

Ask Yourself What You "Can't" Have

By Mindy McHorse

Mindy Tyson McHorse here, continuing the discussion on how to figure out what you want in life — and how to get it.

Here at *The Writer's Life*, we constantly talk about the writer's lifestyle and how great it is. We play up the perks of working from home and not having a boss. We point out that having a freelance business means there's no ceiling on your income.

It's all true.

But my question to you is, does that kind of lifestyle really appeal to you?

To answer that, you've got to dig deep and really visualize the kind of life you want.

This means you have to go beyond the perks of working from home and being in charge of your time. Because that's just what they are — perks. They're not goals.

Think about *why* you want more command over your time and income.

A good trick to doing this is to ask yourself what you *can't* have. Then force yourself to consider whether you'd want those things if you *could* have them.

Here's where it gets challenging: you must also admit you *deserve* to have what you want — regardless of what your parents had, regardless of what your friends have, regardless of the economy.

Too often, we listen to the dreams and ideas of others. They end up running our lives, and we don't even realize it. Parents are often guilty of this: "We come from a family of doctors, so my daughter must also be a doctor." Or the flipside: "People like us don't get rich."

They have the best of intentions, but they end up blocking any expression of your real self and your true calling.

If you've been told you can't have or do or be a certain thing, you tend to stop wanting it — at least, that's the case on the surface. You may still secretly want it deep down, but you've shut off the part of your brain that acknowledges it.

That's where this question comes in handy: what *can't* you have?

If you have enough guts to voice your dream — especially if it's a dream that's bigger and bolder than the dreams of those around you — friends and critics will discourage you. They'll tell you your dream is impossible.

The writer's life is about realizing the impossible. It's about breaking past the status quo barrier. It's also about connecting with people who encourage you to go for your goals instead of holding you back. If I hadn't found supportive friends, I never would

have hit six figures last year (I met those friends at [Bootcamp](#), by the way).

Now I live a life where my days are my own. I decide how I spend my time. I'm not under the thumb of a hyper-controlling boss. I don't view my calendar in blocks of annual leave.

And instead of making small, regular plans, I'm thinking big. I could feasibly have my house paid off in just three more years. I like that my husband has the option of quitting his job if he chooses. My schedule is flexible enough to allow for home-schooling my kids.

If you're wondering what this has to do with copywriting, it's simple. Your freelance career is *how* you'll break that status quo barrier. It's the means to your goal. The vehicle that takes you to where you want to be.

That's been the case for me and a ton of other people — check out the [Wall of Fame](#) for proof.

Now sit down and think. What is it you've always been told you *can't* have in life that you really want? Feel free to share it with me by posting a comment below.

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10 Responses to "Ask Yourself What You "Can't" Have"

Oh, Mindy--I can relate, that's why I never told my family about AWAI or copywriting. The first thing I would have heard was "you can't do that!" Had I mentioned buying the copywriting course, I would have been scolded for spending "that kind of money" (and I'm WAY over 40, too.) It helps that I live in Texas. I've always been told what I can and can't have, long after turning 18. Now that I've met people like you who are actually DOING it, I know I can. I hope to connect with a lot more of y'all at Bootcamp, as well as catch up to folks I met last year.

AmyODonnell – over a year ago

Hi Mindy!

Hi Mindy- I have always loved to write and didn't really think you could make a decent living doing it until I googled "freelance writing" about 6 years ago. (!) OK, so I'm just now getting the car jumpstarted, so to speak, but I was on your

teleconference yesterday and signed up for Bootcamp right after that (after convincing myself that it was actually money I couldn't afford not to spend)! Looking forward to it!

EvanWJ – over a year ago

Ms. McHorse,

I am greatly interested in the wonderful world of copywriting. Your articles certainly are enticing to me since I have spent most of my life, until lately, trying to please everybody but myself.

I have a self-published book now but I'm still not convinced it is any good. Your descriptions of the successes you are having as well those in the Bootcamp are impressive.

I don't know that I have the talent or the money to get started in copywriting but I would if I could. So thank you for expressing your story. Maybe you should title it "Hope for All":)

Sincerely, Lance Knight Pasadena, TX

Guest (lanceknight1) – over a year ago

Hi All,

Thanks for sharing your stories!

One thing I finally had to accept is that some people will NEVER understand the world of copywriting -- and that may include friends or family. In some cases, they don't want to believe we've found such a good thing, especially if they've experienced what you mentioned, Amy, where they've always been told how to live.

That's the major value in meeting other freelance writers -- "kindred spirits" -- they'll encourage and support you like no other!

Mindy – over a year ago

Hi Mindy Several years ago I realised that I liked writing, even though my writing was mainly technical (business requirements & functional specifications for IT projects).

Schalk – over a year ago

My ultimate goal is to be a best-selling author. The why not's stem from my childhood. I felt rejection at every turn in the road, then I found www.writing.com and found people liked my writing. I also received pamphlets for making a 6 figure income writing. I did my homework several years ago, but the price tag always stopped me, until now. Now I feel I can have my cake and eat it too. I have not quit my day job yet, but I plan to when I finish the course and start down Success Road.

Guest (Valerie) – over a year ago

Schalk -- That's terrific. I think a lot of us fail to realize being a writer can come in so many different forms. I'm glad you've found one that works for you!

Valerie -- Excellent! I love that you put your goal out there, that you've overcome hurdles, and that you're already headed in the right direction. You'll definitely get there!

Best wishes for success to both of you! :)

Mindy – over a year ago

Hi Mindy!

One of my goals is to have my portable businesses. I want my freedom. I love the writer's life and i can apply that skill to my money making information websites (another income stream).

Thank you for sharing your story and for the email reply. I will see all of you soon.

Yulanda – over a year ago

I have been writing for a numbers of years. A monthly magazine article called Positively Speaking. I have also written for other magazines, websites and blogs. I even purchased the 6 Figure Copywriting course from AWAI. I know I can write...I also know why I haven't started.

It's me....how do I jump start myself?

Guest (Steve Smith Ramona CA) – over a year ago

Hi Mindy, I've been working on the Accelerated Writing Program since the end of April...decided to go for this as I was recuperating from surgery. And today I realized I haven't even looked at my Writing Goal notebook since I first started with AWAI. So I'm doing some revising! I just turned 60 and thought I was too old to start a career...but AWAI and mentors like you have changed my mind. Thanks for your goal-related articles! They are helping me!

Carolyn R – over a year ago

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