

Finding the Muse or “The Zen of Writing.”

You will hear writers sometime say; “I can’t write right now, the muse hasn’t been with me.” They wait for the muse or the inspiration to hit in order to write. You can wait forever. Writers have also said that once they start, sometimes they will get “into the groove” and things really come, it seems to flow. Why does this happen? Is there a muse? What is the grove and how does it work?

Well, after studying hypnosis and becoming a Registered Hypnotherapist, Dr. Dave Ciabrone has an answer. It is called self-hypnosis. There are those who don’t believe in hypnosis or think it is evil, but it isn’t. It is just an altered state of mind. Have you ever been someplace or driving and heard a song in the background or on the radio that has a strong tie to something (usually pleasant) in your past? It somehow becomes louder, like magic. Your mind returns to that place in time and you can see the situation, visualize it, smell things from then and you will see the place. All of a sudden you realize you’re not there or something happens to “shake you out of it.” Have you ever been listening to a replay of an old time radio show or listened to a book on tape in the car and you are transported into the story and you can “see” the action in your mind like a movie. Later you wonder how you got to the place you were headed and don’t remember driving? You were hypnotized. You did it yourself.

When you start to write something you are interested in, your mind gets into a state where the physical aspect of writing (the typing) is “mechanical” and your conscience

mind lulls itself into a pattern activity. This means it “doesn’t have to think” and “goes to sleep” or relaxes. Your subconscious mind is the creative part of your brain, and because your conscience mind is “asleep”, the subconscious takes over and the story and characters and plots get to come to the surface and start to flow. You visualize things and see the story before your eyes and the writing is nothing more than documenting what you are seeing. You are “in the grove” or “the Muse is working”. It is your subconscious mind at work. You’ve been thinking about a plot problem but couldn’t figure it out.

While you were doing your normal daily activities and your conscience mind was working on life, your subconscious mind was hard at work on your plot problem. When you “got into the grove” the problem was solved. That’s when your subconscious mind got to surface and tells you the answer. Time becomes irrelevant, you are in the world of your story and the plot and characters become alive. You are under self-hypnosis. People self hypnotize themselves without knowing it all the time. It isn’t harmful or dangerous and is actually a means for your mind to accomplish some of the wondrous things it does.

You can get into this altered mind state by sitting down in a comfortable chair with your computer or word processor in a room or place that you like to write in, and relax. Take a few deep breaths and slowly let them out. Now, start writing. Start on your story and just write what comes to you. Before long you’re “in the grove”. You can go back and edit later, just create. Let your mind go and just write. The results will surprise you.