



Transcript of the interview with Chris Cade

InscribeYourLife.com

Interviewed by Zura Ledbetter

CreativeClown.com

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THIS TRANSCRIPT IS EDITED AND CONDENSED

This transcript has been condensed and edited to be more easily readable and does not contain the exact text of the entire interview. However, reading the text is no substitute for the value that is gained by hearing the interviewee and interviewer speak because some things are best communicated through your sense of hearing.

Zura Ledbetter:

I'm so happy to introduce our guest today his name is Chris Cade and he's a spiritual author and mentor who runs several websites including Spiritual-Short-stories.com where he shares hundreds of stories written by and for people like you.

Chris is also getting ready to release his first book, "[Inscribe Your Life](#)" which focuses on using creative writing as a tool for self exploration.

Thank you so much for being with us today Chris!

Chris Cade:

Thank you for having me it's good to be here.

Zura Ledbetter:

I want to start with a paragraph that I pulled off your website and it's kind of what inspired me to want to interview you and it says:

"While some of my writing inspiration comes from the books I read and the movies I watch, even more comes from delving deep within myself to understand universal truths. I hope that by reading these spiritual short stories you will find great enjoyment, inspiration, and a reference point for further self reflection."

I wanted you to start out by telling the listeners what spiritual short stories are and how your business and website got started.

Chris Cade:

Basically, there are kind of two ways to look at what spiritual stories are. You can look at either the more common idea of it, which is a story that has a message at the end. It's a parable like Aesop's fables that kind of thing where we learn something from it.

There is another way to view the idea of a spiritual story and that is the process by which you develop the story. Part of what I write about in [my upcoming program](#) is just how to use the process of writing a story, being more open and allowing our experience to drive more of our writing as being kind of a spiritual process to our writing, and so on my website I share both of those stories. Those stories that are written specifically for a message, and then also those stories from people who write for their own spiritual growth and trust the process that results in a story – those kinds of stories I also share at Spiritual-Short-Stories.com and they also have a message, but the process they are created is kind of different.

The way I came to create Spiritual-Short-Stories.com is kind of interesting. It sort of stumbled into my life as a lot of things do. A few years ago my wife had started writing spiritual stories. She was on a spiritual path, and a lot of her writing was really to help work through some things that were coming up in her. She was using it as a spiritual growth tool.

At some point she decided she wanted to share the stories with the world, and she didn't

know how. She knew that the default way to share them was writing a book. We started looking at that and realizing that she mostly wanted to share it with her friends and family. I said the easiest way to do that was to start a website.

I had some web skills so I could do that. So I threw up a [website](#) and then started realizing that other people around the world were writing spiritual stories and also didn't have a place to share them... so [spiritual short stories](#) evolved to include that. Then as time went on I also realized people would love to have kind of a central place to go find inspirational stories and parables and things like that.

So [spiritual short stories](#) became this sort of little community of sharing stories old and new and really connecting people. Somewhere over time, really about last year, I realized that I was starting to feel passionate about this, and I started writing a few of my own stories.

I didn't really think of myself as a writer I just kind of wrote a story and thought, "oh okay I guess I'll share it" but I didn't really identify with being a writer.

I just kept building the website and eventually I realized that this is something I wanted to do. I think more passionately than just a bypassing hobby. I started to really focus on what it takes to make this a reality.

Zura Ledbetter:

That's a great story. Is your website interactive? Do people submit their stories for consideration or can people upload their stories? How does that work?

Chris Cade:

There's a link at the bottom of the footer on the website that says "Submit a story"... that's where anybody can submit their story. whether it's a true one or a fictional one from their own life or just one they found somewhere else on the web or in a book that they want to share with others and they can submit it that way.

There's also [movie](#) and [book](#) reviews for more spiritual and inspirational movies and books, and on those, people can write comments, discuss back and forth their thoughts on the books and movies.

The same thing is true with the stories people can comment and just say what they think, what it meant to them, whether they disagree, if they learned anything. So it's definitely a very interactive site.

There's also a lot of [e-cards](#) that you can send to friends and families with beautiful pictures so there's certainly a lot of ways to connect with the website to other people.

Zura Ledbetter:

Oh, that's great. it really is a community.

Chris Cade:

Yeah that's what I'm trying to build here.

