

Welcome to the Easy Writing Newsletter, a weekly blast of inspiration to help you and your writing - creatively and financially.

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I hope the weather's good in your part of the world. It's raining here in the normally sunny South Australia.

I should have guessed it was about to rain - I hung out the washing about half an hour ago! I've just spent the last ten minutes bringing it all back in again. That, after using up the morning tidying the rooms my toddler trashed over the weekend.

I've got just about half an hour to write before I head down to the hardware store to buy blades for a hacksaw...

So you see, being a writer isn't always as glamorous as you might suppose!

C'est la vie, as they say.

As always, contact me for any reason at:  
rob@easywaytowrite.com

I'd love to hear from you.

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Writing for a Living: The Only Logical Choice

Autobiographies

One of my esteemed correspondents recently asked for advice on writing their own life story. They wondered if I might have a point of view - an 'Easy Way' approach to the subject.

Here's my thoughts.

To start, you need to build a list of memories, arranged chronologically.

I'd recommend starting with index cards or dot points on a PC with headlines and trigger words that suggest events or anecdotes you will elaborate on later.

Spend perhaps a week thinking of all the events that you might want to include in your life story.

You don't have to include everything, just the most important, relevant and interesting.

At the end of this process, you might end up with a hundred or so triggers that you will need to rearrange a coherent order.

Organize the cards into periods, for ease, probably decades or half-decades, of time.

Think of these lumps of time as chapters.

Try to find start and finish points that suggest a progression of ideas or events with significant outcomes or revelations that you can end chapters with.

This is important.

Nobody wants to read a dry recitation of facts and events, however novel.

You need to find some point to the information you want to tell people.

Think of your life as a journey. Perhaps from ignorance to wisdom or from adversity to success.

Find the message that your life has given you, however tenuous.

Next, using that message, decide on a 'theme' for your autobiography. For instance: 'the pursuit of love leads to redemption through adversity' or 'experience teaches wisdom'.

Write down the theme and place it in your workspace.

Then, start writing and make sure each chapter reinforces that theme in some way.

Try to attain an objective viewpoint where you, the author, is separate from you, the character, that you are creating on the page.

Never be afraid to be honest. Quite often the hardest things for you to write are the most revealing and the most satisfying for the reader.

Admitting to faults, frailty and weakness is not only cathartic, it gives your writing a depth and credibility that will endear you to the reader.

Don't worry about anything on your first draft. Put it all in. Only when it's finished will you know what to leave in and what to take out.

After the first draft (written as quickly as possible!) go back and 'shape' the story, just as you would with fiction.

By which I mean tie up the inconsistencies and see that there is sufficient 'motivation' for the decisions you've made and events you chose for your life.

You need to do this because, even if everything you've written is 'true', a reader will still need to find your story 'believable'.

Okay, this is only a short article on a very complex area.

I hope this helps in some way, if only to get you to think about how to see your life as something you might share with others, to educate, illuminate and entertain.

robparnell 2004

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Inspiration - Which Rock Is That Under?

Here's a good one if you're ambitious.

Think of five anecdotes pertaining to your life, humorous if at all possible.

Write them down as short 200 word articles.

They might be amusing incidents or cautionary tales. They might include a celebrity or just be heart-warming stories involving your family or friends.

When you've edited them to your satisfaction, learn them off by heart.

Guess what, you're now ready for Oprah! Indeed, for any brush with the media, whether it be a radio or press interview or maybe a book signing.

People love stories and it's hard sometimes to come up with them spontaneously. Best that you're always prepared with ready-made ones.

Try it. You might be pleasantly surprised by your own wit and erudition!

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Ever thought your writing could do with editing - but perhaps you needed more information and guidance to do it yourself? This will help:

<http://easywaytowrite.com/selfediting.html>

Till next time,

Keep well and happy

Rob@easywaytowrite.com  
Yor Success is My Concern  
<http://easywaytowrite.com>  
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