

THE POETS' PAGE

Shortcuts to Success:

The Writer's Sacred War Dance

by Wanda Sue Parrott

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You've heard it said that "A picture's worth 1000 words" and "It's as easy as 1-2-3." So, what do these pictures of me mean in such context? I've won big with this literary "war dance" energizing exercise. Join me?



Slip into your creative mental moccasins and do your own Writer's Sacred War Dance. War? Yes, because you are seeking a goal and must fight elements that conspire to defeat you: lack of money, writing space or time; laziness; distraction; flitting to other writing without finishing what you have started. We are at war within mostly ourselves. Dance in sacred, not scared, circles and make faces that help you let go of your writer's blocks! Enjoy!

Sacred? Yes, because the acronym you should hum aloud each morning, noon and night is the primal hum, the universal sound, OME: from it came Amen, Aum and even Oh, man! Our writers' OME means: Opening-Middle-Ending used correctly—to win. It also means action, from concept to creation to ceasing work and letting it become by letting go. The dance is putting physical and mental action into motion to attain a conclusion. Use it for health and writing to assure you start to win. Chant, sing, spit or shout OME as I did in these photos. Write by these three steps.

- **Opening:** Set up your goal, be it fictional or non-fiction.
- **Middle:** Dramatize it with conflict and challenges.
- **Ending:** End by writing the goal in three ways: successfully reached; lost or abandoned; still waiting to find out how the piece ends. Use the ending you like best. The endings often surprise their authors!

In 2008 I did the above dance, excerpts being still shots, on TV news throughout Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas and Oklahoma, while publicizing my life-threatening legal battle with the City of Springfield, Missouri at a public reading of my poem *The Last Indian on the Trail of Tears*. Within two days the city offered to pay me \$91,000 to buy (run?) me out. I took the money and ran, laughing with joy all the way to the bank. Always do your war dance in love. And bear this thought in mind: *"If you cannot do it in love, then you should not do it at all."*

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