

American Writers & Artists Inc.

Wealthy Web Writer's Reality Blog

Speakers: Mindy Tyson-McHorse; Rebecca Matter

Recorded: Jan. 28, 2010

DENISE: Hello everyone. Welcome to AWAI's teleconference series and to the *Wealthy Web Writer* special event. On the call with us today is Rebecca Matter, as everyone knows, and she's over there in Austin, Texas. Hello, Rebecca.

REBECCA: Hi, Denise. How are you?

DENISE: I'm well, thank you. I'm going to bypass your introduction, because I hope everyone knows you by now, and if not, you are definitely going to know lots more about Rebecca as we go through the *Wealthy Web Writer* series with you guys. And joining Rebecca on the call today is Mindy Tyson McHorse. Hello, Mindy.

MINDY: Hello.

DENISE: And you're over there in snowy Albuquerque, New Mexico,

MINDY: Yes, yes. Our winter wonderland, a couple of weeks late.

DENISE: And our callers are coming in from all over the U.S. and Canada, and a couple of international folks will be joining us as well. Before we get started on this call, I just wanted to tell folks that this is one in a series of special events that the *Wealthy Web Writer* will be doing occasionally. And today's call is focused on the *Wealthy Web Writer's Reality Blog*. Yes, yes... You say, "Did she say reality blog?" I did, and that's... Mindy Tyson McHorse is the woman who's going to be writing this blog and leading us forward, and that's the focus of our call today.

Before we get started, I'll say a few brief words about Mindy. She indeed was published as a travel writer, and her first gig came when she was backpacking around Australia, of all places. She told Rebecca in a wonderful e-mail exchange they had that she had always wanted to be a writer, but she couldn't see any money in it, until she really learned about copywriting.

But even as a kid, she had a history of writing letters. She would write letters to her parents to persuade them to do certain things, and as a matter of fact, she tells me that her first paid copywriting gig was when she was seven years old and her older brother got punished with the task of writing an apology letter to her parents for something he had done. So he gave her

a dollar if she wrote the letter for him, and it worked. I love that story!

REBECCA: That was excellent!

DENISE: Mindy has worked in program management at colleges and universities before she really discovered her knack to make money and be successful in copywriting. Her goal, this year, is to make six-figures as a web copywriter, and she's going to document her process in the *Wealthy Web Writer Reality Blog*. So with that, Mindy, we are all anxious to hear who, what, how, why, and when. Take it away, Rebecca.

REBECCA: Thanks, Denise. What a great story, Mindy! You really were born to be a copywriter. I love the fact that your brother paid you for your first assignment. Why don't you go ahead and give us a little bit more about your background.

MINDY: Well, I think that I can add to that story... I ended up getting in trouble for writing his apology letter.

REBECCA: Oh, no!

MINDY: Then we both had to write apology letters... It was a good learning experience. But I think I've always been one of those people... I came into copywriting from the angle that I loved writing; I just loved working with words. I never really necessarily had done anything in marketing or the sales field, but I had always seen writing as kind of a hobby; it's just something I did for fun. Because, like Denise said, I had never really seen any money in it. And I thought

that it would be the fun thing I did on the side, you know, of my regular day job.

But then, a couple of years ago—I think it was about mid-2006—I was in a job at the university that I didn't really enjoy. About that time, I received... I think it was a Bookalog, from AWAI on copywriting. I had never heard of copywriting before, but the Bookalog ... it was impressive. It worked, because it was thick enough that I thought, "Huh! Well there's something I guess I should read since somebody sent me so much." So, it sat on my nightstand for a couple of weeks, and I eventually got to it. As I flipped through page after page of copywriters' success stories, I started thinking, "Huh! There might be something to this."

From there, I started researching the people who were talked about in that mailer. Krista Jones was one of them, and when I found her online, that was when she had first won the copy protégé. I realized that, "Oh my gosh! She's a real person! She really was a \$10,000 challenge winner, and that's not just hype that was made up. This is real and she's out there sharing her story!" So it gave me enough... I guess that was enough proof that I needed that this was something that I could pursue.

