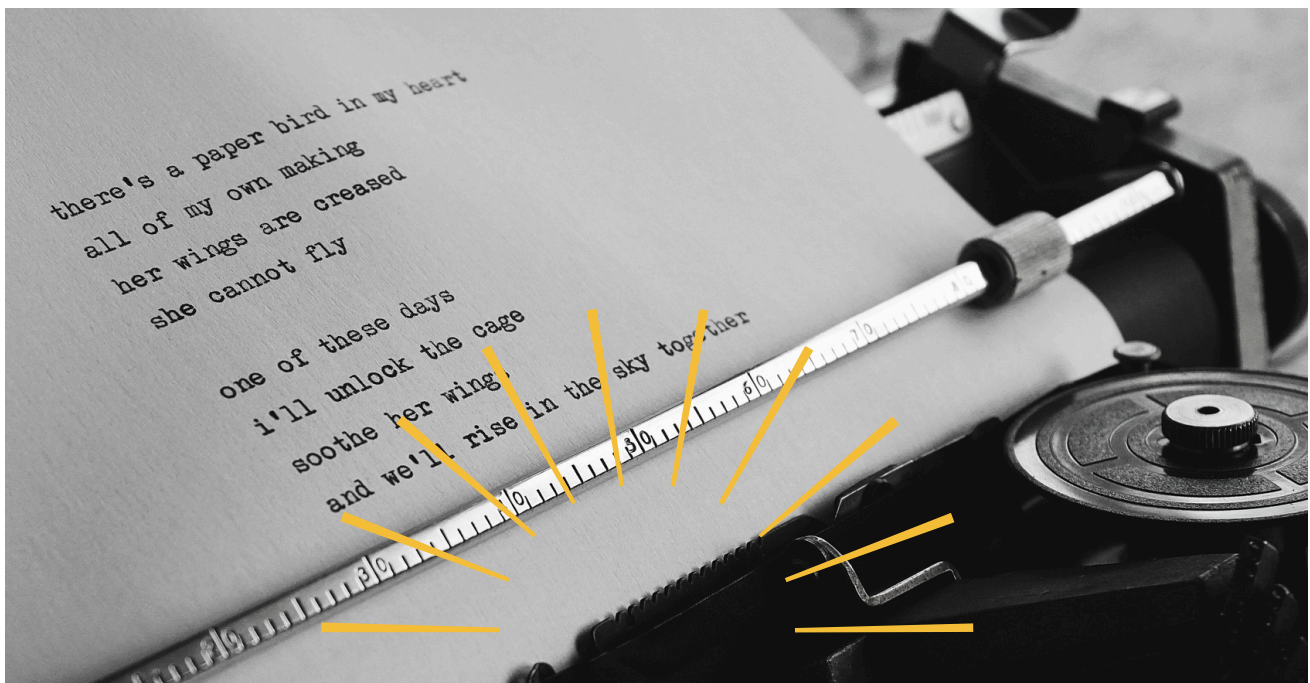


A PUBLICATION RESOURCE



SHARE
YOUR
STORY

FOR TRUTH TELLERS



WELCOME TO YOUR STORY

For far too long the depths and complexities of our stories have been ignored, told through the throats of others, or filtered through frameworks that may or may not suit the storyteller. Many of us have been forced to write our narratives with “happily ever after endings” when that was not what happened. We have been written about through the idealized or degrading lenses of who others wanted us to be. This ends today.

Now, we have the opportunity to shape our narratives through our own brains, bodies, and beings. Access to publishing forums for the written word make it easier than ever before to tell our stories how we want them to be told. The world needs authentic sharing of stories that arise from the truth of generative wisdom. With our words, we will rewrite our pasts and recreate our futures.

**"Write what should not be forgotten."
— Isabel Allende**

MY STORY

When #MeToo went viral in 2017, I knew that my commitment to recovery from childhood incest and illness was so much bigger than me. The desire to share my history and healing narrative publicly through publishing broke out of me like a desperate scream waiting far too long to be heard.

I knew I wanted to share my story, I knew that developmental narratives of trauma like mine needed to be shared, but I wanted to ensure that I could manage my safety in the process. So, I researched other survivors who had already been sharing their stories publicly and began to reach out to them for support. My fears were dissipated by each conversation, while my courage and confidence grew with their encouragement.

So, I started a blog and shared it with my community through social media. My close friends knew what had happened, but many of the people who I interacted with on a day to day basis didn't. I was applauded for my bravery and my courage. Eventually, I asked the people I had interviewed if I could publish on their blogs and was well received. Then, I started reaching out to large media outlets and speaking at a number of events. Today I have published in nearly three dozen digital and print magazines.

In the process, I have fallen in love with the written word and am now a full-time writer. I share my story of my past pain, my present prosperity, and the possibilities for the future that I hope to create to keep children safe.

