



All Things Self-Care and Self-Awareness: Writer's Block Edition

by Meredith Evridge of Word Up Coaching

Come here when you are feeling a blockage in your creative flow.



Find *YOU*

Always begin by tapping into your emotional/physical/spiritual state. How are you feeling? Find a few words to describe how you are feeling in your body, mind, and soul.

If you discover that some stress is hiding in your inner corners, consider taking some time to focus on de-stressing. If you can say “No” or “Pause” to a stressor, do it now. What helps you feel grounded? If you need some ideas, keep reading.

Check, check: how is your self-esteem when it comes to your identity as a writer or creative? If it is on the lower end, ask yourself what you need. Text your writing coach for support!

Self-compassion is always applicable. Give it to yourself in large doses whenever you need it. If you feel like you don't deserve it, give yourself even more.

The Basics

These staples should be your “North Star.” Always make sure you are prioritizing the following:

Sleep and rest

Get plenty of sleep at night and catnaps when you are tired in the daytime.

Movement

Go for a walk, do yoga, run, climb, stretch, swim, lift weights. Do whatever makes you feel challenged, sweaty, and like you're getting stronger. Don't exercise when you are hungry. Fuel yourself with food first, then go move any stagnation through your body and brain.

Time outside

Nature is your best friend. Let her love you! Look at things that are green and growing. Take it in through all of your senses. Breathe fresh air and feel how gigantic the world is.

Eating

Food is fuel. Eat things that are delicious to you. Get enough to eat during each meal and have a few snacks throughout the day.

Take a Break

Don't push through a block in creativity for the sake of being productive. There is a way to be "productive" without working directly on your project. Resting is medicinal and can actually help you make progress on your project in a passive way.

Take a step back from your project and do things that feel restful and centering. These can include engaging with another creative outlet, tapping into your sense of play, making or listening to music, gentle movement, interacting with nature, laughing, crying, hanging out with friends, having a cup of tea, and/or chilling out *hard*. Read a book or watch a show that is inspiring or puts you in a different headspace. Give your brain a chance to rest.

If you are still in a creative headspace but a particular project is blocked, then switch your focus to a different project that seems intriguing or challenging.

Your Working Space

How does the space you usually write in feel? How can you make it feel better?

Adjust the lighting, your chair, your body position, and/or your desk.

Consider sitting somewhere else in the room, like the floor, on a cushion, or in a cozy chair. If you need to tidy up your space, take a few minutes to do so. You can set a timer to declutter or rearrange things before you sit down and work.

Put on some music, nature sounds, or a Hertz frequency that gets you in the writing zone.

Note any distractions. What usually takes you out of your writing zone? If it is something on your phone (e.g. notifications or the draw of social media), then try putting your phone on "Do Not Disturb." Designate writing time just for writing. Set a healthy boundary to protect your goal. Need to get in touch with your goal? Ask yourself WHY you are writing. Keep your "why" close.

Maybe your usual space isn't helping creativity flow. No worries; write somewhere else. If you're usually at your desk, go to a coffee shop. Go sit in a park. Sit on a friend's couch.

Time: If you usually write during a certain part of the day (like the evening), try writing at a different time (first thing in the morning?!).

Do you need a totally different scene? Get out of town for a day or head to a different part of town for the afternoon. Be in a place with new sights and sounds and call it a writing retreat.

Make a Routine

People who write regularly have more opportunity to improve their writing than those who just casually dabble in it (thanks, Captain Obvious). With that in mind, make it a priority. Set aside time in your day or week to write. Your writing coach will help you figure out a routine that is motivating instead of something that fills you with trepidation.

Body Doubling

Ask someone to take a little time to be in the same room as you while you work on writing (or whatever task you need to focus on). They can work on something as well and enjoy a chill coworking space with you, or they can just relax and share their (ideally non-distracting) presence with you while you work.

You can also chat with your friend(s) about what you are writing. This can help clarify your thoughts and get you back on track.

If doing this in person is difficult, FaceTime a friend (or your writing coach! I am totally happy to do this with you. I have found this to be a super helpful tool).

Storytelling

If you are working on writing and are stuck at a particular part (maybe you don't know what should happen next, or maybe you can't write a specific chapter or scene because you are working on world-building or character development), skip ahead to a part where you DO know what is going to happen. You can always go back and revisit the part that got you stuck.

Here's another way to switch things up: let your story out in a different way than usual. If you usually type it out, try dictating it. Talking feels very different than typing. Use this to spend time working through a problem. Just talk! Try recording yourself talking and then listen to it afterward. This is a cool way to listen to yourself.

You can also take a break from typing or talking, and get your thoughts out on pen and paper.

Let It Loose

Rather than trying to make your writing polished, just focus on getting it from your head onto paper. Just write. Fill up the page with your thoughts, feelings, questions, and observations. Pour it all out. You can come back later and adjust it however you want to but for now, just write without overthinking it.

Let go of expectations. Have a brainstorming session. Draw, doodle, add color, and just splash yourself out.

Perfection is Not the Goal

Are you frustrated because you feel like what you are writing is disappointing or completely awful? Again, get in touch with your "why." Why are you even writing in the first place? Why are you spending

time on creativity?

Your writing coach can help you set goals that feel challenging but not stressful. We will work together to find that sweet spot!

Inspiration is Everywhere

Keep a notebook on you at all times to jot down things that inspire you: thoughts, observations, quotes, things you enjoy reading or watching, and anything else that brings a spark or a particularly intriguing shift to your mental space.



No matter where you are in your writing journey, remember this: you are an artist with a valuable message. Just keep writing.