



Offshoots From Writing:

Expanding Your Horizons
Beyond Your Book

Lucinda Jackson

Something I love about writing is all the peripheral stuff! Meeting people like all of you, talking to other writers and the public about writing like we're doing today. I love it when you meet a writer and you don't have to make small talk, you can just say, "What are you writing?" and you get to have this wonderful conversation!

I have found so many unexpected opportunities that have come from writing so today I wanted to talk about this a bit—what OFFSHOOTS from writing there are and how we can all EXPAND OUR HORIZONS beyond just the book or writing piece that we've produced.

Good EXAMPLE of this: I was struck by our outside speaker today, Paul Zeidman, saying that he began writing at an early age, little realizing that his writing would one day launch a screenwriting career!

I began writing at a late age (haha), but still little realizing that my writing would launch a whole new life for me!

So let's delve into how for me, and many others like Paul and yourselves—our writing has opened up our lives far beyond what we ever imagined—and how we can continue to make that happen for ourselves.

My Own Path--Phase 1: Learning



- Started writing after left my full-time job as a scientist
- Crashed first Writers Conference, found local writing group (Mexico)
- SF Writers Conference
- Shut Up & Write
- Writing classes—local and New York
- Studied social media
- Joined organizations: CWC, Nonfiction Authors Association

I think of my path in 3 phases:

PHASE 1 where I just went crazy learning everything I could about writing. I was trained and worked as a scientist so I wrote and published scientific articles and business pieces—got really good at writing in bullets! But really got into after I left my fulltime job as a scientist

I was in Mexico at the time and went to my first writing conference that happened to be in town—I didn't know the San Miguel Writers Conference was actually a big deal and I got to meet and talk to amazing author Mary Karr. First offshoot of writing I discovered! Meet famous people!

Go over others items

My Own Path—Phase 2: Trying Everything



PHASE 2: TRIED EVERYTHING!

Publishing: agent, independent, self-, scammed by vanity, hybrid

Editors: naïve, got not so good one, friend of a friend

Went kind of crazy!

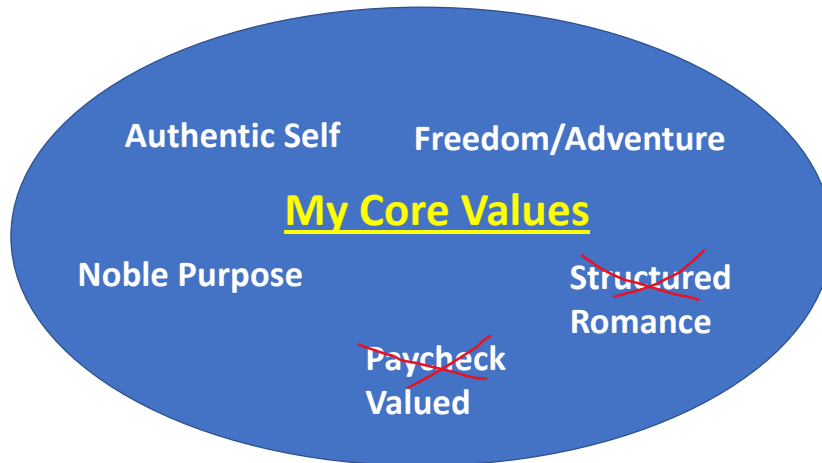
Tons and tons of opportunities as extensions of my writing

Kind of overwhelming and stressful

So: want to talk about now HOW I NARROWED IT DOWN, HOW TO FIND THE OFFSHOOTS THAT HAD THE HIGHEST CHANCE OF BEING MOST SATISFYING AND WORKING BEST FOR ME

Hope these tips might help you

Identify Core Values



One thing I did during these learning & trying phases was Identify my core values. I've worked a LOT on my Core Values. I felt that these would guide me in being a better writer and to evaluate opportunities "beyond my writing"

It's hard, you have to dig deep, it's not all pretty

For example, I originally had paycheck, then switched to Valued—I thought a paycheck brought me a lot of satisfaction but I had to admit that what I really needed was to be valued (HARD TO ADMIT WHAT YOU NEED—EMBARRASSING??)

Authentic self—I wasn't for so many years in male-dominated work settings, so very important

Noble purpose: always been idealistic

Felt constrained in corporation settings, wanted freedom and adventure

Comfortable in structured organizations, so thought Structure was something I needed—but changed to ROMANCE

I SUGGEST 4-5 CORE VALUES

Find Your Core Values

What you **believe in/need/rely on** as guiding principles for your life

A Core Value is not a “DO” but a “WHY”

Example: I LOVE TO TRAVEL: Ask WHY 5 Times

Bottom Line: *It satisfies my curiosity, adventure and learning that are important to me.*

- **CURIOSITY**
- **ADVENTURE = CORE VALUES**
- **LEARNING**

HOW DO YOU FIND YOUR CORE VALUES: what you believe in/need/rely on as guiding principles for your life. Instead of talking about what you are going to DO next—whether it’s a new job, a new undertaking, your next act, let’s try it a new way by finding your **core values, like organizations do:**

Berkeley Lab Values: Collaboration, Serve Humankind, Earn Trust, Imagination & Innovation, Care for One Another

This can get a little tricky when we look at this personally. The most common thing I hear when people talk about what they want to do next is “I want to travel.” That’s a DO, not a core value. But a DO might take you to your beliefs.

