



# Find and Maintain Your Voice

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Do some sections feel genuinely *you*? Do other passages feel phony or dry or awkward?

We're all told to identify our author's voice and stick with it for the entire project. And yet, it can be tricky to feel sure you've found it, especially with a new project.

As [Jennifer Loudon](#) puts it, "Developing your writer's voice requires you to know yourself and reveal that self in your writing: this is who I am and this is what I care most about."

If you are unsure how to do that, re-read your draft pages. Do some sections feel genuinely *you*? Do other passages feel phony or dry or awkward? You'll find clues there.

## Talk It Out

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Sometimes the easiest way to identify your authentic voice for a writing project is to kick back and talk about it with a trusted friend or colleague, for ten or fifteen minutes or more. Let yourself get excited about the subject matter, and really express to the other person why you're so drawn to this material, and why people will want to read about it. Here's the key: As you're doing this, make sure your monologue is being recorded – there's probably an app on your phone you can use.

Discover your voice by listening to your voice.

The quality of the recording just has to be good enough for someone – you or someone else – to transcribe. (If the digital quality is sharp, you can try voice-recognition software do the first pass, which you can then review and correct.)

After a few days, take a look at the corrected transcript. Does it ring true? Is it natural and genuine? Then you have identified your voice. Listen to the recording, too, if you have the time, and re-energize yourself with your ears as well as your eyes.

With your style, tone, and personality fresh in your awareness, revisit the pages that felt a bit off, and revive them.

## Checking in Later Can Bring You Back

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Later, if you get bogged down in deadlines, or research, and/or if other people's voices take over inside your head, this exercise can also help you recover your voice.

If you lose your way, re-read your transcribed monologue, from when you were happy and excited about your writing project. You'll recapture your voice and your passion.

It almost seems too clever doesn't it: identifying your writer's voice by recording your actual voice? It really can work. Do it at a candid moment when you're excited to share your creative endeavor with a trusted friend or colleague, and you'll have a record of your writer's voice, personally delivered, in your own words.

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