



**Creative Workshops**  
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 storyteller speaker facilitator writing mentor poet

Creative Workshops  April 2011  
 Writing Newsletter

**Re-story and re-imagine your Life and Work**

*Whatever dies was not mixed equally (John Donne)*

**Stop Press: Johannesburg workshops 26 and 27 March – see items 1 and 2**

Dear writers, story-tellers readers

**Balancing the brain, balancing the word**

“Every brain has a story,” writes Jill Bolte Taylor, a Neuro-anatomist, whose left lobe was flooded during a stroke in her middle thirties. In *My Stroke of Insight*, she tells the story from the inside. As blood flowed from the burst arteries, she could name the left brain functions as they closed down. She came to an understanding of the gifts of both left and right brain -that metaphoric, euphoric impresario. The left-brain is about solid boundaries, the right-brain is about universal flow - the genie out of the bottle.

Jill Taylor came to believe in the brain’s plasticity “to repair replace and retrain.” As the left brain recovered, she asked new questions; “Could I value money without hooking into the neurological loops of lack, greed or selfishness?” She understood the choice that opened between her ears - to use the “benefits of the hemorrhage” to strengthen “the neurocircuits of innocence and joy.” She could recover the ego without egotism.

Part of Jill Taylor’s recovery involved creating a model of the brain out of stained glass. In writing and story telling, as we balance left and right brains, we can respond to similar choices as we open to our writing and storied lives. As Taylor observes, enlightenment is not a process of leaning but of unlearning. So is writing – unwiring the messages we heard at school. We can write to impress, to criticise, to toll our woes (the negative story-teller part of the brain is the size of a peanut) Or our writing can too, to quote Taylor , “be a portal through which the energy of who I am can be beamed into a three-dimensional external space.”

On a recent flight I sat next to a man into brain gym training. He showed me a list of 10 ways in which this programme benefits our brains. All those benefits can be gathered into one word - story.

The Donne quotation prefacing this letter is from a poem that contains these lines as well:

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,  
And true plain hearts do in the faces rest ;  
Where can we find two better hemispheres...

When we process in metaphor, meanings beyond our original intention open up. So the poem written some 400 ago, speaks not only of the relationship of writer to reader but offers us a brain-balancing (hemispheres) of image and order to guide us home and keep our writing and our relationships alive.

## the Story Apprentices Series... we start in May

*We are all apprentices in a craft where no one ever becomes a master (Ernest Hemingway)*

In the spirit of the apprenticeship tradition, 13 folk so far have subscribed to the **Once Upon a Journey** writing course. This course involve face-to-face workshop tuition with email/phone follow up support. This in turn leads to a shared publication featuring the writing of all those who participated and will culminate in a celebratory launch. Courses come with 8 copies of a book featuring your writing (+8 pages per writer)

The course runs in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. If there is sufficient interest from another centre, then I will accommodate other venues.

For detailed flyers about **SAS1 - Once Upon a Journey: Writing your Life Story** (May - Oct) please contact me.

## Dorian's April Storyshops/ Writeshops/Conversations

If you want any of these workshops in your area speak speak.

### Gauteng

#### 1. Linksfield Ridge Johannesburg

**Yin-Yang Brains and Hearts: Bringing the Gender Story to our Lives** R 480

Sat 26 March 2010 14.30 – 18.00

*In Chinese philosophy, the concept of **yin yang** describes how polar or seemingly contrary forces are interconnected and interdependent in the natural world, and how they give rise to each other in turn. Opposites thus only exist in relation to each other.*

women and men? boys and girls? feminine and masculine? questions and more questions

- how do we differ...how are we similar? are we socialised?
- are there female and male brains - what does brain theory say?
- who is the person beneath gender?
- what of Jung's internal feminine/masculine - his anima/animus metaphor?

In this story-shop we consider and explore these questions. Turn them upside out and inside down, We work in an experiential and interactive way as we consider individual and

collective stories. Come and explore the presence of words through stories that link women and men. Experience how stories echo in the spaces in-between.

**Who should attend?** All who wish to work consciously in their personal and professional life. All who engage with people around energy, relationship, stress and change.

