

9. Walking

Like the simple act of standing, walking becomes mindless; it is an almost involuntary activity. But when we become mindful and aware of what we are doing when we walk, what happens? Walking is actually the way we move from one place to another. Walking is a small miracle. Step by step we get somewhere. So it is in writing, word by word we get somewhere. We make a sentence. A sentence becomes a line in a poem or a paragraph in a story. Step by step we are getting somewhere—to the story we want to tell, the poem we want to create.



Breathe

1. Always breathe in and out through your nose.
2. Place your hand close to, but not on, your belly near your navel. Inhale. As you do, gently push your belly toward your hand.
3. Exhale. Pull your belly in. Imagine your navel touching your spine.
4. Do this three times.
5. Return to normal breathing.

Stretch

1. Begin standing in Stand on Your Own Two Feet pose (see page 22), with hands loosely at your sides.
2. Step forward. Feel the ball of the foot as you take each step. Take ten paces.
3. Return to the beginning position and Stand on Your Own Two Feet.

Write

1. COUNTRY WALK
 - Imagine you are walking in the country. Walk on sensory alert.
 - Write for five minutes, recording the sounds, colors, sights, smells you can imagine. Try a landscape portrait. Remember to include tiny details.
2. A SOUVENIR OF YOUR WALK
 - Go for a walk and pick something up.
 - Return to your place, and place it in front of you.
 - Let it talk and write for five minutes.

3. JUST WALK

- Run or march on the spot.
- Sit down and write.

While I was walking today on my country road (with a stick my husband made for me), a fox jumped out of the ditch, crossed the road, looked at me and sat down. I said, “Fox, I’m not turning back today. You and me share these roads, okay? I’m coming through.” I banged my stick. He gave me a rather bored look and slowly disappeared into the bushes. I walked on, kind of nervous, but passed the spot where he had vanished. Then I thought how my imagination is like that fox sometimes—full of surprise. Sometimes I’d like to turn back because it seems hard or scary, but if I walk toward it slowly, with intention, it ends up being okay—and even kind of amazing. “I share the road with my friend the fox...” strikes me as the first line of something.