

PART TWO

*REVISING*

## Actively revising the life you want to live

Part One guided you through clearing out the clutter of your negative feelings the way you might clear off your desk before beginning a new project. As writers and creative souls, you know the power and purpose of a blank page (and its many artistic corollaries). Blank does not connote empty, but clear and quiet, a space of stillness and calm from which you will now begin to create pictures, images, ideas, and intentions that will lead to your desires.

Perhaps the most important point you can carry with you through Part Two is this: to get what you want, you must know what you want. It is so simple a concept, it's often the easiest to overlook. Our desires are often nebulous, or show up as longing, which is a form of focusing on what you don't have (and thereby creating more of the same). Identifying what you do desire in the Write Free method is as simple as writing it down. Think of it like making a trip to the grocery store. If you go shopping to replenish your pantry for the week, but you go without a list, you are more likely to purchase items on a whim that aren't necessarily what you want to buy. Without a list, you're at the mercy of your appetite and impulses, and could come home with a basket full of snacks but nothing for dinner.

Identifying what you want for your artistic life is the same. If your vision is blurry—maybe all you know is that

you want to live in a natural setting, work from home, and live in a quaint cottage—would you be happy in just any natural setting, whether desert or greenery? Would you be happy in any cottage, such as a one-room fixer-upper? Not likely! You have preferences. The more concrete, visual, and detailed your preferences are to you, the more you will connect your desires—that perfect cottage in the peaceful woods with a calming stream singing outside your window—with the positive emotions that come when you are happy!

We call this process of identifying and clarifying your desires revising. In writing, revising is the process of taking your work to a deeper level, of getting clear and strengthening the work. So it is with your life. In the act of revising, your pen or keyboard are much more powerful than the simple instruments you believe they are; an instrument allows you to record your preferences in full, vivid relief and then change them as you want them to. Feelings can be revised too, by shifting from one to another, thus changing the eventual result and attracting your desires into being. To Write Free requires no more complicated technology than a way to become clear about what your desires are, and the willingness to feel good about them. When you revise your desires, your feelings, and your methods for your writing life, you create a new template, erase the old default, and most important, you get to be the one in charge of your revision. No critical editor or judge will tell you what is right; only you will know. In the act of revising, you follow your own formula and refine it until it feels right!

The more detailed you can be in writing, the greater the energy and momentum you will pick up and add to the ultimate creation of your desires. The minute you begin identifying the spectacular, possibly unexamined details of your desires, the nature of attraction promises that they

are already coming into being.

We hope that you will revise your old black-and-white desires into full color until they are so real that you can't wait to touch, feel, hold, visit, and live them. Revising puts the power of change in your hands.

At some point in our lives, most of us have felt at the whim of circumstances, the random order of life “happening” to us. Most of us simply ride the current to the best of our abilities. What if we could actually control the current, know when it would be bumpy or smooth? What if, even better, we could ask the current to be exactly as we want it to be? Revising enables you to redo and remake scenarios in your life that did not go as you preferred. You can make everyone say the right things, behave ideally, and see results turn out exactly as you want them to about anything. If you can shift the way you feel about things, you actively create better feelings that will deliver better events, circumstances, and situations to you.

Revising is all about possibilities. It's a surefire method to remind you that at any given moment you are in charge of creating your artistic life, all by the seemingly simple act of writing your way there.



## Unleashing Your Desires

*Writing gives you a great opportunity  
to swim through to freedom.*

—Natalie Goldberg

Jordan writes:

My friend Christie is a New England-based writer who has been writing her whole life. She always considered herself a “positive” person in tune with her feelings, except for one area: she had a steady negative stream of defeating thoughts and beliefs about her writing.

“For years I had been giving in to the negative voices in my head allowing myself to believe that I had no right to be a writer, that no journal should accept my stories, and no agent would ever consider me worthy of representation,” she said.

