



*Journey through Words*  
Creative Writing Worksho



Facilitator's Guidebook

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## Authorship and Acknowledgments

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## Background

This Journey Through Words creative writing group (JTW) has developed through a collaborative research partnership between Wellspring London and Region and the School of Social Work at King’s University College at Western University, resulting in the receipt of research funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council’s Partnership Engagement Grant program. Students from both the School of Social Work at King’s University College and the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry at Western University have assisted with the development and research of this group and this resulting manual. Together we have been guided by both the theory and practices of Narrative Therapy and Narrative Medicine in the development of this group program, while also drawing upon the discipline of Creative Writing.

Past participants of the Journey Through Words creative writing group have graciously given of their time to provide feedback, sharing their experiences of the group process. We are grateful to them for sharing their insights which have assisted us in further improving this group.

## Narrative Therapy

Narrative therapy was developed as a therapeutic practice by Michael White and David Epston in the late 80's/early 90's (White & Epston, 1990). White and Epston have written extensively over the years regarding the influences that shaped their practices. However, what is most significant for this particular group is their understanding of the manner in which people talk about things they have experienced in the form of a story. We each experience multiple events in our lives (every day) but only a limited number of events are considered significant enough to focus on and recount to others. The telling of stories (made up of events, over time, structured according to a theme, or plot) then has an impact on our sense of self – we thereby socially construct our identity through these stories we tell ourselves and others. Since there are so many events that occur in anyone's life, many of which go unremarked upon due to the significance of other events, it is possible to see how each of us has access to multiple storylines. For example, a person could tell the story of their life as a partner, or parent, or in their particular line of work, or in relation to an illness. Each one of us is so much more than any one story or socially constructed identity.

Many people involved in the medical world, including those living with a cancer diagnosis, when asked to share their story, will understandably focus on the detailed events of their illness journey. The cancer journey often has multiple and significant impacts and can affect how someone thinks about the big questions in life. Nonetheless, using a narrative therapy lens, the JTW program offers an opportunity for Wellspring members to explore other events in their life in addition to those related to their diagnosis – perhaps those events that could be understood as being part of their resilience story rather than their illness story. That is, this program is designed to support participants in reflecting on other meaningful events in their lives that can be woven together into a story of resilience and hope, offering a way to consider how there are multiple possible storylines in their life. Each person is so much more than their diagnosis, and this group hopes to support the experience of these alternative possibilities.

Another important element of narrative therapy theory and practice is the recognition of the impact of social constructionism. As alluded to above, it is in the telling of stories to ourselves, and to *others* that people construct a sense of self. In this way, the sense of self is acknowledged as being more than just a physically



embodied encapsulated individual and the two-way relationships and influences of other people in individuals' lives are explored.

## Narrative Medicine

While narrative therapy was developed as a therapeutic practice for social workers, counsellors and community practitioners, Rita Charon (2006) developed narrative medicine in the mid 2000's as a non-therapeutic training practice for medical students. At that time, as a physician herself, she began to realize that medical students would be better able to maintain the empathy which may have motivated them to begin their studies in the first place by introducing the humanities, and narrative analysis in particular, into medical education. By introducing medical students to literary texts, they have the opportunity to develop skills such as close reading and disciplined reflective writing. Through this they are able to consider the emotions and motivations of characters in novels and poetry, and express their own experiences which ultimately deepens their capacity to consider the wholeness of their patients' lives. Given the high stress involved in the medical field and the need to focus on the diagnosis and management of illness, a narrative medicine framework supports health care providers in remembering patients are more than their illness. This approach has been well-received by many in the medical field to the extent that an entire division of narrative medicine was created within the Department of Medical Humanities and Ethics at Columbia University.

## Creative Writing

Creative writing is a form of writing that aims to demonstrate meaning through the use of tools such as imagery, metaphor, and storytelling elements. While this program does not aim to focus on, or teach participants, particular creative writing skills, it encourages the use of the creative writing *process* as a way to express thoughts and emotions on a topic. Often, seeing these thoughts and emotions solidified on a page can help make sense of experiences and may even surprise the writer with new insights and ways of considering people and events in their life. In JTW, the writing serves as an activity to assist in the self-reflection process. Participants can then choose to read what they have created to others in the group, or simply comment upon their experience of engaging with activity during group discussion.

## Program Overview

### Objective

The JTW program is a narrative-therapy and narrative-medicine based therapeutic group for Wellspring members - those living with a cancer diagnosis and their family/caregivers, to support the development of narratives rooted in resilience and hope in addition to stories of illness.

Within each week of this 6-week group, participants will be offered verbal and visual prompts to engage in creative writing followed by group discussion. Drawing upon narrative therapy's practices and acknowledging the multiple events and stories that shape each person's life, participants will be asked such questions as: What values, resources, and strengths have influenced you to make you who you are today? How have these aspects shaped your responses to your cancer journey? Who are the people who have influenced and/or supported you in your life and how has you knowing each other impacted you both?

### General Session Structure

- An additional resource to support the creative write process is to pair the writing prompt for that week with an image. This may assist those who are more visually oriented to engage with the writing and/or provide inspiration. You may choose your own images, although we've included examples in our weekly slide decks.
- Facilitators will talk briefly about the weekly theme, introduce the prompt(s) that will guide the writing, and provide a creative writing tip. The group participants might take a few minutes to ask questions and share initial reactions.
- Following this, 20 minutes of silence will be provided in which participants will each write, reflecting on what comes to mind for them with the given prompt. This will be an opportunity to use writing to express their thoughts and emotions. Participants can choose to engage with the writing tip of the week (e.g., poem or dialogue) to respond to the prompt or chose whichever writing style is most comfortable for them.
- After the writing period, the participants will come back together as a group to discuss what ideas and feelings surfaced for them. This can be an opportunity for some or all to share their writing, or ideas that they were able to reflect on while they were writing. Participants can respond to other's contributions and build on each other's ideas. Participants are not required to share their writing and may share

whatever they are comfortable sharing. It is helpful for facilitators to ask about common themes across the comments shared by participants.

**TIP** - Facilitators are encouraged to participate in the writing process and engage with the prompt either before the session or during the writing period for a more nuanced understanding, and support of, the writing experience.

## Getting Started

### Group Format

Determine if your group will be run online, in-person, or as a hybrid model. For online and hybrid models, ensure you have all the required equipment to ensure a smooth hassle-free experience for everyone: highspeed internet connection, computer with good-quality microphone and camera. Also ensure that any potential group member wishing to join online also has all these requirements.