Zura Ledbetter: From that paragraph I read earlier, I'm assuming that somehow for you personally writing these stories is kind of like journaling. Do you journal?

Chris Cade: Your assessment is right. Story writing really is sort of my form of journaling. I've never journaled in the past at least not sort of the "Dear Diary" thing. It just didn't resonate with me, and I think part of that comes down to the fact that most of the time people lean towards journaling and even having a spiritual path, because they have issues or problems or pain that they're trying to work through.

Journaling actually gives them some perspective on it, and so for me I didn't have a lot of that traumatic stuff in my upbringing, so I never felt drawn to seek ways to pull that out so I didn't journal much.

Then as I got a little bit older, as I started exploring the spiritual stories I did start to write some stories that I wasn't really planning on writing. They just sort of came out, and when I look at the stories now I can kind of see what I was going through and some experience and how it was really relating to my life at the time.

So I definitely see a lot of my own experience in the stories and characters that I write. It really has become sort of a different type of journal for me. I think that's really important that people find the outlets that they resonate with the most whether it be writing, poems.

It could just be brainstorming, you know in your case scrapbook type fun, journaling pictures and just letting it be whatever it is for the person. I think that if a person is really open to the concept of what it means to journal then they'll be really surprised, inspired and amazed by what they end up creating from that.

Zura Ledbetter: Can you say a little bit more about being open to that process?

Chris Cade: As a child, we get ideas about how the world works. We know that a wall is a wall. We know who we are. We know what our hand is, and as we get older we start to adopt certain ideas.

"I'm successful" or "I'm a failure" or "I'm good at sports" or "I'm good at writing or journaling." "I'm a good husband, father, daughter, son."

We get all these ideas about what we are and aren't in the world, and that starts to limit us. In my own experience with writing, I said "I'm not a spiritual writer," so guess who never wrote a story for almost his entire life?

Then at some point I wrote a story, and it came out, and I thought "Oh. I'm really good at writing stories about myself. So that's what I'm good at." I let that rest for a while.

Then I wrote a story that I thought was really good which was based on an animal so I thought, “Ok well, I’m really great at writing stories about animals,” and I just kind of kept going through this process of writing a story and then defining what I was now good at. After enough of those, I just realized I can write about anything.

You know there is no limits to the sources of creativity.

The important thing is just to be open and aware. When we walk down the street and we see a dead bird in the street. It might inspire us to think, “I wonder what it’s like to be a bird?” or “I wonder what it’s like to die?” or maybe both, and that may inspire us to write a story or a poem. In that way our entire experience becomes open.

If we’re walking down the street and we just say, “Well I’m really good at writing stories about myself,” we wouldn’t think twice about what we saw about a bird or anything else. By not defining what kind of a creative person we are or what kind of sources can be inspiration for our creativity, we are really enabled to be open to anything in our experience. This is an important topic I expand upon in “[Inscribe Your Life.](#)”

That translates onto the paper because once we’re open to whatever the inspiration is, we’re also open to whatever transpires onto the paper in front of us. As we’re writing, it’s so easy to say “Well I’m writing a story about a person who has a certain set of experiences,” and if we go and sit down and write with that idea in mind, well if the words don’t match that idea then we get frustrated and we get writer’s block and we start feeling like we’re not very good at writing or “this isn’t a good story.”

But instead if we were to sit down and say, “You know what? I’m just going to start writing, and this story is an inspiration. I think that I’d like to write about this trauma and how this person works through it, but we’ll see what happens” and we then just write, and then we see what happens and where the story goes.

Sometimes our mind just jumps in and says, “That doesn’t make sense. How could that be possible?” It’s very easy to get stuck and stopped. But if we say, “You know what, Mind, step aside for a minute, you may be right, might not, but right now I’m just going to see what happens first,” and we finish being open to whatever flows through us, I think that we really can enjoy the process. We can really be a participant instead of almost feeling like we’re competing with our mind, which is what happens when we have these ideas about how or what we should be writing about.

Zura Ledbetter:

I agree. I think that inner fight is something a lot of people who write or do art or any kind of creative processes fight with. It seems to be even, I think Hemingway, I think I read that he had typewriters in every room, and he would go from one typewriter to the other, like trying to run away from that voice in his head, which is a little extreme but it seems to be a universal problem.