Venue Karin Geldenhuys's home 28 Hannabens Street, Linksfield Ridge

## 2. Johannesburg

**Spirit, Myth and Archetype A Writing Workshop** R560

Sun 27 March 2011 10.00 - 15.00

*My task of tasks is to discover what myth I am living. (Carl Jung)*

In this workshop we explore our life stories in relation to the patterns that lie beneath the surface. The workshop offers insights into how myths and archetypes move within and influence our lives. We work in creativity, imagination and words. We use writing as a means of opening new ways of being and seeing. Living our mythology not our pathology.

Who should attend? This workshop is for anyone who wants to

- write creatively
- explore how imagination changes reality
- understand their lives at a deeper level
- change the story they are living
- replenish their power and energy

Bring writing materials and a light lunch to share. I'll provide tea and coffee.

Venue: Beth Shirley's home 94 Kerry Road, Parkview, Johannesburg. (Opposite Zoo Lake)

## Western Cape

### 3. Somerset West

Tues 5 April 09.30 – 13.00

**Write your Life: How to be at ease with words** a U3A (University of the third age) workshop – for U3A members. Elders teaching elders. Free venue TBA: a private home

## Namibia

### 4. Windhoek

A visit planned 10-17 April under the sponsorship of Carl Schlettwein Foundation, Basel to facilitate journal keeping workshops for education students.

### 5. Windhoek

**The Rabbi, Oom Scalk and Nasrudin: The Lost Art of Story-Telling**

Wed 13 and Thurs 14 April 20.00

*It's not the story that counts. It is the way you tell it (Scalk Lourens)*

Our ancestors told stories around night fires. Today all over the globe many are rediscovering the joy and power of stories in their personal and professional lives.

Join in an evening of fun as you listen and respond to stories from different traditions. A world of stories has the potential to delight, entertain and instruct us in a subtle manner. Stories also allow choices, offer growth and facilitate transformation. It's stories all the way down.

Venue: Backstage Windhoek (Aldo Berends – Bank Windhoek Arts Programme)

## **6. Windhoek**

### **Writing Yourself Alive: A Creative Workshop**

Sat 16 April 2011 09.30 -16.00 R480

*I know that there is room in me for a second huge and timeless life (Rilke)*

We can all learn to write and tell our stories. This workshop offers a safe place to explore your innate creativity and imagination and find the words to tell these stories (in your chosen language)... to make them more alive. Writing is about a conversation with yourself and with others. An exchange of energies. It is a skill drawn from attention and openness – an organic process rather than a talent.

Whether you see yourself as a beginner or someone who has lived with words, this workshop will guide you on to the next stage – and will link to other ways in which you can engage your creativity. We also focus on how to be present in your writing and engage the reader as a creative partner. And source your bliss.

Venue: 3 Gordon Day Str Olympia, Windhoek

Bookings: Catherine v d Merwe [cmphysio@iway.na](mailto:cmphysio@iway.na) 081 128 2518

(If there is an overflow then a possible 'repeat' on Sun 17 April)

## **KZN**

### **Durban**

#### **Fourth Chapter Conversations: Creating/ Writing your Story for the Last Quarter of Life**

Fri 9 May (with Cathy Yuill a qualified Integral coach)

*Grow old with me, the best is yet to be (Robert Browning)*

This storyshop is for those who are in the late summer/autumn of their lives, the fourth stage. New opportunities open for us. New possibilities, fresh songs. How do we source and sing them? What were the first three chapters about? We seek to understand their patterns and choices so we can glean the best from them while discarding any beliefs, attitudes and habits that no longer serve us and keep us stuck.

### **Ongoing activities (some repeat info here)**

#### **Mentoring – one-on-one**

"You make me sound like myself" (various clients) Walk with me in words. You put on one shoe, I wear the other. Memoirs, mindful adventures, work in the word... genres tumbling out of folk on the one-on-one path. Such a richness of story here.

#### **Email Courses: Writer's/ Poet's Voice Course – one-on-one tuition**

Some folks respond to structure, assignments... if so, ask and it shall be negotiated. Here is one possibility: Do you love reading and writing? This one-on-one apprenticeship aims to take you further up the writing mountain and offer you a deeper engagement with your craft. This course is structured in the nature of an ongoing conversation with a few chosen writers or poets, (ancestral or alive) with me and with yourself. I encourage you to keep a journal to record your observations and reflections.