### Group Size

Therapeutic group work theory suggests the optimal number of participants in a therapeutically-focused group is 6-8. However, consider registering up to 12 participants as members may not actually show up at all, may drop out, or not attend all sessions due to various reasons. You may also want to consider starting a waitlist if there is enough interest, allowing those individuals first choice on a subsequent session offered.

### Promotion

Included in the Resources section is a poster example, along with social media assets.

### Registration & Group Composition

It is extremely useful if people register early enough to have a telephone or zoom conversation with everyone who has expressed interest in registering in the group, prior to commencing the program. Not everyone who initially considers registering may be ready for a group experience and may benefit from a referral to individual support within your center or within their community prior to attending a therapeutic group. To ensure the best fit and most comfortable experience for everyone in the group it is beneficial to set up these pre-group orientation calls with each potential group participant to go over the following information.

## Orientation Call Checklist

- Review the goals of the group and clarify that it is not a group designed specifically to focus on the development of creative writing skills, rather a therapeutic journey of healing and self-discovery.
- Clarify that while this is a “therapeutic” group, it is unable to fill the need anyone might have for individual counselling, due to the facilitator(s) needing to ensure that each participant has a fair share of time to talk in the group each week.
- Clarify that while all participants will have experience with cancer, it will not be a primary focus of the group. They should however feel comfortable sharing about their cancer experience if it comes up for them in their writing or in group discussion.
- Determine if there might be other significant life events that could prevent them from being fully present in the group process (e.g., loss of job, death in the family)
- Reiterate their presence is important and missing more than one session will be felt by the group. Confirm they are not planning to be away on vacation for several group sessions and that they are able to commit to regular attendance (barring unexpected circumstances).

**The first week of the program focuses on resilience and ‘what is sustaining you’, therefore if participants are not able to attend the first week it is highly recommended, they do not continue with group and are therefore encouraged to re-join in a subsequent offering.**

## Space Set-up & Dry Run

Preparation is key to start your group off on the right foot, although you must also always be prepared for bumps and unexpected glitches along the way. If offering an online or hybrid group, testing technology in advance of the first session is critical. The more comfortable you feel with the technology and set up, the more at ease your participants will feel as well.

If your group will be in person, set up your space in advance to ensure you have enough space to accommodate any social distancing (due to COVID-related protocols or other immune-compromised related concerns) or other physical accommodations required (i.e., wheelchairs). You may also want to consider having a few tables for folks to write on, while having a circle they can come back to for the group discussion. If your space is smaller, perhaps consider providing clip boards for them to write on.

**TIP** - Consider supplying your participants with a personal notebook These can be easily purchased at the dollar store and are a nice keepsake for future reflection.

# Week 1 – What is sustaining you?

## Objective

To create a safe container for the group and for each participant by initiating reflection on their past and present strengths and supports. The goal is not to dive into the problem-saturated story of cancer right at the start. Doing so runs the risk of overly focusing on and reinforcing worries and pain and limiting people’s sense of self to only their diagnosis. Beginning the journey with a focus on what has been sustaining them, while living with a cancer diagnosis, allows participants to bring mindful awareness to the fact there is more to them than their diagnosis and begins to assist them in identifying their personal values and support systems that are, or have been, important to them on their cancer journey.

## Narrative Therapy Tip for Facilitators

This week’s focus allows us to introduce the narrative therapy concept of individuals having access to multiple possible storylines from the range of various events and experiences in their life. This begins the process of assisting people in truly considering themselves as more than their diagnosis or problems and considering preferred storylines, which might have more to do with resilience, or sustaining relationships. Since people are so complex, as facilitators we cannot know ahead of time what participants might choose to focus on in relation to an alternative or preferred storyline. It is also possible that a participant might already feel “stuck” and completely defined by their diagnosis, in which case facilitators allow the space for that and gently and with curiosity ask about how that person has kept going while feeling so overwhelmed by their cancer journey.

## Agenda

Time	Item
5 mins	<b>Welcome &amp; Land Acknowledgment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overview of Session</li><li>• Roundtable Introductions</li><li>• Group Norms + Housekeeping</li><li>• Introduce Writing Prompt + Writing Session</li><li>• Group Discussion</li><li>• Wrap-up &amp; Introduce theme for next week</li></ul>
15 mins	<b>1) Roundtable Introductions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name, what drew you to this program, fun fact about yourself</li></ul>

**TIP** - You can find resources on creating a personalized land acknowledgement in the resource section of the guidebook.

10 min

## 2) Group Norms + Housekeeping

### i) Confidentiality

- **Everything written and shared in the group is confidential.** Given the level of vulnerability some of these exercises may entail, we ask that everyone respects the principle that what is shared in this group, stays in this group.
- **Participants are not required to read aloud their writing** and can participate in responding to others and sharing reflections instead if comfortable.
- **Participants may share only what they are comfortable sharing.** It is asked that everyone is respectful to those that do choose to share.

### ii) Participant Self-Care

- It is possible that certain discussions may prompt some emotional distress for participants that could be difficult to process within the group setting. Participants have the option to access brief one-on-one support outside of the group setting with facilitators or other supports, if necessary.
- If someone needs to leave, please message one of the co-facilitators (in chat or send us a note via email)

### iii) Zoom Etiquette

- Everyone is asked to keep themselves muted at all times, except for when speaking.
- When everyone is writing, participants may wish to turn off the sound on their devices along with keeping themselves muted on Zoom. This way, if participants have questions for the facilitators during the 20-minute writing period, they can unmute themselves, turn on their sound and ask their questions of the facilitators and this will not disrupt other members that are writing.
- In order to develop a safe and trusting community within the group, it is suggested that everyone keep their cameras on if you are able to do so. This will help stimulate meaningful engagement and maintain communication amongst everyone.
- If possible, participants will find a quiet and private place away from any others in their home, or wear headsets so that material shared in the group will remain private.