So, I think at that point I started receiving regular e-mailings from AWAI, and I got the famous letter that Paul Hollingshead wrote about retire this year and make more money than most doctors do. I remember showing that to my husband to first tell him what copywriting was, and he agreed, "Hey, you know, this could be great! Let's try it." So I... Like I said, I didn't like my job at the time, and I had been looking for other jobs. But

I hadn't had any leads, so I just up and quit my job and took...

REBECCA: Wow!

MINDY: ...As a copywriter. Yeah. I'm kind of one of those people who tend to jump off the cliff instead of laying down a bridge, but, you know, it's working.

REBECCA: So this is 2006. So, did you buy the program before?

MINDY: Well, I bought the program in early 2007, and then I had... I do remember feeling so inspired by it, because I've never been a morning person. At the time, because I was still working my regular and side job, I would get up earlier, like 5:00 in the morning, to work through the program a little bit every day. And that's something I've never done for anything. But copywriting excited me that much.

I think I wasn't even half-way through the program when I decided to quit my job. And that way I could go through the six-figure course full time and kind of figure it out. Well, at the time I thought I would figure it out a lot more quickly if I didn't have my regular job. I don't feel like I did it very quickly at all, but...

REBECCA: About how long until you got your first client, though? From the time that you quit your job... Well, let's say from the time that you actually finished the program. About how long until you got your first paying client?

MINDY: I want to say, maybe two months. I finished the program sometime in early fall of 2007, and

then I went to Boot Camp my first... That was my first year at Boot Camp, and I landed a Boot Camp spec shortly after that.

REBECCA: Oh, fantastic! Okay. So that kind of started everything off and going, and since then you have been... You stayed with copywriting, obviously, and that kind of takes us to today. And so, let's go into, kind of just in general, where you are right now and everything. Give me a typical day of you working as a copywriter.

MINDY: Okay. Well, that's one of the fun things about being a freelance copywriter. I don't really feel like I have any typical workdays, and part of that is because it is my personal situation. My husband's work schedule changes every day, and because we have a baby, we alternate. When one of us is working, the other one takes care of the "kiddo," and so, depending on what my husband's work schedule is, I'll try to fill in a couple of hours here and there of writing time. It keeps us on our toes, because it does change so constantly.

But I have found that if I can work for two-hour blocks at a time, I tend to be more productive than coming in for 30 minutes here and four hours there, just because I think that's about my maximum time for focusing and sitting down in front of a computer. And that also gives me enough time to really take in the information I need and turn it into copy for whatever project I'm working on.

I'm working... I'm getting down a system where I plan out my day and then work on specific projects and then follow through with self-marketing. That's a work in

progress... So that's something I'll be talking about in the reality blog.

REBECCA: I think that brings up an excellent point... Not everybody is the same, and so everybody's attention... their limit for attention is different. You're saying that you have, like, kind of about two hours is your maximum capacity for focus? I've heard other people say, like, 50 minutes, and I've heard other people say that they can focus for four hours at a time. So really, it's up to each individual person to kind of figure out what that time is.

MINDY: Well, and you know for me, that was a learning curve, because having come from several years in a regular Monday through Friday, 9 - 5 job, I thought, that basically, having a job meant I needed to spend eight hours a day focusing. You know, in eight consecutive hours. I cannot do that when it comes to sitting here in my office and just focusing. I have to break it up, so... It took a while for me to realize that it's okay to break it up here and there, and basically have chunky work hours. But, it's worked good.

REBECCA: I like that, it's almost like a therapy. "It's okay. You don't have to have your butt in this chair for eight hours." "It's okay. You can get up!"

MINDY: Exactly! Because doing that, and then thinking that this is a real job... That one took me little while, but in the end, you know...

REBECCA: I think that's so important, though, for you to keep sharing that kind of information, because I'm sure a lot of people have the exact same... Especially, coming from the corporate world. They have the same

expectations of what copywriting is going to be like, and when they say that they're changing their career, they expect it to be a career, which, might, you know, in their minds, be eight hours a day. So I think that's good.

So what, when you actually sit down to write... You know, you're writing your assignment. What makes that process easier for you? What are some of the things that you do, or some of the techniques that you use, to stay focused in those two hours so you get the most done?

