

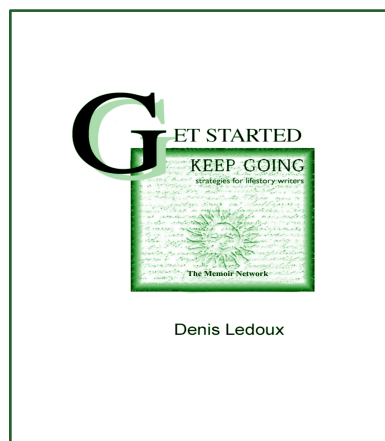


**The Memoir Network**  
helping people turn memories into memoirs

Excerpt from:

**Get Started — Keep Going**  
**Strategies for Lifestory Writers**

By Denis Ledoux



**Table of Contents**

Introduction

Chapter 1: When You Start to Write?

Chapter 2: Early Tasks

Chapter 3: Writing Set-ups

Lifewriting Resources

Memoir Professional Resources

About the Author

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

©Denis Ledoux 2014

95 Gould Road Lisbon Falls, ME 04252 • 207-353-5454 • <http://thememoirnetwork.com>

## 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 *Memoir Writing Maps: 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 rest of this article is available to members of the Gold Master Writers of The Memoir Network. Join at: [TheMemoirNetwork.com/members/membership-gold](http://TheMemoirNetwork.com/members/membership-gold)