

“Don’t Give Up”

By Carol Ann Erhardt

Recently, I read an email from someone on a loop who decided to “give up” writing. She felt she would never reach the heights of the others on the loop, that her writing was terrible, and she’d never get published. So, she was just giving up.

I heard her pain through the words she wrote. I’ve been there, too. I believe many of you might be empathetic as well. Some days the words come hard. I can spend an hour trying to get one sentence right. Other times, the words flow. These are the side effects of being a writer. No one ever said writing was easy...except for those who have never tried it.

Writers don’t choose to write because they know how. Writers write because they have something to say. There is a learning curve. Once you’ve written your masterpiece, you need to take classes and attend workshops where you can learn what POV is, how to show instead of tell, how to get into deep POV, transitions, conflict, goals, motivation, tension, and so much more.

The most important element of writing is reading. You must read books in the genre/sub-genre you are writing. How else can you learn what publishers are buying? Reading can show you how an author uses all the tools of the trade to create a page-turner.

Writers are constantly learning. We’re like teachers. We are always going to school. We learn from writing. We learn from our peers. We learn from NY Times best-selling authors. We learn from our rejections.

But writers don’t give up. Writers may reach that low point, curl up and lick their wounds, but they come back with a vengeance. I know all of you have heard the story of Noah building an ark. It didn’t happen overnight. And, it didn’t happen with everyone cheering him on either. He had a call to build. And he persevered, despite his friends and neighbors laughing at him for being a fool. We can learn a lesson from Noah. It takes a thick skin to persevere in spite of the odds.

My message to you is: When you feel as if you will never succeed, go ahead and allow yourself to be miserable. But don’t give voice to the misery. Bear it in solitude. Then dig deep inside and look at your dreams and goals. Don’t give up. Pull yourself back up out of the hole you’ve dug and get back to the joy of writing. The rest will follow.