

## Natalie Goldberg's Writing Practice Rules

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1. **Keep your hand moving** - don't pause to read what you've written.
2. **Don't cross out** - even if you write something you don't mean, leave it.
3. **Don't worry about punctuation, spelling, grammar, etc.** - don't even worry about staying on the lines or within the margins.
4. **Lose control** - go where the writing leads.
5. **Don't think** - don't get logical.
6. **Go for the jugular** - even if something scary comes up, dive right in.
7. **You are free to write the worst garbage in the world** - and you will, sometimes.
- (8. *Slow down; it's not a race.*)

from **Writing Down the Bones**  
by Natalie Goldberg  
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### Rules for listening:

1. Listen with **curiosity rather than judgment**.
2. Quote back words, phrases, that strike a chord.
3. Ask questions.
4. Thank the reader

*“If Romeo and Juliet had made appointments to meet, in the moonlit-swept orchard, in all the peril and sweetness of conspiracy, and then more often than not failed to meet, one or the other lagging, or afraid, or busy elsewhere – there would have been no romance, no passion, none of the drama for which we remember and celebrate them.*

*Writing is not so different – it is a kind of possible love affair between something like the heart, that courageous but shy factory of emotion, and the learned skills of the conscious mind. They make appointments with each other, and keep them, and something begins to happen. Or they make appointments with each other but are casual and often fail to keep them; count on it, nothing happens.”*

by Mary Oliver, from ‘A Poetry Handbook’