



Writing Home

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a newsletter from The Flying Mermaids Studio by Poet, Writer & Circle Facilitator Mary Ann Moore

Hello friends:

It feels so good to be independent again! Following a total knee replacement at the end of February, I am now back to driving, walking in my favourite Neck Point Park, climbing on to a ferry, grocery shopping, dancing. It's the form of dancing I do at home on my own but that's a good thing!

When I saw my chiropractor's assistant, Alita, recently, she said I looked nurtured. What a lovely thing to say and to have happen. I do feel nurtured by my partner Sarah, my physiotherapists, family, friends and myself. As grateful as I am now for my independence, I really appreciated the six weeks of focusing on getting well. It was a replenishing time that was quiet and expansive.

When I say "six weeks", that's the time I gave myself before "getting back to work." After that time, I continued to go to physiotherapy twice a week as well as reconnect to mentoring clients, spread the word about the *Writing Home* writing/mentoring program, get back to my writing group (The Easy Writers), do a couple of readings, plan fall courses, and work on my various writing projects including some freelance writing. The actual rehabilitation of getting used to a new knee will probably take more than a year before I stop feeling this strange hard object in my left knee.

My right knee (the non-surgical one) can send messages to my left knee about how to do certain bending and exercises or to walk without a limp. I figure the new left knee can teach the right knee a thing or two as well. I released so much from the left knee that was about restriction and disappointment. The new left knee is about courage, strength, stepping into my life, and definitely not settling.

Start Your Day with What You Love

For several weeks I was able to read books, journal, dream and scheme. Why not carry that into my present life I thought. That means not rushing to the computer first thing but rather writing my dreams or writing my thoughts that pertain to a poem, my novel – writing that is mine. From there I go into my work day. A good idea, don't you think?

Recently I got caught up with a swirling to-do list in my head. I didn't want to approach everything as something "to do" so came up with an affirmation: I approach each activity with attention, curiosity, joy and enthusiasm. So the day starts with what I love and continues that way throughout.

What Novel?

In 1994, I completed a novel called Ordinary Life. I did look for a publisher for a time and I did publish two excerpts in *Prairie Fire*, a Winnipeg literary journal. As the years passed I realized I was on to other things and even if I had a publisher, I didn't think I'd be able to go back into that novel to edit, rewrite and prepare it for publication. I let it go as having had the experience of having written a novel and discovered lots along the way. My own story was interwoven with that of the protagonist, Zoe, and I got to do fascinating research.

In the past year, I've reconnected with Ordinary Life and have been blending it with a new novel I'm writing. I'm enjoying the process very much. I'm learning to pick away at it by writing down thoughts as they come to me. Sure it would be great to have a huge expanse of time for this project and that may come but for now, it's writing in those few moments between other projects and other thoughts.

Tap the River

Sue Monk Kidd, on her website, listed "Ten Most Helpful Things I Could Ever Tell Anyone About Writing." One of them, "Tap the River", includes her practice of creating a collage of each of her books. She tears pictures out of magazines, collects postcards and chooses images that fascinate her. She pastes them on a board which becomes "a loose story board."

This idea so resonated with me that I collected some images from some magazines I was about to recycle.

I didn't put them on a story board but rather on separate pieces of cardstock so I have a deck of cards of varying shapes. I can place them in some order later perhaps but right now I've been making lists of what comes to mind as I see the images. I highly recommend this visual practice for your life writing too. All sorts of ideas, threads, insights will reveal themselves through the visuals you have been drawn to.

The way I see it – the well springs of the creative life are deep inside of us. It's the place where images are bred, thoughts and feelings are converted into meaning, dreams are choreographed, myths congregates, and the soul talks. Some call it the subconscious, the matrix, or the source of our psyche. I picture it as an underground river, and as far as I'm concerned, the water is composed of genius. I try to dig down to it in a few places and lower my bucket. Which is why I write down most of my dreams. Dreams can be confounding, yes, but occasionally they drop something priceless into my lap. I got the whole ending of The Secret Life of Bees from a dream.

