

## The Ultimate Guide to Building a Writing Habit That Sticks Like Superglue

You *know* you need to write often to have a successful writing career.

You *want* to build a writing habit so you can unleash the ideas, words, and stories you have locked inside you.

But...

You can't bring yourself to face the page enough to make the habit stick.

You write *sometimes*, or worse, you don't write *at all*.

What should you do?

I can offer tips to help you, but you've **heard them all**, and they haven't helped, right?

Tips don't address the underlying psychology behind developing a writing habit.

Today I want to help you uncover and resolve the deep seated issues that keep you from sitting down to write.

Once you diagnose the problem, you can treat the symptoms.

Are you ready to get started?

### **The One Question You Must Answer “Yes,” to if You Want to Become a Writer**

Do you *really* want to be a writer?

Think about it for a second.

There are two different types of people when it comes to writing. People who want to write, and people who like the *idea of being a writer*.

If you're the type of person who dreams of living in a cabin where you drink whiskey while you write your novel, your chances of success are low.

You don't want to write. You want the writer's lifestyle.

In order to become a writer, you have to want to perform the act itself.

If you truly want to put words on the page, but fear, doubt, and negativity hold you back, then I can help you.

## **How to Reshape the Stories You Tell Yourself About Writing**

When you're trying to build a habit like writing, exercising, or eating healthy, lack of information isn't the problem.

You know to eat less and exercise to improve your health, but knowing doesn't help you overcome the psychological blocks that keep you on the couch eating chips.

The same thinking applies to your writing. You *know* you have to block out time, sit down, and write

Instead of focusing on the "what," let's focus on the "why," behind improving your writing habits.

Here are some of the subtle stories writers and aspiring writers tell themselves. If you recognize any of these in yourself, there are ways to re-frame these stories and make them work to your advantage.

### **Story # 1 – I *have* to be a great writer**

You want to create great work and that's admirable. You care for your words and meticulously craft them in the hopes of becoming an all-time great.

Maybe your dream of being a great writer is actually moving you *away from your goal*.

Writers aren't created equal. Some writers have more natural talent than you do. Some are so freakishly talented *you'll never get close to their level*.

If you measure yourself against a level or quality you're incapable of producing, you're setting yourself up for failure.

Who says you have to be the next Malcolm Gladwell, Charles Bukowski, or Sylvia Plath?

Maybe it's okay to be a "pretty good," writer who creates meaningful work and builds a solid living from their writing.

Instead of comparing yourself to writers who seem blessed with pure talent, try focusing on becoming the best writer *you can be*.

If you push *your* writing skills to *your* limit, you'll pen some damn fine words, trust me.

If you can cultivate the spirit of being okay with doing your best, you'll still end up creating work that blows your own mind.

In your Writer Habits worksheet, I want to fill in the appropriate section with a statement that sets realistic expectations for your writing.

For example you can say, "I want to write as well as I'm capable of writing. If I reach my potential as a writer, I'll be happy."

## **Story #2 – Writing is inherently difficult**

"There is nothing to writing. All you do is sit at a typewriter and bleed." - I won't try to attribute this for fear of the quote police gracing my comment section.

Writers romanticize pain and suffering.

We take a masochistic pride in suffering through creative blocks.

I hate to burst your bubble but...

### **Writing isn't difficult.**

All you have to do is press fingers onto a keyboard and form sentences.

You have an endless amount of ideas in you. You may be suffering through writer's block or avoiding writing altogether because you're giving the *act of writing itself* more credit than it deserves.

Once you come up with an idea to write about or have an outline, start moving your fingers.

If I'm feeling stuck, I'll write something like this: "Damn, I don't feel like writing right now." If I have to write 1,000 words of pure nonsense before I reach the zone then so be it.

The act of typing conjures creativity. The muse rewards action.

If you can disassociate the action of typing and the craft of creating compelling ideas, you stand a chance of building a habit that sticks.

Embody this phrase and your writing career will blossom: **the act of writing** is easy.

