

**YOU CAN...  
WRITE YOUR BOOK  
IN A WEEKEND**

**SECRETS BEHIND THIS PROVEN,  
LIFE-CHANGING, TRULY UNIQUE,  
INSIDE-OUT APPROACH**

**TOM BIRD**

You Can... Write Your Book in a Weekend

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## **DEDICATION**

To Skyla, who has always brought a love so deep into my life that I never knew existed. It is from this love that I now see in everything around me. It is this love that I no longer choose to live without.



## INTRODUCTION

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.”

**T**HERE ARE MANY WAYS TO REACH A DIRECT communicative connection with the being who goes by many names and who is most commonly referred to as God.

Jack Nicholson has captivated the world on so many occasions with his provocative performances as a variety of characters in a variety of movies, each time offering every one of us an enhanced understanding and thus changing our lives. Michael Jordan did so while “in the Zone” on the basketball court. President John F. Kennedy and civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. did so while speaking. African American communities did it almost on a daily basis, singing their gospel hymns while toiling in the oppressively

hot cotton fields. Eckhart Tolle did so while sitting silently, in a receptive mood, on the same park bench at the same time each day.

Each one of the aforementioned persons connected directly with God and in doing so changed the world.

“An atheist is a man who has no invisible means of support.”

—JOHN BUCHAN

As this book will show, you can do the same through writing your book. Not only will you change the world but you will change every aspect of your own personal world for the better. The earlier quote was written by Charles Dickens in his classic *A Tale of Two Cities*. In his book Dickens was describing another time and another age. Or was he?

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity...”

Our economy has crumbled. As we attempt to rebuild it we are being forced to do so from a completely different perspective. No longer does the conscious, dog-eat-dog, win-at-all-costs, it's-just-business approach to a vocation seem to work. Everything seems to have gone in a different direction—with which we are struggling to keep pace.



That direction is reflective solely of treating each other well, looking out for our neighbors, colleagues, bosses, employees, friends, and families, and completely coming from the heart with what it is you do with your life.

“God is subtle, but He is not malicious.”

—ALBERT EINSTEIN

Maybe it could have been, should have been, that way all along. Nonetheless, it is that way now, and it appears as though we are being forced to move in that direction or continue to perish.

“...it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair...”

Sure, the unemployment rate hasn't been this high since the Great Depression, but maybe with so many jobs tied to careers and incomes that do not speak of our higher purpose, maybe that jobless rate needs to be as high as it is. Maybe life—the Creator, the universe, the soul itself—is calling for us to make a necessary shift to a complete heart-based lifestyle. Maybe it is forcing us to do that right now, before we destroy ourselves and the planet on which we live.

“Many of life’s failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.”

—THOMAS EDISON

“...we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going direct the other way.”

What do your reading of this book and your writing have to do with all of that? First, you may or may not be aware of an article that was published in *The New York Times* a few years ago. The article cited a survey that claimed 81 percent of Americans felt they had a book stuck inside them that they had to get out. Based on our most recent census, 81 percent of Americans would equate to nearly a quarter of a billion people. If we assumed that the same percentage of persons was worldwide, that would be close to 4.8 billion people. Are there possibly that many would-be authors out there?

“Many suffer from the incurable disease of writing, and it becomes chronic in their sick minds.”

—JUVENAL

Yes and no. No, because it would be impossible to believe that so many people, with all of the potential

professions out there, would be drawn to one specific vocation. Yes, because it is very possible that the writing of a book may carry more with it than just the promise of a vocation.

In fact, Aristotle believed that to live a full and complete life a person needed to do three things: 1) build a home; 2) raise a child; and 3) write a book.

Yes, that's correct, write a book. It was the great Aristotle who believed that writing a book was one of the three absolutely necessary pillars of life. Based upon my nearly three decades of working with tens of thousands of aspiring authors worldwide, I wholeheartedly agree.

In-depth experience has illustrated much for me. It has shown me that *every* person has a book inside them.

How do I know this? I know this because I have not befriended anyone, at one level or another, who has not wanted to write a book at one time or another in their lives. Sure, some of those people only felt that they had a book in them for six minutes after swallowing a six-pack of beer, while others held onto the dream for decades. Nonetheless, at one time or another—no matter how short that “another” may have been—everyone, at some point in his or her life, wants to write a book.

Why? The second thing that the experience has taught me is that when applying a “natural,” as opposed to a consciously contrived approach to writing the book a would-be author feels is inside, an amazing transformation can be witnessed in every area of life.

Whether or not they are directly connecting with a divine presence outside themselves or connecting with that presence already available within each one of us is a topic for another book. Either way, that connection is definitely made through the writing of their books and their lives change for the better as a result.

