

How the Imagination of a Child Will Get You Closer to Your Goals

By Christina Gillick

Do you remember when you were little? You could be anything when you grew up. The sky was the limit.

An astronaut? No problem.

President? Of course!

But then as you got older, you started doubting yourself.

You realized it's hard to become an astronaut or the president. So you shrunk your dreams to something you thought was possible: get a good job and raise a family.

But now you've found *the writer's life*, and you're starting to dream again.

You've heard about Paul Hollingshead, who went from working at a Publix supermarket stocking the shelves to earning over \$300,000 a year.

Or Jennifer Stevens, who has traveled the world – and been paid to do it – as a travel writer.

Or Joshua Boswell, who had to borrow \$50 from his brother to get the first installment of AWAI's *Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting*, but just a short time later, was making a six-figure income, is out of debt, takes family vacations, and works from home.

You want that life too.

You want to wake up in the morning, write a few pages, and take the rest of the day to go to the beach, spend time with your family, or see a movie.

You can have that life. But first you need to get clear on what you really want. You need to set goals and know what you're working for.

Otherwise, it will be too easy to come home from a long day of work and think, "*The writer's life* can wait. I've had a hard day."

I know because I've been there.

I procrastinated because it's hard to work all day and then work on your own business. But the thing that got me through, kept me focused, and eventually helped me succeed is envisioning my future every day and believing that what I want out of my life

will happen.

Napoleon Hill, the author of *Think and Grow Rich*, said, "All the breaks you need in life wait within your imagination. Imagination is the workshop of your mind, capable of turning mind energy into accomplishment and wealth."

But many of us let our imaginations go to sleep when we reached adulthood. We settled. You can turn all that around by waking your imagination back up. Here are my favorite ways to do it:

1. Set up a work area you're excited to use.

Your office or workspace is yours, so why shouldn't it reflect that? You have no boss telling you how it should look or co-workers you have to share it with.

Put up pictures and decorations. Get a few plants. Whatever it takes to make it an enjoyable area that you want to spend time in.

I invested in a new desk I love, a variety of office supplies that are fun to use, and an entire wall painted with white board paint.

I figure the cost of starting a writing business is so inexpensive, it's okay to spend a little on things that will make it more enjoyable.

Also, get a few things that will make the time sitting in front of the computer more comfortable. I went from a track pad to a wireless mouse and got a wrist pad because I had a lot of aches and pains in my wrists after typing all day.

If you can't afford all the things you want right now, put a picture of them on your wall or computer – or draw out your office the way you imagine it will be soon. This will give you something else to work toward.

For instance, I want to get an amazing office chair and a comfy loveseat, but those are both on my "when I hit it big" list.

2. Create vision boards.

Joshua Boswell is my favorite copywriter when it comes to faith and believing in yourself. He says the first step to unlimited success is defining what you want.

"You will never reach success in your life if you don't define it," Joshua says in one of his articles. "Not just because you don't know where you're going, but because without a clear vision of what you want, you'll never have the motivation to get off your rump and do the right things."

The first step to creating a vision board that is going to keep you motivated is figuring out what you want.

This may take some time, so I encourage you to get a notebook. Keep it with you all week. Then spend the week thinking about what you truly want.

More time with your family? Write it down.

See a show about Australia and decide you'd like to go there someday? Write it down.

Want to get out of debt? Write it down.

By the end of the week, you should have a lot of things written down that you'd like to achieve someday. Some might be right around the corner, like quitting your job. Others, like picking up and moving to Africa, might be a little further away. That's okay — the point is that you're learning to dream again.

If you need help thinking of ideas, try this:

- Envision your perfect day. What does it look like? What do you do? Write down anything you come up with. It could be making passive income and spending the day fishing.
- Now think bigger. What is the amount of passive income you want to make? Where is the most amazing place you can think of to fish?
- Take ideas from others. Check out the goals others share on social media sites. Or you can visit <http://bucketlist.org> to see what others are putting on their own lists.

Then, once you have a good-sized list and you can't possibly come up with any other ideas, start making your vision board. Find pictures in magazines that represent your goals or find them online and print them. Then grab a poster board, markers, and glue and get creative.

You can add everything to your vision board if you choose, but I find that having just a few things at a time helps me stay excited and focused. I usually have several things that are fairly obtainable and then one big goal on my vision board.

Right now, my vision board includes: buy a condo in Florida, visit New York, completely remodel my house (including a new deck with a hot tub), and buy an island.

The important thing to remember is that this is your vision board. It can be anything you want it to be. The only requirement is that looking at it must inspire you to act.

If you're a more techie person and want to avoid scissors and glue, check out Oprah's dream board creator here:
www.oprah.com/dreamboard/index.html

3. Reward yourself.

I believe rewards are very important for keeping your motivation and moving toward your goals.

I remember that when my husband and I first got married, one of our goals was to pay off debt. We created a reward system, and every time we paid off a credit card or student loan, we did something fun. We paid off our debt remarkably fast and had a ton of fun doing it.

Your path to *the writer's life* can be like that too. You can have a ton of fun reaching it remarkably fast.

Just give yourself a specified reward every time you reach a big achievement, and know what that reward will be while you're working toward the goal.

Big achievements might be choosing your niche, getting your website online, landing your first client, landing a client over \$3,000, and so on.

Spend some time this week to decide what you need to accomplish over the next year or so to meet your goals. Then write down rewards for each accomplishment.

Try not to choose any rewards you'll be tempted to give yourself even if you don't reach your goal.

An example might be, "When I land a \$1,000+ project, I'll go to the movies ..."

That might be a good reward *if* you *never* go to the movies. But as soon as the next big movie comes out, you're going to want to go, even if you haven't landed that big client yet.

Instead, set up rewards you wouldn't typically do and ones that can be given anytime. They'll be more motivating to work towards, and you'll be less likely to let yourself slip up. For example, taking the day off work and spending it at the spa, buying yourself a nice piece of jewelry, or taking your family on an exciting weekend trip.

One of the biggest benefits of *the writer's life* is the ability to have fun and get paid to do it. Why not make it as much fun as possible by truly enjoying your work area, envisioning your future, and rewarding yourself for a job well done?

What are your goals, how do you imagine your future, and how will you reward yourself? Let your imagination run wild. I won't tell anyone.

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