

# MONTANA COAUTHOR

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## Current Workshop Offerings

### Creative Process

#### “Creativity & Courage: The Magic and Toil of Book-Writing”

Book-writing begins with a creative spark. Then it demands sheer determination and learned skills. Learn 5 myths about book-writing that threaten project momentum and can cause long bouts of writer’s block. We’ll address challenges with organization and creativity; keys to a successful critique and revision process; and lifestyle choices that make it possible to complete a years-long project. Appropriate for writers who are at the beginning stages of writing a book or anyone who has hit a mid-project slump.

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### Writing Basics

#### Nuts and Bolts of Book Craft

From “idea overwhelm” to writing individual scenes, from organizational tools to motivational strategies, and from final revision to publishing—spend three hours learning how to complete your book in manageable steps and stages. Great for beginner writers or experienced writers who are blocking at a certain stage in their book project.

#### It Takes a Team to Write a Book

It’s your book. But on the path to publishing, many others will be involved in helping you hone the content. If you choose to partner with a professional writer, should it be a ghostwriter or a coauthor? If you write the whole book yourself, what level of editing will you need? And what’s the difference between an editor and a book coach? We’ll learn about working with editors, writing partners, coaches, and coauthors to create your book from scratch or hone a final draft. Learn how you can prepare yourself and your material to work and negotiate with each of these book-writing team members.

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### Narrative Craft

#### Basic Elements of Story-Craft

Explore and demystify 9 literary techniques that published authors use to create page-turning stories, including: principles of story structure, pacing, effective dialogue, and appropriate use of sensory detail. Learn how to take fragmented first draft material and weave it into a flowing, well-structured story. Students will have the opportunity

to submit a draft excerpt in advance to receive personalized instruction during the workshop. Ideal for beginner to intermediate memoir and fiction writers.

### **Fiction Techniques for Non-Fiction Writers**

Techniques borrowed from fiction craft can help non-fiction work come alive—while remaining loyal to the truth. Discover the techniques through a mix of teaching and hands-on writing exercises. Whether you’re writing literary memoir or crafting narrative stories to illustrate instructional writing, you’ll learn how to captivate your reader. Best for beginner to intermediate non-fiction writers, as well as beginning fiction writers.

### **Narrative with a Cause: Stories as Persuasive Art**

*Beginner & Intermediate* – Get tips on the most persuasive literary form that humans have used effectively for millennia: personal narrative. Learn about commonly used persuasive techniques that often backfire and why. Then dive into the bridge-building power of story and the qualities of truly strong narrative—from opening hooks, to captivating dialogue, to effective build. We’ll look at how “I feel” statements can be woven into narrative in a way that honors your reader, as well as misuse that can come across as accusatory. Groups are lightly curated to create a safe space for lively, but respectful dialogue.

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## **Memoir Writing**

### **Intro to Memoir Session 1: Defining Memoir**

We’ll start by reviewing the difference between memoir and autobiography and how that affects our projects. Hands-on instruction and exercises will include: Using story “snippets” and project maps; starting your book idea and growing your seed memories into complete essays; and writing from photos and artifacts. *Beginner Friendly!*

### **Intro to Memoir Session 2: Unique Challenges of Memoir Craft**

Telling the truth in writing can be liberating—and really harrowing too! We’ll take a candid look at the pros and cons of self-censorship and learn how to fill in narrative gaps through interviewing and fact-checking. In-class exercises will make the interviewing process less intimidating and also show you how to use interview techniques to break writer’s block.

### **Truth vs. Fiction – What are “Based on True” stories?**

Today’s readers expect that memoir will read as well as a novel. So most memoir writers use fiction-craft techniques to pace and structure their stories. How do you do that while staying truthful? On the flip-side, what are the ethical ramifications when you write a true story, but call it fiction? When should you tag your story as “based-on-true”? We’ll wrestle with all those issues. Both fiction and creative non-fiction writers welcome.

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### **And more...**

*Interested in a different topic? Don’t see your current writing challenge addressed here? Contact Anika to ask about custom workshop sessions! [anika@montanacoauthor.com](mailto:anika@montanacoauthor.com)*