MINDY: Well, I guess I have two approaches to that. One has to do with the actual equipment I use, you could say. I noticed that my productivity really ramped up when I invested in one of those big, widescreen monitors that I attached to my laptop computer, just because, that way I'm able to have three different windows open at a time. I know when I first started copywriting, I would be working on a project, then maybe researching it on the internet and answering e-mails all at the same time. So I would constantly be flipping back and forth between windows. Just having the visual spread of those multiple windows all at once, so I don't have to spend all those extra seconds of click time getting back and forth, I was amazed at how just that simple act really ramped up my productivity.

Then I also like to use a headset. I can't listen to music while I'm writing because it distracts me, but I find that if I just put a headset on it kind of blocks out all the peripheral noise. I've actually just recently gotten a Bose headset that really blocks out all the excess noise. I don't hook it up to anything, I just

turn it on and that way... I don't know, it just helps me to focus better when I feel like I'm really plugged in, in a way.

But then, I also... So that's my, I guess, practical strategy. But when it comes to actual work on a project, I've taken to... Well, basically, like I said, I work in two-hour blocks at a time, And I find that if I have all of the materials that I need to read beforehand that's related to the project printed out and ready, so that I can read it, fill my head with it, and then basically pump it out into copy that's related to the project.

That's sort of the process I follow. So, I'll just tackle one project per two-hour block. And I kind of surround myself with everything about that project. So if I'm working on, say...Just the other day I was working on some marketing materials for an independent nutritionist who is launching herself on the internet. So I had... I surrounded myself with her story. I had her website up on one of my computer screens, and I had all of her existing marketing materials spread out around my desk. I got rid of all the other books and other projects that I was working on, because I felt like they... I feel like they distract me from focusing on the one person I am really trying to target. Then I kind of digested everything that I had been reading about her, and then I took it right back out and did some copy. So that's the strategy for now.

REBECCA: I love it... It's funny talking to you, because we have a lot of similar issues, as far as the distraction thing. I can't listen to music either.

Yeah, unless it's just classical with no words, nothing like that.

MINDY: With no words! That is exactly ... Because otherwise I sit singing.

REBECCA: Like singing... Exactly! Exactly! And the set up that you described, like learning your own productivity style, I have the exact same thing. I went to the two monitors so that I can do a split screen. Do you use a computer camera, or do you use a camera for your video blog?

MINDY: A camera. A little handheld camera.

REBECCA: It would be excellent if, for one of your blog posts, if you would just kind of film your set up, so that people who are on the call right now... they might not understand what the second screen would look like, and how... that If you could kind of open up the documents on the three kind of areas that you can see, and then show that. That would be very useful, I think, for people who would be interested in trying the same process.

MINDY: That's a great idea! You know, I've thought about...

REBECCA: You're going to have to clean your office, though, you realize.

MINDY: That's why I'm laughing... It's a...

REBECCA: This is part of the reality blog, though, this is getting into your life and into your reality world. So if your desk is messy, I mean I'm looking at a messy desk of my own right now. That's part of it, and you agreed to expose everything.

MINDY: That's true. I knew it was coming, but I thought... You know... I thought surely I'd be more organized by this time. But, like you said, if I'm going to share the truth, then you guys might as well see what's really going on here, because it's not...

REBECCA: Exactly. Then you also brought a few other excellent points, just for productivity in general. Since you do work in two-hour blocks, planning ahead is important so that you're not spending the first hour getting organized in what you're going to do in that block... Maybe ending one block with what you're going to do in the next block. Getting organized, like you said, pulling out your materials and then surrounding yourself only on the project that you're working on, so that you're not thinking about another project while you're working on writing copy for this project.

MINDY: And then finding, also, that cutting off my e-mail connection is really important if I really want to focus on writing well. Because, otherwise, something will come in, you think, "Ah, I'll just respond to that. I'll get it out of the way." But it takes focus away from the project in the end.

REBECCA: Do you ever find that you have kind of a writer's block, too, where you hit a point and you just kind of get stuck? Like, "Oh, I'll just go check my e-mail really quick."

MINDY: Yes! Oh, yes!

REBECCA: Do you distract yourself intentionally?

MINDY: Uh huh. I've got a whole... It was my distraction system when I would get to a point where

either I had writer's block, or I was just tired of the project. So I would go in and I would check my work e-mail, and then my personal e-mail. And then I'd go into Facebook and I'd kind of make my rounds in all these other electronic distractions. And then I'd think, "Okay, there's nothing else to do. I have to write again."

