

A portrait of Gabriela Pereira, a woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a white sleeveless top. She is smiling and standing in front of a bookshelf. To her left, there is a framed picture of Mickey Mouse and another framed picture of a still life with fruit.

Gabriela Pereira

AUTHOR | SPEAKER | FOUNDER OF DIY MFA

Gabriela's high-energy speaking style and quirky humor are a counterpoint to her content-rich, nuts-and-bolts presentations. An entrepreneurial version of Mary Poppins, she uses fun, playful keynotes and presentations to engage and captivate her audience, all the while discussing complex concepts or technical elements of writing and creativity.

Gabriela inspires audiences to...

DISCOVER new sources of inspiration, so they never again have to wait for the elusive muse.

RETHINK the mindsets that hold them back and take ownership of their creative process.

BUILD effective connections with like-minded creatives, so their work doesn't feel so isolated.

UNLEASH their creative brilliance and share their talents with the world.

Whether she's giving a keynote at a college campus, presenting at a national marketing conference, or even teaching poetry to first graders, Gabriela's goal is always the same: to empower people to express their creativity, motivate them to strive for excellence in their craft, and challenge them to go beyond their artistic comfort zones.

Appearances Include:

Claremont McKenna Athenaeum

The New School

INBOUND

Association of Writers and
Writing Programs Conference

Writer's Digest Conference

Romance Writers of America

CraftFest & ThrillerFest

Backspace Writers Conference

"Howl at the Moon" Writers' Conference

Society of Children's Book Writers
and Illustrators NJ Conference

Hippocampus Magazine's HippoCamp

The Write Stuff Conference

CAPA-U

WANACon

Keynotes

The Creative Life

How to Survive and Succeed without Breaking Your Heart or Losing Your Mind

Here's something no one tells you: survival (and also success) as an artist or writer has little to do with talent or technique, it's all about mindset and attitude. The most effective way to up your game is to understand yourself more fully, both in relation to your work and within the context of your real life.

In this keynote, Gabriela debunks some major myths about creativity, lets you in on her secret formula for conquering goals, and walks you through a fundamental technique that will change your creative process forever. You'll leave this session energized and inspired, but also with the tools and techniques you can apply to your creative work right away.

Train Your Brain

Generate Ideas on Demand

Most people think creativity is innate: you're either born with it or you're not. The truth is, creativity is like a muscle and you need to practice regularly, flexing and training your mind. Whether your goal is to pursue a career in the arts, to bring more "outside the box" problem-solving into your workplace, or you just pursue a right-brain passion, you don't need to be a creative genius; all you need is a system.

In this fast-paced keynote, you will discover the five main creativity pitfalls (and what to do instead), learn Gabriela's signature IDEA method, and explore powerful and practical techniques to help you help your brain become an idea-generating machine. By the end of this presentation you will have a clear plan to come up with innovative concepts on demand and—more important—put them into action.

Fail Smarter

The Secret to Creative Resilience

In our perfectionist culture, we're often taught to avoid errors at all costs. After all, why make mistakes when you can get it right the first time? The problem with this attitude is that criticism and failure is inevitable, especially in creative fields. The secret to bouncing back from harsh feedback is learning how to transform incremental "failures" into stepping stones toward a larger goal.

Combining a systematic iterative process with mindfulness techniques, this keynote proves that creative resilience is a product of both left and right-brained thinking. In this talk, Gabriela explains why iteration is VITAL for creativity and shares the five pillars of her Mindfulness Manifesto. Entrepreneurs say the secret to success is to fail better or fail faster, but after attending this session you will know how to fail smarter.

The Art of Persuasive Writing

Conquer the Craft of Communication

In today's information-driven online world, the writers are poised to inherit the future. But what if you aren't talented at writing? Or worse, what if you're still haunted by middle school grammar lessons? Don't panic. Effective writing has nothing to do with talent, grammar, or even the laws of literature. Instead, it's all about harnessing the power of storytelling to convey your ideas.

In this keynote, Gabriela walks you through the fundamental of storytelling and shows you how to apply these techniques to any form of persuasive writing, from corporate memos to critical essays. She also unpacks the psychology behind these storytelling techniques. By the end of this keynote, you will have an arsenal of tools you can use in your written communication so you can convey your ideas in a convincing way.

Breakout Sessions and Workshops

The Craft of Writing

7 Steps to a Stronger Story

Whether you write epic fantasy or picture books, action-packed thrillers or literary fiction, your characters are the heart and soul of your story. This presentation is all about crafting compelling characters that jump off the page and captivate readers.

Using a simple, seven-step system, Gabriela teaches you how to bring your characters to life so you can hook your readers and keep them turning pages. With enticing visuals and dazzling diagrams, she shows you how to streamline the often-complicated concept of character development. By the end of this workshop you will know exactly which characters in your novel need some extra TLC, and you'll have the tools you need to give those characters a boost.



