

# TELLING & SELLING

## Your Story

The Art, Craft, Science,  
and Business of Authoring  
Your First Book



David Krueger, MD

## COMMENTS ON TELLING AND SELLING YOUR STORY

**As a life-long writer, I've taken many courses, some in academic settings, others as workshops and/or as part of writer's groups. Your seminar is absolutely the best of all.**

*~ Catherine Brehm*

**Immensely useful to me as an author, as it will be to my clients.**

*~ Carol Hess, Writing Coach*

**Fantastic! Dave is the best seminar leader I've experienced...he gave literally hundreds of practical tips I'll put into action over the next few months.**

*~ Phillip Noble*

**I signed up to get food-for-thought and I now have access to a banquet.**

*~ Marta Dawn*

**An intensive and empowering journey with practical exercises and reflections to write my story.**

*~ Marlene Lariviere, MBA*

**An invaluable addition to my life coach business.**

*~ Sharon Jentzer, Wellness Coach Jentzer Wellness Institute*

**Dave teaches a revolutionary methodology to enable me to create and capture my stories. His lifelong knowledge as Psychoanalyst and writer turned Mentor Coach underlies his gut knowledge of what works and what doesn't.**

*~ Susan Farrell Goodman, CEO, Goodman Petroleum*

**A totally engaging, enjoyable, and informative experience for me as a new writer.**

*~ Connie Neeley, Founder, Neeley Marketing Systems*

## ***TELLING AND SELLING YOUR STORY***

### ***The Art, Craft, Science, and Business of Authoring Your First Book***

A MentorPath Publication. All rights reserved.

Copyright David Krueger MD

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission from the publisher.

For information, contact:

MentorPath Publications  
1707 Post Oak Boulevard, Suite 145  
Houston, Texas 77056

Printed in the United States of America.

Visit: [www.MentorPath.com](http://www.MentorPath.com)  
[www.TheSecretLanguageofMoney.com](http://www.TheSecretLanguageofMoney.com)

#### **DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY/LIMITATIONS OF LIABILITY**

The Publisher and Author have used their best efforts in preparing the course and accompanying components. The Publisher and Author make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this course or components, and specifically disclaim any implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. There are no warranties which extend beyond the descriptions contained in this paragraph. Neither the Publisher nor the Author shall be liable for any damages arising from the use of this course or components, including without limitation actual, special, incidental, consequential, or other damages. This course and any accompanying components are designed to educate and provide information only about the subject matter covered, and neither publisher nor author are engaged in rendering legal, accounting, medical, or other professional services. If legal or other expert services are required or desired, the services of a competent professional should be obtained.

It is not the purpose of this course and accompanying components to provide all the information that is otherwise available to the Author and/or Publisher, but to complement, amplify, supplement, and direct the reader to other third party information and texts. Thus, this text should be used only as a general guide, and not the ultimate or only source of information in this area; the information herein is believed to be current only up to the publication date. Readers are urged to read all the available material and tailor the information and application to fit their respective individual needs. The resources listed in this course are for information purposes only, not endorsements or referrals. Neither the Publisher nor the Author shall be liable or responsible for any loss or damage experienced in dealing with any such listed resources or providers.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Krueger, M.D. is an Executive Mentor Coach, and CEO of MentorPath™, an executive coaching, wellness and publishing firm. He is Mentor/Trainer Coach and Dean of Curriculum for Coach Training Alliance.

He is author of sixteen professional and trade books, and seventy five scientific papers and book chapters on success, money, wellness, self-development, and mind-body integration.

His book, *The Secret Language of Money*, an international summer 2009 release, is a feature of McGraw Hill Publishers [www.TheSecretLanguageofMoney.com](http://www.TheSecretLanguageofMoney.com)

Dr. Krueger formerly practiced Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis for over two decades, was Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, and taught on two Psychoanalytic faculties. He was listed in America's Top Psychiatrists by the Consumer Research Council of America, Washington D.C. in 2002, and The Best Doctors In America (Woodward/White, Inc. Publishers) annually from 1996-2002. He became a full time Executive Mentor Coach in 2002. He founded and served as CEO for two healthcare corporations, and co-founded a third that went from venture capital to merger/acquisition.

Dr. Krueger has appeared in TV documentaries and media interviews including Tom Brokaw's *America Close-Up*, and has been quoted in publications including the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Money*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *Town and Country*, *Self*, *Lear's*, *Allure*, *Parenting Today*, and *Better Homes and Gardens*. He writes feature columns for a national magazine, and was elected to the American Society of Journalists and Authors.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I. THE ART OF WRITING .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Preparation: The Backstory	
Commitment	
Vision	
Perseverance	
Guiding Questions	
Reflections to Begin Your First Book	
The Who, What, Where, When, and How of Writing	
Your Commitment to Yourself	
Ten Caveats for Writers	
<b>II. THE CRAFT OF WRITING .....</b>	<b>19</b>
Understand Your Motivation for Publishing: 12 and Counting	
Voice	
Design every part of your book	
The Nonfiction Book Proposal	
The Seven Habits of Successful Writers	
The Top 6 Mistakes Successful Writers Avoid	
Chunking Exercises	
Important areas of focus for the serious writer	
Your Belief Systems	
<b>III. THE SCIENCE OF WRITING.....</b>	<b>39</b>
Comfort Zone	
Frame	
The Science of a Vision	
Regulate States of Mind	
Creativity	
Management of State Specific Issues: Chokes, Slumps, and Blocks	
Insight Changes the Brain	
A Summary of the Science of Writing	
Inverse Wisdom for Authors	

<b>IV. THE BUSINESS OF WRITING.....</b>	<b>59</b>
Options for Getting Your Book Published	
Why Self-Publish?	
Titles That Tell and Sell	
Publishing Roadmap for Nonfiction.	
Platform	
White Papers	
Things You Can Do to Promote Your Book	
The Business of Writing	
<b>ADDENDUM.....</b>	<b>83</b>

## I. THE ART OF WRITING



*If you hear a voice say,  
"I am not a painter,"  
by all means paint.  
Then that voice will be silenced.*

~ Vincent van Gogh

*Creativity is allowing yourself  
to make mistakes. Art is knowing  
which ones to keep.*

~ Scott Adams



## I. The Art of Writing

### **Preparation: The Backstory**

It has been said that just about every smart, sensitive person harbors a desire to write a book, because writing is a natural way for a contemporary person to learn, express, integrate, and feel really alive. More than 80% of adults in America say they want to publish. Just over 1% actually do, and that includes articles, editorials, etc., not just books.

First, decide if you have a message or a book.

A message is a written or spoken communication of an idea or point of view. An article can convey a message. A short series of blog posts can succinctly spread even a complex message.

A nonfiction book builds a case, develops and illustrates a theme. The book needs a story to hold its richness. It carries the reader along its course of reason, illustrating the applications. The story evolves an argument with complexity and depth.

The irony is, as Seth Godin points out, “The market demands that you summarize your book in a blog post.”

Traditional advice has been to write about what you know. Here’s another, more exciting and creative possibility: Write to see what you have to say. Write about what you most want or need to learn.

At a conference several years ago, when I was still practicing psychoanalysis, I was talking with a friend who was an excellent clinician. As we discussed the paper just presented I asked when he was going to write a paper. He said, “I’m going to wait until I’m sure I have something to say.” I knew at that moment that he would never present a paper at this or any other conference. Those of you who have trained or mentored with me know that me not knowing anything has never stopped me from talking.

We’re going to discuss how to write in a systematic, structured way for effective and successful results.



## I. The Art of Writing

We'll talk about what happens next when you schedule an appointment with yourself to write. We'll discuss the art, the craft, the science, and the business of authoring your book – in short, how to tell and sell your story.

### **Commitment**

A prerequisite is a commitment and a game plan.

First, make sure your commitment and your game plan match. You know the words of someone who is not totally committed: "I'll try." "I should." "I ought to." "I want to." Versus the words of someone committed: "I will."

One of the great philosophers of the 20th century said, "Try not. Do. Or do not. There is no try." (Yoda in "The Empire Strikes Back.")

And: Think about the difference between a 99% commitment and a 100% commitment. I do not want to be on the back of the motorcycle of someone who has a plan to jump 99% of the way across the Grand Canyon, nor with someone who has a two-phase plan.

*U.S.A. Today* did a study on individuals who made New Year's resolutions. They found two groups: Those who made a New Year's resolution and wrote it down, and those who made one but neglected to write it down.

- Of those who did not put their goal in writing: 4% kept their resolution.
- Of those who wrote down their resolution: 44% kept it.

When you write down a commitment, it produces a tenfold difference of follow-through. So first, write down your commitment to complete your book. Neuroscience teaches that the brain works like a travel agent. The first two questions a travel agent asks are, "Where do you want to go?" "When do you want to get there?"

Program your brain to complete the book by a chosen date.



## I. The Art of Writing

How fervently do you want to tell and sell your story? One unknown author had a collection of heartwarming stories that he thought would make a good book. He shopped his idea to every publisher he could find – no success. He shopped it to 141 publishers in all and was rejected by each. He believed in the book, but he was repeatedly told that it would not appeal to audiences. He decided to publish it himself and began selling it out of the back of his car. It had an unlikely title – Chicken Soup for the Soul.

At last count, he has sold well over \$1 billion of books.

### **Vision**

How do you write a book?

Consider a related question: How do you find a yellow Jeep?

A group of executives asked me to present a seminar to them on writing a first book. The first thing I asked was, “Have any of you seen a yellow Jeep in the last month?” There were twenty-four people present; one person raised his hand.

Then I went through a visualization exercise with them.



## I. The Art of Writing

### Yellow Jeep Exercise

1. *Close your eyes and visualize a yellow Jeep – the specific detail of how it looks.*
2. *Walk toward it. Walk all around it. Look at the tires, the body, and the trim.*
3. *Open the driver's door. Look at the seat, the steering wheel, the dash.*
4. *Smell the interior. Touch the seat.*
5. *Get in the driver's seat, start it, and listen to it run.*
6. *As you turn it off and walk away from it, look again at the vehicle you were just in.*

*Open your eyes. In the next week, see what happens.*

*I asked the executives to let me know if they happened to see a yellow Jeep in the next week. In the first three days, I heard from twenty-two of the twenty-four executives saying they had spotted a yellow Jeep.*

*What happened? What someone sees – what appears on the radar screen is determined by belief and assumption. A yellow Jeep was programmed as possibility. The most common reason people don't write a book is that they don't believe they really can. Or, if they do, they don't devise a specific plan and stick to it. It's the same reason people don't earn money and accumulate wealth:*

*They don't see themselves as capable of it. I can tell you how much money people will make by listening to their assumptions.*

*Once you genuinely see yourself completing your book, all sorts of things begin to happen.*

*You have already coded your radar for writing your book, including beginning this guide. We'll discuss how to evolve that vision.*



## I. The Art of Writing

### Exercise on Choice

*This exercise is based on the principle that it takes just as much energy to construct a negative belief as it does to create a positive belief.*

1. *Say out loud two things you can't do, for example:*

- *I can't finish this article I'm writing.*
- *I can't get the clutter out of my office.*

2. *Now restate each, but substitute "won't" for "can't":*

- *I won't finish this article I'm writing.*
- *I won't get the clutter out of my office.*

3. *Now say this sentence three times out loud:*

- *I am always free to change my mind.*

*Now you're aware of choice: All you have to do is the next right thing.*

*Once you begin thinking about your specific book, you begin to hear things in different ways. You begin to hear examples. You begin to think about stories. Incidents become vignettes. Ideas begin to crystallize. You think about what you want to say, and become aware of how you want to say it. You become an even better listener, which makes you a better speaker.*

*A caveat here: No one ever sits down to write a book. You sit down to write a few sentences, maybe a page. Mozart never sat down to write down an opera. He had a medley in his head and let it speak to him until the story of the music emerged.*



## I. The Art of Writing

### **Perseverance**

The most important thing about a goal is having one. The most important thing about a plan is to stick with it.

Wisdom is to know the right path. Integrity is to take it.

A clearly defined goal can capture imagination and inspire passion. It can cut through the fog like a beacon in the night. One extra degree of effort in business and in life separates the good from the great.

