

Freelancing Later in Life is packed with valuable information and resources for anyone looking to enter the world of freelance writing.

Freelancing Later in Life

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CHAPTER 1

I Did It and You Can, Too

Anticipating the trauma of watching the youngest of my five children leave the nest for kindergarten, I found myself for the first time in twenty years with an unaccountable two hours per day on my hands. What would I possibly do with such freedom? A forty-something mom with a profound love of the English language, I knew it was time to fulfill my dream.

After cleaning out the “Writing” section at Barnes and Noble, I spent the first few weeks studying markets, brushing up on writing skills, and keeping my ears finely tuned to the spectacular as well as the mundane. A notebook quickly transformed from empty and white to reams of scrawling ink in a language only I could understand.

Friends thought I’d lost my marbles. My husband predicted I’d need glasses within weeks. And my kids complained that all I did was hog the computer. I was a mom on a mission, and nothing was going to stand in my way.

I subscribed to an online writing course offered by The Scribe & Quill. The editor and facilitator, Bev Walton-Porter taught an excellent four part series on perfecting freelancing skills. Armed with my newly acquired knowledge, I set a goal of having an article published within one year. (A secret loophole said I could quit if the rejection became too harrowing).

Now, two years into my bargain with myself, I have published nearly 200 articles and short stories. My youngest son will go to school this fall armed with a lunch box and backpack, as all second graders do. I will sit at home in front of my computer, armed with enough writing assignments to keep me busy on a full-time basis.

In addition to the reading, the online class, and the practice, practice, practice, the foremost factor to my success has been belief in myself. I’ve been around for quite some time. I’m fairly educated. I’m the wife of a business owner, mother to five, and have actually survived having three teenagers under one roof at the same time! I discovered a wealth of article and story ideas fermenting within the confines of my own life. It was high time I released them from their cell and utilized the knowledge that my life experiences had provided.

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Belief in myself allowed me to face rejection with a grain of salt. Common sense taught me to be honest in my self-evaluations. These traits, when combined with an unfaltering optimism, resulted in a rewarding new focus for me. That focus has now become my career.

Magazines, online publications, and newspapers have become my targeted markets. I have completed a book of short stories depicting the humorous side of parenting teens (yes, there really is one!), which is currently under consideration with a publisher.

I am a monthly columnist for two publications. And an article I wrote on the art of writing while parenting appears in a recently released e-book.

It can be done. I compare my success with a spark left smoldering. It smoked. It burned. It was never completely extinguished. And just before it turned to ash, something ignited it. That something came from within, or above, and surrounded me with a persuasive power insisting I reach for my goal. So I reached.

There's plenty left to reach for—I'll stretch and reach until I've satiated the need. And then I'll curl up, comfortable and satisfied, with a cup of hot tea and a good book—and revel in the delight of a newly published byline—it could be mine!

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