



Denis Ledoux

Get Started – Keep Going

Strategies for Lifestory Writers

Denis Ledoux

denis@turningmemories.com

Twitter: [@denisledoux](https://twitter.com/denisledoux)

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/MemoirNetwork>

My blogs: [The Memoir Writer's Blog](#)

[The Memoir Professional's Blog: Earn Money Memoir Writing](#)

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Smashwords Edition

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Introduction

“Can I do it?” you ask, perhaps unsure of yourself. “Can I write a book of lifestories that portrays my life’s experience to family and friends—and perhaps even to people I don’t know?”

Sure you can!

Every year, people—perhaps just like you who have never written a book—decide to write just one of their lifestories and, lo, story by story, they succeed at writing their memoirs.

You, too, can write your lifestories and know the tantalizing success of achieving something you had never thought you would.

One woman from my Turning Memories Into Memoirs® Workshop, a woman with no prior writing experience, produced a book that was reviewed in *Library Journal*, a major American venue for pre-publication reviews. Hers was a sweet writing success that led to speaking engagements, newspaper interviews, and, best of all, sharing her stories with an appreciative audience that was larger than any she could find among her own friends and acquaintances.

If we had to say what writing is, we would define it essentially as an act of courage. —Cynthia Ozick

But, her real success—as yours will be—was achieving her once-elusive goal of writing a book to preserve her lifestory for posterity.

Success—whether you define it as private or public—can be yours, too, but it will call for commitment and effort on your part. You will have to put your “nose to the grindstone”—or more likely, your fingers to the computer keyboard—and work on a regular and frequent basis. You will have to search for meaning in levels well beyond “who did what when” and you will have to pay attention to the mechanics of your writing.

“But, I’ve never done this before,” you insist, sure that your situation is different from my workshopers’ and different from those of the hundreds of thousands of people who have already succeeded in writing their personal and family stories.

No problem! Neither had my writing student. She even faced a greater difficulty than most writers: not only had she, like you perhaps, never written before, but she had not spoken English until she was well into her thirties!

There is no birth of consciousness without pain. —C.G. Jung

Exercise

1. Make a list of all things (and people) that will have a claim on your attention and co-opt your time and energy from writing your memoirs. In this list, include your lack of experience with writing and your little talent, your defective education, your sorry level of income, and any other excuses you want to dredge up from your ledger of difficulties.

2. Go back to the list of items that you feel will block your success. For each item, find at least one way in which you will be able to make that problem work for you or a way to compensate for its shortfall (coming up with two ways is even better!).

For instance, "I'm too social to work a long time alone at writing." Ok. Here's how you can make that work for you: "I'll find a writing group to write with or at least to bounce my stories off."

3. Consider at least one way that you will make each of these supports (people or circumstances) even stronger. For instance, "My siblings want me to succeed" can be enhanced by "I will ask if each of them can help me in this specific way..."



4. Place the writing from this exercise in a three-ring binder.

Why tell your stories?

In late autumn of 1988, as people were hunkering down for another Maine winter, I was asked to read from my first collection of short stories to a meeting of volunteer Foster Grandparents.

My collection clearly made use of autobiography—the approach to fiction that has always compelled me the most. After my short program of reading, as has been my custom, I asked people to share their own stories with me and with each other.

An astounding—but, as I was to find over and over again, completely natural—response occurred. In a torrent, members of the audience began to tell me their stories. These Foster Grandparents spoke with eagerness—as if their speaking their stories were, at last, satisfying a hunger they were carrying around with them.

I have come to realize that telling your story to yourself (in the privacy of your bedroom, for instance) does not satisfy that hunger to tell. People need to tell their stories to an audience. Sometimes that audience is your own family; sometimes that audience is much larger—as large as a city, a region, a whole country, or the world even.

Besides merely starting to write, part of what you are about to do is starting to write for an audience. It can be intimidating to realize that your words are going to be read by an audience of real, live people.

