



# Writing Alone and with Others

By Pat Schneider, Peter Elbow

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For more than a quarter of a century, Pat Schneider has helped writers find and liberate their true voices. She has taught all kinds--the award winning, the struggling, and those who have been silenced by poverty and hardship. Her innovative methods have worked in classrooms from elementary to graduate level, in jail cells and public housing projects, in convents and seminaries, in youth at-risk programs, and with groups of the terminally ill.

Now, in *Writing Alone and with Others*, Schneider's acclaimed methods are available in a single, well-organized, and highly readable volume. The first part of the book guides the reader through the perils of the solitary writing life: fear, writer's block, and the bad habits of the internal critic. In the second section, Schneider describes the Amherst Writers and Artists workshop method, widely used across the U.S. and abroad. Chapters on fiction and poetry address matters of technique and point to further resources, while more than a hundred writing exercises offer specific ways to jumpstart the blocked and stretch the rut-stuck. Schneider's innovative teaching method will refresh the experienced writer and encourage the beginner. Her book is the essential owner's manual for the writer's voice.

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## Editorial Review

### Review

"Schneider's book is inspiring, full of common sense about fears every writer will recognize and exercises for jump-starting a manuscript. She is well acquainted with naysayers, external and internal. A storyteller, poet, librettist who once struggled to believe in herself, she sees teaching as a mission, writing as empowerment. She's led four workshops a week (one in a low-income project) for 12 years; she explains here how to lead your own. *Writing Alone* is as much an antidote to writer's block as you're likely to find between two covers: Writing teachers will use it as their bible."--C. Carr, *O: The Oprah Magazine*

"I am grateful to Pat Schneider for recognizing that our species is a writing species. If we don't write, it means something in the culture has blocked our natural instinct. Pat Schneider's helpful, totally personable book shows us how to undo that cultural abuse."--Carol Bly, author of *Beyond the Writer's Workshop* and *My Lord Bag of Rice: New and Selected Stories*

"More than motivational or purely experiential, this very sensible yet practical text provides scores of proven exercises to help encourage the writer in all of us."--*Library Journal*

"Honesty is creative oxygen. Generosity is creative fire. Pat Schneider is a fuse lighter. Her work is gentle, playful, brilliant, and revolutionary. She is the real animal."--Julia Cameron, author of *The Right to Write* and *The Artist's Way*

"For anyone who wants to write, *Writing Alone and with Others* is heartening and practical. It unfolds as the story of one writer's journey, and invites the aspiring writer along with a rich variety of anecdote, exercise and advice, celebrating both difference and difficulty as the gifts they are."--Janet Burroway, author of *Raw Silk* and *Writing Fiction*

"Schneider can help you find your genius. She encourages without ever condescending. She is guide, cheerleader, and advocate. 'What you see, write it,' she counsels. 'Surprise yourself.' You'll find exercises here that will help you do it. The second part of the book, focusing on 'writing with others,' can help the workshop leader or teacher create the kind of atmosphere in which 'images pass in silence from mind to mind,' as writers are affirmed and energized by experiencing creativity, their own and others'."--Marshall J. Cook, author and editor of *Creativity Connection*

"An entertaining and enlightening book...should prove invaluable to poets, writers, teachers, and workshop

devotees of all backgrounds and creative denominations."-- Mindy Kronenberg, poet and teacher, author of *Dismantling the Playground* and editor of *Book/Mark Small Press Quarterly Review*

#### About the Author

Pat Schneider is Founder and Director of Amherst Writers & Artists and Editor at Amherst Writers & Artists Press. An adjunct professor at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, she has taught independent writing workshops nationally and internationally. Her pioneering work using creative writing as a means of empowering low-income populations is the subject of an award-winning documentary, *Tell Me Something I Can't Forget*, by Florentine Films. She lives in Amherst, Massachusetts. Peter Elbow is Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and author of *Writing with Power* and *Everyone Can Write*.

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