

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR  
**J.T. ELLISON**



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New Year, New Habits, and Where I'll Be In 2019

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January 2019 Newsletter  
Vol. 204

## Hi, Gentle Reader!



Welcome to a brand new year! I don't know about you, but I am so excited January is here! January and September are my two favorite months when it comes to planning—they both feel like fresh starts. I've been humming along setting up new calendars, breaking in a new notebook (oh, [William Hannah](#) you've stolen my heart), clearing out 2018's files and folders, downloading new word tracker spreadsheets, and otherwise gussying up my world to kick off the new year right.

I'm not a resolution maker, are you? I hate all the added pressure of trying to change myself dramatically on a certain date – which is untenable at best. Though I am, as always, doing Dry January to really kick start my creativity. I need to get [GOOD GIRLS LIE](#) as close to the finish line as possible, so it's a month of keeping my head down and writing like mad. I adopted several new habits in the last quarter of 2018 to help me do this, and I'm anxious to see how well they work. I believe it was Hemingway who said “done by noon, drunk by three” – I've adapted this to “done by noon, reading by three.” (A wee bit healthier goal. I have no idea how he managed to churn out such brilliance as sotted as he must have been...)

Let's kick off the new year with the Annual Review, shall we? It was a big year, and this is a big, comprehensive look at what went right, what went wrong, and what I am planning for 2019. Hint: 2019 is my Year of Joy!

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## 2018 Annual Review



For the past several years, I've been doing annual reviews of my life and work, based on the format from Chris Guillebeau's wonderful Annual Review on his blog. It's a great system for those of us who are self-employed and want to assess our work for the year. 2018 was supposed to be the Year of Change for me—and boy did it live up to its title.

[Tell Me All About It!](#)

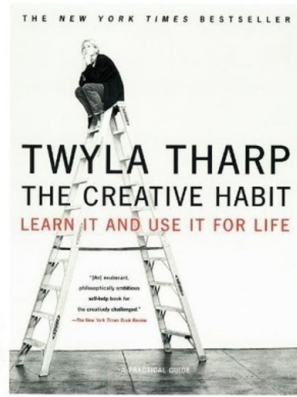
## ▣ My Favorite Books of 2018



This was a great reading year for me—thanks to adding audiobooks to my repertoire, I was able to read 100 books. My list of favorites is longer than normal but there were so many great books to choose from!

[Let's See Those Favorites!!!](#)

## What I'm Reading



### THE CREATIVE HABIT by Twyla Tharp

Since we have so many book recommendations above, I'm going to include only one more—something perfect for the New Year, when so many of us are turning over a new leaf and working on new habits. For this, I give you one of my all-time favorites, which was suggested to me several years ago by my fabulous writer friend, Jeff Abbott.

I've now both read and listened to this beautifully compiled work of art. Twyla Tharp takes an intellectual approach to building habits, with a deep dive into the history of art and its greatest creators. You must read it. Do the exercises. See what comes of your newfound enlightenment. Let your mind dance. You won't regret it.

*Click the cover to learn more!*

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## Cool Things From the Internet

**Svenja Lin Annual Word Tracking Spreadsheets.** My gold standard. I love Svenja's work, and have been using her trackers for years. What's also lovely is it's name your own price.

**The Bigger, Badder 2019 Book Tracking Spreadsheet.** This is super thorough, if you're curious about tracking what you read.

**This Strategy Makes Procrastination Impossible.** "When I look back at all the times I've procrastinated, it was always related to getting overwhelmed. When you haven't even started something, the end result seems a million miles away."

**The Lady Hero's Journey.** Spit tea on my keyboard, I was giggling so hard...

**Why you should surround yourself with more books than you'll ever have time to read.** I just say I'm collecting for the zombie apocalypse and being nod and tell me I'm being so wise.

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## Where I'll Be in 2019

I have a few events on the book already! Would love to see you there.

### **Southern Voices - Hoover, Alabama**

I am so honored to join the Southern Voices family! Tickets go on sale January 4 and they're expected to sell out.

### **Thrillerfest - New York, New York**

I haven't been able to attend Thrillerfest - AKA summer camp for writers -- for a couple of years, and boy am I excited to return!

### **Bouchercon - Dallas, Texas**

Bouchercon is Fall Camp for writers, and encompasses all the crime fiction genres. It's an incredibly fun conference, and after the huge success of the 2018 event, 2019, the 50th anniversary, is shaping up to be even better.

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## January's Recipe: Clandestine Dip



This is a huge favorite from my childhood. It's one of those awesome family recipes from the 70s that everyone makes a little differently. And it's perfect party food, a real crowd pleaser. Super Bowl party, anyone? Plus, it's better after sitting for 12 hours in the fridge, so an easy dip to make beforehand. Enjoy!

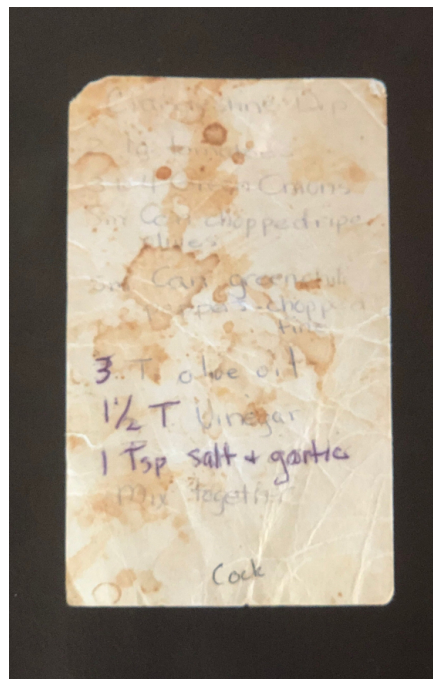


Photo note: I found my mom's recipe... glad we were able to resurrect this one officially.

**When I Dip, You Dip!**

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2019 is going to be an amazing year. Don't forget to drink lots of water, spend five minutes meditating, and keep a daily

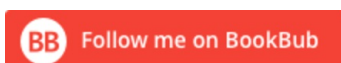
journal — you'll be amazed at how fun it is to look back on in a year. Wishing you the most beautiful of New Years, full of peace, prosperity, and joy!

peace and hugs,



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*Stay up on all of my book bargains and new books!*



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*Are you still here? Here's a kitten for your troubles!*



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*Let's be friends. I don't bite!*



**#KeepReading**

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