



Writing with Your Ever-Present Muse: 75 Catalytic Reads, Wisdom Pockets, and Living Experiments

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Writing with Your Ever-Present Muse is a self-help workbook designed to guide writers to a place of deeper authenticity, power, and confidence.

Writers seeking inspiration will appreciate the playful and engaging creative exercises found in *Writing with Your Ever-Present Muse*, from writing coach Edith Friesen.

The book includes seventy-five short exercises, meant to be worked through “sequentially, leisurely, and completely.” They are divided into five sections: page, journey, process, theater, and voice. Each exercise includes a brief reading to experience, a thought to consider, and a writing prompt to try. The prompts encourage attuning to something personal; focusing on something specific; writing for seven minutes; reading the resulting work aloud to find what resonates; and unfolding into deeper awareness through the process.

The prompts are designed to awaken boldness and to help participants enter into the flow of creative energy. They promote relaxation and awareness of the vastness beyond the conventional mind, helping to hone individual writers’ voices through brief, descriptive depictions of the emotional, psychic, and sensual experience of writing. Each prompt covers a two-page spread, enabling engagement with it as a full experience. This sparse design helps with focusing on the book, and on the writing it prompts, without distractions.

Some of the prompts and readings verge mystical. The audience is asked to “melt into the warm void of the empty page” and to “sense [themselves] transmitting timeless truth, emerging from a source beyond words,” but without advice on the specifics of doing so. One entry describes dancing with the elements in order to “flex and flow with each rhythm, each type of energy, until there is no outside or inside.” In such moments, the text is a guidebook to the territory of the muse, describing how one might approach muses and understand them. Curiosity, engagement, and exploration are necessary for this work to be effective.

The pitfalls that writers might experience are also addressed. The book includes warnings about perfectionism, cynicism, comparison, imbalance, and feelings of being special. These “ouches” are analyzed and healed through the same process of exploration and experimentation, reading, reflecting, and short bursts of writing exemplified elsewhere in the book.

With the goal of making the writing process easier and its words more powerful, *Writing with Your Ever-Present Muse* is a self-help workbook designed to guide writers to a place of deeper authenticity, power, and confidence in their work, and in their notions of what it means to be a writer.

SARAH WHITE (June 11, 2020)

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