I love that you're interested in exploring this art form that has been so beneficial to my life. So, I have created this resource to help you feel safe and supported throughout the exploration, writing, and publication processes by asking you reflection questions and providing you with resources. Feel free to use what works for you and discard what doesn't. Lastly, always remember:

THIS IS THE STORY YOU TELL

YOU ARE PREPARED



**WHEN TO
SHARE YOUR
STORY**



WHEN TO SHARE YOUR STORY

Your story is a sacred source that lives and breathes within your body and being. It will be told when you want it to be told. Sharing your story may arise conflicting emotions within you. That's okay. You never have to feel completely ready or willing to put your pain, your power, or your purpose as you decide it onto the page. Instead of focusing on feeling ready, you can work on being prepared.

Sharing your story will contribute both to the individual and collective advancement of a world still so in need of learning how to honor our brains, bodies, and beings. We should not have to be the teachers of this overdue education, yet some of us choose to be. Prepare yourself for pushback and applause, for triggers and for triumphs. Here are some guiding questions.

"Freeing yourself was one thing, claiming ownership of that freed self was another."

- Toni Morrison

UNDERSTAND YOUR WHY

Why do you want to publish your story?

What do you expect to receive for yourself from publishing your story?

What do you want to contribute to others by publishing your story?

FOSTERING INTERNAL SAFETY

How do you feel when writing your story?

How does writing help you?

How can you manage the way that it may hurt or trigger you?

MANAGING EXTERNAL SAFETY

Who are you sharing your story with?

Do you have supportive friends and family who will support you in writing your story?

Do you have a supportive community that will validate your story?

Do you understand the potential legal consequences of sharing your story publicly? (Defamation laws, etc.)

Do you feel safe from those who hurt you?

Is your personal safety your first priority or do you want to share your story regardless of if it may impact your safety?

Do you have a plan to manage digital verbal aggression or assaults?

PREPARATION TIPS

Sharing your story is a gift to the community, but remember that once it's shared either in print or audio/visual recording, it can be utilized to help or hurt you. Plan for the best and prepare for the worst.

NAMING YOURSELF

Some choose to publish anonymously, while others share their name or a pen name. You get to decide.

NAMING YOUR ABUSER

Defamation laws vary by state and country. Be sure to understand the legal consequences of publishing the name of someone who harmed you. Outlets may ask that you refer to harm doers in general terms.

CLAIM YOUR STORY

Remember that once your content is published, it may be accessible forever. So, be sure to only share with the journalist what you want and to understand what and how your story will be shared.

SELF-CARE

You are more important than sharing your story or helping others. So, prioritize self-care.



**YOU ARE
WISE**



**HOW TO SHARE
YOUR STORY**



HOW TO SHARE YOUR STORY

Today, more than ever before, there is an ease and availability to publishing. You can self-publish by sharing your story on social media, creating your own blog or writing on other self-publication platforms with established audiences. Alternatively, you can partner with a number of editors who work for or own their own digital or print magazines. You can be interviewed for podcasts, livestreams, and news sites. You can speak at events.

The possibilities are endless to what you can do. So, begin by crafting your story, then researching outlets to self-create or publish on someone else's outlet. If you're going to create your own publication method, enjoy the process and engage others who have already done so for communal support. If you want to publish on someone else's platform, here are some options and tips on how to best do so.

"A word after a word after a word is power."

—Margaret Atwood

SELF-PUBLICATION

Self-publication gives you the most control over your story because no one can tell you what to say or how to say it. Your creative freedom is all your own. If you choose to self-publish, you will need to share your story on self-created platforms like social media and/or print copies and distribute them in order to build and share your art with your audience.

Here are a few ways you can self-publish:

Personal Blog: Wix, Squarespace, Wordpress, Blogger, Substack, Patreon.

Social Media: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok.

Self-Publishing Platforms: Medium, The Mighty, Elephant Journal, Thrive Global.

Book: Kindle Direct Publishing (Amazon), Barnes & Noble Press, Apple Books.

Podcasts: Apple Podcasts, Google Play, Stitcher.



MEDIA OUTLET PUBLICATION

Publishing on someone else's media outlet gives you access to their audience, which can help you grow yours! It's great to find people and organizations who share similar values as yours, so that their audience will learn and grow from your story. Some media outlets will even pay you for your story! Note that you may have to edit your story to suit the needs of the audience, which places the final decisions regarding layout, photos, title, and content on the editor of the outlet.

Here are some options for publication for other media outlets:

Blogs	Newspapers	Books
Podcasts	Digital Magazines	Television
Social Media	Print Magazines	Events



PUBLICATION PROCESS

Sharing your story on a new platform can be an equally empowering and intimidating experience. Remember, editors need to fill their pages with stories just as much as you need to share yours. You're a team. Maybe you'll even make a new friend!

SEND YOUR WORK

You can find contact information for editors on a website's About or Submissions Pages. Then simply send them an email introducing yourself and sharing your work.

TRACK YOUR WORK

Create a spreadsheet with the media outlets' names, the editors' names, the dates, and the titles of the pieces that you sent.