There are, in fact, men who talk like books. Happily, however, there are also books that talk like men. —Theodor Haecker

Exercise

1. What is your ambition in regards to your stories? Describe how it will feel to have achieved this ambition. Write about the sense of success you will have and even perhaps of the certain immortality writing will bring you as your autobiography and family history live on into future generations long after you are gone.
2. Whom do you want to write your stories for? This is your audience. Why do you want to write for these people? In what way do **you** need for them to hear your stories? In what way do **they** need to hear your stories?
3. Place your writing from this exercise in a three-ring binder.

Writing your memoirs will bring you much pleasure!

Lifewriting brings many rewards. One is the feeling, as you write your lifestories, that you have come to a family reunion. You will meet once again—if only on the page—many of the people who have been important to you in your life. Enjoy the visit! They are still with you, if only in your memory.

Lifewriting will also renew the relationship you have with your former, younger selves. That, too, is a sort of reunion as you focus on the relationship you have, and have had, with yourself and your life.

What you are contemplating will seem long and difficult at times, but it is not beyond your scope. The regular application of energy and thought cannot help but change you, center you, and hopefully bring you not only satisfaction but greater peace and contentment. One day, you too will have a lifewriting manuscript in hand.

And perhaps, too, the manuscript you are undertaking to write will reach out to others and speak to them about the life you have lived and the truth you have experienced.

Your story can be more than an individual's tale: it can be the story of an Everyman (or an Everywoman) wandering through the twentieth century on the way to the present. You are a hero who has adapted, survived, and perhaps even flourished in the world as we know it, and it is time to celebrate that.

What you are doing is important—both to you, to your family, and to others.

Enjoy.

Denis Ledoux
Lisbon Falls, ME

Any writer overwhelmingly honest about pleasing himself is almost sure to please others. —Marianne Moore

Chapter 1

When You Start to Write

Your initial—and most fundamental—challenge as you settle into writing your stories may be a surprise to you.

It will probably not be scheduling, nor discipline, nor writing itself—although these are not to be dismissed. It is likely to be something more fundamental: how you think about writing and about yourself as a writer.

Let's go back to the beginning, so to speak, of your concept of yourself as a writer. Let's go to the time when you learned to think about writing, about what made good writing, and about what was worth writing about.

That was probably in high-school English class. Unfortunately, English classes were often taught by teachers who were not themselves writers. Of course, they knew about “good writing.” Identifying “good writing” is what they themselves had studied in college and they had become adept at describing it.

The process of writing, of how one goes about writing a text and creating a manuscript as opposed to how one takes a finished piece apart and talks critically about it, is something entirely different.

Unfortunately, many—perhaps even most—high-school English teachers knew very little about this process of writing a story. They had never been taught to write as a writer.

So how could they teach you about it, how could they acquaint you with the process so that you would not only feel comfortable undertaking it but also be successful at writing?

Obviously they couldn't. They had never experienced themselves as writers. What they could do, however, what they were good at from having done a lot of it in college, was to critique your text—tell you what wasn't “right” about it.

As you heard what wasn't right about what you had done, your confidence probably sank! You had done everything you could to make the text as “good” as it could be and now you were being told it wasn't good enough.

A man who writes well writes not as others write, but as he himself writes; it is often in speaking badly that he speaks well. —Montesquieu

We must admit, to be fair to those of our teachers who could not depart from this model, that they themselves had been taught by teachers who had been asked to teach writing without being writers themselves either.

In class, besides tearing apart your own “miserable” writing, you also read and admired stellar autobiographies. These paragons of literary style were by famous and powerful people who were long dead. The only memoirs worth reading were apparently those of

influential people who had played political or military roles and who had recounted their important part in world affairs in a Latinate style.

The course of history is obviously heavily shaped by powerful individuals, but it is also shaped by ordinary people who respond courageously and heroically (or servilely and cowardly) to the demands of their times. During the Vietnam War, anti-war protesters appealed to the common person when they wrote on signs, "What if they threw a war and no one came!" Eventually when enough ordinary people decided not "to come," powerful political individuals brought the war to an end.