- Fifty-one publishers turned down Richard Bach's *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. He took it to number fifty-two.
- At 211 degrees, water is hot; at 212 degrees it boils. One extra degree makes all the difference.

To get what you've never had, you'll probably have to do what you've never done.

*"Perseverance is not a long race, it is many short races, one after another."*

**~Lord Eliott**



## I. The Art of Writing

### Guiding Questions

Three Goals to Clarify Before you Start Writing:

- What you want to write
- What you want to gain
- Who you want to reach

### Reflections to Begin Your First Book

1. Write for a specific preferred audience.
2. Envision your audience. Create a persona for the two or three prototypes of those you will write for. Speak directly to them.
3. Write a focused, compelling, understandable, and enjoyable conversation.
4. What is your “ah-ha”? Your good news?
5. What will your book do uniquely well?
6. Reach out for opinion molders and feedback, such as focus groups.
7. An initial step to create your book is to fully accept the reality of the process of writing, and to evolve your identity as an author.

I'll share a personal experience that was pivotal for me. I was writing *Making Memories: Reflections on Parenting from the Heart of a Father and the Mind of a Psychoanalyst*.

I went to the Iowa Summer Writer's Workshop and shared with my group my dilemma. (I was still practicing psychoanalysis at the time.) I wanted to write from the heart, needing to use examples from my experiences as a parent, but I didn't want to burden my present and future psychoanalytic patients with



## I. The Art of Writing

knowing too much about me personally. (Psychoanalysts think they have to remain anonymous to be a blank screen onto which the patient projects himself or herself.)

I got some immensely helpful feedback: When you're writing, you're not an analyst, you're not a father, you're an author. Therefore, write as your subtitle says, from your heart and your mind.

8. You are thinking and feeling a book into existence. Then you'll craft it into a powerful message within a memorable story.
9. What you imagine guides your endeavor; you learn what your book is about by thinking and writing.
10. You get your book done well by willing yourself to plan, organize, think, revise, and tolerate confusion and uncertainty. The principle is, do whatever it takes.



## I. The Art of Writing

### An Exercise to Address Obstacles

*Schedule a brainstorming session with yourself to do this exercise.*

*It's important for a would-be author to identify and address any obstacles that stand in the way of your project. Examples include interfering self-talk, writer's block, anxiety about the unknown, not knowing enough, worrying about inexperience, concern about not having anything to say, and the like.*

*Make three vertical columns on a page:*

1. Title the left column Usual Cues.

*These are prompts or emotional triggers that may set you into a cycle of rumination, negativity, or stuckness. Example: "I've never written a book before, so I may not know how to do it."*

2. Title the middle column Usual Behavior.

*In this column, write your habitual response to each of the triggers. For example, the trigger "I've never written a book before" may impel you to continue your research rather than actually writing. Or it may evoke procrastination.*

3. Title the third column Desired Behavior.

*This is the specific adaptive behavior you desire, an alternative to the usual behavior. Here you write the behavior that you will substitute for the initial thought or trigger. Make sure it is behavior and not outcome, because in this moment you can only engage in behavior.*

*Let's rename the middle column "Old Story" and the last column "New Story."*

*The idea is to quickly cue your radar to nonadaptive triggers or ideas in order to immediately substitute desired behaviors. By doing this, you do not further etch the old behavior in your brain. Remember, neuroscience tells us that we get what we focus on, not what we want. So be sure you focus on the right thing.*



## I. The Art of Writing

### **The Who, What, Where, When, and How of Writing**

#### **Who**

Who is it that you write for? Your most authentic answer is yourself.

When you speak in writing, you do so to an intended audience. Who's your audience? If you can, identify specifically the audience you will address. The more specifically you envision the reader, the more specifically and meaningfully you will be able to speak.

One strategy is to envision a persona – a characterization of the ideal reader. Develop that persona fully: Who that person is, location, age, occupation, marital and family status, etc. By the time you've developed two to three ideal personas of the intended audience, you have an idea who it is you'll be speaking to. Your conversation comes alive as you talk to them.

#### **What**

You must respect the marketplace. Be attuned to needs. Provide answers. Make your approaches to answers accessible. Be attuned to what someone else wants and needs.

Beyond that, you have to be true to your own story. Who you are is your gift to your readers.

Writing is not a special language, a gift you were born with. Writing is thinking on paper. Anyone who thinks clearly should be able to write clearly.



## I. The Art of Writing

### A “What” exercise: Think before you write.

*Sit down and think about your idea before you begin to write about it. How will you move it from current vague idea to a rich, three-dimensional book? Think about what you will write along these lines.*

- *What are you trying to communicate?*
- *What form should your book take?*
- *What chapters should it be divided into?*
- *What should go into each chapter?*
- *What will you draw from your experiences to enhance the book?*
- *What research will you do to deepen its quality?*

*This is the process that writers don't usually report, and you don't usually see: The thinking part. The preparation. Writers may, in an interview, say that their book just comes out, or just came to them. It doesn't happen that way. Writing is creative pleasure, but it's also work; the only thing harder than writing is rewriting.*



## I. The Art of Writing

### **Where**

Decide where you will write. Virginia Woolf emphasized the importance of having a room of one's own. Get your space ready. Protect it from intrusions and noise. Put one or two things in there that will represent your commitment to writing.

During the time that you commit to write, protect that space and time from intrusions. Unplug your telephone. Your answering service or voice mail will take care of messages. There are few true emergencies in life. Talking to your buddy about who got kicked off "American Idol" last night isn't one of them, at least, not during your writing time. Guard your writing time to allow full immersion. Protect your time, because you will have to pay for every "yes" with at least one "no."

### **When**

Make an appointment with yourself. Choose a schedule for writing that you will be loyal to, no matter what.

Everyone on earth has one thing in common: Our choices in life define us. Those who provide service to others, such as authors, money managers, therapists, leaders, teachers, coaches, and especially parents, have their answers counted many times.

What will yours be?

Make it matter. Determine when you will write.

When I had a full psychoanalytic practice and saw a dozen people each day plus teaching, people would ask me when I found time to write. My answer was to say as gently as possible that I never found time to write, I created time. I grew up on a farm and ranch and got up before the sun to feed cattle. Rising early is still a natural for me. During all of my years of parenting, I still got up early on Saturday and Sunday mornings and had two to three hours to write before my two children woke up. By then I was fully ready to turn off my Dictaphone and roll on the floor with them or play outside the rest of the day. Again later,



## I. The Art of Writing

during their adolescence, I could be totally available in order to be rendered insignificant.

Decide what time of the day you write best. Know your biorhythms. Think about when you are most creative. Consider what may be a natural time to write, and when you most have the inclination to do things like editing. Writing and editing are two different states of mind and are best not combined. Decide when to do each.

Here's my best piece of advice to you: Just start writing. Start simple. Start slow. Start now.

Perhaps the most literate answer to the When? question was offered over 900 years ago by Rashi, the great Torah commentator, who said, "Whatever you can do, or dream you can do, begin it."

### **How**

Recognize your natural style of writing. Are you a visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learner? Respect that style as you write. Some of you will do best visually, at a keyboard, seeing the words appear on the screen. If you're primarily an auditory person, use a dictation device. I have written all my first drafts by dictating them. In that way, as I talk I envision a person or audience to dictate to. It's natural for me, because that's the way I spend my day, talking to people. Earlier I did it in therapy and analysis, now I do it in coaching. As soon as my secretary transcribes the dictation, I assemble it in piles – called chapters. If you think you'll do better writing it out longhand, go to Costco and get a lot of yellow pads – the ones with the thick backs, as somehow I think that makes writers perform better.

Consider also your work and performance styles. Those elements aren't talked about as much, but I consider them very useful in writing as well as in coaching. You can find a paper on this subject ("Toward Brain Hardware Optimization") in the Articles section of [www.MentorPath.com](http://www.MentorPath.com)

One suggestion, whenever you have an idea, even if it doesn't come during your specified "writing time": Write it down. Capture it. Get it into typed form. Research on memory tells us that a new idea or fact lasts an average of 40



## I. The Art of Writing

seconds in short-term memory, and unless you write it down to review, after that it's gone.

Haven't you had the experience of thinking of a great phrase – a really catchy way to say something – and think, "I'm sure I'll remember this later"? And later comes, and you don't.

One principle we know from coaching: When people are asked what they intend to do, they're more likely to act according to how they answer.

- When you ask people the day before an election if they intend to vote, it increases the probability of their going to vote by 25%.
- In a study of 40,000 subjects, the question was, "Do you intend to buy a new car?" Being asked that question increased purchase rates 35%.
- Another factor that increases the likelihood of desirable behavior is asking people whether they intend to eat certain foods, diet, or exercise. One of the basic steps in coaching is to make sure each session includes framing an action plan for the next week that the client intends – commits – to do.

### **Your Commitment to Yourself**

Write down your who, what, where, when and how.

Specifically address your intention and plan.

Make an appointment with yourself and keep it with the same loyalty that you do an appointment with your doctor, dentist, or accountant.

Writing doesn't come about through inspiration – it happens when you decide to sit down and write.

Clarissa Pinkola Estes said, "To be ourselves causes us to be exiled by many others, and yet to comply with what others want causes us to be exiled from ourselves."



## I. The Art of Writing

### **Creativity**

There is a natural, innate energy inside each of us to create. When we open ourselves to our creativity, we allow our internal experience to flow through whatever channels are natural – words, pictures, movement. Creativity is a natural part of life.

As you begin the process of your book, don't compare your inside with someone else's outside. Someone else's outside may be a complete book, and when you pick up the book to read it, it will seem daunting. That author did not begin with that complete book. He or she began with an idea, then crafted a few lines, then reworked again and again.

A great deal of thinking and a great deal of reading are required to write a book. Writers, in discussing their books after they're published, often omit or minimize the amount of work that went into completion of the books. We call that a nostalgia bias. Nostalgia is remembering, not as it was, but as better than it was – airbrushed memories set on an idealized stage. When we compare our inside – our hoped-for book – with their outside – a completed, published book – we don't take into account the true scope of the work.

Again, no one ever sits down to write a book. You sit down to write a few sentences. You sit down for an hour at your desk and stay there, at the time that you have decided to commit to writing, just in case some random string of words occurs to you, or some expression that you create or need to capture.

Some writers set a word quota for the day – 250 is a full double-spaced page.



## I. The Art of Writing

### **Ten Caveats for Writers**

1. The most important thing about a plan is having one. The second most important thing about a plan is sticking to it.
2. Write every day. It will help you think like a writer.
3. Read every day. It will help you think like a writer communicating to a reader.
4. Write in a voice that sounds like you. Writing is not a contest. Writing is a transaction between two people, you and the reader. So, sound like yourself and be yourself. If you don't say "indeed", don't write it. If you don't say "one would think," then don't write it.
5. Use language simply and warmly. You'll be able to make any subject clear by reducing it to good English. A clear, simple sentence is no accident.
6. How you write will be how you are perceived. Your writing may be your only way to introduce yourself to someone whose business, trust, affection, or money is what you want.
7. Keep the burden of clarity. Writing is about creating meaning. Rewriting is about crafting meaning to make it optimally useful and accessible for the reader. Plan from the beginning to keep the burden of the clarity of communication. Don't shift it to the reader or listener. In this way you maintain the ownership of responsibility to your reader.
8. Have the end in mind from the beginning. In the film "The Lookout" Lewis, a blind man, helps his mentally challenged roommate make sense of things by thinking of his day as a story. Lewis said, "Start at the end. Can't tell a story if you don't know where it's going."
9. Take some positive action toward your goal every day, even if it's just one. At the end of the month, you'll have thirty completed actions. If you just write two paragraphs a day, you'll have sixty paragraphs, and that's a bunch (a West Texas literary term).



## I. The Art of Writing

10. Decide what you want. Believe it's possible. A belief is a filter between reality and our perception. A belief is the mind's command to the brain – the software program that determines our behavior. We now know that beliefs can actually turn genes on or off. Highlight this equation: **Beliefs → Behavior → Performance**

Beliefs drive behavior. Behavior drives performance.

You can change your life by changing your beliefs.

Our possibilities are only limited to the ones we allow ourselves to see.

