

Writing with Susan

From Memory to Memoir Writing Class *Writing and Preserving Your Life Story*

Taught by Susan M. Omilian

Published Author, Writing Coach

for Farmington Continuing Education Program

Thursdays Oct. 14, 21, 28 and Nov. 4, 11, 2021

From Memory to Memoir Writing Class

Writing and Preserving Your Life Story

- Five-Week Class starting Oct. 14, 21, 28 & Nov. 4, 11
- From 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on a ZOOM session
- Need ZOOM link to enter. Waiting room in effect.
- We will be writing in class, also homework assignments.
- Contact Susan at susanom@comcast.net or 860-236-2401 (landline)
- Website: www.WritingWithSusan.com

From Memory to Memoir Writing Class

Writing and Preserving Your Life Story

TOPICS we will cover –

- Introductions
- Writing from Prompts
- A Few Critical Words
- Working with a Voice from Your Childhood
- Defining Moments in Your Life
- Finding A Voice, Theme and Structure for Your Stories
- Using Pictures, Documents and the Rest
- Self Publishing



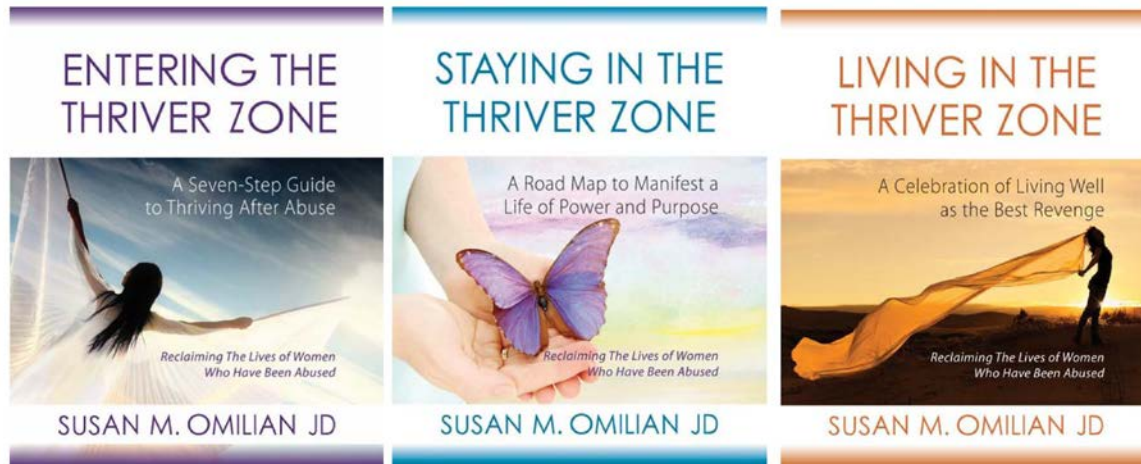
Writing with Susan

Susan M. Omilian

Writing Coach, Writing Teacher, Writing Group Facilitator

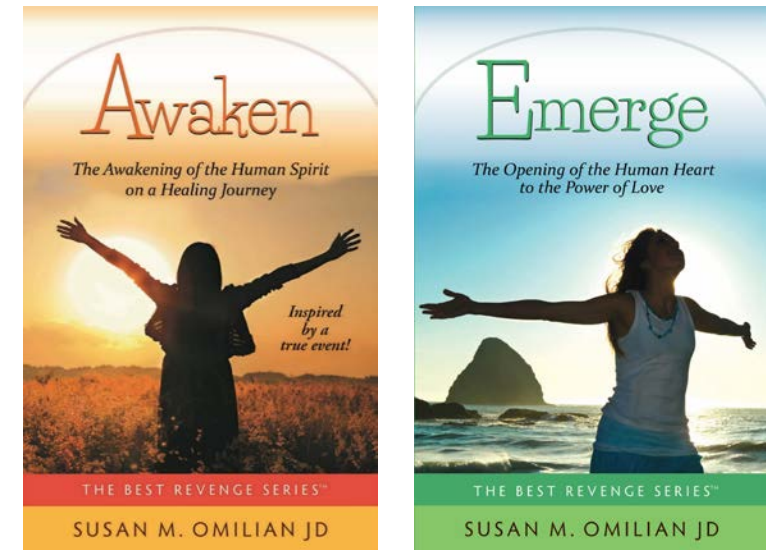
[www. WritingwithSusan.com](http://www.WritingwithSusan.com)

Author of Three Non-Fiction Books



A Self-Help Trilogy! *The Thriver Zone Series*™ by Susan M. Omilian JD

Author of Two Novels



✍ Writing with Susan Writing from Prompts

A writing prompt is a short phrase that gives you
a starting point for your writing.

