

How to Stay Motivated to Finish Your Story: 7 ways

by Chazda Albright -

<http://greatstorybook.com/how-to-stay-motivated-to-finish-your-story-7-ways/>

This entry is part 8 of 10 in the series [My Storybook Process](#)

[My Storybook Process](#)

- [My Storybook Process \(Part 1\): creating a new thing](#)
- [My Storybook Process \(Part 2\): creating new characters](#)
- [My Storybook Process \(Part 3\): creating the story](#)
- [My Storybook Process \(Part 4\): creating the manuscript for a children's book](#)
- [My Storybook Process \(Part 5\): creating rising action](#)
- [My Storybook Process \(Part 6\): um... now I'm a procrastinating writer *ahem](#)
- [My Storybook Process \(Part 7\): creating an ending](#)
- [How to Stay Motivated to Finish Your Story: 7 ways](#)
- [How to Procrastinate \(yes, there IS a right way!\)](#)
- [Falling Hard and Writing Anyway](#)

Along the long road to finishing a story - be it a script, a novel or a storybook - it can be hard not to let the day job and other stuff of life's distractions derail you and your project.

Sometimes, this derailment can happen several times even during just one project. If you've ever tried tackling an entire novel in one month, you know exactly what I mean here. So what can you do to stay on track and finish the story? Let's go.

1. Set Deadlines. For REALS.

Don't just tell yourself about the deadline. Don't just mark it in your calendar. Tell your friends, your family, your agent - or someone whose opinion really matters to you a lot, someone you deeply respect. Give yourself plenty of opportunity to lose face if you do not deliver.

Get uptight about it, get nervous. Be afraid.

Artwork by Ryan McGuire.

2. Set Reasonable Deadlines.

Really. Know what it is you can reasonably do given your daily schedule of responsibilities coupled with any physical limitations you might have. For me, I know that I cannot write eight hours a day every day straight. I could do that in my twenties, but not now. I know what I can reasonably do and set my writing schedule and expectations around that.

While there are always surprising days when I ride a creative storm and I can just sit down and bang out twenty pages, those times are rare indeed and should never be calculated into your writing schedule. Those moments are always unexpected and absolutely nothing you do can throw you back to that kind of head space.

3. Set Priorities. Be Determined.

A fellow writer admitted to me a few weeks ago, “I’m just not sure how important my writing really is to me.” She said this days before deciding to drop it. There is nothing wrong with deciding that writing isn’t important to you. You may discover another passion. In most cases though, I really think it is doubt setting in where determination should be.

If writing is something you’ve always wanted to do, if it has become something that you really love to do, don’t let it slip away because you’ve got laundry to do.

Life’s daily stuff has a tendency to settle itself. If writing is established to be a high priority habit, then the laundry and all the other responsibilities resting firm on your shoulders will get done as they need to get done. After writing, around writing. Writing is the priority.

Family should always come first, no question. But if you get your ducks in a row, they will learn to understand that writing is important to you. *They will line-up to help you through your writing projects.*

4. Get your ducks in a row.

By this, I mean those who live with you: you need to make it clear to whoever lives with you that when it comes to your writing time, that time must be uninterrupted. This is really key.

You typing does not mean “playing around with writing a story” - it is focused work, and that means the rest of the world needs to stay out of your head.

The kids are in another area (if you have a door you can close, this helps), your mate knows to leave you alone, the phone and the doorbell is not for you to answer, and the neighbors can come back later. Tune out and make it known to those closest to you that they need to respect this line you’ve drawn so that you can finish the story.

It will never get done if you are interrupted every 10-20 minutes.

5. Get a Novelist.

This is actually really important. Find and get to know other writers and illustrators. If you want to live a creative life, you must absolutely have other creative people be part of your circle of real-life friends and acquaintances.

To be clear, Internet-friends and acquaintances are great and you never know where that could lead. It can even lead to a creative partnership. Still, there is nothing like real life friends with common interests. Get out there any way you can and get to know others who want what you want. Take a class, join a creative writing group - anything. *Find your tribe.*

When you do find your tribe, you'll find that doing what you love to do somehow becomes SO MUCH EASIER. I don't know exactly what it is, really. There is this certain shared excitement for making stuff, a certain creative energy, and if you can be with people like that, it catalyzes your own spark.

It is the most rewarding thing to inspire someone else, and that action is in itself inspiring. It throws you back into your project with renewed interest and desire to get it done.

6. Get a Champion.

I don't mean a winner, I mean find someone who absolutely thinks your writing is terrific, important and valuable. Many people run into problems with family and friends not supporting their writing interests, the logic behind that being that there's no security in it. Well, there's no security in anything, so you might as well do what you yearn to do.

That naturally means an Uphill Battle, especially if you are starting out. It doesn't matter. Even if you have a low-level of writing skill, even if English is your second language, there must be someone in your life who will support you in this.

Find a friend, a teacher - some kind of mentor - who understands this about you, your need to write down words, to create story. It's a rare thing, so don't get down if you don't have someone like this and certainly don't give up if you can't find someone to champion you. Instead, use that as fuel to try just that much harder.

And anyway - I am here for you. If you ever need someone to unload on about any of this stuff, just send me a message.

7. Allow for Dream Time.

While there are times when you only have 20 minutes to write, there have to be those great days when you can sit for a few hours at a time and just slam it out. **Those are the Writer's Dream Times: when you really push yourself and then BOOM you are transported into your story and the rest of the world is somewhere else.**

This isn't a daily allowance for most writers, but do what you can to get some days like that into your

life.

What do you think? Have I missed something that should be on this list? Write below and let me know: what is the single most important factor in your writing life?

Keep creating, no matter what.

This entry is part of the series

[My Storybook Process](#)

Be sure to check out the other posts:

[<< My Storybook Process \(Part 7\): creating an ending](#)[How to Procrastinate \(yes, there IS a right way!\)](#) >>
