

Remember The *Why* Of Your Writing - Don't Become Lost In The Marketing!

Crafting Your "Writer's Code"

"Nearly a decade ago, in my freelance journalism career, I worked on a story for the *Petaluma Magazine* interviewing dozens of local visual artists. One woman's comments have stuck with me across the years: When asked what it took to produce a final painting that satisfied her, her answer was "Miles of canvas." I could envision those miles, logged at all hours of the day and night...Often countless "draft" paintings went into the one she finally called complete. It's much the same for a writer reproducing drafts of a book or story. Her words encouraged me deeply; they helped me see that everything counts as long as you choose to see it in that light. The value of your writing practice is ultimately up to you. And once you know what the value is, no one can take it from you through rejection, criticism, or competition."

Jordan Rosenfeld
A Writer's Guide To Persistence

This interactive workshop will walk you, the writer, through the activity of crafting a "Writer's Code", as set forth in Jordan Rosenfeld's book.

Your Writer's Code will be the very meat behind your writing—the soul that causes your heart to beat when all falls dark upon your writing practice and career.

It will be the beacon of light that guides you back to shore, and into your deepest pouring out of words. Words that will touch and move those who read them. At least, this is what it has done for me.

2. What Gets In The Way Of Your Writing?

Fears, Excuses, Doubts, Negative Voices. List them specifically in the left column. Then in the right column, cancel out these negatives with one of your reasons for writing.

Negative

Reason

3. What Is Your Writing Rhythm?

Picture a time when you have had immense fun, satisfaction, and momentum in your writing. Explain it in detail. What time is it? Where are you? Who is around? Is there music, if so, what kind? Do you smell anything? Ready, Go.

The above description paints a picture of your Writer’s Rhythm—the conditions that best feed into your best writing. We can;t always create those perfect conditions, but it is important to pay attention not the ones we can nurture, such as what time we write, if we have a candle lit, if we have coffee or wine, or if there is music playing, and what kind. These trigger your mind into creative energy. It is vital to identify when our creative energy is at its peak, and reserve that time and space for our writing.

4. What Is Your Next Risk?

It is terribly easy to become overwhelmed in our writing, to the point that we feel paralyzed. It helps to step back and ask, “What is my one next step?” Often, your next step is a risk. What is something you have been wanting to do, but it frightens you? Perhaps it is picking back up that book manuscript, pitching that story to a magazine, finding a critique group, beginning a blog, or submitting your book proposal to an agent. Write down your next risk—the one that scares you, but you know will move you forward in your writing journey.

Choose a logical risk; one that won’t stretch you beyond your threshold, but will push you just beyond your comfort zone, and into new, exciting, and rewarding territory.

5. Who Is Your Creative Support Team?

Writing can be one of the loneliest of journeys, or a sanctuary of community. When we spend hours buried in our words and stories, it is that much more important that we seek out and make time for community. We need others to speak life into our work, from an outside perspective.

Your Creative Support Team should be made up of those individuals who will cheerlead and champion you on through the toughest of times. They may not be who you expect at first thought. They will know what words you need to hear—the ones that will not discourage, but build up, and press you on to taking that next step; to not giving up. A few may be writers themselves, but a few should be not.

List out the qualities you think of when you think of an ideal champion for your writing career.

We may not have those perfect champions in our lives. But we can think of a few people (at least one writer, but not all), who can speak life into our writing dreams when we feel most defeated. Write a few names down here, who could be part of your Creative Support Team.

Sample Writer's Code, Eryn Lynum.

On this day, April 27 2016, I Eryn Lynum state to myself that I write because:

- It provides clarity, perspective, and vision for my life and our family
- It records our story in vivid detail
- It inspires others through word and story
- It brings families together and strengthens them through tangible and intentional ideas
- It shares the gospel

My best writing rhythms are found early morning, before the house is awake, for 45 minutes, listening to French Cafe music station. With coffee.

My next risk is to pick back up the 936 Pennies manuscript, as we wait on publication.

When I struggle, I will turn to Gray and Dawn. I will also look for a critique group.

Eryn Lynum.