



Writing Ourselves Whole: Using the Power of Your Own Creativity to Recover and Heal from Sexual Trauma

by Jennifer Cross

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Healing victims of sexual assault through transformative journaling: One in six women is the victim of sexual assault. Using her own hard-won wisdom, author Jen Cross shows how to heal through journaling and personal writing.

Rape victims and victims of other sexual abuse: *Writing Ourselves Whole* is a collection of essays and creative writing encouragements for sexual trauma survivors who want to risk writing a different story. Each short

chapter offers encouragement, experience, and exercises. Sections focus on writing as a transformative practice, embodying our story, how to write trauma without retraumatization, writing joy and desire, and more.

How to change your life: When you can find language for the stories that are locked inside, you can change your life. Survivors of childhood sexual trauma are strong and vulnerable enough to bear witness to each other's truths, to share and learn new languages for our experiences, to throw over the simplistic "victim" and "survivor" narratives that permeate mainstream media in favor of narratives that are fragmented, complicated, messy, and ultimately more whole.

Transformative journaling: *Writing Ourselves Whole* celebrates the power of connecting with others who can support us in finding language for subjects we not only are not supposed to talk about in polite company, but aren't even supposed to articulate to ourselves—and includes suggestions for those seeking to create a peer writing group in their own communities.

About the Author:

Jen Cross is a writer, performer, and writing workshop facilitator based in Oakland, CA. Her organization, Writing Ourselves Whole, founded in 2003, focuses primarily on sexuality writing workshops and writing with survivors of sexual trauma. Jen's writing appears in more than thirty anthologies and periodicals, including *The Healing Art of Writing*, *Nobody Passes*, *Visible: A Femmethology*, *Best Sex Writing 2008*; she is also the co-editor of *Sex Still Spoken Here* (with Dr. Carol Queen and Amy Butcher). Jen is an adjunct professor at John F. Kennedy University and an MFA candidate at San Francisco State University.

What Others Are Saying:

"*Writing Ourselves Whole* is a raw, powerful, necessary, wise and practiced guidebook to the revolutionary practice of finding the words, language and voice to transform suffering. It is chock full of insights, exercises, experience and the kind of fierce love and teaching that transforms pain into power. Jen Cross is a brave and brilliant transmitter of the deepest healing and healing practices. To anyone who has experienced abuse, violation and trauma, this book is a way out of the darkness." - Eve Ensler, *The Vagina Monologues*

"*Writing Ourselves Whole* is rich, intelligent, passionate, intimate, honest and encouraging. Jen Cross draws from her personal experience, her many years of facilitating writing groups with survivors of sexual abuse, and the wisdom of a variety of teachers and writers, to provide guidance for writing—and for life—that's both sensible and inspiring. This book is a treasure trove!" -Ellen Bass, poet and co-author of *The Courage to Heal*