



## Ray Edwards Show, Episode 297

### How to Become Wealthy as an Unknown Writer

**Ray:** Ray Edwards Show, Episode 297: How to become wealthy as an unknown writer.

**Recording:** It's the Ray Edwards Show. This is the podcast for prosperity with purpose.

**Song:** [music] Let's change the world and watch your business grow. Welcome to the Ray Edwards Show.

**Ray Edwards:** A lot of people probably feel like they've got part of today's episode all nailed down.

**Sean:** Yes, there are lots of unknown writers out there.

**Ray:** Yes, and if you're thinking, "I don't want to be a writer, I have no interest in being a writer," hold on, cowboy, don't dismount your horse just yet because there's something in this for you as well. Now, if you're a writer, if you're a storyteller a scribbler, a teacher, you love writing, this episode is definitely for you. Because I'm going to give you an avenue to take all those ideas, all those little manuscripts and turn it into a living. Maybe you've been downsized. Maybe you've been outsized. Maybe you want a second career.

**Sean:** Never heard of outsized.

**Ray:** I haven't either, I just made it up.

**Sean:** [laughs].

**Ray:** I don't even know what it is. If you've been outsized can you email us, let us know what that means?

**Sean:** It's when your employer forces you to move your office to the outside. I want my stapler.

**Ray:** You can still work here but you have to work outside.

**Sean:** I could set the building on fire [laughs].

**Ray:** My friend Jeff Cohen says, "Real artists don't starve." In fact, that's the title of his latest book, and in the book, he says, "being a starving artist is a choice, not a necessary condition of doing creative work." Now, think about that. That means that if you're a starving artist it's not because it's a virtue of being an artist. It's because you don't have your stuff together.

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**Sean:** That's offensive.

**Ray:** Well, it makes you uncomfortable.

**Sean:** People don't like being responsible for their own lives.

**Ray:** No, it's much easier to blame an external entity like the rich or greedy businessmen or politicians or lawyers.

**Sean:** The 1%.

**Ray:** The 1%. It's so much easier to blame someone other than yourself.

**Sean:** The Republicans. The Democrats.

**Ray:** Right. Whoever.

**Sean:** The Trilateral Commission.

**Ray:** Yes, the Illuminati. They're the reason I'm poor.

**Sean:** We're going with the assumption that you actually are responsible for your life and you're willing to accept that assignment.

**Ray:** And that you hate excuses.

**Sean:** And that you like reality.

**Ray:** Yes.

**Sean:** I think you're going to like this episode if that fits you. If you don't like those things, if those things upset you, you might want to go listen to something else for a while.

**Ray:** If you prefer living in a fantasy, we will not participate in your delusion.

**Sean:** That's a tweetable right there.

**Ray:** [laughs].

**Sean:** Marshall, make sure that goes in the tweetable.

**Ray:** [laughs].

**Sean:** We will not participate in your delusion.



**Ray:** In this episode, I'm going to lay down a path to prosperity specifically for writers or if you're not a writer then a path for prosperity through writing in whatever business you are in.

**Recording:** Does anyone want to live a life that is long and prosperous? Spiritual Foundations.

**Ray:** Spiritual Foundations. There's this bizarre story in the Old Testament where the prophet Elijah pronounced a drought over the land because of the sin of Ahab and the nation of Israel. That sounds really powerful and like something from a cool biblical type movie, which seems to be popular these days.

**Sean:** Yes, especially when they--.

**Ray:** When they change the story significantly, like Noah.

**Sean:** [laughs].

**Ray:** I haven't seen it yet.

**Sean:** No, I just-- mom was just describing it and you and I were having a good time going, "Oh, yeah, I remember that part in the Bible."

**Ray:** I remember the giant lava rock angel creatures.

**Sean:** Yes, I remember how the evil king broke into the ark and lived with the snakes.

**Ray:** Yes.

**Sean:** I remember when Noah was going to kill his family.

**Ray:** What were they thinking? Anyway, so Elijah prophesied drought over the land to Ahab. The problem was Elijah lived in the same land as Ahab so he was going to suffer the same consequences. But what happened was, because Elijah was following the guidance of God and doing what he was told to do God provided for Elijah. The Bible says that ravens brought bread in the morning and meat in the evening to Elijah and he got water from a brook.

