

WRITING WITH OTHER PEOPLE

A haiku poem is a very individual thing, but there are many advantages to writing and sharing these poems with others. It helps people to experience each other in different dimensions. Whenever haiku is shared verbally it should be repeated. It is hard to hear on the first reading. Also, there should be a minute or two of quiet in between each haiku that is shared.

Apparently, haiku masters would frequently meet with students and others to write together. They would compose little books of poems. Sometimes when writing with other people I find a great increase in my own awareness of life around me. Frequently the sessions begin with a brief sharing of memories of little things we have seen during the day. Then we each write a poem or two and share these. As I hear someone else's haiku it awakens a feeling inside of me and I jump into a similar pond.

I know no better way to turn a yearly leaf than to spend an afternoon writing and sharing. It is a good way to spend a part of the last day of the year or a birthday. Long after the wrapping paper and gifts are gone these haiku will bring back our moments together.

Sharing haiku can also be a way of checking in with each other. Once I was part of a group which came together for a special meal each week. We each brought some food and a haiku. Before we would begin to eat we would share our haiku as a way of letting each other know more about who we all were.

Following the Rules

Does everyone always follow the guidelines I have set out above? No. Do I? No. But I wish I did.

The one important rule is to live a life that lets you experience something of your inner quiet every day. Then, as Basho tells us, we return "to the world of our daily experience to seek therein the truth of beauty. No matter what we may be doing at a given moment, we must not forget that it has a bearing upon our everlasting self which is poetry."