



September Writing + Soul Care Tips

How to Battle Creative Fatigue

Edie Melson



We are just beginning to emerge back into semi-normal life, and all the recent world events are causing stress levels to rise again. Every writer I know is exhausted and experiencing creative fatigue to one degree or another.

Beyond that, the holidays are rushing at us with lightning speed. It's time to address the exhaustion so we can finish the year in peace.

Tips to Feed Your Creative Spirit

- First, I do a little inventory and consider what's on my schedule. I take a look at all I have to do no matter what it is, and at the things I just feel like I should do. There's a difference, trust me. Now's the time to let go of everything that isn't absolutely necessary.
- Then I acknowledge that I'm dealing with some aspect of mental fatigue. My mind is like a muscle that's been overworked. It needs time to recuperate. To give it the time it needs, I watch the clock while I'm working and taking frequent breaks during the day. I'll use those breaks to wander around the yard with my camera, take lunch with a friend, or just sit and enjoy a TV show.
- Next I take a look at my disrupted routine. Many of you know I keep a pretty regular schedule. I have to, I'm too easily distracted as it is. A schedule helps me focus and stay productive. But when life spirals out of control, my schedule can degenerate into doing nothing more than sitting in front of the computer for twelve to fourteen hours a day, seven days a week. No one can sustain that kind of workload for any length of time.

When that happens, I become very rigid with my schedule (including the break times). This helps me stay on track, even as I give myself time to recuperate. My writing time will be shorter and my breaks a little longer.



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Tips to Feed Your Creative Spirit (continued)

- The fourth thing I address is the need to feed my creative spirit. I must rekindle the creativity that's burned so low in my soul.
 - I spend more time reading—for pleasure. I may try a new author, or revisit an old favorite. I go where my whims lead me. NOTHING from my to-do reading list allowed!
 - I do some things that spark my creativity, like photography or knitting. Something fun, but not something I do for money. Just opportunities that encourage my imagination to soar.
 - I go to the movies (or plan an in-home movie night). This gives me the opportunity to immerse myself in worlds that other creative geniuses have imagined and most important, much-needed time with my husband and with friends.
 - Finally, I find a time for a short vacation. It may only be a one-day trip into the mountains or a local park, but my husband and I need the unplugged time with just each other as our focus.

The most important thing is to acknowledge and address the fatigue you're battling. Trying to plow ahead without taking time for soul care is a recipe for disaster further down the road.



Edie Melson—author, blogger & speaker—has a passion to help those who are struggling find the God-given strength they need to triumph through difficult circumstances. Connect with her at www.EdieMelson.com