*A destitute young housewife had almost no money. She couldn't afford a babysitter or a computer. But she had a story to tell, and she was determined to do it. She decided to write.*

*As soon as she started writing, her mother died at age 45 from multiple sclerosis. Her marriage to an abusive husband ended in a divorce. Shortly thereafter, she had a miscarriage. After that, she got fired from her job and lived on government welfare.*

*She took her baby to a coffeeshop in the middle of the afternoon and wrote on a legal pad while her baby napped. She did it everyday for four years.*

*And then, after much work, she finally found a publisher*

*... for Harry Potter.*

## II. THE CRAFT OF WRITING



*Writing is easy. All you have to do  
is cross out the wrong words.*

~ Mark Twain

*Write the truest sentence you know.*

~ Ernest Hemingway

*To write simply is as difficult as being good.*

~ W. Somerset Maugham



## II. The Craft of Writing

You learn to do something by doing it. Writing is no different. You learn to write by producing a certain number of words on a regular basis. You learn to become an author by rewriting.

- You are the author of your life story and your written story.
- What do you do uniquely well?
- Who is your audience?
- In setting your writing goals, be clear about three things:
  1. What your readers need from you
  2. What you want to offer them
  3. What things you understand that you want to convey to the reader

### **Understand Your Motivation for Publishing: 12 and Counting**

People want to write for myriad reasons. I list some here:

1. To disseminate your knowledge, experience, and message to readers
2. As a gift to clients
3. As a premium with some other offer, such as, an e-book as a bonus for subscribing to your newsletter
4. To publish with a traditional house using an agent to establish national presence as an author
5. To make money by selling your book yourself
6. To use your book to make money for other services and products



## II. The Craft of Writing

7. To establish yourself as an expert
8. To enhance your client base
9. As a springboard for seminars, workshops, presentations, retreats
10. To develop mastermind groups or discussion groups based on your book
11. To make a difference in people's lives.

In our own small way, we want to change the world.

“Words are sacred. They deserve respect. If you get the right ones, in the right order, you can nudge the world a little.”

(Tom Stoppard, British playwright)

12. To leave a legacy.

Here's how the dedication of one such book, a memoir on parenting, sounds:

*To Ryan and Lauren,*

*I hope there will be a time when you will find at least some of this book interesting, though if I have done a good job of parenting, not revealing anything new. I can't know whether, or if, it will be tomorrow or a dozen years of tomorrows from now. Know that whenever it is, I will be loving you. May you walk through all your days with love remembered and love renewed. ~ Dad*

That's from *Making Memories*. I'll use it later as an example of one publishing option.

### **Voice**

Definite voice is conversational voice. The writer gives us a sense that we are listening to an empathic storyteller – a skilled raconteur – rather than simply looking at words on paper.

This is different from following the simple advice, “Write the way you talk.”



## II. The Craft of Writing

Voice involves more than accurate transcription. A true essence of conversation comes from attentive listening and dedicated revision.

Transcribing talk is not writing, but it is one technique to help cultivate voice. Some writers speak into recording devices, to let their voices flow, and hear themselves at the same time. One step in your editing process is to read your words out loud; then you can recast a word or sentence that doesn't sound quite right.

Barbara McClintock, awarded a Nobel Prize for her study of gene transposition in corn plants, said she made her discoveries by listening to what the corn told her. She described respecting the life and presence of the corn and "letting it come." She said she learned the stories of the plants. She heard them. She watched their daily green journeys of growth, and came to know the plants in the way a healer or mystic would have known them, from the inside, by hearing the inner voices of corn speaking to her as another being.

Even in previously contributing to the psychoanalytic literature on empathy as a scientific way of listening, it never occurred to me that an ear of corn had much to say. I suspect that if I mused out loud to a colleague that some vegetables were talking to me, he'd call the guys in the white coats. For Barbara, though, it was a true exchange.

From the perspective of voice, consider this short passage. I think you'll hear it immediately. I used this passage, which also fits with my philosophy of coaching, as a preface in my last book written as a psychoanalyst, *Integrating Body Self and Psychological Self*. It is from Anatole Broyard's *Intoxicated by My Illness*.

*My ideal doctor...I can imagine entering my condition, looking around it from the inside like an ideal landlord, with a tenant, trying to see how he could make the premises more livable. He would look around, holding me by the hand, and he would figure out what it is like to be me. Then he would try to find certain advantages in the situation. He can turn disadvantages into advantages. He would see the genius of my illness. He would mingle his daemon with mine. We would wrestle with my fate together, like Rupert and Birkin in the library in D. H. Lawrence's *Women in Love*.*



## II. The Craft of Writing

*I would also like a doctor who enjoyed me. I want to be a good story for him, to give him some of my art in exchange for his.*

### **Design every part of your book**

- Title: Five words or less that tells and sells
- Subtitle: The promise; the benefits described
- Silver bullet: A clear, sharply focused description of your book that can be recited in the time it takes an elevator to go from the ground to the fifth floor. (As you edit, assume you're on a pretty fast elevator.) It should clearly explain what your book is about, why it's special, and the precise benefits it will provide to readers.
- Mission statement: A seven- to nine-word statement of the purpose of your book
- Back cover: Ideally written before you write your book – a compelling ad copy of benefits to the reader.
- Book Introduction: The problem you address for your audience; why you wrote the book, its purpose, its benefits, and how you will present it.
- Table of Contents.
- Book Outline.
- Query letter: Lead, body, bio, close. Even if you don't plan to use an agent, it will help you conceptualize an overview and intended impact of your book.

### **The Nonfiction Book Proposal**

Why is this important, even if you don't plan to submit it to a traditional publishing house?

The book proposal is the business plan of your book.

You need to know where you're going: Goals and strategies. Setting a goal will enhance motivation. Establishing strategies will facilitate focus. If you don't



## II. The Craft of Writing

know where you're going, any map will do. You should have the end in mind from the beginning.

*Lewis Carroll said it well: Alice came to a fork in the road.*

*"Which road do I take?" she asked.*

*"Where do you want to go?" responded the Cheshire Cat.*

*"I don't know," Alice answered.*

*"Then," said the Cat, "it doesn't matter."*

Develop an organizing idea with a substantial center. What's your book about? Why does it exist? You'll communicate both of these notions again and again in various ways throughout your book. The title, the subtitle, the headline sentences, the chapter subtitles – all fit a brand – the essence of your book

The nonfiction book proposal is a tool to help you organize and elaborate your concept of a book.

Another purpose of the proposal is to tell a publisher about your book, why it's important, why you're the one to write it, and why it will be successful.

A good book starts with a good idea. The book's merit should address these primary issues:

- Why would someone want to read your book?
- Who is your target audience?
- What is your unique hook?
- Can the hook and the message support an entire book?



## II. The Craft of Writing

- What will I be telling my readers that they don't already know?

### 1. Title and Subtitle

The title should contain no more than five words. The reason? A longer title requires the reader to think instead of feel. The title should create a motivating visualization. We know that more people think in pictures and learn in a visual way than learn in an auditory or kinesthetic way.

The title should trigger positive images, not negative ones. Its focus should also be positive rather than negative, not even the avoidance of a negative. Neuroscience tells us we get what we focus on, not what we want.

The title should pass the airplane test. This is my personally devised test that came to me spontaneously when a publisher asked me to write a blurb for the dust jacket of a book. When he told me the book's title, I said, "I'd be happy to review the book if it had a different title, but that one doesn't pass the airplane test."

He said, "What's an airplane test?"

"If I'm on an airplane and someone sees the book I'm reading, I don't want to be embarrassed by its title." (Or feel stupid to be reading it, or have somebody wonder if I have whatever problem the title promises the book will fix.) He thanked me, had the author change the title, and sent me a nice bound galley to review.

I also have a subtest for titles that may pass the economy-class test but aren't quite ready for the first-class section. An example would be the *AIG Bonus Investment Guide*.

There are exceptions to everything. Here's one exception to the rule of five words or less for a title. It's a best seller by child and adolescent psychologist Dr. Anthony Wolf: *Get Out of My Life, But First Could You Drop Me* and



## II. The Craft of Writing

*Cheryl Off at the Mall.*

### **2. The Overview**

A compelling overview of your book, one to two pages in length, should communicate what your book is about and show the essential worth and marketability of a book rather than a magazine article or newspaper story. The overview should be a clear, concise statement including four elements:

- What the book is about
- Why it should be written
- How you will write it
- Why you are the best person to write it.

### **3. Markets**

This section should contain information about who will buy your book, whom you're writing the book for, why the book should exist, and your strategy to sell it.

### **4. The Competition**

The competition section spells out the results of your research and assessment as to the viability of your proposal, the competition, any complementary books, and how you support the idea of the book's existence.

### **5. Promotion**

What you will do to help promote and sell your book, including the following specific points:

- Regional and national presentations
- Publicist



## II. The Craft of Writing

- Faculty or consultant positions with network promotion
- Memberships with marketing impact
- Electronic or regular mail contacts
- Collaborative, promotional, and affiliate partners
- Interviews for book release
- Articles available in eZine banks

### **6. Author's Background**

Emphasize your background and experience as it relates to the book.

### **7. Chapter Outline**

This section—its organization and persuasion—is crucial. It should contain a table of contents and a chapter-by-chapter outline with chapter abstracts. The chapter-by-chapter outline consists of a synopsis of each chapter—as little as two to three paragraphs, up to a page each.

These chapter abstracts allow you to show what you can do without having to write the book. It is your blueprint for the book.

### **8. Sample Chapter**

The sample chapter, usually Chapter 1, simply proves that you can do the job.

Engage the reader from the first sentence.

Look at some recent nonfiction bestsellers: *Blink*, *Outliers*, *Freakonomics*, *Predictably Irrational*, *Social Intelligence*. Chapter 1 in each book begins with a story. A powerful story engages the reader and captures the essence of the book's message.

This nonfiction book proposal usually runs anywhere from 20 to 40 pages, plus



## II. The Craft of Writing

the sample chapter.

The book proposal is not just a sales tool for the writer; it is an essential teaching tool for the writer. It is your game plan, your superstructure. This book proposal serves as a map for you, because it requires you to understand the meaning of your book and articulate what the book is about. It requires you to think about why you're the person to write it, and why anyone would be interested in it.



## II. The Craft of Writing

These are the demands you should already be placing on yourself when you first consider writing a book. In fact, the first month or two of creating your book may be about investigating your idea and writing your book proposal.

### **The Seven Habits of Successful Writers**

*1. Create a specific plan including your schedule for writing.*

Stick with it, no matter what. Sometimes one of the most important things in life, as well as in writing, is to show up.

This schedule is simply a writing plan that does not have to be detailed or onerous. It may look like some version of these possibilities:

- I will write for two hours, five days a week, between 8 and 10 p.m.
- I will draft 500 words of writing each day, for five days a week.
- I will create two chunks a week.
- I will create an outline of the book by (date).
- I will create an annotated outline by (date).

Focusing on a simple, specific action plan sets up the best potential for your effectiveness and mastery.

Divide up your work. Focus on and complete one thing at a time. There's always something you can focus on.

During my specialty training in psychiatry, one of my first-year supervisors had a puzzling picture on the wall—a photograph in which everything seemed curiously out of focus. As I met with him each week, I glanced at the photograph until finally, toward the end of the year, I asked him about it.

“Look carefully,” he said. “What do you see?”

I walked over to the photograph to get a closer look. Closer didn't help. It still



## II. The Craft of Writing

seemed out of focus. I saw no particular aesthetic value in it. My experience and considerable interest in photography didn't help. "Steve, the only thing I notice is that there's only one branch of one tree in focus in the entire picture."

He nodded, "That's why I have it hanging there. It's my reminder that, while things may seem confusing and blurry, there is always at least one thing that you can have in focus and see clearly."

Which is why he was a great supervisor for first-year residents.

### 2. *When you write, write.*

Don't combine writing and editing. Writing and editing are two different mindsets. You cannot do both at the same time. Different parts of the brain are involved. Plan separate times for each task.

### 3. *Take one step at a time.*

Have a small, specific, definable goal. Write in small bursts. The first draft may be done at various times, bit by bit, and may be a compilation of several stacks of pages from various times.

