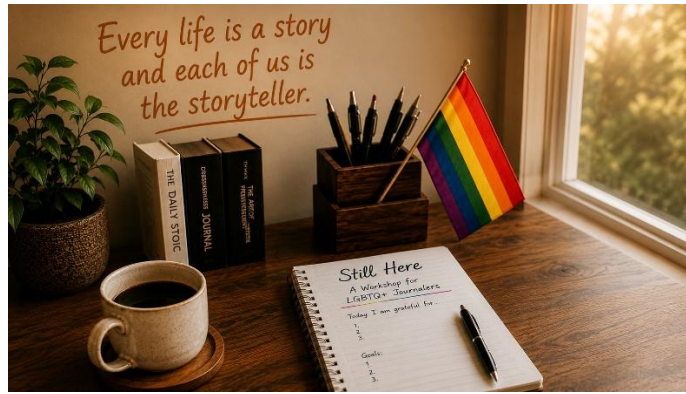




Online LGBTQ+ Journaling Workshop

Welcome. This is an introductory 2 hour workshop, with an ongoing group planned for those interested in continuing.

A Few Agreements

- What's shared here stays here
- Sharing your writing is always optional. "I'll pass" is a complete sentence
- Always supportive – this is not a critiquing group

A Note on the Writing

This isn't about polished sentences or getting it "right." Follow the thread of memory or feeling wherever it takes you, and if it wanders somewhere else entirely, follow that instead. Nothing you write has to be shared, shown, or even kept. The writing itself is what matters.

How it works:

After initial introductions and an icebreaker, we get to writing. Each prompt will allow 10 minutes for writing to its theme. Then the group participants will read what they wrote. Passing is okay. Sometimes things come up in the writing that are difficult to share, and you don't have to. Otherwise, everyone will read what they wrote. Commenting is fine, and there are a lot of commonalities we share. Say what resonates with you, or offer a quick example reflecting on what was shared. But it's not a group where the writing itself is critiqued.

ICEBREAKER

Name a piece of advice you were given and never took. Should you have? Are you glad you didn't?

Prompt Writing 1: When I Knew What I Knew

For most of us there was a time in our lives when we knew, or seriously suspected, there was something different about us. The culture, or our church, or our families, or all of them combined told us we ought to be one thing, but we knew we were another.

Write about your realization that you were not what you were expected to be—call that gay/lgbt, different, *special*. Keep it short, to one experience, revelation or epiphany, and write it out. *10 minutes*.

Prompt Writing 2: A Door Opens (But to Where?)

You open a door in your home (bedroom, hallway, bathroom) and instead of what's normally behind it, you see a room that mattered to you at another time in your life. It could be a safe place where you felt comfortable, or a room you didn't want to be in. Write a short piece describing:

- The scene: what is there? Where is it?
- Who is there, if anyone?
- What pulls you forward or keeps you standing in the doorway?

And do you step through... or close the door. *10 minutes*.

BREAK – Get up, stretch, camera off is fine - 10 minutes

Prompt Writing 3: Safety First

Trust can be hard to extend for everyone. Hopefully we have all experienced safe harbors, whether it's a place or a person, or both. Who in your life, and where, have you experienced a sense of safety? Was it the first person you came out to? A friend or family member? A group?

Take time to think this through, then write about:

- The person(s)
- The place
- Your emotional experience

The details! Use your senses. Where were you? What did it look like? What are your sensory memories?

Prompt Writing 4: What's in a Letter

"If I knew then what I know now ... " Now's your chance. Write a letter to a younger version of yourself—it could be the child you were, or the teenager, or the young adult, or yourself a year ago! What would you tell yourself about the life you would live, and the world you would live in?

Would you offer advice, or comfort? Would you say everything is going to be okay, or there would be difficult times ahead?

Alternatively, if you prefer, write a letter to someone else, a young person who could benefit from your experience. Tell them what to expect—the good, the bad, the devastating, the hopeful. Pass on what life has taught you. This is your chance to speak from the heart, to the heart.

WRAP UP

*Thank you for participating. This is an initial, introductory workshop. For those interested I'll start a monthly Zoom group or two and continue the bonds we've formed today. Just let me know with an email to **StillHere@YourWritePath.net** and we'll launch this in the new year. - Mark*

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