



## Practical Productivity

10 Ways to Write More, Write Better, and Quash Your Inner Editor

If the lure of laundry pulls you from your writing, if the fear of the blank page keeps you from your writing chair, if the siren song of social media spirits you away down the visual rabbit hole, this class is for you. We'll figure out your reasons for distraction and how to address each one. Before long, your words on the page will become an unstoppable snowball!

## Sources of Distraction:

- Real interruptions
- Time constraints
- Overwhelm
- Disorganization
- Computer and other screens
- Fears

*Waiting for inspiration to write is like standing at the airport waiting for a train.*

## 10 Ways to Combat Distraction and Increase Your Productivity

### Location

Your chair: Wherever you normally work on your computer, change things up when it's time to write. Sit in a completely different place. This signals your brain and body what you expect it to do when you're in that location.

Dictation: You can also consider getting a digital recorder and dictating your book as you walk, bike ride, or fold laundry.

- **Dragon Dictation software** <http://bit.ly/2tLKuwY>
- **The Writer's Guide to Training your Dragon:**  
<https://amzn.to/2HpGIFv>
- **Foolproof Dictation:** <https://amzn.to/2HjgxxP>

- **Amazon Transcription Services:**  
<https://aws.amazon.com/transcribe/pricing/>

## **Computer**

Non-internet computer or notebook: write using something that doesn't go online. You can go old-school with a pen and paper, or use a computer with the internet disabled.

Dim your screen to black. You won't see notifications pop up (you may want to turn off the sound, too), and the bonus is that you can't self-edit--only write forward and edit later.

Scrivener in Composition Mode: If you use Scrivener, you can use the distraction-free mode to stay focused. <https://www.literatureandlatte.com/>

Brain music or studying music: this music is helpful for focus. Do a Google search and try it to see if it works for you.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7JmprpRIsEY> (or search for 'brain music' or 'brown noise')

Check if your workspace is ergonomic. If not, simple body discomfort could be cutting short your writing sessions.

## **Community**

Critique Group: if you're in a critique group, you're expected to bring pages each time. That can be quite motivating! Also, having others discuss your writing can light a fire to continue.

Brainstorming session: this can be with one person or more than one. Sometimes our distraction comes from not knowing where to go next with our book. A session like this can help you over the hump.

Word sprints: You can challenge a writing friend to sprint with you. Set a time frame and each of you reports back on how many words you managed. You can also do sprints on your own with an app or a spreadsheet to keep track.

- **5000 Words Per Hour App:**  
<https://www.chrisfoxwrites.com/2015/06/21/5000-words-per-hour-is-live-on-amazon-and-itunes/>
- **5000 Words Per Hour Spreadsheet:**  
<https://www.chrisfoxwrites.com/5kwph/>

Monetary Competitions: with this, you set a weekly or monthly writing goal. Your friend does the same. Agree on a monetary amount (cash or gift card). Whoever does not hit their goal must provide the reward to their partner. Make sure it's enough money that it will 'hurt' to have to pay that amount, but not so much as to bankrupt you!

Don't Break the Chain: This is where you commit to writing at least 100 words each day, without skipping a day. One hundred words is only about a paragraph, and you will often write much more. This helps you establish a daily writing habit, and helps you keep your brain connected to your book. Here's an easy printable to help you keep track:  
<http://karenkavett.com/blog/5154/dont-break-the-chain-calendar-2019.php>

## **Electronic Assistants**

Scrivener: as mentioned above, you can write in Composition Mode

Freedom: this app (for computer and devices) disables the internet for the time period you want to be writing. Perfect if you like writing on the computer, but get distracted by research or social media.

<https://freedom.to/>

Forest: this app ( for computer and devices) enables you to stay focused while planting trees in the world.

- **App** <https://www.forestapp.cc/>
- **Chrome extension (for computer)**  
<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/forest-stay-focused-be-pr/kjacjjdnoddpbbcjlcajfhbdhkpgk>

Write or Die: Not for everyone, this app will start deleting your words if you stop writing.

- **Version 2** <https://v2.writeordie.com/>
- **Version 3** <https://writeordie.com/buy>

## **Mindset**

Perfectionism: Often, we don't write because we expect it to be perfect as it flows from our fingers.

*Describing your writing as trash while you're still drafting is like looking at a bag of flour and an egg and saying, 'My cake tastes [terrible].'*

Fears: We not only struggle with a fear of failure, but also a fear of success.

*I have not failed: I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.*

*~ Thomas Edison*

*Procrastination is the fear of success.*

*You are not afraid of heights. You are afraid of falling.*

Leaving your goals for last: Does everyone else get what they need from you before you do? Why is it that we urge others to value themselves but we don't communicate that same message internally?

Lacking a sense of urgency: How many of us have heard of writers who died of illness or accident? God has asked you to take on the adventure of writing for a purpose: to write His answer. If this is your job, show up for it. If you have been called, be obedient.

## **Health**

Make exercise a priority. Writing is both sedentary and lonely. Combat the doldrums, awaken your creativity, and increase your health with regular exercise.

Adopt a habit along with exercise. If you look forward to these habits, you'll start to look forward to exercising.

- **Dictation**
- **Podcasts: learn about writing or marketing**
- **Youtube: most podcasts are on youtube also**
  - **Recommended: Heart Breathings**  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCasYwEzMc7tjKuAS-vtDYPw>
- **brainstorm with a friend (by phone or in person)**

## **Goals**

90-Day Planning: Set quarterly goals that are attainable to keep you focused and motivated.

- **90-day planning:**  
<https://heartbreathings.com/q2-90-day-review-free-90-day-plan-template/>
- 90-day plan template (here you can download the free 90-day template to personalize)  
<https://heartbreathings.com/q2-90-day-review-free-90-day-plan-template/>

**Kanban Board:** This is a board (digital or physical) that helps you track where your goals are: to do, in progress, or done. Using a Kanban board helps combat overwhelm by allowing you to focus only on a few tasks you select.

- How I Create My 90 Day Plan And Use A Kanban Board to Achieve My Goals  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R8wbLgmNJbQ>
- Digital board: <https://kanbanflow.com>

**Deadlines:** It's amazing how having an actual deadline helps to motivate us to get things done.

## **First Things First: Establish Your Morning Routine**

**Bible:** spend time with the Lord first

**Breakfast:** fuel your body and brain

**Writing:** get your words in first before you open your email or social media. If not, you WILL be derailed!

**Brain Dump:** If it's hard to focus because you have a lot on your mind, take a fresh page and do a 'brain dump.' Write down all the things that are distracting you or worrying you. Once that's done, get back to writing.

## **Plan Breaks**

Pomodoro Technique: Work for 25 minutes with a 5-minute break, or 50 minutes with a 10-minute break.

<https://writingwhilethericeboils.blogspot.com/2010/08/time-management-pomodoro-technique.html>

Plan for tomorrow: end your day with a 3-point plan for the next day. If nothing else gets accomplished tomorrow, what three things would make you feel you got something done?

## **Plan Rewards for Yourself**

What can you aim for that will motivate you? Time with a friend? A longed-for book? Set a goal and make it happen.

Remember: Someday you're going to be someone's favorite author.

Stay in touch: If you would like to stay connected and get a free resource on ways to grow your email list, click here:

<http://bit.ly/readermagnetlandingpage>



