Supercharge Your Presence: Self-Publishing: How to Write Your First Book

Date and Time: Thu, May 16, 2019 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EDT

Hello and welcome I'm Peggy Mihelich associate director of member content here at APA. Today's webinar is titled Supercharge Your Presence: Self-Publishing: How to Write Your First Book. This presentation will cover the following topics: the practical steps of book writing, ways of identifying your core message, tips for building content structure, dealing with writer's block and Imposter Syndrome, the habits of highly effective writers, and much more. Some important points, before we get started, the views expressed in this presentation are those of the presenter. It may not reflect the views or policies of the American Psychological Association. Next, this program does not offer CE. However, we will email everyone watching live today a

certificate of attendance. During our time together, you will be on mute. You can communicate to us using the questions box located in your webinar control panel. Have a question for a presenter? Type them in using the questions box located in your webinar control panel.

Kyler Shumway is a doctoral student at George Fox University and a doctoral intern at Baylor Scott & White Health Care. He is the recipient of the George Fox Outstanding Dissertation Award for research in neuroscience and the impact of psychotherapy on the brain. Kyler is also the author of The Friendship Formula, a self-help book for teens and adults who struggle with making friends and deepening current relationships. He is also the SEO content director for

marketingfortherapist.org. A website dedicated to helping therapists grow their practices and serve more clients. Kyler has spoken at conferences all over the US while still a graduate student and is a frequent expert guest on mental health topics for news stations in Central Texas. He is excited to share his self-publishing insights with you today. Welcome Kyler!

Alright let me see if I can get my webcam booted up. Hello everybody, thank you so

much to Shannon and Peggy and the whole team APA for bringing me on board. I have

a lot that I want to cover and we're gonna be talking about the Nitty Gritty

process of publishing your own book. This is actually part two of a

three-part series. The next one is going to air tomorrow and so we're going to be

talking about my experiences as a self-published author, but also

experiences of other authors that I interviewed for the purposes of this

webinar. We're going to wrap things up with a little bit of Q&A; at the end.

Hopefully we have lots of time for that, so make sure that you're putting your

questions into the chat box at the bottom and now I'm going to turn off my

webcam so that your computer's don't crash as we're going along. Let me see.

Here we go. So let's start the stage with what we're

going to talk about today. The theme of the day is going to be all about how

writing a book is a lot like building a house. When I was 11 years old, I got my

first job in construction. That's right, 11. I was big for my age and so I got

this under the table pay weekends job where I helped build houses and garages

and stuff. Those were memories that I will not soon forget and let me tell you

I can smell this picture. The plywood, the rebar, the hot table saw, and during that

time I learned some important lessons about work ethic and how to not hit my

fingers with a hammer, but I also learned about how a house is

built. We typically see the end result of house construction look at

this gorgeous home. The stone features, the layered peaks, and even the

shrubberies to appease the Nights who say "Neese". This is what we want when it

comes to home. Right? But the problem is, you can't just go, the problem is

you can just go out and buy a house like this, but you can't just go out and buy a

book and claim ownership without making some serious ethical moral and legal

sacrifices. When it comes to writing your own book you're gonna have to do it from

the ground up. The question is how exactly do you do that. How do you go

from a pile of ideas a few nuts and bolts of knowledge to a fully

constructed masterpiece? That's what we're here

to talk about. Here's our agenda for today.

Every good house starts with a blueprint. This is your map that sort of guides

your process and it includes the key elements of what your final product will

look like. From there, we're going to talk a little bit about the foundation which

is the backbone of your content and why that matters and then we'll go into some

ways that you can create structure for your book. Next, I'm going to walk you

through the labor of writing and give you some pro tip strategies on making

that part easier. Then we'll also talk about some of the finishing touches

and really the final step. Loving and listing it is going to be covered in the

webinar tomorrow with Daniel Wenler. So again this webinar is intended to

help you get started in becoming self-published and so make sure that you

watch all three videos in this webinar series so that you get the full picture,

but my hope is, regardless of your experience and authorship and

publication, everybody's gonna be able to take away something from today's webinar.

At least that's the goal. All right, so let's start with the topic before we

jump into the blueprint. You need to have a rough idea if you're gonna design

a blueprint of what you're trying to build. Like the blueprint for a spa would

look different from the blueprint for a therapy office or a fitness center or

house. For example, choosing a topic can be challenging because, at least in

my experience, therapists have the everything is shiny syndrome, where

everything is interesting and they want to write books on all the things. One of

the ways that you can counter that is by thinking about the overlap between what

you know, what you love, and what the world needs so. For example, you might

know a lot about body dysmorphia, but if you don't love the topic, then you're not

gonna stay engaged enough with a project of this magnitude, but as you begin

thinking about that overlap here, which some of you are gonna recognize as being

part of a Ikegui, which is the Japanese concept of one's calling. You might still

have a lot of topics to choose from. Within that overlap. How do you choose?

It's a difficult choice, but it's the most important one so let me give you

some things that can help with just the practical

steps of choosing our topic. First, I will always always recommend going with the

easiest topic. I went with friendship for my first book because it was a broad

topic that I could write a lot about. Picking an easy topic from the get-go

will make the rest of the process easier. If you pick something that's very niche,

you may have limited content that you can produce so something that is

that broad is is very easy to make content around. Secondly, try talking

about some of your top candidates with people you trust. You might notice that

you have more energy or depth when it comes to particular topics. Also, you

should do some research. You want to try searching Google and Amazon to see

if there are already books out there that cover your topic. I'll point out

here that just because somebody has a similar topic or a similar idea or

similar title, does not mean you can't still write a book on that because

you're going to bring your own unique experience to the content, but if the

market is super saturated with books that are already on that thing, a good

example of this is books on dating. There are millions of them. You might want to

consider other topics, unless you can add some specific little unique twists.