Terry Fox started the Marathon of Hope, a cross-Canada run of 3,339 miles. Because he had an artificial leg, his running style was a shuffle and hop. He managed about 24 miles a day and completed the run in 143 days. Asked how he kept going when he was exhausted and knew he had thousands of miles ahead, he responded, "I just kept running to the next telephone pole."

### 4. *Find your most efficient way of writing and stick to it.*

Whether it's the computer, writing longhand on a yellow pad, or dictating for later transcription, do what fits your learning and creativity style. Also, pay attention to your best time of the day for the creative process of writing, and the time of day for the more objective work of editing. Pay attention to your biorhythms. (In Texas, we say it's easier to ride a horse in the direction it's going.)

### 5. *Read your work aloud.*



## II. The Craft of Writing

This can be a very effective element in editing, a way of listening on another level. If possible, join a writers group to hear your work and other work read by others.

### *6. Do adequate research.*

Effective writers know that good research is about pursuing questions and information of themselves, as well as resorting to books, websites, reports, and interviews. One way to review new information daily is to have “Google Alerts” deliver to your e-mailbox abstracts and links to the topic you’re interested in.

### *7. Read the writing of others.*

We learn by reading. Read what instructs as well as what stimulates. Read from



## II. The Craft of Writing

other, related fields—stretch yourself. You will find your own best balance for reading and writing.

### The Top 6 Mistakes Successful Writers Avoid

#### 1. *Avoid passive sentence construction.*

As you reread and edit your work, convert passive verbs into active language whenever possible.

#### 2. *Strive to be clear, specific, simple and humane (William Zinsser, The Art of Writing).*

Significant work goes into keeping it simple and making it look easy. Keep the burden of the clarity of communication. Don't shift it to the reader or listener.

#### 3. *Show, don't tell your audience.*

Use stories and use metaphors. Combining a good story (right brain) with pointing out the story's lesson (left brain) engages both sides of the brain for balanced learning.

People accept ideas more readily when their minds are in story mode as opposed to a more analytical mindset. Show, don't tell: Melville didn't write a story about whaling. He wrote a unique action-and-dialogue drama between one guy and one fish.

Stories are how we understand and how we remember. James Watson, the scientist who, with Crick, discovered DNA said, "You know, I can remember something when I fit it into a story."

A story is a system for holding together facts. A story makes things make sense. Lawyers know this; little kids standing next to broken vases know this.

Muriel Rukeyser said, "The world is made up of stories, not atoms."

#### 4. *Keep the "I" to a minimum, in order to acknowledge and engage your reader.*



## II. The Craft of Writing

### 5. *Lose the jargon and fancy phrases.*

Hemingway believed that one- to two-syllable words worked better than longer ones. Do not seek to impress your audience with your intellect, vocabulary, or research. Your reader wants a savvy friend who explains things in a down-to-earth way, and who also happens to be an expert.

### 6. *Be a good storyteller.*

When you carefully craft a speech, or tell a story, the art lies in evoking the desired emotional response from listener or reader. Rather than expressing yourself, or telling what the receiver's reaction should be, you enable the reader to have the emotional experience. We can learn from the poets, who offer their art to the reader or listener as a doorway to their own experience.

One of the storytellers I studied with told of an experience he had going through the airport in Chicago. A woman stopped him to say how much she enjoyed his presentation, and how it had stayed with her for four years. He asked her to



## II. The Craft of Writing

remind him what he had talked about. She said, “Oh, I don’t remember what you talked about, but I’ll always remember that story you told.”

### Chunking Exercises

Chunk: A piece of writing about the size of a newspaper column that looks at a single subject.

#### Exercise 1:

*Write a single chunk. Treat the single subject in a complete, self-contained way. This might be an anecdote, vignette, exercise, description of an event, complete thought, or case study. It should be on the subject related to your book.*

#### Exercise 2:

*Write four more chunks.*

*You will see that chunks are the building blocks of nonfiction books.*

#### Exercise 3:

*Fit your chunks into your outline.*

*See what the chunks illuminate or describe to further a section of a specific chapter of your book.*

#### Exercise 4:

*Plan a month of writing.*



## II. The Craft of Writing

*After you have written five chunks and fitted them into the outline, you may want to revise your outline. After revision, decide what chunks to write next. For these, you'll be more aware of what you want to write and can make a writing schedule.*

### Important Areas of Focus for the Serious Writer

#### 1. The mission statement of your book

In business, a mission statement is a statement of an organization's primary purpose, the strategies to achieve that purpose, and its fundamental values. A personal mission statement can clarify and give meaning to your daily activities; it adds focus and commitment to what you do.

Consider the mission statement for your book. A mission statement contains four elements: ideals, purpose, strategies, and goals.

- *Ideals:* The core values that motivate and guide you, defining the important elements of what you will convey in the book.
- *Purpose:* What you wish to accomplish, the benefits the reader gets that are consistent with the ideals.
- *Strategy:* The art and science of a plan of action. This has to do with how you will conceive, craft, and deliver your book.
- *Goals:* Effective goals are those that are SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound.

Create a mission statement for yourself as a writer. It can guide you – remind you what you are meant to do. This can become a compass to guide your story to completion and fulfillment. Write it down. Look at it each time before you begin writing.

I'll share mine with you. My mission statement is to inspire and guide people to achieve their unique, most empowered life and business stories.

2. A business plan for your book (the book proposal)
3. A timetable: calendar of completion of each aspect of your book



## I. The Art of Writing

4. Daily schedule
5. Your writing office. The space of your own, as Virginia Woolf emphasized.
6. Your tools. Adequate support from computer to business stationery and cards. Books, references, magazines related to your writing.
7. Continuing education in writing, in your subject matter, and in marketing
8. A writer's group. The huge leaps forward I have made have come from attending two writer's groups at the University of Iowa. In them I learned as much from the other participants as I did from the writer who coordinated the groups.

At a University of Houston Imprint Series, we did something I have subsequently incorporated into a Boot Camp for Writers that concluded just a few months ago – hearing your writing read by someone else. You can't tell the reader where to pause or use a certain inflection. You will find objectively listening to your own work read aloud hugely beneficial.

### **Your Belief Systems**

If you want to change your life, first change your mind. How do you do an inventory of beliefs that may be limiting or compromising? Analogous to impressionistic painting, each of your experiences is a dab of paint on a pointillist canvas. Only when you step back and view the entire picture do you recognize that the points form a pattern of a particular segment of life, and that the segments have their own unity. You create each experience, the patterns, and the composite image. Each is at a different level of awareness.

You are always free to change your mind, always free to change your beliefs and core assumptions about who and what you are.

Changing your mind not only alters your brain, but also transforms your life. But first you have to be aware. Prediction and expectation based on the past create repetition, but when based on the present and future, prediction and expectation create possibilities. A belief system constructs an obstacle or an opportunity.

Consider this: What you seek is camouflaged in what you fear. Show me an



## I. The Art of Writing

obstacle, and I'll show you a desire. For example, show me clutter, and I'll show you blocked energy that desires release. We always create the outside to match the inside.

The secret here is that an obstacle is the unconscious mnemonic of desire. It reminds you of what you want, but makes it safe to want if you're afraid.

I saw a cartoon of a dog straining at its leash, barking relentlessly at a cat as if to say, "Just let me at him." The cat wasn't too shabby, and actually looked mean, at least as big as the dog. All of a sudden, in the middle of a ferocious bark, the leash snapped, leaving the dog free to go after the cat. He looked astonished. Scared to death. He quickly grabbed the leash and tied it in a triple knot. Then he could once again safely strain at the leash and bark his ferocious, "Just let me at him."

When you find yourself focusing on an obstacle (e.g., I can't find time to write), reflect on the underlying desire. When you're ready to consider that you create the obstacle, you're also ready to consider the possibility of not creating it. Imagine what it would be like not to create your obstacles.



### III. THE SCIENCE OF WRITING



*A writer is someone on whom nothing is lost.  
When you start writing, you think like a writer.*

~ Henry James

*So much of writing is about sitting down and doing it every day,  
and so much of it is about getting into the custom of taking in  
everything that comes along, seeing it all as grist for the mill.  
This can be a very comforting habit, like biting your nails.*

~ Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird*



### III. The Science of Writing

## **Comfort Zone**

To write and publish your first book, you'll have to leave your comfort zone. A comfort zone is simply a familiar pattern of behavior. It is a gradual process initially, but once established, resists change. Think of a comfort zone like your home thermostat. An increase or decrease in room temperature signals an adjustment to return to the set point—the comfort zone. Our minds and our brains both contribute to maintenance of our comfort zone. We return to the familiar even when we don't like it or when it's uncomfortable. A comfort zone is predictable and automatic. We know the outcome of being in it. A comfort zone can be a repeated role you play in a relationship, or a repeated pattern like procrastinating about making needed lifestyle changes. It can take various forms, for example, bargaining with yourself about seriously writing—or really completing—your book within a specific time frame.

In the beginning, departure from a comfort zone feels, by definition, uncomfortable—a rupture of continuity. A routine is broken. Remember that a habit is not a definition. It's a choice that gets repeated.

When we write a new story—and change our minds—we change our brains.

Some NASA astronauts did a training experiment in which they wore headgear with a visual apparatus that gave an upside-down image consistently, 24 hours a day. They had to learn to adjust everything they did: down for up, up for down, reversing everything. Then about Day 25 they all noticed something remarkable: their brains automatically made the adjustments. They didn't have to do it consciously any more. Their brains had rewired—developed new neural pathways.

Another group of astronauts in headgear, however, were given a day off, out of the helmets for 24 hours, at Day 15. When they put the headgear back on it took them 25 days from that point on to make the adjustments.

Your performance—even the money you make—operates in a similar way. If people get more successful, they feel vaguely uncomfortable, different. If you make more money than fits with your self-image, it cues an internal thermostat to return to the comfort zone. Here's an example of a comfort zone in action:



### III. The Science of Writing

Most lottery winners manage to spend or give away their newfound earnings to return to their previous situation. In the U.S., 80% of lottery winners file bankruptcy within the first five years after their win.

A comfort zone is an unconscious thermostat until it becomes conscious. Then you can reprogram your mind and brain.

Your mind can reframe; your brain can rewire. One possibility: Make a habit of writing. Construct a schedule and be loyal to that schedule.

#### **Frame**

How you frame something can change the meaning. The meaning can change your mind. Your mind can change your brain.

Meaning derives from the frame we place around an event or situation. The structure of meaning is an inside job. If a traumatized combat veteran hears a car backfire, the stimulus ignites a latent kindling in his amygdala that produces a startle response, which then transports him to a different place and state of mind. To his companion with a different history, it's background noise that doesn't even interrupt his conversation.

Each meaning and each frame is yours to construct. It is not there until you create it.

A simple example:

- I have too much going on right now to find time to write.
- Reframed: I have too much going on right now not to create time to write. It's a way I take care of myself.

Your response – your perception of an experience and a meaning you attribute to it – is a bridge between an external event and an internal state. To discern meaning, you need a context to surround it. The frame can determine your state of mind.



### III. The Science of Writing

The reticular activating system (RAS) at the base of the brain decides what is allowed into consciousness out of all the information streaming into the brain. For example, pay attention right now to your feet. Focus specifically on how your feet feel as you wiggle your toes, as you move your feet back and forth on the floor. Your feet have been there all along, but you cue your RAS to attend to your feet and get feedback.

You pay attention to whatever fits your life story – the framework you use. Now let's examine how this reality affects the story of your book. For example, part of your life story is your self-image. If someone says something really nice about you that you don't believe, it won't register. It will be disavowed with an internal comment such as, "What are they trying to sell me?" Natural filters include beliefs, self-image, and goals.

How do you reframe – reprogram – your RAS to let in what you want to achieve with your book?

Here's the key to this entire discussion on frame (you knew I had to be up to something, other than just talking about one of my favorite topics of mind-brain interaction): Your *book outline* is more than your blueprint and plan. It is your frame. When you start writing about something specific, examples of it begin to appear. It is as if the universe is conspiring to help you achieve your goal. Yellow Jeeps keep appearing. You can't get away from them.

