

Write Advice

*Inspirations, tips and thoughts
for Leaders and Artists*

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Dedication

For Karen and for leaders and artists
everywhere, for they are one and the
same, yet each is so unique.

-INTRODUCTION-

This book is for leaders and artists. I actually believe they are often one in the same. An excellent leader doesn't get to be that way without a sense of creativity and artistry. Likewise, the artist shapes opinions, causes introspection and moves the spirit, if not the body. To do that is to demonstrate leadership.

There are other attributes that leaders and artists share. They're naturally upbeat and typically think in terms of possibilities. They have a record of success but can admit when they sometimes are stuck or stumble over a problem. They have a burning to achieve but their goal can be elusive. Both are also creative thinkers.

The short musings in this book touch on both. I am a writer, so many of my insights are from the writer's point of

view. Simply replace the word writer with leader, artist, painter, sculptor, or other creative as you see fit.

When you thumb through the following pages, either as a seasoned leader, a beginning writer or a lover of quotes, I hope you will uncover a new perspective and be struck by something, an a-ha that causes you to look at your world differently.



Find Purpose. Race for your goals and reflect once you achieve them. If you don't know your purpose, take stock of your recent outcomes. If you like them, glean your purpose from them.

Those who have vision and passion but who lack action can be called a dreamer. Those who have passion and action but who lack vision can be called a workaholic. And those who have vision and action without any passion, unfortunately represent most people. Superior performance requires equal parts of vision, passion and action.

**Be exceptional.
Live with vision, passion
and action.**

When someone reads your work, the writer in you is no longer solitary. If you're successful, a vision, passion or action has been ignited in your reader.

The point of writing is to get a persuasive idea across. To create, vision, passion or action.

“Any, All, Always and Never” are words that can encompass or delete a lot, but they lack specificity. They're lazy words for a leader to use.

Who are three people you know who have infectious laughs? Next time you're down, call them up, just for *giggles*.

*Lessons with laughter
last longer...keep smiling.*

Most pencils are equipped with a device that enables forgiveness. Are you?

You can have a litany of *excuses* or a litany of *successes* - **not both**.

There is variety in happiness. You can experience curiosity, joy, or expectation, to name a few. Enjoy the buffet.

Snap judgments are often great with the **snap** and poor with the **judgment**.

The goal in looking back should always be to end up beaming. After all, back there is what got you here.

*Man often gets
bored
with things
manmade,
but nature's
inspiration
never fades.*

Every rose needs good fertilizer and pruning.

When you plateau and no longer challenge yourself, or no longer strive for something, you become old, regardless of your age.

You know how sometimes you're mistaken for someone else? What if you said, "Yes, I am." instead? It could change your life.

If dreaming big is a *Fool's* errand, be the *Jester* before the *King*.

*For those who wish
but do not work,
dreams
may come true.*

*But those who wish
and work, will find
their dreams,
and riches too.*

**The goal
of a writer
is to write.**

Are you better at goal setting or goal getting?

Goals have deadlines inherent to them. It's what makes it a goal - not a wish.

Share your writing goal with someone else and let them hold you accountable.

Are you still vacationing on *Someday Isle*, or are you ready to work on your goals?

Every business has room for creativity and every piece of art has science to it. Like breathing in and out, both are important.

Word count as a goal
doesn't move your story.
Action, plot and events
do. Use those as your
goals.

Just because you're
indignant and **loud** does
not mean you're right.
You might be, but more
likely, you're just
indignant and loud.

*The sun is full of
energy and light,
even though we
don't see it at night,
we know it burns
just as bright.
Your strength
is like that.*

*Tides come in
and tides go out
regardless of your
fear or doubt.*

*Some are high
and some are low.*

*Learn from tides,
they have much to
show.*

*There is a task
that is before us.*

*Some say
we'll never win.*

*But this task
will not ignore us.*

*So fail or not,
we must begin.*



A platform is who you are, your values, beliefs and behaviors. They say, the best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago, the next best is today. It's the same with building a platform. It takes time. Each plank is an objective. Space them evenly. Soon, you have a floor for your stage.

If you love what you do, (*write*) then talking about it (*promoting*) isn't so hard. You must believe in it (*yourself*) to be authentic.

If **you** don't believe in your work as the creator, no one else will.

It's nice to have thousands upon thousand of followers, but a small group of committed fans has more power.

Let people know what you do and keep doing it. The vehicle is your choice.

Contemplate something for your soul. Let it roll about your mind before you demonstrate it through your body.

"Trying" is a noisy way of **not doing** something. Decide to do or don't do, it's your choice. Commit to yourself.

It's rare that we regret what we've done. More often, we regret the things left undone.

Help others discover their passions and help them make a positive difference.