## 3) Group Charter

Supplies: Flip chart and markers and/or share screen to type onto slide

Brainstorm what the group needs to make this feel like a safe and enjoyable space/group

*If the following are not brought up within the group brainstorming session, facilitator should add the following to list:*

- We ask that no criticism or suggestions are provided regarding the writing but rather the focus is on encouraging one another and listening and honouring the stories and themes shared (for the purposes of encouraging creativity, expression of thoughts and emotions and avoiding unproductive tension).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refrain from giving advice to each other (though many individuals may have had shared experiences, everyone’s perceptions and unique personal situations may be unique).</li> <li>• Attempt to be aware of the need for everyone to have time to talk. Some will be quieter and some chattier than others.</li> </ul>
<b>5 mins</b>	<p><b>Introduction of writing prompt &amp; writing tip</b></p> <p><b>Briefly review the theme of the week described under “Narrative Therapy Tip for Facilitators”.</b> People are so much more than a diagnosis or difficulty – people also develop resilience and ways of managing with change and difficulties:</p> <p><b>Prompt:</b> Imagine yourself as a plant that you connect with, real or imagined (e.g., flower, fruit, vegetable, tree). Imagine you are transplanted to a new area and hope to grow.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the components that you would need to survive and thrive in this unknown environment?</li> <li>• What would be present in a gardener’s toolkit or environment that helps you in this transition, brings you comfort, protects you, and prepares you for the future?</li> <li>• How does your image of this plant and the process of transition parallel your sense of self and what sustains you in your journey?</li> </ul> <p><b>Creative Writing Tool of the Week: Prose.</b></p> <p>Prose involves regular grammar and punctuation rules, sentences and paragraphs, and often does not contain a deliberate rhyme scheme. Prose can be simple and straightforward with a focus on the meaning behind the words, can use colourful and elaborate language and structure, or a combination of both.</p> <p>Prose can use either first or third-person language (i.e., “I was transplanted . . .” or “The plant was transplanted . . .”.)</p> <p><b>You are welcome to choose any other writing style you are comfortable with.</b></p>
<b>20 mins</b>	<b>Silent writing time</b>
<b>30 mins</b>	<p><b>Group Discussion Prompts</b></p> <p>During the discussion is a good time to offer validation of each participant’s subjective experiences, while also creating opportunities to <b>uncover/honour the knowledge/skills they have had in resisting the negative effects of their cancer experiences on their sense of self.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to express curiosity about their personal values (small ‘v’ versus ‘V’ values). The fact that you seem so committed to trying your best to flourish after being transplanted, what does that imply you value and prefer in life? Does your story of how your plant managed,</li> </ul>

	<p>suggest how you might also be attempting to manage and respond to the cancer? How do these qualities/strengths/values help you in standing up against and resisting what cancer might otherwise be trying to convince you of about yourself?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What might you name your response to the cancer diagnosis and journey? Resiliency? Perseverance? Faith? Stick-to-it-ness? Hope? Commitment to loved-ones?</li> <li>• In addition to past skills, what new skills, strengths, new wisdom, new abilities are you developing?</li> <li>• You could also ask what skills they had prior to the cancer diagnosis that are still helpful now.</li> <li>• You will be able to see themes and patterns as more participants share their writing. You can comment on these similarities or ask them what they notice as commonalities.</li> </ul>
<b>5 mins</b>	<b>Wrap-up &amp; Introduce theme for next week: “The Journey thus Far”</b>

**TIP** - We encourage facilitators to book the space for an extra 30mins post session. This allows enough buffer for the group to easily disperse without feeling rushed. This time can also be used for a debrief between facilitators and plan for the next session.



## Week 2 - The journey thus far

### Objective

To offer participants the opportunity to share their cancer journey thus far, in a safe/brave environment. This will begin to lay the foundation for deconstructing the elements of the problem storyline in the coming weeks.

### Narrative Therapy Tip for Facilitators

Problem storylines are the stories we create and tell ourselves and others that limit descriptions of ourselves to only those events related to the problem or illness in our lives. These storylines that only focus on the painful experiences have limiting effects on our identity, our lives and our experience of it. The goal of narrative therapy is to support individuals in understanding there is so much more to each person than even those significant painful events in their life. All the other, seemingly less significant, events in our lives offer the possibility of alternate storylines. As such, we can reauthor our lives by creating new and preferred narratives when we begin to uncover other events in our lives where we have experienced other events that might link together into a plot of resilience, for example. In addition, when we think critically about how we've come to know what we know about ourselves, we can begin to think of our problems as separate from our sense of self, which creates space for new ways of considering the effects of those problems on ourselves and our relationships. This supports people in being able to have a greater sense of agency in their lives as they make decisions about how they would evaluate those effects and consider what that implies they value in their lives and in their relationships.

### Agenda

Time	Item
10 mins	<b>Welcome &amp; Land Acknowledgment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Address any housekeeping items (any regrets received from any participants unable to make the session, announcements etc.)</li><li>• Briefly discuss how everyone has been (anything that came up for folks after last week's session?)</li><li>• Review Charter</li><li>• Summary of theme from last week</li></ul>
10 mins	<b>Introduction of Writing Activity and Writing Time</b>  Briefly review the theme of the week described under "Narrative Therapy Tip for Facilitators".

	<p>Remind participants that last week was focused on what had sustained them and kept them going through challenging times. However, that does not mean they have not experienced pain. This is the one week of the group in which time is specifically given to consider ‘the journey thus far’ but the hope is to balance any painful memories with the reminder that they have survived thus far and can focus back on what has sustained them.</p> <p><b>Prompt:</b> You receive some difficult news. As you are leaving to go home, on your way out, you walk through a long hallway with artwork hung up on the walls to your left and right.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What artwork do you see and what does it suggest about your journey thus far?</li> <li>• Does the hallway have twists and turns or is it straight?</li> <li>• What else do you see or encounter in the hallway?</li> <li>• What do you expect when you reach the end of the hallway and arrive at home?</li> <li>• Who were you before receiving the difficult news and who do you continue to be as you travel this hallway?</li> </ul> <p><b>Creative Writing Tool of the Week: Short Story (1<sup>st</sup> Person narrative).</b> You may try writing this by describing this situation as if you are the one walking through the hallway. The first-person narrative can be used to share opinions/thoughts/feelings in a personal manner with the reader/listener, and create a relationship with the reader.</p> <p><b>Some tips:</b> Try to introduce this narration type at the beginning (i.e., Moby Dick begins with “Call me Ishmael”). Additionally, you do not need to always say, “I think” or “I feel”. By expressing your thoughts/feelings/sensations, these interpretations can say a lot (i.e., “my heart filled with a radiating warmth as I gazed across the meadow”).</p> <p><b>You are welcome to choose any other writing style you are comfortable with.</b></p> <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>TIP</b> - A helpful tip for new writers is that the goal is not to make their writing ‘perfect’. It is about the process, rather than the result. Remind participants they only need to share what feels comfortable to them, if at all.</p> </div>
<p><b>20 mins</b></p>	<p><b>Silent writing time</b></p>
<p><b>45 mins</b></p>	<p><b>Group Discussion Prompts</b></p> <p>Remind them of the concept of people being multi-storied: We do not just have one story to tell about ourselves. The facilitators might share that if they were a child, a friend, or a partner they could tell different stories related to each of those identities.</p> <p>We are transformative and multifaceted beings full of complexity, carrying many stories with us. We are still changing and adding more layers and stories each day.</p>

