

SEEING WHAT YOU ACHE FOR

In *What We Ache For* I write about the process of finding and doing your creative work. For me, writing is the creative expression that allows me to touch and co-create the meaning and beauty I ache for. I know this because when I am writing I never feel I should be doing anything else, be anywhere else or be other than I am. And this is joy. Although I am usually alone when I am writing, I never feel lonely; writing connects me to both my essential inner self and the world around me. Loneliness is a loss of connection with the self that knows its belonging. It can be felt when we are with others. It can be banished when we deeply engage in creative work that feeds us.

How would you complete the phrase: *I never feel I should be doing anything else when I am...*? Can you think of more than one way to finish this sentence? If so, is there a common element to what you describe? Is it the nature of the activities, what motivates you to do them, how you feel when you are engaged in them, where they take place, or some other aspect? What does this tell you about your own path to happiness?

Set aside a set period of time (minimum ten to fifteen minutes) and repeatedly complete the following phrases, substituting for the word “write” the things that came to mind when you considered the question above.

When I write, I feel....

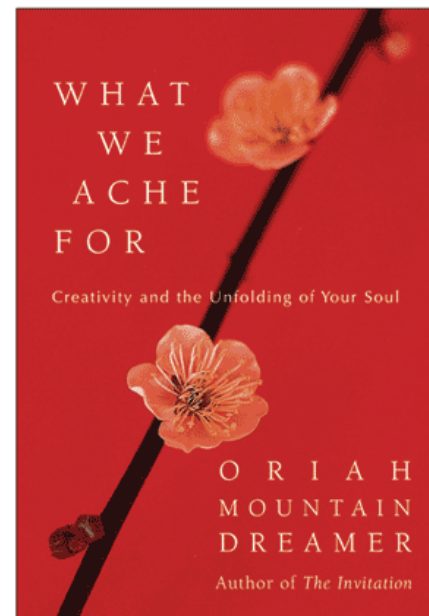
When I write, I see....

When I write, I discover. . . .

I am never lonely when I am....

I ache for....

Write in response to the question: *Why do I write?* (or paint or compose or dance or do any form of creative work.)



Based on *What We Ache For* by Oriah Mountain Dreamer, published by HarperSanFrancisco, 2005

Although Oriah enjoys receiving writing from her readers, the number of messages she gets makes it impossible to send individual responses.