There are many such instances of ordinary individuals whose actions have changed history. Think of Rosa Parks whose feet, one day, were too tired to walk away so that someone else could have her seat! Think of the people of India who decided that it was time for the British finally to leave their country!

Writers, if they are worthy of that jealous designation, do not write for other writers. They write to give reality to experience. —Archibald Macleish

Exercise

1. You may not have been an important political or military figure, but you most certainly have done something that influenced the shape of history—even if not as big as Rosa Park’s contribution, even if what you did was not just you alone but you and a million other people. Were you part of the Depression? Did you fight in the Second World War and therefore contribute to the liberation of Europe? Were you active in the civil rights movement from a perspective that is little known? Were you part of the turbulent sixties even if sociologists said people of your class or ethnicity were not?
2. For the next ten minutes, write a free flow of your memories of when you did something that was part of history. Do not worry about spelling, grammar or organization.
3. No rewriting, just writing. Ten minutes.
4. Place the writing that results from this ten-minute exercise in your three-ring binder.

History is a story we have accepted; our lives are the stories we tell ourselves about the experience of life. —Richard Stone, Personal Historian & Storyteller

Congratulations!

By doing this “no rewriting” exercise you have already begun to loosen yourself from the stifling grip of “good writing.” You have begun to explore what it can mean to be a writer of memoirs!

Remember: what you are about to do—write your lifestory—is no different in kind than the memoirs prime ministers and famous actresses and insightful poets have written. Your memoir may be different in its impact on the world but not in how it is written and put together.

It is not only influential figures that write worthwhile autobiography. Real memoirs are written by ordinary people.

People perhaps just like you.

Lifestory or autobiography?

Do you still feel uncomfortable about writing your autobiography? Well...

Try the following. Stop thinking about writing your autobiography. Let the word “autobiography” slip away. Let it be what famous people write. Don’t permit yourself to get caught up in the paralyzing issues you may have with the term “autobiography!” Instead...

Write your “lifestories!”

Lifestories and autobiography are, of course, the same thing: both are stories about you and the people in your life. The term “autobiography” comes from three Greek words that mean “self” (auto), “life” (bios), and “writing” (graphein), and that is what you are now undertaking: self life writing. But, for the moment, give yourself a break and don’t call what you are doing “autobiography.” Call it “lifestory.”

The term lifestory, especially in its plural version of lifestories, conjures the possibility that short narrations can transmit a full account of one’s life.

Many people feel that the term “lifestory,” is more accessible because it is not weighted down with a long literary tradition, as is the term “autobiography.” That’s why I’ve chosen to favor—but not use exclusively—the word “lifestory” in this e-book series.

Lifestories, written singly just as they are told one by one, eventually add up to what is an autobiography. When you envision your autobiography as a series of lifestories, the task of writing the stories of a lifetime becomes more accessible and ultimately enjoyable.



One at a time

Were I to ask a beginning workshop participant, “Can you produce a 140-page autobiography for me?” most would blanch and then protest, “I can’t possibly write that much!”

Perhaps you are feeling a similar crisis of doubt that impels you to hesitate at the beginning of your lifewriting venture? Perhaps you are asking yourself how you will ever compose a book-length manuscript? Instead of dwelling on the difficulties of a long autobiography, focus instead on writing lifestories that are just long enough to share at an evening gathering with family and friends.

When I ask people in the Turning Memories Into Memoirs® Workshops if they can write a three-, four-, five or even seven-page lifestory, most respond with, “Yes, I can do that.” Over the weeks, I ask them to write five, ten or twenty such stories. Ten three-page stories add up to thirty pages while ten seven-page stories add up encouragingly to seventy pages. Even better, twenty seven-page stories make a one hundred and forty-page lifestory manuscript!

In asking for my workshopppers to write short lifestories, I hope to emphasize the process of storytelling, the pleasures of the writing process itself, and the possibility of short pieces adding up to a coherent whole. To ask workshopppers to write autobiography would be to emphasize the requirements of a literary genre (remember English class!) and possibly make the process intimidating.

