

"I have met many [people] who think they can't be writers because their lives aren't interesting enough to write about. This is simply untrue. Everyone's life is mysterious, beautiful, stunning magic. It doesn't matter if you've lived in the same town your whole life or traveled around the world seven times. What matters is your ability to open up to the breathtaking and spectacular adventure that happens to be your life. Your job is to experience it, see it, feel it, live it, and write it down."

---Leslea Newman

The Writer's Journey is not a critique group in which we polish finished pieces. Rather, it is a class in which we use the day to create new material. We alternate periods of writing with learning to listen to each other-not from a place of judgment or analysis-but from a place of focused attention and deep acceptance.

The morning begins with an explanation of writing practice, the technique we will use throughout the day. Afterwards I'll give a writing suggestion; we'll open our notebooks and begin to write. Throughout the day, we'll do a series of timed writings on a wide variety of topics. Writing is interspersed with reading out loud and focused listening to each other.

Rather than critiquing each other's work, *The Writer's Journey* creates a space in which you can feel free to share "the worst writing in America" as well as your most deeply moving work. Together, we will learn to separate out the creator from the critic, an essential part of freeing the voices within us.

Important Information You'll Need to Know

What to Bring: Writing is physical and is affected by the equipment we use. Please bring a bound notebook. A cheap spiral notebook or school composition book is fine. Don't get too fancy or expensive. Lots of people buy big hardbound journals and never write in them. They freeze up because they feel they can only put "good" writing in them.

Along with your notebook, bring several fast-flowing pens. Ballpoints, felt-tips and pencils tend to be slow. Try a rolling writer or a gel pen.

Even if you are used to writing on a laptop, I suggest you use the old-fashioned way during our class. A different connection is made with the brain and the heart when you use your hand to write. If this presents a hardship for you, I will gladly accommodate your use of a computer.

Recommended Reading: Natalie Goldberg's *Writing Down the Bones* is the inspiration for this class. I suggest you familiarize yourself with it before the class.

Lunch: Please bring a bag lunch that includes everything you need to eat and drink.

Room Temperature: The rooms at Cabrillo can have erratic temperature and the thermostats cannot be adjusted on the weekend. A couple of times when I taught this workshop, it was extremely cold in the

room. Another time, it was hot. I recommend layers, definitely with something warm if you tend to feel chilly.

Being on Time: We will be starting promptly so please come on time. However, if something comes up and you're running late, I'd rather you come late than not at all. If you're delayed and arrive during a period of writing or reading, come in quietly, saving your greetings or explanations for later. Rather than interrupt the group to ask what we're doing, observe quietly and join in the best you can. I'll fill you in as time allows.

Thanks again for joining us and making a commitment to your own creativity. I'm looking forward to seeing you.

- Laura Davis

"The role of the writer is not to say what we can all say, but what we are unable to say." - Anai's Nin