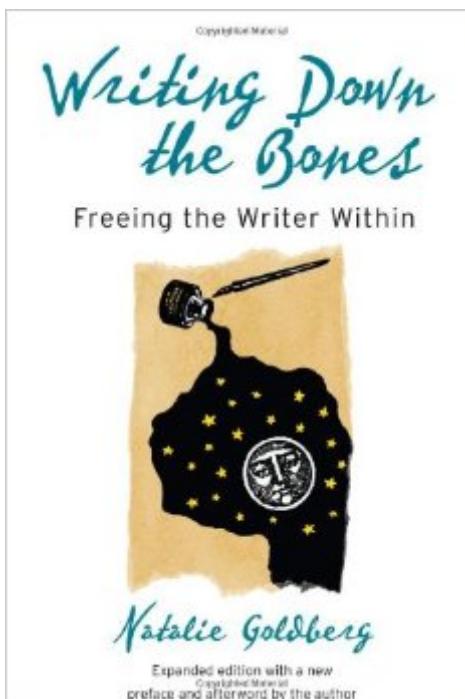


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Writing Down The Bones: Freeing The Writer Within, 2nd Edition



Synopsis

For more than twenty years Natalie Goldberg has been challenging and cheering on writers with her books and workshops. In her groundbreaking first book, she brings together Zen meditation and writing in a new way. Writing practice, as she calls it, is no different from other forms of Zen practice â "it is backed by two thousand years of studying the mind." This new edition, which marks almost twenty years since the original book's publication, includes a new preface in which Goldberg expresses her trademark enthusiasm for writing practice, as well as a depth of appreciation for the process that has come with time and experience. Also included is an interview with the author in which she reflects on the relationship between Zen sitting practice and writing, the importance of place, and the power of memory.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I align myself more with the negative reviews of this book. It's easy to get caught up in some of the philosophical warm-fuzzy rhetoric of Ms. Goldberg. Akin to watching Oprah pull at an audience's heartstrings, Ms. Goldberg pulls readers in with story after story trumpeting the same message of writing from the heart. The initial reaction is to feel that there's nothing to question about what Ms. Goldberg says. When I purchased the book, I saw nothing to indicate that it was specific to one particular form of writing, but after reading it, I feel that the author speaks much more to poetry than other forms of writing. The author on several occasions admonishes us to write in the moment and not dwell on ideas we've had in the past. She relates an experience of one student who had a

fully-formed idea while out jogging but couldn't reproduce it when s/he got home to the blank page. Goldberg went into a spiel about how we should just let go of those thoughts that are not inspired or conceived in the moment that we sit down to write. That's where I have a fundamental disagreement with her and feel her philosophy becomes almost destructive to new writers. Perhaps poetry functions that way. Perhaps someone has to have that spontaneous quality about their work in order for it to be fresh and exciting. I don't know. I'm not a poet. However, for novels, short stories, and longer works, you would be a fool to let great ideas get away. Personally, I like to let some of those ideas percolate for weeks and even years. Yes, we mature and our perspectives change, but in a lot of cases that only means that we can approach a subject in a different way as we grow older. It doesn't make the subject any better or worse to write about. Bottom line: I came away from the book with mixed feelings.

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