

THE
WRITER'S

POCKET BOOK
OF INSPIRATION

PANDEMIC
EDITION

DARLENE REILLEY

The Writer's Pocket Book of Inspiration:
The Pandemic Edition

Darlene Reilley

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The Writer's Pocket Book of Inspiration: The Pandemic Edition design by Darlene Reilley

FIRST EDITION

What's in this workbook?

- My Pandemic Writer's Goals
- Kickass Writer's Advice
- Self-Care Ideas for the Working Writer
- Remember why you started: reconnecting with your writing "why"
- Zombie Slayer's Advice for Surviving the Pandemic with Your Writing & Sanity Intact
- a fun little writer's poem
- A Writer's Planner
- The aw-shit triage guide for writing emergencies
- Affirmations
- The Bug In Bag
- Another little poem
- The Meaning of Life Stuff

Hey, writers. I know it's kind of crazy out there right now. Who saw this coming? Probably Michael Crichton, but since he's not here to give advice, I thought I'd help out in my own weird way.

One of my favorite characters, Julia, likens our current situation to the first few stages of a zombie apocalypse and has had ample fun telling me exactly how to survive the months ahead.

We may struggle as writers and artists right now, but there is a brighter, lighter side.

The good news is we are inspiring people and helping them through a dark time in humanity's history. Since the first storytellers gathered around campfires, writers have inspired others. Our legacy is long. Let's keep it going.

You are an essential part of this puzzle of life.

Your words are important.

Your visions are essential for getting us through this crisis and the ones ahead.

Keep that idea in your heart as you create
and as you share your visions with the
world.

You are supposed to be right here, right
now, working on your work. So says the
universe.

Write on,

Darlene

And if you are lonely and want to email me
pictures of puppies or a plot twist, go for it –
I'm here for you! dreilley7@gmail.com

MY PANDEMIC WRITER GOALS:

HOW I'M GOING TO GET THERE:

**WHAT I'M GOING TO DO IF
DERAILED:**

Kickass Writer's Advice

Books are made of hours of spilt ink. If you're like me, you're finding it hard to deal with imaginary world right now because of the horror stories right outside, but we must carry on.

In times of trouble, people turn to art and culture to uplift and comfort.

That's our job.

We must carry on reading, writing, playing, and envisioning the future. We are essential to the success of humanity.

With perseverance and belief in your dream you can create your vision. You are the only one who can bring it to life.

We as writers have gifts. We need to share them. We are used to spending hours in front of blank screens with nothing but music and beverages of our choices trying to throw ink on a screen or on paper and

making sandcastles that can be shaped into fortresses later.

We have the skillset that we need to share with our friends and family – they are entering a new, strange world.

Time to enter beast mode.

Ideas to Inspire

- Attack your writing at a time you normally don't like 3 am or 5 pm
- Pick fun colors and themes to surround yourself with and then share the images on social media to inspire others
- Do something fun to distract as you enter the writing world – find a few favorite games to get your writer juices going until you can string words into sentences
- Reset and be present every day with an entrance ritual like lighting a candle or touching a favorite rock
- Start the side hustle you've been dreaming of – research how to set up your website or the next step in your writer evolution

Coffee gives me superpowers.
What gives you your
superpowers?

Self-Care Ideas for the Working Writer

- Manicures & pedicures
- Movie night every night
- Journal
- Meditate
- Learn yoga through online tutorials
- Clean and organize your writer bag
- Create a plan in case of the down days
- watch movies and snuggle puppies or kittens or goats
- Go for a walk
- Get creative in a medium you don't usually work in – write, draw, paint, or craft
- Ground yourself
- Cuddle a furbaby
- Create a sanity list
- Go for a walk in the woods far from others...and tell someone where you're going
- Go to the nearest water source and reconnect – yeah, I mean the kitchen sink
- Salt lamps or candles work wonders
- Indulge in your favorite hobby

- Spend time with your writing community online – set up a write in or a coffee session where everyone can be safe in their own spaces, but together
- Take the opportunity to revitalize your writing routine
- Recharge your batteries
- Dream and then turn those dreams into plans of actions

Hold the vision.
Trust the process.
When in doubt,
scribble.

