



WEEK 3

OUTER CALM

The Muse Zone

creating a muse-friendly environment

The Muse Zone

Our focus for this treatment is your workspace.

We're going to harness the ease, flow and magic that comes from having a beautiful, dedicated place for connecting with your muse.

First I'll share why it's worth making the effort and what magical results you can expect.

Next we'll explore what would work best for you.

With a short trip across time and space, we'll uncover the aspects and features that would make your Muse Zone the most beneficial for you.

Then, once you know what you want, your next task is to give some thought into making that happen.

You're going to find / create / declare your Muse Zone.

And finally, when you have settled on your location, it's time to beautify it.

Even though it's possible to create in less than lovely conditions, with a little time, love and attention, you can supercharge your Muse Zone results.

So for this week's work, let's see if we can review your workspace and make some fun and beneficial improvements...

INSIGHT & INSPIRATION

A FAST TRACK TO 'THE ZONE'

Being creative is a lifestyle thing.

We are writers or artists even when we're away from our work - doing mundane tasks, interacting with our families, shopping, sleeping, getting on with the myriad ordinary moments that makes up a life.

All of these aspects of life feed our awareness and knowledge and inspiration. So a significant part of creative process takes places 'out there', when we're at large in the world, away from our desks and studios.

And it's also true that a fixed abode is not essential for our muse.

She is more of a life partner than a work colleague - often turning up in unexpected places, when we're far from our dedicated workspace.

And these mobile downloads can be as potent and productive as our desk-based efforts - so we're wise to notice and catch them as they appear, as well as encourage them to appear more often. (More on this later in the course.)

So the muse is certainly not limited to our work space or 'office hours'.

And yet...

There is something about a dedicated workspace that seems to spark creativity, or at least productivity (which is a vital part of creative success).

Perhaps we can create anywhere, in theory. But what if we can enhance the process, deepen the connection or accelerate results, by giving our muse a place to call home?

For example, the idea for *The Muse Spa* struck me in the summer of 2012. For over a year after that, my notes would gradually multiply in Evernote, and I'd add new mind maps for structure, content etc...

The project was lingering in the back of my mind., it wouldn't go away. Yet it wasn't forthcoming, either. Not retreating or advancing (much) - just evolving. At a glacial pace.

That is until I dusted off an area of a cobwebby outbuilding and declared it my new writing room.

I spent a weekend clearing clutter, washing dusty windows and dragging in a few home comforts until I had something resembling a garden office. (If you enjoy behind-the-scenes sneak peeks, you can see my creative cave [here](#).)

A place - away from the main home - where the only reason I went was to write.

And boy, did my muse love this!

It's as if we'd made a pact to always meet there. As soon I arrived, whatever force brings words from my mind to the screen would wake up and get to work.

My writing took off like never before.

I adored the solitude, the peace of the garden, the sounds of birds singing, the scent of late roses wafting in through open windows, the vistas of green and blue. I was enveloped in nature and I'm sure all of this served to prime my creative spirit.

(As did the distance between me and the housework...)

But I think there was also an element of showing up daily, in the same place, with both the intention and expectation of getting to work.

Whether it was a subconscious cue that it was time to work, or the beneficial feng shui on my brain waves, I found it ever easier to quickly and easily get into those joyful creative flows.

Maybe it was a reward from my muse, for dedicating this space to our work together. (She does respond well to attention.) Or perhaps it was the ancient power of ritual, making certain spaces sacred - used only for important work.

Whatever mysterious force was at work, I found that having a dedicated place for my creativity reaped dividends in terms of clarity, productivity and output, as well as my enjoyment of those creative hours.



It seems that having a space that instantly kicks your brain into 'Create' gear is an effective way to get the juices flowing, boosting not only the quality and quantity of your work, but also making the whole creative process easier and more 'in the flow'.

And if you can create a space you love, not only will it entice your muse, it will also beautifully enhance your experience of the process, too.

This creates a triple whammy of goodness:

- ★ you'll be more relaxed and happy - aka muse-friendly
- ★ you'll enjoy an improved quality of life for all the hours that you spend there
- ★ you'll be more likely and eager to show up more often

You may also find that having a safe, supportive and beautiful space may bring forth your Inner Braveheart - the writer or artist within you that has the confidence and courage to create what you *really* want to create - to express the work that stirs your soul.

Not bad results for the effort of eking out your own little corner of creative heaven.

Of course, some of your creative work may still take place in the midst of life, out there in the world. But when you treat yourself to a creative cave, you have somewhere to retreat and



reassess. You have a safe, quiet place to process and sort and marinate in all the flavours you've experienced.

It can become a home base for your creative spirit, somewhere to ponder, percolate, then reissue as your unique work.

It can become a touchstone for your muse.

And if you create a space that soothes and delights you, it can also become an inspiring haven that relaxes and reconnects you with your soul as soon as you arrive.

Think of the great artists in their studios. Think of the great writers in their huts or studies, or even just the same corner of the same room.

When you enter this dedicated space, you know why you're there. You're clear and focused and ready and willing. You're showing up with a clear intention.

These are powerful messages to your muse.

When you anchor your creativity to a place, getting into 'the zone' becomes less of a hit and miss affair. Connecting with inspiration becomes more predictable, even automatic. Your Muse Zone acts as a fast track to your creative zone.