Wherever you start, wherever you go is okay!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Don't worry about spelling, grammar!

Write from both prompts if you can!

A Writing Prompt!

A writing prompt is a short phrase that provides you with a starting point for your writing.

Wherever you start, wherever you go is okay!

I want to write my story because . . .

If I don't write it, I'm afraid that . . .

I want to write my story because...

- My story is unique, but also universal feelings, experiences.
- I want to preserve my history, culture for future generations.
- Make a family record for others, my children, grandchildren.
- Writing will be “therapy,” I can see “big picture” of my life.
- Understand more about me, how I got to who I am today.
- Show how I overcame obstacles, made choices, had success.

LEFT BRAIN

Speaks in Words

Keeps Order, Makes Lists,
Result-Oriented

Logical, Analytical

Thinking, Informative, Decisive

Demands Accuracy, Perfection

RIGHT BRAIN

Loves Images, Lives in Fantasies

Creates Freely, Takes Risks

Lives in a World of Feelings, Emotions

Insightful, Intuitive

Is Sensuous, Seeks Pleasure and Joy

INNER CRITIC EXERCISE: Draw line down center of page.

In left hand column --

Write negative thoughts
about your writing, about
your ability to write
and finish your stories.

INNER CRITIC EXERCISE: Draw line down center of page.

In left hand column --

Write negative thoughts about your writing, about your ability to write and finish your stories.

In right hand column --

Respond to each thought with POSITIVE, BIG, BOLD statements or just say NOT TRUE!
THIS IS Your INNER WRITER CHEERLEADER!