In your Writer's Habit Worksheet, fill out the appropriate section with a statement that takes the pressure off of the words themselves.

For example, my statement might say, "Nobody gets talker's block. I have interesting things to say. If I keep my fingers moving, the ideas will form as I go."

### **Story #3 – I'm not productive**

The story you tell yourself about your identity has a major impact on your behavior. The words you place after the phrase "I am," can define you.

When you say "I'm not productive enough to be a writer," you take away all your power. It's okay to admit you're struggling, but you can re frame it in a way that gives you room to improve.

For example, you can take the phrase above and change it to: "I haven't been writing as often as I want, but I'm committed to mastering my mindset in order to build my writing habit."

Same scenario, different story. There's power in switching your story.

Use your Writer's Habit Worksheet to write a statement that creates a positive writer's identity.

### **Story #4 – Writing involves a huge commitment**

You've read blog posts telling you to write 1,000 words per day or to write every single day. You figure since you can't commit to that much writing, you shouldn't write at all.

If you re frame your story into one of *testing methods* instead of being bound to them, you'll relieve some pressure and have the ability to explore and find out what works *for you*.

You don't have to write 1,000 words per day or write daily to build a solid writing habit.

You can create a habit with less—much less.

When you meet someone new, you don't skip straight to marriage after the first date, do you?

Why, then, do you think you have to make a major commitment to writing in order to succeed?

The "hustle gurus," who tell you to grind non stop have no idea how behavior and consistency work. We're not all capable of going from zero to hero in three seconds.

It's okay if you don't feel like making a large commitment yet. Later on in this post, I'll show you how to set reachable short term goals to help you gain the [momentum](#) you need to make the habit stick.

In the corresponding section of your Writer's Habit Worksheet, create a sentence that alleviates the pressure of commitment.

For example, mine might say: "I'm writing to test and explore ideas."

## **Story #5 – I have to be original**

You want to write something *so original* it blows people away, and you're showered with praise for your genius, original, and groundbreaking work.

Stop. Stop. Stop.

You can't live in a vacuum and produce work without being influenced.

Nobody is original.

Shakespeare stole.

We all steal.

As a human being, your environment influences your behavior. Unless you become a recluse and never view any form of media, you'll end up "borrowing," ideas and styles from others.

If you let go of your need to be one hundred percent original, you won't become a plagiarist. I promise.

There are a gazillion blog posts that offer writing advice, but no other writer has *my voice, my unique experiences, and my subtle insights*.

The same applies to you.

In fact, if you're too original, it means no one will be interested in your writing.

Are there still a few uncharted territories? Perhaps.

Will you be the one to discover them? I doubt it.

Focus on remixing and remaking what's already been done and tailor it to your voice. Every successful writer does this.

Even fiction writing is generally the same: Somebody wants something, and someone or something is in the way of them getting it.

You're over thinking.

Every "outline," has been created it. It's up to you to fill in the space with your words.

Now that you've uncovered the negative stories you tell yourself and re-framed them, we can talk about routines, systems, and strategies for creating a writing habit that sticks.

In your Writer's Habit Worksheet, write a statement telling yourself it's okay to borrow ideas.

Mine might say, "Once I learn from the greats, I can create my own style using my unique voice."

## **How to Set Yourself Up for Success**

I believe in having a solid vision for your long term success, but battles are won and momentum is gained in the short term.

Before we work on setting your writing goals, I want you to answer this question:

*What does success look like for you in the immediate future?*

Do you have a specific project you want to complete?

Are you simply trying to start writing period?

Are you a polished writer who needs to get back on track?

The goals for each type of success definition vary. Once you define success, setting a goal will be much easier.

I recently helped an established writer jump start his writing habit. He had a background in journalism and freelancing, but his writing career faded and he hadn't faced the page in a while.

I helped him start a new blog and define his definition of success which was simply to "get back on the horse."

Once he builds a consistent habit, his definition of success may change, and he can change his goals accordingly.

