

way a map is used it is the expression of the whole that is important, instead of in some partial way.

What separates these drawings from other forms of art is the fact that in the journal context they given some form of interpretation. Here it is important to understand that the meaning of the drawing only needs to be of significance to the diarist.

Maps of consciousness can take you into dynamics of your personality and may bring about shifts that would otherwise have been perceived as impossible.

GUIDED IMAGERY

Like catharsis and free-intuitive writing guided imagery taps into the right side of the brain. Guided imagery can be very effective for approaching things in a calm, fresh and creative way. It may enable you to maintain emotional balance by ordering your thoughts.

One of the most popular guided imageries is the visualisation of an ideal scene – some place that is relaxing, pleasant and safe. Your private place can then be populated by people, animals or fantasy characters. You may even wish to meet a wise person who acts as a guide.

Recording guided imagery may result in a poem, play short story, song, fairy tale, myth or fantasy journey. Whether it be a fantasy journey or a way of rehearsing favorable behaviours, guided imagery allows you to develop an inner landscape where you can go for amusement, advice, refreshment, support and growth. You may discover the inner myths and metaphors that are uniquely yours.

ALTERED POINT OF VIEW

This techniques gives you different perspectives on yourself or experiences. By using “he” or “she” instead of “I” you will be able to get emotional distance, especially if you are writing about a difficult or painful subject. Using “altered point of view” affords a broader view to be taken on a particular subject This wider view can be further enhanced by writing as if you were the other person in the situation, using the “I” word. This enables you to see why others do as

they do and to bring some understanding to the subject. You can have fun with the “altered point of view” technique by using it to go back into the past or explore the future. In this way you can compare past attitudes to present ones or predict choices you will make in the future according to current attitudes.

UNSENT LETTERS

The unsent letter as the name suggests is a letter written to a particular person, but it is never the intention of the writer to send this letter. It is because of this that whatever needs to be said can be said without fear of hurting others or damaging relationships. In many cases the unsent letter eases the mind of the writer by giving space to unfinished business.

The chance of self definition is another advantage of the unsent letter as we often partly define ourselves by those that we reach out to. The unsent letters can be written to anyone or anything. For instance you can write to a part of your body if you like.

Quite often the letters develop into dialogues, which gives the subject of the letter a chance to respond.

DIALOGUES

Dialogues like many techniques previously discussed, helps you gain insight into a person, event or subject of which you want a deeper understanding.

You can dialogue with aspects of your personality, people you know, people you have met, historical personages, dream figures, animals, inanimate objects, images, symbols, parts of the body, your spiritual or racial or cultural heritage, events, or institutions. The list is endless. In the dialogue you address the subject and simply allow it to speak to you in response.

The dialogue is a great way of conversing with parts of yourself that you feel have been suppressed or threatened. It is a way also of making a connection with people, all be it a passive way, that you are having difficulty communicating with.

JOURNAL WRITING

Journal writing is a very rewarding pursuit. People take up journal writing for many reasons some of which follow a place to develop skills of self-expression a method for turning negative mental habits into positive energy a way to gain perspective on your emotions and to resolve the past a means of keeping in touch with the continuity and rhythms of life a place to record meaningful insights a way to preserve family and personal history a quiet place to relax and refresh yourself a device for freeing you intuition and imagination a way to learn to trust life a means of experiencing the essential humanness that links all people a tool for recording and understanding dreams a way to become your own guide and guru a place to celebrate the process of living a path to spiritual peace a workbook for creative writing and drawing a safe place to take intellectual and creative risks a source book for future projects a means of discovering joy within the context of your life.

In modern journal writing there are four basic devices and seven techniques that can be employed.

Source: ‘The New Diary’ by Tristine Rainer

The centre runs classes in Journal Writing and they are facilitated by Shelley Teasdale.

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BASIC DEVICES

Before commencing let me state the two rules of journal writing.