Putting it together

Some writers decide to connect their stories with transitions and seed their texts with references to other stories so that the whole manuscript will read like a continuous piece—like a fabric sewn together so cleverly that the seams don’t show. (These stories will resemble the traditional autobiography.) Others are satisfied with a manuscript that reads more like an anthology of separate stories—juxtaposed, yet one story independent of any other, with only emotional and thematic links.

These decisions about how to link text together to form a book will be an exciting task

but it is for a later time. Your first task is to be perfectly clear about one thing...
Your life is worth writing about. You are the best person to do it—one story at a time!
You can succeed if you want to.

Today the world changes so quickly that, in growing up, we take leave not just of youth but of the world in which we were young. —Peter Medawar

Exercise

1. What are your “hang ups” about writing? Here is an appropriate time to write about your writing history. Who taught you to write and what were their “hang ups?”
2. In your journal, respond to the suggestion in this section of using the term lifestory. Do you see any difference in the energy you feel around the terms autobiography and lifestory. Does the thought of writing lifestories, one at a time, rather than an autobiography, free you? How have your thoughts affected your ambitions for your writing?

*The last thing that we find in making a book is to know what we must put first. —
Blaise Pascal*

Chapter 2

Early Tasks

Writing your lifestories is a long-term project. As all long-term projects do, lifewriting will have its ups and downs. Knowing this as you begin to write will provide a perspective that will help you to maximize the ups and minimize the downs.

The lifewriting process will involve many developmental stages. Each has its requirements and, generally speaking, when a stage is insufficiently undertaken or not properly completed, the next stage is likely to be more difficult to accomplish. Be patient with the process: your success depends on it.

This chapter will take you beyond how you think of yourself as a writer and help you to be successful with the pre-writing stage, the stage before you begin composing text.

Pre-writing

Pre-writing is often neglected or given short-shrift. People will say, “I want to get on with the real writing!”

But pre-writing is essential and cannot be dismissed. Pre-writing can include:

- making a Memory List (covered in *Turning Memories Into Memoirs/A Handbook for Writing Lifestories* and in the e-book *Work Your Memory/Making the Memory List*) and organizing it into the Core, the Cluster, and the Energy Phases Memory Lists.
- re-reading letters, journal entries, newspaper clippings.
- talking to people and reminiscing.
- gathering photos.
- reading about the history of the times.
- doing some imaginative recreation of the past to stimulate your memory. This can include journal entries of imagined events and relationships, fictive letters, brainstormed dialog between you and a person in your past.
- doing any of the numerous writing exercises in this booklet, in other booklets in this series, or in *Turning Memories Into Memoirs / A Handbook for Writing Lifestories* to stimulate your memory and maintain your interest.

Pre-writing can occur at several points in the lifewriting process: at the very start of the lifewriting task, as an effective daily warm-up, or whenever you return to your writing after an absence.

As a rule, it is more effective and efficient not to start writing until you have done enough pre-writing to be immersed in the subject you want to write about.

*The last thing that we find in making a book is to know what we must put first. —
Blaise Pascal*



Starting to write

Starting to write is not at all the same thing as writing the beginning of your story. Starting to write is simply that: launching the process.

The beginning of your story is the first paragraph the reader will read. Often this is the last thing you write. Do not spend time now thinking about the beginning of your story. Think about starting to write.

Let the pre-writing dictate where you will start writing a lifestory. Pre-writing often reveals a point at which you will feel either most comfortable or most impelled to start writing.

You will know this entry point into writing by the feeling you have around it. You may feel excitement or a lack of composure or a “deep rightness.” You will sense that writing from any other entry point is somehow less relevant or less significant. You will feel you simply must begin to write from this point.

The point can be a setting (“The house where my grandmother lived was down a narrow street...”), a dialogue (“Always remember this,” she said to me one day when I was a little girl), or an action (“Hitting the ball right then became the most important thing that I could possibly do”).