My definition of success is different. I'm looking to expand my reach, influence, and income through writing. This definition requires a healthy writing output, and my goals reflect those ambitions.

When I started writing, my definition of success was getting my work out there, because I dreamed about writing for a long time without taking action.

If you have zero writing experience, success shouldn't look like being a famous author.

You don't have the chops for it (yet).

Success for you might mean writing often enough to believe in yourself.

Using your Writer's Habit Worksheet to write an answer to the above question.

## Why Most People Fail to Reach Their Goals

I'm great at following through with my writing goals, but I fail when it comes to my health goals.

When I want to get back into shape, I come up with a crazy plan to go from zero exercise to fitness guru overnight. I'll plan to work out four times per week and cut out carbs completely.

You can guess how my plans work out.

I set the bar too high, and once I fail to reach my goals, I crash hard. The zero carb goal ends with me eating a pile of nachos and feeling a weird mixture of satisfaction and depression. Once I miss one day in my workout schedule, I give up completely.

Instead, I should try working out and eating no carbs *once per week*. Once I accomplish that a few weeks I can move up to twice per week. This gradual strategy would lead to me creating a solid fitness routine.

(This post will be my reminder).

When it comes to your writing goal, I want you to pick a ridiculously small goal you know you can achieve.

Maybe you choose a 250-word blog post once per week.

Maybe you promise to write **one sentence** when you get up each morning.

You can use an experimental run of one month to build a habit, then, you can increase your word count or frequency when you're more confident.



Small goals seem trivial, but they help your brain associate positive thoughts with your new habit. Your brain likes to “win,” and when you reach your small goal it will start to “wire,” itself to believe you’re competent and capable of following through.

If you write your small goal down and keep it somewhere prominent where you can look at it, your chances of following through will go up as well.

What's a dead simple easy to follow writing goal you can achieve? Write it down on Writer Habits Worksheet.

For example, your goal can be: "I will write 100 words per day for the next 30 days," or "I will write one 500-word blog post for the next two weeks."

When you complete your trial run, decide if you want to increase your goal or do another trial run to firm up your habit.

## **How to 10X the Chances of Reaching Your Writing Goals**

When you combine your easy to reach goal with a compelling "prize," to work toward, your odds of following through will increase tenfold.

When you focus on goals alone, they're hard to achieve, but when you see your goals through the lens of the rewards they'll grant you, there's a pot of gold at the end of your rainbow to look forward to.

I want you to take your definition of success and use it to write a compelling "prize statement," you can look at to remind you why you want to build your writing habit.

For example, my prize statement would be "Writing 1,000 words per day will help me publish more books and grow my writing coach business."

Use your Writer's Habit Worksheet to create your compelling prize statement.

Throughout this post, you've learned subtle techniques that will help you build a writing habit that sticks.

Each is helpful on their own, but combining them makes you become invested in your habit, and ultimately your success.

# How Long Does It Take to Build a Habit (That Sticks)?

According to a study conducted by University College London, it takes a minimum of 66 days and as long as 180 to build a habit that sticks.

Following this logic, if you write one sentence per day for two and a half months, you'll have the solid writing habit.

Baby steps lead to a habitual process. At a certain point, you'll "hit a groove," and the habit will be ingrained into your system.

Now that I have a solid writing habit, I can take a few days off and come back to the page without worry of getting stuck.

Once you build the habit and make it stick, the sky's the limit in terms of your growth as a writer.

Picture yourself a few months from now.

You've just published your first book or have a thriving blog with thousands of readers.

Even better, you're the writer you once dreamed of becoming.

Most people try to become writers and fail. But you're different. You made it to the end of this post and today's the day you're going to set yourself up for success.

Keep your Writer's Habit Worksheet handy when you sit down to write. When you feel stuck, you can look at it to realize you've set yourself up for success.

Embody the statements you wrote down, and face the page with confidence.

I'm excited for you. You will love the rewards you reap from building your writing habit.

You can do this. Trust me.

Begin.