

*Silencing
the
Inner Critic*

A Guide to Fearless Writing

by Elizabeth Welles
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Hello!

Welcome to Your Guide to
Silencing the Inner Critic.

To quiet this critical voice, we must first understand it—and perhaps even extend it some compassion. In its own way, the inner critic may be trying to protect us, though not always in a way that serves our creativity. It can stop us in our tracks, amplify our doubts, and make us feel less than. But I assure you, harmony is possible. With awareness and practice, you can quiet the critic, shift its energy, and even put it to good use.

While this guide focuses on writing, its wisdom applies to all creative expression—and to life itself.

Let's begin.



Are you ready?

LET'S BEGIN!

*Wendy Elizabeth
Welles Shapiro*

SILENCING THE INNER CRITIC:
A GUIDE TO FEARLESS WRITING

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What is Fearless Writing?

Fearless writing or creating doesn't necessarily mean the absence of fear. Instead, it's learning to write with fear present, fear less, without letting it steer the way. It's not about becoming louder, better, perfected, or more polished. It's about becoming truer and letting your words, your voice, your creative drive in whatever field you are in come through anyway.

Fearless Writing Is:

- Writing before you're ready
- Letting the first draft be imperfect
- Choosing honesty over polish, presence over performance
- Letting your words rip on the page

Fearless writing is like a muscle, a practice you can learn and hone. It can be fierce, powerful, and wild.

Deep, tender, and soulful.

Messy, beautiful, and wise.

It includes your humor, your edges, and your most vulnerable, poignant truths. Sometimes it flies out of you. Sometimes it whispers through you.

Much later, the editor can come. Not the critic, but the supportive editor. The one who is also you. The one who rewrites, refines, and shapes the material, if that is the path your words want to take.

Now let's find out who this critic is and discover a path forward for your vision and your voice.

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Who is this Inner Critic?

Often, it's a collection of voices shaped by past experiences, well-meaning but misguided influences, and our own fears. It can take many forms, including:

- **Echoes of Others:** Words from parents, teachers, or peers who—intentionally or not—planted seeds of doubt.
- **Trauma's Lingering Voice:** Past wounds that instilled a sense of unworthiness or fear of failure.
- **The Voice of Self-Doubt:** That internalized skepticism that questions your abilities and potential.

Though these voices may seem powerful, they are not the truth of who you are. Let's uncover their patterns, loosen their grip, and replace them with something far more supportive.

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Recognizing The Critic's Patterns

To quiet the critic, start by noticing when and how it shows up. Ask yourself:

- What triggers my inner critic? (Certain tasks, people, or moments of vulnerability?)
- What does it usually say? (Is there a recurring phrase or theme?)
- How does it make me feel? (Does it cause hesitation, anxiety, or frustration?)

A simple way to track this is to jot down these thoughts when they arise.

Awareness is the first step to changing the narrative.

***And remember to be gentle with yourself while you do this.
In fact, that gentleness is what allows you to keep going.*

The most quiet whispers of
your soul, your own inner
voice, can be heard
in the in between spaces
between what was
and what will be.

WENDY-ELIZABETH
WELLES-SHAPIRO





Understanding the Inner Critic

Ways the Inner Critic Shows Up In Writing

1. Perfectionism & Over-Editing

- You can't move past the first sentence because it "isn't good enough."
- You rewrite the same paragraph over and over instead of progressing.
- You feel like your writing must be flawless before you can share it.

2. Harsh Self-Judgment

- You think, "This is terrible. No one will want to read this."
- You compare yourself to others and feel unworthy.
- You assume that your ideas aren't interesting enough.

3. Fear of Judgment & Rejection

- You hesitate to share your writing because you're afraid of what others (friends, family, peers) will think.
- You avoid writing certain topics because they feel too personal or vulnerable.

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Understanding the Inner Critic

Ways the Inner Critic Shows Up In Writing

4. Avoidance or Gestation

- You keep putting off writing because you “don’t feel ready.”
- You convince yourself you need more research, tools, or knowledge before you can start.
- You fill your time with distractions instead of sitting down to write.