Most things *are* possible.
The biggest obstacle is
often your belief to the
contrary.

Uncover the motivating factors that keep you doing what you're doing.

Take action on the areas where you can make the greatest contribution.

Who are **five** people with great attitudes you could learn from?

What do you think you sounded like to people who may have overheard your conversations today?

Is there *something* you ardently desire, yet are doing *nothing* to achieve? What are you waiting for?

You can begin making a positive difference by first helping others rediscover their passion.

You can tell a lot about an organization by what they hang on their walls.

What's the best compliment you've ever received? If felt nice, right? How many have you given lately?

What have you done to shift your thinking in the last month?

You are the average of the five people you spend most of your time with. Are you happy with that, or do you need an upgrade?

What are the *strengths* you'll keep and the *weaknesses* you'll release?

What did you want to be when you grew up? Is it still appealing?

Who is the person in your life who you most want to introduce to other people?

Can you be happy before you're successful? If so, you already are.

Are you spending one hour a day learning something new or are you becoming irrelevant?



A blank canvas is utterly terrifying sometimes, but we must begin.

The only way to conquer fear is to face it. Show courage. Use your imagination on your writing not on your worrying.

Fear is a type of self-editing. If you are "creating" it's not appropriate to have fear.

Is the fear of the reaction of the first person who reads your work ever really gone?

The moment your fear of failure exceeds your fear of success is the moment you actually do something.

Creativity has no fear in it. Fear is the perceived lack of something. Save the fear for the editing stage.

If you fear mistakes in life, you will fear them in your writing. Arm yourself with an eraser and the ability to learn.

Fear is what blocks people from achieving most things. Defeat the fear you defeat the block.

The greatest obstacle for a writer is perfection; their fear of it, or their belief that they have obtained it.

A writer can find inspiration from things as inconsequential as pocket lint to the grandeur of a vibrant sunset. An author weaves it into a story and inspires others.

Writing journals should be treated like lovers, each with its own passion and heartache.

To be stunted by the poor advice of others is one of life's most tragic things.

For writers, writing is
hard when they **do not**,
but effortless
when they **do**.

Art and science clash between those writing for passion and those writing for money. A "Starving Artist" is horrified by compromise and a "Published Author" is annoyed by naivety. There is mutual jealousy of freedom and success. It's best to keep writing for business and writing for pleasure separate until they overlap on their own, otherwise you will drive yourself crazy.

If you have a story to be told, an idea to share, it's your duty to tell it. Don't be concerned about the marketplace.

Have you lost the muse, the will or both?

Somebody will **always** want to read what you write. That's a subject of marketing. Writers must first create.

Willingness and Desire moves things from the heart, to the head and through the hands, be you a writer or a mechanic.

Good fishermen fish where the fish are. Good writers know where their audience is by using experience and good tackle.

The faithful are more likely to buy your books or ideas and promote them to others better than you can.

The reader comes first. A writer without readers is like a leader without followers. It kinda messes with the system.

Measure progress by reader feedback. Good or bad, if it touched them, you've progressed.

Just as the leader has followers, the writer has readers. How they arrive doesn't matter. Do they stay? That's what counts.

Write for yourself. Your readers will find you. Some will go-many more will replace them, because you'll be better. One barrier in writing is when we don't know our audience. To whom are you writing for? Even if the answer is yourself, it's better to know upfront.

Connecting with readers is what ignites and sustains the passion to write.

If you want outside "success", you will need others.

Writing is not a business, publishing is. Writing is the creative first step.

Keep it simple. Write what you know, love what you write, and spread the love (at least believe in what you write). Also, write what you seek to know. It's a great gift for you and your readers.

Are you in the write mind today?

The only thing that stops a passionate editor is the publication date.

Know your customer. Protect, inform and celebrate them. Knowing your "audience" is the same thing.

Just as a leader must answer, "why should I be followed?" A writer must ask, "why should I be read?" Writers **ARE** leaders.

Writers aren't always the best judge of their craft - but their readers are. Pay attention to your readers!

Failure in writing is not being read or understood by a reader. To actually write **SOMETHING** helps reduce that risk greatly.



First drafts are painful for everyone except the writer and their mom.

Write down the main idea, then write a character draft, then build the story structure. Rinse and repeat as needed. Sometimes you may lose a sock.

A red pen in the wrong hands can leave a trail of blood.

The first draft is written with the heart, the second is edited with the head. Alternate until complete.

Edit **AFTER** the first draft. The first draft is sacred - after that, the gloves come off.

To get perspective on your work, put it aside by giving it to someone else to review.

Some say the writing **REALLY** happens during the re-writing phase. Rewriting is like starting from scratch. Editing is like chipping away the marble to create a statue. To a writer, it's the same difference.

