

EXERCISE: YOUR UPBRINGING

This writing exercise is intended to help you mine your past for important details, identify what is most relevant to your story and get your creative juices flowing. Answer each of the questions as quickly as possible. As you recall your memories, focus on what comes to mind first.

1. When and where were you born?
2. How many siblings did you have and what was your birth order? Did it change over time? What was it like being the oldest/middle/youngest kid in your family?
3. How many places did you live as a child and what do you remember about living there?
4. Who was your predominant parental figure and why?
5. What was your fondest childhood memory and what was your age at the time?
6. What childhood memory would you change if you could and what was your age at the time?
7. What was your favorite family tradition?
8. Was there a family tradition that you dreaded?
9. What was a moment when you realized your family's social class or noticed that you had more or less than others? What was your age at the time?
10. What was a moment when you realized your family's religious affiliation or spiritual beliefs? What did it mean to you and what was your age at the time?
11. What was a moment when you realized your family's political affiliation? What did it mean to you and what was your age at the time?
12. What were the values that were important to your parents/family as you were growing up (even those that may not be consistent with your values today)?