Exercise: Quiet the Inner Critic

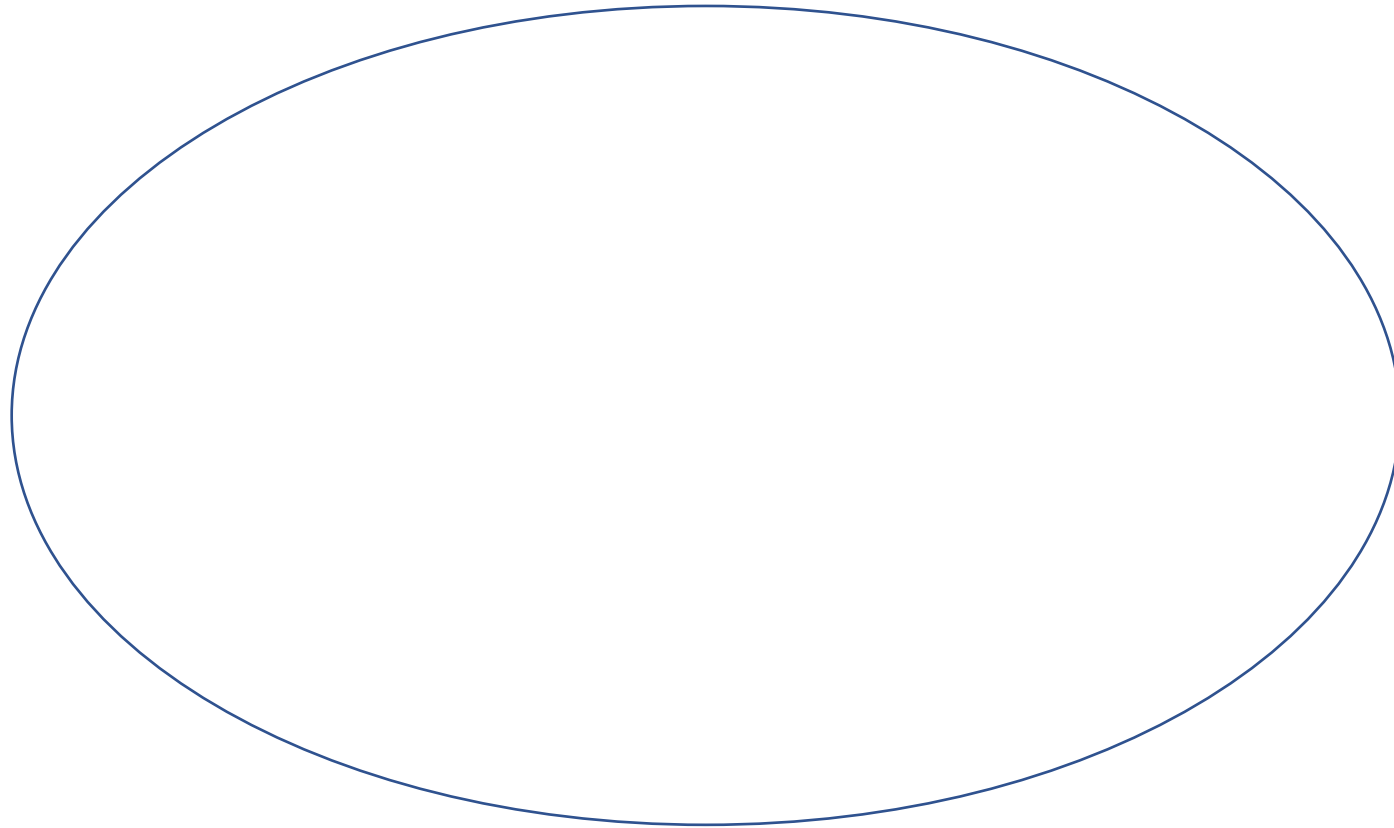
INNER CRITIC VOICE

- You don't know where to start, you won't finish
- Not interesting, boring
- Don't want to write about feelings, too risky
- You'll hurt, offend someone you care about
- You've no time to write.
- Need better vocabulary

