



Very inspired story: A Year to Live.

Anthony Burgess was forty when he learned he had a brain tumor that would kill him within a year. He had no money at the time and nothing to bequeath to his soon-to-be widow, Lynne.

Burgess had never been a professional novelist in the past; but he was always aware that he had the talent to be a writer in him. So, just to be able to leave at least the copyrights to his wife, he put a piece of paper in the typewriter and began to write his first novel. It was not even certain that what he had written could be published; but he couldn't think of anything else to do.

"It was January 1960," he said, "and according to the diagnosis, I had a winter, a spring, and a summer ahead of me. That year, when the leaves began to fall, I would have died too." With that speed and haste, Burgess had managed to write five and a half novels before the year was out. E. M. Forster could only write so many in almost an entire lifetime; J. D. Salinger, one of America's greatest writers, managed to write only half of it in his entire life.

However, Burgess did not die. His cancer first regressed; then it disappeared altogether. In his long and full life as a writer, he produced more than seventy works, most famously *A Clockwork Orange*. He might not have written even one of these novels had it not been for the death sentence that cancer had inflicted on him. Most of us are like Anthony Burgess; we hide a great talent waiting for an emergency to emerge from within us.

A useful exercise in self-motivation is to ask yourself what you would do if you were in Anthony Burgess's place and found out that you would die of cancer within a year... "What would change in my life, how would I live my last year if I had learned that I would only live one more year? ? What exactly would I do? Considering the brevity of life is a useful exercise; it often brings up surprising thoughts in your mind that will reveal your unused talents that have not yet surfaced.