

Living Your Joy: A Practical Guide to Happiness

by Suzanne Falter-Barns

Author of How Much Joy Can You Stand?

Do lack of time, money, and energy keep you from developing a talent or dream you feel passionate about? Do job and family responsibilities take precedence over your own creative pursuits?

SUZANNE FALTER-BARNs, a pioneer in creativity motivation, says that too many gifted people make their creative pursuits a low priority by trying to do them in their spare time. Imagine, instead, approaching your dream like an entrepreneur growing a new business. Even if it never becomes your primary source of income, treating your dream like a business helps you fine-tune your talents, learn to be accountable, and develop high standards, bringing a new sense of fulfillment and balance into your life.

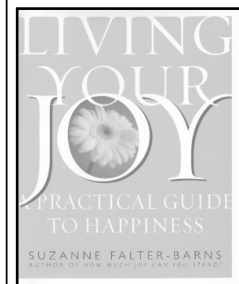
In *Living Your Joy: A Practical Guide to Happiness* (Ballantine Books, October 2003), Falter-Barns presents the first self-help guide that shows artists how to apply powerful business tools such as mission statements, business plans, time management, motivational techniques, and networking to the creative process in order to reach creative goals.

She starts with the premise that everyone can find at least five hours a week, initially, to devote to their dream. She demonstrates how to create "writer's hours" with ingenious time- and energy-saving tips and techniques, how to say "no" to detractors and distractions, and how to develop the entrepreneurial vision, drive, and focus to keep your dream growing.

Falter-Barns is a winning role model of this approach, having made the transition from temp worker and cabaret performer to established freelance journalist, critically acclaimed three-time author, successful Internet entrepreneur, and national motivational speaker and seminar leader.

Readers learn:

- How to commit to regular hours for your dream work
- Unique tips on getting rid of clutter and transforming a closet, corner, or room into your own energy-charged workspace
- How to maintain focus and perform at your peak
- How to turn a day job into your personal "patron of the arts"
- Insider secrets on freelancing, moonlighting, setting up a Web-based business, and other ways to be a working artist
- How to use a "support buddy," support group, or personal coach
- How to hammer out a business plan, finance your dream, market your products and services, and generate income
- Motivational tools, development activities, and techniques from a pro

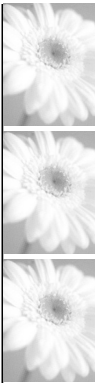


Your decision to run your dream like a business is more about having high standards and accountability than the volume of sales you intend to generate.



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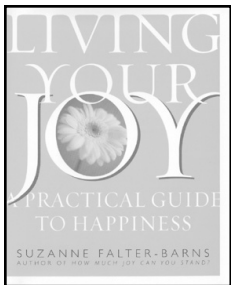


Well-organized and highly practical, *Living Your Joy* features valuable resource sections at the end of each chapter that list books, Web sites, and organizations offering help in such areas as personal productivity, practical office design, financial and small-business coaching, marketing, virtual assistants, and personal coaches.

This book, with its original perspective and incredible scope, will be read by creative people everywhere who want to turn their dreams into reality, but who have lacked the practical skills to do it successfully.



SUZANNE FALTER-BARNS is the author of the highly acclaimed *How Much Joy Can You Stand?: A Creative Guide to Facing Your Fears and Making Your Dreams Come True* (Ballantine Books; 2000), which sold more than 60,000 copies and is now considered a classic on creativity. A widely published journalist whose pieces have appeared in the *New York Times*, *New Age Journal Magazine*, and *Self*, among other publications, she also runs a successful Web-based business, offers teleclasses on creativity, and travels the country as a motivational speaker, offering insight and inspiration in her lectures on the power of creative self-expression.



LIVING YOUR JOY
A Practical Guide to Happiness
Suzanne Falter-Barns
Ballantine Books
ISBN 0-345-43917-1
Hardback, 208 pages
\$12.95
October 2003



Your dream is nothing less than a sacred mission in life, the guiding vision given to you at birth, that still waits patiently for you to finally tune in and take it seriously.

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About the Author



SUZANNE FALTER-BARNS is a pioneer in the field of understanding the creative process, and she is the author of ***Living Your Joy: A Practical Guide to Happiness*** (Ballantine Books, October 2003).