Then finally, if you have three or four or more topics that all still seem

amazing to write on, you can always just pick one to start with and then write

the others later. No one said you have to just write one book. Once you've put

these things together. Once you have a topic or an idea for construction, you're

ready to finally move on to the blueprint and the first thing that you

need to ask yourself, well the first thing you need to do rather, is ask

yourself some important questions. Firstly, what is the core message of what

you're trying to convey? The core message is the big takeaway that you want your

reader to receive from from reading your book. Sometimes you have a few core

messages in a book, but really you want to take a bird's-eye view and sum it up

into one big one. For example in Man's Search for Meaning by dr. Viktor Frankl

you could probably identify several core messages, but I would argue that the

biggest one is, if you can find your why or your purpose you can overcome

anything. You want to be thinking about what your core message might be.

One way to find the core message is to ask yourself this next question. Which is,

what is the problem that is being solved by my book? You can also think of this as

what need does this meet. You might have a core message that you

really really like, but that doesn't necessarily mean it's gonna help anybody

or the world needs it in any way. Even fantasy novels meet a need and solve a

problem by offering entertainment and escape for someone. What is your

core message your book have to offer? That's why it's so important to try and

anticipate the needs of your reader. Try and imagine what they will be expecting

to receive from your material. The best way to get terrible reviews and requests

for refunds on your book is to sell a product that doesn't deliver, but worst

of all you probably aren't having the impact that you intended. You really

want to anticipate that need if you're writing a self-help book. Try and put

yourself in the position of the person who really needs it. Then finally, who

is your reader and who are you writing the book for exactly?

That ties into this. One important defining factor is nailing down whether

this is a self-help book or an other help book. In other words, is this a guide

for professionals to use to help clients or students and such, which would be more

of an other help book, or is this meant to be written directly to the population

in need. The answer to this question is going to dramatically affect your

writing style and how you do this thing, but once you're able to answer these

three questions, you have a much better sense of what the end product of the

book will look like. Many people will make the mistake of just trying to write

the book without having a good blueprint as a guiding start. They end

up with all sorts of problems. For example, if you have a really

well-constructed book with top-notch information, but if you didn't keep the

audience in mind. It's not going to be very useful. You might focus only on

solving the problem and quickly lose track of the core message, which can lead

to a jumbled mess of random ideas or you might put in all of that work and effort,

only to realize that the final product isn't really needed or wanted. These are

all problems that can be avoided if you establish and follow through with your

with your plan. All right so let's move on to the

foundation and the initial structure. For those of you who haven't worked in

construction or had the chance to see a building created from the ground up. This

gives you an idea of what it sort of looks like. The foundation tends

to take a lot of time and it's by far the most crucial part of the

construction process. If you're off by even a few inches on one wall, if there's

the slightest degree of slope, or if there are cracks or flaws and such the

rest of the building process is going to be misery. When it comes to your book,

your knowledge, your experience, and your resources are really what form the

foundation. If you're going to write something that's at least 40,000 words

in length, you're going to need to have plenty to talk about. Let's first talk

about knowledge, this is the stuff that you learned in graduate school and you

got from books and talks and webinars and so forth. Knowledge helps you do two

things really well when it comes to book writing. One, the knowledge gives you a

bank of information to draw on as you create your content and educate your

reader. Two, knowledge includes a certain awareness of what's already out

there on the topic. In other words, you would know about gaps in the research

and clinical clinical insights as well as areas that are a bit saturated with

opinions and guidebooks, but next you need to be able to draw from personal

experience. This doesn't necessarily mean that you'll be sharing personal

stories per se. Although, I am a firm believer that self disclosure can really

make a big difference in writing and speaking. Your experience helps inform

your writing in a way that helps the audience know that you've been there.

That you've been on the front lines, you've actually applied the stuff you're

talking about. This kind of reminds me of if you remember the way that European

artists tried to paint exotic animals. Like elephants, for example. Just

completely based on hearsay. If you want to Google this and look it up, it's quite

the rabbit hole, but but also quite entertaining. That's the way that I see

writing a book with only knowledge, but no experience. If what you write is

both based solely on the things that you've read or heard you're basically

just an echo of what other people believe, which puts you at

risk of being wrong at best, in my opinion, but also you need to have the

resources available to make the book actually happen. This includes having

things like time and energy and creative juices to make this book's something

worth reading and there's a reason why the next segment is called Blood Sweat &

Tears. It also costs money to do it right by hiring an editor, a formatter, etc.

Writing a book can be incredibly life-giving and rewarding and it takes a

lot out of you. You really need all three of these. You need the knowledge,

the experience, and the resources to form a solid foundation for any good

self-published book, but if you want to try and push forward with the poor

foundation bad things can happen. If you lack the knowledge about treating

ADHD, for example, but you decide you're gonna write a book based on a cool idea

that you have, there's a chance you might create something useful, but you might

also just end up creating something kind of crappy. If you know a lot about

something, but lack the practical or life experience on it, it's going to feel just

a little bit off. If you're so strapped for time and energy, it doesn't

matter how much knowledge and experience you have, you're never going to break

ground. The good thing is these are all solvable problems. You can always go

out and get more training and experience. You can set priorities and practice good

self-care and all of that good stuff. You can do this. These are

areas you can shore up, but but before you begin writing, you want to make sure

that your foundation is set well enough for you to move on to the next steps.

