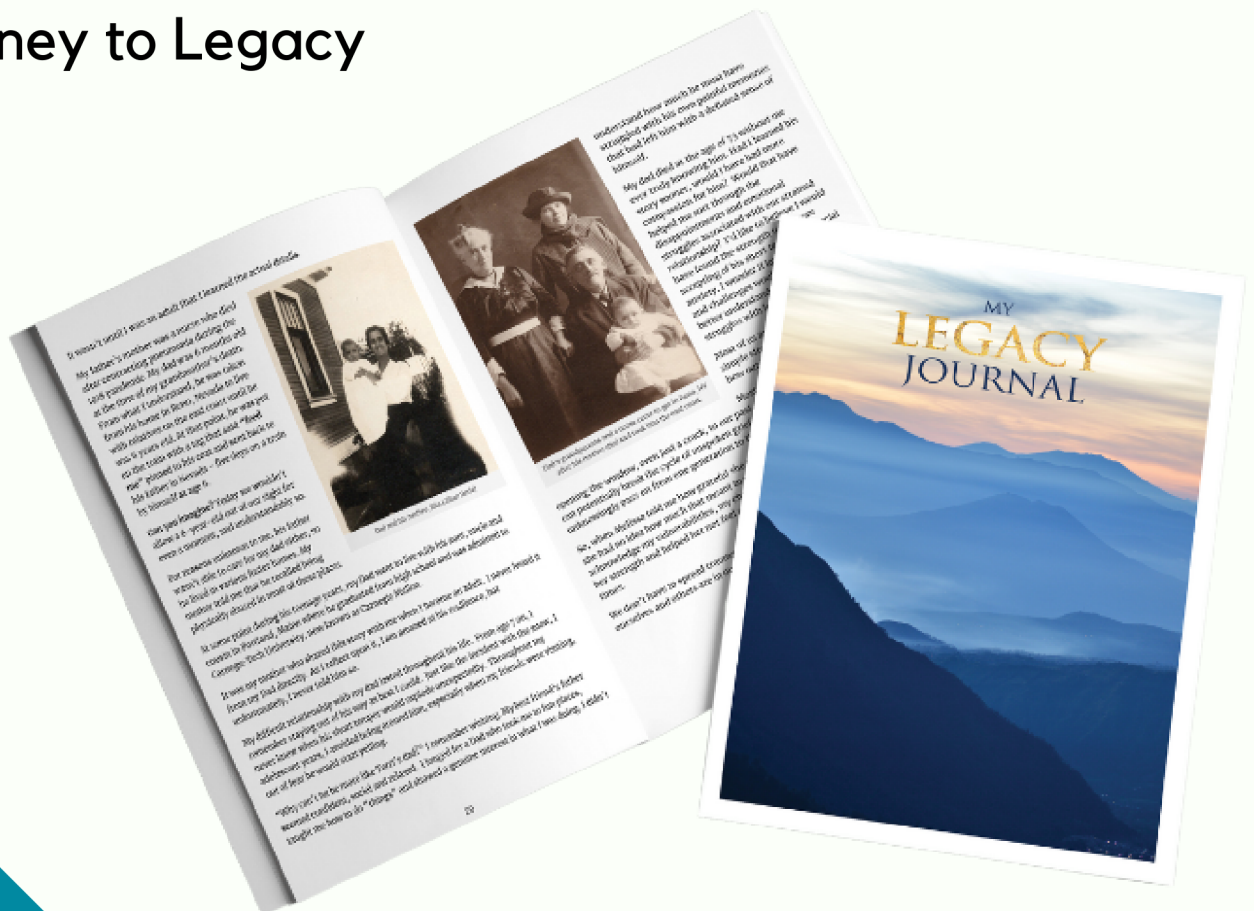


# Stop Struggling and Start Having Fun Writing Your Life Story Using a Simple 5-Step Framework

## Syllabus & Resources

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Journey to Legacy



# About This Session:

Your life matters and you are the only one who can tell your story. The benefits of recording your personal history are well documented: It helps you better understand how you became the person you are today; it helps you make peace with the more difficult moments of your past; it stimulates memory, which is good for brain health; it helps future generations gain understanding and inspiration from your shared personal experiences. So why are we resistant to recording our life stories? Often, it's because our "inner critic" gets in the way, weighing us down with doubts like, "I'm not a good enough writer" or "I don't have time to do this" or "my life hasn't been that interesting" or "my memory has faded too much" or "writing about my past will be too hard or painful." But what if writing about your life became the catalyst for greater self-acceptance, profound inner healing, and a newfound excitement for the years ahead? What if writing about your life made history come alive again by leaving a lasting legacy in the hearts of those you love today and those who follow?

## What You Will Learn:

- 1) What life story writing is and what it isn't
- 2) Why you don't have to be a "writer" to write your life story
- 3) A simple 5-step framework to recall timeless life lessons and wisdom so you feel more confident and empowered in writing about your life
- 4) Tips for overcoming common roadblocks to writing and sharing your story
- 5) Sources of inspiration to keep you committed so you follow through
- 6) Thought-provoking and memory-activating exercises to uncover the richer meaning in your life experiences

If not now, then when will you share the tough, tender and transformative moments that influenced who you are today? This is your life story and it's worthy and deserving of being honored, cherished and remembered by future generations.

