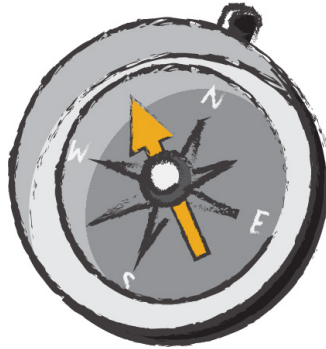




What part of the journey are you on?



"We are all on the path, but we are on different parts of the path."

—Jeff Hanke (Community Member).

Everyone's songwriting journey is unique, but there are common views we all share. This is not meant to be an absolute measurement or another way to compare yourself to others. It's very possible that you find yourself in two different stages at once, or in and out of different stages at the same time. This is a tool to help you in your process of becoming.

In my own songwriting journey, these four stages have emerged chronologically. In each one there is a central problem and at least one solution. **Consider these points on the path as a tool to help you focus your energy.** Don't be afraid to start at step one if you are a seasoned songwriter.

Read through the stages and answer the questions at the bottom.

Stage 1: Blank Notebook



Problem: There are no ideas or very few written or recorded. At this stage, it might feel like every idea is the last good one. Perfectionistic tendencies will make it seem impossible to get started. The creative flow feels clunky and awkward. This is where you might find yourself waiting for inspiration and that waiting might turn into years...decades?

Solution: Generate tons of song ideas, complete or incomplete, without judgment. Simply starting turns on the creativity faucet. You've got this! When you join the community, go to the Prompts Topic to get some ideas.

"Most times, the way isn't clear, but you want to start anyway. It is in starting with the first step that other steps become clearer."

— Israelmore Ayivor

Stage 2: Tons of Unfinished Ideas



Problem: Can't finish a song, but have tons of incomplete ideas. Congratulations! Too many song ideas is a nice problem to have, but it can be paralyzing if you don't know where to start in wrangling this beast.

Solution: Don't move on to the next song. Finishing a song before moving on to a new one is excruciating work, but you can't get to a finished song through an unfinished one.

Ask yourself, "What's my point? What's the one thing I want people to walk away with from my song?" Answering this question focuses and simplifies your decision-making process.

"Rule of thumb: The more important a call or action is to our soul's evolution, the more Resistance we will feel toward pursuing it.

Steven Pressfield

Stage 3: Collecting and Organizing



Problem: Finished song ideas are scattered across notebooks, phone memos, and computer files. You might be anxious about how much energy you have spent, and now your work seems to be slipping out of your hands. You might also lack the confidence to share your ideas when they are fragmented.

Solution: Participate in our EP Challenge. Sometimes having a reason to finish a project creates the energy to see it through. We do two a year, one after each 100 Day challenge. It's a time to bring the editor back into the room, tighten up lyrics, create voice memo demos, or arrange full productions, whatever your highest ability is to capture your songs. Then put them into an official or unofficial album that you can share with our community, your family, friends, and fans.

Remember, this EP Challenge is for you. This is not an obligation, just a practice of finishing what you started and getting the most satisfaction out of all the effort you put in.

"Everything you want to be, you already are. You're simply on the path to discovering it."

— Alicia Keys

Stage 4: Parts to Whole



Enjoy the view!

You have come a long way. You've written enough songs that you notice where your points of resistance are, as well as your strengths. You have become more familiar with your creative process.

Next time you do the 100 Day Challenge, it will be a new type of challenge. Instead of building a workflow, you can apply your workflow in new and inventive ways.

This is a good time to consider collaborating. You might find another person who also understands themselves as a songwriter, which opens up new possibilities with work that isn't totally your own. Community members you have walked alongside through the 100 Days are great potential collaboration partners. What you've come to learn about yourself will enrich the shared songwriting process, and working with others will enrich you.

The creative process is a journey through the self, where every bend reveals a new landscape. There is no end to the sense of newness and learning this experience can give. Each circle through, you go a little bit deeper into discovering more about yourself, the stages, and songwriting in general.

We leave you with the following quote. See how it sits with you—does it hit home? Is it too esoteric? Does it challenge you in some way? What sticks out to you?

"Am I here just to heal my own self? I believe that whatever I heal in myself will have a ripple effect in my energy field and will impact my direct environment (family and social). Many questions arise, have I lived here before, have I come back in this lifetime to share my own understanding of my own healing process and thus contribute to an evolutionary trend our ever expanding universe is setting the stage for ?

I trust the process now and am confident that this coming year will shed some more light on the ever unfolding journey, feeling more than ever before connected to a source of transpersonal guidance that imparts wisdom, through intuition, revealing ever more the wholeness of who we are."

— Aline Munsch

If you have any insights to share or have any questions about the four stages, reach out to us here:

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rigel@100daysofsongwriting.com

Questions for reflection:

1. What stage is pulling at you?
2. Based on where you're at, what are some bite-sized activities you want to focus on for 100 days?



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