	<p>Each participant is much more than a person with a cancer diagnosis, a ‘cancer patient’, or even a relative of a cancer patient. As each person shares their story, or what surfaced in this writing today, the following questions can be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the different elements that came up in the hallway journey?</li> <li>• Thinking back to last week’s conversation on what sustains and supports people during difficult times/journeys, are these available today?</li> <li>• If you hear a problem-saturated story, consider responding with something like, “This sounds difficult and painful, and I also remember some of what you shared last week about what has been sustaining you. Are those supports available to you on this journey to help keep you going/support you?”</li> </ul> <p><i>IMPORANT NOTE: Ensure you refer back to week 1 and highlight the positives/strengths/coping strategies they have used before and which may be part of the preferred/resilience storyline before ending the session.</i></p>
5 mins	<b>Wrap-up &amp; introduce theme for next week: “Values, Hopes, Dreams &amp; Preferences”</b>

## Week 3 - Values, Hopes, Dreams & Preferences

### Objective

To create a transformative space for members to express more than their immediate thoughts and feelings in response to their cancer diagnosis, assisting them to think about what their reactions imply about what they hold dear in their lives.

### Narrative Therapy Tip for Facilitators

A storyline (whether about the illness/problem or about something totally different) is not only made up of “just the facts”. A story is not only made up of a series of events that have occurred over time according to a certain theme/plot, it also is interwoven with nuance and implications about what the author values and hopes for in life. A facilitator might explain that when sharing a story of how upset they were when a friend was late for a coffee date, they could be implying how important being on time is to them, or how important friendship is . . . or how important coffee is – the listener cannot assume what is implied but can be curious and ask. It is also useful to explain that when discussing ‘values’, narrative therapists/facilitators are meaning personal small-‘v’ values – not socially or religiously imposed big-‘V’ values – although for some people there will be an overlap in these values/Values.

### Agenda

Time	Item
10 mins	<b>Welcome &amp; Land Acknowledgment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Address any housekeeping items (any regrets from any participants unable to make the session, announcements etc.)</li><li>• Briefly discuss how everyone has been (anything that came up for folks after last week’s session?)</li><li>• Review Charter</li><li>• Summary of theme from last week</li></ul>
10 mins	<b>Introduction of Writing Activity &amp; Writing Time</b>  <b>Briefly review the theme of the week described under “Narrative Therapy Tip for Facilitators”</b>

**TIP** - Some people find it very difficult to begin to think about what their personal values are. It is helpful to be transparent about how some people find this difficult and that it can be helpful to think in terms of small ‘v’ values rather than big ‘V’ values. Provide an example: “I value honesty over all kinds of other qualities”, for instance.

	<p><b>Prompt:</b> You are standing in a dark room/space, unsure of the way out, when you hear a sound. This sound is familiar to you - comforting or hopeful. When you concentrate on it, you recognize it and it guides you out of the room/space. Describe what you hear. Describe the source of the sound.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does this sound assist you and guide you out of the dark space you were in?</li> <li>• What do you hope the sound implies is out there?</li> <li>• What has the sound been guiding you towards?</li> </ul> <p><b>Creative Writing Tool of the Week: Poetry</b></p> <p>You can imagine how your five senses would respond in this situation (what you see, hear, feel, smell, taste), try using rhyme, metaphors, or similes (“She is the sun” vs. “She is like the sun”). Alternatively, pay attention to the rhythm or sound of the words (i.e., stressed and unstressed syllables like “my CAT is BIG” or “MOTHer” where capitalization indicates stressed syllables).</p> <p><b>You are welcome to choose any other writing style you are comfortable with.</b></p>
20 mins	<b>Silent writing time</b>
45 mins	<p><b>Group Discussion Prompts</b></p> <p>Hopes and dreams are not necessarily about getting better, but might refer to the initiatives/values/beliefs that have strengthened their resilience and supported them in standing up against those limiting descriptions of themselves that are only in relation to cancer.</p> <p><b>Whereas session two focused on the problem storyline, while also looking for the supports that sustained them, this session focuses more on what this all implies in terms of their values, hopes, dreams and preferences.</b></p> <p>The last session was more related to “just the facts” over time (the landscape of action in narrative therapy’s re-authoring conversation) while focussing more on values, hopes, dreams and preferences is related to the landscape of identity in narrative therapy’s re-authoring conversation.</p> <p><b>Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you want to find your way out of the dark room?</li> <li>• What helped you navigate your way out of the dark room?</li> <li>• What was implied is important to you about finding your way out?</li> <li>• What was sustaining a sense of hope that you would make it out of the room?</li> <li>• What values and hopes kept you going?</li> <li>• What does the sound/image that came to mind represent for you? How does that connect to your values, hopes &amp; dreams?</li> </ul>

**5 mins**

**Wrap-up & introduce theme for next week: "Reciprocal Relationships"**

## Week 4 – Reciprocal relationships

### Objective

To honour the supports/people in the participants' lives and acknowledge how their identities are enriched by the presence of these other people. This allows for an exploration of the two-way nature of all relationships and how others have helped in co-constructing their sense of self/ identity while they have also impacted these other people.

### Narrative Therapy Tip for Facilitators

Narrative therapy's focus on the social construction of identity and the importance of relationships influences this week's session. In particular, this week's session is influenced by narrative therapy's *re-membering* conversations. In this type of conversation, we consider our lives as if they are like a club/gym, or association of some type, and people have memberships in our personal club/association. We, at times, might consider revoking someone's membership in our club of life, and at other times we might upgrade someone's membership to a lifetime membership. When we 're-member' in this context, we are reorganizing memberships in our club of life and are particularly interested in celebrating a good/significant person, elevating their membership status. Some people have few significant others in their lives but might want to focus on the importance of a famous person, a professional helper, a pet, or character in a book. This conversation also celebrates the *two-way* nature of relationships and asks participants to consider what it means to the other person that they have so appreciated their contributions and supports. If they are discussing someone they don't know personally, they can still be asked to consider what it would mean to the other person if they knew what a significant impact they had.

