

Dreams Really Do Come True

and yours can too



brought to you by Jamie Ridler Studios

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Dreams Really Do Come True

Over the past year, I have walked along the Seine, seen the Mona Lisa and drank café crèmes in Paris. I've eaten lavender crème brûlée in Provence and strolled the stony beaches of the Riviera. I have contributed to a book called *The Desire to Inspire* and interviewed Julia Cameron. I have experienced the Kachina Woman vortex in Sedona and learned about myself from horses on a desert ranch. I have spent 24 hours making art in a beautiful loft studio and, much to the delight of my inner 10-year-old, I have spent time with loving dogs.

I have had dreams come true.

Some dreams you pursue. You set your sights on Venice and start to save. You dream of art school and fill out an application. You hope to sell your creations and open an Etsy store.

Some dreams find you. A friend invites you to co-lead a retreat and you hear yourself saying, "Yes." You pass a yoga studio offering teacher training and find yourself walking in. Someone looks at your lovingly hand-knit scarf and says, "Could you make me one of those?"

(Psst... Notice how even when a dream shows up, you still have to say, "Yes"?)



I have had dreams come true.

Some dreams have been with you since you were little and some are yet to be discovered. Some resemble little wishes that take just a moment to realize. Others are big adventures, waiting for you to grow into who you need to be before they step into your life.



Whatever their size, whatever their origin, dreams can come true.

They can come true for me. They can come true for you.

Pay attention to the dreams blooming around you. No matter what the dream, no matter who the dreamer, let it be a reminder: ***dreams really do come true – and yours can too.***

Let the stories in this e-book inspire you. Let these "dreams come true" blow gently and lovingly on the dream embers in your heart. Let these examples encourage you to take a step, to say yes and to dream, dream, dream.

With love and belief in you,

Sometimes Our Dreams Ask a Lot of Us

by Jamie Ridler

My husband and I are just back from our 2-week trip to France and it's been overwhelming thinking about how to share this extraordinary experience with you. I wish I could have brought you all in my pocket! We could have shared Nutella crepes while sitting in a café with our journals, watching the people go by and dreaming Parisian-inspired dreams. Wouldn't that be delicious?

There were so many wonderful moments, like when we walked into our exquisite Parisian apartment overlooking Notre Dame, finding myself crying as we stepped into the gardens at the Rodin Museum – it was the moment when I really knew we were there, in Paris – the scale of everything from the Louvre in Paris to the

And outside my comfort zone
were also extraordinary experiences
and moments of wonder.

Pope's Palace in Avignon to the Promenade des Anglais in Nice, eating fresh churros from the market in the Marais, the flower market in Nice and its flavoured sugars, café crème, the Salade Marcel at the tartine place in Avignon, the look on Justin's face when he first saw the waters of Nice, walking by myself along the Seine, the gardens of Versailles, breakfast in the private garden at our Nice Hotel, eating a picnic lunch overlooking the Rhône, dancing sur le pont d'Avignon. We did it. We made it happen and we will cherish the memories forever

And I'm so proud of us for getting there and for savouring the journey because we also faced a whole lot of challenges right from the beginning, right from our plane being delayed because it had been struck by lightning – yes, by lightning! I'm scared of flying any-



way so wow, that was tough. And when we arrived in Paris, it was 8 degrees and pouring rain with a wind that devoured umbrellas. We had rain just about every day and it was so cold that the one sweater I brought was pretty much my Parisian uniform. It helped a little but not enough because on the second day I got very sick. We actually considered cutting our trip short and coming home after Paris but just couldn't bring ourselves to do it. Instead, a trip to the pharmacy, lots of naps and keeping positive got us through. But when we arrived in Avignon, again in the pouring rain, and Justin broke into a fever, I felt pretty defeated. When the proprietor at the hotel gave us the keys to room 13, Justin had "Are you kidding me?" written all over his face.

But the next day was sunny and Avignon is beautiful and as we found ourselves meandering gently up the Rocher des Doms and having a picnic lunch underneath trees overlooking the Rhone, with the most idyllic view imaginable, I trusted that there would be healing. We slowed down a lot at this point. We had to. And we looked for and savoured every single moment of beauty, of pleasure, of delight, of wonder, of inspiration and deliciousness. And there were many.

I'm sharing this with you because it's so important to know that dreams can ask a lot of us. This trip certainly asked a lot of me. I

was aware of bumping up against my limitations for a lot of this journey. I was challenged by the traveling itself, arranging and then figuring out different modes of transportation, from connecting flights to the high-speed TGV to the metro in Paris. I was challenged by French, a language I adore and have a history with but am far from fluent in. I was out of my comfort zone every day as I asked for help at the pharmacy or tried to understand signage or negotiated ordering dinner.

And outside my comfort zone were also extraordinary experiences and moments of wonder. I could have gazed out over the Rhone for days. I could walk along the Seine or the pebbly beaches of Nice day after day after day. I could lose myself in the art and the beauty forever.

And though I can honestly say I would have loved it if we had gorgeous spring weather and if we had been healthy throughout, I loved this trip. I'm thankful for every precious moment and so proud of us too. Even with the rain and the cold and the illness, this was a dream come true.

Jamie Ridler is a creative living coach and the director of **Jamie Ridler Studios**. From the much-loved Creative Living with Jamie podcast to the popular Sparkles e-course, Jamie's work helps women find the confidence and courage to discover and express their creative selves so they can be the star they are. www.openthedoor.ca



Dream Come True: A Summer in Italy

by Kate Swoboda

A summer in Italy--it sounds like some kind of romantic, dream come true scenario, doesn't it? Perhaps you've turned the idea over in your mind, but quickly dismissed it. How could you take the time off of work? Where would you get the money? Who would watch the children?

On three separate occasions, I either traveled throughout Europe or stayed in Italy for at least 3 weeks, or more. In the particularly glorious year of 2009, I spent most of the summer in Italy, stationed just outside of Florence.

That summer, my days knitted themselves together something like this: Waking early in the morning in a little villa just outside Florence, opening the windows to let the light in. My feet were bare over a cool cobblestone floor. I'd shower and get dressed and make the ten minute walk to Pasticceria Buschioni (do a search for it on Google Maps--the cappuccino and coronetti there are amazing!). They were friendly, never treating me like a stupid tourist, and they complimented me on my Italian, even as I knew that it was grammatically incorrect and they were just being polite--but like gentleman, Piero would insist that my Italian was "molto buono." I'd order another *caffè latte*.

After breakfast, I'd hop a bus into Florence. I'm a "no agenda" kind of traveler; I like to walk and observe, stop and write when I'm tired, take naps in the sun, and I take pictures when it suits me. I made it my mission to figure out the best gelato places in all of Florence (my vote goes to Grom, which is hidden off to a side street near the Duomo--and apparently, which has made a recent US debut!

But how--how did I do this?

First, the work question. Two of my sojourns were scheduled dur-



ing the summer months, and I was primarily getting my income from being an English professor, at the time. Simple enough: I gave my coaching clients lots of notice, and I wasn't scheduled to teach.