**Sean:** From a brook like a stream or like a--?

**Ray:** A chic named Brook.

**Sean:** Like a chic. Did a chic named Brook bring him water?

**Ray:** Yes, I think that's what happened.



**Sean:** [laughs].

**Ray:** I like to imagine it that way. Hi, I'm Brook.

**Sean:** Hi, would you like some water?

**Ray:** I'm still a little queasy about being fed by ravens because they're vultures. They're scavengers.

**Sean:** Yes, I'm pretty sure there's something even in the Old Covenant--.

**Ray:** About them being unclean.

**Sean:** Right. But I could be wrong on that.

**Ray:** There's a clause in the Old Covenant that provides for a way for God to do all these things. It's in Psalm 115, it says, "The Lord does what he pleases."

**Sean:** Yes, it's true. Well, I mean, he wrote it. He can-- [laughs].

**Ray:** That's the rule I made for myself in the book I wrote.

**Sean:** Right [laughs].

**Ray:** What's my point in telling this story? Well, if you think about it, the provision that Elijah was receiving from God was the only form of wealth that was available to him in that situation and in that time. I'm going to propose something, a second idea that'll be offensive to many people. That is, that God often uses money to confirm direction in our lives. We think we know what things mean when they happen like, we lose a job, and we think this is bad. I've lost my income. I'm going to have to struggle but we don't always know what things mean when they happen. We were living in Salt Lake City, Utah. We'd been there for about three months. This was back in 1995. We had left the Southeastern US, where we lived all of our lives. You were like nine years old, and I lost my job.

**Sean:** Now, it's fair that people know you weren't just fired for being a--.

**Ray:** A slacker?

**Sean:** A slacker. They had a legal issue at the previous people, right?

**Ray:** Yes. There was a show that was a morning show -- I was in radio -- There was a morning radio show there that left the stations and was in breach of their contract, and I got hired to come in and fill that position. Then, when the money that those guys had saved up ran out, they decided that they were willing to come back and do what their contracts that they're supposed to do. They took their job back and I was on the street.

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**Sean:** Right. I just think it's fair that people know that it wasn't just like, "When I moved to Utah, I got fired, left."

**Ray:** But in retrospect, I think I could have done a better job of doing my research before I took that job and known that it was based on that shifty ground. I'm not blaming anybody else for what happened. What did happen that was good about this was, even though it was stressful at the time, your mother and I were kind of freaked out because I had no job, no income--.

**Sean:** You had a pretty substantial severance package though, didn't you?

**Ray:** That's true, I did.

**Sean:** And even though there was probably a lot of stress and stuff that as a nine-year-old I was unaware of, we did use that time to -- we went on a lot of trips--.

**Ray:** I'm so thankful for that time because we went to Bryce Canyon, to Zion National Park, to Dinosaur, to Arches. Every other day, we would go up into one of the canyons and do some hiking.

**Sean:** Yes, because you didn't have a job. I mean, you were looking for a job, but on the days that you weren't traveling or something for interviews or whatever, you had nothing to do [laughs].

**Ray:** We made some incredible memories. Just thinking about it makes me happy. That's the point I'm trying to make. You don't know. Don't presume you know that something is bad because, as Michael Hyatt often says, "You need to ask yourself, what does this make possible?" That was one thing that that made possible. Another thing that that made possible was for me to end up getting a job that I loved, working with a guy who became one of my best friends and a mentor, and to this day is still one of my best friends and a mentor. We got to live in Spokane, Washington, which we love.

**Sean:** You glossed over-- [laughs].

**Ray:** I'm trying to keep the story simple.

**Sean:** [laughs].

**Ray:** I'm trying not to confuse the story with--.

**Sean:** [laughs].

**Ray:** See, in every movie, there's a huge problem that happens and then, there's a guide that comes along and helps send the hero of the story on a quest. Then, it looks like the hero's about to achieve the quest, then there's something even worse that happens. I'm skipping that part.

