



### Presentation Notes

<b>Presenter:</b>	<p>Charise Jewell</p> <p>Author of "Crazy: Memoir of a Mom Gone Mad".</p> <p>I am bipolar so digging too deep can result in 1 of 2 extremes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Remembering traumatic experiences triggers depression</li> <li>2. Writing well triggers mania</li> </ol>
<b>Topic:</b>	<p>"The Danger of Digging too Deep: Self-Care for Writers"</p> <p>Sunday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021; 12pm EST</p>
<b>Key Message:</b>	<p>Writers tend to write what they know, and this sometimes means digging around in their own painful history. Panelists discuss their approach to writing difficult scenes and how to practice self-care before, during, and after emotionally-draining writing sessions.</p>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> point:</b>	<p>Don't force yourself to write something you're not ready to write: the writing isn't good and it can trigger mental illness.</p>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> point:</b>	<p>Don't write your story in chronological order if certain parts are too painful. Writing lighter parts between difficult parts makes the hard ones less onerous. You can move sections around so the story makes sense after the first draft is done.</p>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> point:</b>	<p>Have a dedicated routine/action to perform pre and post writing as a habitual way to transition into and out of the work. Can be simple, ex. make a cup of tea before, wash the mug after.</p>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> point:</b>	<p>Know your best self-care tactics and repeatedly check in with yourself while writing, to assess whether you're okay to continue or feel drained and need self-care. Some examples: breathing, 54321/grounding, gratitude, a favourite activity.</p>

<b>5<sup>th</sup> point:</b>	Remember that the first draft is usually the hardest. I process my pain by journaling about it so by the time I'm writing for an audience I've already gone through an initial digging deep and worked through most difficult emotions.
<b>6<sup>th</sup> point:</b>	Talk to a therapist during the process, and be honest.
<b>7<sup>th</sup> point:</b>	Structure your day to write when you are best able to deal with reliving pain or trauma. For me this is early morning because I feel at my strongest to tackle it and don't waste any of my day dreading it or putting it off.
<b>8<sup>th</sup> point:</b>	Learn and practice distraction techniques to deal with intrusive thoughts, so you are only reliving the memories while writing. When I recognize an intrusive thought I literally picture a STOP sign and then do something I enjoy, like cooking or painting, often while listening to music or a favourite podcast.
<b>9<sup>th</sup> point:</b>	Monitor yourself for signs that you need a break in the moment or from the project. Some possible signs: exhaustion, irritability, lack of appetite, sleep disturbances, excessive smoking/drinking.
<b>10<sup>th</sup> point:</b>	Prioritize a consistent sleep routine, healthy diet, exercise, etc.
<b>Important vocabulary:</b>	Self-check-in, habitual transition actions, grounding techniques, gratitude, therapy, intrusive thoughts
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