Chris Cade:

It is. We all have that inner critic, and it happens so much in other aspects of our life. If we identify with being a good person, then if we do something that doesn't perfectly align with that ideal our little inner critic comes and says, "Oh you're a bad person now." When the reality is, maybe the situation calls for something different than a very strict sense of morals.

A good example would be, you're driving an injured person to the hospital, and you have the choice of driving the exact speed limit or knowing that five more minutes may mean the difference between life and death. Do you choose to go faster than the law allows?

Our inner critic will say, "Don't do that, that's bad." There's usually a deeper part of us that tells us what the truth is. That deeper inner truth will guide us as to whether or not we need to be listening to the inner critic or not.

It's just up to us to have the strength to say, "You know what, Critic, you may have some truth to what you're saying, but right now it's not really helpful. So let's talk about it later."

Zura Ledbetter:

I can see how that would be a challenge. Oh that's good, that's good. I've heard a lot of people say to tell it to "shut up" or whatever but my experience has been it's like it gets louder, and I think what you're saying is true we need to acknowledge it. Don't you agree?

Chris Cade:

Yeah, there are some techniques that I learned some years ago about how to work with that inner critic. It really was applying to changing behaviors, and in this case, the behavior is the inner critic, but we first look at whatever the behaviors that we don't want. Say it's a bad habit that we're trying to break.

We can't sleep very well at night would be a great example, and we're frustrated with this and we're trying to sleep and no matter what we do you just can't sleep. Well there's a really great process of working with ourselves, our critic, that can really help us get past that.

This is not intuitive at all, which is why it can be confusing, but if we first identify all the benefits to not sleeping that can be very helpful, we might notice that we have nightmares that we are trying to avoid. So if we don't go to sleep, we don't have to face the nightmares. We may not like our jobs, so if we don't go to sleep, subconsciously we don't have to associate then with waking up and going to our job.

By identifying first, the reasons why this behavior is beneficial, then we see that what our critic is really trying to do is protect us. That it's really acting from this place of love because it wants to make sure that you're going to be okay. By acknowledging all

the ways it is helping us, then we can say, “Okay well, what’s the new behavior that I want to embody, and how is the critic now keeping me from embodying that?”

In the case of writing, we say “Okay, well my critic was trying to protect me from, ridicule and rejection when people read my story,” but, if instead, I say, “Okay, what are the benefits of my inner critic being quiet for a little while?” Well, then the benefits are: the creativity flows out, I feel I lot happier, more joyful. I enjoy the process.

These types of things come out, and with this perspective we can then go over to our inner critic and say, “You know what, I really appreciate all the protection you’ve done for me. You’ve really helped me from feeling rejected in a time when I was very sensitive. That’s been great. Now I’m changing focus in my life, and you don’t really need to do that anymore, but I know you want to help.”

“Inner critic, what you could really help with is, instead of critiquing while I’m writing, just let the creativity flow. Let’s see everything come out, and when I’m done completely, with my first draft, I want you to jump in there and pick out the grammar errors, pull out the spelling. Let me know what doesn’t make sense because I really do need your help, Inner Critic. I just need it at a different part of the process than you are participating in right now.”

Zura Ledbetter: That’s awesome. I love that, and that works? Does that help you?

Chris Cade: It’s amazing.

Zura Ledbetter: Wow!

Chris Cade: If you remember, from what I just said, the critic is acting out of love. It wants to help. So when we say, “Shut up, get out,” we’re saying “I don’t love you.” We’re rejecting the very thing that’s trying to protect us.

When we just start embracing that and working with it and embody it as a part of us, rather than something outside of us, then we take it on as a partner. Then it really transforms the way we work with our creative aspects.

Zura Ledbetter: That’s wonderful. I think that you have an attitude that I would consider rare among people that I know, and you seem to not have very much judgment on things. You don’t judge things as good or bad or should or shouldn’t. Am I right?

Chris Cade: I would say most of the time that is true, but like everybody, I still do have some of that good/ bad judgment. I think the difference there is that when I experience that good or bad judgment, I step back and look at it and try to understand: “Okay, why do I view this as good or bad?”

You know that whole thing, “there’s always a silver lining?” Well, what if we viewed all of life as having a silver lining? Then there ends up not this good or bad but this kind of openness to experience.

