

Meeting Myself Coming Back

A 5 week online writing course about diaries, re-reading and re-writing the stories of our lives, with writer and facilitator Emma Decent

- **Thurs 8 February - Thurs 7 March 2024**
- 3pm - 5pm
- Online
- 5 consecutive weeks

Meeting Myself Coming Back is a new online writing course inspired by Emma's personal research project in which she revisited diaries from younger years. Reflecting on old words and writing again, Emma created new work, re-storying her relationship with the past, coming to a more positive, accepting story of her life.

During this 5 week course you will engage with a similar process – revisiting a single journal of your own, responding to it in a supported environment and creating new writing from the material and the experience. Through this you will re-story yourself with the aim of looking positively towards the future.

What we will be doing

In this course you will revisit a small part of a journal of your own - your choice. You can choose this in any way you like - something from long ago, more recent, specific in topic or at random. You are advised not to choose something you know to be particularly complex or difficult for you to return to, as although the whole process aims to be 'therapeutic' the course is not therapy as such and Emma is not able to offer that level of support, nor one-to-one support outside of course time. You are encouraged to put your own support in place should you need it. More below about self-care.

During the 5 weeks you will go through a similar process Emma did on her diary project, following a heuristic method in stages.

			Heuristic stages
Week 1	Introduction	<i>Beginnings - why do this?</i>	Initial engagement
Week 2	Diary-reading	<i>Opening the book</i>	Immersion
Week 3	Reflective writing	<i>Writing in response</i>	Illumination
Week 4	Writing again	<i>Re-storying & reconciling selves</i>	Illumination (cont)
Week 5	Conclusion	<i>The new story - going forward</i>	Creative Synthesis

Each session will include

- Creative and reflective writing exercises
- Time for sharing and discussion
- Self-care guidance & practice - individually and group
- Grounding exercises
- Time offline to read, write and reflect privately

What to expect

The goal of *Meeting Myself Coming Back* is to give you an opportunity to revisit your own earlier writings, beginning with **Initial Engagement** - what has drawn you to write - and want to return to - a diary? This process can feel daunting or intimidating, however we are only really revisiting our younger selves. In **Immersion** you will re-read and revisit those selves with curiosity and kindness from where you are now. You will then use writing to bring **Illumination** - initially using free and reflective writing to notice, feel and express what is there on reading; then writing again, making story and sense of your earlier writings and your responses to them. You will emerge with a **Creative Synthesis** which aims to enable a 'personal transformation that exists as a possibility in every heuristic journey.' (Moustakas, 1990, Ch1, p6) - a journey of reconciliation between parts of self or parts of life. You will produce new writing and hopefully experience a process and method you can use again or adapt to tackle more of your personal writings going forwards should you choose to.

The course is not therapy but - as with any life story work, especially that which might take you to the past - it may take you quite deep. You are therefore encouraged to take care of yourself during the five week period, giving yourself time and space to process what might arise. You are responsible for your process and are encouraged to go at your own pace, set your own boundaries and to find additional support if think you might need it.

Each week we will go through a set of guidelines that emphasize respect for self and others, kindness to self and others, creating a nurturing safe space and confidentiality.

Practical information

You will need to be able to use Zoom on a computer or smartphone. You will need paper and pen or other writing materials at home. Other resources will be sent via email. The session will start promptly at 1pm - please arrive in the Zoom room at least 5 minutes beforehand so we can start on time. (If you are unfamiliar with Zoom and would like to try it before the session we can arrange.) There will be time offline, a break, and we will finish promptly at 3.30pm. Please be in a room where you will not be disturbed, with your mobile phone off or on silent and where no one else can hear what others may be saying (and/or use earphones).

Booking & payment

Please email emmadecent@talk21.com and make a payment to secure your place.
(Numbers limited.)

Deposit: £50

Full payment: Pay As You Feel £125-£160

Bank details

Emma Decent

Halifax

Sort code: 117336

Account: 00014830

Further information

- Emma's article in LIRIC about her diary project: <https://www.flipsnack.com/lapidus/liric-volume-3-issue-1/full-view.html>
- About Emma and her work: <https://emmadecent.co.uk>
- Email: emmadecent@talk21.com