

The light is on but the creative spark is off.

Getting all our ducks in a row is like knowing when our quilt project is going to be started and finished the moment we sit at our sewing machine with the needle in the up position. But nothing happens. There is no machine whirring. We count: one, two, three...on up to ten. Nothing but quiet.

“On your mark, get ready, SEW,” are the magic words. But the foot work is dawdling and the needle quivers awaiting a push into action. Perhaps a snack would help.

Usually, the method of quilting is cutting the fabric into the doable sizes: laying each color, each size in a neat row at fingertip reach. Easy Peasey! But this time the thought process is a bit different. When the stumbling block is a Challenge Quilt block, the mind is in a whirl, not so for the fine-tuned stitching machine.

Holidays and ice storms can ruin a concentration, can freeze the creative juices. Snacks move into lunchtime. By this time the iron has turned on and off. The light in the machine in Ready position is aglow with dimming confidence.

“When will she begin?” blinks the machine. “I am ready to don my covering and sleep for a fortnight. Perhaps another ice storm cutting off power with strike. The iron gives a huff and a puff, shutting down, awaiting that possible ice break.

“Okay, Let’s do this,” encourages the snack eater. The quilter grabs two pieces of fabric and sighs aloud...”Here goes!” The iron sputters, the needle slips down and the metal foot peddle engages with a barefoot babe. Mind and machine whirl and whirr. Sewing and stitching resurge. Whether male or female, quilters engage into a new year of creating their own design, of following patterns, of inserting their own take on a pattern, and of breathing in the atmosphere. They feel lighter, (but heavier since the sugared breaks and lunches weigh in) the energy level picks them up as the needle does its dance. A quilt block emerges and the challenge design escapes the darkness. Sparks fly as the machine lights up.

Time for another snack.

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