

# One Winter Perspective

By Ellie Mencer

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The thought of gray days short on daylight and treacherous ice or snow-covered walks tempt us to hibernate for the season. Just as Mother Nature covers herself with cold and dark, we have a tendency to hole-up indoors and count the dreary days until spring arrives once again.

Well, stop that nonsense! Winter is beautiful in our area. Okay, I'll admit I'm a Buffalo-weather girl! But we know that a snow day for the kids means, "Yippee, snow fights, sledding, and building snow sculptures!" Now, what about you?

**Let me share 5 great ways to enjoy the outdoors when the snow comes. No matter your age or health, you can enjoy the beauty of winter.**

**1** One of the easiest ways to enjoy a snowy day is to step outdoors and breathe the fresh air. It's clear and crisp. You can feel the cobweb of doldrums being cleared out of your brain. The snow offers a muffled quiet that refreshes.

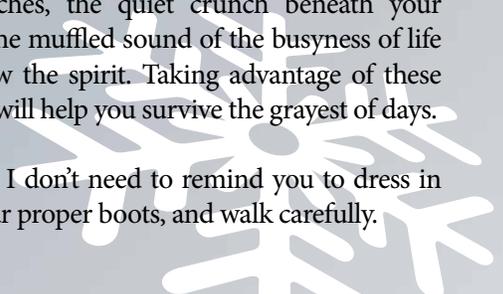
If you have a problem with the cold, wrap a scarf around your neck and pull it up over your mouth and nose to help warm the air you breathe. Then take in the beauty of the changed landscape that you can view from your home.

**2** Looking out your window you'll notice the flutter of winter birds. The Cardinal and the Blue Jay quickly come to mind since they stand out so beautifully against the dull gray or snow-covered winter day.

If you step outdoors and place some seed on the ground or in a feeder, you'll enjoy the wildlife even more. There's a playfulness to the squirrels, the birds, and yes, even the wind, as the snow covers the lawn. While you're out there, take a moment to open your senses to the beauty of winter.

**3** A walk through a gentle snowfall or following a storm can be revitalizing. Snow laden branches, the quiet crunch beneath your feet, and the muffled sound of the busyness of life – all renew the spirit. Taking advantage of these moments will help you survive the grayest of days.

Hopefully, I don't need to remind you to dress in layers, wear proper boots, and walk carefully.



Brrrrr...  
it's cold  
outside.

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**4** For the more adventurous, hiking and kayaking add to the possibilities for enjoying a clear winter day.

If there is no ice on the water, it's a wonderful time to kayak. The wildlife that stays through the winter can be more easily seen. Areas along the shoreline hidden by summer foliage become visible. The very journey you took last spring or summer becomes a new adventure.

Hiking the area parks equals enjoying a personal retreat. Once again, places you've seen before take on a new perspective. Noise is muffled and the clarity of nature's sounds lifts the spirit.

**5** Photographers Delight - what more need I say! A beautiful winter storm, a clear crisp winter day when the snow glistens and the sky is the brightest of blues, these make for great photographs. A gray day offers a sense of solitude and quiet communing with nature while you set-up your perfect photo. The wildlife clearly seen against the white of the snow offers another dimension. Natural and historic structures offer unique character to a site you may have passed a dozen times during the year.

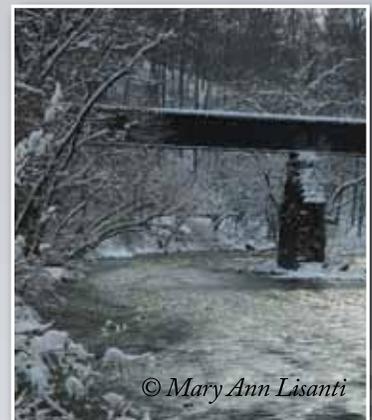
Whether you feed the birds and enjoy them from your window, grab a favorite hot drink and step out on your patio, or bundle up for an outdoor adventure, there is every reason to enjoy a wintry day. Visit the places you enjoy during the warmer months and discover the potential that lies hidden beneath those wintry days. As a friend taught me years ago: Tilt your head slightly and look at your world with new perspective. **Enjoy!**



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