“You have to leave the city of your comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition.

What you’ll discover will be wonderful. What you’ll discover is yourself.”

—ALAN ALDA

As that connection is made, especially over the length of time it takes to write a book, the author heals relationships, rights wrongs, cleanses wounds, finds purpose, releases divine voices, births and reinvigorates new vocations that had become stagnant and in general, lives a better life.

“In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer.”

—ALBERT CAMUS

Am I saying that the type of divine experience I am describing is only possible through the writing of a book? No, I am not saying that. However, what I am saying is that there is something divinely unique, beautiful, marvelous, and mysterious released directly

into the lives of individuals through the authoring of books the “natural” way.

“Resolve to be thyself; and know that he who finds himself, loses his misery.”

—MATTHEW ARNOLD

“The innate human need that underlies all writing, the need to give shape to your experience, is a gift we all possess from earliest childhood,” states Gabriele Rico in her bestselling book *Writing the Natural Way*.

This is evidenced by the fact that persons who have obviously reached some type of divine connection still gravitate toward writing a book. In many cases—I may be preaching to the choir here—people often feel so drawn to writing a book that deep down inside they realize their lives will not be complete unless they get out whatever story is inside them. However, very rarely does that work in the reverse. Very rarely do people who, after they become successful authors, suddenly want to transfer their energies to dancing, singing, sports, acting, or politics, for example. No, there is just something special about writing.

“I did not write it. God wrote it. I merely did His dictation.”

—HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

That something, which is so one-of-a-kind-special, has led me to believe that everyone should write a

book at some point in their lives. The earlier the better, if not for the vocational opportunities available then for the unmatched, can't-seem-to-get-anywhere-else alternatives that are available from doing so. I am not alone in that belief. America's most famous and well-respected family, the Kennedys, have long understood and believed in the power, possibility, and release associated with the writing of a book. Just look at how many books they have written. They have encouraged their children, from JFK Jr. to Bobby Kennedy Jr., to write. Could writing have led the children, those famous Kennedys, to their great, oftentimes earth-changing, lives? No one can say for sure, for there may not be an absolute way of measuring a correlation between writing a book and living a successful life.

Just look what a bestseller, *The Hurricane* by Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, did for the author. How about Nelson Mandela and Solzhenitsyn, who wrote their earth-shaking books while in prison as well? Writing their books in prison led to their freedom from that prison emotionally, spiritually and oftentimes physically as well. What they wrote about or experienced while in their prison cells led to their fame and fortune, through the release of their message, once they were set free.

Could what these moving authors experienced be analogies to what all of us have faced in our lives or are facing right now? Could it be that we are all in some sort of self-imposed prison, some more obvious than others, until we write our books? Could it be

that those prisons in which we find ourselves are there specifically to encourage the writing of our books?

Could that lack of a job or purpose in your life right now create some sort of prison for you as well, where you feel especially locked up with a lot of time on your hands to do . . . nothing? Maybe it is, as Tolle would view it, that nothingness which needs to be filled, longs to be filled, with the writing of a book. If everything does happen for a reason, could the reason that you may have a lot of time on your hands or seek to have a lot of time on your hands have to do with the fact that the prison which you have created for yourself has appeared to lead you to writing your book?

It is said that a great book changes the lives of many. I believe that the greatest change experienced by writing a book is for the author doing the writing. In fact, despite all of the money and fame that can be earned by doing so, if that were not the case no one would ever make it through the penning of a book. Doing so is just too hard and the motivation not great enough.

There is an off-balance belief in unsuccessful writing circles that you should always write to your audience. What they mean is that you should write co-dependently to the needs of those you want to like your work, those who will buy your books. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Sure, you should write for your audience. On that point I agree. However, the audience that you should write for is the audience of yourself. For then and only then can you successfully acknowledge and appreciate and thus grow, change,

and heal from the experience of writing.

Could adhering to inappropriately designed, truly unexplored sayings and beliefs such as the one above, be the reason that the writing of a book has become so difficult, if not impossible, by the well-meaning, hardworking, impassioned souls of our planet?

Yes. In fact, as you will see in the story that follows, I encountered nothing but failure when investing in the “orthodox” approaches to writing, and it was only when I totally began adhering to the complete opposite of what I had been told or taught that I began to experience the success that I deserved as an author.

Such has been the case with, I would venture to say, every person that has ever entered one of my classes or workshops. In one way or another, each person is a writing refugee. Each has tried, on one level or another, to “birth” a book only to be met with frustration and failure. Could it be that what they had learned about writing up until that point had been the cause?

Yes. In fact, once they blend with the method I have used to experience my own success, the one which I teach, then and only then do they transition. Once they transition, all of a sudden writing becomes easy and joyful once again, just like they experienced so long ago before someone “taught” them how to write, as opposed to showing them how to potentially unbridle and release themselves to write.

