

SYLLABUS: CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

Summer 2010

August 2-6, 9am-1pm

Instructor: Pat Schneider

The purpose of this workshop is twofold: (1) to enable the artist in each person to become more free, more able to write, and (2) to model a methodology for using writing to create a healing community. Pat Schneider, author of nine books, including *Writing Alone and With Others*, Oxford University Press, and *Wake Up Laughing: A Spiritual Autobiography*, has pioneered a writing method that has gained national and international attention, both for its effectiveness in deepening the artistry of the individual writer, and as a way of empowerment for low-income and other under-served populations.

Course Description: We will meet for five days, Monday through Friday August 2-6, from 9 am to 1 pm with a fifteen minute break. There will be an additional, optional session on Tuesday evening for the showing of the 23 minute international award winning documentary film, *Tell Me Something I Can't Forget*, (open to the public, you may bring guests) and a discussion on how to use this workshop method to empower low-income persons and those in need of healing. There are no required readings or papers for this workshop, but prompt attendance at all sessions will be considered a serious responsibility.

Each participant is invited to have one private consultation with me outside the workshop time, to be arranged during the afternoons of the week of workshops. There is no requirement to do so, but if you would like a response to your writing, bring a typed, double-spaced manuscript (not more than 7 pages of prose or 4 poems – poems may be single spaced). This should be new work, not term papers or previously published documents. We will discuss the manuscripts in the private conferences. I am also happy to use the time just talking together without a manuscript.

I intend to create a sense of freedom and excitement about writing. It is fun; good writing can be as easy as talking to one's closest friend or lover. We will spend the time together writing in response to exercises I will provide, and then we will share what we have written, always with the freedom to remain silent if the writer does not wish to read. We will suggest in positive ways what might be done with a piece of writing, and we will talk about what the writer has done well. No one will be embarrassed or "put down" in this workshop. Techniques for writing more freely and more powerfully will be discussed in relation to writing that is shared in the workshop.

There will be a good number of handouts provided during the workshop on topics we discuss. There is no "required" reading in preparation for the workshop, although the following books are suggested as good background: *The Writer as an Artist: A New Approach to Writing Alone & With Others*, Pat Schneider (Signed copies available on my website, www.patschneider.com, or may be purchased from me at a discount in workshop and are available from bookstores or Amazon.com.)

Other books I have found helpful: *The Writer's Home Companion*, Joan Bolker (ed.) Owl Books. *If You Want To Write*, Brenda Ueland. Graywolf Press 1987 (An old classic. Inspiration). *On Becoming a Novelist*, John Gardner. Harper Colophon Books, 1983 (Excellent book on writing the novel; generally helpful in other genres.) For poets: *How to Read a Poem* by Edward Hirsch and *A Formal Feeling Comes*, Annie Finch, editor. *The Right to Write*, Julia Cameron, *Bird by Bird*, Anne Lamott. Doubleday (Fun, and inspiration.) Writing Down the Bones Natalie Goldberg. *remembered rapture*, bell hooks (African American perspective). (Of special interest to women: Object Lessons, Eavan Boland, Vintage.) *Letters to a Fiction Writer*, Frederick Busch, editor. The best reading for writers is other writers -- good anthologies of contemporary voices in your chosen genre.