

Writing Tips: The Path of Memoir Writing by Linda Joy Myers

Memoir writing is about finding the story, digging, reflecting, and pondering. It is also about writing what comes up, wandering through story ideas and story lines, not knowing where we are going. We find nuggets along the way..

Turning points

- Sometimes we have stood at a crossroads, wondering what path to take. Robert Frost talks about taking the road less traveled. What were five or ten major turning points in your formation as a person?
- How did you change in response to these events? Write this in some detail (the before and after story).
- Who are you now as a result?
- Or have you left those traits behind and gathered others in your path of self-development (more turning points to add to your list).

Consciousness

Memoir is also about exploring the contents of our psyches (especially our conscious and unconscious motivation as we have journeyed through life. Stream of consciousness writing is a powerful practice: do a period of writing without censoring anything that flows from your pen. Poetry and brief sketches are other ways to track the inner, deeper part of the story.

- How did the events and people that you write about influence the choices you made in life on a deeper level (your philosophy of life, decisions you made such as: "I'll always..." and "I'll never...")
- A way to track the inner, unconscious story is to write about a dream, or to just free write.
- Write a prayer or wish.

These murky memories and parts of yourself can be approached from the dark side as well with such questions as:

- How would you change your fate if you could change one thing that happened in your life?
- What did you wish for that didn't turn out the way you wanted?
- What decisions along your path would you do differently now that you are older and know what you know?
- What did you learn about these choices that you might not have learned otherwise?

About Linda Joy Myers

<http://www.memoriesandmemoirs.com>

Linda Joy Myers, Ph.D., author of *Becoming Whole: Writing Your Healing Story*, is president of the California Writers Club, Marin branch, and vice president of the Women's National Book Association, SF. Her memoir *Don't Call Me Mother* won first prize at the Jack London Writing Contest. A therapist and a writing coach, Myers teaches memoir writing in the SF Bay Area through Writing Salon and her own business, Memories and Memoirs. She speaks about the healing power of memoir writing at conferences and workshops nationally.