“Thoughtful, thorough, and practical in its application, this is an important work on the creative process, and on the craft, business, and magic of writing.”
— from the foreword by TERRY BROOKS, bestselling fantasy novelist

WRITING YOUR WAY FROM INSPIRATION TO PUBLICATION
YOU CAN BEST UNDERSTAND the five stages by listening to this book in its entirety. But we’re presenting this index up front and in an FAQ format so you may jump directly to the audio chapters (listed below each question) that address your most pressing concerns. After you complete the book, you can also revisit this index to remind yourself that many others share your questions, hopes, and goals.

*I want to write, but I can’t seem to find the time or space. How can I become more inspired, motivated, and disciplined?*

Dream a Little Dream (Chapter 9)  
Get to Know Thyself (Chapter 12)  
Dan — The Will to Write (Chapter 25)  
Writing as a Solitary Act (Chapter 24)

*I journal often. Will it help my writing?*

Get to Know Thyself (Chapter 12)  
Sierra — How I Write Now (Chapter 46)
Writing in school made me anxious, so I wrote as little as possible. How can I possibly become a writer?

Dan — Finding My Way (Chapter 6)
Sierra — The Other Side of Anxiety (Chapter 7)
Permit Yourself to Write Badly (Chapter 26)

What can I do to find my voice on the page?

Who is Your Storyteller? (Chapter 19)
Your Voice, Your Persona (Chapter 36)

I’m feeling blocked. What should I do?

Your Stickiest Idea (Chapter 10)
Permit Yourself to Write Badly (Chapter 26)

How do I know if I’m talented? If I’m not, should I bother trying?

Sweat Trumps Talent (Chapter 30)
Sierra — Never Surrender (Chapter 33)

I’ve read other books on writing, but I don’t feel that my writing has changed. What else can I do?

How to Read Writing Books (Chapter 23)
I find outlining difficult. What else can I do to help me prepare to write?

Dreaming in Dialogue (Chapter 13)
What If . . . ? (Chapter 15)

I’ve studied books on craft, but my first drafts lack clear conflict, my characters seem shallow, and my language feels flat. What am I doing wrong?

Get to Know Thyself (Chapter 12)
First Draft, First Layer (Chapter 27)
No Bad Writing, Only Bad Timing (Chapter 40)

Why does my writing seem so different from published books?

First Draft, First Layer (Chapter 27)
The Missing Link (Chapter 29)

I want to write a popular book like The Hunger Games. How can I learn to do that?

Your Stickiest Idea (Chapter 10)
Your Ideal Reader (Chapter 14)
Sense and Sensibility (Chapter 20)
First Draft, First Layer (Chapter 27)

When should I seek feedback and from whom?

Questions — Help Us Help You (Chapter 37)
Questions — More to Ask Early Readers (Chapter 43)
Working with an Editor (Chapter 44)

*How can I possibly make all the cuts my first readers have recommended? Aren’t I mutilating my story?*

Allegiance to Story (Chapter 35)
Creative Destruction (Chapter 41)

*How will I know when I’m done writing?*

Dan — My Final Draft (Chapter 47)

*Agents repeatedly rejected my manuscript. Should I rewrite or move on?*

Handling Rejection (Chapter 51)

*Should I submit to a publisher or self-publish?*

Self-Publishing Pros and Cons (Chapter 53)
The Nine-Sale Gauntlet (Chapter 52)

*Since I have no interest in publishing, my family says my writing is a waste of time. Are they right?*

Get to Know Thyself (Chapter 12)
Your Master Metaphor (Chapter 32)
Dan — Reflections on the Writing Life (Chapter 56)
Everyone publishes every day. Aren’t we all authors now?

Sierra — Sharing on the Web (Chapter 55)

My agent loves my third chapter; my editor hates it. Who’s right?

Trust Your Gut (Chapter 45)

I’ve finally had a book published. Can I quit my day job?

Marketing Your Book — and Yourself (Chapter 54)
Epilogue — Your Writing Career (Chapter 57)