Sue Monk Kidd, from
Ten Most Helpful Things
I Could Ever
Tell Anyone About
Writing



*Unfold your personal story, envelop yourself with your own wisdom,
live your life from that heart-deepening place.*

The Art of Puttering

I'm doing it right now – typing in some thoughts as they come to me. Rather than wait for a stretch of time, I'm using the energy and inspiration of the moment to write down my ideas. Then, when I come back to this newsletter, so much of it will already be done! I realize this is a form of multi-tasking but I must say I enjoy going with the flow of energy – and projects do get done this way.

I've been picking at my new novel and I do it with poetry too. I look back at a poem to see what fresh insight I might have today – what the muses have waiting for me.

I've actually picked for a long time but now I'm acknowledging it as a method, as Sarah has pointed out.

I would like to find a new name for "picking". There are some other words that could do: select, prefer, pluck, gather, kindle, stir up, incite. If I told you I was plucking you might think we added chickens to the garden. "Gathering" I rather like. "Kindling" reminds me of my grandfather starting the morning fire in the old woodstove so that word would work well too. You may think though, that I'm reading a book on a kindle. I'll settle for puttering which combines all sorts of things I like to do and not do, like moodling and meandering.

The Potent Space of Possibility

While I am very much into my creative work and play life now, allowing old projects to resurface for some new insight and thinking up all sorts of new ideas, at some point approaching the end of my convalescence I was actually reluctant to leave the quiet reflective life behind. At the same time, I was anxious to get going again and thought, nothing is happening.

There is a very potent creative space leading up to the physical manifestation of those creative thoughts. We rarely acknowledge that dark time as we can't "see" anything yet. Just think of all the activity that took place before those daffodils popped out, the rhododendrons bloomed, and the forsythia made a big yellow splash. I was in that state at the end of my quiet time. There were lots of ideas swirling about and yet they weren't ready to

manifest. I was surrounded by that potent space of possibility. So when I said to myself "I'm not motivated", the ideas were bubbling and getting ready. I was appreciating the final days of quiet, a space beyond and before doing where my mind was resting and my body was adapting to my new knee. I am very grateful for that healing time.

Flower Essences for the Potent Space of Possibility

Whether I make up a flower essence combination or not, I am always pleasantly affirmed by the descriptions of the flowers essences I intuitively choose. Here are the ones that came up for the "potent space of possibility":

Fritillaria supports the creation of sacred space whether it's an altar, a room, a retreat for meditation and renewal. Fritillaria is a ringing reminder of our own pure core, helping us align our focused will with the Divine.

Queen of the Prairie supports our self-starting capabilities and helps us break through any limitations in our environment.

Grounding, one of the Life Theme essences, helps to calm and centre us by helping us feel the nourishing vitality and support of the living earth beneath our feet.

White Climber relates to the 8th chakra, the gateway to energies beyond our current reference. The essences helps us recognize our deepest longings. Honouring these desires are integral to our unique destiny. We attract the critical elements we need to manifest our dreams. The White Climber essence helps us welcome the infinite nourishment of spirit.

Stillness in the Void is an essence for the journey into stillness. It will help us surrender to the power and simplicity of our being and assist us to open a deeper connection with spirit for centering and healing.

You can find the full descriptions of these flower essences including photographs of the flowers at www.ravenessences.com.

Recommended Books

Traveling with Pomegranates by Sue Monk Kidd & Ann Kidd Taylor (Viking/Penguin 2009)

Awakening to the Spirit World: The Shamanic Path of Direct Revelation by Sandra Ingerman & Hank Wesselman (Sounds True 2010)
See my review at: www.synergymag.ca and storycirclebookreviews.org

The Circle Way: A Leader in Every Chair by Christina Baldwin & Ann Linnea (Berrett-Koehler Publishers 2010)

Transform Your Life Through Handwriting By Vimala Rodgers (Sounds True 2010)
See my review in the July/August 2010 Issue of Synergy magazine and at storycirclebookreviews.org