### Agenda

Time	Item
10 mins	<b>Welcome &amp; Land Acknowledgment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Address any housekeeping items (any regrets from any participants are unable to make the session, announcements etc.)</li><li>• Briefly discuss how everyone has been (anything that came up for folks after last week's session?)</li><li>• Review Charter</li><li>• Summary of theme from last week</li></ul>

<p><b>10 mins</b></p>	<p><b>Introduction of Writing Activity and Writing Time</b></p> <p>Briefly review the theme of the week described under “Narrative Therapy Tip for Facilitators”</p> <p><b>TIP</b> - Our society sometimes makes it difficult for people to recognize and articulate how much they have given to others – especially those who have played a supportive role in their life. Encourage people to consider that even <u>being willing to accept help from someone can have a positive impact on the helper.</u></p> <p><b>Prompt:</b> Think about your life as if it is a club, or association, and all the people in your life have a membership, ranging from 'pay-as-you-go' to 'annual' or even 'lifetime'. As you think of the members in your club, who comes to mind today as having been significant in terms of having influenced or inspired you, or supported you through hard times?</p> <p>Imagine upgrading their membership from gold to platinum - a lifetime membership with access to the VIP lounge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What might this person then write in their thank-you speech as they accept this upgraded membership?</li> </ul> <p><b>Creative Writing Tool of the Week: Speech</b></p> <p>Imagining yourself as the person receiving the upgraded lifetime membership, you may try writing a thank-you letter or acceptance speech.</p> <p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be specific about who you are thanking</li> <li>• Be clear about what you are thanking them for</li> <li>• Explain what it means to you to receive this platinum VIP-access</li> <li>• Include what you admire and value about the person who has given you this gift/upgraded membership</li> </ul>
<p><b>45 mins</b></p>	<p><b>Group Discussion Prompts</b></p> <p>It is helpful to remain curious about the two-way nature of relationships. It is sometimes difficult to realize how much we have given to the people who have helped us but try to remain curious about this.</p> <p><b>Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you at all surprised by who you decided to write about?</li> <li>• What surprised you when reflecting on your impact on this other person?</li> <li>• What does this other person most appreciate about you?</li> <li>• Does this link back to what you most value?</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are there other themes, connections emerging for you?</li></ul>
<b>5 mins</b>	<b>Wrap-up &amp; introduce theme for next week: "Extending Connectedness"</b>

## Week 5 - Extending connectedness

### Objective

To acknowledge members' contributions to other people's lives (and to the world/their communities), and hence to extend their connectedness: No person is an island unto themselves.

### Narrative Therapy Tip for Facilitators

The more often a story is shared, the more robust it becomes. The newer a story is, the more vulnerable it is to being forgotten. When narrative therapists focus on "thickening" a new storyline it is in order to add further details to it – it is a little bit like weaving more details and colours into what was initially an outline of a tapestry. Having begun the process of looking at the two-way nature of important support people in their lives last week, participants are asked to consider further rich connectedness and how simple events in life may have been rich with meaning and awe.

Events and actions in life which might be considered mundane or ordinary can hold moments of extraordinariness - through kindness, courage, wonder, and adventure. Even simple interactions we have with others can hold a great deal of meaning in their lives. In our lives, just as the people we meet change us, we also change the lives of those we meet.

### Agenda

Time	Item
10 mins	<b>Welcome &amp; Land Acknowledgment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Address any housekeeping items (any regrets from any participants unable to make the session, announcements etc.)</li><li>• Briefly discuss how everyone has been (anything that came up for folks after last week's session?)</li><li>• Review Charter</li><li>• Summary of theme from last week</li></ul>
10 mins	<b>Introduction of Writing Activity &amp; Writing Time</b> <b>Briefly review the theme of the week described under "Narrative Therapy Tip for Facilitators"</b>

**TIP** - Meaningful relationships are always two-sided. We don't usually stick around and remain friends with someone if they don't fill our bucket in some way, and the same can be said for those who are friends with us. It's important to reinforce the reciprocal nature of relationships this week and the community map is helpful in **illustrating the impact each of us has on those in our lives.**

	<p><b>Prompt:</b> Imagine a map where you are able to mark all of the different places where you have interacted with your community, other people, and the world around you. Whether this is a map of a local neighborhood or beyond that, we have all made an impact on the world around us. An ordinary impact may start at one place or person, but often spreads to positively impact other places and people. There can be ripple effects to all kinds of people we have never met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are some of the places, people or encounters on your map and how do you think your impact might have spread to and affected others?</li> <li>• Which impacts are you most proud of and which do you want to be most remembered for?</li> <li>• Which impact surprised you in how it spread and affected others?</li> </ul> <p><b>Creative Writing Tool of the Week: 3<sup>rd</sup> person narrative.</b></p> <p>Write as if an outsider was describing the places, people and encounters on your map and the impacts you have made.</p> <p><b>Example:</b> “Here, on the west side of town is our community center, located just near a beautiful stream. Jamil plays a big role here on Mondays as the longstanding leader of our weekly coffee and cookie hour. He’s the glue that keeps many of us coming back week after week, with his warm smile and great sense of humour. He really makes you feel heard!”</p>
20 mins	<b>Silent writing time</b>
45 mins	<p><b>Group Discussion Prompts</b></p> <p>No person is an island, however much of Western culture focuses on individuals. We live and breathe in communities – even if they are small or limited.</p> <p><b>Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you notice any patterns on your map in terms of what has been of most importance to you?</li> <li>• Where is your sense of connectedness coming from? Do these relate to your values, hopes and dreams we discussed a few weeks’ ago?</li> <li>• What is one simple impact you may have had on the world around you? (a flower you’ve planted, a bird you’ve fed, child/family, impact on your friends)</li> </ul>
5 mins	<b>Wrap-up &amp; introduction theme for next week: “Celebrating connectedness &amp; resilience”</b>

## Week 6 – Celebrating connectedness & resilience

### Objective

To acknowledge how beneficial it is to pause from time to time, look back and celebrate our resilience and ability to continue even while experiencing difficulty. To celebrate the interconnectedness of people and invite participants to also review the group experiences over the past weeks and speak to any new perspectives they might like to describe.

### Narrative Therapy Tip for Facilitators

Narrative therapists often engage in what have become known as ‘definitional ceremonies’/ ‘outsider witnessing’ practices. These practices have been influenced by the recognition of both the importance of the impact of people in our lives – in terms of how we think about ourselves, and the two-way support offered – and also in terms of the importance of having people witness and acknowledge our lives and experiences. Naming and celebrating these people and these elements of our lives can further strengthen these positive aspects.

