

Authentic Writing that Changes Lives

Peter Lundell, D.Miss.

Authentic writing starts from within you—being honest with who you are, which sometimes means writing out of recovery from pain and ashes. Then you can effectively write change into the lives of your readers through your particular approach, genre, and unique voice. This continuing session will take you through this process and include participant exercises and presentations for feedback.

The first and second sessions will focus on writing from your own life's change.

Session 1 – Emotional Healing & the Writer

The first session will address going through healing of damaged emotions (a.k.a. inner healing).

Session 2 – Being Real in Your Writing

The second session will work through being real in your writing, as opposed to hiding behind it, which writers can easily do without realizing it.

The third through fifth sessions will focus bringing change through different genres of writing.

Session 3–4 – Writing Memoir & Fiction

The third session will cover nonfiction for personal change and for organizational change, then memoir, and testimonial writing primarily through examples of numerous works.

Session 4–5 – Writing Nonfiction & Devotional

The fourth session will cover fiction and devotional writing primarily through examples of numerous works.

The second, third, and fourth session will include **exercises** for your personal application of content to your life and writing interests.

You are invited to bring examples of your own writing in any genre to ask about or analyze with the class for learning purposes. We want to personalize your learning as much as possible.

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Session 1: Emotional Healing & the Writer

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2 Corinthians 1:3–7 Comfort out of suffering

God heals damaged emotions Psalm 34:17–18; Psalm 146:7–9; Psalm 147:3

For you to flourish, you must be emotionally healthy. People get stuck in survival mode & never get free.

Emotional healing is painful. But better to endure a short period of intense honesty, pain, and healing (like a surgery) than a lifetime of emotional or physical sickness (an endless, gnawing pain).

Emotions can be harder to heal than the body. The body doesn't talk back.

Emotional problems do not mean someone is unspiritual.

He or she is wounded and needs healing.

Trying to overcome or ignore emotional damage by appearing “spiritual” or “holy” actually makes the problem worse.

In true spirituality, problems will be addressed through healing and spiritual disciplines.

Physical sickness often has emotional roots. / Emotional issues can lead to physical sickness.

Where do you carry your tension? / When that part gets tense, you need to do something.

Past memories affect the present. It's not being touchy-feely but rather going to the roots of problems.

Wilder Penfield's 1951 discovery: Every experience is stored in the brain, along with the feelings.

An incident may have happened once or during a particular period. But like a DVD that was filmed once then played back many times, memories affect us every time we remember them.

We cannot delete memories, but we can alter (heal) their effect of emotional pain and resulting problems.

Basics in Healing Damaged Emotions

Know who you are in Christ: a child of God who is loved (John 1:12; 1 John 3:1).

Forgive others (Matthew 6:12, 14–15). Unforgiveness is emotional cancer—like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.

Let go of vengeance and put everything in God's hands (Romans 12:17–21).

When you forgive someone, you set a prisoner free.

Then you discover that the prisoner was yourself.

Three big points in forgiveness: •God •Others •Self

Repent of sin (Acts 8:22–23).

If a person is demonized and the demon is cast out, it will return if the inner problem (that originally allows the demon to enter) is not dealt with (Luke 11:24–26).

Get rid of the garbage and the flies are easy to get rid of.

Renounce lies and affirm the truth (Matthew 22:29).

Be particularly aware of distorted concepts of God and of ourselves.

Intergenerational problems. Determine that things stop here. Change your family legacy.

Expect and follow the Holy Spirit's leading (John 16:13).

This is not counseling. It is God bringing healing at a person's deepest level.

How do we know if we're healed?

Initially when we recall a previously painful memory and it has no effect on us.

Healing is fully realized when we turn our pain into a ministry to others (2 Cor. 1:3–4).

Writing

Writing can be both a catharsis and a vehicle through which we express our experiences and feelings.

You may write about your experiences.

Or you may tuck those experiences away and draw from them in whatever you write.

1. Dump them, even if they're shocking. Don't hold back.
2. Discern and express how you've grown and overcome. Write that into the dump.
3. Find, develop, and organize the lessons learned that form a positive purpose of helping others.
4. Rewrite and edit—a lot—for your audience.

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Session 2: Being Real in Your Writing

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2 Corinthians 4:4–10 Treasure in jars of clay

“You’re hiding behind your writing.”

“Guts: The Decisive Ingredient”

Getting past masks and expectations:

Be honest with yourself.

Be brave. Are you willing to bare your _____?

Reevaluate your ego—on what is it based?

Quit trying to impress people.

This doesn’t mean start cussing and being vile. (Note publishers’ parameters.)

Questions:

How do you want to appear? Who are you trying to impress?

Whose opinion are you concerned about?

Is there anything you’re afraid to say?

What are you willing to risk?

If you could say *anything* & still be accepted by people you care about, what would you say?

Principles:

Write from your heart to other people’s hearts.

Write what most people keep secret.

Write without constraints—modify later.

Cut your heart open and bleed on the page.

Criticizers will criticize; it’s their nature. Others will appreciate.

Examples

Exercise

2 Samuel 12:1–14 the power of story in Nathan’s rebuke of David

Memoir and Testimonial: Encouraging Change

Transparency and vulnerability

Identification with the reader

Didactic fit with narration

Purpose and focused theme and takeaway

Examples

Exercise

Devotional / Touching-the-Heart Change

Voice

Embrace

Wisdom that grips the heart

Examples

Exercise

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Session 4–5: Writing Nonfiction & Fiction

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Acts and Epistles

Nonfiction: Practical personal change

Attitude

Voice

Angle and slant

Purpose and focused theme and takeaway

Examples

Nonfiction: Organizational Change

Attitude

Voice

Angle and slant

Purpose and focused theme and takeaway

Examples

Fiction: Narrative Change

Voice

Story world

Character identification

Character Change

Veiled truth

Examples

Exercise