I first had a series of experiences in psychoanalysis that I have now had in mentor coaching as well. My patients then who were therapists or psychoanalysts in training would notice that as soon as they worked through an issue and came to terms with it, suddenly half a dozen of their own patients would bring up the issue they had just dealt with. Their patients had been unconsciously taking a number, patiently waiting until it was their turn. Those of you who are professional coaches no doubt have noticed and will notice the same thing with your clients. They will wait for you to get your arms around something, so you can help them with it.

Now, as authors, you'll notice it again. And it will pertain to what you are writing.



### III. The Science of Writing

For example, suddenly in the last couple of months, as I've had the release of the new book on money in the foreground, along with putting together a teleseminar and workbook on *Your New Money Story*, my clients have begun giving me illustrations. Their money stories are there at center stage, needing to be coached. That's what the law of attraction tells us: Whatever you focus on, you will both notice and bring about.

Here is a three-step combination to reframe and incorporate your new endeavor:

1. Visualization. You can create powerful and stimulating internal images. Visualization reprograms the RAS by programming awareness. It cues your radar.
2. Affirmations, the positive validation of doing and being what you want. Affirmations constitute the story that frames and supports the visualization. To allow yourself to be creative, you have to lose the fear of being wrong. Affirmations will provide a sense of safety as well as of hope.
3. Change your behavior to precisely what you want. New behavior and new experiences create new pathways in the brain. With each repetition, those pathways become more deeply etched. As soon as they are well grooved, you will have a new habit, an automatic behavior, the default mode.

Your future self lives in your present mind. If you clearly visualize that future self, you can then move ahead to actualize that vision.



### III. The Science of Writing

## **The Science of a Vision**

Recent Positron-Emission Tomography (PET) scans of the brain have confirmed several things about visualization:

- Visualization brings about actual physical changes in the brain
- The brain assimilates a mental picture whether the stimulus is actual or imagined, i.e., from the optic nerve or from the prefrontal cortex. The brain cannot tell the difference between a mental image and an actual image.
- Replays of the visualization (such as repeating the vision of having successfully attained the goal) program neural networks and neuronal pathways to more strongly etch the experience.
- PET scans have also established that thoughts bring about physical changes in your brain.

When you program your unconscious, you actually create a “future memory” to live into. The brain can’t tell who conjured it—you or reality. The more detailed your visual image, the more specifically etched your brain will be.

Here’s the key: You do not make the brain change permanent unless you incorporate it into your story. Otherwise, it doesn’t register, or is extruded as noise.

This may be why 95% of people who diet gain back their weight: They don’t reprogram their body image.

Envision the experience of your completed book—not of getting there, but of being there, of announcing its successful release, the entire experience of the successful completion. This is a way to incorporate your objective as part of your identity, rather than as belonging to someone else or being a wishful fantasy.

We know that by simply picturing a danger, we can trigger the entire body responses of fight and flight.



### III. The Science of Writing

While your unconscious mind cannot tell the difference between something you physically see and something you mentally picture, your conscious mind can, and your conscious mind must incorporate an evolving story to assemble the imagery and your new self-concept as part of your new story. Otherwise, unconscious messages will block access to or believability of the imagery.

The key elements are these:

- Repetition: The neural networks dedicated to your vision must be renewed and repeated regularly, or they will be eliminated.
- Conscious incorporation of this new vision into an ongoing story to be ultimately metabolized as part of the self. Otherwise you will “lose” this vision.
- Specificity about the experience of having achieved the goal.

Visualization *crystallizes possibility* into an *articulated idea* – the experience changes the brain. A vision serves as guide and inspiration to design ways to realize it – to live into it.

Major James Nesmeth spent seven years as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam. During the time he was imprisoned, he was essentially isolated and had no physical activity. Before the war, Major Nesmeth was an average weekend golfer, hardly breaking 100. To preserve his sanity, he learned to visualize golf. He selected his favorite country club. He saw himself dressed in golfing clothes. He experienced everything in great detail. He smelled the fragrance of the trees and grass, made each stroke with his entire body.

After he was released from his captivity, playing golf in his mind seven days a week for seven years, his first outing he shot a 74.

The power of a vision – of mind over matters.



### III. The Science of Writing

## **Regulation of States of Mind**

We enter and leave states of mind fluidly and invisibly, like the precision passage of the baton between relay-team members. Each of us has a set of different states of mind: Relaxation. Alertness. Anxiety. Anger. Centered attention.

A state of mind is a psychophysiological state, an internally organized software program of expectations, attitudes, meanings, and feelings. From an infinite sea of stimuli, the unique software package of each state of mind determines what data are relevant, and once those data become input, how processing occurs.

Each mind-body state determines how we perceive and process information and how we respond. A key element is our awareness of our different states of mind, in order to know which state works best for what purpose. For example, creative writing and editing require different states of mind; brainstorming and completing a project also require different states of mind.

The regulation of feelings and states of mind involves the understanding and mastery of access to each of your different states of mind. Listen to some examples of how artists and authors each enter a creative state to fit their intended work:

- Dame Edith Sitwell would lie in the stale solitude of an open coffin as a prelude to entering the state of mind she needed to write her macabre literature.
- Dr. Samuel Johnson and the poet W. H. Auden maintained a continuous state of stimulation by constantly consuming tea as they wrote.
- Willa Cather read the Bible to set the right tone prior to her writing.
- George Sand went immediately from making love to writing.
- Voltaire used his lover's back for a writing desk.
- Benjamin Franklin wrote while soaking in a bathtub to focus his thought process.
- One of my favorite authors, Diane Ackerman does the same.



### III. The Science of Writing

- Coleridge used opium before each stint of writing.
- The painter Turner liked to be lashed to the mast of a ship and taken for a sail during an incredible storm, so he could later recreate this experience on canvas.
- Some authors play a piece of music repetitively during the course of writing to create an emotional framework to house their evolving story.

The corresponding state of mind in the reader often matches with that of the author, the author guiding the reader to that state of mind through the senses: the music and voice of the words, the texture of imagery, the rhythm of feelings.

Each of us has a continuum of states, with some level of awareness of what state works best for what endeavor, even of how to enter and leave different states. We become more or less cognizant of the best for a creative endeavor, the best one for conceptual planning, in fact, the optimum state of attention and concentration for each task we undertake, from the alertness required for a business presentation to the state of relaxation conducive to sleep.

Self-regulation involves different parts of the brain. It is internal – emotional and cognitive. In order to reach longer-term goals, we need a different kind of goal-setting and brain involvement. Here are a few applications of the principle:

- Schedule blocks of uninterrupted time to sustain a state of mind.
- Preclude interruptions by turning off telephone and ringer.
- Recognize the best time of the day to do certain tasks, such as creative time early in the morning, and protect those times.
- Write out the tasks of that day, in one-hour blocks.
- Cluster the activities that require the same state of mind (errands).



### III. The Science of Writing

#### Grounding and Centering Exercise

*Specific focus on attunement to present experience and state of mind fosters connection of mind and body. If you feel detached or not grounded in your body or experience, you may focus awareness on very specific details of your physical body in your immediate environment.*

*Grounding yourself in your body allows you to center inside your experience and attain a fully present state of mind. This grounding and centering creates a sense of being – relaxed yet alert, focused but not tense. The present state of mind allows full access to all aspects of experience, especially self-awareness and attunement.*

*Sit in a comfortable chair and close your eyes. Keep your mind clear. Focus only on your immediate bodily experience. Begin feeling the sensation of relaxation.*

1. Ask yourself: “How present am I?”
2. Clear your mind of all thoughts and stimulation to focus entirely on your body.
3. Go through a systematic review of your body and perceptions from it, feeling, perceiving, and moving each aspect of your body from toes to head.
4. Systematically inventory each of your senses:
  - Seeing
  - Hearing
  - Touching
  - Tasting
  - Smelling
4. Attune specifically to aspects of body function that may be calming. Focus on and control of breathing, tensing and relaxing various muscle groups, alignment of body posture.
5. Progressive Relaxation:
  - Take a deep breath.



### III. The Science of Writing

- *Breathe in relaxation. Breathe out tension.*
- *Focus entirely on your feet and toes; relax them completely.*
- *Let the relaxation move into your calves. Then to your thighs. Notice the warm, heavy, comfortable sensation.*
- *Let the relaxation move into your hips. Then to your abdomen. Then to your chest. Notice the relaxed, soft feeling of your muscles, and the deeper breathing.*
- *Let the relaxation travel up your neck into your face. Then to your scalp. Then to your brain.*
- *Be aware of even deeper breathing. Continue to breathe in relaxation, and breathe out tension until your entire body is in a relaxed state.*
- *Decide when to stop the exercise. Allow a moment of transition to a fully alert state.*
- *You will remember this experience in your body and mind and will be able to access it more quickly each time.*



### III. The Science of Writing

## **Creativity**

Inside each of us is a natural, innate energy, a drive to create. When we open ourselves to our creativity, we allow our internal experience to flow through whatever channels are natural: words, pictures, movement. Creativity is a natural part of life.

## **Flow**

To access a creative experience, we need to enter a state of mind that allows this flow.

Flow is a state of heightened focus, productivity, and happiness. The ability to create flow to be more productive, creative, and satisfied at work offers significant advantages.

“Flow” is one of the positive states, studied in the last two decades, that contributes greatly to effectiveness and performance (Dr. Mihaly Csikszentmihalya ). Flow, from another perspective, is the state of mind of being centered and focused without distraction. This state of mind allows full immersion in the process of concentration and performance that creates superior results.

In the state of mind of flow, people engage so fully in what they do that they lose track of time. The experience becomes its own reward, a way of countering distraction and becoming immersed in purpose.

Here are some things that interfere with this creative process, obstacles to become aware of in order to avoid:

- Waiting until it's the right time
- Waiting until you really have something to say
- Waiting until you have enough money to justify the time
- Telling yourself it's too late



### III. The Science of Writing

- Being afraid of what family or friends might think
- Thinking that an appointment with yourself for creative time is an indulgence or a luxury

In the beginning, it's not about where you sit, what paper you use, or what you write about; it's about beginning. In the beginning, your job is to begin.

A recommendation: Consider integrating your writing into other professional activities. We've already discussed how you'll begin to hear vignettes and illustrations to capture.

Another strategy: Present what you're writing about. When I'm working on a book, I will only accept speaking engagements that are in the flow of what I am writing about, so that when I'm working on a presentation, I'm also working on a chapter.



### III. The Science of Writing

#### *Exercise: Morning Pages*

*One way to foster this creativity initially is to do what Julia Cameron in *The Artist's Way* describes as morning pages. Morning pages are three pages of longhand writing done first thing in the morning, totally stream of consciousness. She emphasizes that there is no wrong way to do them. Just write. Even if you can't think of anything to write, write anyhow. Do not edit or judge, just write. The morning pages are a primary tool for initiating or rediscovering your creativity.*



### III. The Science of Writing

#### **Insight Changes the Brain (An application – a result – of flow)**

Electroencephalogram (EEG) fMRI monitoring of the brain reveals that, at a moment of insight, a complex new set of neural connections is being created. An “ah-ha” experience causes three different parts of the brain to light up and stimulates the brain to produce dopamine and epinephrine. Contrast this with the effect of receiving information, a directive, or an order: nothing happens, no portion of the brain lights up.

When you solve a problem, neural transmitters immediately respond with a rewarding release. Thus your most powerful way to write effectively is to facilitate insight, to create a situation that gives you a novel approach.

Schedule, protect, preserve the space for this creativity to live, to unfold. You establish the crucible for this creative force when you set aside time and provide an environment free of intrusions or distractions.

#### **Management of State-Specific Issues: Chokes, Slumps, and Blocks**

##### *Chokes*

Thinking too much causes a choke.

We choke when pressure derails the usual processing of tasks we’ve learned so well that they are automatic. The most common cause of derailment is slowing down to think about something. Moving from experiential to observer takes you out of the flow. Thinking about something – consciously focusing on it – moves you away from automatic flow (implicit or procedural memory) to an intellectual (explicit) memory. Different parts of the brain are involved. Thinking too much converts instinct to cognitive observation, causing a choke. This slight internal shift from implicit to explicit disrupts the flow of the automatic, procedural response.

A well-rehearsed presentation can go smoothly, unless you stop and think about it, slow down, and get out of the flow. The same thing can happen if you stop writing to edit.



