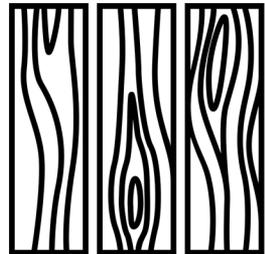
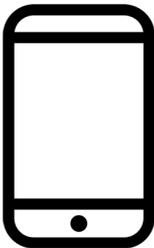


# The Motivation To Write



with an abridged  
history of advancements  
in writing

by Sage Liskey



First Edition.

Released the Summer of 2017.

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# Introduction

At some point in history a hairy creature looking vaguely like Big Foot drew pictures on a wall with mud and blood; everyone thought the images *totally* awesome and possibly useful, so began working hard toward refining the technique. Given a very long time and motivated by the future wonders of Shakespeare, propaganda, and smut, our hairy friends figured out standardized symbols to depict information with. These symbols became gradually more complicated until an alphabet was born to thoroughly transcribe spoken language. Everyone thought the alphabet *totally* awesome and especially useful, and many more alphabets were born. By this time the descendants of the mud and blood artists had hardly any hair left so wore things like khakis and berets to stay warm while trying to write Shakespeare, propaganda, and smut. The dream was possible at long last, but it was really hard to not be distracted by sunlight, squirrels, and having a social life. To this day the descendants of the not-so-hairy mud and blood artists struggle staying motivated because sitting in front of a computer for hours losing sanity to imaginary characters and forgotten places and wondrous philosophies and inter-dimensional ponderings takes skill: patience, determination, and at least a little bit of craziness. That's why I wrote this motivation guide, to help the writers, the wanna-be-writers, and the people who need to write something even though they don't want to at all.

A note on the history of writing included in this booklet: some dates reference when a writing technique was first invented and other times it is when it was first popularized. For instance, a fountain pen may have been invented around 1000 CE, but it wasn't until about 1850 CE that fountain pens reached the masses. Take it with a grain of salt; I wasn't there, and I certainly don't trust my memory to begin with, and historians are simply extrapolating upon little discoveries, so who knows what really happened. Please question everything during your motivational history lesson, enjoy!

\* \* \*

# 1. Schedule In Time To Write

Schedules create a consistent dedication to write. Without one you're going to completely neglect your personal health and discover despair. Include chunks of time to write, breaks from the computer, and days off. You can also create a flexible schedule by setting realistic goals for yourself: I will write 1000 words today or I will write for an hour today or I will write **something** today.



*Cave Paintings ~ Predate History*

## 2. **Force Yourself**

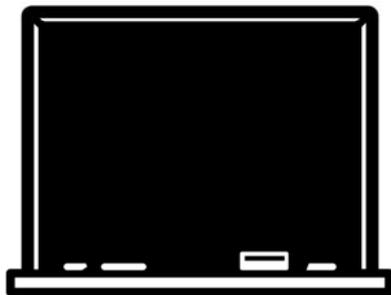
When you have no inspiration or desire to write, the only option is to force yourself. Even just one shitty sentence. It will be easier in an hour, or the next day, to write more. Forced writing can also involve subjugating yourself to the education system and taking writing classes.



*Paint Brushes ~ Predate History*

### 3. Write To An Audience

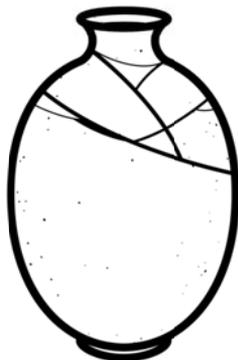
Pick your audience and know that they are waiting to hear your voice. Whether that's to your Facebook friends, blog followers, writers group, sci-fi readers, gardeners, zinesters, punks, this or that political party, grandma, ghost you met once, or crusty stuffed animal, write to someone.



*Chalk ~ Predates History*

## 4. Read Authors Writing About Writing

It is inspiring hearing from other writers on what their process is for doing what you are trying to do, especially with how isolating writing can be. Some of my favorites so far have included *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running* by Haruki Murakami, *Bird By Bird* by Anne Lamott, Yoshihiro Tatsumi's graphic novel *A Drifting Life*, and Ray Bradbury's *Zen in the Art of Writing*.