But what about people who work a 9-5? I ran into a lot of those travelers--other Americans who didn't have the luck of a "free" summer. Some had simply saved up every single vacation day to make the dream happen. Some had decided to take a loss on income while away, and had saved money throughout the year to not feel the financial pinch. Some had made work arrangements that involved tele-commuting, and they were spending the hot, humid siesta hours inside a cool hotel or apartment, getting a little work done before venturing out again for gelato when dusk fell. (And it's worth noting: In October 2010, I spent 3 weeks in Italy during a teaching semester--I got permission from work, and arranged for a substitute).

What about kids? I met a few women who had left the kids with dad. Whenever I heard this, some part of me went: hurrah! There are so many moms out there who spend all their time sacrificing for their children, and no time filling their own well. I loved these courageous women who dared to take a week or two for themselves. Other people? They brought the kids along.

Friends of mine rented a villa and brought their young son with them. Our trips overlapped and I visited them in nearby Arezzo,

smiling with delight as Elias rolled Italian words around like marbles in his mouth. "Ho cavuto!" he yelled after he had fallen down and decided, tears dry, to get back to the business of running around the playground.

What about money? "Rented a villa, Kate? Maybe you have a trust fund, but I don't!" --perhaps this is what you're thinking. Now here's some shocking news:

Renting a room in a villa in Italy is often cheaper than staying at a hotel.

Let me reiterate that: renting a villa (or an apartment) is often cheaper than staying in a hotel. This is especially true if you come during the off-season.

The summer of 2009, I paid about 700 EU for a six-week stay at a villa, which at the time translated to a bit less than \$1,000 USD, and that was even less than I paid for my plane ticket. It's also worth noting that in 2009, my income came to something like \$35,000 a year, and I live in the San Francisco Bay Area, where rent runs about \$1,000 a month--so of course, many choices to save and sacrifice were made along the way.

How did I find a villa? I put an ad on--of all places!--CRAIGSLIST Florence. I was promptly flooded with emails offering *me* prices and dates and details on the accommodations.

The room I rented had a kitchenette, which saved money on eating out, some nights (the gelato budget, of course, could not be sacrificed in the name of savings).

All told, it cost me approximately \$3,000 for a summer in Italy, between airfare, accommodations, and food--and certainly, there were any number of places where I could have shaved euros off of that price (eating out less, the cheapest possible plane ticket, using couchsurfing.com, etc.)

And what did I gain?

Everything. That summer in Italy was the most transformative of my life. It was during that summer of pleasure, of rejuvenation, of

sleep, or play, that I articulated what exactly I wanted to do with my coaching practice, which was then only part-time. It was there that I talked to the owners of the villa and negotiated prices for bringing a retreat there, a dream that I made happen the following year, in 2010. It was there that I wrote what would later become the introductory chapters and concepts of *The Courageous Living Guide*.

Here's what I know about making dreams come true: Everyone (!) has the same initial objections. Time, money, what people will think, what if I fail...the list goes on, and they are monotonous in their ubiquity.

The choice to make your dreams happen is one that will bring up challenges and obstacles, but I also know from personal experience that it is one that reaps rewards.

You really don't have anything to lose if you take a chance like this--if things don't go well, somehow, you'll earn the money back. You won't get back the time, but you will get the benefit of some kind of lesson, or of knowing that you met a personal challenge.

So--let me ask you a delicious question--if you were planning a summer in Italy, what would you do? What would it look like? How would you afford it?

Start asking these delicious questions--and see what dreams blossom.

Kate Swoboda is a life coach, speaker and writer. She's the creator of *The Coaching Blueprint* and *Courageous Living Guide*, the *Courageous Play* and *Create Stillness* retreats, and the upcoming *Blueprint Circles* and *Breathing Space* tele-circles. Learn more at www.yourcourageouslife.com



The Blue Houses of Dreams

by Danette Relic

Wow, I have so many to choose from.

That was my first thought when invited to write on the topic of dreams coming true. I tried to let it sink in. I explored my memory for a real "story worthy" dream, a big awesome dream...but I just couldn't get past the awe. There are so many dreams that have come true. So many dreams that rocked my world in big blooming booms and sweet tiny quivers. I don't know who I would be without these dreams. These dreams have anchored me home, to the truth of my own heart, time and again.

After the awe came the tenderness. It slipped through my lips like a breath and curled into a ball on the floor. Believing in dreams isn't always easy for me. I can see tenderness show up as I write this, a tenderness that still wants to be reassured that it's possible. *Even though my life has proved over and over again that dreams do come true*, the tenderness stays. Isn't that amazing? Here I want to tell stories about how dreams can come true, and my own heart races in to sit in the front row with a pen, ready to take copious notes.

Well, take notes, heart of mine.

A dream come true is a feeling.

The feeling of recognizing a dream come true is a lot like love, you just know it when it happens. It was a Saturday morning in the summer of 1981 and I was laying on the floor in the basement with a bowl of Cheerios, watching an episode of *The Brady Bunch*. In that episode the Brady family went to an amusement park. For a half hour I was lost in dreams of being at a fun park, going on rides and eating cotton candy. It felt like such a delicious fantasy. I marched up the stairs in my nightgown to the living room where my parents were enjoying their coffee and reading the newspaper. I knew this was a long shot, in fact, you might say I had thought this would be impossible. But I declared that I would like to go to a fun park and asked if my parents could take me.



I remember the startled way they looked at one another, and the almost suspicious way they looked at me. It turned out that in fact, that was the plan for the day. My little 6 year old mind was officially blown. This was magic! And more importantly, magic can happen to me.

There is something about that word, magic. It's a word that wraps mystery with delight. When I think of dreams coming true, I also think of how I've been surprised by them.

One of the delightful things I've noticed about dreams coming true, is that often what ends up coming true is even better than what I'd dared to dream in the first place. For example, my 6 year old self was secretly hoping that maybe we could plan a trip to a fun park. I didn't even consider that it would be an option to go right after breakfast. When I was at a soul sucking job listening to a program on CBC radio about this new thing called life coaching, I began dreaming that I could one day hire one. I didn't even think to dream that I might become one.

When I dreamed of one day seeing Prince in concert, I didn't dream he would play Massey Hall, my favourite venue in Toronto

(not a big stadium, but an intimate theatre). I surprised myself at that concert by screaming like a slasher film starlet when I saw his silhouette emerge from the black ice. I didn't think I would ever react that way to the presence of another human being, but there you go. Dreams coming true can have that effect on a gal.

There were dreams I'd carried with me for years and dreams I'd given up on.

I dreamed of making a pilgrimage to Mexico to see Frida Kahlo's house when I first fell in love with her. I even saved my money three different times to go, but something always came up and the money was needed to pay rent. Eventually, I shelved that dream and life moved into different directions. I found a partner, bought a house, and many dreams of my 20s started gathering dust in the attic while new dreams were being created. I settled for books about Frida, and the little framed black and white photo I keep of her in my studio. One day, my partner sends me an email with a link to an article about how there will be a special exhibit in Mexico City to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Frida Kahlo's birth. He suggested we go. I had shelved that dream for so long, it didn't even occur to me that we could go.

