

Three Keys to Writing in a Distracting World

I become fully engaged in my writing when I am fully engaged with my characters.

[Scott Myers](#)

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In a recent [Screenwriting Master Class](#), one of the writers participating in the class posted this:

My question for you is about that. Do you have any tips from your experience in this world to tune out outside noise I have no control over?

My response:

That is such an important subject and I hope this thread spawns many reactions, thoughts, and suggestions.

Here's a starting point: A Writing and the Creative Life article I wrote some time ago simply titled: [Flow](#). As writers, we all know that experience, right? We sit down to write. We become immersed in the process. We look up at the clock. Wow! It's two hours later. Feels like we just sat down!

That's flow.

The trick is how to get there. That's what the article addresses.

Then there is a related concern: How to even get our ass in the chair to write! Because you can't get into a creative flow state if we're not actually writing. And there is **so damn much** which distracts us from the simple act of depositing derriere-in-chair: personal and work responsibilities, emails, texts, notifications, the news cycle, and on and on.

So let me work my way through three suggestions:

(1) Write every day. Just make it a part of the daily routine. Once it becomes a habit, it feels off, even weird when you *don't* write. And it doesn't have to be a lengthy writing session. Even just [One Page Per Day](#) can translate into two spec scripts in a year. Like literally not even finishing a scene. One. Page.

The challenge, of course, is to get started with that process and — again — actually sitting down to do it. So here's my second suggestion...

(2) Write stories you care about. Whenever I work with my writing students, I always make sure as they sort through their ideas and land on one they say they want to write to have them ask this question of themselves: *What is my emotional connection to the story?* This is key. Because if a writer is emotionally connected to the story, it is exponentially more likely they will sit down day after day to write.

But how to achieve that emotional connection to the story? My third suggestion...

(3) Fall in love with your characters. If characters are the conduit for a script reader or audience member into the story, that because they identify with characters, especially the Protagonist, then so, too, with writers. The characters become our conduit into the story. It's like a line I wrote in that Flow article:

I become fully engaged in my writing when I am fully engaged with my characters.

If we work with a story in which we are engaged by the characters, better yet, we fall in love with them — and that includes the Bad Guys! — then we're more likely to sit down to write... which means we're more likely to write every day... which means we're more likely to find ourselves in a

creative flow state.

That's my opening response. In fact, I think I just wrote a Go Into The Story post off the top of my head.

Folks, how about you? How do you get into a flow state?
How do carve out time to write?

All suggestions welcome!

Here's an additional thought: How about music?

How do YOU get into a state of creative flow?