

# ***Am I Ready to Write My Book?***

A reflection guide for aspiring nonfiction authors

---

*For the writer who has a message, a notebook full of ideas,  
and a very talented inner critic.*

---

Use this short guide to pause, listen inward, and decide whether  
your book idea is asking for attention - or permission.

**Bernadette Donnelly. M.S.**

Writing Support | Publishing Guidance | Legacy and Message Development

[BernadetteDonnelly.com](http://BernadetteDonnelly.com)

## ***Before You Begin***

Some books arrive as lightning bolts. Others tap politely on the shoulder for years until we finally stop pretending we do not hear them. This guide is for the second kind, too.

You do not need a perfect outline, a quiet cabin, or a dramatic author photo with wind-blown hair. You need a clear reason, a reader you care about, and enough willingness to begin before confidence has fully unpacked its suitcase.

## ***How to use this guide***

Set aside 20-30 minutes. Answer honestly, not impressively. These prompts are not a test; they are a conversation with the part of you that already knows why this book matters.

### **1. What message keeps returning?**

What idea, lesson, story, or truth keeps showing up in your thoughts, conversations, journal pages, or client work? Write the message in plain language, without trying to make it sound book-jacket ready.

### **2. Why does this book matter to you?**

Look beneath accomplishment or credibility. What personal meaning does this book hold? Is it about service, healing, teaching, legacy, visibility, creative expression, or something else?

### **3. Who could be helped by this book?**

Picture one reader who would feel seen, encouraged, informed, or strengthened by your words. What are they struggling with, hoping for, or trying to understand?

## ***Listening for the Real Book***

A strong book usually begins with a generous impulse: a desire to spare someone confusion, offer a map, preserve hard-won wisdom, or open a door. The next prompts help you find that thread.

### **4. What change do you want your reader to experience?**

After reading your book, what should your reader believe, understand, feel, choose, or do differently? Think transformation, not just information.

### **5. What do you know because you lived it?**

Your lived experience, professional insight, mistakes, recoveries, observations, and hard-earned wisdom are part of your authority. What can you say because you have been there?

### **6. What is the heart of the book?**

If you stripped away all extra stories, research, and examples, what is the core promise or central truth of this book? Try completing this sentence: This book helps readers...

### **7. What would make this book feel finished?**

Completion may mean a published book, a family legacy document, a course companion, a credibility-building business book, or a healing personal milestone. What does 'done' look like for this project?

## ***Meeting the Inner Critic***

Every meaningful book seems to come with an inner critic. Some are subtle. Some bring a folding chair and snacks. The goal is not to silence that voice forever; it is to stop letting it chair the committee.

### **8. What is holding you back?**

Name the hesitation as specifically as possible. Is it time, confidence, structure, fear of being judged, not knowing the publishing process, concern that your story is not important enough, or something else?

### **9. What support would help you move forward?**

What would make the next step easier: a book structure conversation, accountability, publishing guidance, help organizing ideas, a gentle editor, or simply someone who understands the process?

### **10. What is one small next step?**

Choose a step that is simple enough to do this week. Examples: write one page, list chapter ideas, gather notes, schedule a clarity call, record your story, or create a rough table of contents.

## ***A Gentle Closing Thought***

Being ready does not always feel like certainty. Sometimes it feels like curiosity with a pen in its hand. If your book keeps asking for your attention, that may be readiness enough to begin.

***Are you ready? If not now, then when?***