

**LUEANGPIANSAMUT Jidanun**

### **The Benefits of Working Hard**

When I was sixteen, I learned from some books on finance that you can have passive income being a writer. Famous writers write only one book and keep earning as their books get reprinted. Money comes into their pockets without having to do more work.

In 2017, I became a full-time writer and found that this idea was incorrect. If you are not a VERY famous writer, your work cannot give you a passive income. You have to work very hard every month to earn enough to pay bills. You have to work actively to get an active income. Once you stop working, then the money stops coming to you.

Many of my friends who write romantic novels say that they must publish three books a year in order to bear their expenses. Some even write a new erotic novella (30-40 pages) every month and publish it on e-book websites to make enough to live their lives.

This crazy culture of working so hard is “normalized” among Thai mass production writers. However, things are different in the hard-to-read genre of literature. In that literary culture, writers tend to write slowly and publish a new book every three years or more. They have to wait for their inspiration, their muse, and so on.

I always wonder, how do they earn enough for a living? In Thailand, I have observed that most people who work that way have a hard-working wife to support their financial situation.

Now, you will see two types of writers here – ones who are very active in their work, and others who are waiting for inspiration. I consider myself as belonging to the first group. I keep writing new books every year and have 20 books now.

The writers in the first group change the meaning of writing from “making art” to what looks like an industrial job. Maybe that is what professionalization means for me.

What is the reason that makes writers work like a workaholic? Because working like that is beneficial for us.

The first benefit is financial. As I mentioned earlier, I always wonder how those writers waiting for their muse, having their last book published five years ago, afford their living? The way I work, having a book published every year guarantees that I will have enough money to take care of my family. You cannot wait for your muse if you are not already rich or have support from your wife.

The second benefit is popularity. In Thailand, national book exhibitions are held twice a year. Some writers and editors believe that if you don't have a new book for these exhibitions, the readers start forgetting your name. Writing a new book every year or more often ensures that our readers will stay tuned with us and that we will not be left behind.

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ICPL and the International Writing Program Panel Series, April 1, 2022

Yasser Abdel Hafez (Egypt); Lueangpiansamut Jidanun (Thailand); Luíza Fazio (Brazil)

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Anyways. There is no significant evidence that the readers will immediately forget our names if we only miss one or two book exhibitions. It could be a rumor that haunts our minds. I guess. The fear of being forgotten is deep. It resides in every writer who has not published a book in a while. But this fear shouldn't appear until you have not had a book for years. But these days, not having a new book for even six months makes you worried that people will forget you. I think this is because everything in our society has become SO fast. The result is that writers have to force themselves to find new work every six months and publish a new book twice a year. That's crazy. I know. However, I can't get this idea out of my head at all. I observe Thai readers through social media and how easy it is for them to forget many writers if the writers have no new work.

Writing too much or working too fast also has adverse effects. Working too hard can reduce the quality of your work as you don't have enough time for research or revision of your work. Sometimes your work starts to get repetitive. Writers may write about the same issues repeatedly in every new book. If the quality remains unaffected, there can be other adverse effects. Writers may find themselves struggling or even suffering while working non-stop. So, it is important to ensure that your work still is of good quality and that you have a good work-life balance.

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