So before we rush to judge this as procrastination, let’s take a kinder look at what this avoidance might actually be asking for.

A word about procrastination

I’m not a fan of the word procrastination because it often carries too much weight and shame. So here, I’m using the word avoidance. Sometimes you avoid the page because you’re afraid—and that’s not a crime. It’s something to be understood.

We too easily tell ourselves we’re procrastinating or lazy, being far too hard on ourselves. Yet I’ve seen countless students and clients who aren’t avoiding at all, they’re gestating. Ideas are simmering, and their heart and words are finding their way.

If you feel like you’re avoiding the page, give yourself a lot of grace and ask yourself some questions. Do you want to be effective, prepared, or clear? You may have real needs behind the face of “avoidance”—or what people call “procrastination.” Check what’s behind it before labeling yourself as lazy, procrastinating, or unmotivated. Those labels are the critic’s voice anyway, not your truth. Sometimes you need support, and that is all. This is a place where kindness matters.

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Understanding the Inner Critic

Ways the Inner Critic Shows Up In Writing

5. Impostor Syndrome

- You feel like a fraud, like you're not a "real" writer.
- You believe you need external validation (a book deal, a big audience) to prove your worth or that you are a writer.
- You downplay your work, thinking it's "just okay" or not important.

6. Extreme Self-Censorship

- You delete ideas before they even make it onto the page.
- You second-guess every word, worrying if it's "the right thing to say."
- You avoid writing your true thoughts, fearing they are "too much" or "not enough."

7. Negative Inner Dialogue

- "You'll never finish this."
- "No one cares what you have to say."
- "This has been done before, why bother?"
- "You should be better at this by now."

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Understanding the Inner Critic

Ways the Inner Critic Shows Up In Writing

8. Feeling Stuck or Paralyzed

- You can't decide where to start or how to continue.
- You stare at a blank page but feel overwhelmed.
- Writing, which once brought joy, now feels like pressure.

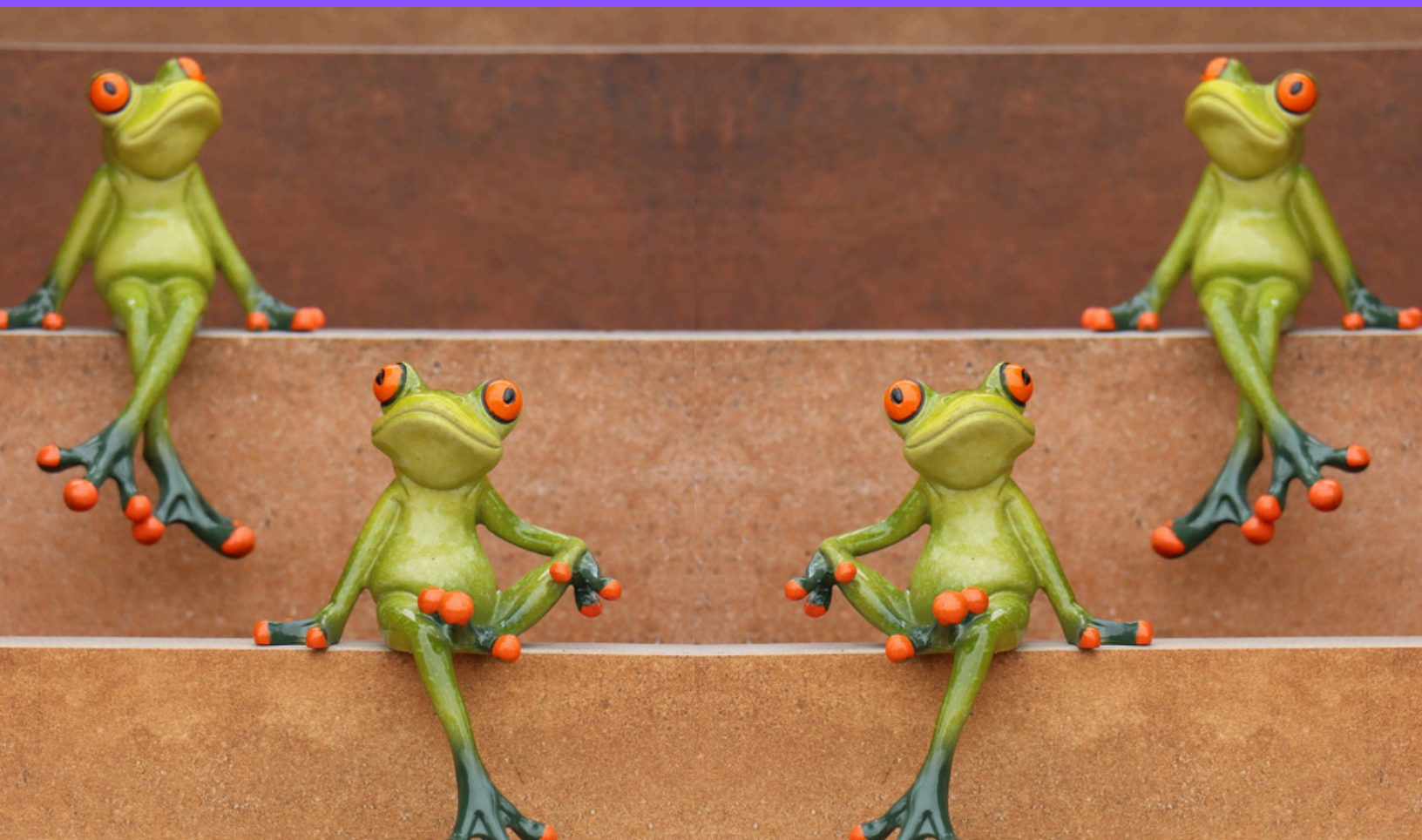
After reading all the reasons we don't write, do you recognize yourself in any of them? It's not a terrible thing. It's simply recognition, and that gives you power.

