

NARRATIVE THERAPY & WRITING · STANDALONE WORKSHOP

The Dissertation, the Manuscript, the Thing You Can't Finish

A workshop for writers who are stuck — and the emotional reasons why

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Who this workshop is for

- You are working on something long and significant — a dissertation, a thesis, a manuscript, a report, a creative project that has taken over your life
- You are not lazy. You are not incapable. And you are almost certainly not stuck for the reasons you think.
- This workshop is for doctoral candidates, graduate students, academic writers, novelists, memoirists, and anyone whose long-form work has stalled
- It uses narrative therapy and expressive writing to address what is actually happening when the work stops — which is almost always emotional, not technical
- Six modules. Writing throughout. By the end: a clearer relationship to the work, and practical tools for moving again.

Module 1

You're not broken — and you're not behind

Struggling with a long project is not a sign of inadequacy. It is a sign of how much it means.



Kintsugi is the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery with gold. The breakage is not hidden but highlighted — it becomes part of the object's history and beauty.

— Japanese aesthetic tradition

The cracks in your relationship with your work are not evidence of failure. They are evidence of contact.

Why long projects break down

- The dissertation, the manuscript, the long project is not just intellectual work — it is an identity act
- It carries an implicit question you never asked to answer: do I have something worth saying? Am I the person I thought I was?
- Every delay, every draft that doesn't land, every advisor comment that cuts — these accumulate into an emotional weight that has nothing to do with the quality of the ideas
- The block is almost never about the writing. It is about what the writing means.
- Understanding this distinction is the first and most important move in this workshop.

Common reasons long projects stall — named honestly

- Conflicting advice: you've received so many directions that forward motion feels like a betrayal of one of them
- Perfectionism: the first draft cannot be imperfect because an imperfect draft is proof of the feared thing
- Motivation collapse: the original reason you started has been depleted by the sustained effort of continuing
- Overwhelm: the scope of what remains visible feels impossible from where you currently stand
- Unclear expectations: you don't actually know what done looks like — so you can't move toward it
- Loss of meaning: you've been working on this so long that you've forgotten why it mattered