Of course having a dedicated workspace won't guarantee that every second you spend there will be a rapture of creative bliss. Almost all creativity involves a degree of friction and discomfort. But it may mean you need less time to warm up your creative engines and find your flow.

When you create an inspiring spot for you and your muse to get together, simply turning up will signal to her that you're ready to play.

Then just watch how she responds to your invitation...



THE PERKS

Confidence & calm

When you know that you have a dedicated meeting place for your muse, you feel more confident in your ability to access inspiration.

The creative process becomes less random and you feel more in control - feelings which can bring both mental quiet and a boosted sense of self.

More time

When you train your mind to realise that it's time to work as soon as you arrive in your Muse Zone, you need to spend less time in confusion or warming up your creative muscles.

You arrive and you know why you're there.

When you begin to turn up with an expectation of success and being inspired, that sends a powerful message of faith and focus to your muse. This is a significant step towards inspiration on demand.

More beauty

If you create a beautiful workspace, and spend regular time there, you will be surrounding yourself with beauty on a more consistent basis.

And by spending more time in beautiful surroundings, you train your eye. You see and notice and appreciate more beauty around you.

So a beautiful Muse Zone will raise both your energy and your aesthetic standards, which effects you even when you leave.

You'll be inclined to make even more beautiful choices and pursue even more beauty in other aspects of your life.

You will also begin to recognise your own beauty, both within and without.





The Muse Spa Recommendation:

Treat yourself to a beautiful, dedicated meeting place for you and your muse.

OVER TO YOU...

HOME SPA

EXERCISE 1

PAST

Where have you enjoyed working in the past?

Where have you been particularly creative or productive?

What were the features you remember?

What was it about those places and spaces that effected you so powerfully and positively?

PRESENT

Review how and where you're currently doing your creative work.

Is it 'working'?

What's good about it?

What are you grateful for?

What would you like to change?

Muse Zones I have loved...

Thoughts on my current set-up

FUTURE

Playtime! Now for some visioneering fun.

Give some thought to what would be ideal - your ultimate workspace.

Ask your muse, be open to inspiration. Get thinking and imagining - what would be fabulous?

NB: No limits on resources, practicalities etc... Blow the budget!

What would be bliss?

What would be OMG-I've-died-and-gone-to-heaven?

What colours would you have around you?

What can you see from the windows?

Is it warm or cool?

What smells or scents are there?

What sounds are a feature of your time in this space?

Explore what excites you. And listen for what your muse would love.

Make a list here, or if you prefer, create a mindmap, vision board or Pinterest board.

If you feel inspired to, paint, draw or design your dream workspace.

(If you'd like some inspiration, take a look at these dreamy Muse Zones on my Pinterest board.)

My Ultimate Workspace

EXERCISE 2 : FIND / CREATE / DECLARE

Now it's time for dreams and reality to get a little closer.

If you don't already have a special meeting place for you and your muse, with ideal conditions for your best work together (or as close as you can get) - is it something you can look into?

Is there somewhere - whether within your home or close by - that you can declare your Muse Zone?

Survey your home with new eyes. Explore. Experiment.

Jot down ideas in the space opposite.

Now, is there anything you can do - where you are and with what you've got - to make any aspects from the previous page a reality?

Perhaps you could start with just a detail of some of the bigger wishes. E.g. a sunny window, a comfy chair, a certain colour that you love.

Go through your list of *what would be fabulous* and highlight *what could be do-able*. What elements can you easily incorporate?

Then find something that would begin that aspect of your Dream Muse Zone, *today*.

Even if it's not a possibility at the moment, you can still begin to plan.

(Plans have a magical habit of becoming reality. I had a client who was working from her bedroom - 6 months after doing this exercise she was blissfully installed in her dream home with a beautiful home office.)

Potential Muse Zones

Action Steps I can take now/soon

EXERCISE 3 : BEAUTIFY

When you've found your Muse Zone, somewhere that feels good, somewhere that you intend to use a sacred meeting place for you and your muse....

Take a good look around.

Is there anything you can do to beautify it?

This is your special place. It's a space for a powerful connection with your muse. So don't allow anything less than lovely to distract you or spoil the calm and confidence that will soon become a feature of your time here.

Is there anything that bugs or bothers you?

Would a spell of clearing, cleaning or redecorating make it an even more enjoyable space to spend some quality time with your muse?

Most of these niggles can usually be addressed quickly and easily, and you will reap the benefits of your efforts every time you come here.

Make a list of what you'd like to improve or enhance, and include ideas of how and when you'd like to put those into place.

Consider what would make this space as enticing as possible - both for you and your muse.

And then notice how your muse responds to your efforts...

Muse Zone Enhancements

NOTES

Though this week is less about the inner work and more about your external world, you may still enjoy some lovely aha moments and insights, and you can record those here.

I've noticed that even the most powerful shifts and breakthroughs soon get forgotten. So it's really useful for you to chart your progress and record your successes.

Plus, it's also a great way to train your brain to both notice and create more of them.

You could also document any results from your work from this week.

Have you noticed any effects from your new Muse Zone?

Have you been feeling any benefits from your spruced up surroundings?

Successes & Insights

Inspired Actions



Enjoy your Muse Zone!

Danielle