Warning: This Post May Distract You



Metadescription: Distractions are an inevitable thing. They keep us from being productive and can be a big hindrance, especially for writers. Is it possible to escape these distractions?

You’ve sat down at your computer to work. It is a beautiful day outside, but you have a blank page staring you in the face. The cursor blinks to the emptiness pulsing in your mind. Where to start? Your thoughts roam aimlessly. Then you hear a notification in your email, so you switch windows to find that your grandpa needs help with an online puzzle. You follow the link he sent to a page full of riddles. This occupies about thirty minutes of your time until you decide you really need to get back to work.

There is that blank page again. You remember you forgot to feed the cats so you get up to do that before setting down to work again. Snuggles has something else in mind though. She follows you back to the desk and jumps up by your computer, rolling over, being cute—just begging to be pet. It is useless. Now your phone buzzes with a text message and you see your best friend wants to go out for ice cream. How are you supposed to get anything done with ice cream on your mind?

Sound familiar? Most of us have fallen prey to one distraction or another—be it pets, email, Internet, phone, food craving, or even a beautiful day outside. The possibility of distraction is ever-present in many ways, shapes, and forms, and writing becomes a mission impossible. You could be researching something one minute and then Googling yourself the next. Or you might be answering a work email only to find one right below it with a coupon for your favorite online shopping site. If you are a writer at night, your day job can even be considered a distraction. Writing about food? Your stomach starts to rumble and it’s time for a snack break! Writing a sexy scene between your two main characters? Your husband or wife walks out of the shower and fiction suddenly becomes reality. Oops!

So, how can we steer clear of all these interruptions? It seems almost impossible. Truth is, there is no guarantee—but there are things we can do that may help us in the direction to productivity! First off, de-clutter your work space. Keeping things clear around your work area eliminates the need to clean up as procrastination. You should also make yourself comfortable. This keeps you from fidgeting and constantly changing positions with the distraction of bodily discomforts. Scheduling alone time and making sure others know you will be busy will do away with those constant social disruptions. Setting a timer can also help you stay on track, and giving yourself periodic breaks when the timer goes off. You can set rewards for yourself as well, but do not let the prospect of the reward become a distraction in itself.

If you don’t need it, disconnecting from your Internet can also be a good idea. This allows for your document to be the one thing occupying the computer space. No distractions! Of course, different methods work for different people. Some find that music allows them to focus, while others need complete silence. Some people snack to keep them on track, while others work better on an empty stomach. The real key is to close oneself to the outside world. Create a space, a lair if you will, equipped with everything you need to be productive. Eliminate as many distractions as possible and alert others that you must not be disturbed when you retreat to your lair. When you’re in your lair, you become a writer. It is your secret identity, where writing becomes a cinch. Mission impossible—possible.

Sources:

<http://www.buzzfeed.com/ariannarebolini/distractions-that-keep-writers-from-writing#.tqpbE5kkbP>

<https://www.google.com/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=writing+distractions>