That instant you first give your writing to someone else to read is a combined moment of absolute joy and fear, especially if the reader has a pen in their hand.

We go to certain friends for certain advice. It should be the same with our written work.

Getting feedback on your writing is like getting feedback on life. Some things you take to heart, some you ignore.

Give yourself time to put what you are working on away and not look at it. At a minimum, leave it overnight. Preferably, leave it alone for weeks. Fresh eyes from the author work wonders.



If we spend too much time thinking and planning but not acting - then words never appear.

Willingness + Desire = Passion. Keep equal levels of both high, it makes the writing flow easier.

A writer never knows if a piece will succeed or fail. Like a parent, they simply give it their all and hope for the best.

Any kind of promotion of your work is good.

Writing, like life, begins with a flourish. Love, nurture and educate it with the help of others. Then let it go to fend for itself.

Life plants the seeds. Writers add light, water and food. Editors weed and nurture.

Publishers pluck and bring to market.

The book is the birth. You still need to nurture and take care of it until it can sustain itself without you.

Writing serves as a type of therapy.

If the creator isn't going to promote it, who will?

If you don't put yourself out there, how will they find you?

A confident writer
is a sexy writer.

Writing for yourself is important. If others read what you write, then you're a success. Now, what do you do with it?

When people ask, "*What do you write?*" I think, "*What do you eat?*"
Personal interests aside, what's the distinction? It's creating.

When people say, "*So, you're a writer. What have you written that I might have read?*"

I think, "*Are you an average American? Then, probably very little.*"

Tragic, those who destroy hobbies by ignorance or intent. Writers are creators, no matter the subject or time of day.

People who ask more
questions make more
money, don't you think?

*Words are a
commodity.
Ideas, emotions,
and connections
are what are sought
and sold.*



What do you want to share?
Whom do you want to share
with? Why do you want to share?
How will you share it? Now begin to
write.

Aside from deadline, word count and
caffeine overdose, when do you know
your written work is **done**?

Start with a title and then let the piece
grow from there. If it still works, keep
it. If not, come up with a new one. A
title serves as focal point for each
draft. If the focus changes, the title
changes.

The title, like all headlines, is your
chance and your responsibility, to
capture your reader's attention and
inspiration.

If you have writer's block or a fear, spend one day writing the opposite of what makes you comfortable.

Just write. No matter what, write.

Don't edit. Just do it. Use your other hand if you have to. Doing so is a pattern interrupt. It forces your mind to make a different type of connection than it's used to. Sparks will follow.

Try sitting in a different desk or doing your "process" in a different order.

See what happens.

Stand on desks and chairs and look at the room differently.

Spending time away from the keyboard and with other people helps plant the seeds for future writing.

Try using Lego Bricks to create scenes to help visualize your story. Index cards can only take you so far.

Stuck? Put your character in front of Google...what will they look for?

To create fictional names, open up a magazine and scan the masthead of editors and contributors, then combine the first or last name with a noun.

Go somewhere you don't want to and pretend all the people are characters in your book. Use the event as back-story.

Listen to real conversations to make your dialogue sound real.

Use an outline to write a fast draft, and then switch everything around. In the next draft, let the characters write it.

Have your characters answer "25 Questions about you" on Facebook.

Do you enjoy building a world or do you prefer to explore the existing one?

For non-fiction, pick a theme and stick with it, but be open to ideas that come from left field.

Does writing ever really feel complete? Don't you always feel you could do more?

Calendar the important.
Many think you can't
schedule creativity-but if
you are creative you just
are, muse be damned.



The *epitome* of healthy ego, reading something and being deeply touched by it, then realizing it was you who wrote it years ago. The *curse* of the writer, reading something that you think is crap and realizing it was you who wrote it a week ago.

One risk in being a writer is that sometimes you write garbage.

Feeling schizophrenic is a writer's occupational hazard.

There is a range of artists, from “The frail and weak” to the “The cool and indignant”.

Anger and guilt are an inevitable part of the writer's make up. If you are a guilt free writer, you may not be doing it right. All writers feel *uncertainty*. Insecurity however, is a personal matter.

What if no one cares whether you write or not? Yes, accolades are nice, but a writer writes alone in every sense of the word.

Isn't a harp essentially a naked piano tipped on its side?

Ideas are a delicate fruit so it's best to let them ripen. But if left on the vine too long they rot through neglect and inaction.

Writers write,
Leaders lead,
Doers do.
Or words
to that effect.

How can hope ever be false? Hope is the only truth available when all else has failed.

A writer is one who writes. An author is one who is read. The medium is irrelevant.

"Good" writers acknowledge the rules - and ignore them.

