

Top 10 Tips for Winter Blues & Slow Work Seasons

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1. It's not just you! Keep a healthy perspective

Darkness, snow, cold winds! In winter many of us feel down and lethargic. If your work also slows at this time of year or if the holidays wreak havoc on your routine, don't blame yourself if you lose some of the creative inspiration you feel at other times of year. You just need to decide what you want to do about it.

2. Slow yourself down

If you've got a busy schedule but you're dragging yourself around, let go of some commitments. Our society places a high value on productivity, but in the seasons' natural cycles, winter is a time to store and conserve energy. Think of it as nourishing yourself for later activity.

3. Indulge in your favourite inspirations

In the spirit of nourishing yourself, make a list of activities, experiences, people, and things that inspire you and engage with as many as possible. This is a "get to do" list, not a "to do" list. You might designate one day a week to tour local galleries or to read or to attend theatre or concerts. Do whatever it is that makes your heart sing.

4. Connect with friends

Social time can be an uplifting contrast to quiet time and rest. Make dates with friends and family who are positive influences and who you don't see enough when you're busy. Reach out when you need support. Think of ways you can give to those you care about.

5. Make commitments to get yourself moving

Need to nudge yourself into more activity? With cold weather and no looming deadlines, many of us need external demands to get moving. Create a routine, organize meetings where others are expecting you, or commit yourself by paying in advance. These all motivate you to get out and go.

6. Work on your craft

Use slow times to build skills or experiment in your art form. For example, an actor might work on some monologues with a coach for a few sessions. A filmmaker might take time to try new editing software. A jewellery designer might learn a new technique to create a brand new line. What would you like to master or add to your repertoire?

7. Learn something new

As a creative person, it's likely you have many, many interests. Why not experiment in a new art form? You could start a new creative hobby. You could just dabble. Or you could research a subject that intrigues you. Take a workshop, sign up for a course, research online or in the library. Following your curiosity inspires a more expansive frame of mind.

8. Get organized

Use time between projects to do those tasks you tend to put off. Clean up your work space. Delete messages in your e-mail inbox. Update your portfolio or your reel or your website. Sort your tax receipts. What would be helpful for you to organize now for busy times ahead?

9. Take stock of the year that's ending

There's something about winter that's not only slow and restful, but also introspective and reflective. If you've got time to pause, you could reflect on what's gone well this past year. What's worked that you could build on? What was most satisfying and why? What did you learn?

10. Plan ahead for the year that's starting

What would you like to happen this year in your creative life and work? Visualize your projects and the end results. Write in a journal. Make some lists. Set goals. What should you start on first? Who can help you? What can you plan now for a sparkling year ahead?