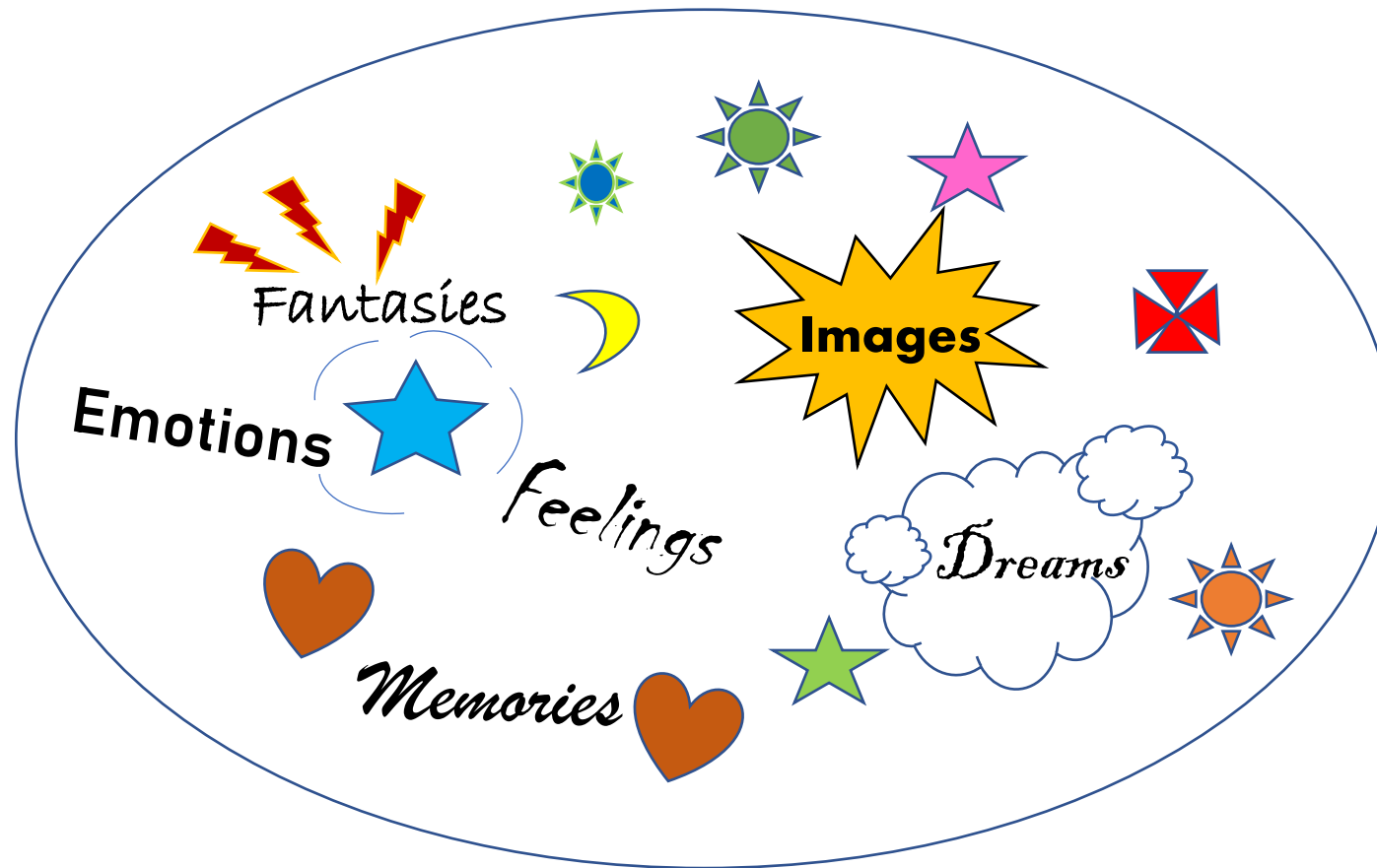
INNER WRITER VOICE

- I can learn how, I can finish it, get help
- My life is exciting, special
- You can write feelings and get over it.
- Write what you want, edit later.
- I have lots of time now.
- I don't need fancy words, just be myself.