Writing as art has good or bad qualities determined by the beholder. Writing as craft is empirical as determined by "rules".

What makes a good piano player? One whose ability doesn't interfere with conveying the mood. One who hits the notes. Same for a writer.

*Six words of writing
advice:*

Write.

Revise.

Release.

Receive.

Rejoice.

Repeat.

The successful keep practicing their talent, keep improving. It's what makes a successful life.

A writers "commercial" success will depend on their skill, business sense and the help and support of others.

A painter struck by inspiration does not choose red because it sells better. A writer is a creative force first.

No mater what the hour, how compelling the character, or how deep the passion a *real* writer is always distracted by cookies.

Painters paint, sculptors sculpt, leaders lead, writers write. Success and setback are inevitable, but you do it anyway.

*Anyone can write
- but few do.*

*Anyone can read
- but few do.*

*Anyone can criticize
- and most do.*

Do you ever respect the person who calls you a failure? What if that person is you? Focus on your strengths and keep writing.

You are not defined by what others label you, but by what you respond to when called.

Remember, pursuing what you love may be hard at first, but ultimately the struggles are worthwhile.

Where do you come across best? Be there.

*Inspiration is where
your imagination
and your soul meet
for a dance.*

To be surrounded
by crumbled balls
of paper is not
failure. Failure is
the complete lack
of effort.



Be a bold writer; don't live in the margins of your work.

The better organized you are, the better you capture inspiration. Like luck, inspiration is **made** more than found.

People talk themselves out of their dreams too often. That hurts, so they take a pill for relief. Try living your dream instead.

Great leaders are also great followers. Poor followers are always poor leaders.

Deadlines help make imaginations real.

There's a fuel that is both free and freeing. Its limitless supply is easily mined, but often forgotten. It's your imagination.

Revise your work right up until you think it's done. If you think it's perfect you've gone too far. Life may deal you a lousy hand from time to time, that's fate. But how you play it determines your success or failure, that's willpower.

If you're awesome and you know it, raise your hand.

Sometimes you can't wait for inspiration. You need to go get it yourself.

To "right" yourself, try writing, yourself. Just get it out and let it go.

The best you can be is what you already are - just go and be more of it.

Every writer has been told they think too much. Thinking writers scare people.

A writer doesn't *need* the oceans, mountains, deserts or cityscape. They just need a pen. It's their spirit that makes the other demands.

You know you're a writer when the scratching sound of pencil to paper in darkened hours is a thrilling moment.

Typing doesn't make you a writer anymore than holding a hammer makes you a carpenter. But it's a start.

If you must write then write. Ignore detractors and naysayers. Write, learn, and improve. Do that and you have already succeeded.

Intuition and Judgment are partners. You may favor one, but should it fail, the other is close at hand.

A good writer always listens.

Change has a process to it. You can speed it up or slow it down, but you can't skip a step. It's like grieving.

It's no coincidence that great leaders are often great writers.

*Coffee streams past writers lips,
inspiration forms between
the sips.*

Keys move fast, full of error.

*Morning edits
met with terror.*

A muse is a wonderful thing unless you become enslaved. You're in charge. Just write the damn thing!

Thirty years from now people will ask, "What were they thinking?" Work to improve **those** things.

You should write AFTER you have your perspective. You're writing then explores your premise. Sometimes we don't want the perspective to change.

"But" erases everything before it.

If you can write a little bit everyday, you will write a lot over time.

The point of writing is to be read.

The gift of writing is in three simple tools. Your head, something to write with and something to write on. Try to keep all three nearby.

Life is **FULL** of priorities. A life well lived **MAKES** the time for the things one treasures.

You can't hope the wind blows a rudderless writing project into some port safety. You've got to work the sails.

Readers are seldom touched by your word count.

Writing doesn't just appear. One may toil a lifetime or scribble in a moment. All of it comes from the minds and hearts of people.

Our inner editor is seldom our greatest fan.

Your pen should weave around writing for yourself and knowing your audience. Otherwise, you won't be doing either any favors.

Really **LISTENING** to a new song can sometimes inspire a completely new world of thought and creativity.

Music and words come from the same place.

Confusing a reader is not a good thing. Intriguing one - now that's a different story.

Generally, if you write often enough, all of your "inners" come out.

If you don't have the
passion to write
something great, you
don't.

*Contrary to popular belief,
it's not the thought that
counts.*

*It's the implementation of
that thought.*

When you love what you're doing
you become an addiction for
opportunity, luck and treasure.

If your premise starts with blame,
hate and noise you'll be heard but not
listened to.

If you stay on purpose, consider
opposing views, challenge yourself
and provide service to others you
ultimately win.

Write.

Rewrite.

Write often.

Write well.

