



# Your Best Writing Life

## Tips to Make Writing a Priority This Year

by Edie Melson

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I think one of the biggest obstacles writers face is finding the time to write. It's a common myth to think that time just magically appears. Truthfully, we never FIND time to write, we have to carve out time to write. That's what separates the wanna-be from the professional.

## Tips to Make Writing a Priority

1. Make an appointment. I've learned that if I don't have it on my calendar, it doesn't happen. For me, that's true. My days fill up fast, but if I have a time scheduled to write, then it happens.
2. Quit with the guilt. For some reason we make everyone else's dreams and goals a priority. Why do we neglect our own? Is God's call less important because it's me?
3. Get ready to make choices. Truthfully you can't do it all. No one can. How important is writing to you? If you're like me, you can't live without writing. A day without writing feels like a failure. It's the way I process life. But I still have to make choices.
4. Watch the clock (especially online). It's not enough to sit down at the computer. We also have to turn off the Internet and actually write. Surfing social media doesn't count. Reading blogs about writing doesn't count. These are important parts of being an author, but they're NOT writing!
5. Don't go it alone. Yes, the act of writing is a solitary process. But you still need a tribe. We need encouragement, accountability, and honesty. As writers we're not good at objective evaluation. We tend to swing between extremes. Either our writing feels like it's brilliant, or it's junk. We need the perspective other writers can bring to the table. And yes, they need to be writers. Non-writers don't understand the process.



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## Tips to Make Writing a Priority (continued)

6. Evaluate your writing buddies. Yes, we all need writing buddies. But they need to be working writers. Not people who like to sit around and talk about writing. Make sure they're people who understand the discipline and drive it takes to succeed. You need people who will hold you accountable, not people who'll help you come with excuses not to write.

7. Be courageous. Failure isn't the worst thing that can happen to a writer. Often failure teaches us more than success. The worst thing that can happen to a writer is to not write.


8. Learn to write when you don't feel like it. This is one of the biggest differences between the professional and the amateur. The pros know you have to write whether you're in the mood or not.

9. Be willing to write junk. So often you have to write junk to get to the jewels. The only thing you can't fix is a blank page.

10. Schedule a write-in. Make a date, meet some friends at a local coffee shop and write. Having a group will spur you to higher word counts and amp up the accountability factor.

11. Build in rewards. When I set a goal, I like an incentive. So I build in small rewards for making word count.

12. Take a break. When I get stuck, it helps to do something. I take a short walk, do a quick chore like load the dishwasher. The physical action stimulates my mind. It's also healthy for your back.



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13. Write in the spaces. Some days we only have short bits of time in which to write. It's a myth that we have to have large chunks of time to get something done. An hour is still an hour, even if it's broken into fifteen minute chunks.

14. Write regularly. When I started out, my kids were young. I couldn't write during the daytime. So my husband and I worked out a schedule. I'd be with the family during the day and evening. When everyone went to sleep, I'd get back up and write until three or four o'clock in the morning. Then my husband would get the kids up and off to school in the morning while I slept in. It wasn't a normal schedule, but it was a schedule.

15. Pray first. This one is the very most important tip. Pray when you're organizing your schedule, pray when the thought of writing pops into your head and pray when you sit down to write.

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Edie Melson—author, blogger & speaker—has a passion to help those who are struggling find the God-given strength they need to triumph through difficult circumstances. Connect with her at [www.EdieMelson.com](http://www.EdieMelson.com)

