

YOUR BONUS Q&A ON MAKING A LIVING WITH YOUR WRITING



www.TheCreativePenn.com/freedom



Welcome back and thank you
for all the comments, emails and
tweets about the last video.

I've had so much feedback about
all the **productivity tips** and
some people have made changes
to their routine already which is
brilliant!

I'm super pleased you found it
helpful!



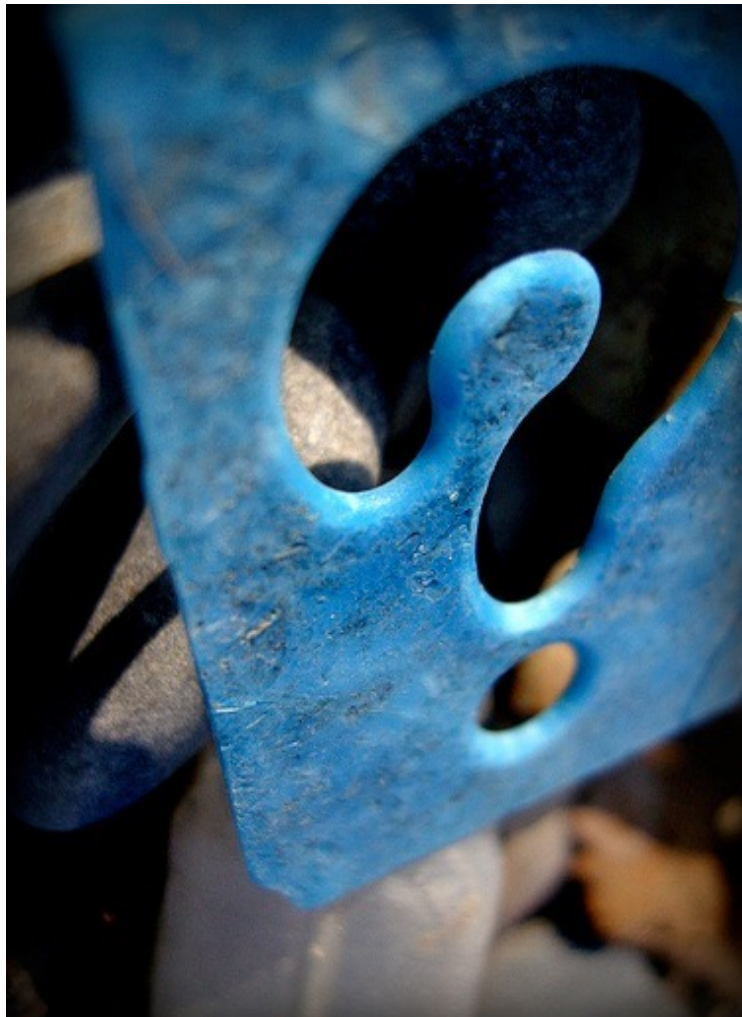
Today we're doing a **bonus Q&A session** in order to get into some more detail around the topics we've covered & the most common questions.

This type of Q&A will be a key part of the Creative Freedom course and private community, which I'll be telling you all about very soon (promise!)

I know that sometimes it's just easier to ask a question than figure it out for yourself.



- Does **blogging** sell books?
- How to make the **switch** to making a living writing? How long before quitting the day job?
- What's best way to **market the first book** or make the first sale?
- How to manage **multiple pen names**



- **Research** time for non-fiction
- **Global sales** if you're not in the US or UK
- Tackling fear of judgement, **fear** of failure and imposter syndrome
- **Writing for love** not money & making money with poetry
- How do you keep the **stamina** going over the long haul?



“My number one struggle is getting people to go from "Nice blog post, Nathaniel!" to "Wow! I just bought your book and it looks great!"

I've gotten my blog posts in front of the eyes of many people, and many have told me that they enjoy my writing, yet **I'm not seeing a lot of readers take that step by buying my novel.”**

Nathaniel

Blog => book purchase is not necessarily a natural step!

