

THE WRITING LIFE

by Bobbi Linkemer

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The Power of the Process

I wasn't going to make any New Year's resolutions this year. Why set myself up to beat myself up when I don't keep them? On the other hand, what if I made just *one*, and what if I called it a *goal* instead of a resolution? Goals are something to strive for, to aspire to (I know ... Never end a sentence with a preposition. Please forgive me).

Goals work for all kinds of reasons, ranging from scientific to spiritual. They inspire us; they focus our attention; they open our minds to opportunities; they even seem to propel the right people into our lives at precisely the right moments.

A fellow member of the St. Louis Publisher's Association once made a presentation on what he called BHAGs (Big Hairy Audacious Goals). He had all of us write down our most off-the-wall BHAG and put it in a conspicuous place in our wallets or planners. We were all a little self-conscious, but we did it.

Crazy? Perhaps, but it worked for him and also, apparently, for Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen, who turned *Chicken Soup for the Soul* into a multi-million dollar best seller that launched an industry. I must confess, it worked for me. My BHAG was to become a successful ghostwriter; and, by the next year, I had ghostwritten two books! That's the power of this process.

As I write this, I am looking at my marketing plan for 2008. It has a business objective at the top that is so outlandish, it might as well be called a BHAG. Since BHAGs are supposed to be kept secret, like TM mantras, here is my suggestion:

Write yours down on a small card or piece of paper. On the next line, write this question: *Is what I'm doing right this minute going to further my goal or detract from it?* Make lots of copies. Put them where you can't miss seeing them. Make them your mantra. Then, watch the power of the process. ■