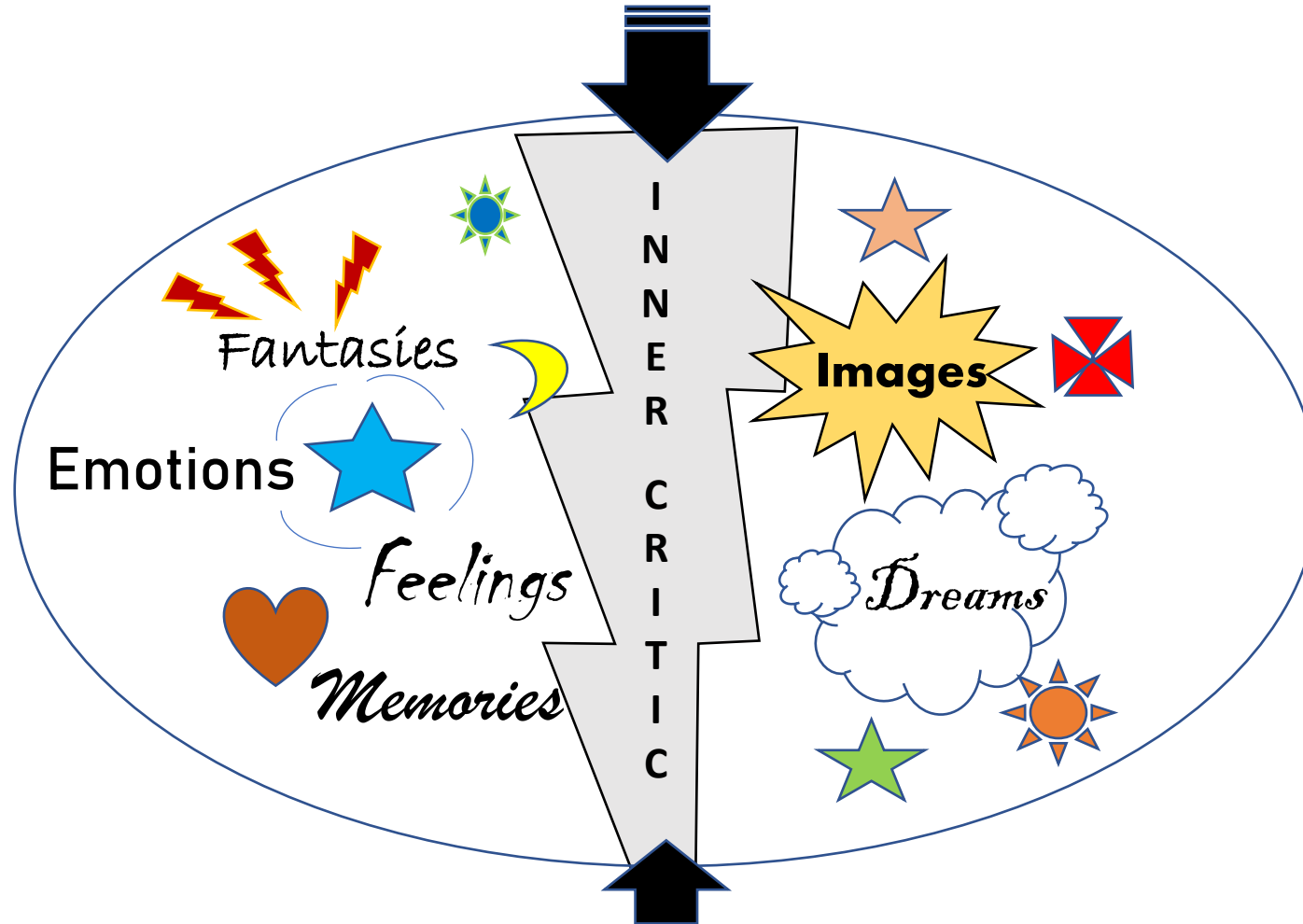
✍ Writing with Susan The Right Brain



✍ Writing with Susan The Right Brain



Writing with Susan The Right Brain



Writing with Susan Access to the Right Brain



Exercise: Quiet the Inner Critic

AFFIRMATIONS IN THE INNER WRITER'S VOICE

- I am a writer!
- I am learning the craft of writing, storytelling!
- My life is exciting, special
- My feelings are valid.
- I write what I want, edit later.
- I have lots of time now.
- I don't need fancy words, just be myself.
- I remember a lot... and I can write about it!



“I am a great writer.
I am not afraid to be seen.
I am not afraid to be heard.
I am not afraid.”



I am a writer.
I am a writer.
I am a writer.

EXERCISE: Guided Meditation

- Working with a memory from your childhood
- Writing from our right brain where memories stored
- Using all five senses, feelings, emotions!
- You can't do this wrong!

OUR GOALS

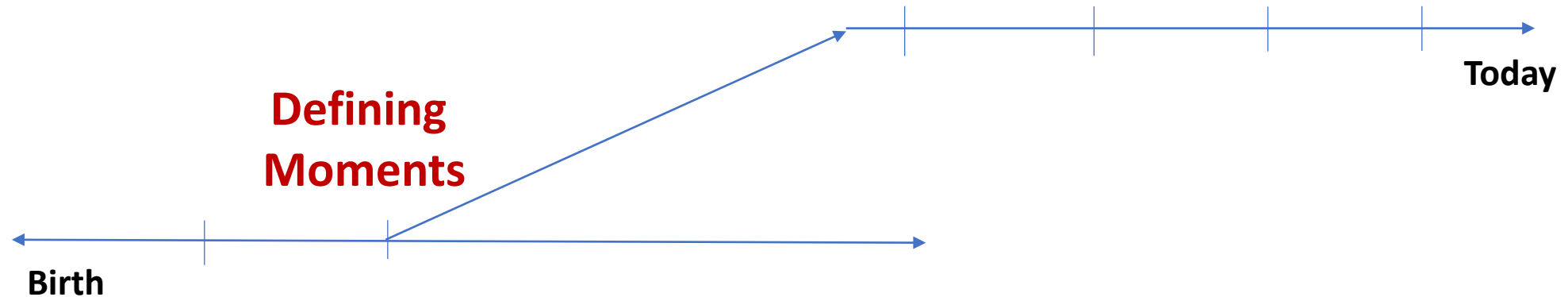
- **FOR WRITER:** This is first draft material, looking for gems!
Where is the ‘energy’ in the piece?
- **FOR LISTENER:** We listen as *READERS!*
 - Any Clarifying Questions about Piece? Anything confusing?
 - What are our ‘Reader’s Questions?’
What questions will keep us reading the story to the end?
 - Help Writer on Where to Write Next for Us, the Readers

What is a “Defining Moment” in Your Life?

