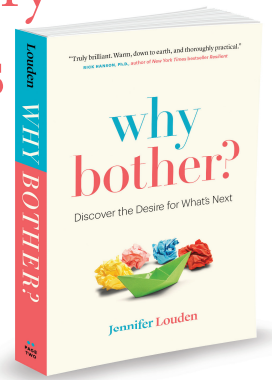


Journaling prompts to liberate and clarify your desires & soften substitute desires

Welcome to a collection of prompts drawn from the **weekly Oasis**,
my Desire Retreats, and my new book, **Why Bother?**



My hope is you will hand write your responses to these prompts. I find handwriting works far better than typing or speaking your responses in order to uncover new territory. I also find using a timer for two to five minutes per prompt, and writing without stopping, incredibly useful.

Choose the prompts that intrigue or that irritate you. Or do them all. Date your responses. Be gentle and curious.

THERE IS NOTHING TO FIX, NOTHING TO SOLVE, NOTHING TO FIGURE OUT. DESIRE WANTS TO FLOW AND WONDER AND CURIOSITY ARE YOUR GUIDES.

Make a list of your stories and experiences of desire being forbidden, dangerous, unseemly, selfish, grasping, rude, and /or greedy. Keep it quick and list-like rather than use a lot of gritty detail.

Then choose one story from your list. Imagine it is across the room from you on a screen on or in a book. See that it is in the past. Remind yourself that you have a choice in how you respond.

Next, look in a mirror. Meet your eyes. Tell your beautiful reflection, **"My desires matter."** Notice what comes up for you. Make notes before your insights slip away. Not to fix them or to change them, but to see them for what they are: innocent thoughts.

FILL IN THE BLANKS:

I most admire _____, _____, and certainly
_____ for living their desires.

I really can't stand _____ or _____, because of how
she/he/they live their desires.

What I complain about most includes _____.

Notice what, if anything, you wrote in these three prompts have in common.
Sometimes this one creeps up on you with insight, so perhaps read back over it in
a few days.

Fear of desire and old messages are part of what triggers us to reach for less than
what we desire.

I can't have _____, because _____.

So instead, I give myself _____.

When _____ what I might possibly want is _____.

FILL IN THE BLANKS:

Explore the gray scale of substitute desires, remembering they are neither good nor bad, but instead about your relationship with desire and how you want to feel.

My current favorite substitute desires are _____, because they allow me to _____.

The times and situations where substitute desires are actually satisfying and enough include _____.

When I refuse to judge myself for what I desire, I sometimes find I want _____, and don't want _____.

Because I can never have _____, I settle for _____.

It would be interesting to give myself _____.

Draw a line down the center of a piece of paper. On the left, write all the reasons you cannot do something you want to do. Then on the right, turn your I can'ts into I don't want tos.

What does this tell you about the nature of your desires?

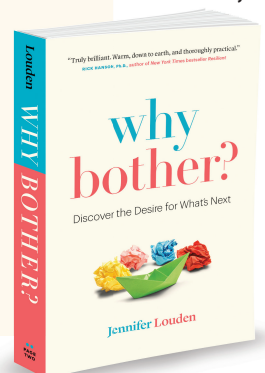
Where, when, and with whom do I most hide my light, my shine?

If I didn't feel I had to do this hiding, what might shift for me around one of my dearest desires?

The self-care that supports me in having the energy and courage to go after my desires includes...

The desires I have ignored repeatedly include...

My favorite way to ignore some of those desires are _____.



FILL IN THE BLANKS:

If I didn't have to be successful (whatever that means to you and you might not know), I would want _____.

The desire I recently told a friend about was _____, but then I told her/him/they I could not have _____ because _____.

What do you feel in your body when you desire?

Do "sunk costs" ever shut the flow of desire down as in ""But I put so many years into building this company or this marriage or _____. Even if it makes me drink myself to sleep every night, I have to stay put and there is no way to change anything."

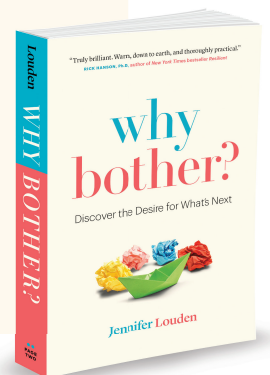
Do you ever bring wonder and desire together? As in "I wonder what it would be like to swap apartments with somebody in Istanbul," or "I wonder if I want to share what I know about how to have a good divorce," or "I wonder why I'm craving mangos?"

How good are you at fulfilling other people's desires?

Does your style of wanting change depending on the object of desire? As in you read exactly what you want, but eating what you want is out of the question?

The desire I have never articulated to anyone else is _____.

It is not safe to share my desires with _____, and I will protect myself by _____.



FILL IN THE BLANKS:

What I want and I am allowing is...

What I want and I am not allowing is...

What I do not want is...

What I do not want and I am allowing is... What I do not want and I am not allowing is...

I am ready to resurrect _____.

Because I can only live in the present, and because I am safe to pursue my desires in the privacy of my own home and heart, I am ready to explore _____.

What I love most about owning my desires...

What I fear most about owning my desires...

The support I am ready to get in the next month to take action on my desires...

Jennifer Louden | **Why Bother?** Discover the Desire for What's Next

