

On Writing...

"Writing is like driving a car at night. You can see only as far as your headlights, but you can make the whole trip that way." (E.L. Doctorow)

"I write every day, something that makes it possible to be a writer all the time, not just on weekends or on sabbatical, as I often did when writing was the "work" that came last because it required so much more focus than everything else. And this has reshaped my writing habits substantially. Time spent doing other things (teaching, say, or chairing) is time when I am taking a break from writing, not the other way around. Even if large projects are completed slowly, to write every day is to keep continuity in my creative habits that nurtures a sense of connection to my writing as primary work - not work that gets done when my work for everyone else is finished." (Claire Potter, Ph.D: <http://tenured-radical.blogspot.com/2009/06/400-posts-tenured-radical-speaks-or.html>)

"Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending." (Maria Robinson)

"People have writer's block not because they can't write, but because they despair of writing eloquently." (Anna Quindlen)

"Even the most seasoned writers have some resistance to sitting down to write. There are always other things we might have more fun doing. Or problems that need solving. Or people who need attention. It's only by pushing against these other distractions and demands that we can find our way to our desks, turn our computers on, and begin to write. The more we write -- and it doesn't matter for how long-- the more easily we can push past this resistance. Stay away for two days or three, and we have to muscle our way to our desks and our computers, using up energy we could have expended on writing.... Writing produces writing. There's just no other way." (Jane Anne Staw, Ph.D., "Unstuck: A Supportive and Practical Guide to Working Through Writer's Block." St. Martin's Press, 2003.

"Everything is vague to a degree you do not realize till you have tried to make it precise." (Bertrand Russell, "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism," 1918.)

"The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing." (Stephen R. Covey)

"Being a writer is a perpetually humbling experience. Every day you have to confront your own stupidity. You have to be willing to say, 'Oh, man, that was a stupid sentence. It's not as brilliant as I thought it would be when it was floating around in my head.' You get to experience shame and humiliation in all kinds of different ways. That can't stop you. It's part of the job." (Mary Kay Blakely, in *The Resilient Writer*. by Catherine Wald, 2005, pg. 20.)

"Just get started [writing] and you may find that it'll come to you as you proceed.... The main thing is to make a beginning, to take the risk of beginning before you feel ready....Don't pressure yourself by supposing that you can't begin unless you already have something impressive to say. The point now is to make a beginning...to insist on an imperfect beginning." (Robert Boice, *Professors as Writers*, 1990, page 60.)

"Finish every day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt have crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely and with too high a spirit to be cumbered with your old nonsense. This day is all that is good and fair. It is too dear, with its hopes and invitations, to waste a moment on yesterdays."

(Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803-1882)

"Instead of finding time to write, allot time to write. Prolific writers make a schedule and stick to it. It's that simple. When you follow a schedule, you no longer worry about not writing, complain about not finding time to write, or indulge in fantasies about how much you will write over the summer. Instead, you write during your allotted times and then forget about it." (Paul Silva, Ph.D., *How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing*, APA Life Tools, 2007, pages 12 and 14.)

"There are days when the result is so bad that no fewer than five revisions are required. In contrast, when I'm greatly inspired, only four revisions are needed." (John Kenneth Galbraith)

"Every creator painfully experiences the chasm between his inner vision and its ultimate expression. The chasm is never completely bridged. We all have the conviction, perhaps illusory, that we have much more to say than appears on the paper." (Isaac Bashevis Singer)

"Close the door. Write with no one looking over your shoulder. Don't try to figure out what other people want to hear from you; figure out what you have to say. It's the one and only thing you have to offer." (Barbara Kingsolver)