Paying attention to what you most feel compelled to write—your entry point into your story even if not the beginning of your story—will prove to be not only the most

enjoyable way to proceed but also the most effective.

"But how do I know where the beginning of the story is?" the writer might persist in asking. "I thought you were supposed to start at the beginning? Isn't that what a beginning is about?"

"Start anywhere you want to," I repeat patiently. "Starting to write your story is about finding an entry point into your story. It is not the same as writing the beginning of your story. Writing your beginning may seem like something you need to do early on, but it is not. In fact, the beginning of your story is often the last thing that you will write."

Often, it is useful to resist the urge to start writing from what seems like the beginning of your story. Instead simply start writing from the point that most commands your attention.



Write whatever you want for as long as you want. Again, you do not need to write from the beginning, nor do you need to continue writing from where you left off when you last stopped. Write in any order you wish. These snippets can be organized later.

When you write as a writer, you understand that the writing process is chaotic and messy and that it has many stages. A writer respects each of these stages and knows that starting to write is important.

Chapter 3

Writing Set-ups

Here are a few more ideas that may help you to get started and to write more fluidly.

1. Write on half-sheets of paper. If you do a first draft by hand, filling a full sheet of paper with words is often the hardest part of writing—so take 8 1/2 by 11 sheets (I recycle paper by using the backs of printed sheets) and cut them in half. It is easier to fill a half sheet of paper with writing than to fill a full sheet!

On the top of each half page, write the name of your writing topic as your title. (Your topic should come from your Core Memory List or Energy Phases Memory List—see the e-book *Work Your Memory*. It should already have clustered to it a number of other items from your extended list.)

Write whatever comes to mind on your half pages—without deciding yet how any of it will come together. At this stage, it is more important to write regularly and voluminously than to write well (that will come later).

Your goal is to create a stack of half sheets of writing. Don't be concerned with whether or not you are writing well or how your final draft will shape up nor what the beginning scene of your story will be. Don't even worry about whether or not you are completely filling up each half-page or whether some half pages are full and others have only a few short sentences.

Once you have a stack of half-pages, shuffle them into an appropriate order: Perhaps page 4 belongs before page 1 and that piece about the picnic belongs after the piece about the conversation with your father. As you create an order to your stack of sheets, you may realize that you already have written what can serve as an effective beginning, or that you clearly lack a forceful beginning. But ...

Not to worry!

In doing this process, you will also see clearly where you have gaps in your writing, where you need to fill in between what you have already written.

Keep writing.

*You must live like a bourgeois so that you can write like a bohemian. —Honoré
Balzac*

2. Make a schedule that works for you. Writing at regular times can free your imagination.

When you know that you will write your lifestories at a certain time, then you will not feel anguished if you are not writing all the time. Because the unconscious seems to thrive on ritual—and memory depends heavily on the cooperation of the unconscious as well as the effort to remember you will inevitably find yourself remembering more when

you write regularly.

Write at the same time—say every evening from 7 to 8:30 AM or every other morning from 6:30 to 7:30 PM. You will find your imagination automatically gearing up at those times when you yourself open up to writing at set times. It's like your appetite being whetted by knowing a mealtime is approaching. One moment you're not hungry and the next—after you've realize it's quarter to twelve—you feel famished!

There are many options for creating a schedule. You can assign your writing a number of hours per week. How much time do you want to devote to (or can you realistically spare for) lifewriting? Be specific: “Two hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 to 11 AM.” or “every weekday evening that I'm not out from 7 to 8 PM.”

Hint: finish your writing for the day before you have said everything you have to say. Stop before your impulse to write is sated, but don't quit before you make a note for yourself about how you will proceed with your material. The next time you sit down to do some lifewriting, reread your notes and pick up where you left off. This habit contributes to a quick start the next time you sit down to write.

