



GET WRITING NOW!

A Five-Step Guide to Discover Your Best Writing Ever

by Michèle Gunderson



Creative writing can be fun, and it's easier to do than you might think. It can include many forms of writing, from published novels to imaginative emails, from poems and autobiographies to the animated stories we tell our children or roommates after dinner. All it takes is jotting down your words on the page.

Even if you don't yet call yourself a writer, know that you are one. And through your own unique words, you have a great gift to share with others.

Whether you have published numerous books or you just want to share a few stories with relatives and friends, or you're writing in a private journal that is for your eyes only, this guide will help you get your creative juices flowing.

Here's how to get started:

STEP 1: Freewriting

Take out a pencil and paper and begin to write. Write whatever comes to mind, without stopping. Keep the pen to the page and don't listen to that little voice in your head that tells you that this process is silly or that the words that are coming to you aren't good enough.



Trust the process. Know that when you write whatever comes, your writing always has roots – they are words that will matter to you when you return to them later on and learn to spot the places that shimmer for you.

When you just keep writing, your writing will be fresh for you and eventually, your readers as well. The writing you do in this way comes from that place inside you that matters.

STEP 2: Discover writing prompts everywhere

A writing prompt is something that gives you a place to begin writing. If you're not sure where to start, simply look at whatever is in front of you – an empty coffee cup, the chipped leg of a table, a polished wooden floor. Use your senses – whatever you can see, smell, taste, touch, and hear around you. Begin there.

Or perhaps you'll write from what's inside your head – that works too. It might be a flash of memory from your tenth birthday party – the time your brother splattered cake all over the floor and your mother burst into tears, or started laughing for the first time in months.



Know that there are writing prompts everywhere. Begin with whatever is on your mind. Begin with the objects in front of you. Begin with the best advice your mother ever gave you.

Whatever you do, simply begin. Know that it's exactly the right place for you right now.

STEP 3: Create space for your writing

Now that you have begun the process of writing, you can find a way to do it again.

Think about where you'd most like to write – is there a comfy chair in the corner of your basement where you like to curl up, alone and undisturbed? Or would you rather write in a busy café where you can experience the buzz and whirl of people around you, smell that fine dark coffee or that freshly baked sourdough bread?

Let your writing spot be a place where you feel nurtured – where you feel safe and comfortable.



Then decide on a regular time to write. It doesn't matter how long this writing time is – it's more important that you simply commit to yourself and your writing, whether it's five hours a day or once a week for five minutes.

Take this time for you – make an appointment with your creative self and keep it, just as you would with your best friend.

STEP 4: Learn about the craft of writing

There are many places you can learn about the craft of writing. Even the idea of craft may have your mind scurrying to the corners of the room, looking for an exit. Perhaps the thought of improving your writing conjures up a teacher who told you that you couldn't write or that you weren't living up to your potential. Or maybe you remember being disappointed when someone didn't really hear your words.

But it doesn't have to be this way.

When we begin writing from the heart, as we do in the steps above, there is always gold in the writing. Then we can learn about how to make that gold shine.



If you're writing a novel, for example, think about what makes a character believable in the books you love to read. What makes you want to find out what will happen to them? Why do you care about their fate? Start with the stories you love and be curious about them. What makes them work for you?

There are so many ways to learn about the craft of writing. You can take an on-line course or search the web for information; you can check out ezine articles in your preferred area of writing, or you can get together with friends to form a writing group.

Whenever you are learning about the craft of writing, it should make you want to write more rather than less. Anything that makes you think you are not a writer – let it go. Follow up on the resources that encourage and support you. When you feel like writing more, you're on the right track.

STEP 5: Go for sloppy success

One of my teachers, Alex Mandossian, says “sloppy success is better than perfect mediocrity.” This applies to your writing process as well.



Don't try to get it perfect the first time. Let yourself be free, enjoy the process, and know that you can always revisit your writing and play with the words on the page.

If you use a computer, you can save old drafts, so you don't have to worry about losing what you've already created. You can always go back to an earlier draft.

After leaving the writing alone for a while, let yourself play with the words on the page the way you'd play with a sandcastle or a sculpture. Add a bit here, take some away there – keep what sparkles for you, whatever draws you in.

You can get a trusted friend to help you. But don't leap to this step too soon. And know that some of the words that that voice in your head insist you delete may be the very words that touch your friend's heart.

Take your time. Let it be fun. See what the piece wants to be – is it a story? a poem? the lyrics to a song? There are many ways to play with your words.



CONCLUSION

Congratulations! You have begun your writing journey. I wish you many happy hours of writing.... May you enjoy the wonderful feeling of allowing your own unique words to flow onto the page.

Namaste,
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P.P.S. Don't forget that my website has lots of information to help you continue your writing journey. You can sign up for my free ezine and learn about other resources for your writing journey at www.LanguageofYoga.com.