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**Sean:** Right [laughs]. I was watching *Moana* at our church thing the other night and I was thinking of that whole basic framework for a movie. I was like, "Look, try, fail. Try, fail." What was it like the false relief or what's it called, like the--?

**Ray:** There's the--.

**Sean:** It's like where you think everything's been wrapped up but there's still one last, "you know, I was identifying all that stuff".

**Ray:** It's the turn, and then there's the "all is lost" moment. We went through all that, and then we ended up in a much better place, and that doesn't mean we're dead.

**Sean:** [laughs].

**Ray:** It just means it opened a lot of doors that would not have opened otherwise. Don't assume you know what something means, and even if it feels like it's bad, ask yourself, "What does this make possible?" And I would just give you this reminder from the New Testament, the New Covenant, that says, "God makes all things work for the good of those who love him and who are called according to his purpose."

**Recording:** Now, simple hacks that make life cheaper, easier, and faster. Ray's tip of the week.

**Ray:** Our tip of the week this week is yet another photo tip. I'm obsessed with backups because we had a backup episode recently. We lost a computer, hard drive and if I had not had three levels of redundant backup for this computer, we would have lost everything that was on it, as two of the backups went South.

**Sean:** That got me into backups too, and now especially because I'm trying to hack my computer to get it-- to run it.

**Ray:** Oh, yes, which is really smart.

**Sean:** External GPU.

**Ray:** There's something about you, you've always got to be challenging yourself with these--.

**Sean:** [laughs] See? It's good to do backups.

**Ray:** Nearly impossible tasks. I admire it but I don't actually want to do it.

**Sean:** [laughs].

**Ray:** One of the things that I have not felt like I had a good handle on was backing up my photos, because really the only backup I had was through iPhoto or iCloud. I've got a lot of photos that live outside of iCloud. I found Google Photos which has

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been around for a couple of years I hadn't heard of it which is actually the case with many Google products. This was actually a spin off from Google Plus, which it's good that it's spun off because that means it will probably survive when they finally kill Google Plus. That will be a mercy killing. Google Photos gives you free, unlimited storage for photos up to 16 megapixels and videos up to 1080p resolution. It's not perfect in that if you're into super high quality photos or 4k video, then it's not going to work for you, but for most people this is more than adequate. It works with your iPhone, it works with the Android, you just get the app from the appropriate app store and give it permission to grab your photos. It does it in the background, it took three or four days to backup all my photos but now they're all backed up in the cloud. What was that meme you were telling me about?

**Sean:** Oh, yes, it was a meme I saw that-- it says, one of those, "the moment you realize" memes and has a picture of Keanu Reeves.

**Ray:** The look on his face?

**Sean:** Right, yes, from one of his movies a long time ago, like Bill and Ted or whatever--.

**Ray:** Like a surfer movie?

**Sean:** Right, yes. The moment you realize that "cloud is just a computer in someone else's house"

[laughter]

**Sean:** Or building or whatever.

**Ray and Sean:** It's true.

**Sean:** I was like, "oh, yes, I got it backed up in the cloud," but every time you say that just stop and think for a second. Really, that just means it's on someone else's computer, either in a server room or literally in someone's bedroom, depending on--.

**Ray:** You could think of Google Photos as a computer in Google's closet. But I think it's better. I've got other backups for my photos. I've got the iCloud backup, I've got Google Photos and I'm--.

**Sean:** Well, it definitely makes it more secure too because then if ever there's a fire at Google's server facility everyone's photos everywhere are gone. It's just another point on why to have three levels of backup.