It's easy to feel like something is wrong with us, or that we're simply not cut out for this work. But the truth is, writers and creators don't need willpower or motivation. That's a myth. Sometimes what we need is support, inspiration, and healthy habits.

That's why writers' groups and creativity support communities exist, to help us stay the course when life gets rough, and to remind us we're not alone. Creativity exists through all things, and it thrives in community just as much as it does when we are creating in our own quiet space.

Works of art are of an infinite solitude and no means of approach is so useless as criticism. Only Love can touch and hold them and be fair to them. Always trust yourself and your own feeling as opposed to argumentations, discussions or introductions of that sort. If it turns out that you are wrong, then the natural growth of your inner life will eventually guide you to other insights.

—RAINER MARIA RILKE





Practices to Quiet the Inner Critic

These practices aren't about fixing your writing;
They are about creating safety to let your voice shine.

1. Name & Personify It

Give your inner critic a character—the grumpy editor, a nervous teacher, an overprotective guardian. Then give it a name: George the Grumpy Editor, Nellie the Nervous Teacher, Oscar the Overprotective Guardian.

When it shows up, greet it with humor:

"Oh, there you are again. Thanks for coming, now sit down and be quiet."

2. The 'Permission to Write' Letter

Write two letters:

✍️ One to your inner critic, acknowledging its presence and setting gentle boundaries.

✍️ One to yourself, granting yourself full permission and creative freedom.

3. Speed Writing Practice

Set a timer for 5–10 minutes and write without stopping.
No editing. No second-guessing. Just let the words move.

Ignore grammar and let go of perfection. Write simply to write.
What comes out doesn't need to make sense—just keep your pen moving.

4. A Compassionate Question

What do I need right now to feel safe enough to write and create?

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Reframing the Critic's Voice

Turn self-criticism into constructive feedback with these four steps:

Step 1: Identify the Inner Critic's Words

Write down the negative thoughts exactly as they appear in your mind.

📌 Example:

"This writing is terrible. I have no talent. No one will want to read this." Just get them out of your body and mind, and onto the page.

