A Writing Life #4: The Daily Battle
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Sometimes I feel like I'm the only one with this problem. There are no magazines devoted to the topic. No commercials for medication covering this condition. There aren't even commercials for pharmaceutical companies who WANT to develop a drug for it.

But then I talk to friends and acquaintances and find out that it's more common than I think.

Still, sitting at home all day, it feels like it's just me.

You see… the thing is… I just can't get anything done.

Well, that's not exactly true. I have a for-pay gig, a volunteer writing gig, a volunteer editing gig, and my own work. Deadlines get met on occasion, or they whoosh by and I have to run and catch up with them.

Yet, no matter what I'm working on, I feel like I should be working on something else.

I work at home. Well, "work" in that I mess about in my house because I don't have an office to go to. I have a million distractions, ranging from the fun to the chore-laden, each of which beckon with the seductive jeweled fingers all laden with the beauteous procrastination-encrusted gems.

And when I do write, I have to wade through horrible metaphors horked up by my subconscious mind.

I don't mean to whine – well, yes I do mean to complain a bit – but I don't mean to be a boring, whiny nitwit. I want to try and talk this out.

You see, I keep thinking that I need a strategy. If I just had the right way of making "to do" lists or the right place to put reminder notes or the right piece of software to properly prod me into productivity, then everything would be wonderful and my life would be complete.

But the truth is I've always done my best writing when in the midst of a whirlwind of deadlines and responsibilities.

So I need to teach myself how to work all over again. But the trick is that I never really learned in the first place, I just handled which ever problem was the most urgent. When my job changed, I did which ever project was the most important. I worked for the operational part of an organization which exists in an "interrupt driven" environment.

I've never been good at dealing with long-term projects. And now I have to set my own deadlines, keep myself motivated, and learn how to structure my day.

I have no idea how to do this.

Jim Zubkavich wrote a great column about this over at Comixpedia. But it's more a set of strategies for managing your daily distractions.

I need to figure out a whole new way of working rather than just minimizing diversions. And, honestly, I don't know where to start.

So I'm opening it up to you guys. How do you frame your day? What strategies do you use to keep yourself on track? I'm happy to hear from people who are working regular "day jobs" as well as those who working at home, both on art and business.