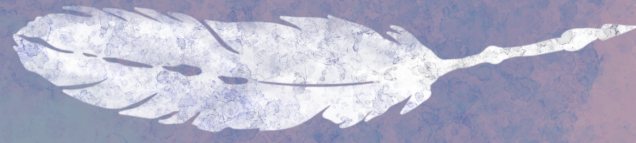# The Writer's Refuge

CREATIVE PROMPTS

"The creative process is a mystical path. It is not measured in miles or minutes. It is not linear. We do not enter it after we get everything else out of the way. We must know that we can enter at any time, and anywhere. Knowing this brings an exhilarating sense of joy."

- Burghild Nina Holtzer

I vividly remember when I was first introduced to writing prompts some thirty+ years ago. I was in the kitchen of my home in London awaiting a visit from a writer whom I'd never met before. She was on holiday in England and had been told by a mutual writer friend from NY to look me up on her travels.

When Judy arrived, I offered her a strong cup of NY coffee (the likes of which you couldn't get in England at the time and this predated Starbucks) and we had a visit that changed my life forever. I'd completed a Creative Writing degree at New York University, mostly writing short stories and some longer fiction, but I'd never heard of writing prompts. Prompts became the way in to my writing. No matter what prompt I was offered, no matter where I was with my writing, the prompt became a doorway through which I could access my imagination or memory. The prompts gave me ways to enter into works of fiction, non-fiction, and even some feeble attempts at poetry that I didn't know lived inside me.

Today, many emerging and established writers rely on prompts for a variety of needs—to overcome the blank page; strengthen their writing practices; find their voices; or take creative risks.

I invite you to try a few of my favorites to reclaim your inner muse.

Gill Quist

Dare to create with these creative prompts

Write about something you (or a character) found in a pocket.

My body is a story to be read. (from Judy Reeves)

A gift you never used.

From your imagination or your memory, write about a character's scar(s).

Write about leaving town. Write about returning to town.

Write about what is packed in a character's suitcase.

Write about learning to swim.

The water reached your (character's) thighs.

"How many ways can you describe the sky and the moon?" – Toni Morrison.
Write about the moon from three different vantage points? Write about the sky
from the points of view of three different characters.

Write about the reflection of light on a body of water.

The senses:

You hear music in the distance.

You smell the scent of fresh baking bread.

The feeling of newly laundered Egyptian cotton sheets against your naked
thighs.

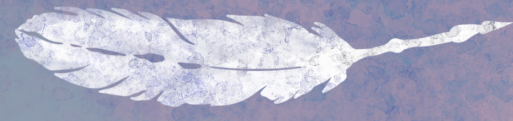Air, wet with humidity.

Picture this...

The taste of Halloween.

The Writer's Refuge

JOURNALING PROMPTS

"Whether you're keeping a journal or writing as a meditation, it's the same thing. What's important is you're having a relationship with your mind."
- Natalie Goldberg

"Fill your paper with the breathings of your heart."
- William Wordsworth

Much has changed in recent weeks. At times like these when the world is topsy-turvy and may feel uniquely surreal, there is nothing better than slowing things down, looking for inspiration in quiet moments, and focusing on what really matters to us.

The coronavirus crisis feels like a good time to reflect and reconnect with ourselves through simple rituals like journaling, meditating, or simply enjoying a warm cup of tea.

To encourage your journaling ritual, I invite you to try some of the following prompts for reflection. Find yourself a quiet place where you can sit comfortably, without interruption and let your pen move across the page. This might be a If you like writing to music, find something that wraps you in its gentle embrace. Even fiv

For self-reflection, here is a list of thoughtful journal prompts to get you writing:

Take a journey to your interior with these journaling prompts:

I write because...

I wish I had the courage to...

I really wish others knew this about me...

From this experience, I am learning...

I feel happiest in my skin when...

I most admire...

I couldn't imagine living without...

I feel most energized when...

The words I need to hear now are...

My deepest regret is...

My most profound joy is...

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