You see, I don’t teach them how to write. I simply help them reconnect with the authors they already are, beyond all that they learned. Once there, all they had



lost suddenly returns, they birth their books in record times, and they change their own lives— for their audiences and for themselves.

Everyone should write a book because everyone is meant to write a book. It is the sole way of delivering the message we were all born to live and then leave behind, first to the author himself or herself and then to the outside audience. It is from that perspective, and from what feels like several lifetimes of experience in this area, that this book is written.

“... in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.”

—CHARLES DICKENS

*A Tale of Two Cities*

Perhaps it has become obvious that you do need to make a career shift. Perhaps it has become obvious that your career needs to be invigorated in a big way, and the presence of a book authored by you, in your particular area of interest, would more than help. Perhaps there is a greater calling inside you. You can just feel it, but don't know how to get to it. Writing a book can get you there. Maybe you have finally just gotten tired of trying to outrun all of the pain, anger, and frustration that has dogged you for what feels like forever. Perhaps you need a route to release it (the subject of many

a great book) in order to heal those parts of you. Perhaps you need to be offered another perspective, a lifesaving one, before it is too late. Perhaps all of the above descriptions apply to you. Perhaps only one or two of them. Either way, it's time to write your book.

Now, before we go any further and your logical “can't do it, can't even try” mindset gets a hold of this concept, I need to clarify something. I'm not talking about the resurrection of your life, career, and relationships taking the rest of your years on this planet. I'm talking about getting all of this done in three days—three short days—to change your life. You can change your outlook on relationships (especially the one with yourself), health, vocation, your total perspective of your time here on this planet, and much more in three days. Three Days! Not several decades or centuries.

Look at this realistically. What would you invest to accomplish that which you can derive from writing? You may have already invested tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of dollars in a college or university education, not to mention all those years, and you are still reading this book. How many of the tens of thousands of English or journalism majors walk out after graduation with either a bachelor's or master's degree or a Ph.D. and yet have not written the publishable book: the real reason they entered into the program they chose in the first place?

Since the results I am seeking would be so dismally depressing, I don't want to go there completely.

However, I would say over 98 percent would be a reasonable guesstimate. Then what do so many of these people, as driven and as intelligent and committed as they are, end up directing all of their talents toward? Teaching. Correct. Then from their positions as teachers, they do what? Share everything they know about writing, despite the fact that they have yet to become, or even remotely experience the personal/professional success that they themselves could seek as authors.

“Our loss begins in school, when the process of writing is taught to us in fragments: mechanics, grammar, and vocabulary,” says Gabriele Rico in her book *Writing the Natural Way*. “Writing becomes fearful and loathsome, a workbook activity. Students write as little as possible, and once out of school, they tend to avoid the entire process whenever possible. As a result, few people turn to writing as a natural source of pleasure and gratification.

“This is sad because children’s writing naturally has an expressive position, an authenticity that inherently captures the sound of an individual on a page, an ability we seem to lose the more we learn about writing.”

“When we were little we had no difficulty sounding the way we felt; thus, most little children speak and write with real voice.”

—PETER ELBOW

*Writing with Power*

“Most of the methods of training the conscious side of the writer—the craftsman and the critic inside of him—are actually hostile to the good of the artist’s side,” says Dorothea Brande in her book, *Becoming a Writer*.

“A lot of people in English departments should never be trusted to run a program,” says legendary author Wallace Stegner. “Their training is all in the other direction, all analytical, all critical. It’s all reader’s training, not a writer’s training, so they have no notion of how to approach the opportunity.”

Collectively, how many years and how much money on average did they invest in accomplishing the completion of a program that personally left them high and dry as the author they really wanted to become? Have you taken a look at results from standardized test scores for high school students lately? With everything else that is going on in our society, you may not want to if you have already had enough depressing news for now.

“This is the sort of English up with which I will not put.”

—WINSTON CHURCHILL

One of the darkest holes in our educational system is directly tied to how much money our federal government devotes to re-educating teachers on their ability to improve their skills in teaching students to write. Does this tell you something? It does to me. That’s the bad news; now back to the good news.

“He must forget the things he does not wish to remember and remember only the things he wishes to retain.”

—BAIRD T. SPALDING

*Life and Teaching of the Masters of  
The Far East*

You can have your literary dream, no matter what motivates you toward living it, right here and right now. You don't need any previous 'qualifications'. In fact, the few you *do* have, the better because there will be less relearning for you to do. You can accomplish this release and rebirthing of your deepest spiritual, expressive self, which was jammed into its own unlivable space so long ago. You can live your literary dream, if that is what you seek to do, in less than a week.