Rule 1 – always date your entries

Rule 2 – don't make any other rules

MODES OF EXPRESSION

CATHARSIS

Catharsis according to the dictionary means purging and releasing of emotions. Catharsis calls for the immediate expression of intense emotion. Most of us feel the need to express this strong emotion somehow and the journal is ideal for this. It could be as simple as "I've got the job" or a longer piece say in stream of consciousness. You can gain hold of an event or feeling simply by writing it down – the here and now stuff of journal writing.

Remember to always express more positive feelings like joy to give balance to your journal and creative life.

DESCRIPTION

In every person's life there is a desire to preserve certain moments of our own unique history. Description is the perfect medium through which to do this.

Description - is a narrative account of events, feelings, dreams, people, places etc. It is the most common device used in journal writing.

Description, not only gives us a snapshot of the person, place etc., it also shows how we perceived the experience. Description does not transcribe reality, it re-creates one person's view of an experience.

Try writing your own version of reality - defy the "official" version. It is wonderfully empowering.

FREE-INTUITIVE WRITING

Free intuitive writing puts away the control of the sub-conscious mind. Free-association stream of consciousness, automatic writing and active imagination are all forms of free-writing.

This form of writing can put you in touch with your sub-conscious feelings and motivations. It also has its

place in the creative process, getting through writer's block by loosening you up or evoking fresh images and rhythms.

The Process:

1. Relax
2. Forget your special talents or attributes.
3. Write quickly – keep the pen flowing across the page.
4. Continue for as long as you like.

REFLECTION

Reflection gives voice to the more objective, rational, adult self. With reflection you are able to stand back, distance yourself and record your observations. Due to the very nature of reflective writing you often create piece by piece, your own personal philosophy of life. However it does not always have to be about yourself, it encompasses all aspects of your life. Often the writer will use the word 'you' instead of 'I' to further distance themselves from the subject. A special quality of reflective writing appears, when the higher self voice makes its presence felt. This usually comes in the form of encouragement or advice.

Through reflection the writer may address the self as 'you', ask the self a question or look at personal experience from a universal perspective.

SEVEN TECHNIQUES

LISTS

In the exploration of journal writing we move onto the seven devices, as described in the New Diary book.

The first of the seven devices is the list. Lists are so commonly used that one would probably give little regard to its significance as a journal writing device. Lists can be used from the most obvious – that of organising yourself- right through to a plot of your life like a "table of contents".

Lists can bring focus and clarity to the mind and are particularly helpful when you haven't written in your diary lately and want to quickly take account of what has transpired between entries.

A list of current fears can bring things into perspective. Conversely an ongoing list of those

things that make you truly happy can be enlightening. Lists often are the beginning of more in-depth creative work – a poem for instance could be developed from a list. Try list making and see if it works for you!

PORTRAITS

Portraits usually come in the form of word descriptions and cover from the people closest to us, to the people who are merely acquaintances. A portrait is never really complete: you can recolor it, revisit it, revise it contradict it and add to it in later entries.

Much can be learned from portraits, as your relationship with the person(s) you are writing about evolve from portraits you can discover what qualities you most admire and value in others.

There is also the matter of projection - over time you may find that qualities you object to in a person are those you are struggling to overcome within yourself. Lastly, you can learn to separate yourself from another person through portrait.

In other words portraits can help you define yourself and others and this in turn helps to empower you by creating boundaries.

Description doesn't have to be the only form that a portrait takes - lists or free intuitive writing can be used and of course your portraits may be represented through drawings.

MAPS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Maps of consciousness are used where words fail to describe what it is you are wanting to convey. They are graphic images of what's in your own mind and are executed by letting your hand lead the drawing. Very little thought is put into it in a similar way that stream of consciousness is a flow of words straight onto the page. No artistic talent is required – the purpose is your own enjoyment and self awareness, not accuracy and beauty.

A map of consciousness can be drawn, for example, to illustrate conflicting parts of yourself. Whatever