

DONE?

Finishing your writing project may be more complex than you think. And it is worth your efforts.

Thomas Wayne King WWA Fall Conference Superior, WI September 30-October 1, 2022

PRACTICAL DONE - *Wrap up all technical details. Do it well. Be thorough.*

You are done when you, *yourself*, are satisfied...and when you:

1. Assure accuracy regarding Spelling Punctuation Grammar Syntax Morphology Prosody Length Topic Tone Style Referencing Quotations Graphics Cover
2. Satisfy Publisher Rules & Requirements & Guidelines. Final V-A-K-T-O-E-E Scan Verb Scan Modifier Scan TOC Bibliography Footnotes Citations Glossary Index
3. Submit your work to editors, readers, reviewers for scrutiny and act on their feedback.
4. Transmit final copy to publisher and handle other issues. Register copyright More...
5. Check responses & reviews, adapt, revise, proceed. And then keep going.

ETHICAL DONE - *Treat other creators with fairness, honesty, accuracy.*

You are done when you have fully considered, researched and correctly handled: References Citations Attributions Art, Photo, and Data Credits Inspirations and Derivations Prior art and knowledge Permissions for borrowed words, ideas, graphics Others...

PERSONAL DONE - *Be alert to your own mental/physical health, endurance, distractions, obligations and responsibilities.*

You may be done/slowed by: Disability Illness Exhaustion Depression Chemical Use Family or Work Challenges Reduced Endurance Lost Motivation Take care of yourself. *You can't write without You.* Stay fit, healthy and persistent. Writing confers a measure of immortality.

LEGACY DONE - *Consider your life span and the life of your works, plus the people in your life who care about you and your works. Will they & your heirs benefit from your works?*

Done can last. Your works extend beyond your lifetime. Who will revise or retain rights, income? Consider: Wills & Codicils Powers of Attorney for finances & personal matters POA for health care Retention & transfer of rights agreements for your works, plus Derivative Works Works for Hire Rights bought back/reassigned Reassignment of royalties Manuscript storage More...

TAKE WITH YOU: “Forget talent. If you have it, fine. Use it. If you don’t have it, it doesn’t matter, as habit is more dependable than inspiration, and continued learning is more dependable than talent.” Octavia Butler, *Blood Child: and Other Stories*

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Ideas/info adapted from Penguin Random House, 2015. *Milena Schmidt, Consumer Marketing Development & Operations group* www.authorneeds.penguinrandomhouse.com Retrieved 4/11/2022. Penguin Random House authors & editors shared how they know a book is truly done. *(A compressed/curated summary.)*

1. Trust Your Subconscious

“I find I’m done with a book when my subconscious mind is no longer working on it. When I stop thinking about it when I’m running. Or if I’m in the grocery store staring at avocados and a great idea about the book doesn’t just spring into my head. Or if I’m no longer waking up in the middle of the night with an urgent need to write down some dialogue. When those little moments stop happening, I know I’m done.” *(Author)*

2. Achieve a Book’s Best Expression

“Quite honestly, I don’t know if a book is ever done. ... A book is done when it’s the best expression of what it can be.” *(Editor)*

3. Room for Improvement

“...deadline arrives. When I can’t find anything else to improve, it’s done. If that time ever arrives.” *(Author)*

4. Follow Your Instincts

“If I feel good about sharing it [book], it’s ready—or close to ready. If I immediately feel panic, it is clear that it still needs work.” *(Editor)*

5. Quit While You’re Ahead

“As a guy who spent ten years writing one book, I’m a bit of an expert on the revision process. My advice: stop at year nine— ” *(Author)*

6. It’s All in the Delivery

“When editing nonfiction, I feel the book is done when it delivers on its promise: it communicates its information...” *(Editor)*

7. Read, Edit, Repeat

“While writing the book, I edit along the way. ... Then I repeat, making sure to analyze and read until all the edits are accepted.” *(Author)*

8. The Tipping Point

“How do I know...? ... When the writer and I simply can’t bring ourselves to *look at it one more time*. ... I know we’re done.” *(Editor)*

9. Completed To-do List

“... I read straight through a draft of my manuscript and realized I had fixed all the things on my ongoing mental ‘to-fix’ list. *(Author)*

10. Only the Author Knows

“... it’s the author’s book, with their name on the cover, not the editor’s. ...only the author can know when they are done.” *(Editor)*

11. Learn to Let Go

“There is only one way I know I am done writing: when I am holding the finished hardcover in my hands for the first time and it is finally crystal clear that begging for a comma to be removed on page 134 will eventually, ultimately, mercifully do me no good.” *(Author)*

TAKE THIS WITH YOU: “I hope that in this year to come, you make mistakes...if you are making mistakes, then you are making new things, trying new things, learning, living, pushing yourself, changing yourself, changing your world. You’re doing things you’ve never done...and more importantly, you’re Doing Something. So that’s my wish for you, and all of us, and...for myself. Make New Mistakes. Make glorious, amazing mistakes. Make mistakes nobody’s ever made before. Don’t freeze, don’t stop, don’t worry that it isn’t good enough, or it isn’t perfect, whatever it is: art, or love, or work or family or life. Whatever it is you’re scared of doing, Do It. Make your mistakes, this...year and forever.” **Neil Gaiman**