But, in a way... Well, I think on one hand, it's important to step back and take a break. For me, I'd convince myself that okay, you know, I'm just going to make the most of this time when I'm not writing by looking at all these other things, or I may need to be doing something, or writing something, or responding. And that wasn't true at all, they were just distractions that I wasn't really using effectively. So if... It's hard not to pull those up, especially since they're right there at the click of a button, but... You know, every day I get a little stronger.

REBECCA: These are excellent lessons, and even though I know that people say them again and again... You know, the focusing on one thing and disconnecting from e-mail and stuff. It really does work. You really cause all these distractions for yourself, and I definitely think that's a good step you're making by trying to disconnect from that.

So your journey started in early 2007, when you got through the program, you came to Boot Camp. Now from then to today, what do you think your most important moment was? Like, when you look back from today, what's the most important moment in your journey as a freelance writer?

MINDY: Well, it seems a gradual realization, but, for me, I think it... The fact that I am succeeding... I'm working and I'm succeeding at this profession by following my own path. I was thinking about this issue just the other day, and it occurred to me that before copywriting, everything I had ever achieved in my life was really, because I had followed some kind of protocol that was already laid out. Like, you know, back when you were in school, you know you had to take certain courses, get certain grades, and then you can graduate. And then, when I was looking for jobs, and even when I was in jobs, I knew that I had to satisfy certain requirements, you know, check off all these boxes of things to do. And then I would either get the job, or get a raise, or, you know, basically, advance to the next step.

But with copywriting, there's really no set path. It's been... I think it's been a very validating experience for me to learn that I just need to follow what works best for me, and what works with my talents and my interests, what fits my schedule, and... Although I should say that I've had tons of help from others from learning what they do, what works best. It's like you were just saying that the fact that everybody's sharing their experiences can help you learn what might work for you. But, at the same time, there's no single person out there, no single other copywriter out there whose had a specific path that would have worked exactly, perfectly for me.

And so, I feel like it's been a very important journey, just to get to the point where I've realized that what I'm doing is individual, and specific, and

unique to me, and that's why it works. And that I don't have to follow kind of a cookie cutter mold to succeed at this. That's pretty much it.

REBECCA: I love that. Your experience, the realization that you make your own path, that you're setting your own kind of rules for yourself. And it's like you just said, it's like you take a little bit of this and a little bit of that, a little bit of this idea from another person, and you create your own recipe for what works for you.

MINDY: Exactly. Yeah, yeah. I probably couldn't have done it if I hadn't had other people who shared their ideas, and people who had good ideas that I heard from. But at the same time, I know when I first started, I would sit down and I would think, "Well, what am I supposed to do? What do I do now? What do I do here?" And now I'm able to say, "Well, I know this is going to work for me, and this is where I feel like I should grow my talents next. And so it's, I don't know, it's sort of like a whole independent experience.

REBECCA: It's almost like you want someone to say, "Okay, Mindy, today you need to take out your pen, and you need to write about XYZ. But...

MINDY: Oh! Of course! Exactly! You know, for a while, when I was really getting going with this, I thought, "My gosh, I'm the only copywriter who actually wants her boss looking over her shoulder to tell her what to do. Because, to me, I thought, "That would have made it so much easier, because I wouldn't have all this mental struggle to figure things out." But, you know, now I realize that it wouldn't have been half as

rewarding as it already is. And, you know, I only wanted a boss to tell me what to do, I didn't want one to tell me when to work and all those other things.

REBECCA: Right. It's almost liberating, I guess. That realization is totally liberating. You know you're free!

MINDY: Uh huh. Yes, exactly!

REBECCA: Okay, so that is all positive, positive. So we've been talking all positive so far. But what has been... What's a hard moment? Everybody has that kind of, like, kick-you-in-the-gut moment. What was the hard moment in your past?

MINDY: Oh, my gosh. I've had so many...

REBECCA: Okay, just share one. We don't want to scare everybody.