Speaking of the next step, the next step is to start moving into creating

structure. In house construction, once the foundation is ready, the team will

move on to putting together the frames for walls and doorways and roof tops,

basically the large components. Many construction workers and electricians

call this step roughing it out. The walls may not be perfectly aligned, the boards

are going to look a little bit ugly, there's going to be nails sticking out,

and glue all over the place, but all of that is okay because once the main

structure is roughed out, it's a lot easier to go back with

finer tools to smooth things over and straighten things up. The same is

true when it comes to creating the structure of your book. There's no single

right way to do this, so you should feel free to be as creative as you like, but I

want to give you a couple of ways to make it just a little bit easier on

yourself. I'm also going to get a bit abstract here, so bear with me,

but I want to give you two main approaches and I'm hoping you can use

one or both of these to get yourself started. Here's the first one, if you

dive into the screenwriting literature, you're going to learn all about what's

called the three-act structure, which is the framework used in most fictional

story writing. Most books can be broken down into major chunks or acts. Now this

isn't rocket science, but I think it's a helpful reminder for creating a book

that makes logical sense and your readers going to be expecting something

like this. You can probably sense why this formula works so well. If you

immediately start out with content, for example, the reader would probably need a

high level of familiarity or knowledge, expertise on the subject, in order to

digest it. The context is all about giving the reader some understanding and

prep for the content. The content is the educational bit. The part that should

really offer solutions for whatever the problem is. If you go back to your

blueprint or the need that you're trying to meet. Then the conclusion is a bit

of a wild-card because it can go all sorts of directions. You could do

like a motivational call to action or send-off of sorts. This can be like a Q&A;,

where you help people troubleshoot common issues. The conclusion doesn't

have to be significant. It's just a simple way to offer closure to the core

message. The three-act structure helps create some really good flow for your

reader to follow, which is why it's a good fit for books that include some

sort of narrative elements or developments along the way. Here's an

example of how this plays out with the three-act structure. If I were to write a

book on social skills training for clinicians to use with their work with

autistic children and teens, and notice how specific I'm getting with that, I

might follow a three-act structure that looks something

like this. I'd start off by introducing the 'why' of why social skills training is

important for autistic people to help set up a bit of a context. Then next,

I would provide my content of each module of training and how to

follow it as a clinician. Then finally I'd wrap things up with some

application. Maybe some troubleshooting and a send-off of some sort, so you can

see how specific chapters within the book fall into place once you have the

acts all lined up. It's a lot easier to sort things around, but if you don't want

to go with the act structure, you can always go with, what I call. the Q

approach. For those of you who remember reading Dr. Woody's "Fifty

Ways to Avoid Malpractice" book. You might remember how each chapter was titled as

a question, with the content of the chapter being the answer to said

question. If you follow a Q&A; structure, you don't necessarily need to

follow any kind of like logical or narrative flow, so it makes it a lot

easier on yourself. Then the reader basically uses your book as a resource

manual, so they can go to the table of contents, they can find that question, and

then they can jump straight into your book wherever there their question is

found that they can answer the question quickly. I would say this is

probably easier to do than the three-act structure. It takes less upfront planning,

but it doesn't always fit what the topic might be, but here's an example, so I'm

using the Q&A; structure on a book on bullying that I'm working on right now. I

provide some context and I offer personal stories to help prepare the

reader for the content, but that's basically all of the upfront work that I

do. After that, it's just a chapter by chapter Q&A; session where I answer

questions based on research and clinical experience and those sorts of things.

The nice thing about this is, I speak at conferences about bullying and at the

end of my speaking events I will have a Q&A; period and I can just take the

questions that people ask me there and insert it into the book. so the book is

really writing itself. You can also build your structured topic by topic, so say I

wanted to divide my book by the different populations that I'd

want to convey information to. Rather than doing like three separate books, I'd

have sections to dedicate each group, so again I'm giving you these approaches as

ways to make your life easier and hopefully give you some inspiration on

how you can do the structure. These are not rules that you have to follow by any

means and you can probably imagine how you can combine different approaches to

meet the needs of your blueprint, and then the beauty of the three-act model

in the QA model is, it you can take those and apply them to the chapter level.

You'll typically, let's let's start with the the three-act model. You'll typically

lead with some sort of introduction, followed by the content, followed by a

conclusion. The main difference here is that your Q and A styled chapters are

going to be a bit more insular in each section. Meaning you can probably swap

around sections in any order and it would still be acceptable for the reader.

In the three-act model, headers within your text are going to divide up the

content by kind of summarizing what's coming up next or giving a teaser

trailer for what the readers about to find. If you have a section in that

chapter that's all about social anxiety, in a in a three-act model the header

might read something like "The Challenges of Having Social Anxiety" versus if this

was a Q&A; style chapter the header might read "What Are the Challenges of Having

Social Anxiety". You can see it's a subtle difference, but but it can play

out very differently as you're writing the book. Let's bring up bring it

all together now, in terms of the structure. First, keeping your

blueprint in mind, what approach will work best for you? Does your book seem to

be more of a Q&A; resource or something that fits a bit more of a narrative flow?