Christie knew what she wanted—to be a successfully published literary writer—but she hadn’t yet shifted her feelings about the process.

Tired of the rejections and the frustration she felt, she wrote in her journal that she needed “a change in attitude.” Not long after, a friend of hers turned her on to the idea of the power of attraction.

“As I learned to identify my desires and revise them, things started to happen. I paid more and more attention to what I was thinking and feeling and actively working to make myself feel and believe and want otherwise. Every day I wrote new desires in my journal and reread my old ones—continuing to add to them and make them richer. As time passed, things started to happen,” she said.

These “things” included having essays and stories published in quick succession by top-tier literary publications she had coveted for years, and then, a surprising request by a literary agent to represent her fiction. Christie’s work is now being represented by this agent.

“I firmly believe that taking the time to work with my desires and learn to listen to my feelings helped me attract representation. I am eternally grateful to my friend who showed me the way.”



Desires are funny things. They can preoccupy us, or seem to ebb right out of us if we stop giving them our attention. There are some desires that have probably been burning in your unconscious for as long as you can remember; childhood dreams or lifelong aspirations that may have gone unrealized for any number of reasons. And there are minor desires that you know you can live without but that would be nice if they were fulfilled. None of your desires are wrong or better than any other. But the more desires you can draw to mind that make you excited, passionate, inspired, and feeling great when you think about them, the better they will serve you in the activities in this book.

Maybe you haven’t really given much thought to what you want lately. Maybe life has gotten away from you, and you’ve put your wants on a shelf for “later,” when there is more of that elusive “free” time and fewer responsibili-

ties. “Later” is a time that never comes, however. The time for identifying your biggest desires is now. Right now! The moment you opened this chapter, you began to pave the way for getting what you want, despite all the other responsibilities and reasons claiming your attention.

In this chapter you will take down those dusty desires from the “later” shelf, shine them up, and remember why it is that you want them. Not only that, but you will learn to turn up the volume on these desires so that you can visualize them in full, vivid detail, and begin to anticipate them being realized.

When you begin to pay attention to the power of attraction, you will notice that what you focus on, you bring into being. You’ve probably heard the phrase, “like attracts like” before. Attracting your desires works the same way; if you till a space of earth in your backyard for a garden, for instance, you’re far more likely to actually plant flowers than if you sit staring at a patch of grass. And once you begin thinking about what to plant in that garden, suddenly you notice a new nursery in town, and discounts for flowers turn up in your mailbox, and friends suddenly have to offload a bunch of rare bulbs. It seems a bit like magic, but once you’ve focused your attention on your desire, you are more inclined to look for, attract, and take advantage of opportunities to create your goal.

There are an abundance of resources waiting to help bring your desires into being, but first you have to take the step, put rake or hoe in hand, and dig up that patch of earth.

So if your desire is to be a published novelist, but you’re holding thoughts about how hard that is, how you’re not sure you can write well enough, or if you should stick to your day job as a real estate agent, then you’re still sitting and staring at a patch of grass, frustrated that you don’t

have any flowers.

The activities in this section are designed to help you clarify which desires really raise your passions and to provide effective tools to flower them into being.

## ACTIVITIES

### My Number One Desire

You probably have more desires than you can count on your fingers, so this game may challenge you at first. We want you to pick your Number One desire for your artistic life and write it at the top of a blank page in your Write Free notebook. If a genie popped out of a bottle tomorrow and said you could have **ONLY ONE** wish granted, this would be that desire. In other words, if two of your desires were one, to write and produce your own play, and two, to clean out the filing cabinet, you'll want to go with the one that excites you most at the mere thought of it, probably the desire to be a playwright.

I. Write your number one desire at the top of a fresh piece of paper now.

II. Spend at least one minute contemplating how great this desire feels.

III. Number from 1 to 25 down the left side of the page.

If you want something enough, you can probably think of some good reasons why you want it, a few “impractical” reasons, and a handful of reasons that seem to matter only to you. That’s good, because you’re going to have the chance to apply every possible kind of reason to this important desire right now. We suggest that your reasons be written in positive terms, even though your desire is not yet a reality.

