

Writing Down Your Soul: How to Activate and Listen to the Extraordinary Voice Within

Janet Conner

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After the traumas of an abusive marriage, Janet Conner began spilling her emotional turmoil and fear onto the page. Conner came to experience an inner voice of wisdom answering her questions on the page, supporting her in facing her fears, healing relationships, and trusting a divine connection. By sharing the founding moments of this amalgam of prayer, meditation, and psychotherapy, Conner embodies the possibilities that great good can come from deep grief and troubles.

It takes very little to begin the process, as she outlines in the section called "What Do I Need?" In the chapter, "Why Write," Conner shares current research that explores the connection between emotional release and the benefits of writing. The heart of the book is the section titled, "How Do I Write Down My Soul?" At more than 130 pages, it might benefit from additional demarcations to make more visible chapter or section headers so readers can readily see where they are in the process. The four steps: "Show up; Open Up; Listen Up; Follow Up," are very simple. The key to their success is in the "Write Down Your Soul" boxed writing exercises throughout. These are starting points for sincere reflection. This section includes worksheets to create an "I De-serve" plan. Workshop participants' stories as well as the author's own journey add depth and richness.

The core of the process for those willing to put pen to paper, are the productive questions to initiate the listening process so critical to accessing that inner voice. Concluding, Conner notes, "...dialogue with the Voice is a joyful, soul-lifting, soul-expanding adventure." In closing, she includes favorite books and resources, a thirty-day writing log, and side-by-side comparison between her process and "journaling." For readers who resonate with the possibilities in Conner's question—"Did I tell you that questions are magic that activates the Voice?"—and the writing and spirituality sections that these readers haunt, all will welcome this fine and timely contribution.

BOBBYE MIDDENDORF (February 13, 2009)

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