

# The Alchemy of Purposeful Memoir

## SEEKING JOY

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Catalysts for Writing

By

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**List: Using the Seeking Joy chart, list all the happy moments you can think of from various times in your life.**

Childhood (Ages 0 – 12)	Adolescence – Young Adult (ages 13 – 23)	Adult (24 – present)



# Scene:

Pick one scene that calls to you today, and describe that moment with as much detail as you can muster.

- Where were you?
- Were you alone or with others?
- What was happening?

Most importantly, try to write down the *feeling* of happiness that you experienced in that moment.

Through your writing, you can magically recreate that scene and step right into it again.

Let yourself smile as you write, savoring the joy that lives on in your memory.

**List: Make a list of things in your life that have seemed to stand in the way of joy.**

Childhood (Ages 0 – 12)	Adolescence – Young Adult (ages 13 – 23)	Adult (24 – present)



# Scene:

Use the present tense to take us into your experience of a particularly joyless moment.

- Where were you?
- Were you alone or with others?
- What was happening?
- How did you feel?

Your story could be focused on what Virginia Woolf called “the cotton-wool of existence”—the dull, humdrum parts of life that keep us from feeling joyful. Or it could be a memory of a really sad, joyless time.

If this feels like painful material to write about, remember that writing it down helps defuse the charge of tough memories.



# Alchemy

Now, try some magic!

Go back to your joyless scene and rewrite it, imagining a change that would have brought a smile to your lips and a happy glow to the space around you.

Free yourself from the bonds of “what is” and allow yourself to imagine “what could be.”

Make it happen, through the alchemical power of writing!



# Reflection

Granted we all have to live through some dull, joyless or even sorrowful and upsetting moments in our lives. We can't just wave a wand and make everything all right. Life is often hard, and there's no way around the difficult parts we must live through.

But through purposeful memoir, we can remind ourselves of all the times Joy blazed out for us, often when we least expected it. In memory, we can hold those happy moments close, tipping the scales of our lives in favor of joy.

Imagine how your life might change if you walked consciously into each day, looking for happiness. Imagine what could happen in your community—in your country—in the world—if more people focused on the positive, rather than amplifying the negative in life.

It's said that a very small number of people, working together, can catalyze major social changes.

Can you imagine yourself, starting with your own life, being part of a movement to bring more joy to the world? What would it take to make it happen? Be specific as you write your reflections on these questions.