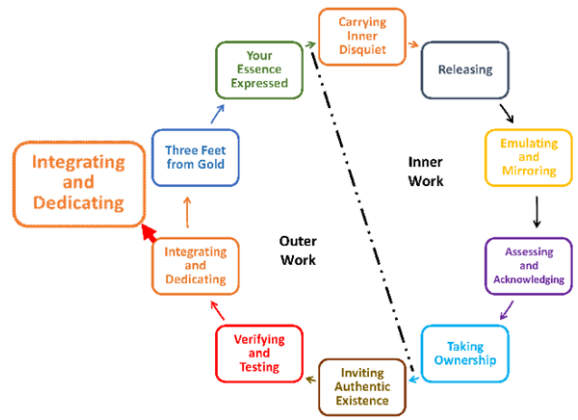


Integrating & Dedicating

This stage is about the integration of the artist/writer's **creative identity** with the rest of their lives. All the learning, all the actions, *all of everything* the creative person has done, thought, and felt up to this point is unifying, combining. Their creativity is no longer compartmentalized or kept separate from everything else in their day-to-day. No longer hiding the creative side of themselves, they are claiming their identity as an artist. Taking ownership of that identity comes with a deepened dedication to productivity and mastery of craft.

The evolution of the artist's skills—as well as their spirit and soul—thus far is evident to all. As the artist begins to receive recognition for their growth, this stage may feel satisfying and comfortable. However, because they've come so far, they may feel they have “more to lose” if things go badly. Staying put in this stage, with its accolades, might seem safer, which could eventually lead to stagnation and not living to their fullest potential. If the artist were to ultimately become bored with that lack of growth, that boredom, ideally, could be the very thing that propels them to the next level or stage in their journey.



1. Based on this description of **Integrating & Dedicating** and our discussion about it in [Episode 36](#), have you ever been in, or are you currently in, this stage of the creativity cycle?

2. What does **Integrating & Dedicating** look like in your life? How do you experience it? How does it show up in both your day-to-day living and in your writing practice?

Tune in to Episode 37 to hear Melody A Scout's perspective on how **Integrating & Dedicating** are evident in each of the five seasons.

3. What do you believe this stage has to teach you? About yourself? About your writing practice?

4. Do you feel “stuck” in this stage? If so, what would it take for you to move forward? Or do you already feel ready to move on?

5. Sometimes we repeat a particular stage or we “loop” back to it because we haven’t yet learned, experienced, or come to believe something that we need from this stage in order to move on.

If you’ve experienced this stage before, why do you think you’ve come back to it again? Did you try something last time (perhaps a new way of thinking or doing) that did or did not help you move on? If it didn’t work, why? If it did work, do you think it might work again? Or do you need to try something else?

You may not have the answers in this moment, but I invite you to journal about your current circumstances related to this stage. Include your external situation (think people, places, things in your life), as well as your inner landscape (your emotions—good and bad; your beliefs; your values). Be open to the possibility that allowing yourself to explore all aspects of your life as it is now will uncover what you need to do or think next to move forward.

Creativity, the writing mindset, and this journey are not linear. But, for simplicity, we are exploring them as a 10-stage cycle or quest. Be sure to tune into the [Around the Writer’s Table](#) podcast for our discussions about each stage/guidepost. Next: **Three Feet from Gold/Trusting the Process.**

