**Morning Pages**

“What are morning pages? Put simply, the morning pages are three pages of longhand writing, strictly stream-of-consciousness: ‘Oh, god, another morning. I have NOTHING to say. I need to wash the curtains. Did I get my laundry yesterday? Blah, blah, blah….’ They might also, more ingloriously, be called *brain drain*, since that is one of their main functions.

 *There is no wrong way to do morning pages.* These daily morning meanderings are not meant to be *art*. Or even *writing*…. Writing is simply one of the tools. Pages are meant to be, simply, the art of moving the hand across the page and writing down *whatever* comes to mind. Nothing is too petty, too silly, too stupid, or too weird to be included.

 The morning pages are not supposed to sound smart—although sometimes they might. Most times they won’t, and nobody will ever know except you. Nobody is allowed to read your morning pages except you. And you shouldn’t even read them yourself for the first eight weeks or so. Just write three pages, and stick them into an envelope. Or write three pages in a spiral and don’t leaf back through. *Just write three pages*…and write three more pages the next day….

 Although occasionally colorful, the morning pages are often negative, frequently fragmented, often self-pitying, repetitive, stilted or babyish, angry or bland—even silly sounding. Good!...All that angry, whiny, petty stuff that you write down in the morning stands between you and your creativity. Worrying about the job, the laundry, the funny knock in the car, the weird look in your lover’s eye—this stuff eddies through our subconscious and muddies our days. Get it on the page….

 *Morning pages are nonnegotiable.* Never skip or skimp on morning pages. Your mood doesn’t matter….Three pages of whatever crosses your mind—that’s all there is to it. If you can’t think of anything to write, then write, ‘I can’t think of anything to write…’ Do this until you have filled three pages. *Do anything until you have filled three pages.*

 When people ask, ‘Why do we write morning pages?’ I joke, ‘To get to the other side.’ They think I am kidding, but I’m not. Morning pages do get us to the other side: the other side of our fear, of our negativity, of our moods. Above all, they get us beyond our Censor. Beyond the reach of the Censor’s babble we find our own quiet center, the place where we hear the still, small voice that is at once our creator’s and our own….

 It may be useful for you to think of the morning pages as meditation. It may not be the practice of meditation you are accustomed to. You may, in fact, not be accustomed to meditating at all. The pages may not seem spiritual or even meditative--more like negative and materialistic, actually—but they are a valid form of meditation that gives us insight and helps us effect change in our lives.”

Excerpted from Julia Cameron, *The Artist’s Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity. 10th edition.* New York: Tarcher Penguin, 2002. Pp. 9-14.