

## The Challenge – Module 2 – Day 3

### 2010TCMD2D3c: Free Writing

Running Time: 14 mins

The challenge  
there is no charge for awesomeness

2010

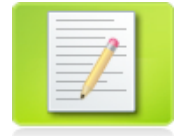
Creating Content Is Easy...  
When You're Taught The Right Way!

MODULE 2 DAY 3

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## Intro

Hi, gang! **Ed** here. And welcome to perhaps what is *the* most important lesson of the entire Challenge. If I can teach you what I hope to teach you today, it is going to literally rock and change your world.



## The Problem with Writing

Because we're on an online business and any online business -- I don't care what you do -- requires some form of content, whether it be video, audio or most commonly, writing articles, reports, Twitter notes, blog posts, whatever you call it. And this really trips people up because as soon as we tell you to write anything, you immediately flash back to school. And you think about all those horrid assignments and 3,000-word essays and all these sorts of things that you had to do when you're at school.

And that is a huge problem because **you're taught the wrong way to do it**. And because you were taught the wrong way to do it, it's become a horrible exercise and instead of what is actually a pretty fun one.

And I've got to say, I was taught this by the great **Gary Halbert**. And if there's one change between, for me, when I started this challenge way back in 2005 to today's challenge is when I started this challenge, doing the challenge, I couldn't write.

And some would argue that I still can't write. I certainly still can't spell.

But that never stopped me. And it never stopped me from learning and wanting to learn about the process because I admired people who could write. I admired people who could create stuff, who could play guitar or paint or take photos.

And I was fascinated to see why some people could do some stuff and the majority couldn't. What was so special? What was so different? And over the few years, I've really come to some realizations. And they're not *my* realizations, I must add very, very quickly.

But I've realized that there is another way. And there is a much, much easier way to create content. And I'm going to teach this to you today. And we're going to do it on writing articles.

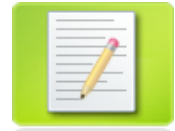
## Fuelling Up

And if you recall yesterday, I got you to fuel up. I got you to start reading lots of notes about your particular niche. **We used Market Samurai and we used Twitter**. You could go on and use **Google**, whatever you do. But we want to fill up that brain. We want you to be reading about stuff.

Then, most importantly, remember what I said to you? It's to stop. Have the rest of the day off. And then, come back here today for the next session. And it's vital that you've done that.

**If you haven't had the chance to fill up yet, then now is your time to fill up. Spend 30 minutes.** Use the timer. And **make sure that you spend all that time just reading and absorbing**. Remember being active using those, taking those well notes because then you'll be ready for today.

Okay. So, I'm going to make an assumption -- now, you've done it, haven't you? We're going to go now onto the next step. And bluntly, I'm going to use the video today, rather than show you anything on the screen because it is such a simple process that I can easily explain it to you.



## Free Writing

Now, what we're going to do is a technique called **Free Writing**. Now, I've learnt this over a decade ago (Oh, my goodness!) And it was this book here. It was by **Mark Levy** called **Accidental Genius**. And would you believe that he's just released the second edition, (which is available on Kindle and iBooks) just literally a week ago. Quite phenomenal *really*. The timing is amazing. But I learnt this trick through here. And it rocked my world.



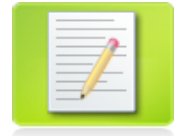
I realized that **we're going about writing all wrong**. And so, what I was taught and what Mark Levy taught me was that I was able to -- you know, if I just used a timer and use this technique of Free Writing that I would be able to generate content like you wouldn't believe. It is phenomenal! So, I'm going to show you how we do it.

**Now, the first thing you need to do is get some sort of timer.** Now, for me, personally, I use my iPhone. And I set the timer and you must **set your timer for ten minutes**. You can use anything, okay? You can use a kitchen timer. There we are, ten minutes. You can use a kitchen timer. You can use a stopwatch. You can use a watch, whatever it is. But **whatever it is, it must have an alarm**. It must have something. My personal favorite is -- oop! Hang on! [Music playing – Phil Collins, *In The Air Tonight*] Gives me an excitement every time. Thanks, Phil. That's mine.

But here's the important point -- **whatever it is, it must have some sort of alarm at the end of it because I don't want you stopping what you're doing and going on over and checking what's going on, okay?** That's the first thing. So, it's ten minutes, okay? You set it for ten minutes.

Then, rule two, whether you're timing on the keyboard or you're writing with pen and paper, what you must do, **what is crucial for you to do is never stop writing**. This is crucial.

Now, let me give you some permission. First of all, **whatever you write**, whatever I write, whatever Stephen King writes doing this, **it's going to be absolute rubbish**. It's going to be horrible. It's going to be really, really awful! But guess what? Nobody's going to see it, but you.



And this is the thing, this is the big, *big* mistake -- everybody thinks that Dickens just started off -- "*it was the best of times, it was the worst of times*". No! He had twenty different cracks at that sentence. Stephen King writes and then has draft after draft after draft rewritten and refined. Gary Halbert used to have fifteen or sixteen different drafts of his copywriting letters. No wonder they're good. That would check that often.

What we do, what we civilians do (who *aren't* writers), what we do is we edit as we write. And it's a tragedy. It is an absolute tragedy. Nobody who writes professionally edits while they write. They leave the spelling mistakes in, everything. If they don't know a fact, they ignore it - They just write something ridiculous in the place, so that they know when they come back to edit the piece that they know that they have to look up that piece of information.

Think about it, if all of a sudden, you write anything, "Oh, I wonder how long is that golf club. Oh, I'm going to go Google it," so you're writing, you stop, you go out to Google it and sure enough, what happens? All of a sudden, you're looking at those cute surfing dogs on YouTube. Or is that just me?

