A rough draft is a rough draft, is a rough draft, is a rough draft.... In other words, a rough draft is not about perfection, great style or correct spelling. A rough draft may be poor. Even a rough diamond is ugly and only through polishing it becomes beautiful. But: if you don’t write it, there is no rough draft! Therefore: don’t let yourself be held back and write down your rough draft as quickly as possible.

This can support your writing:

▪ **Multi-version writing according to Peter Elbow**: Decide to write three versions of a chapter. Divide the time into three equal parts. Shortly before the end of the first third, stop, read through what you have written and reflect on what you have written with a written comment: "What is good about the text is this and that. But this and that would be better...". Then you completely put the page away (or open a new file) and start again from the beginning. (3 times in total). For longer texts, you can leave a day gap.

▪ **Keep a journal**: Use the journal to talk to yourself about your writing process. If you notice that you are not making any progress, force yourself to write down in the journal what you think about your own text. For example, write down how stupid it is, how you feel about it, how you feel about writing it, etc. Writing it down can make you realise that you are not getting anywhere. It can make you realise where the problem is. And only when you see a problem you can find a solution.

▪ **Write in columns**: Put the text in the left-hand column and write any digressive thoughts or comments in the right-hand column.

▪ **Formulate questions**: For each chapter, write down a question to be answered in the text. The question should be a sub-question of your research question.

▪ **Don’t get stuck at the beginning**: The first sentence or paragraph should be perfect. But:
WRITING A ROUGH DRAFT

It does not have to be perfect in the first attempt. Tell yourself that you will rewrite the beginning later and that for now it is just to help yourself get into the flow of writing. You can start with sentences like: "What I wanted to say is...", "It’s about the following...", "This is the beginning that I’m going to throw away anyway, it's not that important, it just leads to my topic, which is...".

- **Speaking with others:** Tell someone the content of your paper or the current sub-chapter and ask them to mirror back to you what they have understood.

**If you get stuck:**

- Write a letter to a friend and explain where the problem is at the moment.
- Time or page limits: The principle of a writing marathon. Decide to write from 10 to 11.30 a.m. and from 11.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and not to stop until the time has passed. Or decide to write three pages and only stop when they are really full. (After that: Reward yourself!)
- If things don’t work out as you had expected: This happens to the best ones. Numerous novels and films deal with writing difficulties, because that's exactly what many authors experience.

"*It is the work we leave undone that makes us tired, not the work we do*."

*(Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach)*

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NOTES: