

Block-Buster

Info and Inspiration for Creatives: October 2017



FEATURE

Seasonal Adaptive Determination

Short days, low light, chilly rain or howling snowstorms – how is a creative to cope with the fall and winter blues? You could spend six lamenting months in bed, your creativity just a thin memory; you could flee to sunnier climes; or you could opt to continue creating, with a few adjustments.



Work around it

Install full-spectrum lights in your workspace.

Paint in greyscale if it's too gloomy to mix colours.

Write in brightly lit cafes.

Return to beginner's mine and hone your foundation skills.

Devote the darkest, dullest days to research.

Treat it

Change your language: it's not depression, but quiet contemplation.

Pamper yourself with supportive self-talk, good food and cozy rituals.

Create with a friend: a collaborative project could lift your spirits.

Honour your seasonal rhythms and changes in energy levels.

Use transition strategies to move in and out of the dark work the season might inspire.

Use it

Open up to the ideas waiting in the depths.

Harness a somber mood to create activist work.

Plan the coming year's production and marketing activities.

When the sun comes out, devote the whole day to creativity.

Adopting a new attitude and relationship to fall and winter could lead to some of your best work!



BOOKSHELF

Bored and Brilliant: How Spacing Out Can Unlock Your Most Productive and Creative Self

by Manoush Zomorodi
St. Martin's Press, 2017

The host of *Note to Self*, WNYC's podcast and radio show, has built on her Bored and Brilliant Project in this book, giving us smartphone-addicted types a way to reshape our relationship with our gadgets.

Among Zomorodi's examples of out-of-control tech use is the woman whose Rule of Three gives her permission to immerse herself in digital space, as long as there are three or more other people around the table.

Zomorodi says one of the costs of this behaviour is the erosion of "mind-wandering" time that is an integral part of the creative process.

The author touts the benefits of a more judicious use of technology. After just one smart-phone-free commute, Zomorodi arrived at work in a calmer state and feeling less rushed. Fewer phone checks gave students in her project improved powers of concentration and a deeper understanding of course material.

Bored and Brilliant reveals that at some level, even the most avid tech users

sense that something is missing in all the digital distraction and long for greater human connection. Taking Zomorodi's seven-step challenge could spur you to reconfigure your gadget habits. The result could be more creative time and more innovative, profound ideas to explore.



BRIGHT IDEAS

If an idea comes calling, don't wait for the perfect moment, the right course or expert advice. Even if you're convinced you don't know what you're doing, jump in immediately, says Pam Grout, author of *Art & Soul Reloaded*.

"Place your faith in the idea itself," Grout writes. "It has the ability to teach you anything you need to know. Within its fiery beat are both the questions *and* the answers



COACHING NEWS

The kind folks attending last month's Awesome Annapolis event awarded me the People's Choice prize for pitching an idea that benefits the community. I argued that free coaching would help local creatives gain the confidence to emerge from their studios, believe in and share their best ideas, and develop a sense of belonging through community involvement.

I have a few spaces available for in-person and telephone coaching this fall. Please contact me at 1-902-250-0735 or visit www.clarethorbescreativitycoach.com to arrange a free first consultation.



WISE WORDS

Great advice for us creatives, given our susceptibility to anxiety, depression and other emotional issues:

“Emotional health and pain-free living are not the same things...What is emotional health, then, if it isn't the absence of pain? It is a kind of vibrant wisdom, a dynamic executive awareness coupled with a powerful resistance to humbug with a bit of philosophical wryness thrown in...(A) vibrant wisdom where you acknowledge your human nature and the facts of existence, see your life as your loving and deserving project, and live according to your life purposes and as a value-based meaning-maker. You are completely in the fray and just enough above it to see what the fray is all about. Does pain still arrive? Of course it does. You haven't learned how to walk on water - what you have learned is how to walk on fire.”

— Eric Maisel

The Future of Mental Health: Deconstructing the Mental Disorder Paradigm

Clare Thorbes

Clare Thorbes is a creativity coach and a visual artist specializing in portraiture. She helps writers, artists and performers overcome creative blocks and build a fulfilling life in the arts.

[About Clare](#)



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