Another way to structure your schedule is to let a fixed number of pages determine the length of a session. You decide how many pages you will complete by a specific time. This is a page quota and may require that you write longer than you had anticipated if the writing doesn't go well. However, if the writing goes very well one day, you may find yourself writing for many fewer hours. (But, if this is the case, why not produce additional pages for when you come upon a busy time at some point?)

You can also schedule a deadline by which you will have finished your writing. Tell people when they might expect a copy of all or part of your lifestories. Their expectation—and inquiries as to whether that expectation will be satisfied—will keep you on task!

Conversely and paradoxically, it can be very rewarding for you to break your regularity every once in awhile. If you always write on the kitchen table, one day, take your writing to the backyard, or to the shore or to a café (but don't dissipate your energy in conversation!). If you always write after breakfast, occasionally write before breakfast—or after supper.

The idea of breaking your schedule is not to promote an erratic approach to writing but to give yourself a periodic release so that you can appreciate all the more the benefits of writing at regular times.

3. Don't wait for inspiration to announce itself as a condition for you to write. Too many people put off writing, apparently waiting instead for inspiration to do the hard work of writing their stories. When the spirit moves them, they sit down to write. And when the spirit doesn't move them...

This perpetuates the misconception that writers create only in some ethereal and rarefied sphere—not in everyday life. Inspired moments are wonderful when they happen—but they come infrequently and are absolutely undependable.

Since these moments may be few and far in between, waiting for them before writing, limits what you'll produce considerably. Better to depend on discipline and craft.

Writing is manual labor of the mind: a job, like laying pipe. —John Gregory Dunne

Exercise

1. Schedule the hours of the day and the week during which you will write. Note these writing times on a calendar or date book and notify other members of your family about your commitment. If you get asked to do something during these writing times, think seriously about the effects of not honoring your commitment to lifewriting.
2. Can't the shopping or the movie or the visit be put off to another time rather than impinge on your writing? I hope you will learn to say, "I can't do that right then but I would be happy (if that's really the case!) to do that either earlier or later.
3. Set yourself a goal. How many stories will you write in what amount of time? Make the goal short term and not so big as: "I'll write my autobiography this year." Think of a smaller, more attainable goal: "I'll write one lifestory this week and every week for at least one month." Renew your commitment once you have met your short-term goal.

Remember: underpromise and overdeliver. It works better everytime than overpromise and underdeliver!

4. Place your responses to this exercise in your three-ring *Lifewriter's Memory Binder*.



4. Confer with your lifemate / housemate about the lifewriting you are about to do. Does he or she know and accept how much time your writing will take? Does s/he expect to do something with you during the times you are devoting to lifewriting? Do you need to negotiate about writing times? Make sure that you are not setting yourself up to be interfered with in your writing life.

Negotiate with the other person(s). For instance you can say, “If you leave the house every other morning so that I can write peacefully, I will leave it to you when you want to have your friends over.”

5. Workshops or tele-classes can be very useful. Take writing workshops and tele-classes—both for the benefits of working with a master teacher and for the support and examples of the serious and dedicated colleagues you will meet there.

Workshops and tele-classes can be local or national. They can last several hours at a time over many weeks or they can take place in a writing retreat for short, very intense periods.

Good luck.

What you are setting out to accomplish—writing your lifestories—is important work.

I have no doubt that you can succeed.

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We hope you have enjoyed *Getting Started – Keeping Going* and feel, as we do, that it's a great tool to use to write memoir.

The book came to you free. If it has contributed to your writing—whether to its quantity or its quality—please take a moment to write a short review of the book? Tell your fellow writers what they might expect of *Getting Started – Keeping Going*.

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Lifewriting Resources

Founded in 1988 by author and teacher Denis Ledoux, Soleil Press is the publishing arm of the Soleil Lifestory Network, dedicated to producing high-quality instructional materials for people who preserve their personal and family stories through written memoirs and lifestory photograph albums.

We also offer ghostwriting, coaching for writers, Memoir Writing Groups, and book production services—design and pre-press preparation—for those who want to self publish their memoirs.