Anyhoo, you get distracted. And good writing, good ideas, good music, good anything -- this technique, by the way goes across the board, *across the board*. I don't care what type of content you're trying to create, but **if you try to edit and do it at the same time, you are headed for disaster**. No professional does it that way -- nobody! Yet we're not taught this way at school, right? We're taught to correct as we go. And that's such a tragedy.

So, **we set our timer for ten minutes and we write as fast (or type) as fast, as quickly as we can**. Now, at some point during that, you're going to run out of things to say. Probably. Maybe not. Maybe. All I want you to do is just keep tapping that keyboard, or I want you to say, "*I can't think of anything to write. This is ridiculous! I can't think of anything to write. I was writing about vintage electric guitars.*" And I want you to keep doing that even if you have to write "*blah-blah-blah-blah-blah-blah-blah-blah*".

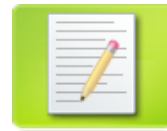
Here's the trick. Your brain *hates* wasting its time. And it wants to protect you from that. And it'll look at that writing and say, "*Geez! He's actually serious!*" "*She's serious! We're going to have to actually come up with something.*" And guess what? Amazing things happen when you do this.

You write little gems, little nuggets, little turns of phrase which are gold emerge from what -- and trust me, I am the worst writer. Ask any of my friends. Ten years ago, I was the worst possible writer in human existence. This past week, I've been published on a couple of the biggest blogs on the planet with my writing. It's pretty cool!

And **you can't hope to influence, you can't hope to sell anything, you can't hope to do anything unless you're going to produce some content**. And that usually scares the willies out of everybody. But doing this method, it will absolutely rock your world.

Okay! So, we've got our first two rules. **The third rule is I want you to start off by giving yourself permission to be really bad**. So, I want you to start out writing. My personal favorite phrase is -- like if I was starting out, I would start out with, "*I'm going to take a free and easy ten minutes to write everything I know about the value of vintage electric guitars.*" And off I would go. And I would continue to type.

**Have some sort of starting sentence**. And that starting sentence should be something along the lines of, "*I realize this is going to be rubbish, but I'm going to do this for ten minutes and just see what happens.*" Give yourself permission for it to be dodgy because it will be dodgy, okay?



So, we hit our ten minutes and we start typing or writing as fast as we can. **And it's important to put in the speed**, okay? It's very, very important to put in the speed.

And when you hit that ten minutes, guess what? You stop. **Even if you're on a roll, I want you to stop** because we don't want to kill the goose that laid the golden egg. If you, all of a sudden, discovered that you can write and you're having a wonderful, bliss moment, I want to take you at the top of that bliss and I want you to put it away and store it for tomorrow, okay? Trust me on this. Don't burn yourself out. It's **the whole theme of the Challenge: don't burn yourself out**.

So, for ten minutes, we're going to write on our topic, on our theme keyword using some of the notes. But, by goodness, **you do not refer. You do not stop. You do not go to look up. You do not spell correct. You do not edit. You do not do anything. You just write and write and write and write and write as fast as you can.**

If you do this, if you play along and do this properly, it is going to blow you away. That's why I'm so excited about this lesson because if I tell you -- if you get this, then your whole world's going to change because all of a sudden, you're going to go from somebody who fears creating content to somebody who is going to get it absolutely right.

And the first thing, **the trick is to get it right by being absolutely horrible at it and understanding that everybody's horrible at it. Everybody's first paragraph sounds like rubbish.** Most people spend all their time trying to make a nice first paragraph, which is great. It just doesn't happen, folks.

Now, when that timer goes off, when that ten minutes is up, guess what? Pens down. You either save -- don't forget to save if you're on a computer -- close that file and you are not allowed to look at that until tomorrow. I swear I'll find out and I will come and get you. Do not look at it. Do not touch it. Do not breathe on it. Do not do a thing. If it's on a pen and paper, put that in a drawer, shut that door and then, leave it, okay? Whatever you do, don't look at it for 24 hours -- well, not 24 hours, whatever. Until the next day, okay? Sit on it. The key, the secret to any writer is to sit on it.

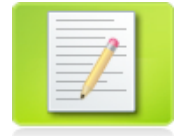
And **never edit after you've created a piece of content.** Never create it and then, edit it straightaway. The thing that you produce if you edit straightaway compared if you just let it sit and come back and edit it tomorrow, I can't -- well, you're going to see for yourselves. You are going to see for yourselves. And it's going to blow you away.

If only they taught this in schools. Teach this technique to your kid. I get hammered to do this and it's amazing because we're taught that failure, a mistake, is a bad thing. Yet everybody I know who's successful realizes that mistakes are a crucial part of any process.

## Wrap Up

So, with that, go to it. Get that timer going. Write as fast and hard as you can. Don't stop. Give yourself permission to be rubbish (because everybody's rubbish when they do this). And then, make sure when that timer goes off at the end of the ten minutes -- and make sure there's a sound, so whatever you do, you're not constantly checking at the time to see how long you've taken. Just let the timer tell you. Write as fast as you can. And we're going to create some magic tomorrow. And then, make sure you put it away and don't look at it until we speak tomorrow, okay? Promise? Excellent!

Go to it! Have fun! You've got ten minutes, go! Or as they say, your time starts [claps] **now**.



## Actions

- Find a timer (something with an alarm or that makes a noise when it's finished)
- Get a pen and paper
- Set the timer for 10 minutes
- Start writing about your theme keywords
- Write as fast as you can and don't stop to check notes or look things up
- When the timer goes off, stop. Put what you've written away until tomorrow.

**Handy Tip - DO NOT attempt to edit the content you write after today's lessons.** Letting the content percolate for 24 hours is crucial to the writing process Ed is teaching. If you're looking for more to do, write 2 or 3 articles for the day.