*Magic. That's the feeling it gives me.
Especially when it shows up
in these peculiar, playful ways.*

Twelve years after I first dreamed it and there I was, standing in Frida's kitchen. There I was, walking through my dreams and her garden at the same time. There I was, wishing I could camp out in the gift shop. There was her bed, her studio, her handwriting. Being in Frida's blue house was a sacred experience for me. Discovering her story in my early 20s changed me. Her story birthed a new story in me, and never before had I been so drawn to journey the way I was drawn to visit her home. This is the woman who became my unofficial patron saint in 1996. Frida is my Mary. This was, without question, a dream come true.

As amazing as the Frida dream is for me, the dreams that interest me the most are the dreams come true in strange ways, ways that don't look anything like what I might have expected.

If you know me, it should come as no surprise that I've done my share of journaling and exploration around dreams. Many years ago, I made a list of 100 dreams, making sure I listed dreams that seemed attainable along with dreams that seemed impossible (this is a great exercise to do, because it can make you feel like dreams are within your reach while also stretching your reach to places that test your trust in dreams). So on this list, I wrote *show my art in Japan*.

To be honest, I probably threw that one in there just to say to the universe, see? *I'm playing fair, there's one of those silly big dreams that doesn't make sense*. Clearly, I had some smarty-pants doubt about this whole 'dreaming big' thing.

Dreams are gorgeous, magical compasses that bring us home to our hearts.

Years later, with no effort at all on my part, my art was shown in Japan — though not in the way I might have imagined. In fact, I wouldn't have ever found out, had it not been for my cousin Jacqueline who was living in Japan teaching english. She came across a travel publication in Japanese, which she didn't understand. There was a lot of text and a bunch of small stamp sized images of different restaurants and attractions. She noticed one and thought, *Oh look! That's Toronto. Oh look! That's the Rivoli on Queen Street. Wait, is that Danette's artwork?!*

The photo used in this publication was taken while I had a solo show hanging on the walls of this popular spot in downtown Toronto. The photo was taken around the same time I wrote *show my art in Japan* on my list of dreams, but showed up in print years later, in Japan. Somehow, through all of that, it landed in my cousin's hands and made it back home to me. I felt so fortunate that she

found it, and it made me think of how close I had come to never knowing this had happened. That makes me wonder how many other wonderful things like this are happening right now, that we can't see?

Magic. That's the feeling it gives me. Especially when it shows up in these peculiar, playful ways.

This dream of having my art shown in Japan felt like a wink, inviting me to dream a little bigger. If the universe was being played by Sofia Vergara, she just gave me a nod and showed me a little leg. When the universe winks at me like this, I listen.

I believe in dreams. I see them unfolding and bursting in my life, like enchanted flowers. Though even with encouragement, dreams can be tender. They challenge us to also believe in ourselves, specifically, how worthy we are of our dreams.

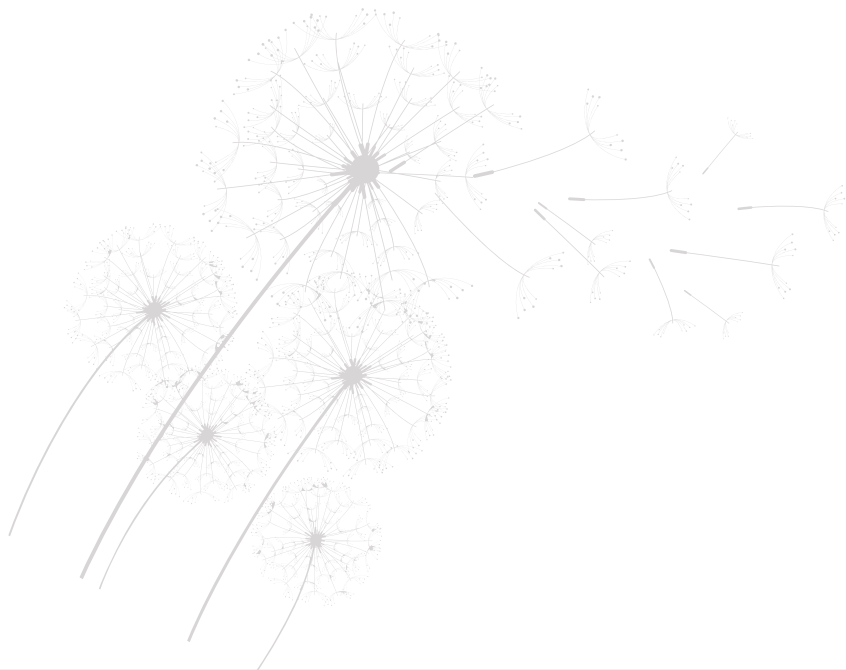
Only when I see my own forgotten dreams coming true for others do I realize how painful it is to believe that for some reason, I am undeserving of such magic. It is often easier for me to reassure others that of course, dreams are possible...for them. I say this to let you know that if you tenderly question whether it's possible for your own dreams to come true, that tenderness is shared by me. I think that tenderness is just a way for us to understand how much our dreams mean to us. It tastes a lot like the fear that arrives when you open yourself to love; when you have everything, you also have everything to lose. This feeling of tenderness is actually the whisper of how precious your hearts desire is.

It takes courage to believe in dreams.

Dreams are gorgeous, magical compasses that bring us home to our hearts. And the best part is, they can still come true — even when you give up on them. Dreams don't give up on you. You are all they've got.

So give your own dreams a little wink. Let them know you're interested. Invite them to blow your mind.

What's the best thing that could happen?



Tara's Ridiculous Book Dream

by Tara Swiger

Last June, on my birthday, I wished a wish.
A wish I didn't even know was hiding deep inside.

You see, it was my 29th birthday. And I was tossing about, thinking about turning 30 (you know, in a year...I like to think ahead) and I felt like I really wanted to DO something before turning 30. What, I didn't know...but something, Yeah, something.

I sat down with my journal and my thoughts and I wrote and wrote a zillion ideas. I'd start a new business (I already have 2), I'd create a new product. I'd buy a house. I'd travel the world.

But none of them felt right. They felt like shoulds. So I asked, "When you turn 30, what will you say, 'I'm so glad I did that!' about?"

And just like that, I knew.

I want to write a book.

Ok, but writing a book takes time. And I don't just want to write it, I want to get it published.

There's my dream and my goal - sell a book to a publisher before my 30th birthday.

(In case this seems like a long time, keep in mind that for a nonfiction book, you have to create a detailed book proposal, shop it to agents (maybe), and then shop it to publishers. It's taken my friends 3-5 years to sell their first book...so one year was being ridiculous.)

But I decided I liked it.

