

Alchemy of Writing



First Steps to Conjure and Nurture Your Writing Practice



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Being forward thinking and proactive



Planning

Do the difficult things while they are easy and do the great things while they are small. A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.

- Lao Tzu, founder of Taoism

I once heard a marriage counselor say that the best way to prevent divorce is to plan for it. The same is true for committing to any other big life plan or goal, like getting a degree, learning a new language, creating and maintaining a writing practice, or finishing a book.

The first step to planning for your writing practice is to **create space—both temporal and spatial**. This will likely mean changing some daily habits and environment to allow for your intentional and healthy writing practice.

Start with your temporal space.

What daily responsibilities and habits might interfere?

- ✦ Unexpected family responsibilities
- ✦ Engrained habits
- ✦ Social media + TV

What others can you think of that are specific to yourself and your life?

Complete the worksheet on the next page.

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Anticipating Obstacles Worksheet

The purpose of this **Anticipating Blocks + Obstacles Worksheet** is to help you **envision and anticipate every possible daily obstacle** – even the positives! Anything that might interfere with your writing goals (E.g. Wanting to change your routine). These types of obstacles usually translate to habitual daily habits, some of which don't add to our quality of life. Some could even be time wasters. **It's all about having back-up plans.**

Follow the example below, then make an exhaustive list of any and all **daily obstacles** that *might* show up in your day-to-day life, along with your plans to accommodate them yet **STILL get your writing done**. This may seem like a no-brainer, but you'd be surprised how effective it is to write these solutions down **BEFORE** they arise. If we wait until after, the writing can easily get swept under the rug.

Situation/Event/Occurrence	Solution/Response	Follow-up Solution/Response
I want to go back to my old habit of sleeping in on Saturday (because I want to go out on Friday nights) even though I've planned to write from 8-10am every Saturday morning Sleep is important, especially after a long work week. How to accommodate both?	Go to bed earlier on Friday night so I can still get up and write, and go out on Saturday nights instead (my reward for writing on Saturday morning to give me incentive).	Write on Sunday morning instead, OR get up an hour earlier two days during the week.

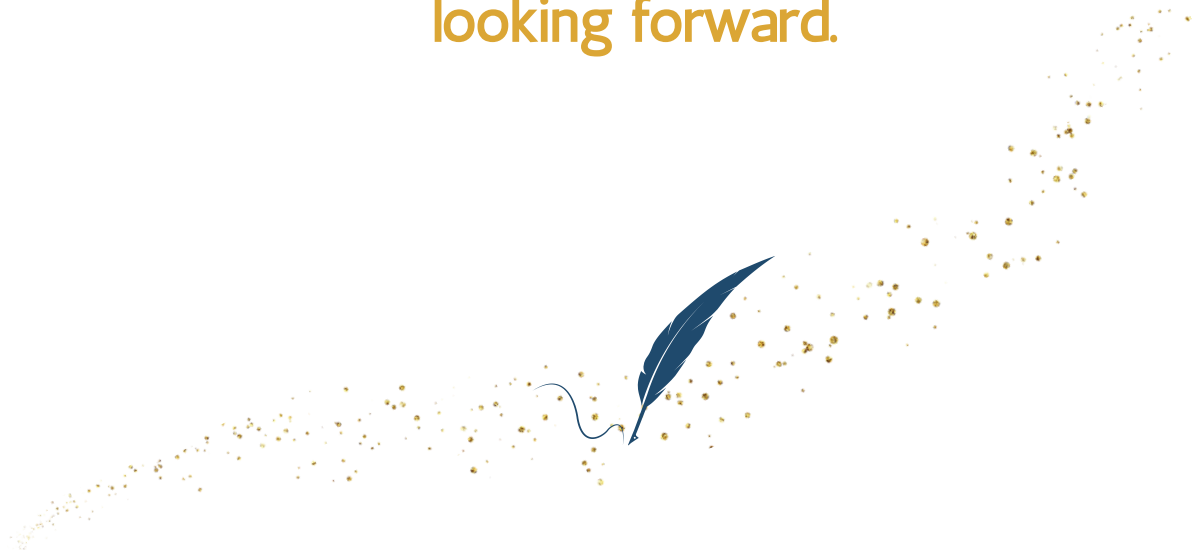


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In Module 1 of the full
Alchemy of Writing Course

we'll delve deeper into other types of obstacles you'll encounter while maintaining a writing practice and how to address and transform them.

We'll also explore your writing desires and visions, and you'll complete a personalized, comprehensive resource of support systems that ensures you always have what you need to stay focused and looking forward.



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Treating your writing like it's a job you love (and you're the boss)



There's no such thing as work-life balance. There are work-life choices, and you make them, and they have consequences.

– Jack Welch

Writing doesn't simply just happen, and waiting for inspiration is a mistake.

The second step to scheduling for your writing practice is to **set appointments on your calendar and treat them like all the other important appointments, responsibilities, and people in your life.** Then, sit down and write at those times. **No exceptions.** Except for fire, natural disaster, or true emergencies. Or a sick child or anyone for whom you serve as caregiver. (when there's absolutely, positively no one else to care for them... just for a while).

Again, obvious, right? BUT... I am continually surprised by how so many people put themselves last, and this includes their writing practice. Part of the discovery in this step is to make sure you're using the BEST method of calendaring for YOU.

Determine your best available times to write.

Where will you keep track?

How will can you best honor your practice?



Do you know which medium is best for you?

Complete the worksheet on the next page.