# Session Outline

*"If history were taught in the form of stories, it would never be forgotten"*

*Rudyard Kipling*

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## Why Life Story Writing Matters

- Confessions of a genealogist.
- Most people wish they knew more about their ancestors' stories.
- Children who know their family story have a stronger sense of control over their lives and higher self-esteem. (Feller, 2013)
- People know it's important yet are resistant to writing about themselves.

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## What Life Story Writing Is and What It Isn't

- Life story writing differs from autobiography, memoir, and reporting on life events.
- Autobiography: a factual account of a person's entire life from birth to the present, written by that person.
- Memoir: a narrative told from the writer's point of view about a certain period of time or a meaningful theme in a person's life. A memoir is typically written with the goal of publication, so skillful writing matters.
- Reporting: writing about events in a person's life without exploring what meaning they held for that person.
- Life story writing is a collection of stories. There doesn't need to be a central theme. You don't have to be a "writer" but knowing how to write stories that connect with your readers is important.
- Life story writing should be done in two stages; the first stage is the inner journey, taking quiet time to reflect, doing a life review and looking for what's significant and meaningful in your stories. Writings should not be shared with loved ones during this first stage. The second stage is editing and sharing. This session focuses on the first stage.

# Session Outline

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## **Roadblocks to Writing Your Life Story and How to Overcome Them, cont'd**

- The most common roadblocks: 1) fear of not being a good writer, being judged, poor memory, painful memories, offending someone, getting it wrong, or not finishing; 2) lack of clarity on purpose or intention; 3) don't know where to find inspiration for your stories; 4) don't know how to write about challenging situations or people; 5) don't know what to write about or how to write it.
- Overcoming roadblocks: develop courage and overcome fear by writing about what inspires you, share only with fellow life story writers at first, don't edit or censor, and let your writing lead the way. You get to choose what you write about.
- Find purpose or intention by focusing on the benefits of life story writing- what is your reason for doing this?
- Make stories meaningful by finding the lessons and blessings using reframing techniques.
- Wisdom can't be taught but it can be shared. To have your wisdom received, you need to gain the trust of your reader, which requires being transparent, vulnerable and accountable for your actions.
- Use history and pop culture as a backdrop for your stories.

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## **How to Write a Story in 5 Simple Steps**

A simple 5-step Framework for life story writing

- Step #1 - Understand What You're Doing
- Step #2 - Set a Deeper Intention
- Step #3 - Chart Your Memories on the Emotional Graph
- Step #4 - Use a Wider Lens As You Look Back
- Step #5 - Show How You Got from There to Here

Writing exercise to practice the 5-step framework.



# About the Instructor

## Joanna Klein MSW

As an entrepreneur, writer, and coach who has designed and directed empowering personal development programs for 4+ decades, Joanna Klein knows that documenting the essence of one's life can feel overwhelming. If you have tried and abandoned writing prompts, struggled to follow instructions in a memoir guide, or sorted fruitlessly through old photos, you are not alone.

To ease the process, Joanna built a digital life-story writing platform called Journey to Legacy and created a 7-step storytelling framework to stimulate memory, craft compelling stories, and captivate your readers. Journey to Legacy's online courses, coaching, and intuitive writing software incorporate proven methodologies that have helped hundreds of people uncover and share their most meaningful memories. Journey to Legacy helps you preserve the one-of-a-kind narrative that only you can pass on to future generations. Let us guide you in connecting the past and future with your legacy.

## Connect with Joanna



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**Instagram:** [@fromjourneytolegacy](https://www.instagram.com/fromjourneytolegacy)



**Facebook:** [/fromjourneytolegacy](https://www.facebook.com/fromjourneytolegacy)



**Upcoming Events:** <https://journeytolegacy.com/events>

**Course Offerings:** <https://journeytolegacy.com>

**Contact:** <https://journeytolegacy.com/contact>

# Resources

- Manfred F. R. Kets de Vries, INSEAD Distinguished Clinical Professor of Leadership Development & Organisational Change, 22 Jun 2017, "[Why Wisdom Can't Be Taught](#)"
- Joseph Campbell, 1948, [The Hero with A Thousand Faces](#)
- Chip Conley, Nov 8, 2019, TEDxMarin, [Becoming A Modern Elder](#)
- Tristine Rainer, 1983, [Your Life as Story](#)
- Bruce Feiler, March 15, 2012, New York Times, [The Stories That Bind Us](#)
- Joanna Klein, 2022, YouTube, [A Surefire Way to Find Meaning in Your Life Stories](#)
- Joanna Klein, 2022, YouTube, [Life Story Writing: Easier Than Memoir](#)

**Free Guide to Life Story Writing:** <https://journeytolegacy.com/story>