Remember why you started: reconnecting with your writing “why”

Why did I start scribbling on paper? It’s hard to remember, but it had something to do with Nancy Drew, Snoopy, and a purple crayon. I’ve always been the type of writer who scribbles on whatever type of paper is around. Then I try to make it bigger, better...something awesome.

What’s your writing “why?” Why did you scribble with crayons on paper?

Be change maker,
a re-creator.

Zombie Slayer's Advice for Surviving the Pandemic with Your Writing & Sanity Intact

So you woke up in a horror movie...

Just kidding. Hey, I'm Julia, a.k.a. the [Zombie Slayer](#), and my writer, Darlene, thought you would like a bit of advice from someone who has been in the zombie trenches and survived.

My writer had a day job and was furloughed because of this pandemic. She was depressed. After a bit, she shook it off because she realized it was an opportunity to see what else could come out of a bad situation.

To start, this workbook.

Not too shabby.

Anxiety attacks. Fear follows. The hairs stick straight up on the back of your neck. All the warnings of your ancient alarm are signaling something huge is about to happen. Whatever it is, it's coming at you fast and you best get prepared.

If you're anything like my writer, you get cranky when you don't get your writing time. With our advice, you will survive to thrive after the onslaught has passed.

Choose your weapons wisely.

Stage 1: You realize something is wrong. You're not quite sure what, but you know people who are missing or sick and there is noise coming from the media about something scary. You find out that zombies are real. It's time to start gathering people and supplies. It's time to make a plan. Levels of awareness: Laid back, relaxed.

Stage 2: You live through the first few zombie attacks – the hardest ones when you think zombies are going to eat you at every turn. You down caffeine like it's candy. You realize your baby plan isn't going to work and you have to rethink on the fly. So you do. And then you willingly step into the line of fire to save those around you because you're the only one who can. Level of awareness: relaxed but aware.

Stage 3: Thus begins the long, arduous trip to the safe zone you hope is waiting for you at the end of your journey. Roads aren't safe. Shopping isn't safe. You must prepare before every level of interaction. Level of awareness: alert and focused on events or people.

Stage 4: When you reach the "safety" of the safe zone...and it's not the right one. Next you figure out what the fuck is going on for real and that everything until now was just prep – and now here's the real SHTF. Level of awareness: touch me and I'll kill you.

Stage 5: You find the actual "safe" zone and hunker down to defend yourself and your fellow humans from the onslaught. Time to snuggle in and plant a garden. Stage of alert: Constant awareness.

You, writer, are the zombie slayer of your life. And it's up to you to take the steps on your journey to becoming the novelist you have always wanted to be. Here's a chance to make the difference you want to see in the world.

Pens don't kill characters.

Zombies kill characters.

Pens kill zombies.

Gather your materials and attack your novel
– this is the perfect time.

Stay calm. No matter what happens, you
will get through it.

Now, write, writer, or the zombies will get
you.

You write or you die, or you die and then
you are a zombie and you kill other writers.

Don't kill writers.

Don't die.

Write.

Love,

Julia, the Zombie Slayer

Believe in persistence, your dream,
and the alchemical writing process.

a fun little writer's poem

I speak for the beings who cannot
speak for themselves.

This road is uphill.

There are many stumbling blocks.

But it won't break me

I have courage
and strength of heart.

Do as you will, Universe,

I'm in this for life.

I will Write On.

A Writer's Planner

Day 1

- Weekly Planner Meeting
- Read, Play, Write
- Brainstorm for This Week
- Set Calendar
- Exercise & Meditation
- Morning Pages

Day 2

- Create Daily Hit List
- Read, Play, Write
- Pay Bills
- Exercise & Meditation
- Morning Pages
- Start three queries

Day 3

- Read, Play, Write
- Find three new markets for next week
- Exercise & Meditation
- Virtual Library Day & Online Errands
- Morning Pages

Day 4

- Read, Play, Write
- Exercise & Meditation
- Morning Pages

Day 5

- Read, Play, Write
- Exercise & Meditation
- Morning Pages
- Finish queries & submit
- Back up computer files

Day 6

- Read, Play, Write
- Exercise & Meditation
- Morning Pages
- Review status of projects

Day 7

- Read, Play, Write
- Exercise & Meditation
- Morning Pages
- Weekly reflection
- Chill!

