

barefootWriter

**Five Strategies to Build Up
Your Writer's Resilience**

**The No-Client Approach
to a Great Living**

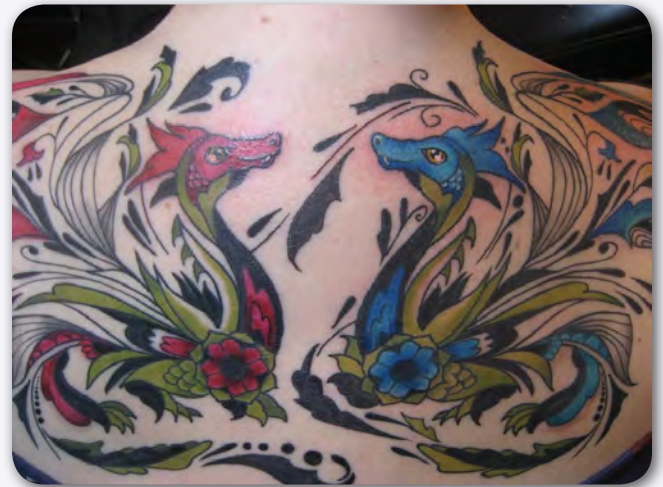
**Discover the Secret to
Easy Daily Writing**

Barefoot Writer Mary Kay Seales recently transitioned from college writing professor to professional writer; shown here at the Taj Majal in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India

PLUS: 4 Writing Rules to Keep Your Clients Happy – No Matter Where in the World You Travel • Winning Follow-Up Techniques to Get More Paid Assignments • Life-Saving Efforts Yield an Abundance of Heartfelt Glickens • 3 Ways to Win \$100

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Barefoot Writer Lea Ann Peterson, interviewed on page 7, bears a tattoo that represents her approach to life: Creative, transformative, positive, and unique

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3 Members Share How **Writing Support** and **Daily Practice** Changes Everything

By Sherri Caldwell, Steve Coombes, Taru Nieminen

Editor's Note: When I heard that Barefoot Writers Sherri Caldwell, Steve Coombes, and Taru Nieminen had challenged each other to a "write-off" using an online daily writing tool, I grew curious — *how had it affected their writing? Their confidence? Their careers?* So here, in their own words, are three different takes on the fruits of that challenge...

Sherri Caldwell

I've never been a morning person, but now I routinely wake up by 5:30 a.m. to write my "morning pages" on 750words.com. As of this writing, I'm on a 65-day streak since discovering this fun journaling program and challenging two of my Barefoot Writer friends to write every day.

Daily writing on 750words.com has given me

more than 52,000 words of draft material to draw from: thoughts, ideas and dreams, goals, and disappointments, too.

I write about what's going on in my life, alongside what's happening with my writing business. I've jotted down everything from article introductions, brainstorming lists, outlines, and more.

I even routinely copy sections of my daily entry and paste it to Word or Google Docs to continue that thought later in the day.

It has been an incredible process that's helped me build a daily writing routine.

And, it's a great way to start the day!

Together, Steve, Taru, and I set out to complete the monthly writing challenge. We each set our own rewards and consequences. These were mine:

.....
become a better writer (continued)

"If I succeed, I will treat myself to a new hair color for a conference in May — Blue? Purple?"

"If I miss a day or more, I will buy Steve Coombes a drink or lunch at Bootcamp in October!"

So at the end of April, you can imagine my excitement when I completed the 30-day monthly challenge.

Here's part of the email I received for the accomplishment:

"Yesterday was the last day of April, which brings an end to our April Challenge on 750words.com. You were signed up for it. Here are the results!

Of the 542 who signed up at the beginning of the month, 206 people made it all the way to the end. That's a success rate of 38%."

The few. The proud. The mighty. All three of us are now on the "Wall of Awesomeness" at 750words.com!

Steve Coombes

Ever wonder how prolific writers get so much written?

They write. Every day.