### III. The Science of Writing

I'm talking sometimes nanoseconds. A pro tennis player was off her form before she was to compete at Wimbledon. We examined her experience frame by frame. Here's what we saw: The instant she tossed the tennis ball into the air for her first serve, she flashed on her coach telling her to toss it higher. That's all it took to get her out of her flow. An Olympic gymnast disrupted her implicit memory by focusing, just for a second, on her chief opponent the instant before she did her routine.

I give you these examples to think about and be aware of the importance of staying in the flow of writing without stepping outside even for a moment to become an observer, a critic of your work. Reverting to an explicit mode and thinking about it makes it deliberate and considered, and can disrupt the flow of your creativity.

#### *Slumps*

Continuing in this explicit mode can create a slump, an extension of a choke. It's a fact that panic or anxiety narrows perception, focusing on one thing, analogous to *thinking too little*.

So, thinking too much or thinking too little can be equally derailing. Consider the applications to your process of writing, your state of mind, and sustaining that state for a natural flow of your creative process.

#### *Blocks*

Writer's block usually happens when the writer can't enter a state of mind to create. Access to the creative state seems – well, blocked.

Anxiety is an energy state. To change to a better state of mind, transform that energy by getting grounded, becoming present. As just one example, the most effective antidote to stage fright is grounding. Then the actor's emotional energy, rather than staying blocked or being managed, can connect with the audience.

Centering brings mind and body together in full focus. A brief relaxation and centering exercise can be a useful aid to your fluid shift into the best state for writing.



### III. The Science of Writing

Here's what I suggest to someone with a writer's block:

- Go through a centering exercise
- Write about being blocked for a 10-minute period (to see what happens).
- Consider whether the block might be a message that, instead of writing, you need to do further research or edit what you've already written.

### **A Summary of the Science of Writing**

- Since old patterns are hardwired, consistency of focus on new experiences is what it takes to change this wiring.
- Concentrate on new behaviors – possibilities rather than problems or obstacles in order to create new brain pathways. Identifying the problem won't solve it.
- Create new ways of thinking to simulate brain circuits, with an "eye on the prize" – the completed book – to lay new mental maps.
- Regulate states of mind and manage emotions to promote brain power. New insights and adaptations occur through balanced learning: left brain and right brain, intellectual and emotional.
- When diverted to an old feeling or behavior, redirect ideas and energy flow to new ideas, i.e., the new story of the process of creative immersion in writing, the discipline + work of rewriting, and, ultimately your complete book.
- Remember that the power is in the focus, and that permanent change arises from the consistency of that focus.
- Focus on successes rather than obstacles or nonperformance. Focus aligns and directs energy and efforts.
- Emphasize positive adaptive behavior and progress; discourage attention to negative behavior.
- Knowledge is inert until it is activated. Put it into behavior.



### III. The Science of Writing

- Think about your new experience and evolving self—how our new experiences will require thinking of yourself, your identity, in a new way, no longer in the old story. “I am an author.”

#### Inverse Wisdom for Authors

What follows are the highlights of the introduction to *Outsmart Your Brain: An Instruction Manual*, adapted for authors.

I came home from college after my freshman year and announced to my mom that I'd decided to major in psychology. We talked; she was excited for me. Then she mentioned that she'd made an A in her college psychology course.

I said, “Oh, I didn't know that. You must have really enjoyed it and studied a lot.”

She said, “No, I just answered everything on the test the opposite of what I thought was right.”

Well, here's a list of nine things that are the inverse of conventional wisdom for authors, in honor of my mom, who thought it was all opposite anyway.

1. *Burn your bridges.* Make it impossible to go back to an old habit or way of being. If you decide to quit postponing the completion of your book, make it impossible in some way to go back to postponing it. Create an uncomfortable scenario if you should slip back. Focus on the present without the limiting habit. Reward yourself for proceeding and not going back. (And even if you have writer's block, you don't get to go to the mall during your writing time.)
2. *Do the opposite of what you normally do when you're afraid, worried, anxious, uncomfortable, or stuck.* If you're uncomfortable with public speaking, avoidance will increase the fear, so do more of it. Embrace it. Join Toastmasters. You have to jump in the water, because you can't learn to swim on paper.



### III. The Science of Writing

3. *Obstacles reveal desires.* Show me an obstacle, and I'll show you a desire. Instead of figuring out a way to sidestep, overcome, or go around the obstacle, consider instead not creating it. When you're ready to recognize that you create an obstacle, you're ready to consider the possibility of not creating it.
4. *Discomfort can be a sign of progress.* Moving beyond your comfort zone is necessary for progress. Comfortable is not a place you begin, it's a place at which you can arrive. Moving from a comfort zone is necessary in order to proceed.
5. *Lean into the unknown.* If you wonder whether you can write and sell a book because you've never done it before, lean into the action of doing it. If you think you're too old to do something, you'll be right. You can tiptoe through life very carefully and arrive safely at – death.
6. *Don't believe every thought you have.* "I'll never be able to write a book." Thoughts lie a lot. They're like my Uncle Ted (God rest his soul or I'd have to use another example). You don't have to believe every thought that crosses your mind. You're not even stuck with the brain you have; you can make it better.

Remember Vincent van Gogh's sage advice? "If you hear a voice say, 'I am not a painter,' by all means paint. Then that voice will be silenced."

7. *You do not attract what you want; you create what you focus on.* Cue your radar for early recognition. Keep an eye open for yellow Jeeps, stories, illustrations for your book, opportunities to talk about what you're writing about. A caveat: Talk about your subject, not the book you're writing. Talking about writing your book can dissipate the energy of its writing. How many people do you know who "have a book in them" or "have been working on my book" for the last decade?
8. *You only see what you believe.* I'll say that again: Some things have to be believed in order to be seen. And: When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change. This fact comes from quantum physics and the process of observing quarks. In quantum



### III. The Science of Writing

mechanics as well as in the brain, the question you ask influences the outcome you see. A well-verified law is called the Quantum Zeno Effect: the mental act of attention activates and holds in place brain circuitry. Consistent focus then rewires the brain. Use this law to help you write your book. You'll begin to see more of what you need to write about.

9. *Believe in someone, and he or she will show you why you do.*  
Neuroscience has demonstrated that authentic belief in someone activates the other person's brain to create a state of mind that transcends usual thinking and performance. That person could be you, the author.

#### IV. THE BUSINESS OF WRITING



*Writing a novel is like driving a car at night.  
You can only see as far as your headlights,  
but you can make the whole trip that way.*

~ E.L. Doctorow

*Someone one once asked Ira Gershwin,  
the great American songwriter,  
which comes first: the words or the music.  
He quickly answered, "The contract."*



#### IV. The Business of Writing

A brief recap as we discuss selling your story:

- Writing is like selling: It must solve a problem or meet a need.
- Do your groundwork. Foster connections and affiliations, do research, and develop marketing strategies
- Gather information: critique groups, classes, conferences, networks.
- For nonfiction books, publishers buy book proposals, not books.

Three secrets of writing success:

- Choose what you want.
- Believe it will be yours.
- Take positive action toward that goal every day

As a coach or consultant, you already know how to do the thing writers find most difficult – think about the sale. The essence of publishing? It's a business

- with a bottom line
- with risk
- with a marketplace.
- with a business goal

You create and market a product – your knowledge. A writer may mistakenly put all energy into crafting a message, rather than thinking like a business person. Both are necessary.

Let's revisit three questions:

1. *How do you write a book?*

The same way you began seeing yellow Jeeps after visualizing one. Once you begin to think about writing a book, you begin to see things in different ways. You begin to hear vignettes. Ideas begin to crystallize. You begin to have an



## IV. The Business of Writing

awareness of what you say and how you say it. It makes you a better listener. It makes you a better speaker.

Remember, no one ever sits down to write a book. You sit down to write a few sentences or a page.

### 2. *Why do you want to write?*

- To sell the book
- To develop a second career
- To further your existing career
- To learn something
- For the joy of writing
- To make a difference

### 3. *For whom do you write? (Your first, authentic answer: for yourself).*

Yet you must respect the marketplace. Be attuned to needs. Provide answers; make your approaches to answers accessible. You attune to existing needs as well as remain true to your own story. Your gift to readers is who you are.

## **Options for Getting Your Book Published**

### **1. Self-publish**

You can form your own publishing company. I did that for *Roadmap for a New Wellness Story*. I'll illustrate the steps from my recent experiences. Each book can cost between \$2.00-\$3.00 to print, depending on quantity. If you publish a book that companies or large groups can use, you can sell multiples of several thousand. Since you control the printing, if you sell to a corporation that wants 10,000 books for its people, you can easily include a letter from the CEO as the first page of the book.



#### IV. The Business of Writing

Here are the considerations and steps to constructing your book if you self-publish:

##### *Editing*

After completing the manuscript, you'll need to get it edited by a professional editor (about \$500). E-mail me when you get to this step if you choose this option and I will give you a personal referral to the head of an editing consortium that I use. He will match your work to an editor knowledgeable in that area, for the most reasonable fee around.

##### *Formatting*

You'll need to get it formatted for a book, i.e., to look like a book rather than a typewritten page (about \$700).

##### *Indexing*

This is your next step (about \$400).

##### *Graphic design*

Simultaneously with these three steps, you can get a graphics firm to do the book cover, spine, and back (\$1,000-\$1,500). (Ditto for a referral)

##### *ISBN number and bar code*

(Reasonable services are available online, about \$100 for both).

##### *Printing*

Send all of the above to a book printer.

##### *Warehousing and distribution*

Arrange warehousing of your book to handle orders if you sell single copies. (I use a printer connected to a distribution warehouse, who also does single sales online, cued from my web site.)



## IV. The Business of Writing

### **2. Subsidy publishing**

With a subsidy publisher, you pay part of the publishing costs. The benefit is that you have a publishing house who does all of the above work (all 7 bullets worth), and you do only the writing. Unless you negotiate hard, you won't have influence in any of the choices, including the cover.

### **3. Print on demand (POD)**

Packages at POD publishers, such as XLibris or iUniverse, cost around \$1,000. You need to submit the edited manuscript. They do all the subsequent steps of publishing I've mentioned, along with placing your book with a book distributor and listing it on Amazon.com. Then you get copies at an author's discount (40% off the cover price). They set the cover price, usually fairly high (e.g., cover price is \$25; you purchase for \$15; if you sell, you make \$10). The benefit is that it gets your book out there — you have a book within a very few months. You also get to actively participate in the cover choice.

### **4. Fulfillment house**

A fulfillment house will take an order for your book, print it, prepare for shipping, and mail it to the purchaser. They will have a stock printed of however many you designate, so that it can be shipped in a timely way.

They work with an edited manuscript and cover art from a disk. For this option, you have completed the manuscript, edited it, formatted it for the particular style you want, and have the front and back cover and spine done by a graphics firm.

This is a useful option for training material and workbooks for seminars. The Coach Training Alliance Accelerator and the Sage and Scholar Guides are done in this way. My MentorPath training publications — the curriculum for *Live a New Life Story: The Owner's Guide*, and *The Workbook; The Wellness Workbook*; and my latest *Your New Money Story Workbook* — are all done by the same fulfillment house. Whenever someone purchases the hard-copy book and pays by Pay Pal, an automatic order is placed at the fulfillment house, and it is shipped to the person who purchased it. They will print only the number of copies of the book you request to have on hand for fulfillment.



#### IV. The Business of Writing

All the examples I just mentioned are three-ring binders, with an index tab for each chapter. I call mine Modules. A tip: Number each Module separately so you can update and add pages without having to redo the entire document. For example, Module 1, page 1 is 1.1. Module 5, page 3 is 5.3

#### **5. A traditional publishing house via an agent.**

For nonfiction books, you submit a book proposal and first chapter to an agent. Royalties usually range from 10 to 15%, in increasing increments according to the number of copies sold. An initial advance on royalty is customary, somewhere around \$5,000-10,000 for beginning authors.

You do an advance of royalty for two reasons.

- a) It's money for you (I don't expect any questions about a).
- b) It's the publisher's commitment to your book.