Then second, focus on the big details. What is the context? What goes in which

act? Don't worry about specific details and don't get hung up on what each

chapter or answer should include just yet. Then once you do so,

you're ready to move on to the next step, which is creating an ugly outline. I

really really want you to be okay with making an outline that embarrasses

you. Your reader will never see it. Your grad professor will never see it.

Your mom will never see it. This is your your ugly outline that you are making

solely for the purpose of roughing out the contents and beginning the creative

process. You should be using lots of question marks and lots of "I don't knows"

for chapter headings and so forth. You can always come back and adjust and

change things around, but as your outline begins to look more and more workable,

you're ready to move on to the next step. Which is writing. Okay so you have your

blueprint, you have a firm foundation, and you have some structure to follow. I call

this next section blood, sweat, and, tears, but honestly by the time you reach this

step in the book writing process, you've done the setup,

worked diligently that I've described so far. The rest of this should be

relatively simple. Easy? No, but simple yes. Now that you know where all the

pieces of your book should fit, you're much more prepared to start putting in

the work. I want to give you some tips on how to actually do the writing and

again everyone is different and how they approach this, but let's start off with

things to do. One of the first things you should do when writing a book is

also one of the first things you should do in therapy. you want to set some goals.

Specifically I want you to set word count goals for yourself.

Most books will run in the neighborhood of forty to fifty thousand words, which

at a 12 point font in Microsoft Word is close to a hundred to a hundred and

thirty single spaced pages. It's a lot, so if your daily word count goal is a

thousand words then you can expect your writing to be done or complete at least

after about a month and a half of writing every single day. That's why

you want to block off specific time for writing. Maybe this is a daily thing,

maybe this is a weekend thing, whatever work for you. The key here is consistency,

but you should also be looking for opportunities to squeak in some writing

time. If a client no-shows, if your meeting

gets canceled, or if you're waiting in line at the doctor's office, these are

all opportunities where you can be opening up your laptop and writing, but

you want to keep in mind that if you are working during work hours, you may need

to check with whomever is paying you for your time to get approval to do

personal projects during downtime because some organizations will try to

claim ownership, when you're working on their dime. You want to make sure that

it's very clear between you and the organization that this is appropriate

for you to be doing., if you're squeaking in time like that, but of course, like

lunch hour is a time where you can you can be working. That is your own time, but,

if you're good to go, those little moments of squeaking in time can make a

big difference in terms of your your writing timeline then how long it takes

to write it all out. I think I've mentioned Grammerly in pretty much every

single talk I've done for APA. I promise they are not paying me to say

this, but Grammerly is awesome. I've been a professional writer for quite some

time and I still struggle with grammar and spelling. I blame my rural Idaho

upbringing, but I've gotten a lot better over time.

That being said, even if you are super super good at catching issues with

grammar and spelling, what Grammerly allows you to do is just

type super fast without worrying about editing. My daily word count went up by a

couple hundred just by having the freedom to kind of slap my fingers all

over the keyboard without worrying about how it's coming across. You want to

take a look at Grammerly. It's very affordable, very much worth your money.

Okay, so also keep in mind that writing a book is hard. You'll want to find ways to

kind of reward yourself throughout the process. I think very behaviorally when

it comes to this. The big reward is gonna come at the end when your reader comes

up to you and says, "Oh my goodness, your book changed my life! Thank you so much!"

but that doesn't happen until the book is written and out there. You want to

intentionally pick rewards for accomplishing steps along the way.

Maybe you let yourself have your favorite treat or maybe you listen to

your favorite music every time you sit down to write. Maybe you buy yourself

that thing that's been sitting in your amazon cart for the past six months, if

you're able to reach your word count goal for the week. You want to build

in these little reinforcement schedules, that way when you go to write your book,

it's it's enjoyable even than the times when it feels less so. But, another way

that you can reward yourself and fuel your creativity tank is to seek

inspiration. Listen to a new podcast, watch some TED Talks, go for a hike, read

a book, spend time with friends and family, cook something, find ways to

engage your creative mind, and be open to new experiences, and while you do so keep

your book in mind. This is a bit of a tangent, but I had a relative

one time who told me she would read the Bible once per year and every year she

would keep in mind a particular concept or an idea, like survival or womanhood or

teamwork or something like that. Just one particular concept she would keep it in

mind. Then every time she would read through the Bible she would notice

things differently. Different things jumped out at her and so she would say

it gave her a new perspective every time that she read it. Even in your day to

day flow, even the things that that seemed pretty mundane, there's

opportunities to be inspired. You just have to be open to it. All right,

now I'll give you some things not to do or things to avoid. Right after I wet

my whistle real quick. Many of you have asked about ways to beat writer's

block and if you do some of the things I've mentioned so far that's gonna help

a little bit, but if you really want to avoid having writer's block you want to

avoid the rush, and what I mean by this is that writer's block is a lot like

being stuck in a long long line. You feel stuck. You feel frustrated. You wish

they'd hurry up already. Right? Like what's the holdup. If you need to get to

the front of the line right now because there's a deadline or you're

gonna miss out on something big you're gonna feel miserable while you wait.