MINDY: Well, I think the main... The most difficult thing I've had, because it's been reoccurring, is just not giving up. For me, this is specific to me, but it's because, like I've written... This is my third full year of copywriting, and so... I know in previous jobs, you know, when I had a salary career, I didn't really feel like I knew what I was doing, per se, until I had been there for a full year. And then I thought, "Okay, I've got the gist of this, I can handle anything that comes my way, I know what I'm doing, But with copywriting, after the first year I sat back and I thought, "I still have no idea what I'm doing, or what I'm supposed to do, or what I'm going to do next." And then, after the second year, I looked back and I thought, "Huh! Things still aren't really coming easy for me."

What's funny is that looking... When I compare maybe what I thought was difficult in my second year to what I thought was difficult in my first year, I've actually come a long way, and I didn't necessarily see that. And now, I can look back on my second year and realize that, "Huh! I really was actually on my way."

But it was very much a mental game for me, just recognizing that, "Okay, I don't necessarily know every secret there is to know within this industry, but I've got to keep going." And that's something that I now realize is never going to happen. This is a constantly evolving profession, especially with web writing. I think Heather Lloyd-Martin said it best, "Every single day something new comes up on the web, and you have to stay on your toes to really keep learning it." And so, for me, it's been a challenge to consistently stay positive, and stay focused, and keep going without just giving up. It's been a test of my own willpower, and I think it's been a healthy test.

REBECCA: Excellent. So if you could do it all over again, then, you know, now that you can look back through your 20/20 vision, what would you have done differently?

MINDY: I would have reached out to other copywriters. And I say that... I'm going to embarrass myself by confessing this, but when I first started copywriting—I think maybe this is a good indication that I didn't quite know what I was getting myself into—because I actually was able to join *Circle of Success* that first year, when *Circle of Success* first came out,

and I remember being on my first call with the other group members and my *Circle of Success* group.

There were twenty of us, maybe thirty, and our group was made up of people from all over the country, actually all around the world. We had some people calling in from Europe, one from Asia, all over the U.S. But, there was another fellow calling in from Albuquerque. I remember thinking, "Albuquerque! But I'm the copywriter in Albuquerque! What is... Oh, my gosh!" And so now, I feel silly looking back on it, because obviously I was pretty naïve thinking that... I don't even know why I thought that was a bad thing. But looking at it now, I think I would have thought, "Whoa! Another copywriter in Albuquerque. I should call him up, we can get together, we can bounce ideas off of each other..."

But at the time, I guess I was competitive in some unrealistic way. But since then, and since going to my first Boot Camp where I actually met this fellow from Albuquerque, who is just a delightful man, since then I've made some great friendships and great connections with other copywriters who are not competitive. They're not selfish when it comes to answering. Everybody I've met in this industry has been so generous, and so fun, and so positive to work with that I'm just excited that I met them all and reached out to them.

REBECCA: Awesome! You're giving away so many great pieces of information. I really, really appreciate this call so far. Even... I mean, I've been doing marketing for six years now, and I'm even... I'm hearing this and I'm like, "Yeah, exactly! Exactly!" So it's even reassuring to me, you know, because just hearing

that somebody has been through this. This is what we preach and everything, all the time, and so hearing someone say this was their actual experience, and they wish they would have reached out sooner. Realizing that there isn't... Someone can't tell you what to do, you kind of have to come up with your own path. It's awesome! So, this...

MINDY: I'm so glad to hear you say that, because I feel kind of sheepish admitting all these things.

REBECCA: No! This is excellent. And you have to remember, you know, you've been doing this now for a couple of years, but there are a lot of people in AWAI and on this call right now with *Wealthy Web Writer* who are where you were two years ago. So this is very, very valuable. It also helps... The idea behind *Wealthy Web Writer* was exactly what you've been saying. To really help people get focused, give them the opportunity to meet people right out of the gate. You know, you joined *Circle of Success*, but this is another way for them in the web community to get to know other people, and bounce ideas, and network, and get that kind of camaraderie going.

MINDY: Exactly. Yes.

REBECCA: Okay, so let's talk a little bit more about clients, because everybody loves to know about clients. What are some client experiences, let's say, that you've had along the way that have surprised you or maybe taught you something?

MINDY: I would have to say I was initially surprised that my clients are all so nice. I don't know

why I had the idea that most of them were big and bad and mean in my head, or that this was...

REBECCA" Because they are!

