

Guided Meditation on Motivations for Writing: The Five Whys

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So, for this meditation, we're going to think about our motivations for writing. And as we do with each of the grounding practices, I just want to encourage you to find a place that you can hold stillness. For me, I'm seated in a chair: it means rolling my inner thighs outwards so that I have a wider base. And then making sure that all four corners of my feet are firmly touching down that I'm supported by the ground underneath me. You might think about if you need something behind your low back or if there's any adjustments to make before you find a place of stillness. And then, as you come to a place that you can hold for about 10 minutes, just begin to notice how you're showing up. Focus on any physical sensations that are present, noticing if there's areas where you're holding tension or tightness. You might begin to notice that there's anywhere that you are aching or where you feel like you're holding onto something. Perhaps you're weighted down. And you might notice that that's by an emotion. If you do notice emotions associated with these physical sensations, without judgment, try to name them and bring awareness to what is present. You continue to notice the physical sensations that are present. Notice, too, if there's places in your body where you're holding a greater sense of ease. Perhaps there's even sensations of pleasure. Notice, too, where you feel more warmth in the body, perhaps a feeling of movement or flow where there's that warmth. And contrast that with where there's more coolness or cold in the body, noticing if those areas perhaps have more stagnation or a sense that there is something that's not flowing. Again, without any judgment, just feel free to bring your attention and awareness there. And if it helps, you could place your hands there, too: anywhere in your body that you need a little extra support. Just place your hands and allow the heat from your hands to flow. And then bringing awareness to the breath, noticing where you feel breathing in the body. You might begin to notice that your chest moves in and out. Or that you can feel air along your skin around the nostrils. You might begin to notice that by bringing attention to the breath, it's naturally beginning to slow down and deepen. And you could set an intention to allow the breath to become deeper, slower -- to allow your body to take in a full inhale and release a full exhale. Without forcing or trying to change, you might notice how it just feels to set this intention and allow the breath to drop a little deeper into the belly, to fill up the core a little bit more. As you take in some of these deep breaths, you might find

yourself affirming on the inhale, that the breath is bringing in nourishment, nourishment of oxygen. And on the exhale that you're able to release and let go of anything that's ready to come up and out. On the inhale, affirming the nourishment of the breath. And on the exhale, affirming the release of the exhale. Continue breathing, and know that the breath is an anchor that you can come back to at any point as a form of grounding. As I lead us through a few questions about writing, know that if any of these feel too tender, you can just come back to breathing or to noticing physical sensations that are present. Pay attention, too, to notice what emotions may arise and how your body responds to these questions about writing. As I said before, we're going to be tunneling down into our motivations or our why for writing project. So begin by bringing to your mind's eye, a sense of the writing you're called to do today. You might name the project as you're conceiving of it now, or think about its shape -- where you want it to live in the world, who you want it to reach, how you're referring to this project or naming it. Just give it a sense of, of being, of being writing, that you are connected to and bringing forward. And then hold the question for yourself of why. Why this writing project? Why are you called to it? As you hold the question of why, you might begin to think about other people who've influenced you or motivations, longings, desires for this work. Just notice what answers arise. Notice if they come with any physical sensations or emotions. And then instead of stopping at these first answers, these first noticings around why, I want us to tunnel down a little bit and to ask why those motivations. So why -- why are those answers to your deep why. You might take the story backward to when the project was first being conceived of. You might remember what led you to this project, old stories of how you got here. You might begin to think about why this writing now? What's the timeliness of it? What's being asked for you in this present moment? And how does it connect to a sense of your future self for where you're heading and what you hope for and the times to come? And then once you have a sense of an answer -- or perhaps a couple of answers that are arising -- ask the question again of why. So, why these answers? Why these motivations? And again, you might find that you're taking the story further back, thinking more into the past. It might be that other people are coming up, other relations, or moments of interaction. Or you might just be feeling other senses of connection that you hope will come about, who you hope to be in conversation with, who you hope to influence, what you hope for yourself. And then I'll ask us again to think about why and to take it down a little bit farther, tunneling down even more. Is there more to this answer? Can you look at what's underneath that last motivation that you identified? Does it have an origin story? Does it go deeper into a sense of longing? You might notice it going deeper into your sense of yourself or the work you're called to do in the world. You might find that you're really touching on your core commitments.

08:49

Or noticing if there's something that's been out of alignment with commitments and noticing, without judgment, what are the whys that you can really identify. With all of these answers, continue to notice if emotions are coming up and what those emotions are. If physical sensations are shifting, noticing what's becoming more open or more stuck or tense or tight or perhaps more expansive and loose. And then let's ask the question again of why. So, why these motivations? Why this writing? If you can, look underneath your last answers and see if you can go a bit deeper still. Are there more answers to be named? More to your answer of what's motivating you? You might think about not only the when of this project -- why now? -- and the where -- why here? -- but really thinking about the people who you are honoring with your work, those you are hoping to connect with and be part of, those perhaps you were writing against. And you might identify that there's an energy around this of a building towards

something as well as possibly a blocking of something. What is it that you're hoping to build? What is it you're hoping to block? Are there any other threads, tendrils, components of this? Other reasons or motivations?

10:49

Give yourself all the time you need here to think more about the why. And you can always pause the recording to sit with these questions longer. And then pay attention to the physical body again, noticing how your body feels having asked these questions. Again, what physical sensations are present?

11:18

Are any of these physical sensations tied to particular emotions? And are the sensations or emotions asking anything of you, asking you to notice something, to do something, to create space for something?

11:47

Thanking your body for sharing insights through physical sensation, through embodiment. Thanking yourself for showing up to ask these questions and showing up to your writing. And thanking the ancestral traditions, the lineages that passed down this guided practice, meditation work, contemplative practices. And you could name for yourself some of those practices for you, those traditions that you draw upon.

12:25

And then to close out the practice, to seal it, to help bring it forward, into your writing, and to where you're heading next with your work -- I just want to invite us all to do three audible exhales. That's taking the breath in through the nose, out through the mouth, making a wave-like haaa sound. So, if you'd like to join along, I'll start by taking an inhale now. So, breathing into the nose.

13:16

Slowly begin to open your eyes, or gently move your body to come from a place of stillness back into movement. Take all the time you need. You might slowly begin to roll wrists or ankles or reach arms up and overhead. You could look over the shoulders, to reorient to familiar space and remind yourself that, yes, this is a familiar space for me. And then take some water, hot tea, anything that helps you transition. You might stand up and walk around a little bit and then come back to sit and begin your writing. Thanks again.