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AUTUMN 2017 NEWSLETTER



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Check Out Our Website!

Please check out our website and blog at:

firstchoicebooks.ca

If you have feedback we would be happy to hear from you. Feel free to email us with your comments or to receive an invitation to serve as a guest blogger!

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**Happy Hallowe'en from the owners & staff of
Victoria Bindery & First Choice Books**

Embrace Our Revolution In Technology

Digital printing technology has completely revolutionized the book industry and in turn made way for the rise of indie publishing. In the same way that the accessibility of the printed word leapt forward with the invention of the steam-operated printing press, taking print production in a direction none could have dreamt of, so the digital print revolution which is now upon us has meant that not only the printed word – but the ability to publish the printed word – has been delivered into the hands of the individual.



Indie publishers can now set up business with a very minimal outlay. The self-publishing pioneers of the past had steep costs in typesetting and the expense of large print runs to contend with. To produce a profitable book, a print run of possibly at least five hundred books was necessary. Printed on an offset press, with lead typesetting alone being a large expense, this could be an expensive outlay for a fledgling self-publisher. It could then take quite a few years to sell those copies and recover even the initial costs, as the Internet and its marketing tools were as yet unavailable.

Today's indie authors no longer need the up-front capital necessary to produce large print runs, but can print when and as needed, matching inventory to sales orders. The cost of typesetting has also diminished and digital print shops are abundant. Gone is the painstaking, laborious setting of lead type. Now most, if not all, of a book's typesetting and layout can be accomplished by authors themselves.

Along with this giant technological leap forward comes another jump – away from the large publishing houses to the autonomy of being self-published - and there is no way to describe just

how huge this step is. Authors are no longer reliant on commercial publishers in the way they were in the past. If they choose to self-publish, they don't have to send their manuscripts from publisher to publisher, collecting rejection letters and expending precious time waiting for notoriously slow editors to respond. Instead, they can proactively get their books designed, printed and out into the marketplace, into the hands of their readers, months and often years before they traditionally would have done. By taking back their power, indie writers have become more self-reliant, letting their audiences, rather than a publisher, judge the value of their work.

This economic and psychological freedom, coupled with the immense marketing potential of the internet, has created a really positive environment for self-published authors. The internet has had a levelling effect, allowing all books the same *potential* availability to readers. It is now a writer's creativity, determination and communication skills which allow them to connect with their unique audiences. Just as the steam press de-politicized book printing – delivering thoughts and ideas to the masses and helping to create the middle class – so digital printing technology is a revolution that has taken power from the few publishing houses and given it equally to all writers who choose to embrace its opportunities.



Reorganize To Prioritize Your Writing

Freeing Up Time To Write Regularly

Our lives just keep getting busier. Although technology was supposed to make things simpler, life seems more complex today than ever. It is therefore essential that indie writers be creative in making time for their true passion: writing. Here are a few ideas that will help you find the time to sit down and put pen to paper.

Simplify Your Life

Easier said than done, it's true. But if a writer can manage to simplify their life in other areas, their writing can take the priority they wish it to. Unfortunately, most writers find that they need to work at another career in order to keep a roof overhead. But working full time makes it hard to get much writing done.



In order to solve this dilemma, many writers have found creative ways to lower their housing and living expenses, such as house or pet-sitting or working part-time as a caretaker in exchange for rent. Other trends that may be advantageous are the tiny house movement, giving up on the dream of large living for a more pared-down lifestyle.

With laptops, ipads and the international availability of the internet, it has become easy to work remotely while travelling or living abroad. Therefore some writers even move to less expensive cities or countries for a time in order to accomplish their projects, living more frugally and finding lifestyles more conducive to creativity.



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Find Mentors And Fellow Writers Who Inspire You

As writing is a mostly solitary craft, it is valuable for writers to meet fellow authors. They can become many things to you - friends who give you moral support, collaborators who push your work in a different direction, or mentors who encourage you. It is great to have colleagues and friends who display a high level of craft to both aspire to and inspire you.

Keep Your Ideas and Research Organized

A really useful tool for writers wishing to keep a record of their ideas and projects is *Evernote*, available as a downloadable app for Apple and Android devices. Some describe it as the most flexible of the note-taking tools, allowing you to organize your research and ideas into searchable chunks. You can save webpages, images, photographs and text, then later easily search hundreds of notes using keywords, or by simply scanning your saved notes visually to find the one you are looking for.

Another great feature of *Evernote* is reminders, which sends a to-do list to your e-mail each day. When you have a thought or come across something inspiring, jot it down or save it into *Evernote*. Then you can later email it to yourself or cut and paste it into a manuscript, but you will never lose track of those lines or brainwaves that come to you at the least expected moments, while on a plane or train, while you are waiting in a queue, or when you wake from a dream.

Prioritize Your Writing Ideas

As we know all too well, there are only so many hours in a day. Learning how to prioritize writing projects and stay focused will help an indie writer to accomplish their goals and use their time productively.

New ideas for projects may abound and easily distract you. A priority list will help you to stay on track and finish current projects before going on to start new ones. Yet, when writer's block afflicts, a priority list can also be useful to turn to for a reminder of other inspiring projects and ideas you could work on. Whether this list is kept on note cards, sticky notes, or electronically, keeping a list of priorities, projects and ideas is a great habit to get into.

There are different strategies to prioritizing your projects list. You might like to complete projects in the order they were started, finishing off your novel before your new idea for a book of poems, for instance. Or, you might work by financial priorities, putting at the top of your list those projects which help you pay the rent, for which you have received an advance or that are deadline sensitive.

If you have multiple projects of equal importance, a good strategy may be to prioritize by giving daily time to each project so that they all progress towards completion together. This approach will also keep you from stressing about ignoring one of your projects while you are trying to complete the other. By switching back and forth, you will worry less as you will see all the projects progressing together towards completion.

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at our new address:**

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**to discuss your next
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Nutrient Filled Creamy Pumpkin Soup for the Soul

This peanut butter pumpkin soup will be sure to warm your souls on the cool autumn nights ahead. Use either pumpkin or butternut squash in this recipe, to create a velvety, richly-flavoured soup that can be served as a delicious dinner starter or main dish at lunch.

Ingredients:

4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter
1 cup smooth peanut butter
2 cups cooked pureed sweet potatoes
4 cups fresh or canned cooked fresh pumpkin (or squash)
6 cups chicken stock or vegetable broth
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoon salt
Pinch of cayenne
Snipped fresh cilantro or chives, for garnish
Sour cream or yogourt, for garnish

Directions:

Melt the butter in a soup pot over medium heat. Stir in the peanut butter, sweet potatoes and pumpkin. Add the stock, pepper, salt and cayenne and stir well until smooth. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for 20 minutes.

Before serving, garnish the soup with chives or cilantro and yogourt or sour cream. Voila! Delicious soul food!

