

Speak Up! Writer's Block and Rejections

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You've just had your eightieth rejection letter or your editor has skipped camp to another publisher and they don't publish what you write—what's an author/writer to do?

Here's what the great members of MCRW have to say. (If you don't ever have this problem, then I'll probably dislike you intensely until my desire to write returns.)

Jody Wallace says:

I go to my local chapter meeting and whine until I'm blue in the face! Then when everyone is about ready to strangle me, agree that I'll start writing something new. I also like to read books that are totally not what I'm writing or work on a nonfiction project or website updates.

Sandra Wales says:

I usually work on more than one manuscript at a time. When I get blocked on one, I switch to the other. I also go back and edit what I've written to remind myself what's going on. Hey, when you're a senior citizen, forgetting comes easy.

Trish Milburn says:

After more than nine years of seriously writing and submitting, sometimes it's really hard to keep going when I get a rejection, especially this past year when I've done requested revisions for an editor and had lots of wonderful comments from her wanting to bring me into her stable of authors. But as so often happens, the editor left and went to another house. I understand they need to do this in order to advance their own careers, but it sure makes it tough for the authors with a working relationship with that editor. You feel like you're going back to square one.

Yes, I could just throw my hands up and quit, but that's the one way I can absolutely guarantee that I'll never achieve my dream of being published. So, I plan a new story, brainstorm, vent to my friends, take solace from their condolences, then sit back down at the computer again. I keep thinking that this is the manuscript that's the one that will finally sell. I keep stuff out there under consideration so there's always the possibility of good news. I visualize what it will be like to get *The Call*, how exciting it'll be to see my book on a store shelf, how proud I'll be to sign those books, and how wonderful it'll be someday to be invited to speak at a conference and encourage other struggling writers to keep going, that the dream is attainable if you work hard enough -- and long enough. And when all else fails, I just think of all the time, effort and money I've spent in this pursuit and tell myself it will not be in vain!

Margaret Stephens says:

Nothing too complex. I try to write something, anything. For inspiration I read, read, read.

Mary Varble whines:

Maybe I'm the least motivated person in the world or maybe I'm just depressed and need a massive infusion of chocolate. I picked this topic because I've not written more than five

thousand words this year. I certainly haven't applied my posterior to the chair; I sit in that chair eight hours a day with only a lunch break and maybe it's getting to me. I know I'm busier than I've ever been in my day job. Frankly I'm sick of the computer by the end of the day which is now five or five-thirty instead of the old four-thirty.

My AlphaSmart used to keep me sane, but the editing and revising can't be done on that handy device so I let my work languish on my desktop's hard drive instead of going over it with my eyeballs peeled for typos--I'm the Queen of typos--malapropisms, etc. I've started a blog [internet web log] and at least I'm writing something...or so I tell myself.