

If your heart is prompting you to tell your story – whether for yourself, your family, or others – it's time to bring your words into existence. If you are feeling trepidation starting to write, try thinking about yourself as a story teller rather than an author.

Memoirs are a slice of life, stories from your life, but not the entire account of your life. They usually center on a specific time in which something significant happened. When we write memoir, we go on a journey of discovery – of awareness, acceptance, understanding, and sometimes healing. Memoir is a search for self, but memoir is not the attempt to answer who am I but who am I in this story.

Writing memoir can be a journey deep into the heart. It's a journey into the past, and sometimes that's a past we would rather forget, one that holds pain.

You've got a story in you – but how do you extract it? If you are having trouble getting started, if you're blocked, or if you're looking for a way to kickstart your creative engine, this class is for you. Or if you already have started writing and want a safe place to continue to explore your memories, this is the class for you. You will get verbal prompts, images, and advice to get you started.

Write to discover

Write to heal

Write to reinvent

Life, after all, isn't lived in a linear fashion, so why should stories be written from beginning to end without a few asides, reflections, meanderings?

Writing will help you record your valuable experiences and memories for yourselves, your families, or posterity.

There is one rule: There are no rules. Break the rules. ([youcanwriteit.com](http://youcanwriteit.com))

Has a piece of art ever brought you to tears? Describe the work and your feelings.

Who was your second love?

After everything I went through, the most important lesson I learned was...

Do not write for payback or vengeance.

Do not write to wallow in pain. The place to vent, rage, whine, or wallow is in private-through journaling, where you can privately express these tumultuous feelings without bringing them into existence in the world of other humans.

There is a difference between wallowing and bearing witness. Think of yourself in the role of storyteller as the mature self that bears witness to the events of your life instead of as the victim who has been

wronged and deserves retribution or pity. Prepare your mind and heart to tell the story from a sacred and safe place. In that way you will best reach the hearts of your readers.

What is your motivation for writing? Why do you feel compelled to tell this story at this time? "My ideal reader will be someone who..."

When we write our stories, we want to tell the truth. It can be challenging to dig into your memories and hearts and face our fears and failures, yet being brutally honest is what will cause reader not only to empathize but draw inspiration and courage for their own situation.

What are some of your deep fears about telling the truth of my story? What is the worst that might happen, and can I live with that?

"If I wasn't so afraid, I would tell you about the time when..."

Make a list of the ten or so key moments you will highlight in your memoir (a brief phrase or sentence for each). Set them out as they come to you, in random order – then in the order that they occurred.

Every memoir needs a theme to be the glue that holds your story together. It should infuse every chapter you write, whether strong in the forefront or subtle in the background. Always keep sight of it. It's the thread that weaves through your entire memoir and ties all the chapters together.

What important lessons have you learned from your experiences that you want to convey in your memoir?