The method behind my Write Your Publishable Book in a Weekend retreats leads over 98 percent of those involved, who are of all ages and come from all walks of life and educational levels, to the completion of their books in that period of time. In fact, the only ones who attend the retreats and normally don't complete their books in that period of time are those who, for whatever reason, miss a day or two of the retreat. It isn't that the method doesn't work for them. It's just that they simply run out of time before completing their books.

“The potential for natural writing is already within all of us; it is not too late for any of us to learn,” states Rico.

However, again (and this is worth repeating), it is possible to actually become the author you want to be while also experiencing firsthand all the life-changing aspects of writing a book right now in a weekend, for a price equivalent to one fifth of the average cost of a semester's tuition at a middle-of-the-road college or university. How much have you already invested in a career, vocation, or psychotherapy?

Sorry, but I can't help you do anything about what you have already invested. All I can help you with is moving forward, right now, through writing a book and experiencing all the wondrous gifts and opportunities it presents. All you will need to experience them, the vast array of them, is a long weekend.

These questions would be more appropriate to ask yourself instead. What would it be worth to you to be able to birth your deepest, most purpose-connected self? How would that change your life? How would that change the lives of those around you? How would that change the world?

Take a moment to ponder those questions again once more before reading on.

We're not talking three, around-the-clock days. When done properly, as described in this book, we're talking about three, eight-hour days—kind of like going to work at a normal job for a long weekend. In that short amount of time you will learn all that you need to carry you through the rest of your life. All that has held you back to this point from being able to write will surface and be released. All that lies before

you as a soul will be laid out in front of you, like a newly paved autobahn constructed just for you and only you. It will be your road, your path, the one you were meant to drive down solely, at whatever speed or rate you prefer to travel.

Can writing a book really do that for you? Yes. So as not to bore you with written testimonial after testimonial here, if you haven't already done so, I would suggest that you visit my website *www.TomBird.com*. There you will find dozens of video testimonials from budding authors of all ages and from all walks of life.

What you will find there will inspire you and possibly even stun you. You will hear a part of yourself, a universal part of us all, speaking directly to you through not only what you hear the retreat attendees say, but from where they share it—a place in all of us, as well.

What do you need for this journey you are about to embark upon? Besides the heart, which is an author's most important ingredient, and the place from where all great books express themselves, what is it that you should bring to the table beside the obvious, including a computer?

- **First**, even though some of you will be using your keyboards to pen your books, all of you will still be doing some necessary writing in longhand, so **a nice writing utensil or two would be great**. By nice, I mean one that fits

your hand well and moves smoothly across a piece of paper. Nice does not always translate into “expensive.” The cheaper versions of pens are oftentimes just as good, if not better, than high-priced ones. The main aspects to keep in mind when acquiring the right writing utensil(s) are simply how well a pen fits your hand, how much ink gets to its ball, and how quickly, as a result, it can thus move across the page.

- **Second**, you will need paper. Yes, as I mentioned before (just stay with me here— it will all be okay, I promise), you will at times be using a pen to write on paper. Initially, this is how you will be asked to approach the writing of your book, instead of through your beloved computer. Don’t worry though, you will receive the opportunity to transfer your efforts to the keyboard, which you have come to know and love so well. There will be more on this later. What I suggest is that you purchase one 14” x 17” drawing pad, one regular-sized lined note pad, and a small lined note pad.
- **Third**, go to my website *www.TomBird.com*. On the site you will see a tab entitled “Free.” Click on that tab. Scroll down until you find the link that allows you to download a copy of my relaxation/subliminal CD, *Transitioning Back to the Writer You Were Meant*



*to Be*. You will be using this CD liberally as you glide your way through your book. It will become the sail that catches and directs back to you the wind of inspiration that will serve as your guide to reconnect with all that really matters in your life. Or, if you have purchased the cyber version of this book, you can access that simply by clicking right here. So important is the use of this CD that I would recommend playing both the first track, which is only a few minutes long, then the second while reading this book or doing any writing of any kind.

“In order to achieve great things, we must live as though we were never going to die.”

—MARQUIS DE VAUVENARGUES

- **Finally**, you will need time, far less time than you may believe—three days to be exact—after reading this book.

“He who rides a tiger is afraid to dismount.”

—PROVERB

Do you want to know about me, my story, and how I came to the revelations that changed my life? Continue reading.

## CHAPTER ONE

### TOM'S TALE

I FEEL THAT IF YOU ARE GOING TO PONY UP TO THE TABLE with your time and energy, not to mention your intestinal fortitude, the very least I can do is share a bit more with you about who I am and where the plan

you will be following came from. Plus, I have found that there are just so many less-than-worthy-folks out there, hiding in the shadows, talking about writing and especially spirituality, that you at least deserve to know a little bit about me, my method, and how I came to pen this book. So, here's my story.

