

## 10 Ways To Nurture Yourself While Writing



### **1. Slow Down**

Today's writer wears many hats. We are scribes, entrepreneurs, workshop and thought leaders, public speakers, social media experts, publicists, publishers, teachers, coaches, editors, partners, caregivers, and more. It's easy to get overwhelmed. But here's the good news: it's impossible to become overwhelmed when you reside in the present moment. Overwhelm is a result of projecting your thoughts into the future and imagining you can't or won't get everything you want (or think you need to do) done. In order to reside in the present moment you must slow down. Ironically, slowing your pace, doing less, enables you to do more. It's counterintuitive, but try it and you'll see that it's true.

### **2. Retreat To Your Sanctuary**

If you don't have a place in your home designed for relaxation, create one. You don't need a lot of space; surrounding yourself with things that comfort you and make you feel cared for is enough. A few years ago, I renovated my bedroom, transforming it from the most neglected room in my house to a blissful relaxation sanctuary. I wear earplugs to savor silence, and I have a lavender-scented eye pillow for when I want to shut out light and relieve the pressure between my eyes. I sometimes listen to music, or guided meditations, and have declared this space a work-free zone.

### **3. Meditate**

A lot of people are confused about what meditation is. In part that's because there are as many ways to meditate as there are people in this world. The important thing is to remain open, receptive, and *present*. Sometimes I do seated meditations with my legs crossed underneath me with one hand on my belly and the other on my heart. Sometimes I plant my feet on the floor and imagine I'm connected to the earth and sky by a thick cord running through the base of my spine and up through the top of my head. Sometimes I

follow my breath. Other times I imagine my body filled with golden light. Sometimes I chant, or sing, or hum, or speak gibberish, all the while listening and trying to connect with the “me” that is *other* than my body or my mind. Sometimes I do a dancing meditation, or I walk. What matters when you meditate is your intention to connect and take yourself as deeply as possible into your essence. There are multiple points of access, and taking the time to give yourself this simple gift will work wonders.

#### **4. Keep a Journal**

Writing slows us down; after all, we can only write one word at a time. Writing in your journal can be like lifting the lid off a pressure-cooker to release steam. It’s also a great way to connect with Source energy. I have conversations with myself in my journal, using different colored ink for different voices. I give voice to my fears, my guilt, my shame, my confusion, and my joy—whatever emotions arise. Often, I’m not clear what’s present inside until I start scribbling. Taking the time to check in with yourself through journal writing will save time in the long run. You will have a clearer sense of what you’re doing and why. You will also feel connected, and a connected person is a happier one.

#### **5. Practice Yoga**

Even if you think you’re not the yoga type, consider trying it out. Not all yoga is intense, like Bikram Yoga, which is done in a heated room. Not all yoga involves strenuous postures only lean, flexible bodies can assume. Many yoga studios now offer classes designed for rest and relaxation, like Yin Yoga, Restorative Yoga, Therapeutic Yoga, or Slow Yoga. I recently took a “Breathe & Stretch” yoga class. The pace was almost too slow at first, but by the end of the session, which I’d started in a frazzled state, I felt centered and calm. By focusing your attention on your body, yoga relaxes your mind, which is especially helpful for those of us who live in our heads.

#### **6. Move Your Body**

Find other ways to move your body. Have you heard that expression, “Sitting is the new smoking”? While that may sound extreme, movement is vital for health and happiness, especially for writers who sit in their chair for hours at a stretch. When I’m writing, I’m like a dog with a bone, except I don’t drag it around—*it* drags me—straight to my office chair where I sit for hours. I find it difficult to switch gears and move my body. But I’m always happy when I do! Try doing a mental scan of your body to see where you’re holding tension—and then let that body part move. Roll your head to release the tension in your neck. Stretch, shimmy, and shake. It doesn’t matter what you look like. No one’s watching. If you’re feeling game, go for a walk. Put on music and dance. Go to the gym. Play softball. It doesn’t matter what you do, as long as you move your body! Writing benefits from physical activity.

#### **7. Ask “How” Questions**

Most people ask “why” questions. We think if we can figure out *why* things are the way they are, we can create change. But there are many things we’ll never understand, no matter how often we ask “why”. And sometimes asking a “why” question is like spinning

your wheels in mud—we go deeper into our dilemma. Consider creating and releasing into the Universe a “how” question, like:

- “How can I get all my work done while remaining calm and peaceful inside?”
- “How can I show up responsibly as a writer and entrepreneur while honoring my own spirit?”
- “How can I take exquisite care of myself while writing, teaching, coaching, and managing my business?”

If you slow down, listen, and trust yourself and the Universe, the answers will come.

### **8. Say “Yes” To Your Inner Writer**

It’s likely there are voices inside your head that list all sorts of reasons why you shouldn’t write. This is your fear talking. Doubts are common for all writers. The trick is not to let them stop you. This starts with not buying into what those voices are saying. Those voices are just thoughts. You can choose *not* to believe them. It’s one thing to *have* a thought, and quite another to invest your “belief dollars” in them. Don’t do it. If you have the urge to write, it’s your soul talking. It’s your ego that’s afraid. It’s okay to have your fear, just don’t make it the sovereign of your inner kingdom. Don’t bow down to it. Don’t take orders from it. Choose instead to crown your faith and desire to write. Keep saying yes to your inner writer.

### **9. Quit Striving**

Be where you are. It’s fine to have ambition. Most writers do. But take time to dig underneath your striving. See if you can get to the bottom of it. What motivates your striving? Do you work hard because you’re trying to prove something to someone? Do you feel “less than” in some way? Do you think if you could just do, or write (fill in the blank) that everything would be better in your world? This is an illusion. Nothing you do or say will magically make everything better. Growth is a slow and steady process. Although an epiphany may occur in an instant, it’s generally the result of hours, months, or even years of searching leading up to that moment. Your job is to show up and do your work—and then let go. Outcomes are out of your control. Know what you can and cannot control. Accept where you are. This is an act of profound self-honoring, and you will save yourself a lot of suffering if you relinquish that which is beyond your control and embrace yourself with open arms right where you are.

### **10. Please Yourself**

If you slow down and listen to your inner dialogues, you may be amazed by the amount of finagling and jockeying for position is going on. You may find that much of what you say and do springs from an unconscious inner desire to please others. What would happen if you worked as hard to please yourself? I tell my students and clients to write for themselves first. Later, it’s imperative to think seriously about your reader, to provide what they need from you in order to get everything they can from your work. But when starting a new project, be selfish. Allow everything that comes. Invite delight and surprises. Tell yourself the story you want to hear. Chances are if your writing tickles your own fancy it will do the same for others.

I love talking about writing, creative expression, personal transformation, and growth. Please reach out to me if you have a project you'd like to begin, develop, or complete. I love to work with creative people who aren't sure what their project is, too. Perhaps you have a wisp of an idea, or a hankering to write. That's great. I can help you breathe life into what wants to be expressed through you. As a midwife of stories, I help birth creative work. What's pressing against your belly longing to be born?

