

## THE WRITING LIFE

by Bobbi Linkemer

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### Circle of Influence

Someone asked me if “The Writing Life” is a blog. Accord-ing to *Webster’s New Millennium™ Dictionary of English*, a blog is “an online diary; a personal chronological log of thoughts published on a Web page; a Web log.”

The Writing Life is personal. While I’m not baring my soul, these are my thoughts; they are on my Web site; and they do focus on subjects I care about.

I care about a lot of things. In fact, I care way too much. I sometimes cry when I watch the news, to the point that I have stopped watching it. I despair over the state of the environment and the future of the planet. I worry about starving children, not only across the ocean, but right here in this country. I am aghast that genocide is still taking place in the world, and no one is stopping it. I find it hard to believe that we are failing to properly educate our young people and falling behind other countries.

These problems are in my “circle of concern,” which is huge. If I think about all that I am powerless to fix, or even improve, I get depressed. I was telling a friend about what a mess the world is in, when the subject changed to teaching (a non sequitur, if there ever was one). Sounding like a proud parent, I went on and on about how many of my students are writing their books or are in some stage of publishing.

“You played a role in that,” my friend observed. “You said they could do it, and they believed you. So, they are writing.” That’s when I had my epiphany.

Yes, there are problems in the world; and, no, I’m not Bill Gates. But neither am I powerless to touch lives. Within my tiny “circle of influence,” I can help people create something new. I can encourage them to write ... to tell their stories. I can guide them through the process. One person at a time, I *can* make a difference. ■