

Writing a blog

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What do you hope to gain from this session? Beginner or experienced? One off or series? Do you have a topics and want to release it through a blog post or do you want to develop a blog site and develop a series of posts?

What is a blog?

Text on a website, talking to the reader and telling a story. It can be about a person (celebrity blogs) or on a topic (eg George Monbiot environmental) or amusing or engaging short stories to capture imagination (topical journalists) or one off ways of sharing a great story. It can be nature writing, news and topical events, critical analysis, humour. Usually a blog is a personal connection with others – there may be space for comments and conversation. It is an informal and conversational style. Nowadays there is increasingly overlap between blogging and video and visual art – you can be a vlogger or do narrative visualisations.

Why write a blog?

To connect directly with others. To get a point of view or story out to a popular or other audience; bloggers can make a living from it. To help yourself reflect. To share with others. To be part of your public engagement plan. To talk to a community of interest. If you want to post a series of blogs you want to build up your community and develop trust and loyalty across your followers. You don't need to be an expert – readers want to connect with personal experience! Build a website, build a movement, make money?

Who do you want to reach?

Your peers, the public, a specific group.....

Where do you post your blog(s)?

Depends on above – you may want to post on LfS Scotland? or to start your own domain name and blog series. There is an increasing push for organisations to publish a series of blogs.

How do you write a blog?

1. Think of your **audience**.
2. Consider your **content**: work practice, life experience, hobby, opinion, humour. Do you have a purpose?
3. Pick an angle on your topic – what do you want to say?
4. Write in your own style: develop your authentic voice. This can be a challenge if there is an organisation wanting to write a more corporate blog – this may end up being a series of disconnected and unengaging information pieces. You could overcome this by having a blog editor who introduces each piece, or a blog writer who interviews people in the organisation and then gives their personal perspective on different roles and achievements, or pieces written by a team of different people eg 3 core writers who can each build up an audience.
5. Be careful with grammar and spelling but sound natural and be informal. You need to be personal AND professional.
6. Express your enthusiasm and passion – authentic interest works best.
7. Include images (careful of copyright) and links to other sites, resources. A great photo or picture on the link to the blog can help people be drawn in and explore it, then you have to grab them in the first few lines.
8. How long should it be? Depends – short or long – but don't ramble or lose structure.
9. Break up text with images (beware of copyright issues – see below), sub headings, bullet points, text art etc.
10. Keep sentences short and paragraphs reasonable lengths.
11. Draft, write, edit, reflect, edit then post, until you have experience and place.
12. Be careful of complaining – if you rant, make it against someone who can defend themselves or an issue. Personal battles don't usually belong on a blog.
13. What is your headline? Try several – make it attention grabbing.
14. Develop an outline, including an introduction. Start with an unusual fact, an observation, something you just did – something gripping that may foreshadow what is to come.
15. Circular structure
16. End at a natural point, or develop conclusions, or with a provocative question. If you have developed a blog site maybe you want people to share or subscribe
17. Blog name – your blog and your domain name
18. Blog host and blogging software eg Blue Host (recommended by Wordpress) (about £5 per month)
19. Blog style and format

20. Blog theme – visual and content
21. Post your blog
22. Market your blog – eg by posting links on twitter and Facebook. This is a science in itself so you can also develop email marketing
23. Answer comments! Some people don't like to answer online so they provide a contact link or email address so people can contact you directly in private.
24. Write more blogs
25. Make money through blogs? Initially usually done through enabling advertising eg by registering at AdSense.

The blog

More information

<https://wordpress.com>

<https://www.bluehost.com>

<https://www.theblogstarter.com>

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

<https://creativecommons.org>

Examples of blog sites

https://blog.feedspot.com/sustainability_blogs/ the top 75 sustainability blogs and websites to follow in 2019

the sustainable human

<https://earthmaven.io/sustainablehuman/space-between-stories/do-not-waste-one-more-second-CFERCOCAU0WIXX6C20fk3Q/>

From <https://www.theblogstarter.com>

“Most images posted online are copyrighted, and you must receive permission from the copyright holder to use them. The owner of the image could be its creator, a business, a nonprofit, etc.—regardless, you don’t have the right to use it without written consent. Think about it in writing terms: If you post a short story on your blog, you own it and you wouldn’t want others to post it on their websites without your permission, would you? Most writers wouldn’t. An image is basically a pictorial story that holds the same copyright benefits your writing does.

Keep in mind that just because you can’t take images freely from any site you please, that doesn’t mean there aren’t plenty of online images available for free use. One great resource is Wikipedia’s [Wikimedia Commons](#), which houses more than 9 million usable media files. Or, pick a search engine and type in “public domain images” to find hundreds of links. If you need something specific, like “a hippopotamus wearing a sombrero,” add that to your search and see what comes up. You may be able to find the perfect image just by doing that. And you won’t be infringing on anyone’s rights in the process.”

Why Don't We Trust Ourselves?

by **Chris Agnos**

[Jan 1](#)

There is a reason why many of us have difficulty trusting our instinct. Are you able to trust yours?

Few institutions would dare to encourage self-trust. Instead, most authorities teach us to become placid participants in various systems. They do not teach us to be happy. If anything, they underline the dangers of freedom and the importance of control.

Because these notions are so common—in our schools and churches, at the dinner table, and on the evening news—we begin to learn what we think is a universal truth: we must hold ourselves together. We learn that if we let ourselves go, we will become evil, lazy, savage. We learn the importance of pressure and restraint. We learn to repress our genuine desires because they’re incompatible with society’s expectations. We learn that if we are not doing well in a school subject or a self-improvement plan, then we are not pushing ourselves hard enough. We learn that people who succeed are examples of this kind of pushing. We learn that those who stop doing something only because it feels wrong are lazy.