MINDY: Exactly! But I actually remember one of my first clients was a marketer who helped small business owners put together websites, I believe, and I'd written a couple of packages for her. And then one day I went to my mailbox and I had a little box... a package waiting for me. I opened it, and it was a mug that she had sent to me, and it says something like "You brighten my day," or some cheerful, little message. I was totally bowled over by the fact that she had sent me a mug. She had sent a thank-you note with it for helping her promote her business and stuff like that.

I think, to me, one thing that really stood out was that it was a personal connection from somebody who, up through a program, I had only known through e-mail, and I think maybe I had spoken to them on the phone a couple of times. But it was actually bringing a little bit of a human touch into this profession. And this is... Well I guess it was after I had gone to Boot Camp, but it was still when I was realizing the value of connecting with people. And since then, I've found that when I'm working on a project, if something goes on in my personal life... You know, maybe I've had to delay something because somebody got sick or I had something come up that was unexpected. If I just reach out to the person I'm working for and explain to them, and, you know, state honestly that this is happening...

Or, if I'm having trouble on the actual project, then I say, "Look, I'm so sorry, but I am having a tough

time on this at this point.” They’re actually nice about it, and they come back to me and they say, “I understand, you know, you can get this to me tomorrow.” Or, “Here’s a tip for working through this problem.” They’re not the type of... In my experience, they haven’t been people who come back and say, “Oh, well if you can’t get it back to me, then forget it, it’s over.” Or, “You don’t know what you’re doing. Okay, then I’m not hiring you.” They’ve actually been a lot better to work with than I initially thought they would be, or maybe I don’t remember the bad ones!

REBECCA: Now, it’s a good point, though, because I have a feeling it’s also in the way that you’re representing yourself. Being a marketer on this end, I have a feeling that when you e-mail them saying that you’re going to be a day late, it’s not just where you don’t e-mail me for a day, and then say, “Oh yeah, by the way, I’m late and I’m going to be even later.” You know, it’s being proactive and saying, “Hey, something has come up and I’m going to need to extend this due day by a day, by two days, but I promise I’ll get it to you then.” And then you don’t miss that deadline. So again, you’re probably not giving yourself enough credit as to... Marketers can be evil, evil people. They don’t have to be, but I’m sure you are representing yourself as a copywriter who’s easy to work with.

MINDY: I have not looked at it that way. That’s could be true. That’s a good point.

REBECCA: But your viewing connection is an awesome point as well. I’m almost wondering, and we should maybe reach out to some of the other copywriters and web

writers, if they've tried that with marketing themselves, as well. Just as you were connected to that person because she stepped outside of e-mail and actually did something personal, that if when marketing your own services and getting to know your own clients, if that would solidify the relationship even further, by putting in your own personal touch.

MINDY: Huh! That gives me ideas!

REBECCA: Yay! Ideas from... inside

MINDY: That's a great point.

REBECCA: Let's talk about some of your current projects. What are you working on right now? What are the projects, besides the awesome *Wealthy Web Writer Reality Blog*?

MINDY: Well, let's see, I've got a couple of irons in the fire. I do... Right now, the bulk of my work is coming from two clients that I actually found through AWAI direct-response job forum, and one of them is a big affiliate marketing company who has constant, ongoing projects that they use writers for. And so I've actually been working with them for almost two years now. And I've learned a lot from them, just because they have such a variety of projects. And then the bulk... I guess the other large portion of my work comes from an independent marketer who helps small business entrepreneurs launch themselves into the public eye. But then I've got some other projects going, and then I've got one local business project that I've just picked up. It's kind of... I have a lot of little things that are just beginning to surface, just in the last two weeks, and it's neat, that I don't think I've ever had this many projects going at

once. And it's also a great learning experience, because I'm having to figure out how to balance this many projects going at once. But I am doing it so far.

REBECCA: Excellent! And so, even though now you have a steady stream of clients, do you ever still doubt yourself, as far as believing that you can be successful? Are you still going through any rough patches?

MINDY: Oh gosh, yes! Today, in fact, I had a good one. Backing up to my earlier comments, about how most of them have been really great to work with, and a lot of that is because they have given me great feedback and tips on how to improve my copy. And I realize that when I improve my copy it makes their end products better. But I still really appreciate the feedback, especially when it comes constructively. And so far, it has for the most part.