**Ray:** Yes, and a good point it is. Google Photos it's free, it's cool and it's in Google's closet.

**Recording:** Now, our feature presentation.

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**Ray Edwards:** How to become wealthy as an unknown writer? Now, the point of this is-- I'm not giving you a roadmap to become a famous writer like Steven King or John Patterson because I haven't done that. I can look at what they've done, J.K. Rowling, I can look at the things they've done and analyze it and say, "Here are the things they did that contributed to their success." I could do that but I want to give you the roadmap to being a high income writer, that's how I put this, instead of a starving writer. The first step on this journey-- I wrote a blog post a couple of weeks ago about, How I work as a million dollar writer. That's the title, you can look it up on the blog @rayedwards.com Let me say right now, I say this in the article but just for those who are only listening to the podcast. Lest you think I am an egomaniacal person bragging about the million dollars I have in the bank, we didn't get to keep all that because there were expenses involved. Just read the article and you'll understand. Let's start with this.

**Sean:** That is a point though, a completely disconnected and rabbit trail point. A lot of people get-- like they have a [unintelligible 00:14:02] they just have a false understanding of money. They're here like, "Oh, look that company brought in 14 billion in revenue last year, they should pay more in taxes." You have no idea how much of that money went back to pay their employees, to pay for healthcare, to pay for R&D. When you hear someone say, "hey, this is a 14 billion or whatever--."

**Ray:** At the very least it was probably 90% of the money went back.

**Sean:** Right, yes, there was a use-to-fund the business and do what they're doing. Just realize that when people use big numbers they most of the time they didn't get to take most of that home.

**Ray:** Here's another rabbit trail triggered at me. This whole thing about taxing the rich-- because I heard some crazy person on Talk Radio the other day-- don't ask me why I was listening to Talk Radio.

**Sean:** Why were you listening to Talk Radio [laughs]?

**Ray:** I think I was in a store where they had it on.

**Sean:** [laughs] There should be an Objectivist Talk Radio show, there might be.

**Ray:** That would not be very popular.

**Sean:** Oh, but it would be controversial and that would be fun.

**Ray:** So they were discussing the need to tax the rich more.

**Sean:** Oh, yes, they got to pay their fair share, man.



**Ray:** So let me just give you a little glimpse into the world of people that you're trying to steal from. You're not going to tax them because they're not going to pay the tax bill, you are. How? Well, tax me enough and I'll have to layoff employees. Tax me enough, I'll have to raise my prices. Tax me enough, I'll have to replace some of my employees with machines. So, one way or another, you still end up paying. Because you can try to put as many intermediary thieving steps into the system as you want to but, ultimately, the market is going to win. So how does this relate to writing?

Well, the first thing is, let's presume that you're a writer and if you're not, again, you can use this in any business, this works for any business. But we start with the presumption that you're going to be doing something I would refer to as information marketing. That's the old-school term for it, the new social media accepted term is content marketing. So if you say to a content marketing person I'm an info marketer they'll be like, "oh, you're one of those sleazy--"

**Sean:** "You're like from 2005."

**Ray:** "I'm a Content marketer."

**Sean:** I just write like three versions of an article and then put it in an article spinner and it goes out into a hundred thousand websites.

**Ray:** Whatever you call it, whatever label you want to put on it we're still creating content that is valuable for the purpose of attracting an audience and bringing them into our marketing system. So what does that mean for you as a writer or for somebody who's using their writing to build and grow their business and have business seek you out and come to you?

Well, here's how we do it. We use a variety of different media: We use the blog, this podcast, my YouTube channel, social media services like Facebook and Twitter, I do speaking engagements that way I have books that lead back to my website, and everything we do points to everything else we do. So we formed a web, if you will, of contact points so that no matter where anybody comes in contact with us it's kind of a spider web it's going to lead to the next thing. So you might be following me so far and saying, "okay, that's great, I have a blog, I have a podcast or I can get one, but what do I do with it?" This is the part that I think most people miss, it's not about what you do, it's about what you be. So I've got a be-list for you. These are the things you need to be--.

**Sean:** "I ain't no B lister. I'm an A lister."

**Ray:** If you want to become wealthy as an unknown writer. These are the things you should be if you want to create like Kevin Kelly's thousand true fan-- or, the Kevin Kelly or Chris Anderson that came up with a thousand true fans article?

