

How I Got My Spinning Mojo Back

I hadn't spun in a while. It's not that I didn't have beautiful fiber. Instead, I had lost my spinning mojo.

Stitches West this year changed that for me. I only took one class, but it was a perfectly timed one for me - Spinning for Socks with Janel Laidman. Janel is a talented sock pattern designer as well as a master spinner. She seems like a wonderful human being. She has a [blog](#), and indeed the blog will connect you to her whole website.

Going in, I did have some trepidations. Even though the description included spindlers, I worried that I wasn't really ready. I might not have all the right equipment (me with four spindles, a lot of toilet paper tubes, and a simple box to hold singles. Seriously, I have done a lot with a little equipment). I calmed myself down, got my stuff together and headed out the night before the class. I didn't want to drive down and back in the same day taking a 6-hour class. At the market, I told my spinning teacher that I was taking this class, and he got a funny look on his face that made start to worry again.

So, the next morning I head into class. Everyone has wheels, well, everyone except for me. I'm holding my breath, praying that the wheels-not-spindles clique had not decided to take this class. Would I be able to fully participate in the class? Would I be accepted by the wheel crowd?

Yes and yes. It was a delightful class. Many in the room were newer spinners like myself, and it turned out that the class was pretty perfect for me. I knew everything that I needed to do with my spindles, I had enough equipment to do what was needed for our samples.

And, I got my spinning mojo back!

Two moments, among others, stick in my mind. Partway through the class, Janel was teaching the long-draw on the wheel. As she is demonstrating, she casually mentions, "And Renee can show us how to do the long draw on the spindle." Gulp. With a nervous laugh I say, "Now the pressure's on." I'm not really a teacher or demo-er in spinning. So, with a circle of spinners, I try, and the spindle drops. Try again, it drops again. After the third drop, I stop and tell the class to watch me as we all get started, and things go better then, and a couple of folks come over to watch. Hey, mom, look, I'm converting the wheel people (ok, not so much).

The second moment came at the end of the class. We were doing a three-ply, and I really wanted Janel to look at what I'd done, so I took it over, and she said, "Hmm. I'd pay to get this yarn." Then in a voice to the class, she said something to the effect of, "Class, here's something to pay attention to - while the spindle might be a bit slower - you actually get a lot of control over the fiber and yarn that you make. Renee's got some good sock yarn here."

And *that's* how I got my spinning mojo back.

I'm spinning a yak-silk sample from A Verb for Keeping Warm - so soft, so shiny!

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And still no snow:

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