

**Dana Kisor**

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**From:** cindybarrilleau@aweber.com on behalf of Cindy Barrilleaux [cindy@writeyourbest.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 28, 2009 9:13 PM  
**To:** Friend  
**Subject:** Writing Tips from Cindy Barrilleaux, Write Your Best

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**Write Your  
Best** May 2009 Newsletter  
Cindy Barrilleaux

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**Dear Friend,**

You have received this newsletter because a while ago you expressed an interest in writing. Hope you find it useful!

Do you have questions about writing or publishing? Send them to me at [cindy@writeyourbest.com](mailto:cindy@writeyourbest.com) and I'll answer them in the next newsletter.

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**Newsletter Archives**

I invite you to check out all the recommended books, websites and quotes for writers, and articles about writing in my earlier e-newsletters. They are now available on my website at [www.WriteYourBest.com](http://www.WriteYourBest.com).

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**What to Do When Your Writing Gets Tied in Knots**

I've been sitting at my computer for the past 30 minutes trying to unravel my thoughts for this month's article. The irony is that I planned to discuss simplicity in writing, and the more I write, the more tongue-tied (word-tied?) I get.

So this month I'm the case-study for a piece about simplicity. I'm the writer who needs to 1) recognize she's about to lose her reader for lack of clarity, and 2) find a direct, clear way to express her ideas.

Everyone who writes faces this problem, so finding a way

**Quotes for Writers**

"The great thing about collecting words is they're free; you can borrow them, trade them in or toss them out. . . .Words are lightweight, unbreakable, portable, and they're everywhere. You can even make them up. Frebent, bezoncular, zurber."

--Susan Goldsmith  
Wooldridge, *Poemcrazy*



"Writing is outrageously time consuming. . . . For every writer, at every level of fame and productivity, making and defending writing time is a lifelong battle. It's not just hard now. It will *always* be hard."

--Stephen Koch, *The Modern Library Writer's Workshop*

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**Recommended Blog for Writers**

"Write to Done"



through it will make your writing life--and mine--easier.

My clients often express wonder at my ability to get to the heart of what they're having difficulty expressing. "It's like she was inside my head," one client often tells people. The truth is more prosaic. When a writer is stuck I make one simple suggestion: "Just tell me what you're trying to say."

Perhaps it's because they know I'm on their side, that I just want to help and am genuinely interested in their ideas. Or perhaps it's because they are more relaxed speaking than writing. In either case, the just-telling-me magically clears their minds of complications and obfuscations, and a shiny, pristine thought comes out of their mouths, beautiful in its truth and clarity. Then my next instruction is: "Good. Just say that."

So why was I having problems writing about simplicity? My goal was clear: to offer help with a common problem writers face. It seemed like last week everyone I talked with was having difficulty writing in a down-to-earth, direct way.

Where I got tangled up was wanting to explain all the reasons writing directly is difficult: self-consciousness; a desire to impress readers; and my issue--trying to say too much in one small piece.

Each thought led to another thought and soon I was lost. I wasn't following a clear train of thought, because I hadn't decided what train I wanted to be on.

So my inner writing coach nudged me and said, "Just tell me what you want to say."

And that was easy to answer: I wanted to say to you, writer or would-be writer, "Be real and be simple in your writing."

I wanted to say, "Decide the point you want to make and drop the fancy language, complex constructions, lifeless phrases. Write as if you were talking to somebody you know and like, somebody who's on your side. Write as if I had just said to you 'Just tell me what you're trying to say.'"

Happy Writing!  
Cindy Barrilleaux

PS - If sorting out your ideas and writing simply is causing you difficulty, you may want to consider writing coaching. For more information about how coaching works, and the services I offer, go to [www.WriteYourBest.com](http://www.WriteYourBest.com)

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If you know someone who is writing or wants to write, and think they'd be interested, forward this newsletter to them.

If you want to receive monthly newsletters with writing tips and advice, sign up at [www.WriteYourBest.com](http://www.WriteYourBest.com)

Award-winning blog by Leo Babauta with excellent articles on the art and craft of writing.

<http://writetodone.com>

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## Recommended Website

[nathanbransford.blogspot.com](http://nathanbransford.blogspot.com)



"The Ten Commandments for the Happy Writer."

A thoughtful blog entry from literary agent Nathan Bransford.

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## Buying Books?

Check out [www.BetterBooks.com](http://www.BetterBooks.com) for used books. They don't charge shipping, and part of their proceeds go to literacy programs and libraries.




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## More Resources for Writers

To see more Recommended Books and Websites for Writers, visit the Recommended page on my website: [www.WriteYourBest.com/Books](http://www.WriteYourBest.com/Books)

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## Is Writing Coaching for You?

If you want to get started writing, and wonder if writing coaching can help, check out my [Introductory Special Offer](#). It's an inexpensive, low-risk way to take a test drive.

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