

What Derails Your Writing Dream?

By Tara Johnson

“Most men lead lives of quiet desperation and go to the grave with the song still in them.”
~Thoreau

Each year, I meet countless people who tell me they dream of writing, but only a fraction of them take the first step to begin. Why?

Here are the most common excuses:

1. Fear of failure

Writers fail all the time. That’s just part of the deal. But the good news is failure teaches us success. Yes, it’s true if you don’t attempt something, you’ll never fail; it’s also accurate to say if you never try anything new, you’ll never truly live. You only have one lifetime. Fill it with by pursuing things that thrill your soul.

2. Fear of rejection

You are not what you write. What you create is merely a product. When we refuse to let our worth be determined by outside sources, it makes criticism and rejection much easier to swallow. Not everyone will get you, your ideas, or your stories, but that’s okay. When this life is over, you won’t stand before a jury of your peers. You’ll stand before God alone. Pleasing Him is all that matters.

3. Lack of time

Most authors work full or part time jobs. They have families. Some homeschool. Some are care-givers for their parents. Some battle chronic health issues. When do they find time to write?

Serious writers sacrifice expendable things for an hour each day to create. (Television, chores, downtime...even sleep). We are all given the same amount of time in our daily allotment. What you do with that time is a reflection of your priorities. Is an hour too much? Start with ten minutes. In one month, that’s 300 minutes of work on a story you didn’t have before.

4. Perfectionism

The stories that slip from a writer’s fingers to the page are never perfect, because the one doing the creating is flawed. Learning takes a life time. The pressure we put on ourselves to release a perfect product is unrealistic. Why? Because we’re always striving to improve. A superb story in our eighties does not negate a great story we created in our forties. Both have value. Both have impact.

With each new story, my goal has become to write the best novel I can in the current life circumstance I'm navigating. God has been faithful to bridge the gap where my skill ends.

5. Vulnerability

Not every story will require you to bleed on the page. There is a place for fun, light-hearted tales that do nothing more than make your reader laugh. But what if God is calling you to go deeper?

Writing from hard places takes courage. Ask yourself why you are terrified to be honest about your feelings and experiences. Wrestle it out with God. One of the greatest joys of writing is allowing Him to heal those broken places as you create.

6. Inadequate skills

No one is born knowing how to be an electrician or a heart surgeon. Every skill set is taught. Pick up a book on the craft of writing. Follow a blog. Take a class. In today's world, the opportunities are limitless.

Ask God to make you fearless. Change your "What if I fail?" to "What if I succeed?" Do one thing to pursue your dream. In order to do something new, you'll have to attempt something you've never tried before. Incubator is here to help.

"Do not despise these small beginnings, for the LORD rejoices to see the work begin..."
~Zechariah 4:10