

Recommended Reading from *The Writer's Process*

I read a lot of books while writing *The Writer's Process*; here are a few of the ones recommended in the text.

Cognitive science books

[*Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention*](#), by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, describes the five key phases of the creative process.

[*Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*](#), by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, is the definitive source of work on flow. Csikszentmihalyi lists his five phases of creativity in the book *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention*.

[*Focus: The Hidden Driver of Excellence*](#), by Daniel Goleman, assembles a terrific breadth and depth of research on the topic of attention, and presents it all in an inspiring and accessible way.

[*Give and Take: Why Helping Others Drives Our Success*](#), by Adam Grant, offers an excellent discussion of scarcity or abundance in interpersonal relationships.

[*Happy Money: The Science of Happier Spending*](#), by Elizabeth Dunn and Michael Norton, was my source of the world-shaking study about chocolate.

[*The Marshmallow Test: Mastering Self-Control*](#), by Walter Mischel, is the source of detailed information about delayed gratification.

[*Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*](#), by Carol Dweck, describes the power of the growth mindset.

[*The Myths of Creativity: The Truth About How Innovative Companies and People Generate Great Ideas*](#), by David Burkus, busts common misconceptions about creativity, particularly in the organizational context.

[*The Organized Mind: Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload*](#), by Daniel Levitin, discusses the challenges of managing our attention in an information-dense world.

[*Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces that Shape Our Decisions*](#), by Dan Ariely, debunks the myth of the rational self, while demonstrating the consistency of the automatic systems.

[*Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age*](#), by Sherry Turkle, offers insight into the impact of modern technology on solitude.

[*Thinking Fast and Slow*](#), by Daniel Kahneman, is a treasure trove of insight into the multitude of mysterious ways that we make decisions.

[*Willpower: Rediscovering the Greatest Human Strength*](#), by Roy Baumeister and John Tierney, describes numerous studies related to willpower and self-regulation, as well as strategies for overcoming procrastination in your own life.

Writing-related books

[*Accidental Genius: Using Writing to Generate Your Best Ideas, Insight, and Content*](#), by Mark Levy, describes applications for the practice of freewriting.

[*Between You and Me: Confessions of a Comma Queen*](#), by Mary Norris, offers a peek inside the mental workings of an expert and passionate copyeditor.

[*Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less*](#), by Greg McKeown, delivers valuable advice on paring down activities so you can do the important things, like writing. The book dedicates an entire chapter to saying no.

[*Everybody Writes: Your Go-To Guide to Creating Ridiculously Good Content*](#), by Ann Handley, offers terrific guidance on revising, particularly in the business context.

[*On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*](#), by Stephen King, is a wonderful work on the craft as well as the life of writing.

[*Process: The Writing Lives of Great Authors*](#), by Sarah Stodola, is a rich source of information about the lives and quirks of famous authors.

[*The Sense of Style*](#), by Stephen Pinker, offers one of the best explanations of grammar I have ever read, with a cognitive science slant.

[*Shut Your Monkey: How to Control Your Inner Critic and Get More Done*](#), by Danny Gregory, offers an inspiring and irreverent look at the dealing with the inner critic.

[*Working Days: The Journals of The Grapes of Wrath*](#), edited by Robert Demott, details John Steinbeck's journals during the time he wrote *The Grapes of Wrath*. You hear the voice of the author, pleading with himself to stay on track, agonizing over setbacks, and plotting the path to completion. It makes compelling reading.

[*Writing to Deadline: The Journalist at Work*](#), by Don Murray, offers an excellent description of the writing process. Also see [*The Essential Don Murray: Lessons from America's Greatest Writing Teacher*](#), by Don Murray.

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