



The 3 Day Rule

Handling difficult feedback

You've received some feedback on your manuscript. More than you could ever ask for: notes, questions, graphs, venn diagrams. Everything congeals together into a sucking mud puddle as you sift through comments you agree with, comments you're not sure about and comments you're dead set against. Where do you start? What do you do?

First off, do nothing. Close your notebook and walk away. For now.

The worst action is dive into a draft the same day you receive feedback. Your head is swimming with what has been said, perhaps you hate every last note and question. Perhaps the feedback makes you hate your draft. It's a vulnerable time.

Create some distance. Set a three day rule. All feedback no matter how big or small goes away for three days. Lock it in a drawer. Distance allows you to approach the notes and the draft with fresh eyes. Feedback makes all writers defensive. We want our work to be unconditionally loved. But feedback is a necessary and vital tool to move writing forward.

So instead of making a snap judgement, take a breath. Take three days worth. Then return to your manuscript. A note or a question that feels wrong in the moment, may have value. It may be the one note that turns your work into a finished product.