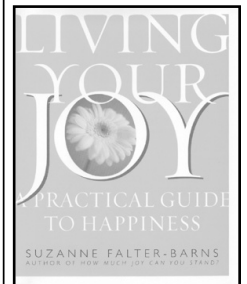
Falter-Barns knows a thing or two about the struggles of living an artistic life. Earlier in her creative career, she weathered more than a thousand rejections (including those of her second and third novels), worked at dozens of depressing temp jobs by day while singing in cabarets by night, and endured a case of writer's block so severe that it impelled her to take stock of her life and "get a grip," as she puts it.

The result was a book of inspiration she wrote mainly for herself, which became her first self-help guide, ***How Much Joy Can You Stand?: A Creative Guide to Facing Your Fears and Making Your Dreams Come True*** (Ballantine Books, 2000). Hailed as a classic on creativity, the book has sold more than 60,000 copies and was a *Publisher's Weekly* Hot Pick as well as a One Spirit Book Club main selection.

In addition to writing books, Falter-Barns has enjoyed a career as a freelance journalist for more than twenty years. A former columnist for *New Age Journal Magazine*, she has penned articles for major publications, including *Fitness*, *New Woman*, *More, Self*, *New Age Journal*, *Prevention*, *Real Woman*, the *New York Times*, and many others.

Her popular Web site, www.howmuchjoy.com, features practical tools for creative dreamers, and offers the "Discover Your Soul Purpose" CD and a free e-zine titled *The Joy Letter*. She also offers teleclasses for creative people seeking new ways to find the time, energy, courage, focus, practical skills, and money to pursue their dreams.

After earning a B.A. in art history from Wellesley College, Falter-Barns went on to study at the Actor's Institute in New York City, and she worked as a professional cabaret singer for many years before she became a creative writing teacher at New York University's School of Continuing Education. Today, Falter-Barns is a successful author and a sought-after speaker on self-expression and creativity issues. She leads writer's retreats, facilitates workshops and seminars, and delivers keynote speeches across the United States.



From Publishers Weekly, on *Living Your Joy*:

"Falter-Barns strikes an encouraging but realistic tone in this down-to-earth self-help manual aimed at people struggling with doubts about pursuing their dream.... Aspiring artists, writers, and entrepreneurs will find basic and creative tips in this succinct motivational guide."



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Interview Topics



SUZANNE FALTER-BARNS is an author, a freelance journalist, and a nationally recognized expert on creativity and self-expression. A sought-after speaker and seminar leader who has helped hundreds of people shape their creative processes and realize their dreams, she is inspiring and charismatic in front of every kind of audience. Here are several possibilities for timely, issue-oriented features, articles, columns, shows, and segments on which the expert can work closely with business, women's, and New Age media.

Help for Chronic Time Wasters

If "not enough time" is your excuse for avoiding your dream, it just ran out.

What eats up your precious time? Is it grocery shopping, trips to the post office, blow-drying your hair? Falter-Barns says you can gain five or more hours each week by making small changes in your habits—time you can reserve for a creative pursuit. She offers three dozen ingenious ways to free up time every day, from cooking in batches and paying bills electronically to nixing TV and returning phone calls on a cordless headset while doing household chores.

I Can't Leave My Job

Are job security, perks, benefits, and what your mother thinks keeping you from doing what you were meant to do?

When Falter-Barns quit her full-time job to be a freelancer and a cabaret singer, her mother stopped speaking to her for six months. Many of us are stuck in jobs we hate because society tells us it's irresponsible to give up job security. The expert debunks common myths about perks such as job-provided insurance and retirement accounts, and she offers viable alternatives and practical financial solutions for responsible dreamers who are ready to cut the cord.

Arts in the Workplace: A Growing Trend

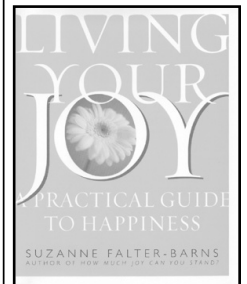
How America companies are waking up to the value of creativity—and how yours can, too.

