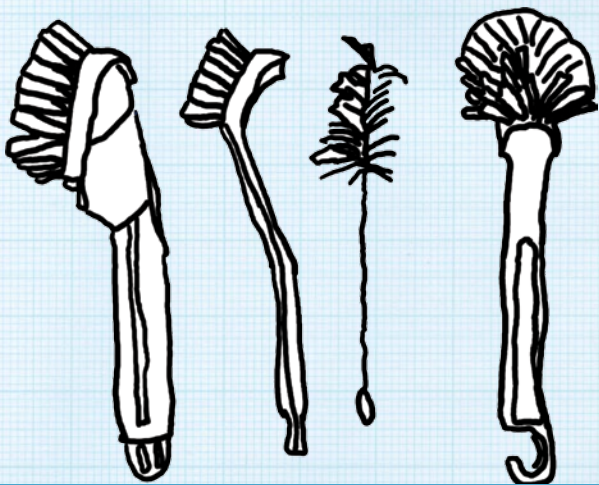
# Assignment

## # 3

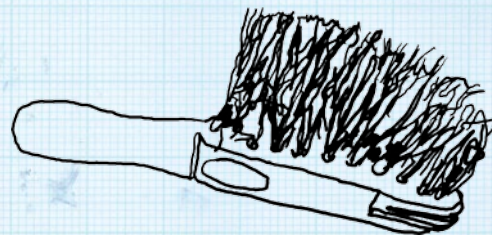
### Make a series of drawings of similar things

the richness that is your life. By all means draw the out of the ordinary too, the birthdays, the places you go on holiday to, a visit to an art gallery. But don't wait for the extraordinary to happen. Start today with what's in front of you. Draw an object, a teacup perhaps, and then find another and another and draw those too.

If you know my work, you probably know that I love to draw the everyday and ordinary - and if you're going to draw your own life you probably have to embrace doing the same. Whilst I think that everyone's life is unique and full of interest, that uniqueness is often made up of the mundane. The endless cups of tea you drink, the food you eat, the dishes you wash, the things in your bathroom, the pile of books by your bed. They all go together to make up



I draw brushes  
what will you  
draw?





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Did I really  
want these?  
or did I just?



Drink tea  
and eat  
biscuits

BA<sup>a</sup>, BA<sup>a</sup>

Have you any wool?

Yes sir, yes sir, three

• Now, by now you probably have at least three drawings from your life. That's the start of a collection! Now, why not start sharing what you're drawing with the world and inspire other people to do the same. If we all convince two more people to draw their lives, who then do on to convince two more people, who go on to convince two more people (you get the idea) eventually everyone will be drawing their lives (actually there's probably some mathematical problem with this sort of drawing pyramid selling, but I bet we could convince a whole load of people to start to draw their lives!).

Assignment  
#4  
Set up and post a drawing to a blog

Write the 2e goal

It doesn't need to be difficult to set up a blog. Of course you could design and build your own, but to start why not use one of the great free services out there. Both Blogger.com and Wordpress.com let you set one up easily. You'll also need a scanner (or failing that you could take a quick photo of your drawings). Don't forget to send me the link to your blog when you set it up. I'd love to see your drawings.

# 75 Ways to draw more

- 1) Carry a small sketchbook everywhere.
- 2) Keep a favourite pen in your pocket/bag.
- 3) Get them both out regularly.
- 4) Read inspirational books ("Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain" is a good starting place, as are "Everyday Matters" by Danny Gregory and Frederick Franck's "The Zen of Seeing").
- 5) Visit inspirational websites (try [www.dannygregory.com](http://www.dannygregory.com) and [www.kerismith.com](http://www.kerismith.com) for starters).
- 6) Find some drawing friends and arrange to meet for a drawing session.
- 7) Take a class (a good way of helping with number 6).
- 8) Make lots of bad drawings (and learn not to care).
- 9) Make a bad drawing when you first wake up.
- 10) Make another before you go to bed.
- 11) Draw your morning cup of tea (see 9).
- 12) Draw your toothbrush (see 10).
- 13) Buy or make a (slim) sketchbook and set yourself a date to fill it by.
- 14) Treat yourself to a present (a new sketchbook?) if you complete number 13.



15) Draw it. 16) Take photos of things you want to draw while you're out and about but are too nervous/haven't time. Draw from them.

17) Go somewhere specifically to draw (a museum, a zoo, a gallery, a library, a bookshop, a cafe).

18) Draw somewhere you just happen to be (the supermarket, the doctor's waiting room, your desk, in the cinema (even if it's dark).

19) Draw in your car (after you've parked!) before you get out of it.

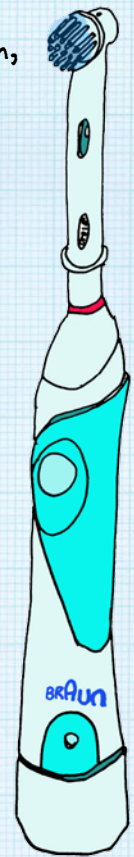
20) When meeting a friend, get there ten minutes early and draw something.

