

# THE WRITERS STUDIO

*Fiction and Poetry Writing Classes since 1987*

## GUIDELINES FOR WORKSHOPS

1. Set a realistic schedule for the week; an unrealistic schedule only insures disappointment and frustration—allies of that negative voice inside your head. A schedule, of say a minimum of five hours a week, will encourage consistency and momentum. If you miss an hour one day, make it up the following day. Even staring at a blank page is working, thinking about working.
2. Create a private, personal workspace, where the atmosphere induces creativity. Eliminate distractions. Inform friends not to disturb you during work hours. If your attitude, or mood, is directed toward writing, writing is much easier.
3. Chose ambitious subjects to write about, subjects that challenge you. Ten pages of connected, substantial work are worth 1000 pages of disconnected work. Each paragraph or stanza of substance represents real progress; aim at quality, not quantity. You'll be surprised to see the progress and accumulation of pages after six months of consistent, undistracted work.
4. Don't worry about progress. It'll take care of itself.
5. If you follow these steps rigorously on a consistent basis over a period of time, you're bound to discover a voice, a tone, that's original. Progress will come. Take my word for it.
6. Writing is hard but also fun. When one works in an unorganized manner, one often spends most of his or her energy working against oneself, worrying instead of actually writing.
7. Teach yourself to appreciate every little pleasure. The big secret is that writing can be enjoyable. It's the obstacles one creates that cause the grief. If a subject becomes impossible to deal with, leave it and find another less resistant one. Try to work at the same level of connection when you move to a different subject. Shift subjects, not level of feeling.