Blogging for **non-fiction** can be great.
Build your audience, build authority.
Get speaking events, bring traffic for
other product or service sales.

In my experience, **blogging doesn't
work effectively for fiction sales.**

Blogging can help find your voice and
a community, but it doesn't sell books.
Maybe a review site, but not otherwise.

Save word count for writing more
books / short stories / evidence of your
writing voice.

A Song Of Shadows. An Interview With John Connolly.

I love John Connolly's Charlie Parker series, and its blend of crime and the supernatural was the major influence for me. I recently met John at Crime in the Court in London (below). I'm a total fan-girl! 😊 I also interviewed John for The Big T. I include the interview below.



John Connolly with J.F. Penn at Crime in the Court.

John Connolly is the bestselling author of the Charlie Parker mystery series for middle-grade readers, and co-author of the Chronicles of the Inland Sea.

His latest book, A SONG OF SHADOWS, is the thirteenth book in the series.

Your latest book, A SONG OF SHADOWS, weaves European history into a mystery in Maine, all while Charlie Parker recovers from devastating injuries.

How much of the story is based on his knowledge of European history? Why did this particular aspect of Nazi Germany interest you?



“No. 1 struggle would be to match my present income as a freelancer with my writing income ... It would help to explore various ways to set off as a writer, e.g. maybe to start off as a p/t writer, or to focus on 50% writing non-fiction related to what I do now f/t and 50% fiction.”

Sunchana

Don't expect to match your
current income immediately.
Why would you?

e.g. for me, 13 years to the top of
my career - and I'm only in year 6
of this one. It takes time in any
career.

What is 10% of your current
income? Focus on that first. Work
out how many books you need to
sell, or how many products and
do that. Then aim for 20%.





“Since I'm gearing up to publish my first novel, the thing I'm focused on right now is determining which strategies, among so many out there, are best when you have **ONLY ONE BOOK**”

Monica

“This may seem very simple, but can you please tell me how to make **the very first sale of a book?**”

Mikael

- Go **KDP Select** when you have one book - you can at least move some copies w/ free promo & countdown
- **Work on the next book** - and really focus on marketing when you have at least 3 related / in a series
- Start building your **email list** and getting reviews. A free book helps but I only went free at book 3 :)

<http://www.thecreativepenn.com/2013/11/04/checklist-for-new-authors/>



“My #1 struggle as I try to make a living from my writing, is time and how to manage it when writing under two separate pen names.”

Valerie

It's difficult to maintain 2 brands.
Only do it if you REALLY need to
because you have different
audiences and you are
monetising both.



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On writing and creative
entrepreneurship

You can use multiple names to
publish under but do they all
need websites, social media
accounts etc?



