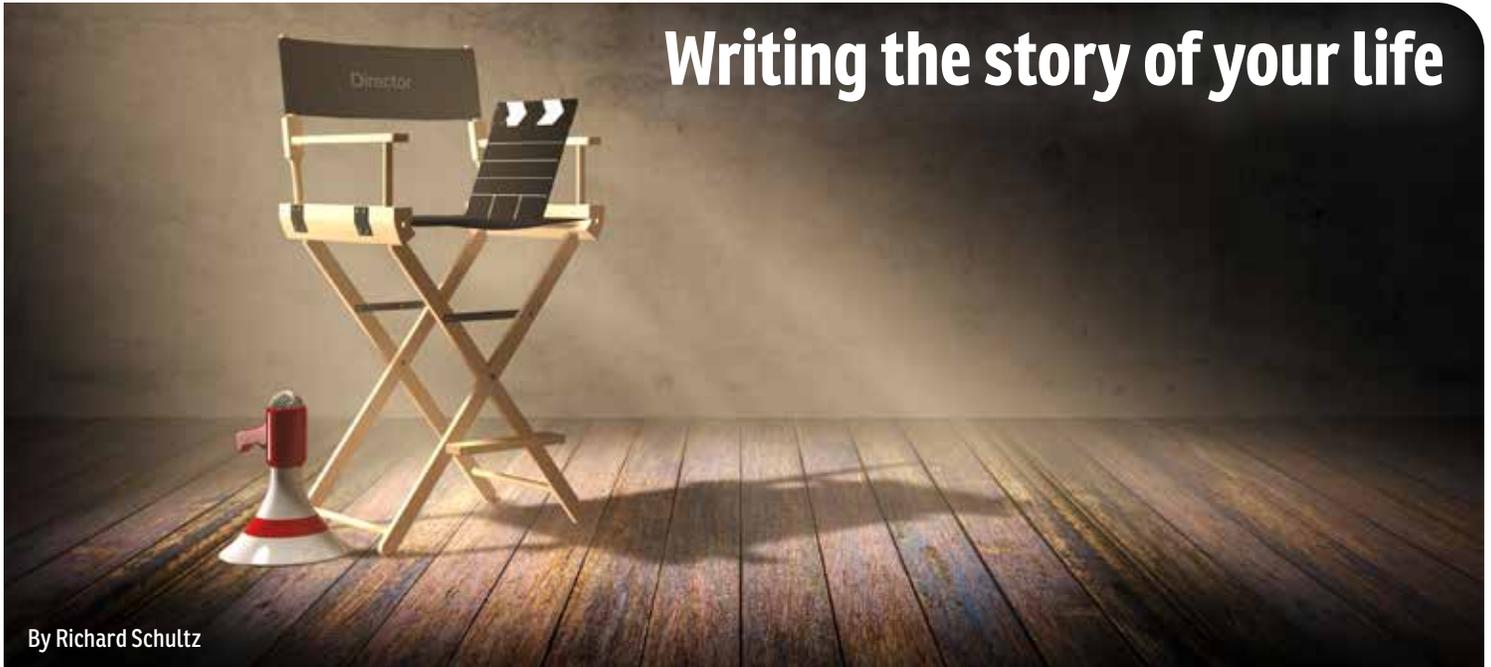


# Writing the story of your life



By Richard Schultz

**R**emember being at the movies and watching a film with a compelling story that really captured your emotions and your mind. Remember how that movie moved you. What thoughts did it provoke? How did it make you feel? What sensations went through your body? Did it move you to tears of sadness, laughter or joy? Would you have clenched your teeth or did your hairs stand on end? How did you relate to the characters in the story? How did the story affect you afterwards? Was your mood joyful, reflective, inspired, sad, lonely, disgusted, fearful, loving or horrified? How long did those feelings last?

Such is the power of story and we all love to immerse ourselves in the drama of a compelling story—be it at the movies, in a book, a song, on social media, gossip or in real-life relationship dramas! Story has the power to move us!

Now, remember the stories that have played through your life or are playing now. What sensations go through your body when you connect with those stories? How do those real-life stories shift your thoughts, emotions or mood. What genres or themes consistently show up in your life movie? Are they tragedies? Love stories? Horror? Comedies? Action? Adventure? What characters do you play? Are you the heroine, the victim, the princess, the lover or the bad guy?