So I certainly do carry a lot less judgment than I have, and in my past I had a lot more judgment that I carried, but now I have become a little less judgmental. I’ve learned to partner more with that inner critic, and that translates into the rest of my life. I certainly do sometimes have moments of judging things good or bad, and I take the time to look at that and understand what’s going on.

Zura Ledbetter:

That makes sense, and I think that’s something a lot of people aspire to, to not be as critical and judgmental. I appreciate you sharing that. When you write, what inspires you? When the muse takes a vacation, how do you get inspired to write?

Chris Cade:

Well, right there you’re talking about the inner critic. The inner critic is saying that either you are or are not a writer at this moment in time, that it’s bad if you’ve stopped writing, and that it’s bad if you have nothing to say.

That’s what we perceive a lot of times when the muse goes away, and I talk about this more in “[Inscribe Your Life](#).” But if we fall back to what I was talking about earlier with being open to the process, then what happens is we write when we feel inspired, and if the inspiration stops, we stop writing and I just set something aside.

I’ve had some stories I’ve written have taken me almost two months to write because I spent a month just letting ideas accumulate. Like I said, walking down the street and getting an idea here and getting an idea there just kind of taking note of it. Then when the time felt right, I sat down and wrote a story and that was a month and a half later.

Then I sat it aside, came back with my inner critic, and said, “What are all things that don’t make sense here?” and went through. A lot of that just becomes the process of writing. By translating that openness and accepting nature we have initially to gathering the creative sources and creative energy, the same thing happens when we write. I just trust that if I’m not feeling inspired to write that’s okay; I don’t need to be writing at any give moment.

In fact, I think that also touches upon our ideas about labels earlier we were talking about. Not only do we get ideas about what’s good or bad or what kind of role we have in life, but we say “I’m a writer.” We sit down to our writing session, and we say, “Well if I’m really a good writer, then I’m going to finish this whole story right now. And the muse will never leave if I am a good enough writer,” but that just sets us up for pain and failure and frustration because we can only be a writer when we’re writing.

We can only be a parent when we’re parenting. We can only be an employee for a company when we’re actually working for that company. When we’re driving, we’re

certainly not a writer. You know, when we're driving, we're not a meditator. That might be a real disaster. The same thing is true of writing.

When we stop writing and the inspiration stops flowing, we have to acknowledge, right now I'm not a writer, for now, and that's okay. Maybe go off and take a nap. Go take a bath, relax, go for a drive, and if you come back and feel like writing again later then you write and if not, then I just trust that I will finish that writing whenever that moment comes up... when I feel like being a writer again.

Zura Ledbetter: That's great. You know because I'm a very visual thinker, I'm getting a visual as you're talking about all of this, and a lot of times creative people talk about thinking outside the box, and what I'm picturing is this box that we put ourselves in, and what you're talking about is just getting rid of this box. We don't have to live inside this box with this label or that label. You said at some point being open, and it's like opening that box and being open to whatever.

Chris Cade: Yeah, definitely. That image really resonates, you know, we've always heard that phrase think outside the box... Well, what you're saying is "think without the box."

Zura Ledbetter: Yeah! There you go, that's it, no box.

Chris Cade: Yeah, "Think without the box." I've never heard that before but I like that.

Zura Ledbetter: Well you just coined it. That's good. The last thing I wanted to ask you is, do you have any insight to share with our listeners about pursuing their dreams? It sounds like you've certainly had a dream and pursued it.

Chris Cade: Yeah that's a very interesting and challenging issue for a lot of us. When I was younger, I saw my dad in the corporate world and saw that the corporate world provided nice security. My dad always encouraged me to go for my dreams, and he also always encouraged me to make sure I had a good paying job for my family.

One quote that really comes to mind is he said "It doesn't matter how much you love your job if your family is starving," and so needless to say, during my childhood he never said you could follow your dreams and actually make money and support your family. That bridge wasn't made there.

So I went through the corporate world, and I have been very successful in the corporate world exactly as I have been raised to be a success at whatever I did. That's my conditioning, and I identified with being a success, and therefore I kept living that out.

That also resulted in me having issues earlier on in life with, you know, feeling like it's not ok to quit or fail or things like that. That was definitely not more of my fun issues

to work through, but that is the flipside. Everyone always views being successful as being a great thing, but if it's being backed by a fear of not being successful, well then it can be just as painful as not being successful and wanting to be.