**Sean:** I don't know.



**Ray:** I should know this, this is embarrassing. Somebody will correct me in the comments. But the idea is, you don't need a hundred thousand raving fans, you just need one thousand who will buy everything you do, and you'll make a great living. So this is what you need to do or who you need to be in order to gain those thousand true fans, that's my belief. It's borne out in my experience, you'll have to be the judge of whether it'll work for you or not. The first thing you have to be is, you have to be interesting. Because, I mean, this should be self-evident but why else would people pay attention if you're not interesting? If you're just boring, if your blog is boring, your podcast is boring, you don't let your real personality come through, which we have no problem with, then nobody's going to care. Number two, you have to be attractive, by which I mean, there needs to be a certain aura of fascination about you. I'm dipping into three biographies simultaneously these days: Houdini, George Washington, and Benjamin Franklin, and I.

**Sean:** Because those three go together.

**Ray:** Well, in my mind they do. Which one of these does not belong?

**Sean:** [laughs].

**Ray:** Well, it looks as though Houdini does not belong.

**Sean:** I know, I know, on the surface of it is just quite funny.

**Ray:** I hadn't thought of it, you're right.

**Sean:** [laughs].

**Ray:** So Houdini-- this is why I want to bring up-- the primary thing I think he did that we can learn from as writers and content marketers or information marketers, he crafted an attractive image of himself very consciously, he was very intentional about how he wanted people to see him, so intentional that now, over 80 years after his death if you ask a room full of people think of a magician, any magician, probably 75% of them will say Houdini. He's been dead for 80 years. Something about the way he made himself attractive to the public persisted over time. That's-- how you do that goes beyond the scope of this podcast but that's just something to think about and integrate into what you're doing. Find ways to be attractive to your audience. Look at some of today's YouTubers. They figured out who they're playing to and how to be attractive to those people. That has the benefit of-- attracting that audience, it also has the effect of repelling many other people, and learn to lose that too.

Here are the lessons I learned from Benjamin Franklin. You need to be visible. Benjamin Franklin formed a group and he called the-- I never know how to say this, The Junto?

**Sean:** I don't know.

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**Ray:** It was kind of like a mastermind group. They gathered and debated philosophical questions and topics on ethics and business. It was originally made up of 12 members. They had people from all different backgrounds. They being Franklin, he orchestrated all this.

He wanted people-- in the original group he had printers, surveyors, a cabinet maker, a cobbler, a clerk, a bartender. They got together on Friday nights. In his autobiography, Franklin said the group was, "a club of mutual improvement." So he was visible in his community with the other people.

The second thing I learned from Franklin was to be prolific. Now, this is something that I'm continuing to work on. I think I've done a pretty good job of it. I write a lot of blog posts. I've stepped up the frequency of those lately. We've done this podcast now for 297 weeks in a row without fail.

Franklin was prolific in his note-taking and in his writing. In fact, there's only one figure in history that we know of who was more dedicated to his note-taking than Benjamin Franklin. That was Isaac Newton. You may remember Newton as the guy who invented or discovered classical physics and calculus--.

**Sean:** Along with that other dude?

**Ray:** Yes. They argued over it, Leibniz?

**Sean:** Yes, I think so.

**Ray:** Yes. So Newton kept track of all of his theories and his analysis by producing up to 100 pages of notes per day.

**Sean:** What?

**Ray:** Yes.

**Sean:** How did he even have time to write all of those and do his experiments?

**Ray:** I don't think he slept. Maybe he was a vampire. A humanities research project has cataloged 4.2 million published and unpublished works by Newton. You can download a lot of them. He writes about everything from physics to mathematics to theology, very fascinating. Being prolific is part of the strategy of becoming popular, which leads people to want to do business with you, which will make you a wealthy writer. Even if you're not super well-known, even though these guys were well-known. That's beside the point.

Here are the lessons I learned from George Washington's biography so far. Be systematic. In his biography, written by Ron Chernow the guy who wrote the biography of Hamilton which became a musical, it says of Washington, "his love of



ritual, habit, and order enabled him to sustain the long involve tasks that distinguished his life. System in all things is the soul of business, he likes to say, to deliberate maturely and execute promptly as the way to conduct it to advantage."

