

Writer's Block Detox

Transcript: Week 1 Video

Week 1

Now, the idea of doing this detox isn't to get you creating masterpieces, it's to get you writing and enjoying it, because if you're not doing that you're totally stuck. What you're going to find is that it's not the case that you can't write or that you have no ideas, even if you feel that way, that it's actually often the stuff that's in your head that's holding you back, and you want to get that working in your favour, working out what works for you, and get your feeling good about writing again.

There are 3 things I want you to remember this month.

The first is, be kind to yourself. It doesn't matter what you haven't done yet, where you think you should be, that you miss this day or that day, that what you're writing is awful. There's just no point in beating yourself up about the past, and it's going to make you not want to do things in future, it won't actually help you to write. What you do right now, today, and tomorrow, is much more important than anything you haven't done in the last week or the last year. Let go and start again.

This isn't some kind of magic pill that means you'll never procrastinate again, I can't wave a magic wand and 'cure' you, but what the detox will leave you with is a set of tools and a practice that you can use to get yourself unstuck again in the future, because let's face it, life gets in the way, but from now on you'll know that it's always okay to just start again gently and in a way that you'll enjoy.

The second important thing I want you to do is, well, to actually do it. This does not work if you don't! You've signed up to the writer's block detox because you recognise that something needs to change, so hopefully that means you're ready to commit and just give it a go. Just try for the next 4 weeks to just accept it all and follow the prompts and exercises, regardless of whether or not you feel like it or like what you're given. Trust the process, and when those voices in your head start grumbling, just tell them ok, but my job right now is to follow this programme and do this bit of writing. And if you ever feel intimidated by something, it's absolutely fine to go back to writing for just 5 minutes at any time, there's absolutely no shame in that or in going back over old prompts again. doing something is the most important thing.

The third thing I really want you to do over the coming weeks is to let go of perfectionism, and allow yourself to be a bad writer. I mean, really really cringingly terrible. If you don't produce at least one piece that's truly shocking I'll be very disappointed.

We're all overly concerned about wanting to be good, but the irony is that being bad and allowing messy, unformed, ill-advised ideas out, to explore and play with them is the only way to develop them and make them into what they want to become or to get to the good ideas hiding behind. It's a critical part of the creative process that you need to become okay with, because you know what, you can't edit something that you haven't written because you were too worried about it being good. There's something freeing about allowing yourself to be Gloriously Craptastic, so that's what I want to encourage you to be.

I want you to think of these prompts as being your version of a pianist doing scales. You can't be a concert level pianist without doing a whole lot of scales, without getting it all wrong multiple times, and nobody needs to hear that. Your notebook is a safe zone, and this writing practice and allowing it to be what it is, is critical foundation work if you want to be able to be a better writer in the long term. I am officially giving you permission, encouraging you, to write badly for the next 4 weeks.

Now today I didn't want to overload you with exercises, I wanted a gentle day where you'll easily finish the task and think, 'was that it'? So really all that you have to do today is to get an inspiration notebook if you don't have one already and write for 5 minutes on your first prompt.

Just so that you know, you'll find all of this week's exercises below this video, and there's also a progress tracker so that you can tick off the prompts and exercises as you complete them, and it also means you can find all of the prompts directly here if that's easier than going into your inbox.

So that's it from me, and what I'd like you to do right now is open up your notebook or computer, set a timer and write. Don't go anywhere, do it right now if you haven't already, then you can go off and be smug for the rest of the day, and you'll get a nice juicy exercise from me tomorrow that will set you up for the month.

Ready? Go!