Think about like waiting in line to get to the bathroom. That's terrible. You went

to the bathroom because you needed to use it and now you're waiting and you're

waiting and that's taking forever, but if you don't need to use the bathroom, if

you're just sort of waiting in line with a group of friends, maybe you're enjoying

some nice coffee, you're laughing, you're enjoying the moment with all the time in

the world. The line doesn't seem as aggravating. If you need to write a book

in a hurry and you haven't had time to process that content, you're gonna run

into writer's block guaranteed. What you need to do instead, is just accept

the writer's block as being part of the creative process and provide yourself

with enough time for your brain to do some processing, rather than just waiting

impatiently in line. Just because there aren't more words showing up on page

doesn't necessarily mean that your brain isn't still working on the book somehow.

You may be working on a book right now even having not touch the keyboard at

all. That book is percolating you're brainstorming ideas and how you might

communicate them. I know I said you want to set word count goals, but

it's also okay to accept that some days you're just not going to write as much

as others. You're also going to want to avoid worrying about the finicky

little details things, like the title of your book, the color of your cover, and so

forth. All of that stuff needs to be put off until much much later in the process.

If you plan to put the title into your content and you're going to be writing

the title throughout your book somewhere, what you want to do is just use a

working title that you can then do a like a find and replace once you have

those details worked out. What I did with my book is I named my book 'xxx' and

then when I got to the end I was able to just do a quick find and replace to

replace the 'xxx' with with the title of my book. You're also going to want to

avoid telling people that you're working on a book, if possible.

I'm including a study here that I remember reading in graduate school,

which examined the effects of sharing one's goals on achieving ones goals,

which is an entire research rabbit hole you can feel free to dive into, but

essentially the consensus is that when we share our goals we experience reward.

We're rewarded by others, which in turn decreases our need and our drive to

continue pursuing said goal. For example, if I say I'm dieting and I've

lost five pounds so far, then the people around me are going to

give me a pat on the back and say, "Good job Kyler, you did it! You lost five

pounds!" and I'm gonna feel great. So later that day maybe, you want to have a

hard choice to make I'll think to myself well you know people really like me

and they supported me in my weight loss and now I don't need to be

as hard on myself, for example. It's maybe good for when you need a mood

boost or helping yourself feel better at the time, but in terms of long term goal

achievement sometimes it's more helpful to just kind of keep it private or keep

it to yourself. The one caveat I will say for this is

colleague consultation. Say you were wanting to write a book on a topic that

you and another colleague you know a lot about. It might be helpful to connect

with that colleague to get ideas from them. Get some early feedback and those

sorts of things so that would be the one exception I would say is being able to

communicate about your book, but lastly and most importantly. You're going to

want to avoid letting this book consume your life. It's really easy to get so

hyper focused on writing to the point where your relationships, your day job,

and your health can begin to suffer. Remember to maintain a good balance and

allocate resources so that you can live a life that's fulfilling while you try

and make this book a reality. Keep in mind these do's and don'ts as you lean

into the nitty-gritty part of writing. It really is easy to get sucked into the

book writing process once it gets started. Alright.

Let's fast forward just a little bit, you've used your outline, you've put in

the labor of writing at least 40,000 words or so, and your mansion of a book

is nearly complete. It might have a few bare spots that need

a little bit of touch-up, but you're finally at the point where you're ready

to give it some tender loving care and to do that, the first thing that you're

going to need is feedback. Some people will start to suggest starting out with

an editor, but I strongly disagree you want to send it first to a wide audience

of reviewers. There are two main main reasons for this

One, not everybody's going to get back to you. People are busy and your book

might be long or not relevant for them. It's kind of boring. And two, you

want to get lots of eyes on your work, so that people will catch your blind

mistakes. I remember when I sent my first draft out for for

my book, somebody caught a typo on the very first sentence of the very first

page. It's helpful to have a lot of eyes on this. That's the same

reason why NASA has hundreds of teams, of hundreds of people, working on every

single teeny tiny detail of their space exploration program. More eyes means more

mistakes being caught. You'll also want to send this out to colleagues if

possible for similar reasons, but they can also give you feedback specific to

the science and the practice related to your topic. I was talking about this

earlier. This idea of connecting with them can help you realize what areas

that you want add in and or take out so and also, if possible you

want to try and send a draft or an early version of some of your content to your

intended audience. This can be tricky, especially if you're trying to write a

self-help book for somebody who maybe your typical client for example

because that raises an ethical dilemma. You wouldn't want to give a client a

rough draft of your book and say, "Hey. I would love it if you could give me some

feedback on this book that I'm writing." and you cam see how that would create a

weird dynamic in the therapy process and it puts pressure on them to do

something for you, that may not necessarily and probably isn't

necessarily therapeutic. An obvious ethical dilemma there, but once you have

all of that, you're finally going to be ready to send it to an actual editor.

Somebody who can go through the content with a fine-tooth comb.

