

Writing Powerful Narrative Nonfiction

Be Real Exercise

1. Ask yourself, “Am I ready to write this? Is this my timing or God’s?”
2. Describe something in your memory: a hospital room, ICU, kitchen, viewing room at the funeral home, neighbor’s house, garage, bedside of a sick or dying person, bedroom — whatever place is significant to your story. What are the colors? Sounds? Smells? Moods? Emotions?
3. Describe an angry face, a sad face, frightened face, happy face. Describe an infant’s face, a child’s, a middle-aged person’s, a senior adult’s. What dialogue do you recall?
4. Make up a story from these details, or write a real story based on what you remember.
5. If you’ve brought a story with you, read it over for “voice-overs” — those narration parts that intellectualize. How can you rewrite these sentences/paragraphs more descriptively?