

Personal Blog Writing Sample

Passion gets me into trouble a lot. Specifically, things that tend to grab my heart by the valves and create an instant emotional reaction to someone or something. Most people don't know how to shut this off, and many think that logic is more important anyway, so people who operate in this manner are often left feeling as though their thoughts and opinions are less valid or important. Unfortunately, some people regulate emotions better than others.

When people are high in emotions they clash, leaving the topic or chance at further knowledge left on the table. Two individuals spend their time arguing and invalidating one another. They get nowhere. Sometimes these individuals can't become close to each other because of these differences. Even people with great communication skill sets and "level 100" persuasion can fall into these difficult to navigate discussions in a way that causes them to fail at convincing the other person of anything.

Now drop this complicated idea into a situation where even rather stoic people are having a hard time processing the events that have taken place this year (you could even go back further of course) and imagine what that might look like....

Did you picture George Floyd protests?

Riots at the Capitol?

Dead virus patients in a refrigerator truck because there are too many bodies for the hospital to store?

We are broken. We aren't okay. We've given up on communicating with anyone who disagrees with us.

I know this because I fall into this category too. I haven't hidden what I feel or where I fall politically right now. I'm angry. I'm volatile. More likely to snap over an innocent comment or unintentional implication from someone else's emotional statement.

People are fighting. Ending relationships. Hating one another.

I get it.

I absolutely get wanting to rid myself of someone who could be okay with something that seems evil to me. I understand and encourage people to turn from toxic behavior. But where does that leave our future generations? What will be left when hatred is done taking its course?

We are all in this toxic pool together and we haven't gotten out. We are just on opposite sides and/or fighting each other in the middle. Nobody is concerned with cleansing the water, they just with forcing the other person to see that they are right.

Pumping more and more of their incompatible liquids into the same pool. That their side is more humane or loving and safe for our future. Many people have boiled all of politics down to human rights. Whether that comes out in unborn babies, LGBTQ+ community, hate crimes, welfare, etc. If someone doesn't agree with their stance on these topics, they fight without trying to have an open conversation or they retreat into their echo chambers.

Obi Wan Kenobi likes to remind the Jedi often that, "the only people who deal in absolutes are the Sith." While I stand on opposite sides of this pool right now with many friends and family, I appreciate the message Obi Wan communicates on the dangers of thinking in a black and white manner. Please understand. This isn't meant to say that nobody is equipped to talk through these things on a more informed level. It IS meant to say that many people think they are being rational and righteous right now but behave in a way that will never create a more positive future for everyone.

I include myself in this broken group of people. I am not rational or okay right now. I have spoken many hurts with the feeling of just cause.

Of all things, my screenwriting class has given me a rather pertinent, dainty piece of humble pie to feast on as I bathe in our toxic, human made hot tub.

(Mm mm. Just picture that 1800's proper noble in a murky, smelly, cesspool of self-righteousness...carefully eating their pie and patting their mouth off with a napkin and satisfied smirk. Delicious.)

Senior Screenwriting Lesson One: Connecting to Purpose. Famous writers end up with bad scripts all the time. Yet they are still produced and made into bad books and movies. How can someone with extreme talent go oh so wrong? Did they forget how to connect to an audience?

Nope. It's about understanding yourself. Knowing your demons. How they work. Why they surface. How they manipulate you. Sounds eyeroll worthy right? Spend some time thinking about that for a while.

“Saying your passion is World War II isn't enough. It isn't the war that triggers you. It's being a kid and having to sit under your desk knowing that if a bomb hit it wouldn't protect you. You would die without your family under a desk at school. It's wondering if you ran as fast as you could, would it be enough time to make it home so that you could die with your family? Years of conditioning you with this same experience has left you with all this emotional aftermath. This deep, complete feeling from that moment that you will never forget. And the more you understand each of those unique moments that make up the collective you, the more

you will understand how humans tick as a whole. The more you will connect with others.” (This is of course, not my own example but from our screenwriting textbook).

We argue with our purple faces and our flying spit, resting in the reassurance that our conviction makes us right. That deep feelings mean our words are true and our side is just. We love the word conviction. We happily die on that sword. Never once considering that it is that same feeling that causes the other person to fight back so passionately.

We are the same and we are different.

Our experiences shape those unique moments and feelings but the passion that causes us to fight for what we believe is right is the same.

We cannot hope to build a future with equality for all if we continue down this fire and brimstone method of arguing and unfriending people. It isolates us with our allies and causes a further division with our enemies.

I'm not saying not to think or feel the way you do.

I AM saying that if we want to do better as people and get to a better place, we can't keep doing things this way. In these absolutes. Do you want to wall off everything toxic and be safe? **OR** do you want to take that possibility that you can change things for the better for everyone?

I'm not comfortable eating my pie in the cesspool anymore. It's not good enough. I want my son to be in a future where the water is safe and when things get bad, we find a way to make it better together. I want him to eat his pie without having sewage whipped cream on top. I want to know that I turned away from my echo chamber in hopes that someone on the other side might connect with me. Just because we believe differently doesn't mean we have to behave this way. Disagree this way.

I'm willing to bet people connected with their enemies change for the better. I don't think this ends on the "right" side. It isn't about everyone having the same opinions as me. It's learning how to build a world where we are stronger in our ability to communicate with people, we disagree with instead of dividing ourselves by it.