
Memoir Writing Tips

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1. Write frequent vignettes—small do-able pieces.
2. Use the timeline to organize your memories and stories.
3. Find the dark and light in each story as well as identify stories that are primarily dark or light.
4. For healing: Write the truth without editing
5. Don't listen to the critic
6. Work with the critic: write down what it says and answer back
7. Keep writing private from family, even some friends.
8. Use your writing group to help support your creative vision.
9. "Pre-writing", journaling, free-writing even for 10 minutes a day or twice a week keeps the writing process alive.
10. Write a first draft all the way through without much tinkering.
11. Get inspiration from photos.
12. Gather genealogical information. Research the accurate details of place to gain verisimilitude.
13. Use scenes to show action, put the reader in place and time; dialogue shows character and place. After your second draft have a professional read your book
14. Hire a copy editor to smooth out your text before sending it out.
15. Learn the pros and cons of self-publishing, small presses, and the larger publishing world.
16. Write a synopsis—a one-page summary of your whole book. Write several.
17. Write query letters—learn what the pros want.
18. Read everything—fiction, poetry, non-fiction, memoir. Learn about structure, style, voice and how others do what you are doing.
19. Attend author readings and events at bookstores once a month.
20. Go to conferences. Learn about the professional issues in publishing—agents, editors, query letters etc.
21. Consult *Writer's Market Online*, *Guide to Literary Agents*, *Writer's Digest*.
22. Surf the web for writer's sites.
23. Love words, images, stories. Keep writing!