

Apr 17, 2017, 08:53am EDT

If You Had Time Alone Without Distractions What Would You Do?



Bonnie Marcus
ForbesWomen

How many times have you said to yourself that if you only had some time by yourself, time without distractions and daily responsibilities, that you would finally work on that project you have pushed aside for years? Yes, if I only had the time I would draft a business plan, finish writing my book, or create new works of art. If I only had the time. Does that sound familiar?



Shutterstock

I hear this from countless of coaching clients who are drowning in their to-do lists and overwhelmed by personal responsibilities. There never seems to be enough time for women to get things done; time to think without the phone ringing reminding us of more obligations to family, friends, and work. It's difficult enough to deal with the multitude of daily challenges, and it's almost impossible to establish some space in our lives in which creativity can flourish.

In 1994, Kitty Burke began offering that time and space to friends in transition who came to Martha's Vineyard, and in 2010, [Turkey Land Cove Foundation](#) (TLCF) was established, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization committed to providing need-based grants for motivated women to work on a specific project or defined goal in the quiet and beautiful surroundings of the island. Currently, TLCF has provided retreats to over one hundred women. These women are writers, painters, musicians, entrepreneurs, even circus performers; women honing their craft or venturing into new creative territory.

Recommended For You ^

[Apple Issues New iPhone 12 Upgrade Warning](#)

[Why You Should Stop Using Your Facebook Messenger App](#)

[Apple's Massive iPhone 12 Pro Surprise Suddenly Confirmed](#)

I had the opportunity to speak with several women who spent time at Tree House 2 on Martha's Vineyard at a gathering for grantees last weekend in Providence, Rhode Island. The organization was celebrating the talent and success of its grantees.

[Kelly Carmody](#) is an award winning portrait artist whose work has been shown at the National Portrait Gallery in London and the National Portrait Gallery in Washington D.C. On her first retreat, Kelly wanted to explore landscape painting.

“Because I have to make a living in my studio, with my work and my teaching, I can't just take 2 weeks to experiment without any income. I don't have the ability to do that, so to have two weeks to explore is incredibly beneficial. I have training in studio painting and it's an entirely different lighting system. It's a different palette. It's different subject matter. And so I had to learn a whole different thing about space and atmosphere. I was trained to do portraits and I got decent enough at it. I was making a living doing it and I wanted to explore and learn this new thing. But I couldn't just do it right off the bat. I was giving myself time and permission to go and do that.”

Kelly's second stay at TLCF was more business oriented. “The second time I was trying to come up with a curriculum to incorporate landscape painting into my teaching, which up until this point had been studio-based and portrait work. So I came up with an outline to how to incorporate that into my teaching. I've been slowly trying to make money from the landscape painting through selling the paintings and through teaching.”

Laura Lind-Blum went to Turkey Land Cove to work on an ebook. “I was desperate for solitary time to be able to even listen to what my ideas were; to refresh them for myself. I knew they were there. And I knew that they had some life. But I couldn't connect with them. I couldn't be with them in my day to day. There was too much of ‘Oh, you should be doing this thing to generate income. You should be doing this thing to market your

business. You should be doing this thing to serve your clients.’ And so with all of that competing with the ideas, it all just kept getting pushed up, ‘I’ll get to it when I have time.’

And so Turkey Land Cove Foundation was this amazing gift of time. It’s so daunting in a way when you walk into a space and there is this amazing gift of time. And there is this energy infused in the Tree House of all of the creative work that has happened before. Then you walk in and it’s like this baton is handed to you that has all of the ideas and aspirations of all the people who have been there.”

Laura gave birth to a new plan to combine her knowledge of astrology with business planning. She also has a thriving business that makes beautiful bracelets incorporating your astrological chart.

[Betsy Cullen](#), a commercial photographer located in Boston, MA, came to the island retreat to revive her business, but the time alone also helped her recover from previous health issues.

“I think in the normal course of your life, it’s hard to be selfish with your time when everybody else wants part of your time and there are so many responsibilities. I went to reboot my commercial photography business. I needed to rebuild a website or build a website and design it myself. And that meant that I had to go through many years of images to decide the direction I was going and what I wanted to show. By going through the old images, you figure out where you want to go next. It was a great opportunity to do that without distractions. I was always someone that tried to do everything herself. And I didn’t have the finances to hire a good designer to take a look at it. So I don’t think I would’ve gotten it done without this time. I think it would’ve been much longer.”

[Janet Hubbard](#) is a published author, editor, and workshop leader who came to Turkey Land Cove to work on her novel. “I could almost say that it felt like time did stop there. I mean there was no time. I don’t remember ever looking at a clock. And it’s an extraordinary way to live. And by the time it was all over I was ready to re-emerge. I was writing a book about silences, women being silenced. I’ve written three mysteries. But the novel that I was working on called *A Woman to Whom Something Happened*, which will be going to my agent soon, required that I go into a much deeper place. I had written my first draft. I knew the arc of it. But I had a lot of discovery to do. So it was the first time I was able to completely be with the novel, to have the novel happening in my head 24/7.

I asked the founder, [Kitty Burke](#), why she started this foundation in support of motivated women. She replied, “At a hard time in my life, being recently divorce with four very young children, I was given the gift of time and solitude by a wise older friend, to plan my path going forward. That path has had many bumps and on occasion taken some side roads,

but gave me the knowledge to get to where I am today. I am now able to give the gift of time and space to other women to find their own path”.

Do you have a project that has taken the back seat to your daily responsibilities? How would you use the gift of time and space to discover your future path? Applications for fall retreats are now open until May 1. Check out the [website](#) to see if you qualify for this amazing opportunity.

Follow me on [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#). Check out my [website](#).



Bonnie Marcus

Follow

I'm an executive coach, author, and international speaker with a passion for helping professional women gain the visibility and credibility they need to have a fulfilling... **Read More**

Reprints & Permissions

ADVERTISEMENT
