

# Michael Metzler

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***“Writing is an act of courage.”***  
***- Cynthia Ozick, writer***

***“Writing is easy; all you do is sit staring at the blank sheet  
of paper until drops of blood form on your forehead.”***

***-Gene Fowler***  
***(and just about everybody else who’s ever written!!)***

Dear Workshop Writers:

O.K. On the count of three, be creative! One...two.... Not so easy is it? In fact, it’s quite scary. The idea of creating something, anything, on demand is enough to make even a seasoned artist wet his pants like a first grader in a fashion show. One of the most frightening things to face in the world is the blank page – that willing but woefully vast white wasteland. It is difficult and daunting to create something from nothing, particularly when we must face head-on what we have created. Like a mirror, our words stare back at us. These black and bold truths about ourselves – our vulnerabilities, our twisted psyche, our hidden thoughts – leap from the page, ready to cut us for every cursed key we punched to put them there.

As difficult as it is to face the writing we have birthed on our own, the fears are tenfold when it comes to putting forth that product, that creation, that extension of ourselves, for public consumption. Others will read our words and devour them like divine sustenance or purge and spit them out like an unpalatable piece of pimento loaf. Clearly, sharing ourselves through writing is not always easy, and it’s not always kind. But neither are most of those things that provide the potential for the most enrichment & elation. Giving of oneself is risky but rewarding. So, we must create (there’s that word again) a place where all of us recognize that phenomenon, and share openly. We must share our creations, accept criticism, and offer it with compassion. Maybe that would be the perfect “sound bite” for this course: Create & Critique with Compassion.

I’m excited to engage in the courage of creation with you.

Warmest regards,

Michael Metzler