



By Joe Byerly

Every time I sit down to write a blog post or record an episode of the podcast, something happens inside my head. A voice asks me,

“Who are you to write or talk about this?”

It usually follows up with an equally damaging concern,

“Why would anyone want to listen to you?”

For a while, I listened to it and I even agreed with it. I didn’t have the rank, the experience,

the education, or the writing ability to make it worth anyone else's time. So I didn't write.

In my experience working with other writers, many of us have the same voice, especially when it comes to sharing lessons or insights with other people. Usually, if I recommend to someone they write an article about their experiences, they mimic the voice in my head out loud saying, "Who am I to write an article?" or "Why would anyone want to listen to me?"

In his book [*The War of Art*](#), Steven Pressfield names that voice, calling it "Resistance" (with a capital R). He writes, Resistance is the force that keeps us from doing the things worth doing. Moreover, he says,

Resistance will tell you anything to keep you from doing your work. It will perjure, fabricate, falsify; seduce, bully cajole....If you take Resistance at its word, you deserve everything you get. Resistance is always lying and is always full of shit.

If you've ever heard this voice, and it has kept you from sharing your lessons with others, I'd like to share with you some mental jujitsu that works for me. It helps me ignore Resistance and focus on the intent of why I write in the first place -to help others.

Instead of arguing with Resistance and trying to reason with it, I feed it back its own medicine.

I tell Resistance I'm not writing to share lessons or insights. I'm merely creating conversation starters for other leaders to share. They are free to read it, discard it, or ignore it all together. Even if people dislike my ideas or want to argue about the [laws of gravity on the moon](#), the conversation that emerges from their discontent makes it worth the effort. In doing so, I'm able to move past the self-doubt; the voice that tells me what I'm doing is a waste of time.

Instead, I focus on getting my ideas down on paper, reminding myself I'm achieving a

greater level of clarity with my thoughts. I'm slowly getting better at written communication because I'm able to practice the art of writing and reflection. More importantly, I'm learning to be a better writer because of the lessons I learn from the editors who clean up my crudely written drafts.

If I had listened to this voice seven years ago, *From the Green Notebook* would be just another [hallucination](#). My individual efforts would have never become a team effort; the team that helped grow a platform that has given a voice to so many leaders over the years. There is a power in sharing our ideas with each other; a force that can overcome Resistance. All you have to do is get past that initial voice in your head, and just start writing: One. Word. At. A. Time.

I encourage you to sit down this weekend or whenever you get some free time and jot down an experience that you think could help someone else lead better. Maybe *it's* an experience that you think could help someone avoid making the same mistakes you did. Or, maybe *it's* a behavior someone else can emulate, becoming a better leader in doing so. Or, maybe *it's* an idea you've always wanted to flush out that you think could benefit others.

Whatever *it* is, let go of your fear. ignore Resistance, and write. We look forward to publishing your ideas!

Joe Byerly is an active duty Army officer and Non-Resident Fellow at the Modern War Institute. He's also the founder of From the Green Notebook. Listen to him on [The Podcast](#), sign-up for [his reading list email](#), or connect with him on [LinkedIn](#).

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