WHY EDIT?

☐ In today's literary world you have multiple choices for getting published. But whether you go Traditional Publishing (slim chance), or Self-Publishing (if you can afford it), or Indie Publishing, you still **must** have a work that is not beset with errors.

☐ All books have errors, but the good ones require a close analysis to find them. Your goal should be to have your book in that category. I am not talking about **rough** editing. I am talking about **revising** the book, **basic editing** of the book, or **advanced editing** of the book.

☐ **What is Rough Editing?**
Some writers edit as they write which is what I call rough editing. An example would be you writing a sentence or paragraph and immediately stopping to correct or edit.

This is when your writing juices flow. Editing interrupts that flow. You want to let your writing juices flow with little or no hindrances. You will have time to edit later.

Don't get me wrong. Sometimes we write something and immediately see that it is wrong or simply doesn't work for the story. So, we stop and correct or rewrite.

That is fine on a limited basis, but I would not recommend this as a practice. I once helped a man in writing his book and we were constantly stopping to rewrite, and reorder what was written. It slowed the process down to a crawl.

☐ **What is Revising?**
Revising is more like the idea of putting in a whole day of writing, then on the following day revisiting what you wrote, reading it and either correcting or rewriting portions.

It is an acceptable form of editing and usually is concerned with obvious misspellings and poor grammar. It might on occasion deal with bigger issues, but again I would recommend that you keep this under control.

☐ **What is Basic Editing**
Basic Editing, as I understand it, is chapter by chapter editing, and/or end of book editing. I do both. In chapter by chapter, I review previous chapters and edit as needed. This may require a more in-depth review than you were doing before.

Later, when all the chapters have been written, I go back to the beginning and read-through the book. This helps me better understand the flow of the book, the continuity of the plot, and the characters themselves.

☐ **What is Advanced Editing?**
This is after Basic Editing has been completed and you are getting the book ready to be published. While this lesson doesn't necessarily deal with Advanced Editing, the course will provide tools that you can use, and resources that you can visit.

	BASIC EDITING		
☐	**Action #1 – Read the book through** This should be your first action. Reading it through will provide you insights into how the story flows, the characters interact, and other important issues.	☐	**Action #2 – Big Picture** Having read the book, you want to see if there are parts that should be moved or rearranged. You might spot characters that need changed, removed, or simply moved. See the tool *Big Picture.*
☐	**Action #3 – Narrow the Scope** Beginning at the start of the story, review each scene. We will discuss scenes in a later lesson, but it is important to know that every chapter is divided into scenes, just like a play. For the purposes of this lesson consider a scene as an event that has a beginning and ending involving one or more characters. More in Lesson 13 on *Scenes*.	☐	**Action #4 – Watch for repetitive words or phrases.** We all have our favorite words or phrases and if we are not careful, we overuse them. This needs to be watched and corrected. Find another word with the same or similar meaning, or rewrite the offending passage. Use the tool *Overused Words/Phrases.*
☐	**Action #5 – Grammar Check** If you have Microsoft Word 365 you also have a strong grammar checker. Whether it is Word or some other writing tool, a grammar checker is probably included. Make use of it. However, I would advise that you use caution. Make sure that the recommendations (that is all they are) fit your story. You don't want your characters to sound like professors unless the character is one.	☐	**Action #5 – Dialogue** When I talk about dialogue, I am talking about speaking and thinking. Can the reader see that the character is thinking? I use italics to separate thought from spoken words. Also, check that your character's speech is consistent. If they sound more educated at the end of the story there should be a reason, such as the character has been learning about the subject being discussed. The tool *Dialogue* has been provided.
☐	**Action #6 – Proofread** I don't recommend this action *until you have performed the first 5 actions two or three times!* Proofing is more advanced, and the tool Proofreading is provided.	☐	Our next lesson is on Viewpoint.