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Come in...and be captivated...

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Writers' Craft Box

What this section is intended to do:
Give writers suggested hints, resources, and advice.

How to use: Pick and choose what you feel is most helpful and derive inspiration from it- most importantly, **HAVE FUN!**

What a Writers' Craft Box is: Say you're doing an art project and you want to spice it up a bit. You reach into a seemingly bottomless box full of colorful art/craft supplies and choose only the things that speak to you. You take only what you need to feel that you've fully expressed yourself. Then, you go about doing your individual project adding just the right amount of everything you've chosen until you reach a product that suits you completely. So, this is on that concept. Reach in, find the things that inspire you, use the tools



"Arts and Crafts" N.M.B Copyright 2008

that get your writing going and see it as fulfilling your self-expression as opposed to following rules.

Writing is art and art is supposed to be fun, relaxing, healing and nurturing. It's all work and it's all play at the same time. A Writers' Craft Box is whatever your imagination needs it to be- a lifeboat, the spark of an idea, a strike of metaphorical lightning, a reminder, or simply the recommendation of a good book. Feel free to sit back and break out the crayons. Coloring outside the lines is heartily encouraged.



"Fun" N.M.B Copyright 2009

Author, editor, writing coach, and spiritual counselor, Noelle Sterne writes fiction and nonfiction and has published over 250 pieces in print

and online venues. Short stories and essays have been published in various anthologies, and she has had guest posts on many writing and spiritual sites. With a Ph.D. from Columbia University, for over 28 years Noelle has helped doctoral candidates complete their dissertations (finally). In her new book, [Trust Your Life: Forgive Yourself and Go After Your Dreams](#) (Unity Books), using “practical spirituality” Noelle draws examples from her practice and other aspects of life to help readers let go of regrets, relabel their past, and reach their lifelong yearnings.

Visit Noelle’s website at: www.trustyourlifenow.com

Her radio interview about the book can be heard at:

[http://www.unity.fm/showdownload/](http://www.unity.fm/showdownload/UnityVillage_081511/unityvillage_081511.mp3)

[UnityVillage_081511/unityvillage_081511.mp3](http://www.unity.fm/showdownload/UnityVillage_081511/unityvillage_081511.mp3)

A YouTube review of the book can be found at:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSVEkcoLiIk&feature=channel_video_title

Do You Deserve Your Dream?

By Noelle Sterne

From early ages, many of us have dreamed, fantasized, and painted enchanting pictures on our ceiling of reaching success in our most passionate pursuits—writing for me, fashion design for my cousin, chess master for her son, Yankees’ shortstop for her other son, first cellist in international symphony for my other niece. Every musician dreams of rock (or Philharmonic) stardom and millions. Every actor dreams of dramatic discovery, constant lead roles, adulation, and Oscars. Every writer dreams of best-sellers, big money, movie adaptations, appearances on national TV and induction into the Kindle Million Club.

Some of us make it. And most of us don’t. Why? Sure we must work enough, practice enough, pursue enough, and concentrate enough. But there’s another crucial reason—we must feel we deserve our Dream.

Do You Feel You Don’t Deserve Your Dream?

If you feel you don’t deserve your Dream, no matter how much time and

sweat you've put in, how many movers and shakers you know, how many "lucky" breaks you've had, or how gorgeous (or outrageous) you are, you will torpedo yourself. Louise Hay reminds us, "When we have strong beliefs that we don't deserve, we have problems doing what we want." [1]

I felt undeserving of writing success for a long time, despite countless queries and pitches. The mounting frustrations forced me, finally, to recognize some of the red lights that kept me gridlocked. See if and how they apply to you.

~Do you feel a vague sense of guilt when you're doing what you really want to?

~When you've just settled down to create, do you suddenly remember you absolutely must go get the car washed?

~When you've marked out the whole afternoon for your project, do nausea, headaches, dizziness descend?

Admit these signs of non-deserving. Your shifty unconscious has just dispatched the guilt gestapo to subvert your creativity and stifle your Dream.

Unfortunately, our culture keeps this squad on active duty, especially for women. Mothers are notorious for taking the raggedy heel of the bread, serving everyone else the perfect wedges of pie, and scraping the dregs for their portion. Wives are notorious for putting off their Dreams until their husbands have established their careers, children have grown, elderly parents have been cared for, and church has served its last supper.