Corporate America is beginning to understand that art unites employees beyond the usual, artificial boundaries, and so helps the company thrive. Forward-thinking firms now support noonday jam sessions, employee exhibitions in the lobby, and company-sponsored theatre clubs. Falter-Barns shows how to transform your drab day job into a thrilling creative laboratory, and she provides strategies to get your boss and fellow employees to support you on your creative path.

How to Make Your Job Work for You

Transform your day job into your personal patron of the arts.

Holding down a regular job is one of the most viable ways to finance your artistic pursuits. But if your day job is getting in the way of your dreams, says Falter-Barns, redesign it. She offers up creative solutions such as job-sharing, telecommuting, temping, and flexible hours, and teaches no-nonsense strategies for getting clear on your



You have more time than you think: Possibly 186.5 Hours a Month

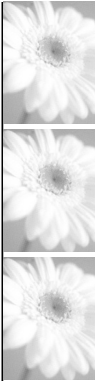
- Stop blow-drying your hair (save 10.5 hours per month).
- Cook dinners in large batches to freeze for later use (save 10 hours per month).
- Check e-mail only twice a day instead of throughout the day. (save 15.5 hours per month).
- Pay bills automatically (save 2 hours per month).
- Watch only one hour of TV a day (save 148.5 hours per month, based on national average of 40 hours watched per week).

Cynthia Cunningham and Shelley Murray were Bank of Boston branch managers and new mothers who packaged themselves as a team to share one job. They presented their idea, along with their accomplishments and resumes, to the bank's key decision makers and landed a new job in the bank's foreign exchange department. Each woman now works twenty hours a week, sharing a vice president's job at a salary level higher than that at either's previous job.



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priorities, creating your dream schedule, and negotiating a new arrangement with your boss.

Turn Your Dream into a Moneymaker

How to make money doing what you really want to do.

In her workshops, Falter-Barns has helped hundreds of creative people transform their dreams into paying jobs, from leading whitewater rafting trips to making jewelry. Learn how to treat your dream like a business, identify your marketplace, create a business plan, promote your services, set up a Web site, and manage your income.

Decluttering: A Surprising Way to Create More Energy

How to create a lean working environment that enhances your energy and releases you from creative blocks.

What does your environment have to do with the creative process? Everything, says Falter-Barns. A clutter-free, well-organized sacred space that reflects your passion and personality feeds your creative energy, productivity, and joy. Drawing from the wisdom of feng shui, the ingenuity of contemporary office product design, and tips from her favorite experts on organizing and decluttering, the expert demonstrates how to turn a linen closet, kitchen corner, or guest bedroom into your own dream studio.

How to Be Your Own Boss

Learn the tricks and traps of freelancing.

Taking the leap from her nine-to-five ad agency job into the life of a freelance writer was one of the best business decisions Falter-Barns ever made, and it transformed her from an artist who had to work into a working artist. But along with the benefits of being her own boss came a slew of challenges she had not anticipated. Learn the ins and outs of health insurance, self-employment taxes, bookkeeping, networking, marketing, creating a financial safety net, and other useful tips—from one who knows the ropes.

How to Treat Your Dream Like a Business

It's more about having high standards and accountability than the volume of sales you intend to generate.

Making a living from your dream is quite doable, but it won't happen until you set a system in place to support it and are willing to receive payment for your work. The rate of return has everything to do with how much seriousness and energy you put into that dream's development. Falter-Barns says you will acquire new focus and motivation by treating your dream like a business. Learn pro techniques such as setting regular hours, creating a workspace, designing a business card, developing a logo, and making income and expense projections.

Lunchtime Recipe: Pita Pocket Stuffed with Joy

No time to create? Try workday lunch hours.

Being businesslike is simply the translation of your responsibilities into systems that support that effort.

Eight Key Steps for the Inherently Unbusinesslike

- 1. Create a business card.*
- 2. Get a logo.*
- 3. Register your business.*
- 4. Create business banking accounts.*
- 5. Set up books.*
- 6. Keep track of receipts.*
- 7. Consider a business credit card.*
- 8. Figure out what you need to make each month.*





If you are putting off pursuing a creative dream because you lack the time, here is good news. You probably have a perfect hour smack-dab in the middle of your day to write, design your next quilt, or organize slides for galleries. It's called your lunch hour. Bring food from home or order in, then activate your voicemail, close the door, and get to work on developing your talents. Falter-Barns offers tools for coping with nosy fellow employees, work distractions, unaccommodating spaces, guilt, and lack of motivation.