\* \* \* \*

Late one summer evening, at the age of fourteen, as I lay on my parents' side lawn staring up at the stars, I asked the question that had haunted me for years.

“Why is it that I want to write?”

I was asking the One who goes by many names but is most often referred to as God. I had always had a good, close, personal relationship with God. Thank God (no pun intended). I was just coming to grips with the fact that my childhood had been much more difficult on me than I realized, and it was to God I ran each day to talk and listen. So by my mid-teens, having a heart-to-heart with the Almighty had become rather routine. I knew I would receive an answer to my question. As it came back I could feel my body vibrating with every word as it formed. It was almost as if God had been waiting for me to ask this very question and it was as though I could actually feel God's excitement coming through with the reply.

“You want to write, you were born to write because you see so much beauty and wonder in the world and this is the best way to convey it so others

can begin to see it and enjoy it as well,” the voice said, straightforward, direct, and clear.

Finally, the obsession I had since childhood finally began to make sense; reason began to appear behind my obsession, this urge to write which began at the age of eight.

“It is not necessary to seek God because God is already the essence of who you are. To connect with God, simply remove all judgments and thoughts that do not bless you and others.”

—PAUL FERRINI

The answer came through so crisply and clearly. I wondered why I had waited so long to ask the question in the first place. My delay must have had to do with my feeling of unworthiness. I mean, who was I, the son of a blue-collar father, to think that someone would actually want to read what I had to say? Who was I to even think I had the ability to write well enough for people to want to read what I wrote as well?

“What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered.”

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Looking back now though, all the signs were there. All that was off was the attitude I had toward myself. Recognition of what I was meant to do with my life

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vocationally first came to me at the age of eight. That year for Christmas, my aunt and uncle had given me a two-foot-by-three-foot cork bulletin board. Immediately after hanging it in my bedroom, a never-ending stream of words began pouring through me and I began writing them down and tacking them up on the board.

In no time at all, the corkboard was completely full. I began using the tacks to hold more than one scrap of paper. Soon the tacks would hold no more, and I began capturing my inspirations in notebooks. It was at that time I realized that deep down inside I was a writer.

From that time forward, writing always came easily for me. In fact, I finished in the top two percentile nationally in communication skills on my college placement exams, this after I had literally refused to participate in any form of writing and/or studying in high school.

Another time while in college, I was assigned to write a review on a play for my college newspaper. However, I only had twenty-five minutes to complete the review after the play was done to be able to get the article in on time. Of course, the short amount of time I would have to complete the piece would not allow me to do any “thinking” (much more on this later).

I finished the piece in fifteen minutes. I received more compliments on my writing from that piece than I had received from all the other articles I had written previously for the paper combined.

My theory about the naturalness of writing being

available to all of us, almost like it was a God-given gift bestowed upon all of us, was taking shape.

“We do not write in order to be understood;  
we write in order to understand.”

—C. DAY LEWIS

Shortly after graduating from college, I moved on to a one-season temporary internship with the Pittsburgh Pirates and for the first time in my life I felt pressure to become like everyone else.

I had only taken the job with the Pirates because of my love for baseball, which was second only to how deeply I felt about writing. I had possibly been the only senior on campus that hadn't applied for any jobs. I didn't want a job. I wanted to write, to be an author. I hadn't ever been clearer on anything in my young life.

Despite my academic complacency in high school, I transformed myself into an outstanding student at the university level. My college, in an effort to further its reputation, fixed me up with the Pirates. That year was 1979, the magical season of Willie “Pops” Stargell and the “Family,” the most charismatic group of ballplayers in the modern era of baseball. The Pirates won the World Series that season. Pops brought us back from a three-games-to-one deficit to win a deciding Game Seven with a classic homerun. He had promised to hit that homerun only a few hours earlier for an eleven-year-old boy dying of leukemia who openly realized he would not make it through that night.

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As exciting as the season had been, I never had any aspirations to stay with the Pirates. With the World Series every kid had always wanted to win under my belt, I was planning to follow my heart to New York, where I was going to settle in and write my first book. However, I had become a fixture with the Family. I was offered a big raise and a permanent position was established just for me, so I allowed myself to be convinced to stay.

Yet the writer in me kept calling to be let out. It relentlessly drove me to use whatever few free hours I had to feverishly follow the callings of my heart.

“Surrender does not transform what is, at least not directly.

Surrender transforms you. When you are transformed, your whole

world is transformed because the world is only a reflection.”

—ECKHART TOLLE

*The Power of Now*

However, by that time, practicality had set its roots deeply within me. For the first time, I thought I had to be an authority on writing and publishing to become the author I longed to be. As a result, I forgot all about my theory on the naturalness of writing.

