



# Bloom



ROOTS  
AND  
BRANCHES

## Reconnecting with Momentum & Joy

We all know how good it feels to be in our flow as writers, when it feels like the words pour out of us and ideas come so fast we can barely catch our breath as we write them down.

We all also know that the writing process doesn't always look like that: There's editing, there's brainstorming, there's struggling to find the right word to express an idea, or just feeling stuck in one place.

Whatever creative and professional background we come from, we're taught that not being in our flow is "bad," it means we aren't "productive enough," or that there's something wrong with our ideas, our work patterns, or ourselves.

Of course, this isn't true, but these inbuilt messages can take time to disassemble and reassemble (see for example Exercises for Progress and Redirection).

What I've found over the years is that when we feel stuck, we tend to stay in that headspace longer than we need to because of the messaging we've received and the stigma we carry around progress and process.

Here are some ideas for what to do to help you change scenery (literally and metaphorically) when you're feeling stuck:

Changing scenery helps pop us out of the doom spiral of shame and guilt around feeling stuck, or if you aren't feeling that, offers you permission to step away and process your ideas in the background so you can come back refreshed.

Another BIG part of momentum is celebrating all we've already done: It's easier to keep or reconnect with momentum if we see our progress as part of a pattern.

Below are some of my ideas for changing scenery and acknowledging momentum: I'd

encourage you to list yours at the end of the document so you have them handy when you need them.

## Changing your mental and physical scenery by taking a break:

I find it helpful, whatever you pick, to do it away from your writing space, so you can fully disengage before you re-engage.

- Read something for fun (a book, a poem, a comic, etc.)
- Draw a picture
- Garden
- Go for a walk or a hike
- Go swimming, to a gym, or whatever other form of exercise you like
- Do a quick yoga flow and/or breathing exercises away from your writing space
- Spend a bit working on a craft or cooking
- Engage in mindful + intentional eating: Really slowing down and enjoying a cup of tea, a piece of chocolate, or another favorite treat.
- Meditate
- Daydream listening to a favorite playlist or to nature sounds

## Or, change where and how you write for a day and notice the results:

- Write in a coffeeshop (check your list of coffeeshops and walks from "Getting Unstuck")
- Focus on non-screen writing activities, like reading, drafting in a notebook, or editing a print version of your work and take it out to a favorite spot
- Write and edit in a park, at the beach, or your favorite natural setting
- If you have another favorite spot in your house, try writing there and see how it feels (I write on my couch or at my kitchen table sometimes, in addition to in my writing space)
- Set up writing times, with friends virtually or in person, to write together. Agree in advance how long you want to write (many people find two pomodoros, plus chatting in the break between them, to be a good model).
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## Celebrate your progress:

- Have a dedicated writing progress notebook: Write down a sentence about what you did at the end of each writing session, and what you did that week at the end of

each week. Before you know it you'll have a record of all your accomplishments you can flip through whenever you need.

- Reconnect with your writing routine: Where are you feeling like you naturally and most easily write? Where do you find you feel tired or distracted? You may want to update your routine to best reflect your writing practice, if it isn't currently matching how you naturally want to work.
- Keep a visual reminder of your progress posted somewhere highly visible: Dr. Alex Ketchum uses a "writing rocket ship" (see screenshot, below). I write a "big list" for each year that I hang on the back of my door, and check off each article, event, or other work-related thing I do as it happens.

When I feel really stuck, I'll really dive into making small, concrete goals and writing them down on paper so I get the little serotonin hit from physically crossing off each one (no goal is too small here: 'write one paragraph' or 'reread my outline' are great

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**Dr. Alex Ketchum (she/her)**  
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I call it the writing rocket ship. I like to draw a project thermometer to mark progress rather than just a check off to do list. Seeing visual progress feels encouraging on a multi-year project (vs a check off list which I find overwhelming). I've been doing this since my 1st book



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