He had a very regular routine. People sometimes poke fun at me for my daily routine and how I try to stick to that, but Washington pretty much had the same phenomena in his life. He was very dedicated to his morning routine. He was a compulsive note-taker. He recorded his every action.

Washington's contemporaries recognized that his compulsive note-taking, his itch to record his every action went to the very essence of a well-regulated man. He developed comprehensive bookkeeping records long before such a practice was even commonplace. You could say he invented the practice.

Being systematic. Key: Be elusive.

**Sean:** Yes, he was elusive.

**Ray:** "Washington struck people as stern and grave, pleasant and affable at once." This is from the biography again. "He seems to embody Benjamin Franklin's Maxim, 'Let all men know thee but no man know thee thoroughly.'" Well, that sounds kind of Machiavellian but, in reality, it's just how it has to be because not everybody can know you thoroughly.

**Sean:** Right, yes.

**Ray:** Taking people into your inner circle or your inner confidence is something you should not do lightly. Washington certainly did not. There was always a feeling of people wanting to know more about Washington.

**Ray:** One line from the biography that's key to this phenomena is, what Chernow writes, "because Washington never invited people readily into his confidence. It had a nearly irresistible appeal when he did. It meant something."

**Sean:** Because he didn't offer it to everyone.

**Ray:** Yes. That's a way to be, elusive. And then, finally, be who they want to be. Now, notice, I did not say be who they want you to be. Everyone wants to be the self-possessed person. We love and admire people who own their lives. People who are their own person. We say things like, "Well, I may not agree with him, but he really knows who he is and he's true to that." That's who people want to be. You need to have the courage to be who they want to be. What that means is, you need to have the courage to be who you are, fully and completely.

**Sean:** To let people be unhappy about who you are.



**Ray:** Yes, because they will be.

**Sean:** One of my friends posted-- they said they got to go teach a class on journalism. They posted on Facebook, they said, "I taught a class on journalism today and I considered it a success because no one threw any tomatoes at Rotten Tomatoes at me." I commented and I said, "Now, see, I take the opposite, [unintelligible 00:26:23]. If no one threw any rotten tomatoes at me I wonder if I said anything of import" [laughs].

**Ray:** Exactly said. I think that's true. Would you mind recapping the be-list?

**Sean:** Absolutely. You need to be interesting, be attractive like Houdini, who was a very attractive man.

**Ray:** It was his aftershave.

**Sean:** Yes, right [laughs]. Be who they want to be, be visible, be elusive, and be systematic.

**Ray:** The vehicles or methods by which we do this include:

[music]

**Sean:** The blog--.

**Ray:** Podcast--.

**Sean:** YouTube--.

**Ray:** Social media--.

**Sean:** Speaking--.

**Ray:** Books--.

**Sean:** Etc.

**Ray:** Etc.

**Sean:** Etc.

**Ray:** Taking this approach can help create that pool of 1,000 true fans who will support you in your work, even though you may not be well-known. I have plenty of friends who are quite wealthy even though most people don't know who they are. As I often tell people when they ask me what I do, I say, "Well, I'm very famous to a small group of people on the internet."



**Sean:** [laughs].

**Ray:** If you have more questions about this or this sounds interesting to you, let us know. We may be covering more of this kind of information in the future. If you have no interest in it, let us know that too.

**Sean:** [laughs].

**Ray:** It doesn't mean I'll stop doing it, but it'll be interesting to know.

**Sean:** Totally.

**Ray:** All right, well, if you found this show helpful, please subscribe to the show through the Apple podcast directory and give us a rating or review. Make sure you put your real name and website in the text of the review itself and at some point we will mention you. If you like to get the transcript for show notes please go to [rayedwards.com/297](http://rayedwards.com/297). Anything to wrap us up?

**Sean:** Yes. "To deliberate maturely and execute promptly is the way to conduct business to advantage." George Washington.

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**[00:28:42] [END OF AUDIO]**