#### **Speaking Engagements**

*Be still when you have nothing to say but when genuine passion moves you, say what you've got to say, and say it hot. ( D. H. Lawrence)* Last August I created and presented a myth of the Berg at the Drakensberg Sun for Southern Sun executives. What are your needs?

## **Development Work**

During 2011 I will be working for Diakonia facilitating life story workshops for stress and trauma debriefing counsellors.

## **Bosman and Nasrudin under starlight**

This season I will be a story-ing ...a summer evening, wine, cheese, breads and tales for the telling. This kind of evening is a bit like the old days - singing around the piano at home. - Except I use stories and creative activities to get folk interacting and to prompt conversations. Themes... Chinese, South African, Mediterranean, Arabian nights. Spending quality time. Any rhyme or reason – birthdays, TV fatigue, the art of conversation.

## **Corporate Work**

***The Halo and the Noose, the Power of story-telling and story listening in Business Life* R195**

Want to source a 100 plus stories? co-written with Graham Williams (Graysonian Press). We run corporate story workshops based on our book. Roma Howard, a training practitioner in leadership and team effectiveness, writes:

*I was utterly captivated by The Halo and the Noose, and now regularly recommend it when I am facilitating my Train the Trainer & Presentation Skills courses. )*

For orders: from the authors or Graysonian Press Inspirational books that change the world [www.graysonian.com](http://www.graysonian.com) 0836101113

We've established a website in order to offer *The Halo and the Noose* as an eBook, and to create a Member's facility for those who are serious about their story-telling and listening prowess in business. Members can access various resources, audio streams, article archives, their own newsletter, questionnaires, communicate with the authors and will get ongoing offers. The site is <http://www.haloandnoose.co.za>

In response to a growing demand we offer an eWorkbook, discounted to members (*Story Matters @ Work*) that contains many new stories and exercises covering elevator, personal, business issue, corporate, crucial conversation and other stories.

## **Friends at Work and Play**

### **Walter Willies: Poetry Therapy**

Two working sessions of Poetry Therapy. Open to everyone: no expertise required. bring pen and paper and a skin that works on both sides. Scheduled for Wed 6th and 13th April at Mystic Cove, 1 Boland Rd Durbanville. Please contact Dr Walter Harry Willies at 082 853 0902 or [info@biofocusing.com](mailto:info@biofocusing.com) for more details.

### **Elma Pollard: Write for Earth email based writing course**

Learn the art of eco-journalism with energy and passion. Offer your voice to help craft a better future. More information at this link <http://thegreentimes.co.za/index.php?id=63>

### **Aneta Shaw: Creative relaxation in a small group context**

Enhance personal growth and honour your soul through creative techniques. Aneta is a clinical psychologist and hypnotherapist, has integrated years of experience and life in other countries with ancient ways of being in this world.

Aneta 082 686 8118 or 021 8555415 [aneta.shaw@vodamail.co.za](mailto:aneta.shaw@vodamail.co.za)

### **Hugh Hodge: As-you-write-it**

Hugh, the Off-the-Wall Poetry MC and New Contrast Ed, runs a Saturday morning - 0930-1230 - class in creative writing from his home and the homes of participants, The course, As-you-write-it, is themed on the seven ages of (wo)man; over seven Saturdays. Cost R250 per Saturday or R1000 for all seven if paid up-front. Booking essential to Hugh ([hahodge@gmail.com](mailto:hahodge@gmail.com)) - quorum 3, full house 8.

### **Juliette Gyure : Coaching**

*Far Sight Change and Transition Coaching cc* provides a framework, creative processes and support mechanisms for people negotiating significant changes and transitions. I have a passion for co-creating innovative pathways to change, transition and transformation with my clients. For a free consultation contact me, Juliette Gyure, on 0726353818. (I am based in Durban)

*“ If nothing ever changed, there would be no butterflies”*

### **Anne Haarhoff OWL (Order, Words, Language)**

Need a top class sharp eyed editor and proof reader? Oh so most highly recommended  
044 873 0547 [ah1948@gmail.com](mailto:ah1948@gmail.com) 078 2733963

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[dorianhaarhoff.com](http://dorianhaarhoff.com)

May your brain balance at the tip of your fingers.

Dorian

