

# WRITE YOURSELF INTO YOUR *Dreams*

## Guidelines for Providing Feedback on ELS Written Exercises

If you're reading this, you've been asked to provide feedback for someone who is going through The Essential Life Story Journey, which is a great honor! Hopefully, you'll be going through the process alongside them, but either way, the following tips will ensure that the process of giving and receiving feedback is beneficial and enjoyable for both of you.

### 1. SHARING ONE'S STORY MAKES THEM VULNERABLE—SO ALWAYS START WITH THE POSITIVE!

The writer who is sharing their ELS Written Exercises with you becomes very vulnerable through that sharing, especially as their writing will be in a very raw and unpolished state. They will almost always be afraid that you didn't like their writing or that you'll feel they did something "wrong!" So, it's imperative that you, as the person providing feedback, are sensitive to that fact, and that you never shame or judge them—for anything. Always begin your feedback with something positive. This will help them to relax, trust you, and feel supported, encouraged, and more receptive to additional feedback. You can begin by sharing a result they wrote into their ELS Intention that feels moving to you, such as an inspiring dream of theirs that you were previously unaware of or something that made you laugh or cry. Share whatever you most appreciate about their ELS Written Exercises in a way that is kind, empathetic, and supportive.

### 2. PROVIDE ONLY THE RIGHT KIND OF FEEDBACK.

The primary purpose of providing feedback on ELS Written Exercises is to make sure that the writer *stays on the path* and follows the instructions—it's *not* to give advice! So much gets revealed about the psychology of the writer while using the ELS Method that it becomes very easy—and tempting—to try to psychoanalyze or "fix" them. This unsolicited advice is a distraction from the ELS Method, so it's crucial that you understand what your primary role is: to ensure that the writer follows the instructions. Whenever they don't follow the instructions, it's almost always a subconscious way of avoiding the very breakthroughs and results that they started this method to experience. So, when you help the writer to see where they've strayed (that they usually won't be able to see on their own), you're doing them a *crucial* service.

### 3. PROVIDE SPACE FOR PROCESSING.

Whenever the writer has strayed from the process and you lead them back to the instructions, be ready to hold space for them to have a major breakthrough. It's important to also be patient with them, because they will likely be resistant to following the instructions they missed (that you pointed out to them) *because* of the breakthrough they're about to experience. They may need to talk through those instructions, and process their feelings about what they're being asked to do, what realizations might occur, and how their life might change as a result, before being able to get back on track.

### 4. NEVER TRY TO BRING THEM BACK TO REALITY.

No matter how lofty or “unrealistic” the writer's dreams may seem to you, it's crucial to never try to “bring them back to reality” after learning about their dreams, or project any fears or limitations that you might have about realizing your own dreams onto them. It doesn't matter if the person you're providing feedback for wants to become a ballerina in their eighties or build a rocket ship in their backyard, your job is to help guide them back to the instructions so the method can help them build the story that makes them believe they can succeed. However, you *can* suggest that they also include a “stepping stone goal” toward a Greatest Dream in their ELS Intention or their ELS itself in later stages. For example, if they want to write a screenplay but never have before, you could suggest they purchase some popular screenwriting software or take a masterclass to get support for writing their screenplay. You can always suggest that they add a dream to their ELS Intention or their ELS, that you've heard them talk about or that has shown up elsewhere in their ELS Written Exercises; just don't *ever* suggest that they *remove* a dream from their ELS Intention or their story.

### 5. PRIORITIZE *THEIR* INTUITION OVER YOUR FEEDBACK.

If you provide feedback that doesn't resonate with the writer, always be supportive of their trusting their own intuition over your feedback. The purpose of The Essential Life Story Method is to connect someone more deeply to their own truth. Even if they don't take one of your suggestions, your suggestion itself will likely help them to explore new perspectives that ultimately brought them to a stronger place of truth inside of themselves.

### 6. LET THEM KNOW WHEN SOMETHING IS CONFUSING.

One of the most common kinds of feedback you'll provide is that a certain area of their ELS Written Exercise is confusing or “doesn't make sense.” And don't be surprised if they're confused about why you're confused! Something that's confusing to you might make perfect sense to the writer, but that's because it's their story. But when they reword that section so that it also makes sense to you, they will understand that part of their own story even more clearly, themselves. That's the gift in providing feedback about what you find confusing.

## 7. IN THE FINAL STAGES, BE CONSTRUCTIVE!

In the final 4 stages of the ELS Method, you'll be providing a lot more feedback on the story itself, according to the instructions in each chapter. And it's important to remember to be constructive! Here are some phrases to avoid and some phrases to emulate when you're inserting comments into their *My ELS* document:

### **Avoid feedback such as:**

- “This doesn't seem important.”
- “It looks like you're trying too hard and writing in flowery language.”
- “Why does this matter?”
- “I'd take this out.”
- “This is boring.”
- “This doesn't sound interesting.”

### **Provide feedback like:**

- “I love your descriptions. I can really see...”
- “I'm unclear about this part—who are you talking about?”
- “Can you tell me a little bit more about this relationship?”
- “This feels important, but I suggest making it even shorter/more simplified.”
- “Can you tell me how this part relates to the rest of your story?”
- “Can you tell me more about this part of your story and why it's important to you?”
- “This area feels a little like a ‘Trouble Spot’ to me. I'd suggest working with it more.”

Often, when something in the writer's story feels extraneous or unimportant, asking the right questions (your job!) will bring out a deeper meaning that renders that information important and so much clearer. Just be sure to always be honest, compassionate, patient, and non-judgmental with all of your feedback and you will help make the writer's ELS Journey so much more transformative and empowering.