PRACTICE PATIENCE

It can take up to 3 months for most publishers to get back to you with a yes or no. Note, that often you won't hear back at all.

REPEAT, REPEAT

Sometimes can send the same piece to multiple publishers or wait until you hear back and then resend. Check the rules for "simultaneous submissions."





EMAIL TEMPLATE

Dear [Editor's Name],

Hello! Thank you so much for the work that you do for [Media outlet's name]. I'm so inspired by [Speak to the outlet's mission].

I would love to submit a piece called, [Title], to your [Section title] of your [Outlet type]. I think my story will really help your readers because [Reason].

My name is [Your name]. I'm a [Include a short bio with other places you've been published]. [If you have a strong social media following, share that here].

Thank you so much for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best,

[Signature]



MANAGING A YES

Wow, an editor said, YES! Now what?

PUBLICATION DATE

It can take months for a piece to be published once approved. So, be sure to ask for the publication date to get a sense of when.

THANK THE EDITOR

You want to build relationships with editors, so be sure to thank them for working with you via email, card, or you can send them a gift. Then, you may be able to reach out to them for future publications, or, better yet, they'll reach out to you!

READ THE FINE PRINT

Generally, you will enter into some sort of publishing agreement or contract. Be sure to read the details. Some publishers allow you to keep the rights to the piece and repurpose it, while others hold the rights to your writing and limit repurposing.

SHARE YOUR STORY

Share on your social platforms and tag the outlet and the editor!

MANAGING A NO

Studies show 90% of pitches are Nos.

REDIRECTION

You won't hear from most of the editors you reach out to. So, be grateful to get a, No. Then, you can redirect your work elsewhere.

TRUST THE PROCESS

Trust that a rejection doesn't mean that your writing is bad or your story not worth sharing. Instead, trust the story will find its home in the right outlet for the most suitable audience. Then, keep sending it to new outlets until you get a, Yes!

MULTIPLE OUTLETS

You can send the same piece to multiple outlets simultaneously. However, read the submission instructions before you do so. Some publications don't allow this, while others do. As soon as you get a, Yes, be sure to let the other outlets know.

OWN YOUR ART

Your art is valuable, you are worthy, your story is necessary.

**YOU ARE
SUPPORTED**



**WHERE TO
SHARE YOUR
STORY**



WHERE TO SHARE YOUR STORY

There are so many places to publish, as well as a multitude of opportunities to create your own publishing site. Begin by either dreaming up your own creation or researching people and media outlets who align with your vision and values. You want to be published by safe people who want to help you share your story as a method of healing or advocacy for you and others.

Additionally, there are a number of organizations nationally and internationally that devote their missions to supporting truth tellers, so reach out to them. There is no need to do this work alone. Healing, advocacy and art is all about authentic self-expression in communion with great friends. Here are some organizations and publications to get you started in your artistic endeavors.

"Like art, revolutions come from combining what exists into what has never existed before."

- Gloria Steinem

PUBLICATIONS TO CONTACT

Consider creating a [Submittable](#) account for publication requests, a [Press Hook](#) account to get daily opportunities from editors, or sign up for the [Freedom With Writing](#) newsletter. Here are a number of platforms from my list. Note that many of them align with sexual abuse survivors and female-identifying truth tellers.



SHARING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Public Accounts

Do you want your accounts to be public? This allows you to reach a broader audience which could increase your impact. It also leaves you vulnerable to strangers making comments that you may not appreciate. If you do decide to keep your accounts public, be sure to think through how you will manage unwelcome commentary.

Private Accounts

Alternatively, you could keep your accounts private. This would allow for the sharing of your story just to those who you allow to follow you. This will likely keep comments safer, but also limit the ability for those who may be interested in your posts to see them and make it more challenging to build your audience.



ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT YOU

There are so many individuals and organizations that seek to support truth tellers in finding safety, sharing their stories, and living satisfying lives. Here are a few that I have come across in my own work. Keep connecting. There are so many more focused on healing for a number of different types of challenges!



ONE-ON-ONE SUPPORT

I offer writing consultation and SEO copy and content writing services. Writing consultation includes discussion about reflection questions above, as well as process questions. Copy and content writing includes writing for websites, social media, blogs, and feature length articles that are Search Engine Optimized for your passion project. Please, click on the link below to make an appointment for either of these services. You can follow my writing and work on the following platforms.

Substack: Become a free or paid subscriber.

Website: Review my portfolio and services.

Incest AWARE: Lean more and donate.



Josephine A. Lauren, or "Jo," is an author and activist with a Master of Theological Studies. She shares her story of childhood trauma and recovery through writing and public speaking as a medium to express the significant intersections and urgent demands between spirituality, psychology, healing, and justice on individual and collective levels.

Jo's story has been published in print and digital magazines like Spirituality & Health, Arcadia, Elite Daily, The Mighty, Ms. Magazine, and Elephant Journal. You can review her portfolio at www.josephineanne.com and become a free or paid subscriber on her Substack.



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