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THE WRITER'S KEY

Creative Solutions for Life

Why writing is personally and professionally beneficial is clear. Now we turn to the treasure chest of how to begin writing.

WRITE!

1. Find a time and place where you can be alone with your writing for at least 20 minutes, where you feel relaxed and comfortable.
2. Write without thinking about commas and full stops, correct spelling, or proper form. Much of this writing will feel like the middle of something, since middles are where most things happen. You might fear it's a muddle; writings like this – done with no previous thinking – are often perfectly formed, however, and easy to understand. Grammar, spelling and sorting out a beginning, middle and end can be dealt with later if you wish to share it with another.
3. We assume we know so much about ourselves; writing down these assumptions can be enlightening. Here are sentence beginnings for you to continue from, writing a lot or a little: just whatever seems right to you. Allow your hand to do the thinking: put the pen on the page and see what comes. No-one else will read this unless you expressly wish them to. Try one or two now, and return every now and then to write from another one. Writing from the same one on different occasions can be illuminating: you do know a huge variety of stuff which this can bring to light.
 - I am...
 - I know...
 - I think...
 - I believe...
 - I remember...
 - I feel...
 - I want...
 - I wish...
 - I can...

- I wonder...
- I hope...
- I was told...
- I promise myself I will...

You'll notice that none begin with 'I should...', 'I ought...', 'I must...'. This writing is about being positive and genuinely enquiring; it's the only way to find out the useful, interesting things. *Should* and *ought* and their ilk cause locks to jam, keys to rust, easing oil to turn to water, and door-handles to snap.

4. Write the story of your life, or perhaps just your work, or love, or artistic, life.
 - a. Start wherever you like. Write as much or as little as you like, and for as long, about different elements. You might find you've written your entire life story in two pages. Or perhaps after 20 minutes you are still describing your birth and first years. That's OK; it doesn't matter if you never write any more. Or you could carry on another time.
 - b. Give your life story a title, as if it were a film.
5. Read through your writing to yourself to see what you've written. Add or alter it in any way you like. Pay no attention to grammar, spelling and proper form at this stage unless you really want to; otherwise leave it as notes. Share it with someone else if you wish, or just keep it in your notebook.