



Little Things Matter!

*For want of a nail the shoe was lost,
For want of a shoe the horse was lost,
For want of a horse the rider was lost,
For want of a rider the battle was lost,
For want of a battle the kingdom was lost
And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.*

- Benjamin Franklin, Poor Richard's Almanac



Forgive the militaristic nature of the analogy, but this is an excellent illustration of how important the little things are. The little things, especially those that you repeat frequently, have far more impact than the once-in-a-lifetime moments (like having a whole day to yourself to get all those things done that you want to do and never make time for).

For Want of a Nail: If you cannot reserve 15 minutes a day for process (creative play just for the sake of play without concern or expectations about the outcome), 15 minutes a day for self-care, and at least 15 minutes for product time, which is time for your writing or other project that is an expression of your creativity, if you can't honor these 45 minutes, the day is lost to you.

For Want of a Shoe: If you can't claim today as your own, it's so easy to let tomorrow slide, too. And when you lose a couple of days, you may as well bag the whole week.

For Want of a Horse: If you lose a week, you can probably write off the whole month.

For Want of a Rider: When you've lost a month, you start talking about getting started next season or next year.

For Want of a Battle: When you're talking about starting a project in future tense, ("Someday, I'll...") instead of present tense, ("Today I am..."), you know, in your heart of hearts, it's probably never going to happen.

All For Want of a Horseshoe Nail: For the want of 45 minutes today, your life is lived or lost.

Oh, you're not going to drop dead if you don't find those 45 minutes for process, self-care and product time. But when you cannot claim even 45 minutes of your day as your own, your life is lost to you.

And your creativity and unique perspective are lost to the world. Each of us has our own threads to add to the tapestry of life. When we contribute what we have to offer, the tapestry is that much richer and stronger. If we can't find the time to add our part, the tapestry is that much weaker and lackluster.

You have a creative purpose and your life has meaning. And, unless you are exceedingly fortunate, your purpose is much larger than the narrow confines of your job and keeping your house in order. I'm not saying these responsibilities in your job and to your family are not important. You still have 23 and a quarter hours to do those things.

Those activities are necessary, but they are not sufficient. You will not be truly satisfied unless you are living in accordance with your own values and working to fulfill your life purpose, to share with the world the largest, best part of yourself.

Your life is yours, all for 45 minutes a day!



If you want help figuring what to do for process, self-care and product time, and support and encouragement to hold yourself accountable to those commitments, check out the Loft classes I'm offering this spring (see www.Loft.org for course descriptions and registration information). Or call me at 612-722-4139 to talk about how coaching might work for you.

The Writing Habit: Talent is a gift we're all given to one degree or another. Techniques can and must be learned. But what really makes a writer is the habit of writing. In this course, you will identify your writing (or nonwriting) habits and adapt them to fit your writing goals. Our weekly check-in will give you safe and supportive witnesses to help you become accountable to yourself.

Thursdays, February 1 – March 8, 12:30 – 2:30 pm at Hopkins Center for the Arts or Thursdays, March 15 – April 19 at Open Book. Register online at www.loft.org or 612-379-8999.

Around the Writer's Block: Call it writer's block. Call it procrastination. Whatever you call it, every writer experiences resistance at some time. What makes or breaks us is not whether we experience resistance (we will!), it's how we respond to it. And most writers respond badly: we criticize ourselves, we push and drive, we threaten and bully ourselves, we question our ability, our commitment, our character. Stop doing that! Learn what resistance really is and how you can move through it and around the writer's block.

Thursdays, February 1 – March 8, 5 – 7 pm at Open Book. Register online at www.loft.org or 612-379-8999.

Improvisational Fiction: If you wait for inspiration, you can spend a lot more time waiting than you do writing. If you drive yourself to grind out pages anyway, you may drain your creative energy and not produce the sparkle you want. This class gives you a third alternative. In improvisational fiction, writers don't wait until they know what to write; they discover what happens as they write. We will play some improv games to warm up and inspire the writing. We'll spend most of our time doing in-class writing, generating energy and ideas for both new material and stories you're already working on.

Wednesdays, March 14 – April 18, 11 – 1 pm at Shoreview Community Center. Register online at www.loft.org or 612-379-8999.

We get what we expect. Social science research proves it. I expect all my students to have great ideas and they do. I focus on their strengths and how they can keep growing and they do. I help them eliminate obstacles so they can focus on what they have to give the world through their writing and they give it.

- Rosanne Bane, Creativity Coach and Loft Teaching Fellow



Phenomenal! I'm writing again. I feel hopeful and capable of moving forward as a direct result of taking this class.

I found the strategies and techniques a great addition to my writing habits.

Rosanne has great energy and kept us all fully engaged.

- Students on Rosanne Bane