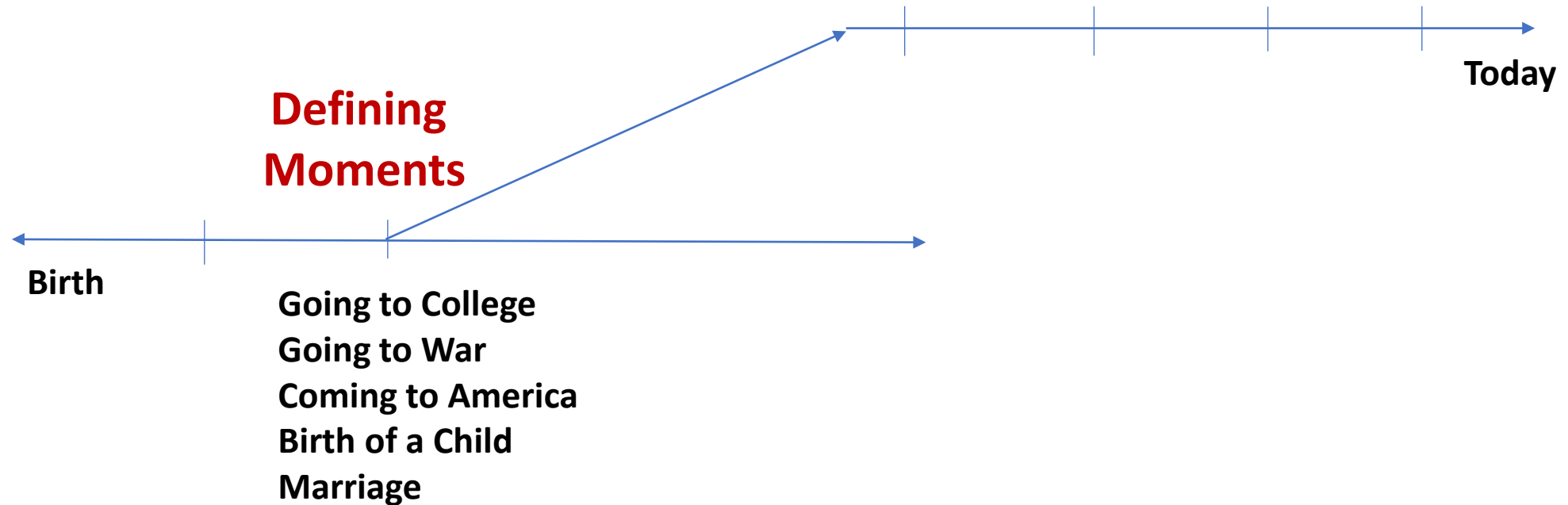
- A defining moment is a major event or turning point in your life.
- This moment may be something you have control of, or may be totally out of your control. *Enrolling in college vs. being drafted to go to war*
- Defining moments occur when we direct our lives onto a new pathway or we expand our horizons. *A “fork in the road” of life!*
- Defining moments can literally redefine our lives and may move us into a new state of action or feeling about ourselves.

✍ Writing with Susan Your Defining Moments

How did DEFINING MOMENTS shape you into who you are today?

