

The 8 Essentials--Tips to Create Your Retreat

As a savvy, successful, service-focused soul, you are intent on making a difference. You take a stand for the betterment of your community or the health and productivity of the organizations you're involved in. You care for the earth and fellow travelers on this path, whether family, friends or strangers. You generously give of yourself, your talents and your time. Like a car with a full tank of fuel, after many trips and going, going, going it's necessary to refuel. It's also essential to maintain and tune up your vehicle with regularity so that it doesn't break down when you need it most. Just like that vehicle, if you never refuel as leader, you'll run empty. If you never get a tune up, you won't lead as efficiently. That's why retreat is an essential tool for savvy, successful souls like you to continue to flourish. Here are 8 Essential Tips you need to know for creating your retreat.

Consider Your Intention.

What is your intention for your retreat? Is it to finally take some down time for rest and renewal? Perhaps a technology hiatus—a chance to “unplug” from the phone, computer, etc for a few hours? Give your mind a rest from the constancy of demands and activity? Perhaps you need a change of scene to shift into a fresh perspective regarding your work or personal situation. **Consider your intention and then consider the next steps of planning your retreat.**

Invest Sufficient Time

How much time do you think you can allow for your retreat—a few hours, a full day? Good. Now I'm inviting you to stretch a bit. **Imagine the amount of time you can take and double it.** Yes, double it. Over and over again, I hear leaders say that it feels so good to take retreat that they wish they had planned for more time. Go for it. You'll be glad you did.

Treat With Care

Retreat is about stepping out of your ordinary existence and setting time apart. Retreat really is a sacred act, as special and sacred as you are. **Yes, what if you treat yourself with great care, as if sacred?** There may even be a ritual to denote your sacred time, lighting a candle, including a reading or your favorite passage, going to a favorite location. Consider your retreat as sacred time just for you.



Get Outdoors

Recent studies have shown that spending time in nature actually boosts the immune system and bolsters well-being. In addition to these benefits, nature has a balancing impact. Especially when feeling out of balance and over-committed, **time in nature should be an integral part of your retreat.** Fresh air, a gentle breeze, a scenic vista, imagine it now.

Reflect then Reflect Some More

Carving out time for reflection often does not happen in our busy day. Yet reflection is key to high performance. What happens when we s-l-o-w down and reflect? **Reflection allows the brain a chance to access whole-brain circuitry instead of only the working memory.** Kind of like tuning into the entire orchestra instead of just one instrument. As a result, reflection allows for new insights, clarity and new possibilities you may not have seen without having taken time to reflect. Sweet music, eh?

Include Inspiration

What inspires you? Include inspiration in your retreat. It may be music that soothes you. It may be a poem or a picture of a beloved one. It may be art that makes your heart go “ahhhh”. **Shore up your positive energy by including an infusion of inspiration in your retreat.**

Honor your body and senses

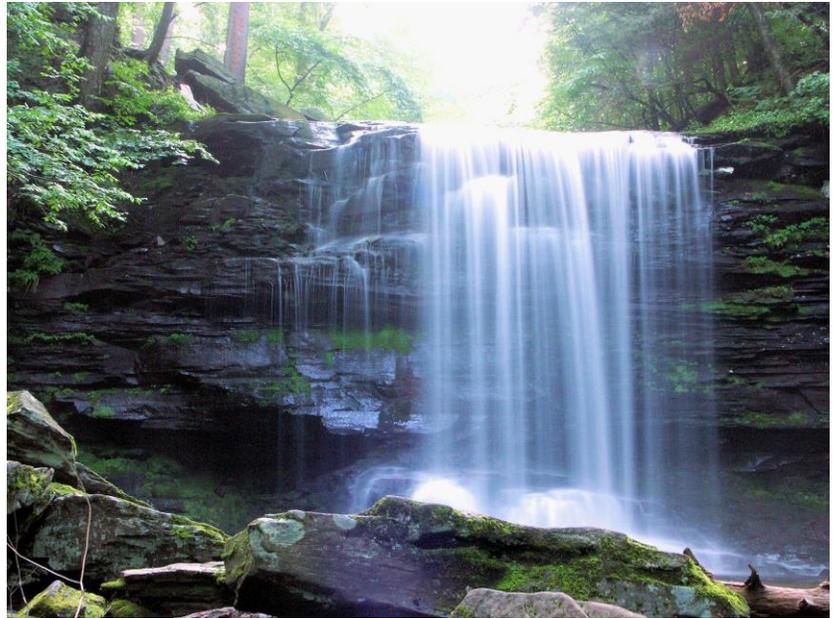
Include healthy foods—succulent fruits, vibrant vegetables, nutritious nuts and nibblers. Include movement, listening to your body when it wants to stretch or move or dance. How about a pampering massage? **What are some aromas and textures to celebrate and accentuate your senses?** Consider all of the ways your body serves you well. Return the favor and use retreat as time to be good to your body.

Location, location, location

What’s the physical environment that would have you loving your retreat time?

Consider some of the elements you love and factor them into your retreat planning.

Maybe being next to water is like balm for your soul. Perhaps a gorgeous hide-away with a comfy, inviting feeling to it may be just what you need. If you can’t afford to go far, take care to create an uninterrupted, distraction-free zone for your retreat location.



Thanks for taking the time to consider the 8 Essentials for creating your retreat.

What did it spark for you in considering the tips? More importantly savvy leader,

what will you act on today in moving forward to create your retreat? Let the inspired actions begin!



Don’t want to do it alone?

Need additional help in creating your retreat? Call on a professional.

Michelle Burns is a certified Master Retreat Coach, specializing in supporting savvy, successful leaders through custom retreats. Imagine a retreat that is tailored specifically for you. Imagine each and every detail taken care of so that you can simply relax. For over a decade, Michelle has been creating and leading custom retreats. She is passionate about retreat as an essential practice, especially for those who give of themselves and then give some more. It is imperative to balance out the equation, to take essential time for you through a Design Your Destiny Retreat. Michelle serves a wide range of savvy, successful souls-- from non-profit leaders and educators, boards of directors and executive teams to private individuals and private groups. You may email Michelle at retreats@designyourdestiny.com or reach her at 507-665-3358 to discuss your Design Your Destiny Retreat today.