Twenty Things that Waste Your Energy—and How to Get Rid of Them

Why-didn't-I-think-of-that tips for stopping the slow leak of your energy.

One of the first ways to start living your joy is to get rid of all the day-to-day obsessions, activities, and annoyances that sap your energy and time. Seemingly insignificant things, such as that scotch-taped hem or being put on hold indefinitely, are energy sappers because they interrupt your creative flow, invade your thoughts, and alter your mood. Falter-Barns identifies twenty of the most common energy-draining culprits and offers practical ways to avoid them.

Creative Motivation 101

Discover what to do when you feel like quitting.

Actively pursuing your dream and developing your creative side in a focused, serious manner is hard work. It is much easier to report to a job day after day, and fill up off-work hours with family, friends, and entertainment. Falter-Barns offers exercises, tips, techniques, and habit-breaking activities that help creative people weather "in-between" periods, when fear, self-doubt, and discouragement make you feel like quitting.

Does Your Dream Come First?

Acquire tools for saying "No!" to distractions, detractors, and your inner fear.

There comes a time in every creative person's life when he or she has to deal with people, circumstances, and emotions that block his or her creative path. Falter-Barns gives creative dreamers valuable hands-on techniques for carving out inviolable time for yourself, coping with your own self-doubt, addressing saboteurs, prioritizing outside activities, and saying yes to your highest self and aims.

A Nonthreatening Guide to Business Plans

Creating a business plan for your dream can actually be fun.

Falter-Barns is here to debunk the myth that creative types make poor businesspeople. If designing lampshades in your spare time or drawing cartoons is your passion, why not turn it into a moneymaker? She lays out the basic steps to creating a business plan—locating your target market, determining what problem they have that you can solve, and figuring out how you will help them find your solution. Then she shows how to create a simple, workable business plan by thinking in broad, creative strokes, based on nothing more than your vision.

Creativity–Nurturing Dos and Don'ts

DO:

- *Keep note-making materials with you wherever you are.*
- *Get out and see other people's work in your field.*

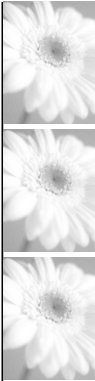
DON'T

- *Listen to news while doing creative work.*
- *Take calls or check e-mails while you are working.*

Famous Writing Habits

- *Ernest Hemingway wrote from before dawn to 11:00 a.m. each day, so he could visit the bistros in the after noon.*
- *John O'Hara wrote from midnight until dawn, as did Balzac, drinking coffee to stay awake.*
- *Tolstoy and Rousseau both wrote in the mornings, after a daily walk.*
- *Dostoyevsky got his creative flashes after the sun went down.*





Can you Accept Support from Others?

How to find “support buddies,” support groups, virtual assistants, personal coaches, and others to help you pursue your dream.

Successful people rarely get there alone. To create an ideal dream life for yourself, you may need to surround yourself with like-minded individuals and others who are reliable and trained to help. Falter-Barns gives useful advice on where and how to find the right people, groups, networks, and organizations that can help you with creative brainstorming, motivation, administration and bookkeeping, business organization, and other supportive roles to help you along your creative path.

Eight Questions to Ask a Personal Coach

When you get serious about your dream, there are real advantages to hiring a professional motivator.

Why bother with a personal coach? Personal coaches are particularly useful to anyone pursuing a dream because they require accountability. But how do you find one who is especially suited to your unique needs? Falter-Barns sings the praises of coaches, and she suggests eight questions to ask a potential coach so you can find the right one to help you accomplish your dream goals.

Discipline is simply sticking to those commitments you make for yourself that grow out of a love for your vision.

Miniquiz: Are you supportable?

- *Would you join a support group?*
- *Have you gained from self-help books, therapy, or workshops?*
- *Are you adventurous?*
- *Do you actively seek happiness?*
- *Do you respond well to friendly advice?*
- *Can you maintain long-term focus?*

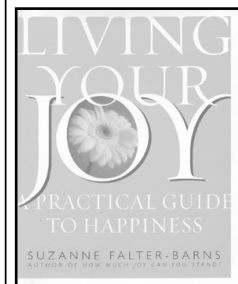
“Yes” answers make you a great candidate for growing your dream and finding help to do it.



