

Your Writing Life

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5. Ideas for Writing from Your Own Life

Your life can be a significant source of ideas for your writing. After all, your life is unique, and you have experiences and perspectives that are one of a kind that are worth sharing with others. You also have experiences and perspectives that others will relate to and will be happy (and even relieved) to read and to know they aren't alone. Either way, share your life! Here are some suggestions — and space at the end to add your own ideas, too. Carry on!

Look at comments and reviews people make on your blog posts, social media, and your print and e-materials, too. Think about conversations you have with people, individually or in groups; what interests them about what you have to say? What do they agree (or disagree with)? What do they want to know more about? What kind of writing could their comments and reviews lead to?

Look for themes that run through all your different writings and through all your life experiences. What do they show you are passionate about? What kinds of expertise do you have to share? How could you use your passions and expertise to jump-start your writing and writing-related activities?

How can you use your life experiences which you have already written about informally—in letters, in diaries or journal entries, on your blog, in family stories you’ve recorded for your grandchildren, and so on—to develop fictional stories, write a memoir, or use as anecdotes to personalize and illustrate your nonfiction writing and make it relatable to your audience?

How else can you use your life experiences and perspectives—including your writing life thus far – to develop your present and future writing life? Try to think of at least 5 or 6 ideas, and jot them down here:

Putting your notes into practice:

Choose one idea you’ve recorded above, and immediately—yes, right now—sit down and write a story, poem, article, one scene play, photo essay, tweet or status (or whatever format you wish, though for now, stick to a short form) that is inspired by the idea you’ve chosen. Self-edit it, and then PUBLISH it within the next 24 hours on whatever platform is suitable: your blog, social media platform, local newspaper, newsletter, email, or even on the community bulletin board at your library, school, or local supermarket. There! Wasn’t that fun and inspiring? YOU are inspiring! Write on!

Don’t forget to place this exercise in your “Writing Life” binder or Duotang.