### CREATING YOUR THERAPEUTIC DOCUMENT!

**TIP** - Narrative therapists use therapeutic documents, from time to time, to celebrate the insights of those people with whom they have had therapeutic conversations. **For this group, the narrative therapeutic document will take the shape of a poem.** It is important that these poems/therapeutic documents are **primarily made up of words and phrases used by the participants.** They do not need to be finely tuned pieces of poetry that you would submit to an English teacher, but rather will be more like pieces of everyday language that you have strung together in the shape of a poem. This is not about shining the light on the facilitator’s skill in writing but is rather about celebrating the words and phrases and insights of the participants.

**NOTE:** To ensure you are using the participants words as the primary text for your short poem, it is **crucial to take notes as they are sharing today.** When reviewing your notes, circle the words or phrases that sparkle /jump out at you from the page. This will help to ensure you are using THEIR words and phrases rather than your own. *If needed, you may also refer to any notes taken from previous weeks, if applicable, and if you are certain you can attribute them to your assigned participant(s).*

Ultimately the goal is that your poem **will be another reinforcement of their preferred storyline, values and personal empowerment** they have discovered throughout this journey through words!

## Agenda

Time	Item
10 mins	<p><b>Welcome &amp; Land Acknowledgment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address any housekeeping items (any regrets from any participants unable to make the session, announcements etc.)</li> <li>• Briefly discuss how everyone has been (anything that came up for folks after last week's session?)</li> <li>• Review Charter</li> <li>• Summary of theme from last week</li> </ul>
10 mins	<p><b>Introduction of Writing Activity &amp; Writing Theme</b></p> <p>Briefly review the <b>theme of this final week by referring to the objective</b> described above (rather than the facilitators tip as in past weeks).</p> <p><b>Prompt:</b> Imagine that you are on a walk and meet your past self who is sitting on a bench, overlooking a beautiful view.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What wisdom would you share with your past self that could help them navigate their journey with grace and meaning?</li> <li>• What can you share that would encourage and sustain them through the ups and downs, including possible disappointment and pain?</li> <li>• What would you share about what sustains you, your identity, your values and hopes, relationships, and your impact on the world?</li> </ul> <p><b>Creative Writing Tool of the Week:</b> You may wish to write using <b>any writing style</b>.</p> <p><b>Prose:</b> writing that often contains regular grammar and punctuation rules, sentences and paragraphs, and often does not contain a deliberate rhyme scheme (i.e., Letter: Dear self,).</p> <p><b>Short Story (1st Person):</b> describe the situation as if you are the one experiencing it (i.e., what are you seeing, hearing, feeling, thinking). Example: "I opened the door and saw her."</p> <p><b>Poetry:</b> writing that may use stanzas (groups of lines/phrases), rhyme, rhythm (patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables), and imagery (metaphors, similes, describing what the five senses are experiencing). Example: "Hope is the thing with feathers/that perches in the soul."</p> <p><b>Dialogue:</b> describe what two or more people are saying to one another (you may want to include the speakers' actions, facial expressions or tone). Example: "I love pineapple on pizza," she said, with a defiant smile.</p>

	<p><b>Narrative (3rd person):</b> describe the situation as if you are watching it as an outsider (you may or may not want to describe the character's emotions/thoughts). Example: "He saw the boat and it reminded him of his past."</p>
20 mins	<p><b>Silent group writing</b></p>
45 mins	<p><b>Group Discussion Prompts</b></p> <p>Use what participants share to thicken new perspectives and new learnings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are some of the ideas and themes that stand out for you the most about what you've uncovered through this journey?</li> <li>• What has been most significant or most meaningful for you?</li> <li>• What will you take away with you from this group as being precious to you?</li> <li>• If you have identified what is precious and of value to you, how might you hold on to that and remember it?</li> </ul> <p>Facilitators will decide before the group session for which of the group members they will each write a therapeutic document, ensuring each member is assigned to one of the facilitators. Facilitators will then take particularly careful note of the words and phrases their assigned group members use when describing their writing today.</p> <p>Within a week of the last group session facilitators will send each member a follow-up note including a therapeutic document (See tip above).</p>
5 mins	<p><b>Wrap-up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank the participants for engagement over the weeks, consider going around the circle and asking folks to say a word/phrase that sums up their experience – be sure to include yourselves in this.</li> <li>• Let them know you'll be sending around some resources should they wish to continue with their creative writing (found at the end of this guidebook).</li> <li>• If your branch utilizes post-program evaluations let them know this will be sent out as well.</li> </ul>

## Resources

### **Additional creative writing prompts once JTW has ended**

If participants would like to continue writing and reflecting on themes discussed, you can provide them with the following resources

\*Please note that these prompts were not developed by Wellspring and are not specifically for narrative therapy purposes.

<https://writingthroughcancer.ca/>

<https://dancingthroughtherain.com/50-best-therapeutic-journal-prompts-for-mental-health-and-healing/>

<https://courageousandmindful.com/50-best-therapeutic-journal-writing-prompts-for-mental-health/>

<https://nerdknowslife.com/2018/06/05/50-therapeutic-journal-prompts-for-mental-health/>

<https://psychcentral.com/blog/ready-set-journal-64-journaling-prompts-for-self-discovery#the-journal-prompts>

<https://thinkwritten.com/365-creative-writing-prompts/>

### **Land Acknowledgements**

<https://cansolvekd.ca/resources/training-modules/wabishki-bizhiko-skaanj/land-acknowledgment/>

<https://native-land.ca/resources/territory-acknowledgment/>

Program Logo





## Promotional Poster

Edit each text box in the poster below with the corresponding program information. You may also choose to include a brief bio and headshot from your facilitator(s).



### How have your values and strengths shaped your cancer journey?

Fusing a variety of approaches, including narrative therapy and creative writing, this 6 week program will provide participants with an opportunity to explore the multiple stories that have shaped their lives and provide support in creating their preferred personal narratives.

Program Date, Time & In-Person location

Registration Information & deadline

## Welcome Email Template – Online Participants

Thank you for registering for the upcoming Journey Through Words program at Wellspring, we begin next week on [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)!

We are looking forward to creating a warm environment where you will be invited to engage in reflection, through the creative writing process, and explore the ways your strengths and values have supported you in your cancer journey.

Since you have signed up to join us online, here is the zoom link. It will remain the same for each session, so save this email in order to come back to it each week to access the link.

Please aim to log on 10 minutes before the start time on the first day, to ensure we can help troubleshoot any tech issues ahead of our start time.

Join Zoom Meeting: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Meeting ID: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Passcode: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

What you'll need:

- Pen/pencil
- Notebook/paper
- Water/coffee/tea
- Open and curious mind and heart

If you have any questions before we start or need to get a hold of us on the day of the group, please feel free to reach out to [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) [at Click or tap here to enter text.](#) or give us a call at the centre at [Click or tap here to enter text.](#).