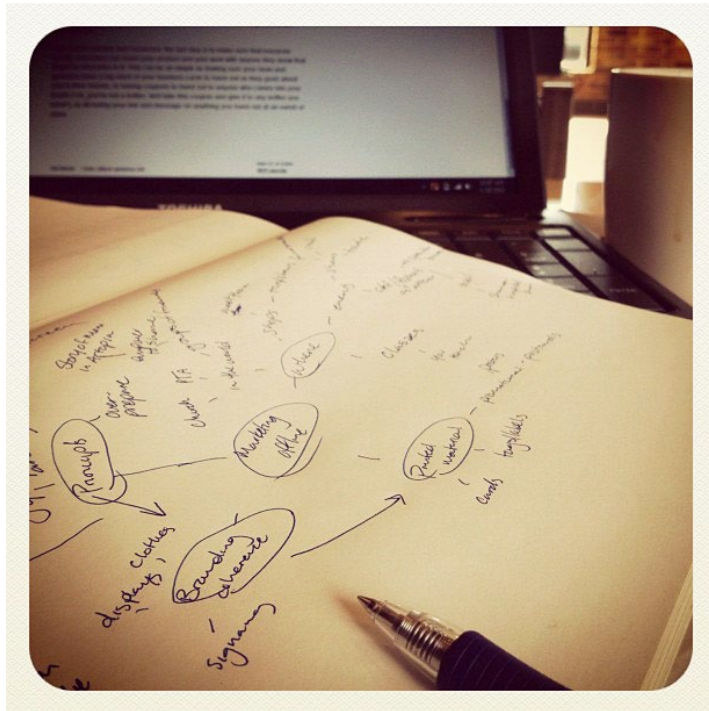
There's nothing I like more than being ridiculous.

I kept it as my little secret for about a week before I worked up the courage to tell my husband.

"So, um, I'm thinking that maybe I'll write a proposal and sell a book before I turn 30. It's this little goal I just set for myself. Um, but it's so embarrassing! I don't even know what I'll write about! Oh, I don't know, maybe it's crazy...."

Danette Relic is a life coach, writer and creative lover of life. She lives in Toronto and works in the metaphorical space she calls Radical Creative Sanctuary. Spaces delight Danette, especially safe spaces that encourage others to be themselves, ask breathtaking questions, share stories and open hearts. She believes that self love and enlightened selfishness is the doorway to all love and connection. She admits that her own work is a selfish act, because she simply wants to see more beauty in the world — and that includes all the colours in each beautiful, personal life. Danette does her best writing in cafés that play great music. www.radicalcreativesanctuary.com





Jay just looked at me calmly and said, "It's not crazy. It's the next step. I bet you'll do it sooner."
And snap, the dream felt doable.

(Lesson: Sometimes all it takes is someone else to believe in your dream to make it doable.)

The next week, I sent some emails to some friends. In a week, a publisher asked for "just a rough outline of what you might write about." I spent a day organizing everything I had been teaching and writing about for the last 2 years. At the end of the month, the very first month, I had a contract in my inbox. And that should be the end of the story, right? My dream came true in the first month I pursued it!

But dreams aren't tidy. They're slippery. When you pursue them, they transform. They get layers.

The truth is, I freaked out.
I realized that this dream was about to come true.

Jamie Ridler Studios

Way too early.

I wasn't the person I'd thought I'd be.
I wasn't a **writer**, I wasn't an author.

How in the world could I sign a contract to write a book I only had a rough outline of?

I didn't reply to the emailed contract for nearly 2 months.

In that two months, I worked through all the stuff I didn't know I was carrying about this dream. I looked at each of my assumptions - What is a writer? What about who I already am is close to being a writer? What have I learned about myself that might prove that I am ready for this?

And then I got a logistical- What will this project take from me? What is the time commitment? Where can I fit it in? What will I give up in order to do it?

But dreams aren't tidy. They're slippery.
When you pursue them, they transform.
They get layers.

And I dreamed a new dream - that the book would be published by my birthday.

(This is also a ridiculous dream - traditional publishers take 15-18 months to take a finished manuscript and publish a book. But I was with an indie publisher.)

And I signed the contract.

And my dream came true.

I wrote the book.

It was nothing and everything like I dreamed.

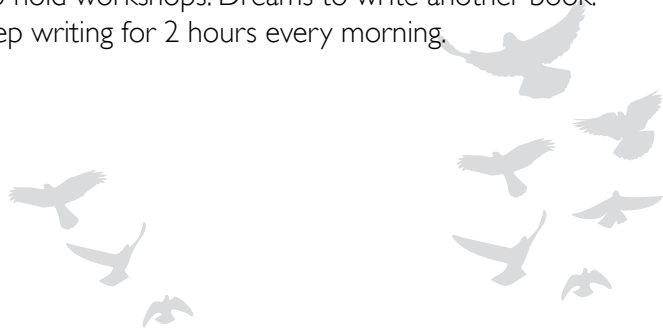
And quite by surprise, the rest of my life unfolded around this dreams.

New clients approached me, I started new kinds of work.
My businesses thrived. I traveled more. I made new friends.

Dreams Really Do Come True

Towards the end, when the words were flowing out of me, 7,0000 a day, I started to thrum with ideas. Not just for the book, but for everything, everywhere, all around me.
And in February, I turned in my manuscript.
Later this month, it will be released.

But of course, even though the dream has come true, it created all these new dreams. Dreams to travel and meet the readers. Dreams to hold workshops. Dreams to write another book. Dreams to keep writing for 2 hours every morning.



New Haven

by Amy Palko

The dream would sweep through me -
a tsunami of calm,
a flood of peace that
soothed synapses, numbed neurones.

But I would always awake to the feverish realm
of reality. Landlocked in suburbia.
Trapped, boxed in;
no room to breathe
no room to be.

"There's no air in here,"
I would scream.
"I'm drowning."

Intense pressure bearing down on all sides,
and every day,
my purpose diamond clear:
Get through the next 24 hrs
in whichever way you can.

Months passed with respite only found
night after night, in dreams
of waves and water.
Precious hours adrift on the tide.
My sanity for a breath of sea air.

And then a shift in the currents.
My spirit set free -
a seed finally released
from the confines of desiccated husk.

When I found myself staring out
at my new sea view
an ocean of serenity swept
right through my whole being.

Tara Swiger captains a starship, makes yarn and writes about crafting your own business adventure. She is also the author of Market Yourself. Find out more at www.taraswiger.com



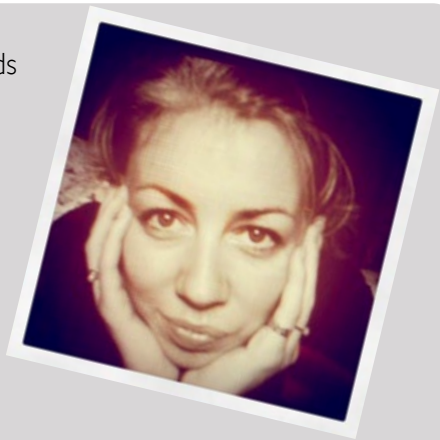


Here I am.
I've found my place at the edge
of things, where land lays down
with the waves
and both sigh in remembered rapture.

Here I am.
I have made it through.
I've found the harbour of my dreams,
my haven.
And here, I rest.

