



Concussed.

Journaling Prompt

Reference and prompt provided by Kim Cooper

When we are faced with challenging situations outside of our control, it is a common experience to feel stuck inside our own heads. Journaling is one of many avenues that can be helpful in moving anxious energy out of the body. It also lends itself to being a reflective space where we can choose to share with others or keep for ourselves.

Reference Source

March 12, 2021

Natalie Diaz is a Mojave American poet, activist, and educator. Before completing an MFA in poetry and fiction in 2006, she played professional basketball in Europe and Asia. She published *When My Brother Was an Aztec* in 2012.

On the physicality of writing

(excerpts)

You were a professional basketball player. A number of artists started as athletes. How did sports affect the way you approach your writing, if at all?

Having been a professional athlete, I believe I have a different lexicon of the body. A specifically textured vocabulary that moves beyond the five or six senses we tend to limit ourselves to in Western thinking. This also comes from my Mojave culture. I don't only feel with my body, I think with it. Even text is a physical space for me—it is not merely ink or font or symbols. Writing for me is no different than playing basketball, it's my body moving among and pushing up against and being moved by other bodies of language and the energy of language.

How do you nourish your creative side when you aren't working?

I was built in a big family, so my brain is electric for conversation and fields of questions and wonders. I love collaborations because they create a third hand that now belongs to each person in the collaboration. I have my two hands, but I am gifted with a third when I collaborate. Imagine how much more you can hold and touch and build and move and reach for with a third hand.

Reference

Diaz, Natalie. On the Physicality of Writing, The Creative Independent, 12 Mar. 2021, <https://thecreativeindependent.com/people/natalie-diaz-on-the-physicality-of-writing/>.

Writing Prompt

Diaz talks about having a “lexicon of the body,” going on to say that writing is her “body moving among and pushing up against and being moved by other bodies of language and the energy of language.” What is the language your body is currently speaking? What language are you using to speak to your body? What is the language that your body needs to hear? Next, consider how you might use your writing to help you “push up against” what is causing you pain or creating conflict.

This is certainly an abstract way of thinking about our bodies and our language, so when you can, try to use memories or specific moments in your life as examples for how you’re feeling or thinking about these questions.

Reflection Questions

1. How do you feel after doing the exercise?
2. How might writing offer an outlet during stressful times? Why?
3. What are some other outlets that you access- purely for yourself- during challenging times?
4. Do you have any questions about this journaling exercise?

Feedback and Sharing with Concussed.

I would love to read any reflections you would be willing to share! Don’t hesitate to reach out: concussedcait@gmail.com

Thank you for your participation! Go Bears! - Cait Ward