We look forward to joining you on this journey through words,

Warmest,

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Journey Through Words Facilitators

## Welcome Email Template – In-person participants

Thank you for registering for the upcoming Journey Through Words program at Wellspring, we begin next week on [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)!

We are looking forward to creating a warm environment where you will be invited to engage in reflection, through the creative writing process, and explore the ways your strengths and values have supported you in your cancer journey.

Since you've signed up to join us in-person at Wellspring, if you have not been to our space before, the address is [Click or tap here to enter text.](#).

Parking and COVID Safety Information: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) Attached is a parking map for reference.

Please feel free to bring in your own pens and notebooks, but we will also have some available for use.

As a reminder our program runs from [Click or tap here to enter text.](#), please feel free to arrive 10-15 mins early to get settled in.

If you have any questions before we start or need to get a hold of us on the day of the group, please feel free to reach out to [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) at [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) or give us a call at the centre at [Click or tap here to enter text.](#).

We look forward to joining you on this journey through words,

Warmest,

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Journey Through Words Facilitators

# Weekly Slides



# *Journey through Words*

Creative Writing Workshop

Week 1





# Land Acknowledgment



# Session Overview



Roundtable Introductions



Group Norms & Housekeeping



Group Charter



Introduce weekly theme & writing prompt



Writing & Discussion



Wrap-up & Introduce theme for next week





# Who's in the room?



Your name



What drew you to this program?



Fun Fact about yourself  
(yes you have one!)







Shhh...

# Confidentiality

Everything written & shared with the  
group is confidential





# TAKE

CARE OF

YOURSELF

Check-in with yourself  
&  
seek support if needed





Please remain muted unless speaking



Keep camera on if you are able



Find a private space or use headphones



If you need to leave early, please let us know



# ZOOM ETIQUETTE





# Group Charter





**WHAT IS SUSTAINING YOU?**





## WRITING PROMPT



Imagine yourself as a plant that you connect with, real or imagined (ex. flower, fruit, vegetable, tree). Imagine you are transplanted to a new area and hope to grow.

- What are the components that you would need to survive and thrive in this unknown environment?
- What would be present in a gardener's toolkit or environment that sustains you, brings you comfort, protects you, and prepares you for the future?
- How does your image of this plant and the process of transition parallel your sense of self and what sustains you in your journey?



A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a quill pen, writing in an open notebook. The notebook has several pages, some with handwritten text in cursive. The background is dark, and the lighting is focused on the hand and the pen.

# Creative Writing Tool

→ **Prose**

Prose involves regular grammar and punctuation rules, sentences and paragraphs, and often does not contain a deliberate rhyme scheme. Prose can be simple and straightforward with a focus on the meaning behind the words, can use colorful and elaborate language and structure, or a combination of both.

Prose can use either first or third-person language (i.e., “I was transplanted . . .” or “The plant was transplanted . . .”.)

**You are welcome to choose any other writing style you are comfortable with.**



## WRITING PROMPT



Imagine yourself as a plant that you connect with, real or imagined (ex. flower, fruit, vegetable, tree). Imagine you are transplanted to a new area and hope to grow.

- What are the components that you would need to survive and thrive in this unknown environment?
- What would be present in a gardener's toolkit or environment that sustains you, brings you comfort, protects you, and prepares you for the future?
- How does your image of this plant and the process of transition parallel your sense of self and what sustains you in your journey?





# GROUP DISCUSSION







**NEXT WEEK...**  
***THE JOURNEY THUS FAR***







# *Journey through Words*

Creative Writing Workshop

Week 2





# Land Acknowledgment





***THE JOURNEY THUS FAR***





# WRITING PROMPT



You receive some difficult news. As you are leaving to go home, on your way out, you walk through a long hallway with artwork hung up on the walls to your left and right.

- What artwork do you see and what does it suggest about your journey thus far?
- Does the hallway have turns or is it straight?
- What else do you see or encounter in the hallway?
- What can you expect when you reach the end of the hallway and arrive at home?
- Who were you before arriving and who do you continue to be when you leave this hallway?



A close-up photograph of a hand holding a fountain pen, writing in a notebook. The notebook is open, and the pen is in the process of writing on a page. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the notebook and the hand.

# Creative Writing Tool → Short Story

You may try writing this by describing this situation as if you are the one walking through the hallway. The first-person narrative can be used to share opinions/thoughts/feelings in a personal manner, and create a relationship with the reader/listener.

**Some tips:** Try to introduce this narration type at the beginning (i.e., Moby Dick begins with "Call me Ishmael"). Additionally, you do not need to always say, "I think" or "I feel". By expressing your thoughts/feelings/sensations, these interpretations can say a lot (i.e. my heart filled with a radiating warmth as I gazed across the meadow").

**You are welcome to choose any other writing style you are comfortable with.**



# WRITING PROMPT



You receive some difficult news. As you are leaving to go home, on your way out, you walk through a long hallway with artwork hung up on the walls to your left and right.

- What artwork do you see and what does it suggest about your journey thus far?
- Does the hallway have turns or is it straight?
- What else do you see or encounter in the hallway?
- What can you expect when you reach the end of the hallway and arrive at home?
- Who were you before arriving and who do you continue to be when you leave this hallway?





# ***GROUP DISCUSSION***







**NEXT WEEK...**  
***VALUES, HOPES & DREAMS***







# *Journey through Words*

Creative Writing Workshop

Week 3





# Land Acknowledgment





# ***VALUES, HOPES & DREAMS***







## WRITING PROMPT

You are standing in a dark room/space, unsure of the way out, when you hear a sound. This sound is familiar to you - comforting or hopeful. When you concentrate on it, you recognize it and it guides you out of the room/space. Describe what you hear. Describe the source of the sound.

- How does this sound assist you and guide you out of the dark space you were in?
- What do you hope the sound implies is out there?
- What has the sound been guiding you towards?



A close-up photograph of a hand holding a fountain pen, writing in a notebook. The notebook is open, and the pen is in the process of writing on a page. The background is slightly blurred, showing the texture of the paper and the leather cover of the notebook.

# Creative Writing Tool



# Poetry

You can imagine how your five senses would respond in this situation (what you see, hear, feel, smell, taste), try using rhyme, metaphors, or similes (“She is the sun” vs. “She is like the sun”). Alternatively, pay attention to the rhythm or sound of the words (i.e., stressed and unstressed syllables like “my CAT is BIG” or “MOTHer” where capitalization indicates stressed syllables).