You can start out with what you want to DO—Travel. Then ask WHY 5 times to get to a core value. *Why* do you want to travel? **It’s fun.**

Why is it fun? **It’s exciting.**

Why is it exciting? **It’s interesting.**

Why else? **It’s new and novel.**

Why does new and novel appeal to you?

Curiosity, adventure, learning—those are core values, now we are getting someplace

Core Values: Which Are Yours?

Fun & Enjoyment	Achievement	Creativity & Curiosity	Order & Stability	Strength & Courage
Enthusiasm	Accomplishment	Adventure	Control	Boldness
Surprise	Challenge	Exploration	Certainty	Bravery
Independence	Recognition	Originality	Security	Confidence
Freedom	Growth	Imagination	Structure	Self-reliance
Playfulness/Humor	Status	Learning	Traditional	Fearless

Another way to find your core values is by lists readily available on line

I've grouped these in buckets

For example, you may feel you have some key belief in creativity—looking at that more closely, it may be you really enjoy using your imagination or you have a strong sense of wanting to EXPLORE—helps you be more specific

Or if you are achievement oriented—maybe it's that you want a challenge, or maybe it's really about wanting recognition!

Helps you get to the bottom of your needs and beliefs

How I Expanded My Horizons Beyond Writing

- Identified and stuck to my core values
- Found my theme
- Stayed in learning mode

Other:

- Made friends
- Showed up early, stayed late
- Reached out



I made friends with other writers—I REALLY like writers so it was easy and genuine. This helped me build a network that was authentic because I wasn't networking to get something from others—I networked because I really like these people

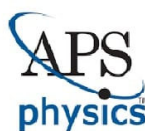
Showed Up early/stayed late: I worked hard—being diligent has helped me a lot

Reached out: I don't wait for people to call me—I call them, text them, set up a meeting with them, volunteer, apply for podcasts & talks

All this has led me to a life I love

My Own Path--Phase 3: Finding My Niche

- What's my "theme"/ audience?
Empowering women in science
- Led to magazine column and interviews in science magazines
- Joined and spoke at professional science groups



Focus for 2023

- Certified career/retirement counselor for scientists
- My own business: LJ Ventures (books, speaking, consulting)
- Romance!

Never thought that day I started writing would lead to this!

LJ Ventures

These meet my core values:

Noble purpose

Authentic self

Freedom/Adventure

Valued

Romance

Love affair with my husband! HUSBAND involved with my writing—reads my work, he's my webmaster, listens to and critiques my presentations (like this one!)



Have gone from JUST A SCIENTIST to a much more diverse person:

I'm a teacher and a mentor—now JUDGING WRITING CONTESTS! SCHOLASTIC WRITING AWARDS!! Highly recommend this, we just completed! Quinn will be our host for next year—VERY FUN

Now one coming up as a judge for YOUTH WRITING ABOUT SCIENCE—RIGHT IN MY NICHE

I'm a public speaker

I'm an ACTIVIST

AND I have lots of adventure in my life

ALL BECAUSE OF WRITING!

What have YOU found “beyond your writing”?

- Influenced where I live! (community, bookstores, library)
- Learned about myself—very self-reflective
- Patience
- Life on LinkedIn
- Credibility
- Support from others that I’ve never experienced before
- My voice
- Human connection: we are all fundamentally the same



Credibility: Connections with other authors (street cred)

Bully Market: Jamie Higgins

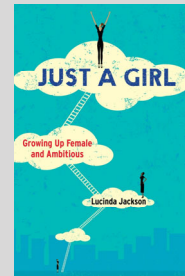
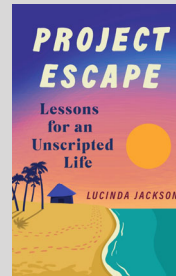
An Inconvenient Apocalypse: Robert Jensen

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How to contact me

My website—more about my books, articles, events

I mentioned picking 2 social media platforms—these are my 2!

WHAT ABOUT YOU??

HAPPY TO ANSWER QUESTIONS BUT ALSO WOULD LOVE TO HEAR HOW YOUR WRITING HAS LED TO OFFSHOOTS YOU DIDN'T EXPECT!

COULD BE POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE? WE LEARN FROM THE NEGATIVES!