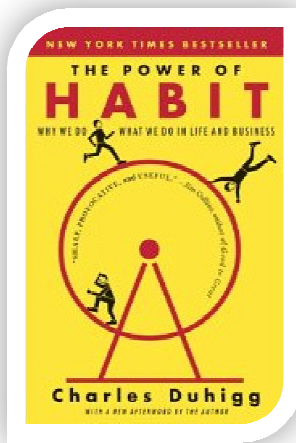


Readin' & Writin' with Lauraine- February 2014



I've never liked cold weather. This year I thought I'd escape to Texas to attend a writer's retreat and visit friends, but the joke is on me—it is warmer in Tehachapi than in Texas. Dreary overcast days, falling rain and snow, and temperatures in the 30's have me so cold all I want to do is sit by the woodstove. I am praying some of this rain and snow travels to California to help ease the drought.

Besides meeting fascinating people on this Texas trip, I have been introduced to an exceptionally powerful and life-changing book. I am currently steamrolling through *The Power of Habit* by Charles Duhigg. I finally believe there is hope at the end of the tunnel for changing some of the habits I would like to live without. I used to say, "get rid of", but in this book I have learned new habits overlay old ones, and thus the old ones never die. Which is why people, including me, slip backwards so easily.

Charles Duhigg is not a scientist, but an award-winning journalist, who writes about business for the *New York Times*. While investigating why some businesses succeed and others fail, he discovered several scientific studies that focus on human behavior, especially human patterns of behavior. As he points out, successful businesses are masters of this information; they influence us on a daily basis to buy their products.

My goal in reading and studying *The Power of Habit* is to gain victory over certain destructive behavioral patterns of my own. As I overlay my old ways with new actions, I have a feeling parts of my life will definitely work better. There are three magic words I

learned from my reading: *cue, action, and reward*. Before reading this book, I had no idea what a strong part habits play in one's life.

Written in a friendly, easy-to-read and comprehensive style, *The Power of Habit* can help not just me but anyone change their life. The book comes in all formats: print, audio and ebook. I am reading it in print because I can underline and circle important points. I may also get the ebook for its portability and maybe even the audio version. I plan to get this information into my brain every way I can. Want to change your life? Pick up a copy.

Speaking of habits and changing your life, if one of the new habits you'd like to form is becoming a writer, or improving your writing skills, the Mount Hermon Writers Conference April 9–15 is the ideal place for you. For more information visit <http://www.mounthermon.org/event/212>. Hope to see you there.

And since we're talking about travel, I will be hosting a special tour to Norway June 27 – July 6. Let's explore the contemporary and historical highlights of Norway together. Who knows, we may even discover Ingeborg hiking in the mountains. Visit <http://www.brekketours.com/scandinavian-tours/escorted-tours> or phone 800-437-5302 for more information.

On the writing front, I have good news for those of you who love the *Red River of the North* series. I have just completed *To Everything A Season*, the first book in the new *Song of Blessing* series. The year is 1905. Come and discover the changes that have occurred in the fictional town of Blessing, ND. *To Everything A Season* will be released in October.

Before that, in July, watch for *Heaven Sent Rain*, a contemporary novel about a boy, a small dog, a veterinarian, and a driven female executive with no desire to let her heart be taken over by a gifted child who needs a home.

Until next time,

Happy readin' & writin' from Lauraine