

Writing the Self:
Some 10-minute writing prompts to release your words
(from Natalie Goldberg's *Old Friend from Far Away* 2007)

Instructions: *Read the prompt; Go! Ten minutes!*

What have you held onto too long?

Was there a time you tried to be perfect?

What have you waited a long time for?

What's been on your mind? What have you carried and gnawed over?

What I really want to say is....

What are you not willing to reveal?

I remember...

Write a letter to your 'internal editor'...

I write because....

Monday mornings make me feel...

***Write what disturbs you, what you fear, what you have not been willing to
speak about. Be willing to be split open***

Natalie Goldberg

Inspiration and Resources for your Writing

Natalie Goldberg's *First Thoughts* method

- Keep your hand moving
- Don't cross out
- Don't worry about spelling, punctuation, grammar
- Lose control
- Don't think. Don't get logical
- Go for the jugular

'The Six-Minute Write' (Gillian Bolton)

For a full overview, guidance and examples, see Bolton 2014.

This is a "fluid and open way of thinking aloud on the page; as such it cannot go wrong" (Bolton 2014: 26). This is quiet, peaceful writing for at least six minutes, uninterrupted, alone, writing without stopping, 'following the flow' rather than any logic.

Recommended reading

Bolton, G. (2014) *The Writer's Key: Introducing Creative Solutions for Life*, London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers (*outlines the 'six-minute write' with exercises for practice*)

Bolton, G. (2010) *Write Yourself: Creative Writing and Personal Development*, London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Bolton, G. (2010) *Reflective Practice: Writing & Professional Development*, 3rd ed., London: Sage

Bolton, G, Field, V and Thompson, K. (2006) *Writing Works. A resource handbook for therapeutic writing workshops and activities*, London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Brandeis, Gayle (2002) *Fruitflesh: seeds of inspiration for women who write*, New York: Harper Collins

Cameron, Julia (1995) *The Artist's Way: A course in Discovering and Recovering your Creative Self*, Macmillan

Cameron, Julia (2002) *Walking in this World: Practical Strategies for Creativity*, London: Rider Books

Chavis, Geri G. (2011) *Poetry and Story Therapy: the healing power of creative expression*, London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Goldberg, Natalie (1986, 2016) *Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within*, Boston: Shambhala Publications

Hynes & Hynes Berry (2012) *Biblio/Poetry Therapy The Interactive Process: A Handbook*, St Cloud: North Star Press

Mazza, Nicholas (2016) *Poetry Therapy. Theory and Practice*, 2nd ed., Routledge

Wright, Jeannie (2018) *Reflective Writing in Counselling and Psychotherapy*, 2nd ed., London: Sage

Organisations and links

Lapidus, The writing for wellbeing organisation: <http://www.lapidus.org.uk/>

International Academy for Poetry Therapy: <https://iapoetry.org/>

National Association for Poetry Therapy (NAPT): <http://poetrytherapy.org/>