Inspiring Woman



My primary caregiver during my recovery from surgery was my partner, Sarah Clark. She nurtured me in every possible way so that I had a totally stress-free convalescence. I am so grateful for Sarah's patient and loving care in preparing meals and doing all the other household tasks, missing out on her own fitness classes to attend to me (we've now joined fitness together), picking up medications for me at the pharmacy and reminding me as well as guiding me in my knee bending exercises. Oh yes, and she took me to physiotherapy twice a week before I was independent again. Sarah has been a graphic designer for 30 years. She has taken a three-month sabbatical to reflect on her design and writing life. It could be that by September there will be a new way for Sarah to spend her days. You can follow her blog on her website at www.sarahclarkdesign.ca.

Besides publishing a book on graphic design for small business (called *Making a Great Impression: How To Make Your Mark in the Marketplace*) and designing and writing marketing materials for a wide array of clients in Canada and the U.S., Sarah has been designing my brochures and self-guiding materials for ten years. The *Writing Home* mandala and Moira Oenia, the whimsical mermaid who encourages you to "embrace your creative self", were hand drawn by Sarah. In fact all the logos on my website having to do with the circle and one to one coaching were designed by Sarah. Any of us who have had our logos designed by Sarah have been able to step into our full potential with gorgeous materials to represent our work in the world.

And, something else: Sarah has mastered the art of puttering. That's how she finished her book. Nowadays, she's making journals with handmade papers and building and painting small wooden boxes.

Upcoming Reading

Sunday, August 8, 2010, 2 to 4:30 p.m.
An Afternoon of Readings (poems, monologues, stories)
at Hazelwood Herb Farm

13576 Adshead Road, Ladysmith

Admission to the farm: free Admission to this event: \$5.00

www.wordstorm.ca www.hazelwoodherbfarm.ca

What a beautiful place to hold this literary event! I'll be reading along with Sandy Shreve, M. C. Warrior, David Fraser, Kim Goldberg, Leanne McIntosh, Judith Millar, Cindy Shantz and Pat Smekal.

Writing Home, in your own good time

Writing Home is called a nine-month mentoring program and it usually does take nine months as I send out the materials once a month and call participants once a month. However, that doesn't necessarily mean people are able to keep up with a chapter a month as so many other things are happening in their lives. That's when I suggest that if you have the desire to write but aren't doing it, try five minutes. Try puttering. See where that takes you.

Not writing, and the resistance to it, is all part of the writing journey. In a couple of cases, when women weren't available for their monthly call, we did two of those check-in calls at once the next month. We used the half hour for writing together on the phone. Yes, it's possible. I can thank Kim Rosen for that idea, as I've been part of her Invisible Poets Society, writing together on the phone, and Lynda Monk of Creative Wellness who offers virtual retreats, on the phone.

All of this is to let you know that you can begin in your own good time and approach *Writing Home* in your own good time by writing on your own, writing on the phone together or sharing your writing with me if you wish.

A Flower Essence Combination for Writing Home

When I began visioning all the aspects of *Writing Home* about four years ago, I imagined a kit of flower essences, one combination essence for each step of the journey. That may happen in the future when there's a book and people I don't know are buying a copy as well as a kit of flower essences to go with it. Right now, as I connect directly with people, I am able to make up a flower essence especially for them. I'll describe this process further in a future newsletter or, feel free to email me and I'll tell you all about it.

Upcoming Women's Circles

Monday, July 12; Wednesday, July 28 & Thursday, August 12, 2010

7 to 9 p.m.

Your Own Wise Self, a women's circle

at the Three Cat BE & BE, 3350 Hickman Place, Nanaimo

Come to one or come to all. Tune in to ancient wisdom, modern wisdom and your own wise self. Check out all the details including circle themes at www.maryannmoore.ca.

Blessings to you for a replenishing summer,

Mary Ann

Visit The Flying Mermaids Studio at www.maryannmoore.ca to learn more about the Writing Home writing/mentoring program.

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