



# Seven Steps on the Writer's Path: The Journey from Frustration to Fulfillment

*Nancy Pickard, Lynn Lott*

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The blank page, the impossible deadline, the exhilarating rush of inspiration, the perils of publication: There is no profession more maddening or more rewarding than being a writer. Yet surprisingly, all writers, no matter how famous or successful, pass through the same sequence of stages in the course of their careers. It was this remarkable insight that inspired veteran writers Nancy Pickard and Lynn Lott to pool their talents and write a book. The result is one of the wisest and liveliest guides to the literary life ever written—a volume of astonishing revelation, warm reassurance, brilliant encouragement, and welcome humor.

Drawing on their own experience as writers of fiction and nonfiction as well as the insights of scores of colleagues, Pickard and Lott follow the trajectory of the writer's life from the first time that inner voice whispers "I want to write" to the burst of accomplishment that comes when the book is finished, the vision expressed, the dream made real. No matter what you write or how much recognition you've received, if you're serious about writing as a profession, you are bound to pass through the seven steps on the writer's path. Pickard and Lott call these steps Unhappiness, Wanting, Commitment, Wavering, Letting Go, Immersion, and Fulfillment.

Are you sunk in a pit of loneliness and confusion, burdened by pressures you can neither name nor escape? Welcome to the stage of Unhappiness, what Pickard and Lott call the "precreative state." Don't worry, Tolstoy and Stephen King have been there before you, and somehow they cleared the abyss of Wanting (desires you can't shake, jealousies that sting like bees) and climbed the ladder of Commitment.

Wavering is where you hit the wall, tread water, and succumb to the dread paralysis of writer's block and the abuse of unsympathetic editors and critics. E. B. White said a writer is like a surfer waiting for the perfect wave—and in the stage of Letting Go, that wave finally crests, releasing the torrent of creativity that carries you through the deeply satisfying stages of Immersion and Fulfillment.

Pickard and Lott are the buddies every writer dreams of—always there to light the way and lighten your mood, generous with advice and sympathy, and bold enough to give you the occasional kick in the pants. Whether you're a "wannabe" writer or a published literary veteran, you're bound to find this book a source of true delight, vital wisdom, and lasting inspiration.

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