As if these societal expectations aren't enough to keep us trussed for life, many stay tied up for fear or guilt of bettering our parents. So we deliberately sabotage our successes.

Beginning to Reverse

To reverse any of these Dream-crushing thoughts and actions, you don't need thirty years of therapy. Only realize you have the power to change, first by recognition and then by refusal. Refuse to let the self-denial and guilt gang in, no matter how much they're pounding on the door and menacing at the windows.

Have you boldly asked yourself what you really do want, what your Dream is? In her irresistible, spiritual odyssey, *Eat, Pray, Love*, Elizabeth Gilbert had such an epiphany. When she finally dared to ask herself what she really wanted, her answers ranged from a new linen shirt to living in Italy.[2]

You don't have to go on a shopping fling, relocate, or even leave your house. Instead, practice deserving with relatively small things. Choose the better piece of toast (I love it dark), take the neater piece of cake, get tickets to the playoffs, order a mile-high pastrami sandwich and don't share it, give yourself a daily bottle of imported beer, buy that slightly-too-tight pair of jeans (not your grandmother's overalls). You'll soon graduate to giving yourself the time, energy, and focus to pursue your Dream.

Dare to Deserve

If you're questioning your deservingness, no need. Your desire to pursue your passion tells you that you unequivocally deserve your Dream. Otherwise you wouldn't desire it at all. Dare to believe that all things are working for good in your life, toward your Dream. Give your Dream the energy it deserves.

This may mean giving up certain things, very cherished things that we've hung onto often for years. Like what? Give up thinking about your face (wrinkled), your feet (bony), your stomach (too big), your house (unclean), your garage (a disaster area), your desk (piled high), your finances (lacking), your work (chronically behind), your mate (chronically annoying), your future (scarily unknown).

Give up trying to preserve an often worse enemy than all these: your status quo. The old comfort zone is a fleece we pull around us, with soothing

snacks and silly distractions that don't feed or challenge. We sink into them and away from all but the necessities.

But you know that your Dream won't let you stay in superficial fatal contentment. It prods you with that annoying feeling of dissatisfaction, despite the huge sugar intake or movie marathon. It pokes you with that floating guilt that you should be doing something else. It jabs you with what should be welcome darts of discomfort so you don't stay in that sluggish zone.

Know that your Dreams and deepest desires aren't flighty, stupid, ridiculous, but God-given, even implanted in you. Their strength and persistence alone show how intrinsic they are to your very being.

Creativity counselor and spiritual teacher Julia Cameron reminds us, "Our creative dreams and yearnings come from a divine source."^[3] And you know you'll continue to be restless, unhappy underneath every other good thing, and always on the edge of grumpy unless you take steps to let your Dream dip its toe into the water and start splashing.

Get to Deservingness

How do we rise above all those negative thoughts that pull down our Dreams and feel like spilled glue oozing through our minds? The principles are ancient and lately rediscovered. Abraham, the collective consciousness channeled by Esther Hicks, tells us: "If you want your fortunes to shift, you have to begin telling a different story."^[4]

Our old stories, and the different, better ones we create are so powerful because of four principles. These are "mental conditioning laws" explained by metaphysical teacher U. S. Andersen, and reiterated by many more recent spiritual teachers:^[5]

1. We are what we concentrate on.

If we concentrate on guilt, lost opportunities, and failure, we engender

feelings of extreme negativity. If we concentrate on success, feelings of achievement begin to infuse us. We gain a glimmer of hope, a sliver of excitement, a glimpse (can it be!) that what we yearn for really can happen.

2. What we concentrate on grows.

We've all had this experience. You wake up grouchy. You snap at your spouse and slap down the dog's bowl. Then on your way to the second cup of coffee, you hit your head on the kitchen cabinet door, curse, and step on the dog's tail. The dog yowls, waking the baby, and your spouse yells at you. And you haven't even gotten dressed for work. You've been concentrating on grumpiness. Result? You've produced these matchless experiences the first thing in the morning.