Perfect Your Plot, Structure Your Story

Whether you're a plotter, a "pantser" or somewhere in-between, an outline can make your story stronger while making your writing life easier. Many writers think of an outline as either too daunting or too stifling but, if done correctly, it can be a powerful addition to your writing toolkit.

During this session, Gabriela will teach you how to create a strong, flexible outline that's custom-designed for your style, your process, and your story. You'll leave knowing how to use your outline to perfect your plot, deepen your characters and guide your story from draft to done.

Rock Your Revisions

Most people think revision is something you do in an afternoon, manuscript and red pen in hand. They think once that first draft is done, the book is practically finished. Writers know better. You know that when it comes time to revise your fiction, trying to juggle all the story elements at once will leave you frustrated and your manuscript in shambles.

In this session, Gabriela will walk you through her signature Pyramid Method for revision, a layer-by-layer approach for a smoother revision and a stronger final draft. You'll leave this session with a concrete plan and actionable timeline so you can power through and rock your revisions.

Unleash Your Storytelling Superpower

Most writers struggle not with a lack of ideas and interests, but with having *too* many and not knowing where to focus their energy. This session will help you identify your Storytelling Superpower and it begins with choosing the right character as the center of your story. Every writer has one particular type of character that they are drawn to and can make come alive on the page.

Based on your storytelling superpower, you will discover which character you are uniquely skilled at crafting, and how develop a story your readers can't resist. You'll leave this workshop energized, inspired, and with plenty of ideas so that you can write the best book possible, and get it published.

Marketing and Promotion

Pixels to Platform: Marketing for Creative People

Savvy writers know that producing a great book is just the first step. To make an impact, you need to build an author platform so you can get your work in the hands of your readers. Yet oftentimes it can feel like you're being pulled in a million directions. With new social networks popping up every day, it's easy to get distracted by latest marketing gimmick—or worse, give up on building a platform altogether.

Don't worry. Platform doesn't have to be painful and you don't have to sell out to sell books. In this session, you will learn concrete steps for building your online brand so you can forge meaningful connections with your readers. You'll also discover a game-changing technique that will help you understand and research your audience, whether your platform is huge or nonexistent. Finally, you'll learn strategies to help you focus your energy and resources on the things that matter most, so your platform will be sustainable for the long term.

From Brain to Book: How to Package Your Expertise

If you're a creative person or entrepreneur, chances are you're passionate about what you do and you want to share it with as many people as possible. Writing a book can help you do that, but it may feel daunting, especially if you don't consider yourself a writer or you feel that writing is outside your expertise. But if you have already been creating a body of work, you're well on your way to writing that book. You just didn't know it!

In this workshop, you'll learn a step-by-step process so you can take material you have already created—on a blog, podcast, or other creative outlet—and package it into a book. You'll discover how to structure your ideas so you can hook your readers from the very first page. Finally, you'll know exactly what steps to take so you can get this book published. You will leave this session with a working outline and a concrete plan so you can get that expertise out of your brain and into a book.

Riveting Reviews

“ Gabriela presented in a friendly, professional way, but with her own sparkling personality. This is one teacher who really knows what she's doing, and projects just that. Several people told me it was the best conference we ever had.

Bob Isbill DIRECTOR, “HOWL AT THE MOON” WRITERS' CONFERENCE

“ Gabriela is an exceptional presenter. Her ability to connect with an audience of writers, and offer content that gives them focus, direction and encouragement is remarkable.

Gary Zenker FOUNDER & FACILITATOR, WILMINGTON AND MAIN LINE WRITERS GROUPS

“ Gabriela's presentation was a big hit! Many attendees told us that the information she presented was exactly what they needed to hear at exactly the right time. She is a pleasure to work with, and her desire to help writers reach their publishing goals really shows.

Karen Dionne ADMINISTRATOR, BACKSPACE LLC



Gabriela Pereira is an author, speaker, and entrepreneur who wants to challenge the status quo of higher education. As the founder of DIYMFA.com, her mission is to empower writers, artists and other creatives to take an entrepreneurial approach to their professional growth.

Gabriela earned an MFA in creative writing from The New School, an MA in child development from Cornell University, and is the author of *DIY MFA: Write with Focus, Read with Purpose, Build Your Community* (Writer's Digest Books, 2016).

Gabriela speaks and leads workshops on college campuses and national conferences.

“ Gabriela’s presentation and worksheets have changed how I look at story structure and my writing process. I took a recent synopsis I was having trouble with and jotted everything down on the worksheet. Immediately my problem became apparent and I was able to clean it up quickly and send it to my agent.

Celia Kyle NEW YORK TIMES & USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHOR

“ I loved Gabriela’s wonderful class on outlining. She’s an awesome teacher who not only knows the content perfectly, but also knows how to teach it. Of the fifteen sessions I attended at RWA this year, hers was one of my top three.

Silvi Martin CONTEMPORARY ROMANCE AUTHOR

“ Attending Gabriela’s information packed session provided me with such great advice that I have referred to the notes almost daily since I started writing my second book.

Niko Godfrey Bommer FREELANCER IN FILM AND TV