A true lover of stories, **Amy Palko** spends her days reading, writing, knitting and dreaming... well, that is when she's not being kept busy home-educating her three kids! She is the creatrix of the series Ancient Wisdom for the Modern Goddess, exploring goddess myths and moon cycles through story, journalling, visualisation and creative exercise.

www.amypalko.com



Beach Magic

by Sunny Schlenger

I was vacationing on the island of St. Maarten and decided to go horseback riding one day. The path we were taking stretched down a mountainside onto a private beach.

I've always loved horses and have ridden casually since I was young. I believe that I was a cowpoke during one lifetime, riding the range on my paint. I feel such a kinship with this lifestyle, even though I was raised in average suburbia.

Always, always it had been a dream
of mine to gallop a horse across a beach
but this moment was totally unanticipated
and completely magical.

I mounted up on this sunny, humid afternoon and ambled along behind the lead horse. There was a slight breeze but nothing else to distinguish this day from any other; no hint that something amazing was about to happen.

Do you know what a peak experience is? We all have them – it's the moment when you realize, "Wow, life just doesn't get any better than this!" Your peak experience may be unexpected or part of a larger plan. You may encounter one alone or in partnership with someone else.

For some reason, my peak experiences most often involve either music or nature. I had one when I first heard Paul McCartney in concert. After decades of listening to his records, tapes and CDs, I finally had the opportunity to hear him live. He took the audience on a 40 year journey through our shared past and it was a celebration of love and hope and perseverance over tragedy and loss. And that's what our most outstanding personal experiences do for us. They bring us to a moment of intense appreciation that can be remembered and relived for as long as we're able.



Photo Credit: tibchris

My nature “fix” is the ocean. There’s just something about the combination of surf, sun, sky and sand that takes me to a place of deep introspection, powerful insights and an almost transcendent way of being.

And now here I was in St. Maartin, on the back of a horse overlooking a pristine beach. It was perfection. We began to descend. I brought my attention back to my horse as he carefully picked his way down the rocky path, shifting my balance as he did. I was totally focused on the descent.

As we reached the bottom, there was a sudden explosion of movement. My horse took off across the sand so abruptly that I only had time to grab hold of his mane.

Oh. My. Lord. I could hear the pounding of his hooves as we galloped in seemingly slow motion across that stretch of beach. The wind was blowing tears from my eyes as I both laughed and cried. Always, always it had been a dream of mine to gallop a horse

across a beach but this moment was totally unanticipated and completely magical.

I’ve since done it again, in Costa Rica. The ride was equally wonderful, but not as magical as the first event. Time didn’t disappear and there wasn’t that out-of-body sensation of a dream made real but yes, there was the conscious thought of wow, it still doesn’t get any better than this.

May you have a lifetime of peak experiences and be aware of every precious moment!



Sunny Schlenger is an author, professional organizer, and life coach. She has written two popular books: *Organizing for the Spirit* (Jossey-Bass/J. Wiley & Sons/2004) and *How to be Organized in Spite of Yourself* (Penguin/1999). For over 30

years, Sunny has worked with large and small corporations, non-profit agencies, and individuals to creatively and effectively teach the art of managing both time and space. Her program has been licensed by Harvard University’s Center for Training and Development. By combining specific how-to advice with dynamic philosophy, Sunny offers a unique and successful approach to mastering the dual challenges of staying productive and feeling good. www.suncoach.com

A Dream Come True

by David Cohen



Here we are a star, a star.
First we glimpsed afar, afar.

Mapping, tapping, slogging, gook.
Paving, craving, and it took.

Wish upon a long ago
and in seeing made it so.

A star, our star, and we shine.
We are here, your hand and mine.

Wish and work and it does too.
Dreams come true, they do, they do.

David Cohen has lots of magic markers. When he's not drawing his joyful doodles he's busy helping business owners to build a deeper, personal, more meaningful connection with their businesses. He calls this work Brand Therapy because in his words, "you have to go through the head and the heart if you want to tell the story that turns your business into your legacy." www.equationarts.com



Acceptance

by Julie Daley

Sitting on the kitchen floor with my back against the moonlit-night-blue wallpapered wall, my entire body lets go as I read the words. The tears, so long held in check, finally find their way down my cheeks, then breasts, belly and legs. These flat surfaces define a room that is empty of people these days— except me. At one time this room knew so much life, but now I am the only one left to savor this sweet, sweet moment.

As the tears fall, I cannot help but feel the presence of my beloved fill the space created by these four walls. He wanted this for me. He tried hard to get me to believe this was possible. He told me this would happen years ago, and I could never quite fathom it. Just like now. I can't quite fathom it.

I held the dream out in front of me
where I could see it, where I could
challenge those feelings of shame
with the power of my dream.

I know this happens with shock. He died too fast. Shock came and stayed for a long, long time. Unexpected things can be too much for the psyche. The system has to allow things to sink in, a little bit at a time.

Once more, I look at the fat envelope. I read the words clearly meant for me:

Congratulations! You've been accepted...

And the tears fall again. It's as if months and months of work, exhaustion, and grief are tumbling out of me, tumbling out my eyes, my muscles, my gut.



Joy Division by Paris

years already, taking a class here, and another one there, at the local community college. And, when my younger daughter left for college, I filled the emptiness with full-time everything – work, school, and exercise. It's kept me sort of numb, no make that very numb - sometimes a necessary thing when facing such deep grief. And, sometimes, full-time everything is what we must do to get to this place, the place where the dream comes true.

Retaking the SAT and taking the SAT2 with high schools students, kids half my age, felt humiliating to part of me, yet

Now, sitting here with the fat envelope, drenched with wet, the

I really cannot grasp it. You know how it feels when you've worked so hard towards a dream, one that you've longed for for so long, and then it comes true? You know that feeling? That's it. That's what I am feeling. And, in this moment, everything in me just lets go. It's relief and grief. It's shock and disbelief. It's not yet joy, but it soon will be.

They've accepted me. I am 41 years old, a mother of two grown daughters, a widow who was married (at seventeen) for twenty-one beautiful years to a man I adored.

I've been going to school for over twelve

tears of joy begin to fall. I am headed to Stanford. I am finally going to the school of my dreams. The dream has come true.



A dancer at heart, **Julie Daley** would love nothing more than to live her life and do her work from the dance floor. Ten years in the practice of 5Rhythms has opened her to the joy and wildness that is at the heart of women's creativity. A writer, teacher, coach, and yes, dancer, Julie savors life playing with her wee grandchildren & serving the women and men who are called to work with her. Julie is happiest when she is breathing through her feet.

www.unabashedlyfemale.com

Once Upon a Time

by Leonie Dawson

Once upon a time,

when dream boarding was all I lived and breathed I found a picture of a couple marrying on a sweet little beach named Conway.

And I thought, YES:

that is a marriage.

And there was no one around them but the person marrying them and their feet were bare and the ocean lapped around them.

Yes:

that is a marriage.

I store the picture away, I keep it in my heart.

*

Six years later,

without realising, without knowing,

my love and I marry each other:

first in front of a judge in an old white courthouse then out of the rain, in a little blue shed by the sea, and then once the rains broke we ran to the sea and that is where we truly married.