But just this morning I heard back from somebody I've been writing for. I had written a couple of projects for this person, and I've gotten great feedback in return, saying, "This is great, I'm going to use this, this is fabulous..." But I wrote something else and sent it in a couple days ago, and heard back saying, "You know, clearly I know a lot more about this issue than you do, so I'm not actually going to be able to use anything you just sent me." And of course, they wrote it in a very nice way, but it made me think, "Huh! You know, well that one just pretty much flopped." It makes me take a step back and think, "Okay, did I get too confident? Did I not spend enough time on this? Did I just really not know what I was writing about?" It could be any of those things..

REBECCA: Or it could be that the marketer didn't communicate properly. I mean, that's...

MINDY: Oh, I like that idea. So it's okay, though, because we've since corresponded and I've cleaned up a few things. I'm going to be resubmitting the project. But, you know, it's not like I've come this far and I'm, I don't know, I'm breaking through with excellent copy every single time. I still have...

REBECCA: You still get knocked off your block every now and again.

MINDY: Yes, that's a good way to put it.

REBECCA: Well, that's good. See, that information is good to share. It's not just all roses, you know, sometimes you get a couple of thorns and that's okay. You just kind of have to keep going. Okay, then your goal this year is to make six figures. Why that goal and why this year?

MINDY: Well, for one thing, I've, like I said, I've actually met quite a few copywriters who are able to really sail out of the gate in their third year and hit the six-figure mark. And it was because of a variety of reasons... Maybe by that time they'd had enough experience, or they'd had enough construction under their belt that they were just really ready to launch themselves. So I feel like I am at that point, but I also feel like I could easily toil along, like I've been doing for the last couple of years, forever. I can pick a little package here, do a little bit there, be really happy when a check comes in, even though it's not that much, but just because it's a check, it's money, and I've brought it in, and it feels great. But, if I actually make the

goal and, in this case, make it public and commit to it, then I feel confident for my own work style that that's what is really going to prompt me to take action and follow through on this as opposed to just kind of dabbling.

DENISE: I think, Mindy... Are you there?

MINDY: Yes. Can you hear me?

DENISE: Yes, now I can. I think it was your chin.

MINDY: Oh! No! I'm sorry if I accidentally muted myself.

REBECCA: No, that's okay. I think we got it. I love... You basically... This is a recap. You set the goal for six figures for this year because you know copywriters who have done it, and in their third year, that is when they broke through to six figures, and I think that's an excellent thing to follow. So then, at this point, you... We're at the end of January, Monday is February first, if you can believe it. What do you see as your biggest challenge this year, with hitting this goal.

MINDY: Right now, follow-through is definitely my biggest challenge. I feel like I've nailed other things that challenged me along the way, like self-confidence or like, just being able to schedule in enough time to follow through on projects. But actual follow-through on goals and plans, and all the things I've laid out in front of myself to do, that's my weak point. I tend to get a lot of great ideas and I get really excited about stuff, then I think, "Huh! Okay. Now how do I do

it?" And so, in this case... One thing I love about being part of the reality blog is that I feel compelled to follow through on these goals, because I've got a lot of people working right there along with me, following through on their goals, and who are well aware... You know, there's nothing like professional embarrassment to motivate you.

REBECCA: So is that kind of the reason why you've agreed to do the reality blog this year? Like, what's the reason that you're going to put yourself out there? Is it to keep yourself motivated?

MINDY: Well, that's a bonus, but I honestly feel that... Well, I want to put myself out there because of what I feel is the value of community within the copywriting and the web-writing world. Because, like I said, once I finally reached out to people when I first began copywriting, that's when I started seeing my copy improve, that's when things started happening to me, and that's when I really started enjoying this more because I didn't feel so alone. So I feel like putting myself out there, I hope, is going to help others realize that they're not alone, that they can achieve things quicker, maybe improve their writing a little bit faster than if they were to just do it on their own.