People mistakenly think that self-publishing means you get to avoid

all of this the editing part, but if you want to publish a book that you can be

proud of, you're gonna want to invest in an actual editor. There are so many

options you can go with when it comes to finding editors, but I want to give you a

few ideas to get yourself started. Bookbaby.com and again none of these

places are paying me. It would be nice if they were, but but they're not. Book

baby.com is kind of your one-stop shop for all things related to

self-publishing. Their prices are honestly a little bit steep but they

really do offer everything. You can also check out Reedzi.com, which is, you can

think of it kind of like Etsy, but for self-published author editing. It's just

a bunch of freelance editors who offer editing services for people just like

you, but you should also feel free to shop around and look for people who

have their own shingle hung up for freelance writing or editing. For

example, I found the guy who just had his own website up. I really liked

how he described his editing process and what he looks for and what he pays

attention to and he had some mental health experience. I decided to go

with him. There are lots and lots of editors out there, but the other thing

you'll have to keep in mind is that even though you hire an editor that does not

mean your book is going to be properly formatted to be published. Formatting is

all about how the content appears on the page. Such as having consistent headers,

indentations, good spacing, all those kinds of things. Sometimes the

formatter needs to put it in a particular file format so that it can be

uploaded properly. A good example of this back when it was Create Space,

but for amazon.com you needed to have your book format in a very specific file

type, that was actually produced by create space and so you could either

purchase the the software to do so yourself or you can hire a formatter to

just do it for you. There are some people who do both.

Some people will offer like an editing service, as well as a formatting service.

If you want to keep things simple for yourself, that's what I'd recommend, but

you can also teach yourself how to format. There are books on Amazon that

help you learn how to format for publication, although I would recommend

against that, unless you're one of those people who has more time than money. One

of those people like me. Alright, so I only want to spend a little bit of time

on this, so that we have lots of time at the end for questions, but once you have

a solid draft of your book, it's been edited, it's fairly well formatted, you

can begin to work on things like the cover and the title, if it hasn't come to

you already. When it comes to choosing a title you want to keep two

main things in mind. First of all, is there already a book out there with that

title. You want your title to be unique. Both to avoid getting sued, but also to

have something to build your SEO behind. For example, I had this idea of doing

the friendship formula and there are other things out there that exist that

have the same name as the friendship formula, which is why I went with a

subtitle that sort of elaborated on that. How to Say Goodbye to Loneliness and

Discover Deeper Connection. That's another trick you can use just because

you want to use the same title of somebody doesn't mean it's

necessarily a copyright infringement. If you add a subtitle that further states it

somehow. You want to just make sure that you're watching out for both of

those things. That's the first thing. You want to check to see if

there's a book out there with that title, but the second thing is your title is

kind of your first impression with the reader. They should be able to get a

general sense of what product is all about just by

looking at the cover. They are going to judge your book by its cover. I promise

When it comes to cover creation, there are lots and lots of options you

can go with, but the nice thing is is that Amazon actually offers a free

cover design app as part of their self-publishing process. I'm gonna leave

a lot of the amazon.com stuff for Dan, who's gonna be speaking tomorrow

actually, to talk more about marketing and those sorts of things, but just keep

in mind that if you decide to self publish on Amazon, you can do so for free

and create your own cover for free. It's awesome. I actually ended up making my

own cover using Photoshop. You can look up the specifications for

dimensions of the cover and all those sorts of things, but I ended up just

creating my own because I have this nasty combination of need to control and

artistic tendencies, so if you don't want to do it on your own or go with Amazon's

free service, you're going to have to hire an artist or a designer so you can

do that through Bookbaby.com or loads of other sites that are out there on the

interwebs and just like with everything else you're gonna want to try and get

feedback on your title and your cover along the way. My book was originally

going to be titled something totally different and I was gonna go with like

this nacho cheese thing because I really loved nacho cheese, like more than life

itself, I loved nacho cheese, but my friends and colleagues steered me away

from that because you know they wanted my book to be respected. They

steered me towards this much more improved concept. Now that

your book is written, edited, formatted, styled, you picked the perfect title,

you've got your cover, you're finally ready to put it out there on the market.

Now Dan is gonna cover marketing tomorrow, so I highly recommend you

listen in on him. He's the king of marketing for therapists, but I I just

want to throw out there that you can list your a book on Amazon for free and

that there are some small royalty fees that are taken out of sales. One of

the big issues with going with a publisher, there plenty of

issues and I know Dan talked about these at the previous webinar, but

publishers will take a pretty significant cut of your book sales. When

you go with any sort of self-publishing software is site, Amazon is a great

example of this, they're gonna take a bit of a cut but it's not going to be as

significant as if you went with a publisher. You're getting a little bit

more, which is nice, but really that's not the reason you wrote the book in the

first place, hopefully. Hopefully you're writing the book for the same reason you

joined the field of mental health, which is to make an impact or provide healing

for others and spread knowledge and education, all that good stuff.

Amazon.com is great for self-publishing offers. It helps keep track of everything,

lets you know how much you're spending on advertisements, if you want to go that

route, but on the side if you're if you're thinking about advertisements.

You're gonna want to start thinking about publishing guest posts and

Linkedin articles to help bring more traffic to your book, wherever you have

it listed. You could even potentially only have your book listed on your

personal website where you are able to find a way to produce it on your own and

sell it on your own. You're still going to want to have outside links that connect

back to wherever that book is found. If you want to learn more about how to

build that kind of traffic, build that kind of reputation you're

going to want to check out the webinar that I did earlier this year on writing

for the web, or you could just shoot me an email at my website and I'd be happy

to help you out with that and once it's finally up and listed I want to join you

in celebrating that huge accomplishment. I'm a major bookworm and I would be

so overjoyed to hear about your self-publishing journey if you happen to

remember me once you get to the end. I want you to send it my way so I can

be one of your first customers. I firmly believe that psychology needs to

continue to give itself away and by writing your own book, you're doing just

that. You're taking a risk, you're doing something courageous, and I think that

really deserves applauding. Okay, well, thank you all so much for your

time and thank you to Peggy and Shannon and everybody at APA for bringing me on.