Resources for Lifewriters — www.turningmemories.com/

Turning Memories Into Memoirs, A Handbook for Writing Lifestories by Denis Ledoux... \$19.95

The Lifewriter's Memory Binder, Turning Memories companion, customized 3 ring binder ...\$21.95

The Photo Scribe: A Writing Guide How to Write the Stories Behind Your Photographs by Denis Ledoux. A guide to turning ordinary photo albums, family scrapbooks and heritage albums into written treasures of family and personal history...\$16.95

The Photo Scribe's Memory Binder A customized 3-ring binder with forms to carry out *The Photo Scribe's* exercises. Pockets and sections to help you organize your photojournaling...\$21.95

Turning Memories® Workshops & Tele-classes Held several times a year, these are led by a highly qualified writer/teacher on staff. Lifewriters receive the experience and guidance of a master teacher.

Coaching and Memoir Writing Groups A writing coach and/or a Memoir Writing Group, will guide your writing project past difficulties and help you to bring your project

to a successful completion. This service is effective for undisciplined writers who experience blocks or lack of focus.

Editing An editor will show you how to shape your story and keep your reader's interest while helping you to add finishing touches to polish your writing. Especially useful for the writer who already has a manuscript.

Ghostwriting/Co-authoring A ghostwriter provides technical skills and a writer's sensibility to your project as well as professional confidence, and you provide the lifestory details you want to share and preserve.

Book Production Service Start to finish pre-press preparation of your lifestory manuscript.

Memoir Professional Resources

TURNKEY RESOURCES FOR MEMOIR PROFESSIONALS

Teacher Packages

Affiliate Memoir Professional Package

A TURNKEY PROGRAM with a full line of supports—lifestory writing *Curriculum Manual*, *how-to Presenter's Manual*, *Editor's Manual*, *Memoir Professional's Speaker's Manual*, three thirty-minute recordings with Denis Ledoux, inclusion on the “Workshops Near You” webpage, referrals from lifewriters in your area, and e-Newsletter updates of your program schedule and services as well as a copy of the workshop text, *Turning Memories Into Memoirs*, and *The Lifewriter's Memory Binder*.

Associate Memoir Teacher Package

Lifestory writing *Curriculum Manual*, *Presenter's How-To Manual*, a copy of the workshop text, *Turning Memories Into Memoirs*, and *The Lifewriter's Memory Binder*.

Training Programs

Turning Memories® Workshop or Tele-class

Led by a highly qualified writer/teacher on staff, this workshop allows teachers to experience the workshop they will lead. It also provides an opportunity for teachers to renew their own writing lives.

Business Supports Seminar for Memoir & Writing Professionals

Participants design and develop working 12-month business plans and learn the “ins and outs” of running a small office.

Certification –Your Calling Card. An intensive program thoroughly trains personal history service providers. Includes a Turning Memories® Workshop to learn to be the best teachers they can be and Business Supports Seminar to teach providers to design and develop working 12-month business plans

Volume Discounts

Books purchased in bulk are always available at a discount—both for Soleil Lifestory Network teachers and others.

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About the author:

Turning Memories Into Memoirs™ workshop originator Denis Ledoux grew up in a three-generation home with paternal grandparents who lived upstairs. Stories have always played an important role in Denis' life. Since 1988, he has been helping people from all walks of life write their personal and family stories. He is director of the Soleil Lifestory Network, an international organization of professional writers and teachers that lead workshops, seminars and other programs on memoir writing.

Discover other books by Denis Ledoux:

Turning Memories Into Memoirs/
A Handbook for Writing Lifestories

The Photo Scribe: A Writing Guide
How to Write the Stories Behind Your Photographs

A Consumer's Guide to Ghostwriting Services
How to Choose and Work with the Best Co-Author for You

As of January 2013, these titles are available only on our website but please check back with Smashwords as they will be added soon.

Connect with me at:

denis@turningmemories.com

Twitter: [@denisledoux](https://twitter.com/denisledoux)

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