**Focus on the one that helps
you to get to your goals the
fastest.** Double down on that &
get back to the other later.

<http://www.thecreativepenn.com/2014/01/26/a-tale-of-two-author-brands/>

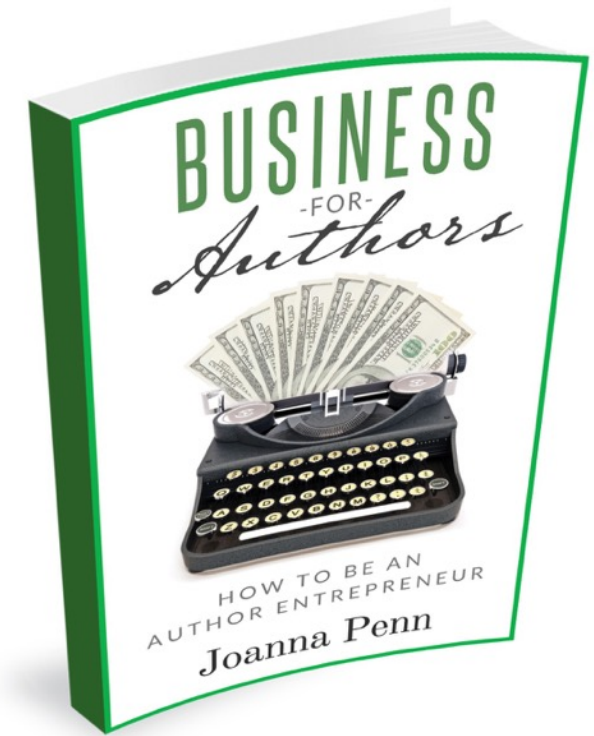


“I noticed that in the schedule you had a week for research before writing. If you get time in your Q&A video would love to hear if you would recommend for non-fiction books to do the research for the whole book and then write or to research each chapter, then write the chapter and more on to the next one. Thanks again!”

”

Christel

For **non-fiction**, I would generally assume that you are already an expert in the niche. If you are, then you can brainstorm the chapters - I use Scrivener - and then fill in the blanks.



If it's a new topic, then I would probably buy the top 15 books in the niche and see what they cover. Then decide on my own direction, again brainstorm chapter titles and then research in more detail.

Whatever you do, **set deadlines.**

www.TheCreativePenn.com/writing-tips/



“Ebooks are not so big in the Netherlands yet (growth-market) and Amazon has a really low market share. So right now my number one question is: how do I get potential readers to my site?”