Equally negative mindsets—of despair, feeling it's too late, giving up—have produced the succession of events, choices, reactions that have sent our Dreams down the mineshaft. And have left us with flinty handfuls of shale instead of flowers.

3. What we concentrate on becomes real.

The marvelous human mind believes what we tell it, whether it's in the world we see or the world of our minds. What we tell our minds we come to believe. When we tell ourselves we're failures, can never finish anything, or will never get what we want, we believe these messages. We attract them, by our very concentration, into our experience and they become real to us. And this leads to the next principle . . .

4. We always find what we concentrate on.

A well-known axiom declares that things don't just happen to us; they happen justly. "Justly" means that things happen just as we believe them. Haven't our dire self-fulfilling prophecies come about—"I never could...", "I was afraid that...", "I knew that..." to our disappointment, dismay, or heartbreak? But—when we "know" and keep daydreaming about our success, what it looks like, feels like, and leads to, it begins to show up.

As Andersen also points out, these four mental laws always work, whether we consciously apply them or not. “The greatest danger in your life lies in dwelling on failure. The greatest reward lies in thinking success.”[6]

You may think that reversing negative concentrations takes too much concentration. And determination. And discipline. Yes...and not necessarily. Start using these very principles of thought to reverse your thoughts—if you tell yourself it’s hard, of course it will be. If you tell yourself that reversal and replacement of those tentacled thoughts are easy...

Abraham helps:

All you have to do is identify what you want, and then practice the feeling-place of what it will feel like when that happens. There is nothing you cannot be or do or have. You are blessed Beings; you have come forth into this physical environment to create. There is nothing holding you back, other than your own contradictory thought.... You are powerful Creators and right on schedule.... Just practice that and watch what happens.[7]

If you need a little help to reach this mind- and feeling-state, envision a spring shower. You stand there, face skyward, arms open, the gentle drops blessing you. Each drop is a positive thought, touching your face gently, effortlessly. Are you straining? Condemning yourself for not feeling the rain? Trying? Not likely. All you have to do is stand there, enjoy, take in, accept.

So, like a soft spring shower, imagine your Dream, visualize it, and gently let these words refresh you.

Affirmations for Deservingness

~I deserve to do what I’ve always wanted.

~No one stands in my way.

~I don't stand in my way.

~I was born to deserve what I've always wanted.

~I have enough time, money, energy, interest, cooperation from everyone around me to do what I've always wanted.

~Doing what I've always wanted to do is my natural state.

~Doing what I've always wanted to do harms no one.

~Doing what I've always wanted to do makes me feel good and keeps me healthy.

~Doing what I've always wanted to do blesses me and everyone I meet.

~Doing what I've always wanted to do feels wonderful!

* * *

So marshal the courage to dare your dream. By daring, you'll be opening yourself to accepting and receiving the love, abundance, care, comfort, security, order, healing, reassurance you're entitled to. When you open yourself this way, nothing can stand between you and your Dream. You realize the essential truth: you're "a divine being, blessed with miraculous gifts" that allow you "to rise above any challenge and live your dreams." [8]

You do deserve your Dream. You deserve everything you've ever wanted, imagined and longed for. Your Dream is natural, God-inspired, springing from your highest Self. Your main, effortless job is to keep thinking about your Dream, going towards it with the right activities, and accepting your deservingness.

ENDNOTES

[1] Louise L. Hay, *The Power Is Within You* (Carson, CA: Hay House, 1991), p. 164.

[2]Elizabeth Gilbert, in the first third of *Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006).

[3]Julia Cameron, *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity* (New York: Tarcher/Putnam, 1992), p. 3.

[4]Esther Hicks and Jerry Hicks, *Money and the Law of Attraction: Learning to Attract Health, Wealth and Happiness* (Carlsbad, CA: Hay House, 2008), p. 72.

[5]U. S. Andersen, *Success Cybernetics: Practical Applications of Human Cybernetics* (North Hollywood, CA: Wilshire, 1972), pp. 29-31.

[6]Andersen, p. 31.

[7]Esther Hicks and Jerry Hicks, workshop in North Los Angeles, CA, No. 544, March 22, 2003.

[8]Unity, Daily Word, March/April 2010, April 6, 2010, p. 53.

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