Anyway, I just went through the corporate world successfully, but I didn't really know what I wanted out of life. I didn't know what my passions were, and as I started developing Spiritual-Short-Stories.com, I started to realize that I enjoyed writing. I enjoyed connecting to people and it started to resonate, and I wanted to make that a lot larger than it was.

As time went on, I actually realized that it was larger than me. My dreams are larger than me or any idea I have of myself, and so right now I really am living that dream. It's not easy sometimes. I still have that conditioning that says I need to have a secure job, and so I work my day job for my forty hour a week day job. I spend some hours in the evening with my wife and son, and then after that, in the evenings, I'm working on spiritual stories and working on helping people with their spiritual path, being a spiritual mentor, and that way building what I would consider my spiritual website and businesses and things like that.

So the way that I'm living my dream is kind of merging both worlds, and it takes a lot. It's not easy having two jobs and a family, but the reality, I know, is that eventually what's going to happen is this night job of the spiritual websites and things is gonna be so much larger than me, that I'm going to have no choice but to quit my day job and go for it.

If my past conditioning is any indicator, then I'll probably jump when I'm about eighty percent certain because anything less than that and I think that there's still some fear there about "Can I make it on my own?" There's that little bit of doubt that wonders "Could I do this?" because I lived a full life of people telling me that I can do anything I want but I can't align it with my creativity.

Now I have to face that every night when I sit down to work, and say "I'm doing this because this is what my soul yearns for, and if I just keep doing it and I keep persisting follow what my dreams are then they will manifest and eventually this whole corporate job and the insecurities that go with wanting to maintain that job will fall way."

Eventually, I know my dream will be what I live... not just in my work but in every moment of my day.

Zura Ledbetter:

You know I've asked that question to several people who I've interviewed, and the thing I'm noticing is that they talk about the inspiration, they talk about the spiritual aspects of it, but everyone talks about the hard work too. I think that's maybe what is missing in some of these messages that you read is that you do have to work even if it's "meant to be" there's still work involved.

Chris Cade:

Yeah and that's a very challenging issue because a lot of times in life we see these examples of rags to riches, and we see people who say they quit their day job to follow their dreams. They were high paid marketing executive or that kind of thing, and they make it look so easy like "Oh you know I did it," but what we don't see is the hard work.

We don't see that when they quit they spent eight hours a day after that working on their dream. We don't see that they spent an hour or two a day crying, working through the pain. Maybe they identified very strongly with being a marketing person, and now they don't know exactly who they are. They just know they feel compelled to be more than what they perceive themselves to be.

A lot of times we don't see there's not just the hard work. There's also emotional work, very deep emotional work, that goes into it that people have to be willing and able to face their fears and challenges, to be able to really embody themselves wholly and bring their holistic self to what it is they want and to bring into the world... their dream.

Zura Ledbetter:

Excellent point. There is the whole emotional thing to it. I'm glad you brought that in. Before we finish here, will you tell us some about your upcoming book?

Chris Cade:

Definitely. It's titled "[Inscribe Your Life](#)", and basically what I'm producing is a program that talks about how to use story writing as a tool for spiritual growth.

There's going to be some bonuses and things like that. Basically, if you sign up for the list, then I'm giving away a bunch of free gifts.

So I'll be giving away those gifts, and then I'm going to be giving away a lot of free content. This interview actually may be something I share with the people because I think it would be really valuable to those who are interested in how to use writing as a tool for spiritual growth. I'm going to be sharing some more, maybe some chapters from the [guidebook](#). Just a lot of free stuff just to kind of get people interested and excited about what's going on and really let them get a feel for what the program is about.

Often we see people selling things and they're trying so hard to sell but they're not thinking about if what they're trying to sell is a good fit for their audience. A big part of what I'm going to be doing is just spending time letting people get as much free stuff as they can to see if [this program](#) is something that's going to resonate with them.

I encourage people to [sign up](#), get lots of free stuff, and when the day for the program goes on sale, if you feel compelled to buy it, great, and if not then enjoy all the free stuff because I know you're going to learn a lot just in the experience of it.

Zura Ledbetter: Oh that's great. Thank you so much for being with us today Chris. This was very interesting, and I do appreciate it.

Chris Cade: Thank you very much for having me.