Even people who oppose one institution's dogma often end up buying into another's. It is difficult to escape these teachings because they are so ubiquitous.

Humans are pattern-seeking, storytelling animals. From the world around you, you have learned which patterns to seek and which stories to tell. Your unconscious inner conversation has helped you mimic the people around you rather than understand yourself better. When you learn, from a young age, to fear, ignore, and suppress parts of your experience, you can only tell half the story. You remain an acquaintance to your reflection instead of an intimate friend.

To live how you feel is right takes the same effort as to live how you're told is right. The work is the same. What is different is the reward. No amount of approval and no size of achievement can ever fill the space reserved for your opinion of yourself.

Of course, in the real world, we need both. We cannot live only by our own expectations. I wouldn't suggest driving on the opposite side of the road simply because you "feel that it's right." Self-trust is not about rebellion, and it's not about hedonism. It's about realizing that all your experiences—your thoughts, your emotions, your dreams—are valid. They exist for a reason.

Accepting this reality does not require you to believe each thought, act on each emotion, or fulfill each dream. Quite the contrary, embracing each part of your experience gives you the ability to understand it, explore it, and integrate it.

Instead of labeling your emotions as problems to solve, you can see them as signals to interpret. Instead of judging your desires as shameful aberrations, you can learn to meet them in healthier ways. Instead of calling yourself critical names when you cannot build or break certain habits, you can explore your motivations.

You can become a student of yourself rather than always seeking a wiser teacher.

<https://earthmaven.io/sustainablehuman/space-between-stories/do-not-waste-one-more-second-CFERC0CAU0WIXX6C20fk3Q/>

Do Not Waste One More Second by [CaityJohnstone](#) Nov 9, 2018

This could all be gone very soon, so don't waste it.

Do not waste one more second of your time on this earth, for the insects are all dying, and the ice caps are vanishing, and the oceans are filling with plastic.

This could all be gone very soon, so don't waste it. Don't take any part of the crackling miraculousness of this cacophony for granted, because there are missiles being

targeted, and there are vast battle plans being drawn. You could look outside your window tomorrow morning and see a mushroom cloud on the horizon, and you will regret letting life's preciousness slip through your fingers.

We do not like to think about death. We say, "I will think about death some other day. Today I must busy myself with mental chatter about nonsense and the avoidance of feeling my feelings. I would love to stare into the white skull of the human condition, but my schedule is chock full of escapism." We push death aside, and push death aside, and push death aside. And then, one day, death pushes us aside.

One way or another, the end is coming. But if you truly, deeply engage here, you can live more life in a week than most people live in an entire lifetime. By that I do not mean that you can have more experiences, I just mean that you can experience far more moments with far more depth and clarity than someone who's just drifting through life on autopilot. One week fully and consciously appreciated contains more lived life than an entire stay in this world from cradle to grave when it is taken for granted.

And of course you will also have far more amazing experiences than someone who isn't directly interfacing with the moment. Necessarily you will. People are normally so paralyzed by pain, fear, guilt, shame, bitterness, anger and resentment that they stay in more or less the same holding patterns for decades, and choosing to truly live life necessarily entails ceasing the escapism strategies used to hold that paralysis in place. Truly engaging and making the very most of your time left in this world means shaking off that paralysis, leaving that job, getting that divorce, diving head over heels in love, having mind-bending, earth-shattering orgasms and letting creativity flow from you like wine, courageously feeling all the unlocked emotions as they come up in response.

One breath. Take just one fully conscious breath. Start there. It is no small thing to do this; people can go their entire lives without ever once having tried it. Take one deep, full breath and truly experience it with everything you've got. Begin living from there.

Come and run with the real werewolves. Come and swim with the hidden ocean angels. Let everything in this endless explosion of light and wonderment and sopping wet tenderness have a voice in your experience, and let those voices sing to the heavens.

Because (and here is the good news) that paralysis is the only thing keeping us on the path toward destruction. Our predictable patterns have been mapped out and sequenced by powerful men with cold hearts, and those patterns are being used to herd us toward helping them strip the earth of life for profit. They break us up into groups based on our fears and insecurities, and then they manipulate those groups using fearmongering and false hope. And now here we are, allowing bankers and bastards to poison the planet and march us into endless wars while clamping down on our minds ever further, and hardly anyone even understands why.

Really showing up for this life makes that impossible for them to pull off. Being fully engaged with each moment means responding consciously to everything that comes up

instead of habitually reacting based on old patterns, and someone without patterns is impossible to manipulate. They can only herd the walking dead, those who are ruled by fear, those who say "I'll believe whatever you tell me to believe, just keep letting me binge on Netflix and drink on the weekends so I don't have to feel my feelings." A fully present human organism who is unafraid to feel any part of life cannot be manipulated.

Whether or not the end of the world is around the corner, the fact that we've only got a limited time here is reason enough to be sure we are fully present for every waking moment. Don't be like the others who come to clarity on their deathbed, saying tearfully, "Fuck. Has it always been this beautiful?"

Yes, it has. Yes, it is.

So don't waste it. Don't waste one more second of your time on this earth. It is self-evident that the most constructive way you can spend your time here is learning the art of fully relishing every bite of it.

So that's it then. Let's do this thing. Are you ready? Get set. Breathe.