

Welcome to Writing Womanhood!

I love to tell the story of how I came to teach writing. You may hear me tell the story in class. You might read about it in my book. It is a story of light-bulb inspiration, white-knuckle determination, synchronicity, serendipity, chance. It is also a story of taking a first step—any step, no matter how small. The world famous mythologist Joseph Campbell believed that if you follow your heart doors will open where before there were none. In other words, one step always leads to the next. This is how mountains are scaled, deserts are crossed, whole journeys are made.

Congratulations! You just took your first step. You signed up for my class. Now your journey begins. As you set out, let me be your guide. More than a teacher, I see myself as a writer and a woman on my own journey. Periodically, I welcome passengers on board. Sometimes they paddle or help steer; other times they sit back and let me point out the sights. Then, around the next bend, they disembark and continue on their own way. I invite you now to climb on board and travel with me through the first stretch of Writing Womanhood.

On the first day of class you will receive a course overview detailing everything you'll need to know for the weeks ahead. So don't worry. But here are a few tips to help make your arrival more comfortable.

Arrive on time. I will start class promptly, so please make every effort each week to arrive on time, a few minutes early if you can. That said, I understand that as women we do not always have control of our schedules. Much better to come late than not at all.

Wear comfortable clothes. Class is a dynamic mix of lecture and discussion, storytelling and sensory exercises, large and small group activities, writing and reading aloud (voluntary). Be prepared to *move*. You will quickly discover that writing harnesses both mind and body.

Dress in layers. The temperature inside the classroom can be variable. Besides, some days we may choose to write outside.

Bring paper and pen. Just grab whatever you have, as I will walk you through the steps of buying your first Woman's Notebook. And don't stress if you swore off paper and pen long ago. In the weeks ahead, we will discuss the many advantages of writing by hand.

Buy my book (optional). In my book, *Writing Motherhood*, I outline many of the methodologies I teach in class, so you might want to pick up a copy, even if you're not a mom. You can buy it (used or new) on Amazon, or from me in class (\$20 cash or check).

That's it for now. All you need to do is come to class with an open mind and a soft heart. Leave the rest to me.

Lisa Garrigues