Dipping each other's rings in the sea waters, whispering words that rose up out of our bellies "I promise you we will always grow, we will always transform, we will always be becoming our best selves together;"

I tell him.

And I mean it. Cross my heart.

A rose gold ring engraved with an oak tree slips over his finger and there it has stayed.

Jamie Ridler Studios



And he tells me

"Yes. Let's have an amazing life together."

And my opal mermaid ring washes over my hand.

And we looked into each others ocean eyes, smiling, serious, there, witnessed by turtles and pelicans and sea eagles.

Together. Alone.

And that was the moment our photographer photographed us from the shoreline Making our truest vows to each other, Or-dained by the wind and the sea and by Great Spirit.

*

And it is only now, in the year that has followed, that I finally see the wedding of two photos

one: a dream I glimpsed many years ago

and the other: the dream come true.

I have no idea how these things work.

Dreams Really Do Come True

I just know they do.

Somehow, the path of our life takes us where we need to go:

through lessons and medicines great and at times painful, so we can find our way home to love, to spirit, to ourselves, to the dreams that are inside us, waiting for the right moment, the right time, our right selves, to be birthed.

love,

Leonie

Leonie Dawson is a writer, blogger, retreat leader, globe-trotter, visual artist, mama, and vessel of wild creativity & cosmic prosperity for the 20,000 Goddesses who orbit around her virtual altar each month. Leonie's strategic musings & practical wisdom have been featured on ProBlogger, Tiny Buddha, spirituality magazines like Goddess, Spellcraft, Life Images and Spheres, and in three of SARK's best-selling books on creative fulfillment & freedom.



Purposeful, passionate & unendingly prolific, Goddess Leonie published her first book at 22, held her first art show at 23, began leading women's circles at 23, created her first retreat at 25, launched the Goddess Circle — a subscription-based women's community for creatives of every color — at 27, and has guided 3,000 women through transformational Circle experiences over the past 3 years. She's also released 5 e-courses — including her signature workshop for entrepreneurs, Become A Business Goddess — 4 meditation kits and 2 workbooks into the digital ether, building a multiple six-figure business in the process.

www.leoniedawson.com

A Longing to Write

by Chris Zydel

One of the dreams that I have always had for my life was to be a writer. But for the longest time it was a secret dream.

I know this might sound kind of strange, given that I have built my whole life and business around the intuitive painting process, but it was never my heart's desire to become a painter. Painting and the visual arts are something that I love but my paintings have been something that were always and only for me. They were my private dialogue with myself.

But my writing was different. My writing was something that I have always wanted to share with the world. It was something that I wanted to be seen and appreciated by other people.

I can finally, with confidence and joy,
call myself a writer. And I have realized
my secret dream of being a writer
and look forward to many more years
of sharing my words and my ideas
with whoever wants to read them.

I adore language and love playing with words. One of the proudest moments of my life was winning my second grade spelling bee with the word "civilization". I also know first hand from my work as a psychotherapist, astrologer and painting teacher what a powerful impact words and language can have on the human soul.

But I also love ideas and concepts and the power of belief and understanding to change the world.

I read constantly and I know how much I have been influenced by other people's writing. There have been books that have absolutely



transformed my life. And that power to influence people, to teach and enlighten them, was a power that I always wanted to be able to access and express.

But writing is also associated with thinking. With having ideas and being able to articulate them clearly. With having an opinion and a point of view. All of which was strongly discouraged in the family I grew up in.

I was expected to be a good student. And I was. Because I truly enjoyed learning. But because I was a woman, my own ideas were not valued. Mostly they were ignored, but sometimes they were actively put down. So I learned to keep them to myself. And I learned to internalize the belief that what I thought as not important.

There was also another issue around the process of writing that stems from my family history. I've written in other places about how both my parents had creative gifts that they knew they had but were not encouraged to develop. My father as a visual artist and my mother as a singer. But there was a final gift that never even made it to the level of awareness and desire.

And that was the gift that my mother had around writing. She didn't write a lot. There was some poetry and a twenty-five page childhood history that she wrote about herself for me when I had

some questions about my psychological legacy.

But mostly she would write notes and messages in cards that she sent out for birthdays and the holidays. And her writing was exquisite. She knew how to use words to make a person feel something.

Which is something that I learned and internalized from her without even realizing it. But because she, too, was a woman, she would not for one second begin to think of her writing as a venue where she could share her unique ideas or perspectives. It was only a tool meant to make other people feel good about themselves.

So I received these two very distinct messages around writing. One was that writing had the power to affect people emotionally and the other was that my ideas were not worthwhile because of my gender.

And underneath it all was my almost invisible longing to write.

I spent a large part of my adulthood writing. But in many ways it was a repeat of my mother's experience. I can STILL write a greeting card that will touch someone's heart and often bring tears to their eyes. And I wrote a lot of ad and website copy for my business.

But I didn't start writing as a way to communicate my own unique ideas until 2007 when I decided to send out a monthly newsletter about creativity.

I began by writing articles and blog posts that were often a complete torture to produce and create. The feelings of shame and low self worth that I had to work through in order to write were tremendous. And there were many times when I wanted to give up.

But as I continued to write I also continued to get feedback from my readers about how important my writing was to them. How much it helped and inspired them. And even though the process of writing was still incredibly painful, I kept at it because I was starting to get the message that my ideas had some worth.

I've been writing now for over five years. It has become as much

a part of me as my white hair and my blue eyes. I can finally, with confidence and joy, call myself a writer. And I have realized my secret dream of being a writer and look forward to many more years of sharing my words and my ideas with whoever wants to read them.



Chris Zydel is the founder of Creative Juices Arts, and knows deep in her bones that everyone is creative. She is on a mission to prove that to the world which she does by providing nurturing, joy-filled and growth enhancing sanctuaries of encouragement, permission and trust in the sacred energy of play and creativity that lives inside of us all. You can find out more about her and her work at www.creativejuicesarts.com



Dreaming Bigger

by **Andrea Schroeder**

After years of working a part time job and doing my dream part time, I was settling into my new life – my dream was my full time job, no more side job and I could not be happier.

One morning I was sitting in my sunny art, play + meditation room thinking about dreaming bigger.

Wondering what more I could want.

I looked around my much-loved house, filled to the brim with colour and sparkle and magic and I knew what I wanted – to trade it all in for a gleaming open loft space.

A quick internet search showed that such a loft condo cost twice what my whole house cost.

So this didn't seem like a dream that would happen anytime soon – but I put it out there anyway. Because dreaming bigger is what dreamers do!

A few months later, I was driving home from a particularly magical walk in the woods when my Creative Dream Fairy tapped me on the shoulder and suggested I take a different route home, so I did. I drove past a construction site and it's like an alarm went off inside me.

**So this didn't seem like a dream
that would happen anytime soon
– but I put it out there anyway.
Because dreaming bigger
is what dreamers do!**

I pulled over and wrote down the info from the sign on the side of the building. I raced home, googled the building and there it was. My Dream Loft.



Actually, even better than what I'd dreamed.

Outside: a tree-and-plant-filled park, with meandering paths and a little bridge that leads to my door. Building exteriors that look like a very cool art project.