Because although, it's great that we get to work independently in our own homes as freelancers, without a lot of the usual things that go along with a job. It's also... The only downside is that we lose that connection, that human, personal connection to a community. That is what I realized, after a couple of years working from home, that's what I craved. And so, if there's anything

that I've found that really entices people to reach out to me, it's when I tell them, "Look, I'm not all that great. I haven't mastered everything. I'm a lot like you." And then I've noticed that's when people open up and they say, "Ah! Me too!" And then you have that instant connection, and you can support each other along the way. So, you know, I'm hoping to connect with a lot of other people, and I hope, in return, they connect and feel the kind of encouragement that I've felt as I've gone along this journey.

REBECCA: So you're kind of paying it forward.

MINDY: Yeah! That's a good... See, you phrase everything so great!

REBECCA: So then, we're actually going to open up for some questions actually in just a couple of minutes. But I just wanted to say, before we do that, is there any advice that you would give other web writers who are out there, who are just beginning, who are just getting started. Maybe they just found the *Wealthy Web Writer*, or they just bought Nick's *Copywriting 2.0*, but they're really just now getting started. What advice would you give to them?

MINDY: I guess I just can't say it enough. Just connect and put yourself out there. Reach out to me, write to me, or to anyone of the other people on the *Wealthy Web Writer Forum*, because, I think once you start making those links, it's almost like you build a net that is going to catch you when you run into those rough times. If you have nobody to link to or to connect to, then when you hit bad times you might fall a little bit further, or you might give up sooner. And so, don't be

like I was when I first started, and I thought that copywriting was such an individual, independent kind of thing. Instead, reach out and... I hope, that like me, you'll be amazed at how much more enjoyable this entire profession becomes just because of that human connection.

REBECCA: That's excellent advice. And so, Mindy, we're going to open up to questions and answers, but I wanted to thank you personally, for both doing the reality blog—I really have been looking for someone like you to put themselves out there for awhile, and I am really looking forward to what this year brings. I hope that you do hit your goals this year, because I think there will be a very fun celebration at the end of the year.

MINDY: Oh, you bet! Everybody can come to Albuquerque and celebrate with me! You're all invited!

REBECCA: And so Denise, do you want to go ahead and take it over and open the call for questions?

DENISE: Sure, Rebecca. So, Alisa, if you're there?

ALISA: I am.

DENISE: Thank you. Would you please explain to the listeners how they can go about asking the questions?

ALISA: Ladies and Gentlemen, if you have a question, please press the number 1 key. I will then ask you your name. If you hear your name repeated into the conference, you may go ahead and ask your question. I'm sorry, that's star 1; Ladies and Gentlemen. Now, if you have a question, please press star 1.

DENISE: And while the queues are lining up, Mindy, you're going to be with us in March, I see.

MINDY: Yes. I'm very excited about that.

DENISE: Good. Excellent. I think that'll be part of these stepping-stones to your goal, so I'm excited too.

REBECCA: You'll have to actually cover the Web... Denise, you were referring to the *Web Intensive*, correct?

DENISE: Yes.

REBECCA: In Vegas. Mindy, you'll have to do some reality blog coverage from there.

MINDY: Oh, that would be great! We'll have some live shoots.

REBECCA: Exactly. We're going to have a video camera there, so we'll do some video feeds as well.

ALISA: There are no questions at this time.

DENISE: No questions at this time. Okay. Well, I think that people are just interested in finding out what you're going to be up to. So I guess they're going to have to tune into the blog and figure that out.

ALISA: We do have one question. Is that okay?

DENISE: Absolutely.

REBECCA: Where did they go?

ALISA: I guess they changed their mind. I'm sorry, ladies.

REBECCA: We'll go ahead and close out the call then, for today. I have a feeling a lot of people, you know they wanted to hear about you and who you are, and

we've been getting a lot of questions on the *Wealthy Web Writer* website. I saw a lot underneath Mindy's individual blog post. So definitely continue to post there, and Mindy, you'll continue to answer those throughout the year. Correct?

MINDY: Yes. And I just want to say thank you to everybody who've already shared their comments and their own goals and experiences, because it really motivates me just knowing that other people are out there, just like I said. Working for the same goals and the same kind of experience that I am.

DENISE: Building that net that you talked about.

MINDY: Yeah. Exactly.

DENISE: All right. So I want to thank everybody for dialing in this afternoon, and thank you, of course, Mindy and Rebecca. And everyone, just keep writing!

REBECCA: Thank you!

MINDY: Good luck, everyone. Thank you!