Let's go ahead and shift gears and we'll take some of the questions that are

coming in.

[Peggy] Oh well, thank you, Kyler. That was a really great presentation, very

inspiring presentation. I think he's got some of you out there

fired up to get writing. We've had a lot of great questions come in. One of the

first ones is, what's the most common mistake or maybe you could talk

about your own mistakes that you made when writing your first

self-published book?

[Kuyler] Yeah. I don't know about most common, but I'll give you a

few that came out for me. First, I thought originally that the only way to

write a book was to sign with a publisher to go through that whole

application process, but now that the Internet has made it so easy to

self-publish, self-publishing has become the norm and it's really quite an

effective way to get your book out there. Back in the olden days, the publisher was

the only way that you could market your book. That was the only way you could do

distribution and all that stuff, unless you were able to dedicate a significant

amount of time to doing it on your own, and then the bonus of this is I don't

need to confirm with the publisher. Anytime I want to speak somewhere or

offer my book as a resource. I don't have to give up 80 percent of my sales

to some massive company, which is which is pretty awesome, but another

misconception is that nobody wants to read my stuff or that nobody cares about

what I have to say. If you're one of those people, I have two words for you.

Not true. You folks are psychologists, professors, mentors, researchers. You're

the ones who need to get your voices out there because for every one of you, there

are 10 people out there who know nothing about psychology and science, who are

writing about your topic right now. I'm not saying that their stuff is bad.

I'm just saying that you could do better and you should.

[Peggy] Great okay. Our next question is what's a reasonable time line

considering people's busy daily lives, you know nine-to-five, either working or

going to school, your goal is to write a 50,000 word book, you know what's a

reasonable time line, and I don't want to say deadline, because that's too you know

because you know deadlines move shift life is what it is well, what do you what

do you think is a reasonable timeline to give yourself to write a 50,000 word

book?

[Kyler] Yeah I think, and again like you said, this is going to be different for

everybody. I'll share my personal goal. which is to produce at least one book

every year or two. That's just a random number that I came up for myself and I

think that the reason for that is you want to find a good window between where

you feel rushed and where you feel like you're stagnating or it doesn't feel

like you're going fast enough because if you're if you're too rushed, if your

deadline is too close, you're going to run into writer's block, you're going to

have that 'I'm stuck in a really long line effect'. You want to make sure

that you have enough space, but if it's going to take you 30 years to write this

one book and you know maybe there are people out there who can stick with a

project that's as specific as a book for that amount of time. I don't know., but you

want to think about how long do you want to be working on this. Does this

seem like something that you could do for a year, for two years, for five years.

Does this seem like something that maybe you want to be done within in six months

and you feel like reasonably that's something that you could do. Then you

want to shoot for that. Maybe rather than giving yourself a deadline per

say you want to figure out what's a good window and you may figure it out in

a real hurry, so if you have a deadline of a year and you're kind of a

procrastinator, right, like a month goes by., you haven't really started it.

Two months, three months, four months, and nothing's really happening. You might

have to get a bit more specific about your goals. I'm not sure if I

I wrap around after that rants to get back to you.

[Peggy] I mean I think

you know the idea of 50,000 words, you know what's a reasonable time line. I

think a year is a good goal to have and of course depending on the topic that

could swell, but I think it's reasonable to set a timeline for

yourself in that process and it's just good to know what that timeline is,

that reasonable timeline. Thank you, yes. Moving on to the next top question.

Do I need to copyright or otherwise protect my material before I send it to

an editor or a manuscript, formatter? Do I risk my material or

intellectual property being misused or stolen?

[Kyler] I'm gonna preface

this by saying I'm not a lawyer. I don't have any lawyer friends that I could

consult on this, but what I will say is, this was much more of a problem before

we had the kind of technology that we have today. Let's say some copyright

issue comes up with your content in the future and you emailed it to an

editor and then the next month the editor turns around and publishes it.

Publishes it as their book. You could take them to court. You could say look,

here's the email that I sent on that date to this editor and then they turned

around and published the book so it's a lot easier to prove causation or

malicious intent and all those sorts of things. Now versus before we have that

kind of technology. That being said, if you're concerned about this, especially

if you're writing on the topic that's fairly commonly produced about

like say you want to take the dive and do a dating book. There

are there a lot of dating books out there. It may be helpful to get some

copyright protection and of course there are copyright services that you

can look for. One example, and I know this is going to come up in

just a little bit, is a APAs LegalZoom which is something that you can, or just

LegalZoom rather, you can get copyright protection. You can register your

information ahead of time if that's a concern that you have. I ended up

going just with Amazo.com copyright protection plan, which basically just

says if somebody else comes up with it, we can prove that you had this published

beforehand, but good question. It's something that you want to be thinking

about, but I would say it's less common today than it was previously.

[Peggy] Yes, we will be sharing with everyone our Legal Zoom offer just before we wrap

up today, but speaking of editors. What should the

audience really be looking for in an editor, or maybe you could give like

three or four things to look out for, that sort of make that make an editor

rise to the top?