By that time I recognized that my college education hadn't been able to offer me the evolution as an author

that I had sought. So, I took to reading every book on writing that I could find. In eighteen months I had read them all, filling 148 legal pads with notes. In those pads, I was sure the conscious, magic formula I longed for would be found, but what I sought couldn't be found there.

I then turned to the biggest asset that I had at that time: my job with the Pirates, which put me in the company of many bestselling and world-renowned authors. Liberally utilizing my extensive contacts, I began interviewing every author I could. To each one I asked the same question, "How do you become an author?"

The best answer I got was from Dick Young, the so-called Dean of American Sports Writers at the time, who replied to my question by simply saying, "You write."

I initially poo-pooed Dick's response, not realizing its true significance. I kept going solely because I did not believe that God would have given me such a strong calling to write without providing me with the route to live it; of that, more than anything else in my life, I was sure. Yet, on the other hand, I was still convinced that I had to find the necessary formula that so many hundreds of thousands, if not millions, had sought before me on not only how to easily and enjoyably write books but get them published as well. However, it was nowhere to be found, neither in all the obvious places I looked, nor within all the orthodox methods I had studied. They were a deep and dark frustration at



the time.

It is my firm belief that many of us don't change until the pain becomes so great that we have to. As a result, desperation can be a necessary predecessor to greatness, and at that time in my life I was feeling very desperate.

Finally, tired of feeling this pain and not being able to find any solution, I got down on my knees and asked for divine guidance. I expressed my frustration. I shared the fears that I had about living my life without being able to live my dream, and how I felt that doing so was really dying. Then I realized the true reason for my despair. The despair had to do with the fact that I had stopped writing, which had come so naturally to me, and as a result I had severed my truest and most direct connection with God. It was also at that time that I promised to share with others whatever solutions God would offer me so that they, hopefully, wouldn't have to suffer as long or as hard as I had been suffering.

Two mornings later I woke up hours before my alarm was set to go off, and I heard the words of Dick Young rolling around over and over again in my head. It was then that I finally realized that when I had started searching, I had stopped writing, which was the very reason my connection with God had been severed and my life had become such a depressing mess shortly thereafter.

“Unprovided with original learning, unformed in the habits of thinking, unskilled in the arts of composition, I resolved to write a book.”

—EDWARD GIBBON

So, I returned to what had once come so naturally for me. In response, the words literally seemed to write themselves. In fact, I felt stronger and more jazzed after writing the 4,000 or so words than I did at any other time during the day. I could see a clearer and deeper meaning behind everything that was happening in my life. I knew exactly what it was that I needed to do: write, write, and continue to write daily, every hour, every minute of my time that I could squeeze out.

Embedded in the act of actually writing, what most writers miss, is the faith, the wisdom, and the direction one needs to live life. I also clearly understood that I didn't have to try to be something I had been since I was born. I had already connected with my inner author, which I now refer to as my Divine Author Within (DAW), my true and absolute pipeline to the natural communicative abilities between God and every one of us, which I had left behind when I tried to figure out how to become what I already was.

“Literary men are. . .a perpetual priesthood.”

—THOMAS CARLYLE

As a result of that realization, amazing things began happening in my life. Overnight my DAW urged me to approach Willie, the most popular athlete in the

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country at the time, about co-authoring his life story.

However, no matter how strong the draw was, I was deeply hesitant. Willie Stargell had been severely taken advantage of by a co-author a few years earlier. This author had chosen to fabricate certain aspects of Willie's story to make it a more sensational read. Since opting out of the deal, Willie had sworn never to become embroiled in a project like that one again. However, after working together through one World Series victory and the Pirates' next three seasons, Willie and I were the best of friends. I was hesitant to approach him, though, since I didn't in any way want to jeopardize our friendship.

Nonetheless, the draw to speak with him wouldn't let me go. I finally approached him and confessed my aspirations. Willie listened attentively and compassionately, as he always did. He then shared his reflections of the pain, frustration, and embarrassment he, his friends, and his family had suffered at the hands of his former co-author. Yet, he concluded by telling me that there was one and only one person with whom he would ever trust enough to enter into a venture of that sort again...and I was that person.

The incident caused me to see how my purpose, my dream of becoming an author, and most of all my connection, had never given up on me, even though I had tried to give up on them. They were willing to follow me wherever I strayed.

Never having sold a book before, I once again asked for divine guidance. Shortly after arriving in my

office the following morning, the man who ran our mailroom came in with my morning's stack of mail. In it was a brochure from Scott Meredith, a literary agent in New York; how he had gotten my address I did not know. Nor did I know at the time that Scott was the top literary representative in the world.

