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## FUNDS FOR WRITERS

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101 Best Websites for Writers  
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## ARTICLE

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### Writing Markets for Illnesses

By Valerie Benko

Write what you know.

It's four of the most famous words in writing history. You'll read it in writing newsletters, countless books and hear its echo in multiple creative writing classes.

Yet many struggle with what to write, including myself.

What did I know?

I studied journalism in college and worked for a short time in that field before switching to utilities, but I didn't consider myself an expert to write for trade journals. I have many cats, but I'm not a veterinarian. I like to scrapbook, but I'm usually reading magazines to get other people's layout ideas.

So I didn't write.

Then one day as a jolt of pain ran down my legs and ended in my toes, I realized I was looking at those four words

too abstractly. When writing guidelines mentioned I shouldn't submit unless I was an authority on the subject, that didn't necessarily mean I had to have a specific degree to write for them. It meant I needed to have a feel for the subject matter.

I have multiple sclerosis. I know what it's like to wake up in the morning and not feel the floor beneath my feet. I know how difficult simple tasks can sometimes be. I'm all too familiar with the painful diagnosis process. I may not hold a medical degree, but I can write from a patient's perspective about life with the disease, and my doctors can be my "expert" sources.

There are many publications that take personal essays for which a writer can detail life with any disease or ailment. Topics I've written on include how my husband became my care giver and helps me through my weekly injections, how despite disability I actively kayak, how I continue to work full-time despite my symptoms, how the disease has helped me grow as a writer and even how to travel safely with injectable medicines.

Here are some markets to get you started:

You & Me - Pay not specified - expect 25 cents/word  
<http://www.youandmemagazine.com/pages/submissions> - Seeks first-person perspectives about the human aspects of dealing with all medical issues.

Guideposts - \$100-\$500  
<http://www.guideposts.org/writers-guidelines> - Seeks first-person narratives written in simple, dramatic, anecdotal style with a spiritual point that the reader can "take away" and apply to his or her own life.

Chicken Soup For The Soul - \$200  
<http://www.chickensoup.com> - Seeks inspirational, true stories about ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

Now What? - \$25-\$55  
<http://nowwhat.cog7.org> - Seeks personal experience stories of 1,500 words that show a person's struggle that either led him to faith in Christ or deepened his walk with God.

Full Spirit Magazine - \$750  
<http://www.fullspiritmagazine.com> - Seeks testimonies of 1,000 words on such things as overcoming addictions, personal

limitations, fears and anxieties, false beliefs, and social obstacles.

Self - \$2 /word

<http://www.self.com> - Seeks personal essays of 1,200-2,000 words on topics important to women for the "Self Expression" column.

Women's Health - \$1 /word

<http://www.womenshealthmag.com> - Seeks smart, funny pieces of 1,000 words that will resonate with readers who are between the ages of 25 and 39.

Shape - \$1.50-\$2 /word

<http://www.shape.com> - Seeks real life essays of 600 words that go beyond writing about fitness and are full of personal insight. Has an illness caused you to get in shape or lead a healthier lifestyle?

The Funny Times - \$60

<http://www.funnytimes.com> - Seeks funny stories of 500-700 words about any topic.

BIO

Valerie Benko is a freelance writer from western Pennsylvania. She has been published in Woman's World magazine, multiple Chicken Soup for the Soul anthologies as well as Patchwork Path. Visit her online at <http://valeriebenko.weebly.com> .