[Kyler] Yeah so I think there are a few things you want to

consider when it comes to an editor. First of all what your budget looks like

and how much you can afford to pay them. If you can go with some of the top

dollar editors you're gonna get a little bit higher caliber editor who has some

strong experience. Maybe they've edited things that were New York Times

bestsellers or something along those lines. There's the financial piece,

but as you're shopping around you can typically find people

who are just as good, who don't charge that much, who are working their way up

the career ladder, may be more of like a moderate level editor. One thing that was

really important for me was finding somebody who had familiarity with mental

health topics. I didn't want them to kick back and say like, "Oh there's this

word that is specific to mental health and I think you should change

that" because I'm fairly good at disseminating things for the public and

so I I wanted them to be able to connect with

the things that I was saying, but on the flip side, that also can give you a

chance if they don't have that kind of mental health knowledge that gives you a

chance to recognize, "oh my my content that I wrote for let's just say first

time parents with a high school level of education" if my editor is able to catch

all of the places where I get a little bit too jargony. That can also be helpful

for you. In terms of other things you want to make sure that they're verified

in terms of their editing services. It really varies country by country. I'm

dropping the name right now, there's there's one verification within the us.

that you can look into, but also just in terms of like payment, security you

want to think about having people who use a secure payment method. That way

you don't get scammed by somebody who's just posing as a self-publishing editor.

[Peggy] Okay that's great kind of leads into our next question,

reducing jargon, we have a lot of folks who are interested in turning an

academic dissertation into a book for the general public. Do you have any

suggestions or advice on that approach?

[Kyler] Yeah and and again I think that

this could this could be its own webinar really. This idea of translating

stuff for the public, but I think that the first thing, the first suggestion I

would have is practice. You have to put lots and lots of content out there

through writing and speaking. For two reasons. The first one is you're

going to get better at explaining it. the more that you do so, for example think

about how easy it was to describe your dissertation at your prelim defense or

maybe your first brainstorming session compared to your final defense where you

could sing your dissertation, if they asked you to. Then the second reason

is you can learn from your intended audience. I gave a talk last year at a

conference and I thought I did just the most wonderful job of explaining the

role of modeling behavior and how bullying behaviors can be learned

from others, but the only problem was the audience didn't get it and I have a lot

of questions at the end asking me to go back and sort of explain myself. I

guess I could have taken that as a personal failure about my knowledge

and doubt myself or I could take it as a bit of a learning experience, where I can

further develop my craft. The thing that I really want to warn against when it

comes to writing a book that is about your dissertation is, you want to

watch out for or at least try and avoid the temptation to just copy-paste your

dissertation into a book format and then put a cover on it that you think most

people would enjoy. Being able to translate your stuff into something that

most people can receive is really a gift you can give them all of that

data and all of that knowledge that that you found in a way that's very easy for

them to receive. If you're able to put in that kind of work so I

would say just allow yourself or be willing rather to do that hard work

of translating it into something that everybody can enjoy. [Peggy] Thank you, okay. We

have a question about co-authoring, do you have any experience with that or any

suggestions on how to approach that? [Kyler] Yeah, yeah. Co-authoring is is tricky when

when it comes to self-publishing anything, not just writing. It might be

easier to create content if you have somebody who's working alongside you, but

if you also gonna have to coordinate a lot, so you're

gonna have to coordinate the content so that it flows together nicely.

If you're also gonna have to figure out ownership, who is it that owns what

percentage of sales or what percentage of the intellectual property, who gets to

take the book to conferences and talk about it and if a publisher comes along

because this can happen in some cases. If your book becomes popular enough if your

name gets out there a publisher might come to you and say, "Hey I want to

publish your book and I can get it way out there to a lot more people". You can

have a much greater impact, if you co-author it, who gets to make

that decision. I mean you would think that both of you would want to be on the

same page, but what if you're not. My big tip for co-authoring

something is having these conversations up front before you start the work,

before you start the love labor, so you can decide together who's gonna write

what, how much work each of you is gonna put in, who's going to be listed as the

first author all of that stuff, so have a conversation about it and then and then

afterwards put it into a brief, but simple contract something that both of

you can reference in the future. That way when these decisions come up, it's

less so of a tension between the two of you. You don't want the band to break up

right after you've made it big.

[Peggy] That's some really good advice and stay

friends from the beginning to the end.

[Kyler] Absolutely.

[Peggy] Yeah. Okay. Well unfortunately

we have run out of time. Thank you so much for joining us, Kyler and thank you

to all our listeners for your participation. Well, thank you for having

me. APA has partnered with Legal Zoom to

offer affordable legal products and services with special discount with a

special discount for members. Legal Zoom has helped over 4 million people with

their personal and business legal needs. Their products includes business

formations to start and protect your practice as well as copyrights to

protect your published works you can visit APA legalzoom.com

To learn more, and we've included a special promotional offer in the

handouts box of the webinar control panel with information about registering

copyrights you can download that and we're also chatting that out to you. A

recording of this presentation will be emailed to everyone in three weeks. As

soon as the webinar has ended a short survey will appear on your screen. We

hope you'll take just a few minutes to complete the survey and give us feedback

on how we did and how we can continue to improve. Our next self publishing webinar

will take place tomorrow May 17th at 2 p.m. Eastern.

I'm in this presentation. You'll learn marketing skills that will help you

attract readers to your self-published book we are sending you the registration

link via chat right now. We thank you for your attention today and we hope you

have a great day!