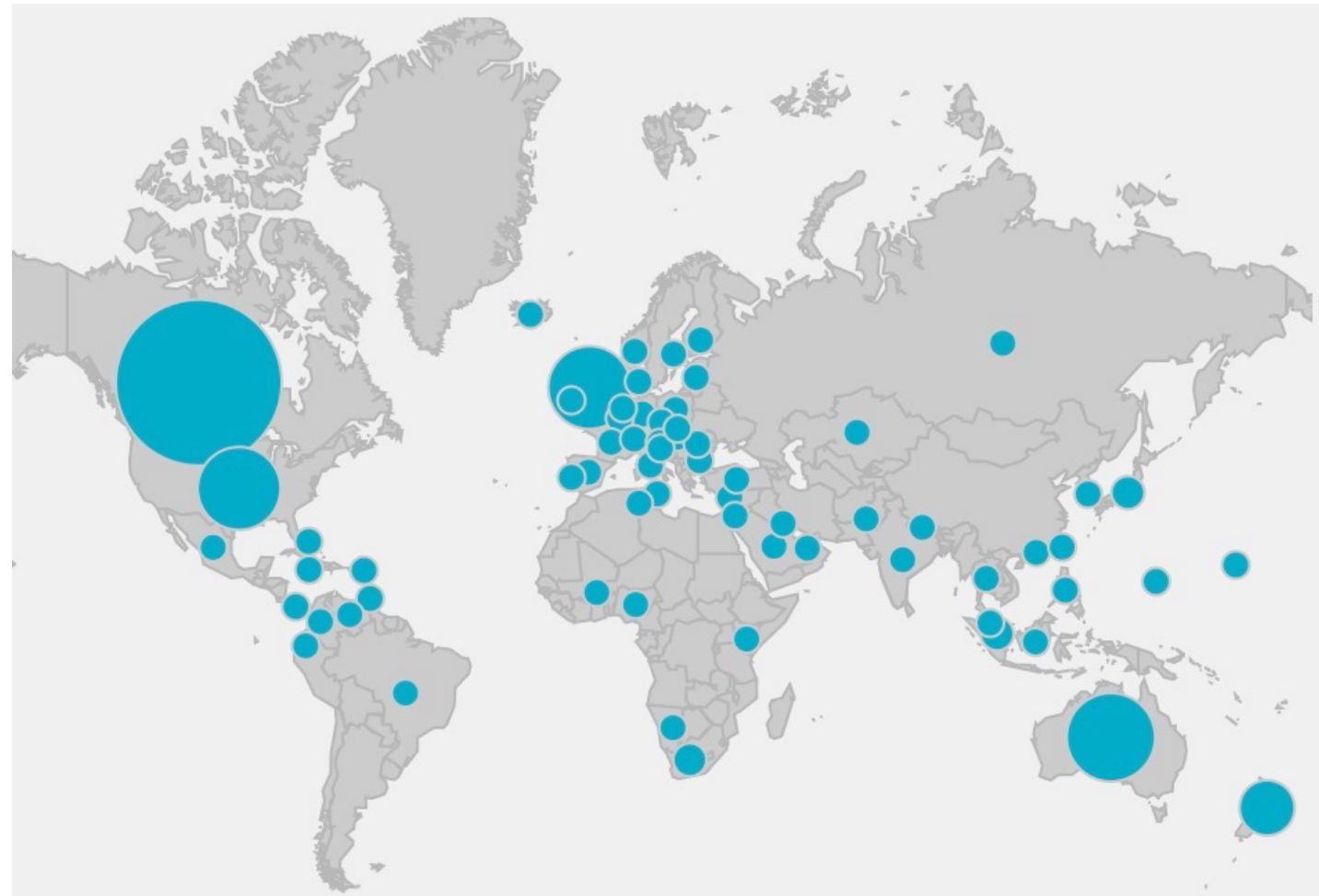
Jan

This is a global market :)

Books in any language may sell globally, although English is the most international language and more likely to travel. Currently have sold in 68 countries.

Personally, I'd focus on translation to English and selling on Amazon, Kobo & iBooks globally instead of getting traffic to your books in Dutch.

Otherwise, traffic stuff is the same in any language. Write stuff people are searching for in an original voice!





“... the biggest struggle that I have is imposter syndrome. Regardless of how much research I do, I can't seem to kick it.”

Russell

“My number one struggle is getting over the fear and overwhelm from writing a book and procrastination because of this.”

Loan

Fear of judgement, fear of failure,
fear of what people will think.

These never go away. I've talked
to veteran authors at the top of
the industry who still feel this on
the release of every book.

The big difference between
authors who make it and those
that don't is that the former just
get on with it.

Feel the fear and do it anyway -
and all that!





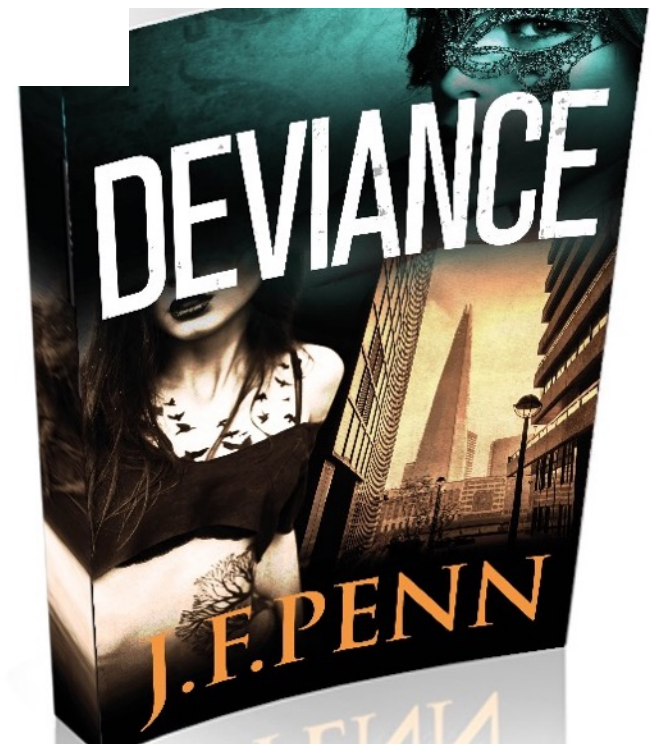
“Do you need to do print and audiobooks as well as ebooks to make a living wage as a writer?”

Max

Most indies make most money
from ebooks.

But print is great for ego :) and
the vanity shelf ... plus marketing
giveaways, signing ... plus
speaking ... plus comparison
pricing. Well worth it - I use
Createspace Print on Demand

Audiobooks are more advanced
and worth it if you have books
that sell well. Reach a new
audience who 'read' through
listening.