*Clay Tablets and Pots ~ 4000 BCE  
Ancient Near East*

## 5. **Take Care of Yourself**

Take care of yourself while writing, especially on a computer. Use good sitting posture, take a look away from the screen every 20 minutes, stretch, use a properly lit screen, and wear glasses that block blue light. Remember that there is a whole other world out there besides your brain and the computer screen! Also be sure to celebrate victories and take a break when you've completed a project.



*Hieroglyphics ~ 3200 BCE*

*Egypt*

## 6. Get Depressed, but Not Too Depressed

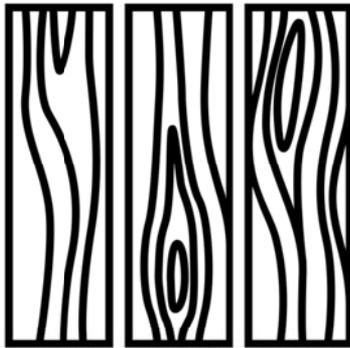
A lot of creativity is sparked from sadness and depression. Break up with someone, watch a dramatic movie, or just live a normal life and eventually the sadness will come to you. Of course, don't get so depressed that it becomes debilitating for you to get out of bed and type. Be reasonable.



*Papyrus ~ 3000 BCE  
Egypt*

## 7. Break Up A Project

Make an outline of major plot points, ideas, or chapters, and then fill in the ideas. This gives you an easy to follow road map and lots of mini-successes as you complete each section.



*Waxed Wood Slates ~ 1300 BCE*  
*Rome*

## 8. Write Small Things

Smaller projects such as booklets, zines, and brochures give you a sense of gratification that you actually completed something. Show these off to friends for some much needed compliments on your creative work so that you can power through your gigantic crazy-making projects a little easier. Even an update on Facebook, an e-mail, a letter, or a blog post can provide a little boost of ego!



*The First True Alphabet ~ 700 BCE  
Greece*

## 9. **Have A Deadline**

Participating in events such as NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month), literary magazines, spoken word open mics, writers groups, or local authors tabling events provide an end point for your writing. They give you reason to push yourself harder and deem work finished that might otherwise go on being revised for eternity.



*Wood Pulp Paper ~ 100 CE  
China*

## 10. What Inspires You?

Finding a source of inspiration such as another author, a book, a love, politics, an activity like running or gardening, cats, or competing with other people can greatly help fuel your creative passions.



*Quill Pens ~ 600 CE  
Spain*

# 11.

## **Block The Robots**

What distracts you? Most people carry addictions, especially to robots. Finding an application that can block your favorite social media, disabling Wi-Fi, or powering off phones will greatly increase productivity. Even better, go someplace where you cannot access the internet at all or at least a public place that you feel guilty about getting on social media. If you need help transforming habits, read my book *The Happiest Choice: Essential Tools for Everyone's Brain Feelings*.



*Wooden Pencils ~ 1560 CE*  
*Italy*

## 12. Where and When You Write Best

Some people can write around people, others need to be alone. Some people do great in the morning, others at night. Some people need to be drunk and on various drugs, others like it clean and sober. I wonder if writing in outer space or underwater will become popular one day, pens have already been invented to do just that!



*Steel Nibbed Pens ~ 1820 CE  
England*

# 13. Do Mindless Work

The best sparks of creativity typically come out while not writing, but instead while doing mundane or mindless tasks that keep your brain free to think: walking around, gardening, driving, hiking, daydreaming on the job, and so forth. Be ready for these ideas by carrying a notepad and pen at all times, or at least have easy access to a voice recorder or word processor on your phone.



*Fountain Pens ~ 1850 CE  
United States of America*

# 14. Apply to Writing Residencies

Residencies provide an environment in which the writer can think less about starving and more about creating. Programs last several weeks to several months and often offer free or cheap lodging, food, critiques, classes, and sometimes a stipend to help get your words onto paper.



*The Typewriter ~ 1868 CE*  
United States of America

## 15. Read

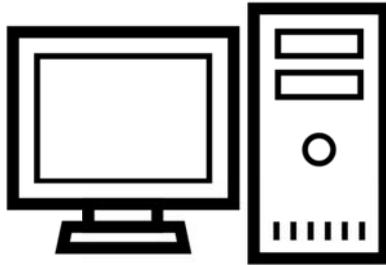
You're a writer, you had better be a reader too. Include books you might like but also books you might hate, there's a lot of inspiration in reading something and saying, "I could write this so much better!" I'm still planning on contacting the publishing house for *Wicked* and asking to rewrite that mess. Okay maybe I won't, though it was such a great but poorly delivered story.



