



HOW TO SUSTAIN WRITING

By Molly Blaisdell

I don't have any easy answers, but discipline is the key. You must write consistently and have a plan. A boatload of tenacity doesn't hurt either.

I don't write every day, but most days. I always have a plethora of projects on the table, so I can change gears, if needed. I never allow myself the luxury of writer's block. When I can't write fantasy, I write historical fiction, then picture books, followed by poetry. If that doesn't work, I pull out my really lousy romance novel. After that, it's on to non-fiction articles, rants, letters, and lists. In the incredible down times, when I hate writing, I write about that.

If nothing is working, I read a book and call it research. I keep a reading log and write about why I loved or hated the book. My critique group keeps me on my toes and looking ahead. Having a manuscript due tonight helps the whole process. I take writing classes to inspire and challenge. I go to writing conferences to meet like-minded souls. It always surprises me to find a bit of myself in such different people. I find it very comforting.

Honestly, I've thought about quitting hundreds of times and have actually quit at least five times, but then the zest of my life pours out like a popped balloon. Writing is like breathing to me -- a necessary function to live. When I don't write, I feel less of myself -- like an empty shell going through the motions of life. It's not a bad place because as my words hit the paper, word after word, calmness enters my soul. I know my purpose. My calling. I am sure that my writing is a gift. I find this assurance when my words fly against the paper.