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Calendar Type Worksheet

The purpose of this **Calendar Type Worksheet** is to help you determine the best type of calendaring system for you. All minds are not created equally! Both digital and analog calendars have advantages and disadvantages, and the one(s) we use depend(s) on personal taste and preference, how our brains are wired, and how we want to use them to simplify our lives. It's easy to get stuck in habits, even scheduling habits, so use this worksheet to see if your current mode of scheduling and calendaring is best serving you, your lifestyle, and your brain wiring. Choose the box that best represents the truth about these statements on the 1-4 spectrum.

1	2	3	4
I am well-versed and comfortable using technical devices. They are a regular part of my life.			I don't use devices very often and/or I'm not comfortable using them. Devices are not a focus in my life.
My days are so full, I like receiving notifications on my phone about upcoming appointments so I don't miss something important.			My life is simple and straightforward, so I don't need notifications on my phone about upcoming appointments.
When I make lists, I usually make them in Notes or some other similar digital app or program.			When I make lists, I usually make them by hand with pen and paper.
I find scheduling and calendaring to be an arduous task and would rather spend my time doing other things.			I enjoy creating lists, checking boxes, doodling, and drawing. It's relaxing to me.
There are many parts to my life and many people to consider when planning my day.			My life is low-key, and I mostly answer to and/or am responsible to myself.

15-20 points – Analog all the way | **10-15 points** – Mostly analog with digital as a supplement and/or back-up | **5-10 points** – Mostly digital with analogue as a supplement and/or back-up | **1-5 points** – Digital all the way



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In Module 2 of the full
Alchemy of Writing Course
we'll look more closely at the advantages and
disadvantages of both analog and digital
scheduling, how to best utilize them separately
and in tandem.

We'll also consider the differences between
detailed and big-picture scheduling, and how and
when to use them to enhance success in your
writing practice.



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Perspective

You must weed your mind as you would weed your garden.


— Astrid Alauda, author

A big part of writing is perspective, and in the case of writing, it's about a lot more than simply thinking positively. It's about more than adopting an "I can do this," mentality. Writers view the world differently than non-writers.


The third step to adopting a writer's perspective—a writer's mind—is to **analyze the voices in your head**, then deciding which ones to keep and which ones to let go of.

Get quiet and get clear about what the voices in your head say.
Which ones come from a fixed/scarcity perspective?
Which ones come from a growth/abundance perspective?

Fixed/Scarcity

 I don't have what it takes

Growth/Abundance

 What do I have to offer?

What other thoughts/voices run through your mind when you think about being a writer??

Complete the worksheet on the next page.

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Your Perspective Worksheet

The purpose of the **Your Perspective Worksheet** is to help you determine your current perspective about writing a book, or writing in general. **Be honest.**

Choose the box that best represents the truth about these statements on the 1-4 spectrum.

1	2	3	4
I don't have what it takes to write a book.			What do I have to offer the world that it doesn't already have?
I don't know how to write a book.			What do I need to learn about writing a book, or writing in general?
I've never been a good writer.			What can I learn about writing?
I don't have the time to write a book.			What can I change in my habits and schedule that will allow me to write a book?
I don't take critique well.			How can I use compassionate, constructive feedback on my writing to make it even better?
Challenges and obstacles make me feel like a failure.			How can challenges help me want to learn more and strive to do better?
The world doesn't need another book because all the good ideas have already been taken.			How will my unique voice, story, or idea add to the rich abundance of books in the world?

8-10 points: Abundance/Growth Perspective (Congratulations!) | **4-7 points:** You're well on your way to an Abundance/Growth Perspective. (Only a few minor adjustments!) | **1-3 points:** You're currently operating from a Scarcity/Fixed Perspective, but all is not lost! (Do some freewriting around the ones you responded with a 1 or 2, and see what learn about yourself.)



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In Module 3 of the full
Alchemy of Writing Course,
we'll take a closer look at the voices that take up
space in your mind, and what they tell you about
your writing and about yourself as a writer.

We'll determine where those voices came from,
and we'll do a POWERFUL exercise to banish them
from your thoughts once and for all.

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Your relationship with your writing



Honoring your writing practice is an act of self-love.

– Johnnie Mazzocco

Committing to a writing practice is a lot like taking a vow...The way you would take a vow to be integrous and true to your relationships with the people in your life.

The fourth step to planning for your writing practice is to **announce your intention** to honor your writing practice to people who will support you. The people in our lives can make or break the success of our practice, so choose thoughtfully and wisely.

Think of all the people in your life.

Who can you trust to support you in your intention to honor your practice?



Friends



Family members



Other creatives

How will you tell them?

Complete the worksheet on the next page.

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Announcing Your Intention Worksheet

The purpose of the **Announcing Your Intention Worksheet** is to help you determine who you most trust to support you in your writing practice. Likewise, just as important as **WHO** you select (and **WHY** you selected them) is **HOW** you tell them and **WHY** you want to write.

Stating an intention to another person who believes in us and wants to support our happiness and well being is a brave act with powerful consequences. Deciding who to depend on is not a frivolous task. Their response and level of trustworthiness has everything to do with the kind of energy that infuses your efforts and your practice.

Complete the following worksheet and take the next step to announce your intention. **Get clear about who** you will ask for support **and why** you are choosing them. Then, **decide how you'll tell them** (conversation—in-person/phone/virtual, email, some other way), and be sure to **let them know your reasons** for choosing them and why writing is so important to you.

Name	Why I chose them	How I will tell them	My reason to write



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In Module 4 of the full
Alchemy of Writing Course,
we'll do processes and exercises to help you
create your sacred writing space, no matter the
size of your home, or how many people you share
space with.

You'll also learn and perform another POWERFUL
process—a commitment ceremony that will set the
stage for a fulfilling, life-enhancing writing practice
that will serve you for life.

SENDING YOU MAD WRITING MOJO...

HAPPY WRITING!