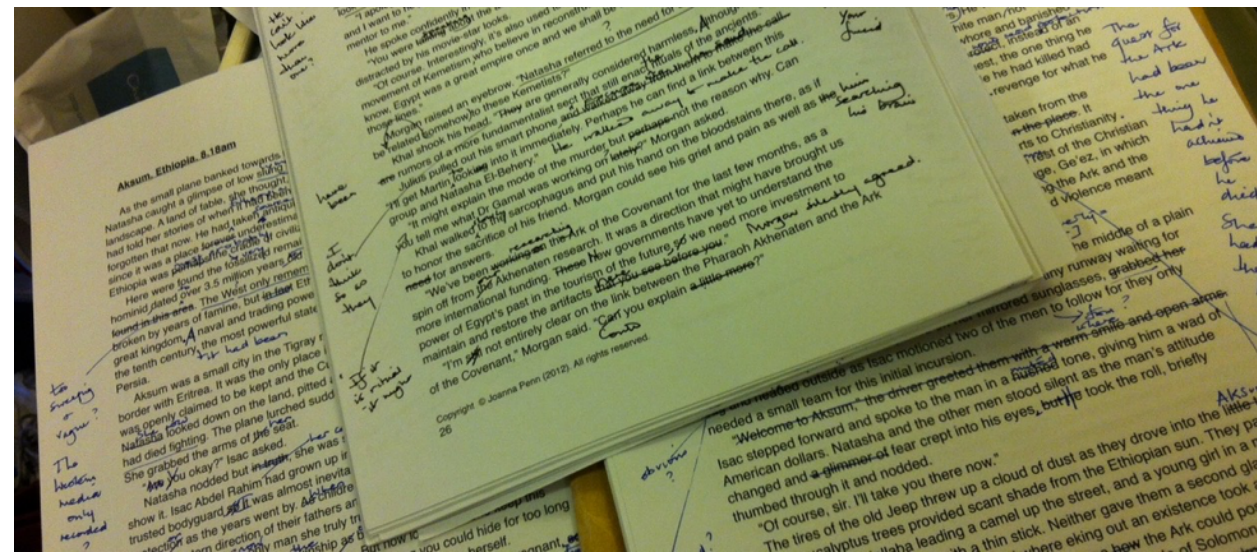




“What is your biggest expense as an author?”

Lacey

The best place to spend your money is on professional editing. I spend around US \$2000 per book on various levels of editing.



The first books will also cost the most as you are learning. You might need several editors.

Also, cover design. Well worth it.

<http://www.thecreativepenn.com/editors/>

<http://www.thecreativepenn.com/bookcoverdesign/>



“I don’t write to the market, I write
what I love. Can I ever make
money?”

