

## THE WRITING LIFE

by Bobbi Linkemer

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### Synergy

What could possibly be better than a one-on-one relationship with a writing coach? The answer is being part of a writers' group in which the members are all there to help each other.

**1 + 1 + 1 = 5**

**That's one way to explain synergy. Another is when like-minded writers come together.**

Writers form groups for a variety of reasons — sometimes, to share their work and critique each other's ... sometimes, to tap into their inner creativity ... and, sometimes, to carve out an hour or two to simply write in peace.

I belonged to a group like that for years. We met every Monday night, talked for about a half hour, and worked on our own projects the rest of the time. We never read our work out loud. Some of us wrote in journals, some on yellow pads, and some on laptops. I wrote most of a book on those Monday nights.

Recently, I was invited to an Amherst Writers & Artists (AWA) creative writing group. We all wrote on the same topic and received highly structured (and always positive) feedback.

In only two hours, eight people achieved an instant rapport that felt like it would last forever.

Without a doubt, the most magical writers' group I've ever experienced was a six-week, non-credit class I had to privilege of teaching.

As these 12 strangers described their book topics to each other, they became a cohesive writers group. It happened that fast. By the end of their first evening together, they had shared intensely personal information with each other, built trust, and committed to helping each other write their books. *That's* synergy.