Step 2: Question the Critic

Challenge the thought that the "writing is terrible" by asking:

- Is this 100% true?
- Would I say this to a friend?
- What's a more supportive way to look at this?

📌 Example:

- "I think I am being too harsh. It cannot be that bad. Maybe it just needs some revision, not rejection. Maybe I need someone else's eyes on this who I trust and who supports me."

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Find the Feedback that Nurtures

Step 3: Reframe with Constructive Feedback That Builds

Replace harsh criticism with encouragement:

✗ "This writing is terrible."

✓ "This is a first draft. Let's give myself a break, and find one solid thing I like and build from there."

✗ "No one will want to read this."

✓ "I'm writing because I have something to say. Let's make it clearer for the right audience."

✗ "I have no talent."

✓ "Writing is a skill. The more I write, the stronger I become. I am gifted and have something to say to this world."

Step 4: Use a Supportive Mantra

Repeat an affirmation when the critic appears:

- "Progress, not perfection."
- "Every great writer starts with a rough draft."
- "I am learning and improving with every word I write."



Creative Affirmations & Personal Mantras

Create words that have value specifically for you and carry them with you, literally or metaphorically.

Here are a few ideas:

- ◆ My words have value.
- ◆ My voice matters.
- ◆ Someone needs to hear what I have to say.
- ◆ I write bravely.
- ◆ Perfection isn't the goal; connection to myself and my audience is.

Choose to listen to the feedback that nurtures and builds, not the voices that tear you down. Find support that strengthens you, that is clear and kind, and that reminds you of your worth.

**Keep writing.
Keep creating.**

Your vision & voice matter.
Your story matters.
You matter.

Ask yourself:
What feeds me?
What builds me up?

Move in that direction, and keep on keeping on.

To let each impression and each embryo of a feeling come to completion, entirely in itself, in the dark, in the unsayable, the unconscious beyond the reach of one's own understanding, and with deep humility and patience, to wait for the hour when a new clarity is born. This alone is what it means to live as an artist in understanding as in creating.

—Rainer Maria Rilke



What's Next?

Thank you for traveling this road for your vision, your voice, and your truth. As you dance to your own music along the way, the natural rhythm of your writing and the self-knowledge, self-respect, and self-compassion you cultivate begin to outweigh the critical voice.

Remember, you are a golden bridge for others through your magical, healing words, your courageous and honest words, and the truth only you can tell.

Keep writing. Keep trusting. Let your fearless voice shine.

There is a deeper path available. If you haven't signed up, [Give Your Inner Critic A Vacation: Your Way to Freedom & Creative Self-Expression](#) gently expands this work to help you meet the critic with compassion and ease. It invites you to release the roles it once held and build clear inner boundaries so your creativity has room to move, breathe, and unfold.

May you continue to find your inner calm, see your greater vision, and explore your dreams, your life, and all the magic in between.

To explore what's next, here's where to find me:

[yourmiracletime.com](#) • [yourmiracletime.com/contact](#)

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[Linkedin](#)

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Who Am I

Best known as Elizabeth Welles, I'm a creator—author, playwright, storyteller, and teacher—dedicated to helping others find their fearless writing voice. I'm the author of [Journaling for Well-Being & Peace](#) and [Women Celebrate: The Gift in Every Moment](#), and the creator of the ever-popular courses, [How to Rest](#), [Writing Through Grief's Open Door](#), and [Give Your Inner Critic A Vacation: Your Way to Freedom & Creative Self-Expression](#).

A lifelong writer and meditation practitioner, I know the healing power of words and sound — written, spoken, or silent — to restore, uplift, and set you free.

If you've felt overwhelmed by self-doubt or silenced by the inner critic, know that you're not alone. The creative path can be messy, but it's also where your truest voice lives. This guide is here to help you reclaim that voice, to step into your power as a writer, storyteller, creator, or whatever your path may be, with clarity and heart.

Keep writing, keep trusting, and let your fearless voice be heard.

The world needs your story.



Are you ready?

LET THE MAGIC BEGIN!

yourmiracletime.com

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