

# Sustain the Weary with Words: Writing for Healing

APCE Workshop 2023 with Julie Hester | Writing in Company

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“The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to ***sustain the weary with a word***. Morning by morning he wakens—wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught.”

—Isaiah 50:4

## A Few Resources for Writers + Leading Writing Workshops

### Books to help you write and/or guide a writing group

- [Writing Alone and with Others](#) by Pat Schneider
- [How the Light Gets In: Writing as a Spiritual Practice](#) by Pat Schneider
- [Farther Along: The Writing Journey of Thirteen Bereaved Mothers](#) by Carol Henderson
- Natalie Goldberg’s Books, especially [Writing Down the Bones](#), see also her [Writing Down the Bones Deck: 60 Cards to Free the Writer Within](#)
- [Julia Cameron’s books](#): *The Artist’s Way*, *The Right to Write*, *The Sound of Paper*
- Read and reread good writers that inspire you—on my list are: Annie Dillard, Frederick Buechner, Anne Lamott, Barbara Brown Taylor, and more.

### More Resources I Use for Prompts

- [Writing in Company](#) Free weekly writing prompts and encouragement from me
- [Devotions: The Selected Poems of Mary Oliver](#)
- [Poetry Unbound: 50 Poems to Open Your World](#) by Pádraig Ó Tuama and the podcast
- Online poetry resources: the [Poetry Foundation](#), the [Academy of American Poets](#), [Poetry Daily](#), [Poetry 180](#), [Read Poetry tweetspeak](#)
- For short essays/prose pieces: [Stone Gathering](#), [Riverteeth Journal](#), Ross Gay's [The Book of Delights](#)
- Poems, prayers, prompts, and inspiration: [a hundred falling veils](#) from Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer, [The Weekly Pause](#) from James Crews, [The Isolation Journals with Suleika Jaouad](#), [Black Liturgies](#) from Cole Arthur Riley
- Prompts are everywhere—keep your eyes and ears open!



## Praying

It doesn't have to be  
the blue iris, it could be  
weeds in a vacant lot, or a few  
small stones; just  
pay attention, then patch

a few words together and don't try  
to make them elaborate, this isn't  
a contest but the doorway

into thanks, and a silence in which  
another voice may speak.

— *Mary Oliver*

## Practices for Writing in Company

- We use this space and time as a gift to ourselves.
- We follow our thoughts on the page.
- We write from memory and imagination.
- When others share, we listen generously, for what is strong or memorable.
- When we share, we trust our words to say what matters without disclaimers.
- We can care about each other while we take care of ourselves.
- We keep confidentiality.



## Writing as a Spiritual Practice

In Writing to Wake the Soul, Karen Hering says you can have moments of spiritual awakening "...now and then, with some good fortune...without adhering to a spiritual practice, just as you can happen upon a patch of wild blueberries and enjoy a trailside treat. But if you want to harvest enough berries for jam (and year-round enjoyment), you'll either want to cultivate your own blueberry patch or you'll need to know how and where to find the most plentiful ones growing near your home. And you'll want to bring a pail."

## How can I help you and your group use your words?

I'm available to consult as you plan a workshop, or help lead one with or for you.

Past workshop topics include:

- Writing from the Heart
- Playing with Words
- Writing for Remembrance & Healing
- Pen & Paper: Learning to Pray Again
- Writing as a Spiritual Practice
- Writing for Resilience
- Writing through Loss and Change
- Advent/Lenten Writing
- Writing toward Wholeness
- Writing through Grief

Find me at [juliehester.com](http://juliehester.com) + subscribe to my weekly prompts at Writing in Company.