#### **6. Partnering with a foundation or company**

For this option, the foundation or company may support the writing and promotion of your book to further their cause. The author usually has a special tie with the organization and donates a significant portion of the proceeds to the group.

#### **7. An e-book.**

An e-book can be set up for an automatic purchase from your website. My website has e-books set up with automatic links for their download when someone pays. A service like e-Junkie can house all your books and articles that you want sent automatically to anyone without your having an active hand in the purchase or fulfillment.

For any book you publish, consider having an e-book option that you control. It can work with everything except traditional publishing with a big house. The cost per sale is pretty good per e-book – zero.



## IV. The Business of Writing

### **Copyright Considerations**

For any form or venue of publishing from article to book, always keep the copyright on any work you produce. Never sign it over to anyone else under any circumstances. It is your intellectual property.

The law grants you automatic copyright protection when you create your work; it doesn't even have to be completed to be protected. You own the copyright on your work as you create it.

Registration isn't required, but there are advantages to doing it. Here are two of the most prominent advantages:

- Registration establishes a public record of the copyright claim.
- Before an infringement suit can be filed in court, registration is necessary for works of U.S. origin.

### **Why Self-Publish?**

Self-publishing has at least five benefits:

#### ***1. Control***

With a traditional publishing house, you sign an exclusive agreement that prevents you from having input about most of the decisions that affect your book, including the cover and release date. If your book doesn't sell quickly and the publisher lets it go out of print, there's often a waiting period before you are allowed to seek another publisher.

#### ***2. Money***

A contract with a book publisher does not necessarily give you a guarantee that your book will get onto bookstore shelves, nor how long it will stay on the shelves if it actually makes it. If you're a new author, your publisher will allocate little to no marketing dollars to promote your book. If it does well, it will be largely by your own hand, and your reward will be a tiny fraction of the book's total profits.



## IV. The Business of Writing

### 3. *Waiting and rejection*

Realistically, first-time authors have difficulty breaking into a blue-chip publishing house. Many nonfiction book projects are time-sensitive, and you may not want to wait 18 to 24 months for your book to be published.

### 4. *Autonomy*

Self-published authors usually have confidence and have developed a following by giving talks and seminars. As an expert in your area, you may not need a publisher's approval. You may also happen to like being in the driver's seat of your book project.

### 5. *Power of belief*

You most probably believe deeply that others will benefit from reading what you have to say, or you wouldn't be reading this right now, or wanting to get your message into a more permanent form. I'll bet that's an unshakable conviction. I'll also bet that a deep belief motivates what you do, as well as what you write – a strong sense of purpose. That's why you need to write a book and sell a book. You may want to consider self-publishing if some or all of these factors fit.

Additionally, there is no longer a stigma attached to self-publishing. A decade and more ago, it was a death knell for a serious author to self-publish a first book – the producers were called vanity presses. Now it's accepted, sometimes necessary. I have even heard major agents recommend it to certain authors to test the market.

My first venture into nontraditional publishing – to me at the time, meaning other than a major professional or trade publishing house – was *Making Memories*. When I did *Making Memories*, I did it essentially as therapy for myself. I began writing it a year and a half before my oldest child, my son, left for college, and completed it a year after my youngest, my daughter, also left for college. It was my way of saying goodbye to parenting, the most important thing I had ever done. I needed to bring closure to an entire era of my life without burdening them. I was mourning their childhood, as well as the kid I could be again with them. I wanted both my children to know, someday, what it was being like being their parent from my perspective, and I didn't want an editor to



#### IV. The Business of Writing

touch a comma of it. I wanted it to be exactly what I said, the way I said it, and not have to worry about marketing. For the cover, I wanted a picture I took of my abstract sculpture of a dad holding two children.

It happened that the book was successful, because an interview in the newspaper was picked up and syndicated, and for a time it was Number One on Amazon's regional best-seller list.

No one cares about your book than you do.



#### IV. The Business of Writing

### **Titles That Tell and Sell**

- Three to five words that capture the essence of the book's promise
- Does the title sell (an answer, not a question; a solution, not a problem)?  
Is the title positive and empowering?
- Is the title a memorable image, metaphor, or a symbol that captures the essence of the book (a hook)?
- Is the title a prescription for the cure that the book will provide?
- Does the title make a promise the book will fulfill?
- Does the title offer your unique position – your good news?
- Does the title speak to one of the five great marketing motivators – fear, exclusivity, guilt, greed, or the need for approval?
- Does the title appeal to the needs and values of potential readers?
- Does the subtitle clearly spell out the benefits of reading the book?



#### IV. The Business of Writing

##### **Exercise: Brainstorm Titles**

*Brainstorm a title for your book. Don't censor or try to focus only in one direction, but free-associate. Brainstorm. Allow a free flow of ideas and write it down. Put down anything and everything that comes to you.*

*Come up with thirty potential titles that you write down.*



#### IV. The Business of Writing

##### **Exercise: Brainstorm a Subtitle.**

*Do the same with your subtitle. Same free flow, just not at the same time as you're brainstorming your titles. Carve out a separate time for this exercise.*

*Brainstorm thirty possible subtitles.*

*Then later come back to your brainstormed titles and subtitles and select your favorites. Put those away for 24 hours, then come back to them a third time and look at how they fit together. See what rings true and seems engaging. Select one or two of each.*



#### IV. The Business of Writing

##### *Exercise: Bullet Points*

*Write 5-6 bullet points of benefits readers will get by reading your work.*

*Make them brief, clear, and simple.*



#### IV. The Business of Writing

### **Publishing Roadmap for Nonfiction (roughly in the order of occurrence)**

1. Come up with your idea.
2. Do your homework.
3. Choose whether to type, dictate, or write your material.
4. Research topic and competition.
5. Develop a title and subtitle.
6. Find similar books to model.
7. Design a working cover page.
8. Create a mock-up.
9. Set a binder to hold your materials.
10. Write out a basic structure for your book (chapter titles, overall concepts, chronology).
11. Organize your ideas into chapters.
12. Generate a complete book proposal, even if self-publishing.
13. Create your first draft of Chapter 1.
14. Edit and review first draft to create a second draft to ensure proper punctuation and grammar.
15. Read your second draft aloud as another editing step.



#### IV. The Business of Writing

##### **Some miscellaneous points:**

- Two crucial elements are execution and marketing.
- You don't have to be Lance Armstrong to teach people to ride a bicycle.
- If you're blocked, skip past it and move to the next thing.
- If you're blocked in writing, get someone else in the room and tell them what you're trying to say that you are blocked on. Consider having a tape recorder running, because you may not remember.
- Record/video yourself pitching your idea. Then get another person to critique your pitch.
- Communicate your message when you're writing.
- Communicate the value to the reader when you're selling.



## IV. The Business of Writing

### **Platform**

#### *Where to Build Platform*

If you're working on a book project, what do you do first? Write your book? Set up a website or a blog? Start an e-zine? Does it matter?

It does matter, and what you decide depends on your destination.

#### *1. For a major book deal*

To publish with a big publisher, you would do things differently from what you would do to fill a coaching practice, or establish yourself as a professional speaker.

Your platform, your presence in the marketplace, is how many people know you, as well as why people know you. Your brand is tied to your audience. For major publicity and big book deals, existing platform is critical. To sell your book, as well as to build business and expand your audience, growing your platform is essential.

For a major book deal, the first questions an agent asks the author (because they're the first questions a publisher asks the agent) are, "What's your platform? Who knows you? How many people do you know who will buy your book?"

Considerations to build your platform:

- E-mail list
- E-zine or newsletter
- Blog
- Affiliate partnerships
- Writing articles for publication
- Speaking, workshops, and seminars
- Publications in trade journals



## IV. The Business of Writing

- Presentations to conferences, trade shows, organizations
- Affiliate contacts and partnerships
- Media exposure and contacts: radio, TV, podcast, teleseminars

Be sure with everything you do, from website to speaking engagements, that you have a way to capture e-mail addresses. Then establish an ongoing communication with people who will become your audience.

### *2. To enhance a professional practice*

Brand and niche are important. Your brand is your promise. What's your promise? What's the good news of your book – the “ah-ha”? Make sure you have a way to connect with potential clients and readers from your website and blog. Articles, including those in an e-zine, help distribute your message and presence.

### *3. To become a professional speaker*

The easiest way is to have a book. Even with a book you need to become proficient at public speaking. Begin with Toastmasters. Evolve to workshops to build keynote addresses, or through an advanced organization like the National Association of Speakers. You will need a strong niche and brand. On your website you will need a picture, preferably audio and video. Be sure all your credentials, bios, speaking one-sheets reflect your expertise. I'd recommend a keynote workshop if you plan to do serious public speaking and charge for it. There's an art and science to that, too. I just participated in one – there's a lot to know.

### *4. For major media*

For national magazines, TV, and other media, your biggest priority is to stand out in your area of expertise. A well-crafted niche and branded website are priorities here. Your site should have a strong media room with a media kit.

A footnote: Radio and TV producers and hosts, as well as magazine editors, are insulted to be referred to as “Press.” Their perception of themselves is “Media.” So use the term media kit, not press kit.



#### IV. The Business of Writing

You may want to develop separate e-media kits with corresponding urls specific to each medium. If there's too much stuff in your media room to click around or drill down to a certain portion, they won't follow through. Radio producers need radio-related material, and magazine editors need magazine-related material.

Common to each of these is an authentic brand and niche. Set up your website as you're designing your media kit. Design both blog and newsletter and set them to feed off each other. Create online promotions.

### **White Papers**

White papers are persuasive documents that usually describe problems and how to solve them. A white paper is a cross between a magazine article and a brochure. The white paper usually focuses on a product or service and translates them into business advantages.

The white paper takes the objective and educational approach of an article and weaves in the persuasive messages and benefits usually found in brochures.

A white paper usually begins with a problem or challenge faced by its readers and makes a strong case for preferring a particular approach to solving the problem. The white paper usually proposes a solution to a challenge and helps the reader make decisions.

Most white papers range in length from 6 to 12 pages. They can be a marketing tool for your book or practice. Relate them to the topic of your book. Make everything you do consistent with your brand. You won't see Nike diverting into breakfast cereal, or Dell developing a line of fountain pens.

A suggestion: When you do a presentation, have access to a white paper related to the topic access available on the home page of your website. Or you can have an annotated outline of your presentation for signing up for your newsletter – some aspect of your presentation in greater depth. This is platform building – a way to capture e-mail addresses to which you can send newsletters to announce a service, a new product, or both.



#### IV. The Business of Writing

### **Things You Can Do to Promote Your Book**

1. Buy a domain name as soon as you have a title for your book.
2. Start your own blog at Blogger.com or Wordpress.com.
3. Write a few articles on your topic and submit them to the internet for syndication.
4. Get business cards.
5. Put together a marketing plan.
6. Do an internet search for writer conferences or book festivals in your area.
7. Create an e-mail signature to promote your book and message for each e-mail you send.
8. Write a media release and submit it to free online media-release sites.
9. Write a brief bio that you will use to pitch yourself to the media.
10. Start your own e-mail newsletter.
11. Leave your business card, bookmark, book flyer, or postcard wherever you go.
12. Pitch yourself to local TV and radio stations.
13. Pitch yourself to local print media.
14. Work on your media kit and have it available on your website.
15. Check your local paper to see if the topic of your book is in the news, and if it is, write a letter to the editor to share your expertise and promote your book.
16. Check with local companies to see if they're interested in bulk buys of your book.
17. Add reviews to your website. What someone else has to say is a thousand times more effective for promotion than what you say.
18. Donate a copy of your book to a charity silent auction. If you attend, sign it for the winner.



#### IV. The Business of Writing

19. Get to work on your next book. Sometimes the best way to sell your first book is by promoting your second.

Authors who get published still need to do a lot of marketing. Books with a special-interest niche audience, which tend to have flat, steady sales, are ideal for POD (Print on demand). If you're happy with small but steady sales, if you want to get started and then generate interest from a traditional publisher, or if you want to keep an older book in print, then POD is a good option.

If, on the other hand, you want to make a business of your book, if you want to make a lot of money on it, self-publishing may be the right choice because you get all the revenue. The upfront fee is bigger, but at the end of the day you can make a lot more money.

