

## Out of work? Go dumpster diving.

The recession has sparked a self-help publishing boom. But are all these recession tips worth reading?

Tags: [dumpster-diving](#), [self-help](#), [unemployment](#)

With economists predicting more than 250,000 job losses this year in Canada, there will be more than enough stress and panic to go around. In response, a barrage of self-help books are now available, aimed at helping the unemployed survive the tough times. Some of the books even promise to help land readers a better job. Titles include *The Fastest, Easiest Way to Get Good Jobs in Today's Economy. Guaranteed!*, *How To Prosper During Bad Times and Your Recession Survival Guide*. But do these self-help books justify the cost, especially during these penny-pinching times? We took a closer look at *No Job? No Prob! How to Pay Your Bills, Feed Your Mind, and Have a Blast When You're Out of Work*, by Nicholas Nigro.

Though the book is filled with plenty of obvious suggestions—staying positive, physically active and keeping a daily routine—there are a couple helpful hints, including taking advantage of free courses and volunteering. Nigro also recommends swallowing your pride and throwing a party, in the hope that your friends can help get you back on your feet (a bash, one can only assume based on the financial state of the host, that would feature non-alcoholic beer and no-name chips). That, however, is far from the strangest bit in this 300 page book. Here are a few of the odder suggestions:

- Nigro lists 20 free activities to pass the time, including bird watching (“birding”) or “dumpster diving” for goods you can use or sell on eBay. Of course, rifling through other people’s garbage isn’t everyone’s idea of a good time. It could, in fact, make you feel worse—not to mention, risk inciting hostility from your neighbours.
- Though trying something new is almost always a good idea, Nigro suggests fasting for a day or becoming a street performer (not the kind of thing prospective employers are looking for on a resume).
- As for what do with your briefcase, Nigro recommends converting it into a flowerpot or bronzing it. He also advises making a patchwork quilt out of your old work clothes or using them as a shower mat. That might be reasonable, perhaps, if your next job doesn’t require clothing.

Tim Cork, President of NEXCareer, a Toronto-based career-transition firm, says this mini publishing boom is the sign of an industry looking to cash in. Still, he says the books can do some good, even if all you’re left with are one or two ideas. “If you’ve heard it before,” he says, “it reinforces what you already know, which gives you that added confidence and self-esteem.” And, at the very least, you’ll end up with a new flowerpot.

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