



# Still Writing: The Perils and Pleasures of a Creative Life

By Dani Shapiro

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**Still Writing: The Perils and Pleasures of a Creative Life** By Dani Shapiro

*“Everything I know about life, I learned from the daily practice of sitting down to write.”*

From the best-selling author of *Devotion* and *Slow Motion* comes a witty, heartfelt, and practical look at the exhilarating and challenging process of storytelling. At once a memoir, meditation on the artistic process, and advice on craft, *Still Writing* is an intimate and eloquent companion to living a creative life.

Through a blend of deeply personal stories about what formed her as a writer, tales from other authors, and a searching look at her own creative process, Shapiro offers her gift to writers everywhere: an elegant guide of hard-won wisdom and advice for staying the course. “The writer’s life requires courage, patience, empathy, openness. It requires the ability to be alone with oneself. Gentle with oneself. To be disciplined, and at the same time, take risks.” Writers—and anyone with an artistic temperament—will find inspiration and comfort in these pages. Offering lessons learned over twenty years of teaching and writing, Shapiro brings her own revealing insights to weave an indispensable almanac for modern writers.

Like Anne Lamott’s *Bird by Bird*, Virginia Woolf’s *A Writer’s Diary*, and Stephen King’s *On Writing*, Dani Shapiro’s *Still Writing* is a lodestar for aspiring scribes and an eloquent memoir of the writing life.

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### Editorial Review

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Novelist and memoirist Shapiro (*Devotion*, 2010) explores the qualities of a creative life while reflecting on the indelible relationship between her own experiences and her writing practice. An accomplished author, Shapiro provides insight into both craft and career, separating the text into three parts: "Beginnings," "Middles," and "Ends." Each looks at certain literary efforts alongside everyday challenges faced at the different stages of the creative process, from such general pitfalls as procrastination to more unwieldy, internal struggles, such as uncertainty, restlessness, and self-doubt. Shapiro blends her personal thoughts with anecdotes from fellow writers, providing varying perspectives and strategies in navigating the demands of writing. Throughout the text, Shapiro weaves in reflections on the more difficult circumstances of her life, including an isolated childhood, her father's death, and the complicated relationship with her mother. In these moments, the narrative explores how such events shaped and informed Shapiro's writing then and now. Honest and conversational, Shapiro provides an introspective look into the creative process and the value of persistence, offering inspiration for writers at any level. --Leah Strauss

#### Review

"A practical, wise, and inviting guide to [Shapiro's] 20-year journey as an author and teacher." —*Elle*

"*Still Writing* offers up a cornucopia of wisdom, insights, and practical lessons gleaned from Dani Shapiro's long experience as a celebrated writer and teacher of writing. The beneficiaries are beginning writers, veteran writers and everyone in between." —Jennifer Egan

"Writers need hope. Writers need help. Thank you, Dani Shapiro." —Michael Cunningham

"Dani Shapiro has written a wise, pragmatic, and soulful field guide to the writing life. *Still Writing* is filled with honest words to not only live by but write toward. Shapiro has created a well-drawn map for the lost, the weary, and the found. I loved it." —Terry Tempest Williams

"One of those rare books that is both beautiful and useful. *Still Writing* is an exploration of the writing life, lit up by Shapiro's luminous voice." —Susan Orlean

"A thoughtful examination of [Shapiro's] life and the creative process that has defined it....Cleareyed, honest and grounded." —*Kirkus Reviews*

#### About the Author

**Dani Shapiro** is the bestselling author of the memoirs *Devotion* and *Slow Motion*, and five novels including *Black & White* and *Family History*. Her work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Granta*, *Tin House*, *One Story*, *Elle*, *Vogue*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and has been widely anthologized. She has taught in the writing programs at Columbia, NYU, The New School and Wesleyan University, and she is co-founder of the Sirenland Writers Conference in Positano, Italy. She is a contributing editor at *Travel + Leisure*.

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#### **Joshua Little:**

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#### **Tim Gonzalez:**

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