

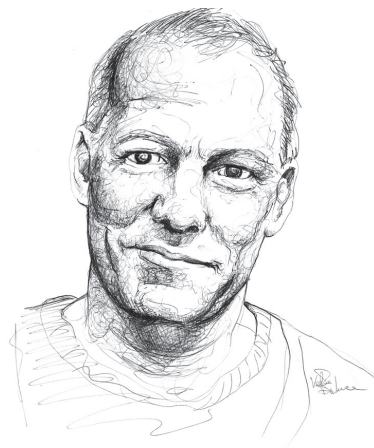
HEALING THROUGH WRITING

An Introduction



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In this series, all aspects of healing through writing will be explored, showing how it can bring us mental equilibrium. It is like yoga, hypnosis, meditation, time travel; it's both therapeutic and creative; it helps us thread our way through the labyrinth. Few would believe that traumas heal through writing, still less boost your immune system. But as the queen in *Alice in Wonderland*, declared, thinking of at least six impossible things before breakfast is good practice, helping to attune to a quantum universe, a place where the weird and unpredictable are the norm.

In the 1980s, James Pennebaker, made a groundbreaking discovery. He found that people who wrote about their most traumatic problems made fewer visits to the doctor. This was tested by immunologists who found that writing improved immune function as well. Further studies revealed, that using language to clarify issues involves a network of connections in the brain to map together. The more complex and varied the use of pronouns, the greater the chances of improving your overall well-being, resulting in good health.

Begin by getting into a contemplative mood in which you go inside yourself. Choose a problem that triggers a personal, emotional confusion that distresses you. Then, while breathing deeply, pick up your pen, allow the nib to meet the surface of the paper. Listen and watch the words that emerge. Don't think about being grammatically correct or a clever storyteller- this is a quest for personal insight and relief from emotional tangles- just allow the voice within to speak, even if painful. Do this two or three times on consecutive days for twenty minutes. You may not notice any improvement initially, but if you can accept the previously unacceptable and breathe more easily, it is easier to move on with your life.

Writing is the weaver of threads, but some knots woven by tragic events need careful unravelling before being released. Bottle up a problem and it could negatively affect the subtle signals our brain gives to our body cells via neurotransmitters. It is not coincidental that the Latin word for textile is *texare*, meaning writing a story. The word *tantra* also means 'weaving' the thread of life. For me, writing is the perfect tool for achieving this sense of co-creation – that we are weaving our own life tapestry. Writing is accessible to everyone who has learned to write. You don't need to see a therapist – just to turn up with good intention and without page fright. The simplicity of this interaction between you a pen and paper is breathtaking. It's an 'anywhere, anytime' tool. You don't even have to be healthy – do it in your sick bed. When the energy is ignited, the clouds around your problem disperse and insights flow. Writing helps fuse more connections between right and left-brain hemispheres.

We could just talk to a friend instead. Trauma filled confessions are a big trend these days, but it can be very awkward to tell friends your uncomfortable truths. Much easier to reveal them on a page – then tear it to shreds. If you feel that you are already healed, then bear in mind that the institutionalised worlds of religion, government and society keep us under a cultural spell of entrenched beliefs that do not always match our true spirit. We need to awaken from this spell of shame and inherited self-criticism. Shame and distress dissipate even faster once you write out how they have affected your whole life. 🌿