

HEY, WRITERS

A Month of Writing Tips, Prompts and Ideas To Get on Track and Stay on Track

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WRITING IS REWRITING:

This One is for You to Write and MAKE YOUR OWN. I've already done thirty-one. I'm dripping with sweat.

APPENDIX: AFFIRMATIONS CENTRAL

PAGES FOR YOUR OWN TIPS, PROMPTS and IDEAS

INTRODUCTION

“The most significant problem is that one cannot prompt creativity.”

—Anna Abraham, Neuroscientist

I wrote these 31 tips, prompts and ideas for you and me and, at the last minute, Dr. Abraham, that scientist with the quote above, who likes the word *significant* and doesn't think we can 'prompt creativity'. Well, Ms. *PhD*, look who knows so much. Anna, you've been using lousy prompts, with subpar ideas and hardly a tip to be found. Here we're working with magic.

We creatives might look like lab mice to you. We're not.

We are city mice.

In my artistic journey, I've had good years, great months and magical days. All the way, I battle creative roadblocks, the least of which is writer's block: getting down to the writing, self-esteem, confidence in what I'm producing, asking why I even bother, the biz. That's an abridged list.

My goal was to put together, in 31 short chapters, hundreds of tips, prompts and ideas useful to the process of creativity. Useful being the key. I know they're useful because I use them and look at me know, riding a cresting wave of fame and glory. My scattered, creative brain needs tips and prompts and ideas. Some have suggested the university all-night study stimulant *Adderall*. Problem is I already make coffee jumpy. I'm going to stick with creative tips.

Is a lack of confidence or fear holding you back from writing? If fear is the block, write *about* the fear that is blocking you. Now you're *writing* about not being able to write—which *is* writing. Checkmate. Close this book and write your epic.

Maybe you think it's stupid and useless to write about the fear of writing something stupid and useless. Write about *that*. In the process of proving-by-writing

how stupid it is to write about the fear of writing, you get a character proving an unprovable point. That's got best-seller written all over it. Might even be the plot of *The Matrix*.

Remember, whatever is stopping you from being creative is smothering your true nature. We are born to be creative. We are meant to be creative. *It is* what we are. It is what you are. Granted, to be *relentlessly* creative takes relentless drive. But to simply *be creative*? That takes a pinch of desire and a twist of self-belief. Sit down with a working pen and a sheet of paper. Or a computer. A chisel and a rock? Whatever. You're getting close to writing the first word, which is how every work of genius started. We all write a first word. Geniuses keep going.

Peek out the window or around your abode. Take a deep breath. Now put your thoughts down...write a little story about, say, how your heart got broken when you were ten or what frustrates you at work. Make it a rant, if that's the way to flow.

That reminds me. After I wrote my second novel, *Understanding Ken*, about a kid caught in the crosshairs of his parent's divorce (a fictionalized version of a year in my childhood), readers would ask: "How did you remember all those details about '70s pop culture and being a kid?"

Before I'd answer, they'd rattle off multiple events from their own childhood. They couldn't stop themselves. Like song lyrics from your childhood, the creative information is there. *Your* song is waiting to be sung. The paper is the crowd. The pencil is the singer. Sing, dammit!

In the end, I hope to inspire and inform you but it's *your* journey. Use *whatever* triggers *you* to be more creative. The words you write, in whatever form, are yours. That's the beauty. Your creativity offers notes to the world and your own soul saying *I'm here, I exist, this is me and, garl darnit, I'm worth it*.

So use the prompts, tips and nudges. Use anything you can. I promise you this, my co-creators, self-belief will grow by *exporting* your creativity *beyond* your brain. Whether you're working on a novel, a screenplay, an essay, poetry or a free-flowing journal; whether you write fiction or non-fiction, suspense, horror, coming-of-age sci-fi, epic fantasy, LGBTQ romance, dystopian YA, business proposals, comedy, social justice manifestos, tech manuals, biography, historical fiction, drama, political satire or

anything else, the act of writing your words down will make you a better writer. If you're brave with your words, it might even make you braver.

Creativity is a sustainable resource. It only dies if it's not used. And even then, it's not dead. It's lonely. Creativity is a life skill. In an uncertain future, creativity is a super power. Creativity helps negotiate trouble and joy.

Be a friend to your creativity. It might be the best friend you ever have.