What about the story and cast of other characters in your life? What roles do they play? The spouse, the friend, the boss, the employee, the parent, the child, the neighbour or sibling? What are the stories you tell about them? Are they saddening? Abusive? Controlling? Compassionate? Loving? Trustworthy? Caring? How do you relate to them? Is the relationship healthy and enhancing your life or depleting it?

Story is central to our life experience. Some say a script was being written and our character cast from the moment we were born. Parents or caregivers teach us how to speak, how to behave and how to be. We learn to play our parts to make sure we are loved and that they may be proud of us. Some may just learn what it takes to survive difficult and even life-threatening circumstances. Unfortunately, most of us were not told that we could re-write our life script and even completely redefine ourselves in the context of our relationship with others. We all have the power to quit being an actor in an old script to become the director, script writer, and leading actor in a renewed and redefined life story. This new story, YOUR new story, has the power to move you and move the world. What story do you wish to write?

## About the Author

### Richard Schultz



Richard is an executive coach and group facilitator based in Shediac, NB. He has over 20 years of experience helping individuals shift

unwanted behavioural patterns, discovering their life purpose and unlocking their true potential. He specializes in forgiveness and helping his clients discover and reconsider the limiting beliefs that have been holding them back from success.

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## How do you re-write your story and step into your new act?

1. Examine your stories, the character you have played and the experiences you have had. Question the thoughts, feelings, assumptions, opinions and beliefs that are part of those stories. Are they true? Be curious. Do you absolutely know that they are true or are they part of a script that you inherited? Choose which thoughts, values, beliefs and behaviours you want to keep and which no longer serve you.
2. Write out the new script or vision of what you want and who you want to be. How would you think, behave and act to play that part? What attitudes would you be conveying? What will you see, hear and feel when you are actually at the top of your performance? Try to be as clear and specific as possible. Think of who your supporting cast members may be and what roles they

will play, but most importantly accept your leading role in your new story.

3. Let go of the old story. Imagine yourself gathering up all the old scripts that pull you down, writing them down and ceremonially burning them. Consider forgiving yourself and others that may have played parts in your old performance. Holding on to old stories often weigh you down and bind you to old drama. If you are having trouble letting go, getting assistance may help you redefine new objectives and means to achieve them.
4. Step into the new role. Play. Practice. Rehearse. Adjust. Fake it until you make it! Find a coach, mentor, friend or therapist you connect with to support you, give you feedback, and teach you useful tools and tricks.
5. Realize that you cannot control others or what happens in the world, but you are in charge of the story you tell about it.
6. “Break a Leg” in each new act! Have fun, celebrate your successes and live your legacy now.

## Stay Energized at Work



Working out or going to the gym every day before work can be a big challenge, but it will help you stay more consistently energized during the workday. If you typically get groggy in the afternoon, try this five-day experiment. Schedule a 20-minute brisk walk daily during your lunch hour or early afternoon. This routine will cause you to feel more awake, less sluggish, and less likely to doze off in the afternoon, thereby raising your productivity.

## Relationships—the Secret to Happiness



Many articles, books, and speeches have discussed the secret to finding happiness, but there is only one 75-year study that has attempted to pin down the answer. It's the Grant and Gluek Study, which began in 1934. And it continues today. The project focuses on the lives of two completely different groups of people—a large group of low-income people from Boston, Massachusetts, and a similarly large group of Harvard graduates. The only finding common to both groups of what ultimately brings joy is quality relationships. Recent studies on the negative effects of loneliness lend support to these findings. Developing strong and positive relationships is a social skill that also has some important ingredients. And it can be learned. If you're past your teens and younger years and you find your health and relationships are lacking, it can be a bit more of a challenge to fire up an active friends network. Start with a visit to a workplace counsellor or EAP. For advice on reestablishing a social life after lots of time away from the practice of doing so, consider the book *The Friendship Crisis: Finding, Making, and Keeping Friends When You're Not a Kid Anymore.*

Source: <https://www.adultdevelopmentstudy.org/grantandglueckstudy>.

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