**You are welcome to choose any other writing style you are comfortable with.**



A narrow, dimly lit stone tunnel with a path of cobblestones leading to a bright opening at the end. The walls are made of rough-hewn stone, and the floor is a path of smooth, rounded stones. Light streams in from the opening at the end of the tunnel, creating a strong contrast and highlighting the texture of the stone.

# WRITING PROMPT

You are standing in a dark room/space, unsure of the way out, when you hear a sound. This sound is familiar to you - comforting or hopeful. When you concentrate on it, you recognize it and it guides you out of the room/space. Describe what you hear. Describe the source of the sound.

- How does this sound assist you and guide you out of the dark space you were in?
- What do you hope the sound implies is out there?
- What has the sound been guiding you towards?





# GROUP DISCUSSION







***NEXT WEEK...***  
***RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS***





# *Journey through Words*

Creative Writing Workshop

Week 4





# Land Acknowledgment





# ***RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS***





# WRITING PROMPT



Think about your life as if it is a club, or association, and all the people in your life have a membership, ranging from 'pay-as-you-go' to 'annual' or even 'lifetime'. As you think of the members in your club, who comes to mind today as having been significant in terms of having influenced or inspired you, or supported you through hard times?

Imagine upgrading their membership from gold to platinum - a lifetime membership with access to the VIP lounge.

- What might this person then write in their thank-you speech as they accept this upgraded membership?



A close-up photograph of a hand holding a fountain pen, writing in a notebook. The notebook is open, and the pen is in the process of writing on a page. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the notebook and the hand.

# Creative Writing Tool

# Speech

Imagining yourself as the person receiving the upgraded lifetime membership, you may try writing a thank-you letter or acceptance speech.

## Tips:

- Be specific about who you are thanking
- Be clear about what you are thanking them for
- Explain what it means to you to receive this platinum VIP-access
- Include what you admire and value about the person who has given you this gift/upgraded membership

**You are welcome to choose any other writing style you are comfortable with.**



# WRITING PROMPT



Think about your life as if it is a club, or association, and all the people in your life have a membership, ranging from 'pay-as-you-go' to 'annual' or even 'lifetime'. As you think of the members in your club, who comes to mind today as having been significant in terms of having influenced or inspired you, or supported you through hard times?

Imagine upgrading their membership from gold to platinum - a lifetime membership with access to the VIP lounge.

- What might this person then write in their thank-you speech as they accept this upgraded membership?





# GROUP DISCUSSION







**NEXT WEEK...**  
**EXTENDING CONNECTIONS**







# *Journey through Words*

Creative Writing Workshop

Week 5





# Land Acknowledgment





**EXTENDING CONNECTIONS**







# WRITING PROMPT

Imagine a map where you are able to mark all of the different places where you have interacted with your community, other people, and the world around you. Whether this is a map of a local neighborhood or beyond that, we have all made an impact on the world around us. An ordinary impact may start at one place or person, but often spreads to positively impact other places and people. There can be ripple effects to all kinds of people we have never met.

- What are some of the places, people or encounters on your map and how do you think your impact might have spread to and affected others?
- Which impacts are you most proud of and which do you want to be most remembered for?
- Which impact surprised you in how it spread and affected others?



A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a fountain pen, writing in a notebook. The notebook is open, and the page shows some handwritten notes and a small sketch. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a desk or table.

# Creative Writing Tool → 3rd Person

Write as if an outsider was describing the places, people and encounters on your map and the impacts you have made.

**Example:** "Here, on the west side of town is our community center, located just near a beautiful stream. Jamil plays a big role here on Mondays as the longstanding leader of our weekly coffee and cookie hour. He's the glue that keeps many of us coming back week after week, with his warm smile and great sense of humour. He really makes you feel heard!"

**You are welcome to choose any other writing style you are comfortable with.**





# WRITING PROMPT

Imagine a map where you are able to mark all of the different places where you have interacted with your community, other people, and the world around you. Whether this is a map of a local neighborhood or beyond that, we have all made an impact on the world around us. An ordinary impact may start at one place or person, but often spreads to positively impact other places and people. There can be ripple effects to all kinds of people we have never met.

- What are some of the places, people or encounters on your map and how do you think your impact might have spread to and affected others?
- Which impacts are you most proud of and which do you want to be most remembered for?
- Which impact surprised you in how it spread and affected others?





# GROUP DISCUSSION







***NEXT WEEK...***  
***CELEBRATING CONNECTEDNESS &***  
***RESILIENCE***







# *Journey through Words*

Creative Writing Workshop

Week 6





# Land Acknowledgment





# **CELEBRATING CONNECTEDNESS & RESILIENCE**







# WRITING PROMPT

Imagine that you are on a walk and meet your past self who is sitting on a bench, overlooking a beautiful view.

- What wisdom would you share with your past self that could help them navigate their journey with grace and meaning?
- What can you share that would encourage and sustain them through the ups and downs, including possible disappointment and pain?
- What would you share about what sustains you, your identity, your values and hopes, relationships, and your impact on the world?



A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a fountain pen, writing in a notebook. The notebook is open, and the pen is in the process of writing on a page. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the notebook and the person's hand.

# Creative Writing Tool → Writer's Choice

**Prose:** writing that often contains regular grammar and punctuation rules, sentences and paragraphs, and often does not contain a deliberate rhyme scheme (i.e. Letter, Dear self,).

**Short Story (1st Person):** describe the situation as if you are the one experiencing it (i.e. what are you seeing, hearing, feeling, thinking). Example: "I opened the door and saw her."

**Poetry:** writing that may use stanzas (groups of lines/phrases), rhyme, rhythm (patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables), and imagery (metaphors, similes, describing what the five senses are experiencing). Example: "Hope is the thing with feathers/that perches in the soul."

**Dialogue:** describe what two or more people are saying to one another (you may want to include the speakers' actions, facial expressions or tone). Example: "I love pineapple on pizza," she said, with a defiant smile.

**Narrative ( 3rd person):** describe the situation as if you are watching it as an outsider (you you may or may not want to describe the character's emotions/thoughts). Example: "He saw the boat and it reminded him of his past."





# WRITING PROMPT

Imagine that you are on a walk and meet your past self who is sitting on a bench, overlooking a beautiful view.

- What wisdom would you share with your past self that could help them navigate their journey with grace and meaning?
- What can you share that would encourage and sustain them through the ups and downs, including possible disappointment and pain?
- What would you share about what sustains you, your identity, your values and hopes, relationships, and your impact on the world?





# GROUP DISCUSSION







**THANK YOU**