If you have a story to tell and the capacity to execute it cogently, your story deserves to find a market.

Making a success of any self-published book takes time and money. A website, paid keyword marketing, marketing to other websites that have something to do with the subject, getting booked on radio shows, arranging book signings, are all in your future. You become your own promoter and distributor. Unless you work hard for your book, you're going to be Amazon.com Number 1,400,023.

Marketing figured prominently in the success of L. Trevor Grant's book on New York City's foster-care system. After being rejected by publishers all over town, Dr. Grant, a former social worker with child-welfare agencies, decided to publish the book himself. He managed to get the book seen by nearly everyone who had something to do with child welfare or was studying it in college. Someone saw the book and called Geraldo Rivera: "You've got to have this guy on your show." His life has never been the same since. The book is used as a teaching tool in schools of social work.

Jack Canfield (*Chicken Soup for the Soul*) said he sent a copy of his new book to jurors on the O.J. Simpson trial. Whenever the TV cameras panned the jurors during recess and most of them were reading his book, sales skyrocketed.



#### IV. The Business of Writing

Most people who buy books will know something about the subject of the book, a much smaller percentage will know the author, and nobody knows anything about the publisher. Readers don't care who publishes a book. It's the readers we all write for.

To publicize your book, you must capture people's attention in a world filled with media noise. Remember your silver bullet – the clear, sharply focused description of your book that explains what it's about, why it's special, and the precise benefits it will provide to readers.

### **The Business of Writing**

Here's my preface so I can say what I want to say to you: In all matters regarding your tax return, be certain to consult a qualified professional.

OK, let's talk. Many of you know about these deductions already.

You can deduct expenses related to the business of your writing. Include supplies, equipment, books, subscriptions, and expenses related to research. Marketing expenses include advertising, promotion, and business-related meals and travel. Why do you think you read so many novels are set in Rome, Paris, or Monte Carlo instead of downtown Pittsburgh?

The key to each of these deductions: Keep adequate records. Document the business purpose. If you don't already have one for a related business like coaching, consider opening a separate bank account, and take out a separate credit card for business expenses. A separate business name would help.

For some time now, I have rarely committed a nondeductible act.



## IV. The Business of Writing

### **A Final Thought**

Once you start writing, you'll never look at a piece of writing the same way again. Once you begin capturing your thoughts and musings, you'll feel a magnetic pull to continue. When you find your personal style for capturing thoughts, images, and feelings – writing on a yellow pad, seeing your words materialize on a computer screen, or holding a dictation device to speak to an imagined audience – it will have its own appeal.

Think of experiences that have been pivotal for you in opening new awareness. After my first cross-country bicycle trip with a buddy, I've never since looked at inclines and terrains in the same way, without immense appreciation. As a photographer, I see light and framing a different way. After my first watercolor class, I've never seen an aspen tree since without thinking of a particular wrist motion to get that downward branch etching on the trunk. After all, God knew it in Her infinite wisdom since the beginning of time.

Your book will take on a life of its own.

I hope our time together to consider some notions about the art, the craft, the science, and the business of writing has been helpful. I hope it has been perturbing as well as affirming. And, I hope, in a small way, to inform and guide you to make a difference for yourself and for others with your present and future books.

### **A Final Secret**

One book is like one potato chip.



#### IV. The Business of Writing

### **A Final Zen Story for Authors**

An oak tree is brought in to creation by two simultaneous forces. One is the acorn from which it begins, the seed holding all the promise and potential for the full, mature tree.

The other force is the future tree itself, which desires so powerfully to exist that it pulls its seed, the acorn, into being. It draws forth from the germ and guides the evolution from nothingness to maturity. In this respect, it is the oak tree that creates the acorn from which it is born.

Your book desires creation. You are already in a unique relationship with it. Listen carefully. Nurture it, prune it.

Let it grow and be born.

### **And a Final Quote**

*This may be the turning point your grandchildren will tell stories about years from now: The time you leap over the abyss to the other side of the Great Divide and begin your life in earnest.*

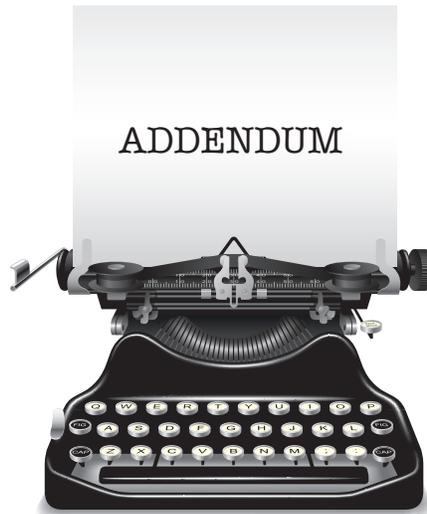
*On the other hand, this moment of truth may end up being nothing more than a brief awakening when you glimpse what's possible on the other side of the Great Divide, but tell yourself, "Nah, that's waayy to far to jump."*

*In that case, your grandchildren will have to be content talking about what delicious cookies you used to bake or what your favorite sports team was.*

*It will all depend on how brave you'll be.*

~ **Bob Brezsny**





### **References:**

*How to Write a Book Proposal* by Michael Larsen

*Write the Perfect Book Proposal* by Jeff Hermann and Deborah Hermann

### **Recommendation:**

*The Art of Writing* by William Zinsser

### **Readability Test**

If you use Microsoft Word, you can test the “readability” of your writing by clicking on TOOLS, then OPTIONS, then SPELLING AND GRAMMAR. Then click the check box at the bottom that says SHOW READABILITY STATISTICS.

After you spell-check your document, a box will pop up showing the number of words you used, the number of paragraphs, the number of sentences, the number of sentences per paragraph, the number of words per sentence, and the percentage of passive sentences. It will also give you two indicators that are based on the Flesch-Kincaid formula for readability. These indicators measure reading ease (based on 100 points, with 100 being the easiest) and grade level.

When the reading ease is 65 or higher, it indicates that you have a good chance of connecting with your reader.



## Addendum

### **Some Examples of Voice**

*“My work, my life, is all with the sick – but the sick and their sickness drives me to thoughts which, perhaps, I might not otherwise have had. So much that I am compelled to ask, with Nietzsche: ‘As for sickness, are we not almost tempted to ask whether we could get along without it?’ – and to see the questions it raises as fundamental in nature.*

*Constantly my patients drive me to question, and constantly my questions drive to patients – thus in the stories or studies which follow there is a continual movement from one to the other.”*

~ Oliver Sacks, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*

*“There are some things that human beings can see only out of the corner of the eye. The niftiest examples of this gift, familiar to all children, are small, faint stars. When you look straight at one such star, it vanishes; when you move your eyes to stare into the space nearby, it reappears. If you pick two faint stars, side by side, and focus on one of the pair, it disappears and now you can see the other in the corner of your eye, and you can move your eyes back and forth, turning off the star in the center of your retina and switching the other one on.*

*“Something like this happens in music. You cannot really hear certain sequences of notes in a Bach fugue unless at the same time there are other notes being sounded, dominating the field. The real meaning in music comes from tones only audible in the corner of the mind.”*

~ Lewis Thomas, *Late Night Thoughts on Listening to Mahler’s Ninth Symphony*

*“When you write, you lay out a line of words. The line of words is a miner’s pick, a wood carver’s gouge, a surgeon’s probe. You willed it, and it digs a path you follow. Soon you find yourself deep in new territory. Is it a dead end, or have you located the real subject? You will know tomorrow, or this time next year. You make the path boldly and follow it fearfully. You go where the path leads. At the end of the path, you find a box canyon. You hammer out reports, dispatch bulletins.”*

~ Annie Dillard, *The Writing Life*



## Addendum

### **Places to post ezine articles:**

#### *Ezine Articles*

<http://ezinearticles.com/>

#### *Self-growth.com*

<http://www.selfgrowth.com/artman/exec/admin.cgi>

Only one per month

#### *Business know-how*

<http://www.businessknowhow.com/newsletter/articleguidelines.htm>

Home office, small business, advertising, sales & marketing, human resources, legal and accounting issues, management, productivity, retailing, mail order, direct selling, multilevel marketing, gift baskets, medical billing and transcription, writing, editing and publishing, and using computer technology in small and home businesses.

#### *Main Street mom*

[http://www.mainstreetmom.com/article\\_submission\\_form.htm](http://www.mainstreetmom.com/article_submission_form.htm)

Parenting, children, at-home moms, working at home

#### *Articles on*

<http://www.articleson.com/>

Consider becoming feature writer

#### *goArticles*

<http://www.goarticles.com/ulogin.html>

#### *NetterWeb*

<http://www.netterweb.com/artcls/articlesubmit.htm>

Consider registering to post ezine - requires advertise NetterWeb once per year

#### *She Unlimited*

[http://www.sheunlimited.com/forums/cms\\_index.php?page=writer](http://www.sheunlimited.com/forums/cms_index.php?page=writer)

#### *Marketing Seek*

<http://www.marketing-seek.com/index.php>



## Addendum

### **Places to post ezine:**

#### *The Ezine Directory*

<http://www.ezine-dir.com/cgi-bin/links/add.cgi>

#### *eZine search*

<http://www.worldabooks.com/search-it/ezine/ezine-add.html>

Might have to include ad on web site or in ezine

#### *eZine locator*

<http://www.ezinelocater.com/>

Have to have email subscribe to use

#### *Best Ezines*

<http://www.bestezines.com/submit/>

#### *New List*

<http://new-list.com/submit/>

#### *Newsletter Access*

<http://www.newsletteraccess.com/account/register.php>

Standard listing is \$2.95 per year. Sponsored listing is \$29.95/year

#### *Web Scout Lists*

<http://www.webscoutlists.com/signup.epl>

Have to have email subscribe to use

#### *Ezine Hub*

<http://ezinehub.com/add.html>

#### *Topica*

<http://lists.topica.com/lists/mailman>

Can announce once per week on newsgroup

#### *Yahoo groups*

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/1\\_List\\_Advertising](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/1_List_Advertising)

Newsgroup to announce ezine; can post one a week

#### *Newsletter Promote*

<http://www.newsletterpromote.com/>

Software



Addendum

dkrueger@mentorpath.com to contact David Krueger MD for:

- Executive Mentor Coaching
- Wellness Teleseminars tailored to your group or corporation

www.NewWellnessStory.com to order digital or hard copy of:

*ROADMAP FOR A NEW WELLNESS STORY™*  
*7 Steps to Enhance Health and Longevity*  
By David Krueger MD

www.MentorPath.com for articles by David Krueger MD and for his new book/CD *The Sage and Scholars Guide to Coaching Wellness*.

www.NewBrainStory.com for digital copy of:

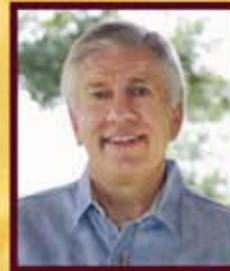
*OUTSMART YOUR BRAIN AN INSTRUCTION MANUAL*  
*How Neuroscience and Quantum Physics*  
*Can Help You Change Your Life*  
By David Krueger MD

# TELLING & SELLING Your Story

## The Art, Craft, Science, and Business of Authoring Your First Book

### Using materials and resources designed especially for the first time author, you will:

- Use a powerful writing system to complete your book
- Discover the seven habits of successful writers
- Learn the architecture of a book
- Explore the spectrum of publishing possibilities
- Recognize how books are marketed
- Add visibility and credibility to enhance practice and income
- Cement your position as an expert
- Learn proven methods to build platform



**David Krueger, M.D.** is an Executive Mentor Coach, and CEO of MentorPath, an executive coaching, publishing, and wellness firm.

He is Mentor/Trainer Coach and Dean of Curriculum for Coach Training Alliance.

Author of sixteen trade and professional books on success, wellness, money, and self-development, and seventy-five scientific papers and book chapters, his coaching and writing focus on the art and science of success strategies: mind over matters. He is a national feature columnist, and has been elected to the American Society of Journalists and Authors.

His book, *The Secret Language of Money* is a feature of McGraw Hill Professional.

[www.TheSecretLanguageofMoney.com](http://www.TheSecretLanguageofMoney.com)



[www.MentorPath.com](http://www.MentorPath.com)