*Rotary Dial ~ 1904 CE  
United States of America*

## 16. **Experience Life**

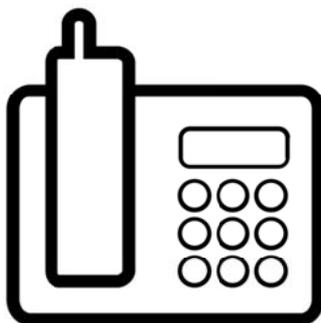
Fall in love. Go traveling. Take on a new job. Almost die a few times. Have a spiritual experience. Try something you've never tried before. Challenge yourself. Explore your boundaries and edges. Get edgy.



*The First Publicly  
Available Computer ~ 1950 CE  
United States of America*

## 17. Write What You Want To

Writers occasionally have to write things that are unpleasant or not fun to write. Be sure to stay nourished with writing what fulfills you such as poetry or fiction or mathematical tomes that only a handful of intellectual superstars and their dog's mouth will ever read.



*Alphanumeric Keypad ~ 1960 CE  
United States of America*

## 18. **Take A Break**

While sometimes you have to force yourself to do it, other times you have to give a project some space. Don't stop writing, just write something else for awhile.



Screen-Based Text Editors ~ 1970 *CE*  
*United States of America*

## 19. Get Early Feedback

Releasing a rough draft or a chapter can not only give you some valuable feedback but also essential confidence and drive to continue on with a project. Reach out especially to those excited about your project and will cheer you on to keep going.



SMS Messaging (*Texting*) ~ 1992 CE  
*England*

## 20. Use Voice to Text Software

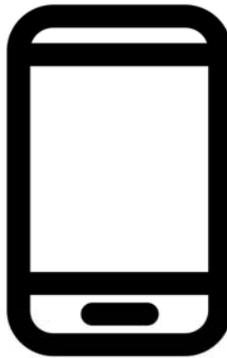
Voice to text software can save your hands from typing and your eyes from the glare of the computer screen, allowing you to write longer without hurting yourself. This also allows a free flow of your subconsciousness, a true free-writing practice.



*Commercially Available Speech  
Recognition Software ~ 1992 CE  
United States of America*

## 21. **Don't Expect Immediate Success**

Write for the fun of it. While some people create an international bestseller as their first novel, many others take decades and after writing dozens of novels finally reach financial stability with their words (or not). An agent can help. Taking marketing classes and a few public speaking classes wouldn't hurt either, especially if you are self-publishing. Don't give up, don't quit your day job, and have fun while exploring the wild world of words.



*The First Smartphone ~ 1994 CE  
United States of America*



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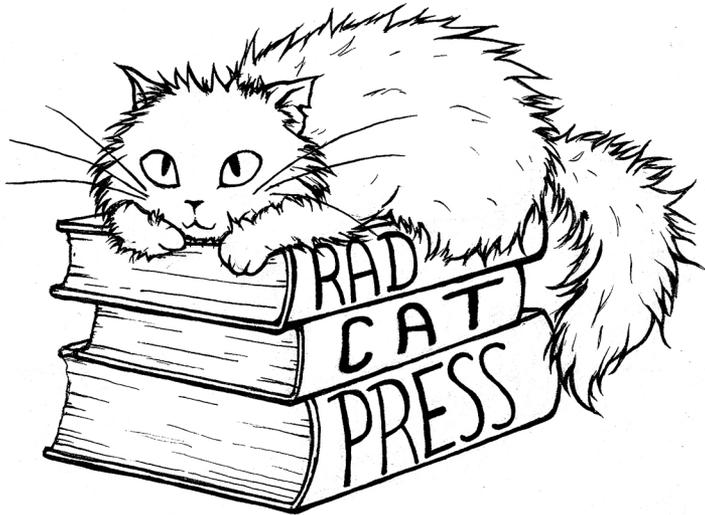


Sage Liskey is an author, poet, workshop presenter, mental health advocate, and artist. He founded the Rad Cat Press in 2010 and is based out of Oregon. The Rad Cat Press is devoted to creating life-changing and accessible publications for the modern world.

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21 tips to stay  
motivated writing,  
creating, and  
laughing.



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