



Writing In Flow: Keys To Enhanced Creativity

Susan K. Perry

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The term “flow” describes a state of mental absorption in which a person’s mind is so focused on a task that he or she loses awareness of both self and time. Or as writer Richard Jones describes it: “When I’m in flow, all of a sudden I’m going somewhere and I have no idea where.” David St. John calls it a “realm of timelessness, that ... really is becoming part of some pulse, other than yourself.” Flow is best understood metaphorically, rather than in complex psychological jargon, which Perry avoids in her new book *Writing In Flow*.

Writing In Flow is a detailed look at flow and writing, with the aim of helping readers learn to access and benefit from the flow state. Perry, who has a Ph.D. in social psychology and teaches psychology and writing at Woodbury University, researched and interviewed more than seventy-five writers (both published and not) on their experiences with flow. Throughout the book, she uses their own words. Even for someone not interested in the psychology of flow, Perry’s book is a fascinating and telling look into the very real habits of writers. *Writing In Flow* also includes writing tips, Perry’s own and those of other writers, along with descriptions of the things writers can do to foster an environment in which flow is likely to occur.

The good news that Perry offers is that anyone can learn to enter flow more often and that there is not only one way to be in flow. There are as many descriptions of flow states and how they’re entered as there are writers. By seeing all the myriad and quixotic ways that writers write, this book can help readers recognize the common elements of flow so they can learn to do and trust what works for them. The bad news is that Perry’s suggestions on learning to write in flow aren’t quick and easy. Writing still comes down to writing. If one is already motivated to write, Perry’s book can help.

NAVA HALL (July / August 1999)

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