

Women's Memoir Writing Series



Our Lives as Stories

Maybe you would like to commit to paper (or your laptop) a few of the stories knocking around inside you. Maybe you're seeking a new way to deepen your understanding of yourself and your connection with others. Or maybe you've been longing to write your memoir. Whichever is the case, this series of workshops could get you started.

Session 1: Finding Stories. (Gathering the Sensory and Emotive Details)

Session 2: The Craft and Building Blocks of Stories. (Writing the Scene(s))

Session 3: From Draft to Polished. (Giving and Receiving Feedback)

- The three two-hour workshops will be spaced a month apart providing lots of time in between for other activities.
- For the first two sessions, the whole group (up to twenty participants) will meet for instruction and guided exercises. Sharing time will involve breakout rooms of five or six, and everyone will be invited to share a portion of their work with Maggie by email if they wish.
- The third workshop will happen in 3 sessions, with up to six gathering each time, to share their work and give and receive guided feedback.

\$100 registration fee for non-members

FREE to UCV members

Bio

Maggie de Vries is the author of eleven books including the Governor General Literary Award nominated **Missing Sarah: A Memoir of Loss** and teen novel, **Rabbit Ears**, winner of the Sheila A. Egoff Children's Literature Prize. Maggie's TEDxSFU talk **The Red Umbrella: Sex Work, Stigma and the Law** has been viewed more than forty-thousand times. **Hooker Monologues**, a collaborative production Maggie co-produced, co-wrote and performed in, staged six sold-out shows at Vancouver's Firehall Arts Centre in 2016.

Maggie was children's book editor at **Orca Book Publishers** for seven years and a substitute teacher in Surrey for five. In 2005 and 2012, she was the inaugural writer in residence at VPL and UNBC respectively. For some years now, she has been a Lecturer in UBC's Creative Writing Program, and a Martha-Beck-certified Life Coach who mentors writers, runs workshops, leads writing retreats and offers creative writing courses in her Ladysmith, Vancouver Island community and beyond.

She is in the process of reconnecting with UCV, where she was married in 1995 and attended more and more regularly from 1999 until she moved away from the city in 2017.

www.maggiedevries.com

Dates: May 8, May 29 (2-4pm)

and

June 19 The last class is meant to be divided into three groups for workshopping, with Maggie present for each one. People will sign up for one of three slots: 9:30 to 11:30, 12:30 to 2:30 or 3 to 5.

Registration required: contact Mary Bennett ucvconnect@gmail.com

Zoom link will be sent to registered participants by April 30th.

Minimum: 10; Maximum: 20 participants

Supported by the Vancouver Unitarian Women's Retreat Fund.

Registration fees will be used to replenish the fund for future events.

Testimonials

Insightful, hardworking, thoughtful and encouraging, Maggie provided the literary expertise to solve the structural and editorial issues that plagued early drafts of my memoir. Coincidentally, she identified areas where I struggled to probe and encouraged me to explore, improve and flourish. She helped me to dig deeper and write better. Maggie is terrific!

Renée Hetherington, MBA, PhD

Writer, Scientist and Businesswoman, British Columbia, Canada, February, 2021

Maggie de Vries runs a humdinger of a writing retreat. In an island setting, I was so deeply comforted by the schedule she set for us—one I could decide not to partake of at any moment should the writing bug o'er take me or should I simply need a walk in the woods—that I was inspired to fully involve myself in the opportunities. I was encouraged to share my writing, something I'm truly not used to doing, and I found it thrilling; that shell remains open, well after the retreat, and I'm delighted to feel the change.

Maggie took care of each of us by combining inviting reflection and prompt-driven writing sessions, literary focus, and guided workshops with lots of individually spent time too: free writing in our separate (stunningly beautiful) spots and one-to-one sessions with Maggie. These check-ins allowed us to look wide to see the larger project and then to perceive the minute detail of scene writing and character perspective.

All that Maggie engaged us in over the 3-day retreat stays with me, weeks later, because I heard myself articulate a deep desire to do this. I said it in a safe and supportive environment; that baby step feels giant to me now. And Maggie helped us envision each of our books in the mess of journals and papers, in the engagement and the intention of the writer. I see these things now. I am showing up for this part of myself. Thanks, Maggie, for knowing the world of writing so thoroughly and letting us in on its mysteries and delights.

Jane Slemon, Retreat Participant, UCV Member, November, 2019

Maggie's experience as an author and writing coach has given me the courage to finally write my memoir. Her guidance has helped me see more clearly how to structure my book, stay true to my purpose, and tell a story that will engage the reader. I know I couldn't do this without her expertise and dedicated commitment to my project.

Jeri Ross, MPH, Licensed Health Educator & Entrepreneur

Author of See You in the Sky: A Memoir of Prison, Possibility and Peace

Santa Cruz, California, June, 2018