Rather than waiting for inspiration to strike, they reach out with their mighty pen, typewriter, or keyboard and bring words to life on the page.

That's why, as a writer, I was immediately attracted to the idea of writing 750 words: Every. Single. Day.

Without fail. Building a literal chain of success.

Every day, filling another X on the visual chain atop the writing screen serves as a surprisingly effective virtual reward and enticement to avoid "breaking the chain," a productivity method attributed to Jerry Seinfeld. (Although he denied

750 Words
TODAY THIS MONTH HELP SETTINGS 3837 MEMBERS

The Wall of Awesomeness

This month's challenge Wall of Awesomeness Wall of Shame Sign up for next month

Sherri Caldwell Search

Sherri Caldwell Miles Griffis John Mills Joy Bean Michael Grubbs

Jennifer Christofersen Alexander Taylor MeLissa Marie Hodges Tracy michele adams

Alex Laforest Kamui Yuma Janet Davies Elizabeth S Robin Trujillo Moritz Miar

Carla Nepali Ninja *Andrea Dana A. Kara G Christine Dashwood Chloe Gilholy

Sam Wagner June Terry **Taru Kaarina Nieminen** Brittany Furse-Taube Haly Dearing

Deirdre Chandler **Steve Coombes** Iain Lennon Bryan Sim Andi vL Vicky Scowcroft

Here's a poem Steve wrote on his third day of using 750words.com...

Tree in a Storm

You were here again.

I knew it before arising from slumber, your presence announced across my limbs with a cool whisper. Feathery, damp kisses promising a lengthy visit. Watching silently, listening intently, bending under your embrace.

Breath held, then released in swirling gasps.

Darkness descends as neighbors turn off the lights.

Energy now spent we sleep on, entangled in a blanket of white.

You melt away and soon I arise.

Warmth of spring renews my hope yet winter calls again.

– Steve Coombes, 3/14/2017, Inspired by Winter Storm Stella

the idea as his own during a Reddit “ask me anything” session a few years ago, it works!)

I mainly use 750words.com as a kind of private online journal to clear my head of distracting thoughts. Stream-of-consciousness writing detailing whatever was cluttering my brain became the norm. And, as a result, the tool became a springboard for creativity.

In the midst of uninteresting trifle, gems in the rough would pop up. Ideas for projects I’m working on.

Thoughts on improving my work/life balance. Even poetry — an area of writing I hadn’t explored since childhood.

This daily writing habit opens the door to boundless creativity, just waiting to be let out. All I have to do is do the work.

Which reminds me of something else Jerry

Seinfeld said during that Reddit session... “Writer’s block is a phony, made up, BS excuse for not doing your work.”

So, reminder to self, and to you: Do the work. Write every day. Or no soup for you!

Taru Nieminen

I’m so grateful for the opportunities writing brings me daily.

Like today, I’m writing for *Barefoot Writer* magazine! And it’s all because I accepted a challenge with Sherri and Steve to write 750 words a day.

It was easier than I thought.

It is incredibly helpful when you’re on the site, and you feel like you’ve written nothing, and then — surprise! A green panel pops up in the upper right-hand corner of the screen to say you’ve surpassed the 750 mark!

This daily practice has helped me become a more accurate typist (even though the program doesn’t penalize you for making mistakes). It also has helped me increase my typing speed.

Along with that, it’s helped me improve my conversational writing style.

Because I write every day now, I no longer agonize over my blog, an article, or any other writing project I need to start. First drafts are a breeze — still terrible, but they actually get done.

Writing just flows now — almost effortlessly. I can write about anything, as no one judges my writing. While doing this challenge, I’ve had many realizations about the kind of life I want — such as living somewhere with more sunshine.

And with that, my writing is elevated to a higher level — no doubt about it.

Our names adorn the “Wall of Awesomeness” found on 750words.com, and I look forward to buying Sherri and Steve both drinks at Bootcamp because they encouraged and challenged me. (And *not* because I lost a bet!) ■