So, unknowingly, I casually picked up the phone and gave him a call. After I explained why I was phoning, his receptionist quickly patched me through. Once Scott heard what I had to say, he couldn't wait to meet with Willie and I. Coincidentally, the team was scheduled to be in Manhattan the following week to play the New York Mets, so a meeting was planned.

“No matter where your life takes you, no matter how far you stray from the path, you cannot

extinguish the spark of divinity within your own consciousness.

It was and is God's gift to you.”

—PAUL FERRINI

Once the three of us got together, an immediate kinship formed. Scott gave us both his private home phone number, signed us to a contract, and we were on our way.

Six weeks after that date, Scott sold my first book to Harper & Row, the third largest publisher in the world, and Larry Ashmead, one of the business's finest

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editors. Scott sold it for an amount equivalent to three times my yearly salary.

All of this transpired less than two months after I directly reconnected back with my DAW, and thus, with God. Since then, I have discovered through my students that this kind of miraculous event is not atypical.

However, as wonderful as my first book's sale happened to be, I found myself faced with the daunting dilemma of having to author a book, and I had no logistical idea how to go about doing so. Yet there was one thing that I had become very good at over the last few months, and that was reconnecting with my DAW and listening to God.

I was still working with the Pirates when I began my first book, which meant I was still responsible for working seven days a week for an average of fifteen hours a day. To accommodate my commitment, I got up two hours earlier each morning to write. This simple routine enabled me to complete a manuscript within six months that brought Willie to tears, and which our editor praised as a strong literary work.

It was my second book, though, that allowed me to perfect and understand what I had done so spontaneously with my first work. I was living in a bustling suburb of Pittsburgh at the time. Pittsburgh has a reputation for many things. For those of us who have lived there, the traffic jams created by its many tunnels and bridges were one of the worst.

I make no bones about it: I despise traffic. I realize

that no one likes it, but because I dislike traffic so much more than most, I am willing to do literally anything I can to avoid it. As bad as the traffic is in Pittsburgh during weekday rush hours, it was nearly as bad on the weekends when most people were off work.

So, entering into my second book, I made the decision to test what I had learned by writing only on the weekends, when the traffic in my neighborhood usually came to a standstill. My thinking was that not only would I be able to avoid the traffic I disliked so much, but I would also be able to evaluate what I thought I learned from my first book.

By then I had come to theorize that the reason a person wanted to write had nothing to do with the actual act of writing itself. Instead, a person sought to write because he or she had a divine message in the form of a book—signed, sealed, and delivered inside them—that was trying to get out. The statistic I quoted in the introduction from the article in *The New York Times* attests to that fact.

My tested and well-founded belief also led me to theorize that, because of this divine connection, we should be able to relay these already finished works onto paper in about the same amount of time that it would take us to literally copy down that book.

If my theory was correct, I would be able to capture the entire 80,000-word draft of my second book in twelve days or less, and then revise and perfect that draft in three days or less. My final calculations for how long it would take from start to finish would add

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up to fifteen days, or five three-day weekends.

Much to my delight, creating the formal timeline calmed the concerns and fears of my logical mind, and as a result I was able to give in to the process even more deeply and easily.

Right from the beginning of writing book two, I could tell that I was on to something brilliant. The words began flowing out of me like water spraying from a hose. Even more important was the fact that I loved the way I felt when I wrote. I looked forward so much to writing that I became positively addicted to it.

I zoomed through the writing and revision of my second book, from the first word to the last, in the five consecutive three-day weekends I had allotted. To be able to reach that stage with my book in that short amount of time was an unfathomable high. Little did I know that I would eventually be called to lead other authors to do it as well. I was still reeling from the effects of my excitement as I slipped my manuscript into the mail to the publisher.

However, stagnant time for a writer is the mother of all self-doubt. Sitting idle can cause a mountain of problems, as your mind and all of its worries and fears finally catch back up with you. That is exactly what happened in my case. In a mere few days, my opinion of the experience had completely changed, and I was more than sure I had just made the biggest mistake of my young literary life.

Ten days after I had mailed in the manuscript I could no longer control myself, so I called my publisher

searching for some sort of validation.

To my surprise he not only loved the book, but found so few mistakes that he didn't feel any sort of rewriting was necessary. So, I chose to employ the exact same methods with my third book, which I had been given five months to write. My publisher, Zondervan, was deeply concerned that the deadline was too tight, so I believe that they gave me a larger-than-average advance to compensate for my inconvenience.

I completed that book in a month and a half, but waited the remainder of the five months before I turned it in. I just didn't want to disillusion them. A favorable response was received from them as well.