Lucy

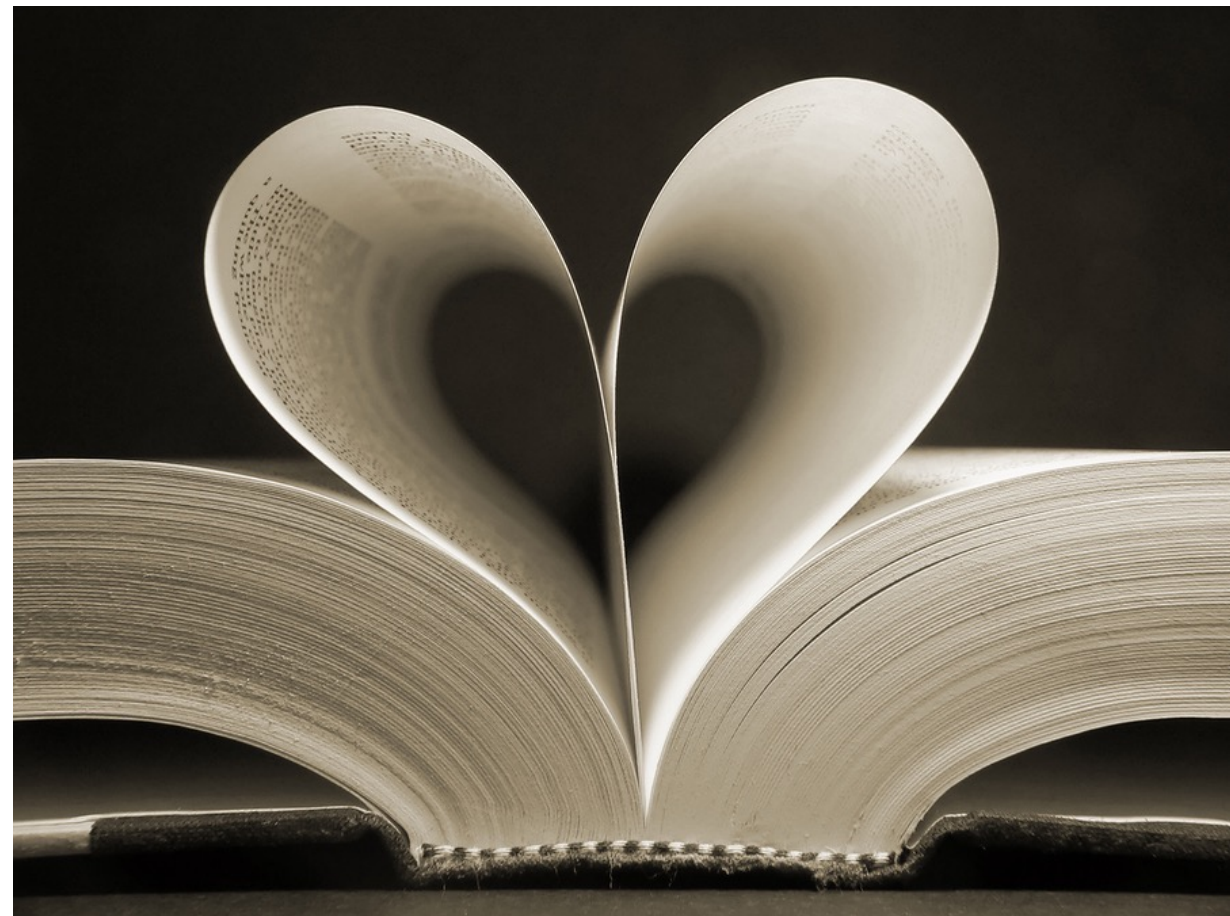
“How can I make money from my
poetry?”

John G

You have to decide on your
definition of success.

If you write for love, then your definition is about self-fulfilment. It's about YOU. It's not about money. Poetry is about love of language, not money. Again, it's about YOU. And that is entirely valid.

But if you want to make sales, you have to think about what the CUSTOMER wants. What do readers want? You can find that in which books actually sell.





“My greatest struggle is maintaining enough gumption and stamina to continue building my inventory with minimal return---many of the superstars of Indie Publishing who have not had immediate success with a runaway bestseller say it takes from two to five years to establish an audience as a fiction writer”

Linda

True - but life is long :) What do you want to do with that time if it's not **building your body of work?**

Also, if you think about any career, it takes time to build. How much are you worth in any job in year 1, or even year 5?

You get to choose! But if you love writing and you love books, then this is a super way to spend the time. For others, it's knitting or watching sport or other hobbies.

Think in terms of Olympic years. You can achieve a lot in 4 years :)





“How long will it take until I can
leave my day job?”

Bry

It will depend on:

- What your living costs are and how much you can downsize
- How many books you have and your average monthly income
- How much you have saved
- Your comfort level with risk and uncertainty

It took me 3.5 years of working every morning, evening and weekend, and also moving to 4 days a week before I was able to leave. We also downsized, cleared our debt and had savings.





Coming next:

**Your step-by-step
roadmap to making a
living with your writing**

Watch out for this video coming
soon in your Inbox :)

Please share with other writers who might find this useful.

www.TheCreativePenn.com/freedom

Please like and comment below, or leave a question.

See you next time!

