



Publishing Nonfiction Books on Spirituality

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MODULE 1

INTRODUCTION TO PUBLISHING SPIRITUALITY NONFICTION BOOKS

Introduction

Hi. I'm Benebell, author of *Holistic Tarot* and the forthcoming *Tao of Craft*. By wading your way through these workbooks, handouts, and listening to the audio lectures, you've made the decision to invite me as a companion through your book writing and publishing journey. Thank you for that.

The content of this course can apply to any nonfiction book writing project, but it *is* keyed specifically to the market category of New Age, spirituality, and metaphysical nonfiction. So I'm really going to be focused on writing and publishing for that market. Of course, the logistics of querying traditional publishers, the ins and outs of a publishing contract, self-publishing, intellectual property law, or how to promote a book will apply across the board, irrespective of market category. So to all nonfiction writers, welcome aboard.

Here's how we're going to spend our time together. We'll start by expanding on your book concept. What is your core message? Who is your target market? Even if you have part of a book written, let's go back to the foundation and really make sure your concept is air tight. We'll cover the elements of successful nonfiction and see how you stack up.

While you work on your book, you should also be working on your author platform. We'll talk about why you need an author platform well before your book has even come out and what you can do right now to build that platform. Throughout our time, I'll get personal and talk about my own experiences.

Our journey together will be charted from examining the seed of a book idea to nurturing it into full bloom. We'll cover the logistics of finishing your first book. This course will also cover both traditional publishing and self-publishing, and run a side by side, dollar for

dollar, pros and cons comparative analysis of the two. When we talk about traditional publishing, we'll start by covering the "Big Six," which is now the "Big Five," after the merger between Random House and Penguin Group happened in 2013.

But our main focus will be on small to medium size publishers. I'll share my research into all the small and medium publishing houses that publish New Age and spirituality nonfiction. We'll talk about the book proposal and the submissions process for traditional publishing.

Then we'll talk about self-publishing. What is self-publishing and what are the different forms of self-publishing? One of the handouts will be a formatted template that you can use for your book that's compatible with most print-on-demand services so you can publish your book in the standard trade paperback trim at 6" x 9". We'll also talk about what you need to know when you're both publisher and author, like registering a U.S. copyright, getting your book listed in the Library of Congress catalogue, and getting an ISBN. I've helped a number of folks self-publish their books, so here I'll bring in my insights from those experiences.

Whether you're traditionally published or self-published, you have to promote your book. We'll talk about author endorsements, getting interviews and reviews, book tours, what helps generate sales and what's just for show, and how to formulate a strategic marketing plan that works with your time and your budget.

We'll also cover intellectual property basics that as a lawyer, I wish every author and would-be author was familiar with. When we talk about intellectual property or IP law, you're talking about copyrights, trademarks, and patents. For authors, the primary form of IP to focus on is copyright. We'll also cover some basic points on fair use and the public domain. We'll talk about how to secure the permissions you need and how to organize your files so you stay on top of the publishing process, traditional or independent.

We then conclude our course with a conversation on how authors *actually* earn money and how to expand upon your creative business model if you're really serious about turning book writing into your full-time profession. But before we even get there, I will warn you right now. Writing nonfiction books is *not* a financially viable full-time occupation. But a successful first book can *lead to* financially viable opportunities. That's what we'll talk about in the final module.

Each module will consist of audio recordings, workbooks, and/or handouts. The series of modules will take you from planning out your book idea, the logistics of writing a book to publishing it, by way of a traditional publisher or through self-publishing, and then how to establish your author platform and promote your book.

For each module, there will be a course outline. Follow the course outline. In Module 1, for instance, after reading this Introduction handout, listen to the “Current Market Trends” audio file. Then listen to “Why Write and Publish a Book?” The first document you’ll work on is Workbook A, Examination of the Seed, and then it’s back to another audio file, “What Are You Sharing?” You can simply skim Workbook A for now before moving on to the next audio file. If you want, skim each workbook but save actual work on them for later, after you’ve heard all audio files and browsed through everything in Module 1.

Workbook B, Establishing Your Author Platform, will help you start brainstorming ideas for an author platform. You’ll want to begin now, no matter what stage you are at in book writing. After Workbook B, take a quick look at the handout, “Brainstorming a Speaking Engagement.” It’s a supplement to Workbook B. Then close Module 1 with one last audio, “Birthing a Book: My Story.”

A note-taking template per the Cornell method is provided. Use that template or simply have any notebook on hand while listening to the audio lectures. You may want to print everything out as you work through the modules and keep your documents in a three-ring binder. That three-ring binder will become your personal manual for writing and finishing your nonfiction book.

Next week’s Module 2 will help you plant your seed of a book idea and walk you through the process of growing that seed to full bloom. Let me tell you how I managed to stay on track and finish my books while working full-time and tending to family responsibilities. Let’s talk about the daily grind. How do you structure the chapters of your book? How do you schedule your weeks to make sure you get your target writing done? What are some of my personal tips and tricks? I’ll provide you with the workbooks, reference materials, templates, and inspiration that will help you turn your book idea into an actual book.



Overview of Next Module

MODULE 2 BIRTHING AN IDEA AND WRITING THE MANUSCRIPT	
Audio Files	The Logistics of Writing Your Book Does Word Count Matter? Why Outline Your Nonfiction Book? The First Sentence Making Time to Write & Tracking Your Progress
Workbooks	Workbook C: Profiling Your Book and Getting Started Workbook D: Outlining Each Chapter
Handouts	Getting Started Manuscript Progress Log Word List Flowchart for Determining Public Domain Works Sample Permissions Query Letter Boilerplate Template for a Copyright Licensing Agreement