Inside: polished concrete heated floors, wide open spaces, huge windows. A huge sleeping loft with an enormous window so I can look up at the stars.

Sustainable, innovative design.

And the price? Just under what I ended up selling my house for.

It doesn't make sense that this happened so fast. But it did.

Dreams are amazing and they want to grow.

Give them just a little space and they will take over.

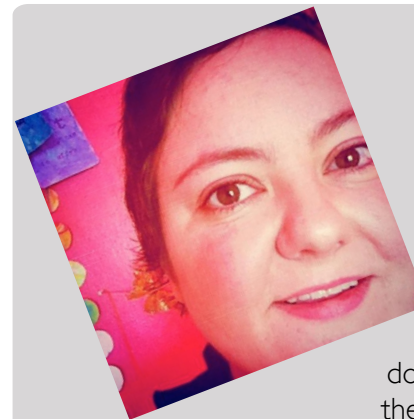
Construction of the loft didn't happen quite as fast, though. I've

had my stuff in storage and I retreated to my parent's house, waiting out the delays and getting ready to live my new dreams in my dreamy loft.

But finally, it's here!

By the time you read this I'll be moving into my Dream Loft.

Yay Dreams!



With a paintbrush in one hand & a glitter-gun in the other, **Andrea Schroeder** lovingly mentors men & women who want to lead creatively abundant lives — and do 'impossible' things, with ease & joy. Express the greatest parts of who YOU are, at www.creativemagicacademy.com.

My Dream Come True

by Bridget Pilloud

My dream come true.

My kid says "Can you pick me up at 4:00 today? Tristan wants me to hang out."

I say "Absolutely."

And inside, I glow.

It seems like a little thing. It's a little conversation that happens a million times a day, but to me, it's a tiny miracle.

My dream was for my kid to be seen for the person we know him to be.

I can't tie this up in a simple knot. The feelings of every dream are complicated.

He's a good guy. He's kind and sensitive. He's funny and generous. He cares. He's a natural with animals. Cats will follow him down the street. We adore him.

He's also suffered from sensory integration issues, depression and anxiety. He was shy and didn't understand social cues. He was in the background. For years, we knew something wasn't quite right, but we didn't know how to help. They thought he had autism. They thought he didn't have autism. After 5 years of disparate diagnoses, we finally got the information we needed.

With the right medication and therapy, he blossomed.

For years, we were told to be realistic about our expectations. Early on, one expert told us that with the right classes, he might be able to live on his own.

At our last visit with his therapist, she said, Bridget, you have to



Photo Credit: David Paul Ohmer

treat him like he's a normal kid, because he's a normal kid.

He's normal. He's healthy. I don't have to modify the world for him to be in it.

I don't know how to talk about this. I don't want it to seem like phew! We dodged a bullet. Or Oh, lucky us, our kid is normal.

I have sat in a circle with women whose kids suffer from autism, or developmental disabilities or mental illness, and had someone ask What is his diagnosis?

I have seen women sigh with relief that their kid wasn't as bad as mine. And seen others look like they'd lost again.

I know that every one of those women would rather not be in the circle. And I know that every one of those women wouldn't trade their kid for anybody else. We don't want our kids to suffer. We're not different than any other parent. We want our kids to have fun, and love and be loved. And when we watch our kids struggle, we worry.

Of course, I'm relieved that my child is doing so well. And I know

that our situation is not the norm. Once that disability line is drawn, it's rarely crossed back over.

My son's teacher said, These kids are like pieces of our hearts just walking around.

I can't tie this up in a simple knot. The feelings of every dream are complicated. I am very thankful, though. Very, very thankful.



Bridget Pilloud is a writer, intuitive consultant and teacher who helps people all over the world to experience a life of prosperity. Find her at www.intuitivebridge.com.



Letting My Dreams Come True

by Lisa DeYoung

If I were to look back on my journals over the years – since I was in my 20s and 30s – I will see my writings about becoming an artist, a designer and an entrepreneur. Although I have not looked back on these sporadic entries from earlier in my adult life recently, I remember them as often painful. I always thought I was failing – I could not feel my life unfolding exactly as I envisioned.

About a dozen years ago I took a writing workshop with Cynthia Morris and one of the exercises included writing about what our ideal day looked like. My ideal day included a studio space for creating.

Playing in the outdoors has always been an important part of my life. I am an avid skier, mountain biker, hiker and camper. I have always loved living in small towns where I can pedal around for transportation and be part of a community.

Now that I understand that I need to
LET MY DREAMS come true
(BELIEVE IN ME & MY DREAMS),
my dreams are unfolding before my eyes.

About six years ago my husband and I bought a small (and old) brick Victorian house in a beautiful little town in the upper Arkansas River Valley of Colorado. We 'dreamed' of moving to our dream spot in five or so years. We got the opportunity to move here quite suddenly a few months later when I was offered a job in marketing with a small company that was expanding at the time. Two years later my job disappeared.

This was a difficult time for me. It was when the economic melt-down happened and for a time I could not see any opportunity in front of me. There were no good jobs in my town. The news was



depressing. I had a hard time digging out of negative self-talk about past decisions.

But it also gave me time for self-exploration. I began to explore in the burgeoning online world and met many wonderful creatives (including Jamie whose wonderful outlook and insight on creativity helped me to begin moving forward again).

My husband was (and is) ever the optimist, and he kept believing in me – even when I could not.

Now I have a beautiful purpose built studio space that looks out across my neighborhood and across the valley to the 14,000+ feet peaks of the Sawatch Range. It is the space I dreamed of.

I make art in my studio space. **I am an artist.**

I am nurturing my infant virtual assistance practice in my space.

I am an entrepreneur.

I am designing – handmade books and cards for friends; my logo; e-zines, e-books and website pages for my clients; and more – from this space. **I am a designer.**

I enjoy exploring and adventures in my backyard and beyond. I appreciate our beautiful earth and all that it holds. **I am an outdoor diva.**

Jamie Ridler Studios

The community I live in is full of amazing creative and loving souls that support me. My online community provides me another amazing creative, loving and supportive circle. I am grateful for the love and support I receive and the opportunity to share love and support for others. I am in community.

I realize I have been inching my way towards my dreams all along, but because I often resisted them forward movement was imperceptible (to me).

Now that I understand that I need to LET MY DREAMS come true (BELIEVE IN ME & MY DREAMS), my dreams are unfolding before my eyes. The journey I am on is my dream, and it is beautiful. Everyday is not perfect or ideal, but now I truly understand that these days and moments are part of the journey – and I embrace all of them with JOY and LOVE. And I know that I can lean into my communities for support and offer my support to them.

“To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe.”
– Anatole France



Lisa DeYoung is an artist, entrepreneur, designer and outdoor diva living in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. Through her Virtual Assistance business she loves supporting other creatives move forward in their entrepreneurial dreams. You can also share in Lisa's creative life adventures at her personal

blog at www.mtnmermaid.wordpress.com.

