

TRANSFORMED BY WRITING

How to Change Your Life and Change the
World with the Power of Story

Robert Hammond



Transformed by Writing: How to Change Your Life and Change the World with the Power of Story. Copyright © 2013 Robert Hammond. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. This book may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system now known or hereafter invented, without written permission of the publisher, New Way Press. For reproduction rights or questions email info@newwaypress.com.

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Why this Book?



When a mentally ill gunman stormed a suburban Atlanta elementary school with an AK-47 and started shooting, bookkeeper Antoinette Tuff calmed him down by sharing tragic stories from her own life. The gunman surrendered to authorities and nobody was injured. Sharing her story saved the lives of countless children and school employees. Her story changed lives.

As a creative writing professor, author of over a dozen books and writer of several scripts that have made it to the screen, I have long been aware of the power of story. Over the years I have witnessed many people change their lives and inspire change in the lives of others through the sharing of stories. Along the way I've helped many people bring their stories to light through book and screen and other venues. Others just want to leave a legacy for their friends and family. My personal journey of healing, transformation, and recovery was facilitated through telling my own story and from hearing the life-changing stories of others.

After the recent publication of my novel, *The Light*, I planned to take a break from writing for a while. Having already retired from my previous career with the government, I was busy enough teaching a couple of college classes and doing a little creative consulting on the side. Little did I know that when writing coach Christine Kloser invited me to her *Transformational Author Experience*, everything was about to change. During that same time I also completed a program on book to screen adaptation with Nat Mundel and his team at Voyage Media. Soon afterwards, I was asked to write an article on *Creative Writing and Recovery* for the *Recovery View* publication for substance abuse treatment professionals. Several radio interviews shortly followed where I had a chance to reveal some personal details about my life and the transformational process of storytelling. Three months later the book you are now reading was finished.

Transformed by Writing combines time-tested ancient wisdom with personal experience, extensive research and the latest media trends to provide you with a comprehensive experience for helping you become a published author or produced screenwriter and shine your light in the world. This book was developed from original, previously unpublished material, including many hours of transcribed interviews, teleseminars, classroom videos, along with articles and special reports related to creative writing, personal

transformation, recovery, spirituality, publishing, screenwriting, and adaptation to film and television.

Feel free to read this book any way you like – from front to back, or back to front or starting in the middle. You may just pick a random page or section and start reading as you are led. If you want to start with the last page and read my bio first, then move through the press releases before you come back to the beginning, that is perfectly fine as well. I would, however, encourage you to read the book in its entirety and go back through it again to focus on the areas that most strongly draw your attention. I've purposely left the interviews, classes, and teleseminars as close as possible to their original formats in order to provide you with the experience of being in the classroom or on the phone with me. I also found that much easier than editing everything to make it seem like I had just written this book from scratch.

The purpose of this book is to provide you with practical tools and personal insights to help you along your journey to share your story with the world. On a practical level, you will learn how to prepare, organize, write, publish, promote, and adapt your story to film or television. On a professional level, you will be transformed from being a writer to becoming a published author, produced screenwriter or leading expert in your field. On another level your life will be

transformed as you impact the lives of others with the power of story. Ultimately, your transformation will play an essential part in changing the world.

The question to you now is why do you want to write your book? Are you ready to tell your story so you can begin to change your life and change the world? Adventure calls.

Ready when you are,

Robert

What if...?



What if you woke up blindfolded and tied to a chair? A distant voice asks, "Where is it?"

We'll come back to that scene later. Meanwhile, let's look at a more personal and realistic question.

What if you went through life without ever trying to get your book published or telling your story to the world? What would be your **BIGGEST** regret?

Here are the five most common deathbed regrets of aspiring authors:

- I'd never know if I could have made it.
- I'd never find my voice.
- I'd never get to show others what I'm capable of doing.
- I'd hate not having the freedom to do what I want.

And the number one regret is:

- I couldn't live a life true to myself.

Nobody wants to come to the end of their life filled with deep regrets. And you don't have to ... if you take the right actions now.

Begin by asking yourself the following questions:

1. Will I regret never knowing if I could have succeeded as an author?
2. Could my words make a difference in someone else's life?
3. Do I want people to know who I really am?
4. Do I want to pursue my vision now instead of waiting until it's too late?
5. Do I have a story that needs to be told?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you're not alone. You're in the right place right now. Welcome home.

A Distant Memory



I entered the department store and tried my best to look halfway like a real shopper. Something told me they were watching me. Maybe it was just my drug-induced paranoia, I told myself, half-convincingly. I picked up a pair of slacks, folding them over my arm neatly. I turned and headed down another aisle, this time deftly slipping a belt and a handful of silk ties beneath the pants. I then headed to the dressing room to do my dirty work. I entered an empty stall and wrapped the belt and ties around my waist, covering them with my shirt. I tucked the shirt in carefully and straightened out my jacket, making sure nothing was bulging or hanging out. Then I exited the dressing room and put the pants back on the rack where I had found them.

They're watching you. Eyes piercing your soul. You're naked for everybody to see. Don't you know that everyone is watching you now? You can't hide anymore. They all know. They all see you. They hear your thoughts. The sound of your pounding heart echoes over the loud

speakers as all of the store employees and all of the customers stop and listen. They turn toward you and watch you with accusing eyes. Penetrating eastern eyes burn with laser-light intensity through your naked soul. No place to run. No place to hide. It's over now. They know what you've done. They know who you really are. They all see you. You're naked.

I was in a movie watching myself play out that final scene. But I couldn't change the script. I was trapped in this moment of destiny. I watched from the audience as two security guards tackled me just outside the front door. Like a video recorder, the action stopped and then replayed itself in slow motion. I watched as they cuffed my hands behind my back and dragged me into the security office. I saw the police officers come in and place me under arrest and haul me down to the station.

The next thing I remember was looking up at the ceiling. A white light glared down at me. The room was white. A man in white looked down at me and laughed. He put his face close to mine and stared into my eyes mockingly. He turned to his assistant and said, "Hey, you want to see what a black guy with jaundice looks like?" I couldn't see who he was talking to at first, but I knew that someone else was in the room. I whispered, "What's going to happen?"

"Looks like you'll probably be dead by Christmas" the man in white jeered. His laughter

faded into sterile walls as the words echoed in my brain, "DEAD BY CHRISTMAS"... "DEAD BY CHRISTMAS"... "DEAD BY CHRISTMAS." This was Thanksgiving. I closed my eyes as I slipped in and out of consciousness.

You're going to die and it matters to no one, least of all to you. At least the pain of this life would end and you will cease to destroy the lives of all those whose paths you've crossed. You think back over the years of running through people's lives like a wild hurricane, leaving behind only shattered glass and splinters. There is nobody left to turn to. The world will be a better place without you as your life now comes to its vile and well deserved finality: To die. In jail. Alone.

The Three Assassins stand by your bedside. Fear, Guilt and Resentment taunt you with every sin you have ever committed.

They shout their filthy curses and accusations at you until you cover your ears with your hands and beg them to stop.

And they don't stop.

You know you have to end it all. You are beyond hope, beyond salvation. Your grace period has run out.

I wrap the bed sheet around my neck and tie it into a hangman's noose, fastening the end to the top of the bars. I leap into the Abyss.

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