Suggested Interview Questions



- 1** How can a busy person who has a family and a full-time job find the time to create his or her dream?
- 2** What were some of the challenges you faced early on, while working at jobs you hated, as you pursued your creative dream?
- 3** What are the most common excuses people give for not making the pursuit of their dream job a priority?
- 4** How do clutter and lack of organization sap creative energy, and what are some of your favorite uncluttering and organizing tips?
- 5** What advice would you give to someone who feels stuck in a job he or she hates?
- 6** What do you mean by “treating your dream like a business?”
- 7** What tools can creative people borrow from the business world to achieve creative goals?
- 8** How can someone who is not yet generating income from his or her dream stay motivated?
- 9** What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of freelancing, moonlighting, temping, and other nontraditional work models?
- 10** What are some ways to make your day job work better for you, in the context of pursuing your dream?
- 11** What kind of outside help would you recommend to someone who is struggling and who feels alone in his or her creative pursuit?
- 12** What are some real-life examples of people you have met in your work who have successfully dissolved what you call “the artificial divide between their passion and their work”?

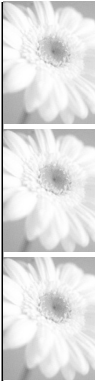


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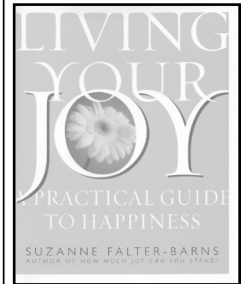
How Well Does Your Job Support Your Creative Dream?

Take this quiz to find out



For each of the following statements, circle the answer that best describes how you feel about your day job. Check your score at bottom.

- True False** I can't imagine working at my job ten years from now.
- True False** A major reason I stay at my job is because it provides a regular paycheck, job security, or benefits.
- True False** When I go to work, I'm mostly my "work self." Only off the job can I sometimes be my "creative self."
- True False** The possibility of making a living or even some decent income from my creative talents seems pretty remote.
- True False** My boss and most of my coworkers are unaware of my true passion and talents.
- True False** My day job is stressful and requires a lot of mental or physical energy.
- True False** I often have to stay late or bring work home to get it all done.
- True False** Once I get home, I have a hard time "turning off" my work brain because of deadlines or other job-related worries.
- True False** I often work through lunch because I'm too busy to take the time off, or because I feel too guilty to do so.
- True False** I'm mostly unaware of the secret passions, talents, and creative gifts my coworkers pursue in their off hours, or dream of pursuing.
- True False** The type of work I do at my company wouldn't be conducive to telecommuting or working part-time from home.
- True False** My boss would never agree to some sort of new work arrangement such as flexible hours, different hours, job sharing, or telecommuting.



*A recent survey published in the **New York Times** found that 70 percent of all Americans report high or moderate workplace stress.*

According to the Editorial Freelance Association, out of 2,080 annual paid hours of average staff time, almost one-third—nearly 630 hours—are spent not working. That's money companies spend on nothing, and many have decided that using freelancers, who are paid only for work that is accomplished, makes more business sense.



Scoring:

Count up how many statement for which you answered "True." If that number is:



9-12 You're in the classic creative person's bind. You spend a lot of time and energy at a job that doesn't make much room for you to pursue your passion. You've probably put your dream on the back burner because you can't see any other way. If you want to bring more balance, fulfillment, and joy into your life, it might be time to seriously consider a different job or type of work.



5-8 Your job has the potential to support your dream. You may be able to start spending lunch hours developing your creative talents, network with other creative coworkers and even bring your talents into the office, or get your boss to agree to a work schedule that better accommodates your creative pursuits.

1-4 Lucky you! You are fairly happy with your work and can probably "be yourself" at the office. Your job may even fulfill a side of you that complements your creative pursuits. You're in a great position to turn your job into your own personal "patron of the arts." Your job will not stand in the way as you begin pursuing your dream with focus and dedication.