The Sacred Yes We Wish for ...and Warrant

by Danielle LaPorte

I used to think I was weak n' needy for wanting my "big break." I dreamed of being discovered. I toyed with the willingness to enter some Svengali deal where an agent dude or silver foxy dada would see my raw talent and shape me into a formidable star—a fresh new voice on the scene. I longed for Someone Really Important to give me a Yes that would change my life.

One day, that Yes came.

My first literary agent is one of the most powerful people in the business. With an agency roster like Malcolm Gladwell, Al Gore, Camille Paglia, Michael Moore, Jane Fonda, Anderson Cooper, even Danielle Steel...publishers and producers trip over themselves to take her call. The day she signed me, my life changed. I was in bed for the teleconference. 10am EST, 7am PST. It was snowing out. She was extolling the merits of the book proposal, and in my state of stunned glee, I had to interrupt. "May I ask a question?" I said. "Does all this meaning that you're taking on the project?"

She laughed. "Yes!"

I had it. It felt like someone had lifted the red velvet curtains to my heart. I hung up the phone and cried. And I thought to myself, "God really wants me to do my work, 'cause this is it."

It's natural to crave the sacred Yes. Ideally, you give yourself the Yes first. That self-love methodology is all neat and tidy and evolved. But I think you still get evolution bonus points even if it takes a dozen power people to convince you that you are fabulous. Neil Young said that he didn't know for sure if he was talented until his albums sold. Fair enough.

It's the kernel of our humanity to want to be seen, recognized, understood—celebrated, even. And when that kernel is watered,

magic tends to proliferate.

The sacred yeses you get don't have to be exceptional or prestigious or catapulting. The yeses can be votes of confidence, offerings of counsel, connections, a bitta cash when you need it most.

And you don't need to be a big league power broker to give someone a sacred affirmative.

We are all power brokers. Yes?



Danielle LaPorte is the author of the forthcoming book *The Fire Starter Sessions: A Soulful + Practical Guide for Creating Success on Your Own Terms* (from Random House/Crown). An inspirational speaker, former think tank exec and business strategist, she is the creator of the online program *The Spark Kit: A Digital Experience for Entrepreneurs* and co-author

of *Your Big Beautiful Book Plan*. Over a million visitors have gone for her straight-up advice on DanielleLaPorte.com, a site that has been deemed "the best place on-line for kick-ass spirituality."

www.daniellelaporte.com

The Whispered Invitation

by Tanya Geisler

When Jamie invited me to write this piece, I was an effusive YES. Now, in all fairness, if Jamie asked me to shave my head, I'd likely still be an effusive YES, because I love and respect her that much (AND...of course she'd have a good and savvy reason for wanting to see my bald pate).

But it wasn't like I gave a ton of thought to what I intended to write when I offered up that YES. Intrinsicly, I know dreams really do come true. I see it every single day. Big ones, little ones. I hold them for my clients and witness them coming to life. And the frequency does nothing to dim the sheer wonder I feel every time I watch them unfold.

Where I hesitate is in considering my own life. By all of my own measures, I have an incredibly rich one. The life of my dreams, I guess you could say. If I had designed a checklist when I was in my early 20's of where I dreamt of being by the time I was eyeball-to-eyeball with 40, I know most boxes would be checked with great flourish.

How did that happen? One way. And hundreds ways.

The one way was a clear vision: abundance of love, joy and prosperity (though I'm not sure those would have been my exact words). And the hundreds of ways were the piles of mistakes, missteps and stubbed toes along the way. In learning my value and my values. In leaving room for magic while still holding focus. In living with the questions knowing that they would give way to the answers.

And in this very moment, I realize that some of those unchecked boxes are calling my name, asking to be loved up and tended to.

I've been so focused on the meta-view of my life that I've not been addressing the "other" dreams – the ones that get relegated to the category of "greedy" or "too much". The impeccably gorgeous workspace. The travel I want for my father. The cottage. Some phil-

Jamie Ridler Studios



photo by Hannah Spence

anthropic work that feels so tender I dare not write the words. The personal stylist. The TV Show.

And so, once again, I am grateful to Jamie Ridler. In her request for this piece was a whispered invitation: what dreams to you want to see come to life, Tanya?

I will now make space for these other dreams. With spaciousness and intention.

Thank you, Jamie.



Tanya Geisler is a certified business and life coach who simply cannot and will not shake her indomitable belief that if everyone knew and lived their values, they'd hold the key to shining in their life, in their work and in their life's work. (Now, wouldn't THAT make for a far more joyous world?) A catalyst, not a therapist, she wrote *The Joy Pages*, created *Board of Your Life*, and speaks with great passion on all things joy, meaning and purpose.

www.tanyageisler.com

“What’s your dream?”

(PS You can have more than one.)



Name your dream here

by _____

Write about
your dreams here.



More space for
your dreams here.



Your photo here

Your bio here



About

About Jamie Ridler

Jamie Ridler is a creative living expert and the director of Jamie Ridler Studios. Her work takes many forms, from writing to leading, from coaching to creating, and yet, her mission always remains the same. She helps women rediscover their creative spirit and find the courage and confidence to express their true selves fully and vivaciously in the world. With fierce love and deep magic, Jamie will help you be the star you are.

About Jamie Ridler Studios

Jamie Ridler Studios is a creative work/play space where spirits awaken, magic stirs and creativity comes to life. There is so much to discover in the studio (Wishcasting, Dreamboards, Creative Living with Jamie and more), including yourself! With an inspirational blog & podcast, regular events & creative workshops, this is a studio for self-discovery and dreams!

Connect

Jamie Ridler Studios

www.openthedoor.ca

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Big Dreams. Big Gratitude.

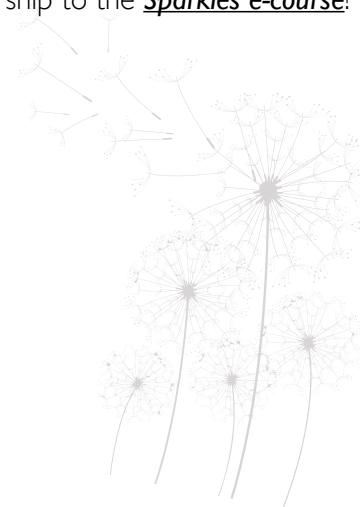
This book is full of brilliance, love, support and creativity from amazing writers I am blessed to call friends. Seeing them all together in this book feels like a wondrous party, rich with deep conversation and lots of laughter! Thank you to each and every one of you for being a part of this celebration of dreams come true and for modeling what it means to keep your eyes on the stars. You inspire me every day.

Thank you so much to Lisa DeYoung for putting this beauty together. Lisa, you have so much heart and creative spirit. It has been a real joy to work with you on this project. I am so thankful for your dedication, your insight and all of your dedicated work. I am so glad that we are connected.

A special thank you goes out to my husband, Justin, who is central to my dreams come true, whether we're in Paris or our own backyard. You are everything to me, baby. I love you.

Share Your Dreams

If you have a dream come true story, come on over to the [Dreams Really Do Come True page](#) at Jamie Ridler Studios and share it in the comments. You could win a scholarship to the [Sparkles e-course](#)!





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