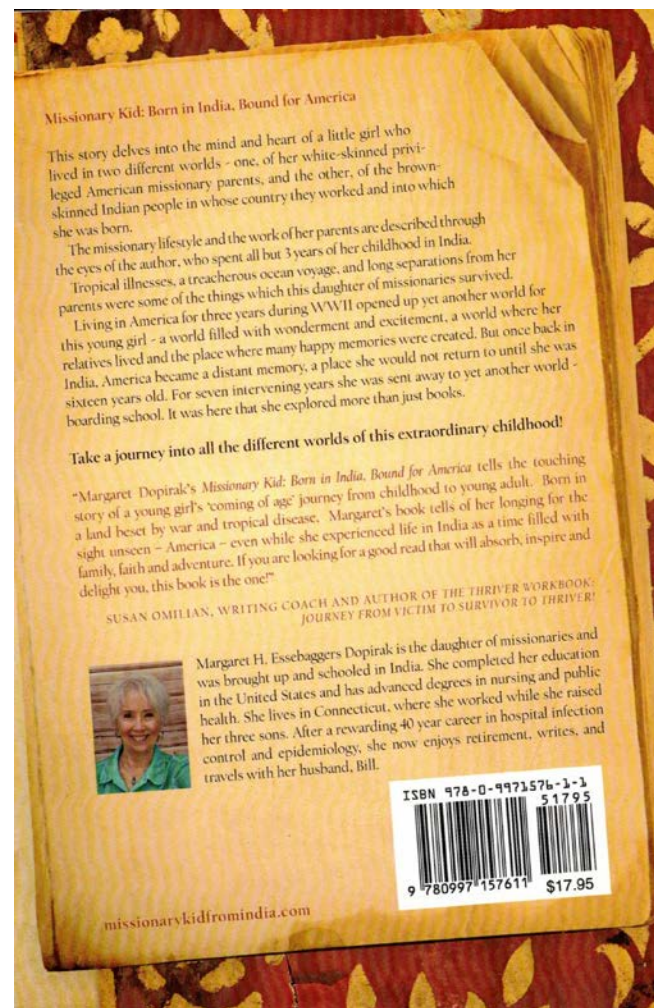
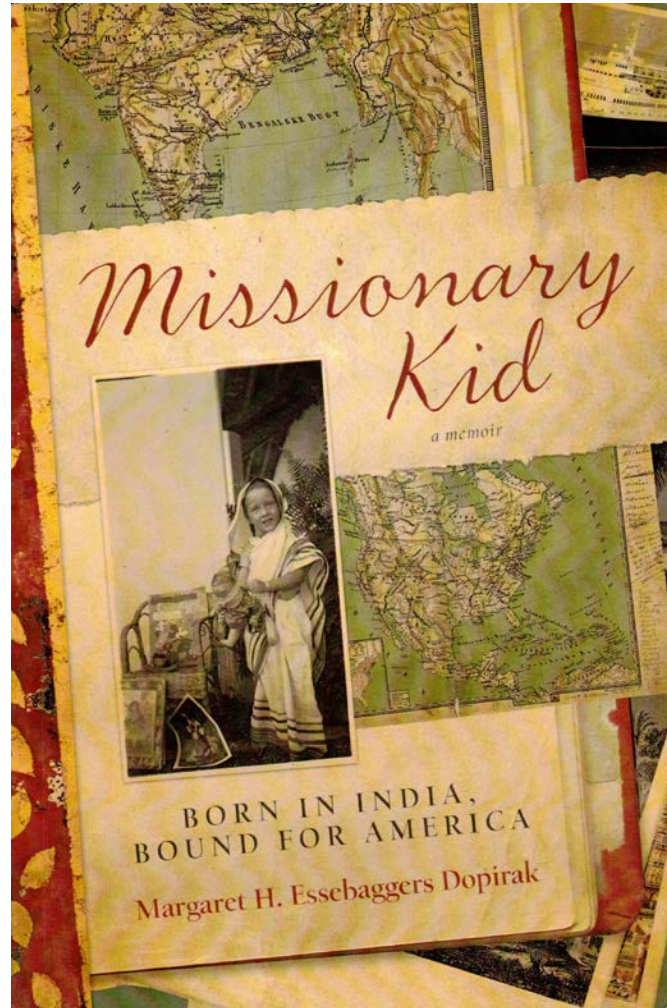


How did **DEFINING MOMENTS** shape you into who you are today?



✍ Writing with Susan Writing Defining Moments

- Make a quick list of an important change, transition or turning point in your life. You have many! Choose one with most energy for you!
- Find a scene to “show” that defining moment happening...
 - e.g. the day you came to America from another country, you got married, you got divorced, went off to war, graduated from college, got your first job, stepped up in your career, got married, had a child, grandchildren, and so on...
- Focus on questions: who, what, where, when, why about this event.



✍ Writing with Susan Homework for Class #2!

- **Write IN SCENE a Defining Moment in Your Life – “Show” how the moment happened.**
- **Include Feelings, Thoughts –What were You Thinking, Feelings?**
For example, the day you came to America from another country, you got married, you got divorced, went off to war, graduated from college, got your first job, stepped up in your career, got married, got divorced, had a child, grandchildren, and so on...
- **Focus on questions: who, what, where, when, why about this event.**
- **You don’t have to write what happened next or even the long-term significance of this event.**