



June 30, 2006

Dear Writing Women,

It is with great excitement and much anticipation that I write you in preparation for our upcoming summer writer's retreat July 28—30, 2006.

I hope to have 12 women signed up by the time of the retreat. Some of you will know one another and there will be several women "new" to the Women Writing for a Change approach of being and writing together in community. This retreat will be a brand new experience for all of us.

As our facilitator, I intend to work hard to create a space which is open enough and structured enough for you to hear your writing voice and have it heard in a responsive community. As is true for our semester classes, women are welcome to bring work in progress and use this time to attend to a project underway, *OR*, approach this weekend as a chance to jump-start your writing from wherever you find yourself on your writing practice path.

The theme I'm bringing to the circle is based on the idea of recapturing the childhood self presented in the book *The Girl Within* by Emily Hancock. The compelling questions I ask in response to the image of the girls we once were, are:

- A. What did the girl in me know that the woman has forgotten?
- B. What would the woman I am wish to share with the girl I once was?

You may be bringing your own themes. Some will be bringing stored up words that haven't had a chance to reach the page yet. Others will come with the intention to respond to my prompts and/or what is prompted by the experience of being together. You choose and it's all good!

Here are a few items to be sure to bring with you on July 28th: (if you're like me, you will misplace this important letter. Find a folder for this and other retreat materials that will come your way.)

- a photograph of yourself, between the ages of 6-12 (bring to the opening circle Friday evening).
- One or two pages of writing to read in our opening read-around (see suggestions below)
- Your journal, your laptop or whatever you write in or on
- Food or beverage items to share during social time in the evenings: snacks like veggies, fruit, cheese, chips, your favorite chocolate. There is a fridge for our use. Wine may not be stored openly, but as long as we don't go overboard, it will be accepted.
- Please read the enclosed copy of "Rediscovering the Girl Within," chapter 1 of Emily Hancock's book.
- **OPTIONAL:** 4 copies of written work you plan to discuss in small group, a knitting or a handwork project to enjoy during evening socials, favorite CD, comfortable, loose-fitting clothing for those who choose to join the Yoga activity Saturday afternoon, a portable printer, past journals for reflection and "digging," and walking shoes.

Possibilities for opening read around:

1. An initial response to the questions I raised above. Who was the girl *you* were? What did she know?
2. Something culled from your journal or on-going writing that says something about YOU.
3. A piece of writing that follows from: "my intentions at this retreat are to..."
4. Anything else in whatever written form you wish to share...

***remember the 1-2 page limit as we will be tired on the first night, coming in from the drive, jobs, family lives, etc. You will have time to share longer pieces of writing in small group. ALSO know that no one is ever forced to read. Passing is honorable and need not be apologized for.

I'll sign off and include some further details about the retreat which will, I hope, allay any anxiety about getting to the Franciscan Retreat Center and claiming a space for yourself and your writing next month.

Love,
Ann

DRAFT OVERVIEW of retreat (subject to slight changes once we're there!)

- Events marked with an asterisk are ones I ask you not to miss. All others are optional. Please especially note beginning and ending times and plan your schedule around them. It is hard on the community when we do not all begin and end together.

Friday, July 28

3:00-5:30 Arrivals, registrations, settle into rooms (Balance due at time of registration: \$190 for most: \$215 minus \$25 deposit) in the Bonzell Room.
Dinner @ 6:00

*7:30 Opening the Circle

8:30- 9:30 Writing exercise, READ AROUND (In the Bonzell Room Writing Circle)

9:30 Social Time, quiet/writing time.

Saturday, July 29

8:00 Breakfast

Open time for Writing/Quiet

*11:00 Large Group Meets in Writing Circle

Discuss Small Group Agreements/Feedback Practices

12:00 Lunch

*1:00-3:15 SMALL GROUPS Share Writing

3:15- 5:30 Time for rest, walking, Yoga, or YOGA MEETS DANCE (hopefully!)

Yoga Meets Dance is one of the most joyful ways I've recently experienced to move my body...the music is FABULOUS, it's something anyone can do at whatever pace they need in order to feel comfortable, it's an antidote to sitting and being in your head and is just so darned fun! This is being offered as an option for Saturday afternoon if all goes well and the instructor is willing to join us from Abiquiu, NM. Anyone wishing to MOVE and play a little is encouraged to participate. I don't know if the teacher will be able to come or not, but I'm keeping my fingers crossed!

6:00 Supper

*7:30-9:30 Large Group Read Around

9:30 on...Social, conversation, knitting, music, etc. (or writing time on your own)

Sunday, July 30th

8:00 Breakfast

8:30—9:45: Writing time

*10:00 – 11:45 Small Groups Meet

12:00: Lunch

*1:00—2:00 Large Circle

DIRECTIONS TO THE FRANCISCAN RETREAT CENTER:

7740 Deer Hill Grove, Colorado Springs, CO. Phone: (719) 955-7025 Ann's Cell: (970) 260-2965

FROM I-70:

On the outskirts of Denver, take **Exit 260—C—470** towards Colorado Springs. Stay on C-470 for 25.3 miles. Then take the **I-25/US 85 Exit** toward CO SPRGS for 45 miles. Next take **Exit 149-- WOODMAN RD.** Turn Right on E. Woodman Rd, stay to the right to stay on E. Woodman Rd. Turn Left onto Franciscan VW. for .3 mile. Turn Right onto Deer Hill Grove.

FROM BRECKENRIDGE: (More scenic, less traffic, about the same driving time):

From I-70 take the **Frisco** exit, follow signs to Breckenridge. Go through Breckenridge on Hwy 285 to Alma and Fairplay over Hoosier Pass **via CO-9 to Hwy. 24** toward Manitou Springs and eventually I-25. **Take I-25 N 7.3 miles to Exit 149—WOODMAN RD.** Turn Left onto E. Woodman Rd. Turn Right to stay on E. Woodman Rd. Turn Left onto Franciscan VW, turn right onto Deer Hill Grove.

Please call or email me if you would like to carpool. I can take a few people as long as they are willing to leave Grand Junction by 9:00am, as I would like to arrive early to check things out and set up.

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