

## **NATURE-BASED WORKSHOP - FALL 2024**

Joanne Brokaw, teaching artist  
www.joannebrokaw.com  
joannebrokaw@gmail.com  
585 734 2209

These workshop ideas are designed to give participants an opportunity for self-reflection and to encourage them to find the connection between themselves and the world around them. The site for the workshop can be a field, a cemetery, a city block, a wooded path, a farm, a museum, inside an office building - the activities and prompts can be adapted to any setting. The key is to provide participants with the time and space to be present in the moment and with themselves, and to allow them to explore their feelings, emotions, and thoughts in a supportive space. This process, sometimes known as reflective writing or generative writing, is not meant to work towards any final product. Instead, creative elements like writing, sketching, journaling, etc. are part of the process to connect ourselves more fully with ourselves. However, it's not uncommon for participants to leave with fresh ideas and a renewed creative spirit. Below are three general workshops, which can be adapted for your event or needs.

General info: Each session runs about an hour or so, including time for an intro and ending discussion. Participants will need to wear shoes/clothing appropriate for the site, something to write with/on (although I always have extra supplies), and I encourage bringing a water bottle. A blanket or chair is optional, depending on where we're meeting.

### **REFLECTIVE SIT SPOT**

Participants gather for an intro to the session, and then are sent out to find a quiet spot to sit for 15 or 20 mins. They're instructed to simply be present in the space. They can journal or take notes or sketch if they wish, but they're strongly encouraged to do less "recording" and more "simply being". Observation, breathing, and engaging the senses are key. At the end of the allotted time, they wander back to the gathering space where they'll be given a prompt and time to free write before a time of discussion about the entire experience. This can also be to generate a collaborative poem.

### **SITE SPECIFIC REFLECTIVE WRITING**

Participants gather together for an intro activity, meant to get them thinking about the site-specific topic we're exploring that day. They're then sent to wander in the space designated for the activity, for 20-30 mins. They're encouraged to explore, make notes, sketch, whatever they want to do to engage with the process of reflection as they ponder their place in the world around them. When the group gathers again, another prompt will be provided along with a few minutes for private reflection or writing, and then group is then encouraged to discuss the experience.

### **PROMPT WALK**

Same concept as the site specific reflective writing, except we walk/wander together as a group, stopping periodically for 10 mins as we all contemplate and privately respond to the same prompt. When we reach the end point, there is an ending prompt, and then time for group discussion.