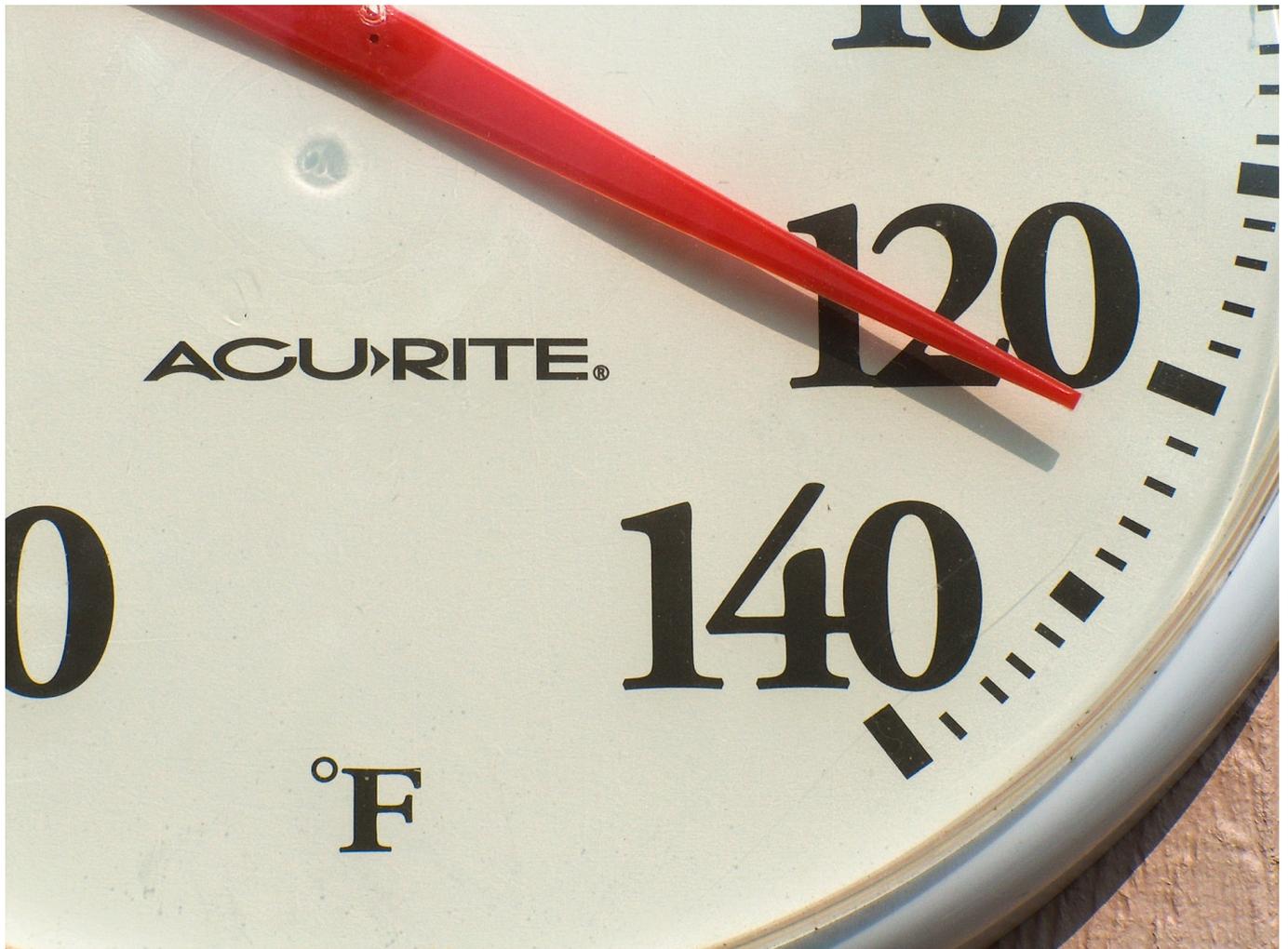


Too hot for the creative mind



I was on the phone recently with a woman who was bitterly complaining that it was too hot. Knowing that she's in the Midwest and I'm in the Southwest, I was curious to know if she was experiencing the same heat wave. When she told me her hot was 86 degrees, I was ready to get on a plane to join her. My hot has been ranging between 106 to 119, and so far it's been 41 days of consecutive temps over 100. In my mind, she honestly didn't know how good she had it.

Needless to say, I haven't been very inspired to be creative lately despite air conditioning. I sit captive at my desk looking out the window at perfect blue skies and my green plants keep on life support with much watering. These are the summer days you dreamed of all winter. But, open the door and

there's an invisible wall of heat that dictates you close the door as quickly as you can.

Why live here? You rationalize it's a trade off. What's a little heat during the summer (okay a lot of heat) when the rest of the country is up to their armpits in snow and it's 30 below, and we have sunshine and the mid 70's? We love it and so do all the snowbirds who flock here. They're not ready to leave until back home gets to be at least 50 degrees.

Sadly, there's something about the extreme heat that slows down the creative juices.

Your cognitive abilities improve as a temperature rises up to a point. The best performance comes between 72 to 81 degrees Fahrenheit. Beyond that it's downhill. Add in humidity, and the brain wants to go into hiding.

A study looking at the relationship between mood and weather found that

“...high humidity lowered concentration and increased sleepiness among participants.

The weather also hurt their ability to think critically: the hotter it got, the less likely they were to question what they were told.”

When It's Too Hot

Higher temperatures slow down not only the body's ability to move but the brain cells as well. It's not unusual to experience brain fatigue and confusion. Be aware that you might also experience dizziness and nauseousness. So, always make sure you have plenty of water at hand.

While you might not be very motivated and feel that your creativity suffers, you can still get things done by –

- Doing your important work early in the morning and later

in the evening.

- Check your AC service and make sure everything's in working order.
- If you are using a room fan, adjust it so that it circulates the air throughout your space.
- Take advantage of siesta time and nap through the heat.
- Get good sleep the night before so that you can start your day being refreshed and productive.
- Don't worry about how many trips to the bathroom you'll make. Stay hydrated with water not sugary or caffeinated drinks.
- Use spell check on everything. You'll be surprised how easily your brain malfunctions.
- Get out of town if you can. Head for the hills, the lake or the ocean shore where the natives will think it's too hot and you will be enjoying every glorious moment.

Stay cool my friends.

Resources:

<http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/why-summer-makes-us-lazy>

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.2044-8295.1984.tb02785.x/abstract>

<https://www.business.com/articles/how-the-weather-affects-your-productivity/>

<https://advice.diversityonecareers.com/2769745/5-ways-to-stay-productive-on-hot-summer-days/>

<https://gothinkbig.co.uk/features/how-to-stay-productive-on-a-hot-summer-day>

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