

## Sometimes you have to play dead

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Nature is a great teacher. I learned a valuable lesson from three cats. We have family friends who own three cats (or rather have three cats that own them) and one day a poor mouse entered their residence. Like any predator the three cats circled it, the mouse froze then fell on its back and played dead. The cats instantly lost interest and left. The mouse left the residence unscathed. What a clever scheme.

At times I feel like that mouse and all my obligations are cats circling me ready to pounce. In our society of *do, do, do*, you can drive yourself mad trying to achieve what society says you're supposed to: set goals, get slim, get smart, get rich, get married, have children, have more children, look young etc...

Sometimes you have to play dead. Just for a moment stop doing and just 'be'. Create a "Don't Do" List. Things you won't do.

Don't call back your critical brother-in-law.

Don't set goals on how you're going to be rich in five years.

Don't worry about your weight

Don't worry about getting older

Don't worry about the promotion you hope to get, or the kid's report card, or what your neighbor thinks of your fifteen year old car.

Don't worry about anything. You're dead. Who cares?

For writers especially, please:

Don't worry that you didn't write today

Don't worry that your agent hasn't called

Don't worry that you're still unpublished

Don't worry that you're still mid-list

Don't worry that you didn't secure a six figure contract

Don't open that rejection letter today (it can wait)

Don't compare yourself to that prolific writer in your critique group

Don't do anything.

Just for a moment be free of anxiety. Be quiet and listen to your inner voice. Do nothing and important issues will start to come through while all the other 'clutter' will fall away.

In our helter-skelter world we sometimes lose ourselves and think we have to live life like a cartoon character running from a predator. Create your own timetable. Just breathe. Be free.

Learn how to play dead...you'll never feel more alive.