IV. Under each of the twenty-five spaces, write one reason why you want what you want. Give yourself a few moments to feel the positive energy of each reason. No reason is too small, or too grand. You can want it because you think it will achieve world peace, or simply because it gives you a flash of pleasure. See if you can let this pleasurable anticipation build as you write, so that by the time you hit twenty-five, you are buzzing with excitement and good feelings.

Example: *I want to write and produce my own play. Why?*

1. *Because it will be creatively fulfilling*
2. *I will get to use talents that I don't otherwise get to use.*
3. *I love the simplicity of the play form*
4. *It will be more fun than weeding...*

Some tips: If you slow down and think you are running out of reasons, don't quit!! Stick with it. Think of the simplest possible reason why you want it. No positive reason is too small! Don't consider what others will think. Allow yourself to want and don't worry about how this will come to you yet.

Congratulate yourself for getting these down! The time spent on visualizing your desires is important. You are setting the groundwork for your creative life.

## ✍ But Why?

You know how children, in their perfect innocence, are often unsatisfied with the simplest of answers? “Mom, why do birds fly?” And Mom answers, “Because they have wings.” And the child asks again, “But why do they have wings?” and so on... You’re going to apply that same kind of innocent, childlike curiosity to this next game.

I. From your list of twenty-five wonderful reasons why you want your Number One Desire, pull five that resonate with you most. They can draw you the strongest for any reason. Write them on a fresh page.

II. Take each reason, and ask in a spirit of curiosity and anticipation, WHY will [your desire here] make me feel creatively fulfilled? And so on. For each of these five reasons, ask WHY again, and freewrite the answers. You may come up with a whole series of new answers to the question, or deeper, possibly surprising reasons that didn’t make it onto your list of twenty-five. If you are feeling particularly keen to push your feeling state up even higher, do this activity for as many of your twenty-five reasons as you like.

## ✍ Telling a Story

Even if your medium is poetry (or sculpture, for that matter), the act of telling a story is a powerful incantation that can draw your desires to you. Remember stories told to you by adults when you were a child? Remember how those characters were as real to you as your actual friends? Your desires are only intangible so long as you can’t see or know them. Now that you know why you want them, it’s time to tell yourself a new story, one that you’ll begin to

live by, reshaping and refining it until it vividly becomes the story you want your life to be.

On your Number One Desire list you have twenty-five reasons why you want something. From the But Why game, you have plumbed the depths of your desire, and can see that desires are a meaningful, intrinsic part of who you are. In this next game, you are going to employ all your senses to write a narrative story, making your way to the end result: HAVING your Number One Desire. As you follow the guided writing below, include specific details of how things feel, smell, look, taste, and sound. Be sure to remember that everything in your story is there to lead you toward what you want. Every character that shows up, all objects and ideas you encounter should line up to support your desire. If a blip of the negative finds its way in, start a new sentence with the intention of moving away from any negativity. This game challenges you to use your imagination, which happens to be one of the most powerful tools at your disposal for creating what you want.

I. Begin by imagining yourself in a dark room in which you can't see anything, but where you feel perfectly safe and brimming with anticipation. A seam of light appears, revealing a door opening. As you step through that door, you are going to storytell your way to the fulfillment of your desire. Begin writing with the sentence: "As the door opens, I am brimming with anticipation..." By the end of your writing, your goal is to have reached your desire, and see it as vividly as possible. It will seem real to you.

Some tips: Focusing your attention on what you want instantly begins to draw it to you. If you can feel as though you already have what you want, you begin to embody it, and thus create it through your actions and feelings. Never

underestimate the power of your imagination. If you can envision having the creative life you dream of, and continue to drum up more energy around having it, you will be pleasantly surprised by the outcome. Don't take our word for it. Try it.