

Community Writing Program Spotlight

Unlocking Creativity

Most writers have their very own built-in Mr. Censor. Your brain will begin to play tricks on you when you need to create a piece of writing (this is especially true for high-risk, graded writing you are asked to do for high school or college). You'll think of a topic to write about, but then Mr. Censor butts in. Mr. Censor says things like, "You call that writing? You can't even spell! What makes you think you can write a book? Who is going to want to read your story? Why are you even bothering, you talentless hack!

And on and on and on.

Everyone has a Mr. Censor in their life, but some Censors are louder than others. Some people have learned to live harmoniously with Mr. Censor. Others can tune him out. So how do you shut him up?

Remember that Mr. Censor's opinions of your writing are not the truth. But believing in yourself and not Censor's noisy voice takes practice. By writing a little every morning before you begin your day, you can learn to avoid Censor. This is called a *mind dump*.

Begin your day by mind dumping, or writing what Censor thinks of you (you're a lousy speller; you don't know punctuation from a hole in the ground; you never had an original thought in your life). Once you let Censor have his say, keep writing, emptying your mind of all

your worries. The idea is to dump everything out of your "thinking" brain and onto the paper: I'm worried I'm not good enough. *Everyone is so much more talented/prettier/likeable than me; the rent is due; I have to take my kids to the dentist; my car needs an oil change; I don't understand the assignment; I was up all night with a headache; I have to work all weekend. . .*

Keep going. Nothing is too stupid or silly to include in your mind dump. If left unchecked, our worries constipate our subconscious, blocking our creativity. Empty everything out that's been on your mind until all your worries and concerns are on the page in front of you.

After you've emptied your mind, notice how you feel, both physically and mentally.

After a mind dump, you'll breathe a little easier. You'll feel a little lighter. Now that essay for English class that's been nagging at your mind all week won't feel so overwhelming. You may feel like you can tackle that memoir you've been wanting to write. You might even have a new idea for a poem or short story. That flat tire you had on the way to work that was a catastrophe earlier, seems like a mere inconvenience now.

If you have trouble sleeping, try doing a mind dump right before bed to clear your thoughts. We all have worries, some we can do something about, but some we

To support the emerging local writers of the Community Writing Program at the Writers' Colony at Dairy Hollow, the *Lovely County Citizen* is providing space each week to showcase their work. Pieces will be selected by the program manager, and students must have taken at least one workshop in the Community Writing Program, which was launched on July 21. Selections from instructors and student mentors of the program will also be presented. For more information email alisontaylorbrown@me.com.

This Week's

Author:
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can't. Just acknowledging what's on our logical minds will clear a pathway for our creative minds to freely write the essay, paint the landscape, create the recipe, or anything else that takes a clear head and creative thought.

Once your mind is clear, Mr. Censor's voice won't be so loud. You'll see it for what it is, not the voice of reason but a blocking device to your creativity. Even professional writers and other creative artists have their own Censors; they've just learned how to either ignore them or work around and through them. Spending a few minutes each day on a mind dump will help you silence Mr. Censor and put you on the path to reaching your full cre-

ative potential.

For further reading on unlocking creativity, read *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity* by Julia Cameron.

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Newell-Mack will be joining Alison Taylor-Brown to teach Character, Setting and Dialogue on March 16 and March 19. The Saturday workshop will be held at the Club House at Holiday Island and the Tuesday workshop will be held at the Garden Bistro on North Main in Eureka Springs. The cost of each workshop is \$45. For more information or to register, contact Alison at alisontaylorbrown@me.com or 479 292-3665.

Community Writing Program 2013 schedule

Each workshop will be from 9-12 and 1-4. The cost for the all-day program is \$45. The first five workshops may be purchased together for the discounted price of \$200.

- Module 3 - March 16 & 19 - Character, Setting, Dialogue
- Module 4 - April 20 & 23 - Subtext,

High Events, Closings

- Module 5 - May 18 & 21 - Self-Editing and Publishing
- Module 6 - June 15 & 18 - Writing the Memoir

For more information and to register, contact Alison at alisontaylorbrown.com or 479 292-3665.