

✨ VERY SMART Writing Goal Worksheet

Set a Writing Goal Your Mind Can Trust – and Follow Through On

The VERY SMART Writing Goal Worksheet

A mindset-first, future-paced approach to setting writing goals that actually stick

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Before You Begin

This worksheet is designed to help you set a **VERY SMART writing goal** — one that works with your mind, nervous system, and identity as a writer.

Unlike traditional goal-setting, this approach invites you to:

- Clarify direction before adding pressure
- Anchor identity before focusing on output
- Write your goal **as if it has already been achieved**

This is not about forcing motivation. It's about creating a goal your mind feels safe committing to.

Take your time. There is no rush here.

STEP 1: CHOOSE YOUR PRIMARY WRITING FOCUS

Choose **one** primary writing focus to anchor your year.

This is not the only thing you're allowed to work on — it's the **main direction your energy returns to** when you feel scattered, overwhelmed, or unsure what to work on.

Examples include:

- Finishing the first draft of your novel
- Revising an existing manuscript
- Rebuilding writing consistency
- Reconnecting with your story after a break

My primary writing focus for the year is:

STEP 2: DEFINING SUCCESS (REALISTICALLY)

Success is not about perfection or intensity. It's about **sustainable progress**.

Answer honestly — based on your real life, not your ideal one.

This year, success will look like:

I am letting go of unrealistic expectations such as:

For me, consistency looks like (weekly, not daily):

STEP 3: WEEKLY COMMITMENT

Instead of asking “*How much can I push myself?*”, ask:

“What level of commitment can I keep even on my hardest weeks?”

My realistic weekly writing commitment:

- Number of writing sessions per week: _____
- Session style (short, long, flexible, focused):
- Where writing fits best in my life right now

STEP 4: THE VERY SMART FRAMEWORK

Before writing your goal, reflect on the prompts below.

V – Vision-Led

What has been completed or meaningfully moved forward by the end of the year?

E – Emotionally Connected

How does it feel to have achieved this?

R – Realistic & Responsible

Why is this achievable for *this* season of your life?

Y – Yours

Why does this matter to *you* – not anyone else?

SMART – Structured Enough to Act On

What simple structure supports this goal?

STEP 5: WRITE YOUR VERY SMART GOAL

(Future-Paced – As If Already Achieved)

Now imagine it is **12 months from now**.

Your primary writing focus has moved forward exactly as intended.

Write your goal as a **short paragraph**, in the **past tense**, as if it has already happened.

Begin with:

“It is the end of 2026, and...”

STEP 6: CHECK IN WITH YOUR BODY

Read your goal back slowly.

When I read this goal, my body feels:

Calm Grounded Motivated Tense

This goal feels:

Believable Aligned Too heavy (adjust expectations)

If needed, gently refine your wording until the goal feels **supportive**, not pressured.

STEP 7: MAKE THE DECISION

Complete the sentence below:

This year, I am choosing to stop restarting — and to follow through by:

A Final Reminder

A VERY SMART goal is not something you chase.

It's something you **step into**.

You don't need to prove yourself. You don't need to rush.

You simply need to show up — again and again — in alignment.

Listen to **Episode 6 of Write the Darn Book - How to Set Writing Goals That Actually Help You Finish Your Book** www.maddisonmichaels.com/podcast