

A whimsical winter scene with snow, trees, a bear, and a rabbit. The background is a soft blue with falling snow. Bare trees are scattered throughout. In the bottom left, a white bear wearing a red and white patterned sweater is walking. In the bottom right, a small white rabbit is sitting on the snow. A white cloud-like shape in the upper center contains the word 'Flow' in blue text.

Flow

Stagnation is a bird that cannot fly. **Stagnation** is a heart that doesn't beat. **Stagnation** is a soul without life. Through my experiences this year, this one truth describes it all. As I look back on this year, I felt like the world was leaving without me, time was avoiding my grasp, and I couldn't reach it, as I stood still as everything went by. Like a moon-silent rock, I watched the river of people glide away from me and reach for the stars. The river swirled away into the darkness, and as everyone left me, a waterfall of worries crashed into me and slowly eroded pieces of my happiness away. I felt like an **outlier**, subject to **derision**, **bereft** of joy as I sat there like that for a long year not moving, not changing, not elevating. But now, as the year comes to an end and all of my worries come to a closure, a new word arises from the murky depths, saving me from drowning: Flow. Flow not like the river, but with the river. The word glows in my mind a sapphire blue, calm and assuring. It pushes my troubles aside and clears my path to success, guiding me through the harsh times evoking images of a bright star. I don't think about the future but swim in the present, wading through my problems with ease. I am not threatened when I flow; I am unaffected, I am unabashed, I am free.