The aw-shit triage guide for writing emergencies

I am not afraid of a virus. I wash my hands.

I am afraid of sitting at the blank page and nothing coming out.

Not writing is scarier than writing.

So be you – you weird wonderful writer in all your authentic strangeness.

Go to the desert.

Go to the woods.

Go to the mountains.

If you're not comfortable stepping outside right now or if you have a stay in place order, go online and look for deserts, woods, or mountains. Lots of places have online access or webcams.

Knowledge is not power – it is only the potential for power. Only knowledge plus action will gain you results. So you need to create a writer battle plan. It's time to

reignite the spark in you that was ignited by the source of all energy.

Your task during this situation is to figure out how to level up your life in a sustainable way.

You want to make a difference. You want to share what you know. And to do that you need to figure out what you don't know so you can master those skills and get to the next level. It's time to retool and level up your life.

So get out a pen and some paper. Write your perfect writer dream down – where you want to go with this thing called the alphabet – and determine exactly how you are going to get there. Not sure? Ask a few writer friends what they think. Start a conversation online. And then go back to your page and scribble your dream down.

Don't tell me you don't have a stack of journals just waiting for you to scribble. I see at least three empty ones on my shelf right now. After all, we writers collect journals...for times like these.

Affirmations

- I am a creative force and will do my best in times of crisis to inspire others.
- I will keep perspective and realize this is temporary and will one day pass.
- I will have faith in my process and in my dreams.
- I will finish my work.
- I don't cry over spilt ink, instead I form that blotch into something useful.
- I know good things take time and this will be another chapter in my writer story.
- My writing is my priority.
- I can cut through noise and listen to my muse.
- I create fantastic stories.
- When in doubt, I go into my writer's cave and regroup.

The Bug In Bag

- Pens, highlighters, and markers
- Notebooks
- Planner
- Lotion
- Chapstick
- Headphones
- Music
- Laptop
- Hand sanitizer
- Snacks
- Water bottle
- Beverage of Choice
- Tissues
- Emergency supplies: food, hair ties, band aids
- Something fun to remember this is what you love

Another little poem

love what you do
better humankind
dream Big.
do Big.
make stuff.
create epic content.
HQVC - high-quality, valuable content
Give kick ass advice
read - write - play
create a cohesive worldview

Write on and prosper.

The Meaning of Life Stuff

Don't be afraid of failure. Failure means you're playing. Keep playing.

Bare bones – compress, compress, compress.

Read. Write. Play. Revise.

Keep your readers on the edge of a cliff and keep them wanting more.

Think Big. Dream Big. Realize you can do more than you think you can.

Shake up your routine and inject new life into your projects. Take the time to develop your art and your craft.

Burrow into your writer's cave and write.

If you're a joiner, find an online writer's group. Nothing beats hanging out with writers over tea or coffee.

When characters throw tantrums, listen. At some point they're going to piss you off. Go with it because whatever they are doing is

way more interesting than what you had planned.

It could be the best story ever told. Or it could be drivel. But it's yours. Your story. Your words. Your dream. Take the time to do it right.

It's crunch time. Are you ready?

Go. Write.

About the Author

Darlene Reilley is a nomadic writer traveling the world. When not writing, she loves coffee, hiking, photography and snorkeling. Her favorite color is cerulean blue. Darlene's goal is to write one hundred books that entertain and inspire the future of humanity [this is #13].

Ms. Reilley is happiest when her fingers are flying over the keyboard and she's lost in another world. In another world she is an archaeologist traveling the world in search of ancient relics. Her unique perspective and well-traveled boots can help you explore life from a new point of view.

She runs [DarWrites](#), an online website geared toward helping creative entrepreneurs build their dream businesses. Curious? Email her at dreilley7@gmail.com.

Also by Darlene Reilley

Fiction

[Zombie Slayer](#)

[Forbidden Timeline](#)

Walk On

Nonfiction

[1,001 Prompts to Get You Started](#)

[DarWrites: Writing Prompts](#)

The Writer's Pocket Book of Inspiration: the
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Poetry

[From the Heart: God, Guys, and the Rest of It](#)
[Life, Liberty, and the Rest of It](#)

Writing as Brianna Flannigan

[The Pink Book of Romance](#)

[The Rose Book of Romance](#)