

Can You See Your Dreams Come True While Raising Your Kids?

Do you have dreams and talents that you'd like to see develop? Have you always wanted to write a book, or host radio show, or run your own business but you are waiting until "after?" After the kids start school. After the youngest graduates. After life slows down. Dreams fulfilled all start with seeds, and they only grow when planted.

When I was 22-years-old, I decided I wanted to become a published author. The desire was there and the first seed was planted when I attended my first writer's conference. In addition to having great aspirations, I was a mom of three kids. (Yes, I was a teen mom, but that's a different story.) I wondered if I could really accomplish my dreams. The answer was YES!

Over time I watered that dream by writing lots, by attending more conferences, and by seeking out mentors. With watering and tending my dreams grew. My first novel was published in 1999. Currently I'm 44 years old, and I have 55+ books in print.

(I just realized that Palm Sunday weekend is the anniversary of my first writers conference. It's odd to think that I attended Mount Hermon Writers Conference 22-years-ago! I've been pursuing writing for HALF my life! How amazing is that?!)

Dreams+Kids

When I first planted my dream-seeds, I was a stay-at-home mom. I wrote in the mornings, during naps, and at bedtime. The kids were there, and I somehow made the writing work. I hardly watched television, chose one day a week to do all my errands, and I said "no" to many, many things. Choosing to make the

time was hard. The hardest thing was giving myself permission.

Permission to Plant

To follow our dreams, we just need permission. Permission to slow down. Permission to discover our deepest purpose. And permission to follow God-breathed dreams even when we still have kids at home.

I've written books and articles while raising kids, and there are times I've feel guilty for not being able to watch a movie with them. I've felt guilt for we have pizza for dinner ... again.

Then again, I make sure to be a mom first. We sit around the table at dinner. I take time with each child each day. We serve together, and we laugh together. And once I started following God's dreams for me, I've also been an example to my children of what following God-dreams looks like.

Dreams Grow

The most important part of growing dreams is consistency. If you write 30 minutes a day, you can almost finish a book in a year. And it's the same thing about growing our kids, isn't it? Loving, giving, and serving each day makes them into amazing people in the long run.

Kids don't grow overnight. Dreams aren't fulfilled in a day. Give yourself permission to start following your dreams, and before long you'll have a harvest of good things to share.

A note from Tricia:

My newest book is *Planted by Hope*. It's the second book in the Pinecraft Pie Shop series. Here's a short description:

When Hope Miller is offered the plot of land behind the *Me, Myself, and Pie* shop to start a garden, she jumps at the

chance. Finally—some space away from her four sisters! But everyone in town seems to have an opinion about what she should grow and how she should grow it. When the widower schoolteacher, Jonas Sutter, asks if his students at the Amish school can help turn the plot into a community garden, Hope only halfheartedly agrees, wondering if she will ever get the peace and quiet she craves. And will she get anything to grow?

The stories of friendship, community, and unexpected love within these pages will plant real seeds of hope within your heart.

This novel is set in Pinecraft, Florida, where the Amish go for vacation. I was blessed to take my family to Pinecraft twice for research. It's a beautiful place, and it was fun being able to write about it.

What I didn't realize when I first dared to plant my dreams is that my kids would benefit from the harvest. I'm seeing that more and more each day. My writing is something my whole family is thankful for!

Tricia Goyer has written more than 55 books, including both novels that delight and entertain readers and nonfiction titles that offer encouragement and hope. She has also published more than 500 articles in national publications such as Guideposts, Thriving Family, Proverbs 31, and HomeLife Magazine.