21) Hang around after you've met a friend and draw something else.

22) Hold a drawing party and give everyone a sketchbook and a pen and make drawings of each other's faces without looking at the paper

23) Give up watching one TV programme and draw instead.

24) If you can't give up a programme draw it instead.





25) Draw instead of eating pudding once a week (good for your waistline too).

26) Draw your pudding (that you're not eating).

27) Eat it anyway (and draw the empty plate).

28) Draw your pet.

29) Draw your lover(s).

30) Draw your

mother.

31) Draw your father.

32) Draw your brother.

33) Draw your sister.

34) Draw your best friend.

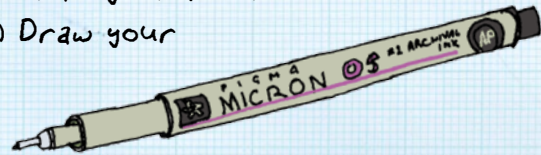
35) Draw your worst friend.

36) Draw yourself in a mirror if you haven't got any of 28 to 35.

37) Get more people in your life (draw them).

38) Find old photos of yourself and draw them.

39) Make a drawn "photo" album of your



40) Draw while you're on the toilet.

41) Draw while you listen to the radio.

42) Draw while you wait for the kettle to boil.

43) Draw while you're on the phone.

44) Draw your phone.

45) Set a timer and draw for fifteen minutes.

46) Draw for fifteen more.

47) Go for a walk and draw three things you see.

48) Draw the contents of your bag.



49) Not feeling well? Draw your medicines.

50) Do you collect anything? Draw your collection.

51) Buy something unusual from eBay. Draw it.

52) Start a collection of unusual objects. Draw them.

53) Sort out things you no longer want. Draw them.

54) Collect together your five favourite things. Draw them.

55) Open a random cupboard. Draw what you see.

56) Draw your favourite food.

57) Draw your least favourite food.

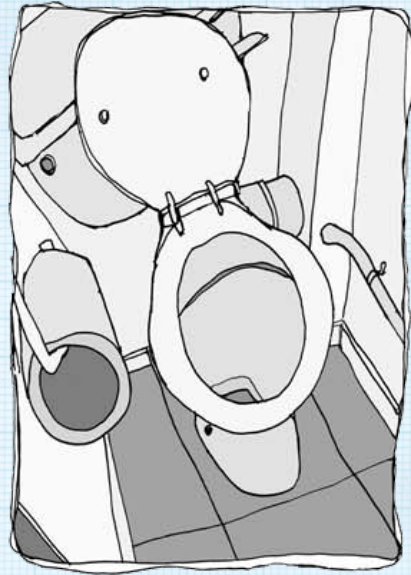
58) Draw the book you're reading.

59) Draw your washing hanging on the line.

60) Draw your shoes. 61) Draw your hand.

62) Draw your foot. 63) Draw your breakfast.

64) Draw your lunch. 65) Draw your dinner.



66) Pick a favourite cafe and work through the menu, drawing everything as you go.

67) Start making tea in a pot (and draw the pot).

68) Start buying loose leaf tea and get a tea caddy to keep it in. Draw it.

69) While you're at it, draw your coffee pot.

70) Draw your dirty dishes.

71) Draw your clean dishes.

72) Draw your washing-up brush.

73) Stay up ten minutes later tonight and draw something.

74) Get up ten minutes earlier tomorrow and draw something.

75) Put down this book and draw the first thing you see.



MY Pencil Case



# Resources

## Some artists who like to draw

(click on the name to visit website)

**Mattias Adolfsson**

**France Belleville**

**Gabi Campanario**

**Danny Gregory**

**Nina Johansson**

**Marc Johns**

**Tommy Kane**

**Koosje Koene**

**Lapin**

**Dan Price**

**Keri Smith**

## Books

(Click on the title to find out more. If you do buy via these links I'll receive a small amount of the cover price)

**Drawing Book: A Survey of Drawing : The Primary Means of Expression** Tania Kovats

**Drawing Essentials: A Guide to Drawing from Observation** Deborah Rockman

**Drawing: For the Artistically Undiscovered** Quentin Blake and John Cassidy (fun and highly recommended!)

**Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain** Betty Edwards

**Vitamin D: New Perspectives in Drawing** Emma Dexter

**Everyday Matters** Danny Gregory

**The Zen of Seeing** Frederick Franck

## Twitterers who draw

(I love to [Tweet](#), here are a few artists who draw that I follow. Click on the names to visit their Twitter pages)

**@doodlers @dannygregory @marcjohns @mattiasink @polan @seattlesketcher @tommykane @urbansketchers @wagonized**

## Drawing Your Life

This book's big sister! Ideas and inspirations (plus lots of space!) to encourage you to draw even more of your life. [Order your copy here.](#)