True to my word, soon after the completion of book one, I began following through on my promise to God to share what I had learned with other aspiring writers. In no time at all, word of my work spread through the local and then national writing communities. Over the next thirty-one years, I gleefully divided my time between writing my next books and making over 4,000 appearances at over 100 colleges and universities.

Then, while standing in front of a packed classroom at the University of Arizona in January 2000, my next revelation came to me as I was overcome with the strangest of feelings. I recognized it as my own DAW coming through.

By that time, I had learned the value of always following the advice of my DAW, which on this occasion was nudging me to steer those in attendance to begin writing their books right then and there, without any



of the necessary preparatory steps I had employed in the past.

Shortly after, I upgraded my system to directly emulate what I learned could be done that day. Once I implemented the system with my students I began seeing even more clearly the potential of this ultimate connection, as aspiring writers from all ages, beliefs, and backgrounds composed more than 10,000 words per day and completed books and screenplays in as little as two or three weeks.

In fact, the first fifty students with whom I chose to share this program completed over 100 books in one year with no compromises in quality. More importantly, their lives transformed as their biases and fears were removed and replaced by the fulfillment of their dreams and the recognition of their life purpose.

Of course, that is just the beginning of my tale. For later on, further inspirations led me to create the Write Your Book in 90 Days, and then forty-five days, and then thirty days, and then Write Your Book in 8 Days retreat, then the Write Your Book in 5 Days retreat, and then the Write Your Publishable Book in a Weekend retreat.

Amazingly, in each of the above situations I was offering the exact same things. The only thing that changed was the time allotted to the authors I worked with to finish their books. That's it. And the plans associated with the different timeframes I offered all came to me at different times and in the same way—divine inspiration received while I was in my DAW

state working with authors. Yes, looking back, I feel that these descending time periods were the result of a divine inspiration I had received. Those divine inspirations were in response to an ever-expanding consciousness to the God within us all, trying desperately to birth a message and dying to be born through the books many of us feel drawn to write.

What's the secret behind the amazing results I have not only experienced but witnessed firsthand? Reconnecting and then remaining connected to God, both as a writer and as a human being, and then allowing one's DAW to express itself through the books so many of us are compelled to write.

## CHAPTER TWO

### WHY HAVEN'T YOU BEEN ABLE TO FULLY BIRTH YOUR BOOK TO YOUR POTENTIAL?

**O**KAY, SO HERE YOU ARE AT LEAST RELATIVELY smart, honest, hardworking, and committed. You have probably graduated from schools or programs, successfully held jobs, paid taxes, possibly paid off loans, built things from homes to relationships, raised kids, et cetera. Yet, the thing you could possibly want to do for yourself more than anything else, write a book, you have been unsuccessful at completing.

Maybe you're just not talented, experienced, educated enough to do so, or maybe it is simply not in the cards for you. Bull! We may not all look, think, or live alike, but one thing that each one of us has the capability to do is write. Yes, it can be that natural for

all of us and it is a God-given right not just because it supplies an essential opportunity to become one with the Creator but also because it is the one route we all share to deliver some form of divine message we were at least partially born to birth. So natural and innate is the ability to write that even someone with the physical liabilities of Stephen Hawking can do so, and do so very effectively. If it is so natural, innate, and easy to do then why have you not been able to do so to a satisfactory or publishable level?

First of all, in response, let me say this: “It has nothing to do with you and everything to do with you.” What do I mean by that? Second, the motivation to take the wrong turn that steered you away from the ease that writing could be did not originate inside you. As noted in the introduction, it came directly from what you were taught about writing and publishing.

In reality, you were taught the exact opposite about what you needed to know to succeed as a writer. How could that be? The curriculums that most influenced you in this area were designed by individuals—as caring, intelligent and accredited as they were—who hadn’t studied the art form of writing from a holistic perspective, and thus didn’t have a full understanding of it. What do I mean by holistic perspective of writing? Doesn’t holistic have to do with the New Age or organic produce or something?

By holistic, I am referring to the four arenas of writing: the physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional aspects. What we are normally taught about writing

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comes from the mental perspective only. So, what we have been taught and forced to absorb about writing to get that all-important passing grade is one-dimensional. What we have been taught would be like trying to drive a car with only one inflated tire. Doing so would be frustrating, dangerous, and slow. After trying to drive a car with three flat tires, most of us would just give up. This is essentially what most aspiring authors do.

However, with all four tires properly inflated, which is what this book will do for the writing of your book, the car rolls nicely, and potentially quickly, just as your book will.

Third, it's all about you because up until this point, you have innocently chosen to accept the misinformation you were offered on writing as the gospel. Whether you choose to fully embrace the proven solutions in this book will be up to you. It's all about you— always has been and always will be.

“We are dancing on a volcano.”

—COMTE DE SALVANDY