



# Video Transcript

## Angelique von Loebbecke on Facing the dreaded blank page

*"Whatever you write, you, in your heart,  
know if it's good or not. If you're really  
honest with yourself you know it. And if you  
feel that it is good, it is good."*

Angelique von Loebbecke

WRITE, *Woman*, WRITE



# Facing the dreaded blank page

## VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

with Angelique von Loebbecke

**WWW:** Hello and welcome back to Write, Woman, Write. I'm Donna Barker and today we have with us, Angelique von Loebbecke ([www.AngeliqueTheHealingCoach.com](http://www.AngeliqueTheHealingCoach.com)). How's that?

**AVL:** Hi! Yes, you said it correct!

**WWW:** I am a classic Canadian. I can say names in French but I can't say them in any other language.

Angelique is going to be talking to us today about overcoming the fear of the blank page. Even authors who have published many titles will sit down in front of that blank page and think, "Oh my goodness! What can I do?" and all manner of different concerns come up.

Angelique worked as a journalist which she is going to tell us about. She has also written one book which she hasn't yet published. When she tells



some stories, we're going to go into some tips which Angelique has from years of experience facing blank pages pretty well, every day, in your work right?

**AVL:** Yes, that is true I was working as a journalist for 10 plus years for TV stations, newspapers and magazines. I was working on tight deadlines and under a lot of criticism because everyone had their own opinions of what is good and not good.

The fear of a blank page is very common, even in journalism.

**WWW:** It's not even a matter of confidence, then, that fear of a blank page? If you're a journalist, I am assuming that fear of having the blank page it doesn't have to do with not having confidence it has something else or is it confidence?

**AVL:** I think that, of course, a part of it is confidence. But, as a journalist you have your editor and then another person, and the editor-in-chief and another journalist, so a couple of people are reading your article, or whatever it is you write... a treatment for a short movie or video. A lot of people will read it and everyone has their own opinion.

I have a unique writing style – which I think is great because everyone should have their own authentic voice – but if you are writing for a broad

audience, like a newspaper, that might not be what they are looking for and might not be desirable.

It should be very easy and understandable. So you may have a couple of people tell you, "No, this is not good," or maybe they'll say, "Great. This is fantastic," and then somebody just before printing will cut out four sentences or ten sentences or rearrange the whole article... so, yes, a part is confidence and a part is the fear of rejection.

**WWW:** There is a man whose book I've read, William Kenower. In his book he talks about fearless writing and one thing that he refers to – and you made me think of it because you were talking about when you sit down to write are always thinking about the people that are going to be reading it and then cutting out sentences – well, his belief is that if you can sit down to write and *not* worry about who is going to read it then it helps with overcoming that fear and of having that blank page. Of course you can't do this in journalism, but for someone who was doing something else...

I am sorry I cut you off. I want to hear your story about being a journalist and the book you've been working on.

**AVL:** I have written a fairytale or fantasy novel and at this point I am not sure what kind of book it will be. I have written it for my husband, who at the time was my boyfriend. It was our first Christmas together and I was going

pregnant with the idea of the story in my head for a couple of weeks and then I sat down two days before Christmas and wrote it down in one night.

Then I printed it and bound it into a book and presented it to him. That's eight years ago. Until now I never felt comfortable to let somebody else read it, because it was sacred to me, something between me and my husband. But recently I read it to him and I thought, "Okay...this is good! I should publish this." Either extend it to full book story or maybe make a shorter fairytale for adults because it has dragons and warriors... it's not mainly for kids. We'll see!

**WWW:** Before we started recording you said something that was really intriguing and it felt true to me as well. When I wrote my first book which I still haven't published, you said you were making excuses for why you shouldn't publish it.

**AVL:** Yes, a couple of friends told me, and even my husband said, "You should publish it or give it to me and I'll send it to an agent."

I would say, "No, this is something between me and my boyfriend. I'm not to sure. I have to rewrite it. I'm not sure if the story is finished."

I had all sorts of objections, but actually deep down, in my heart I knew it was good, and I didn't want anyone to voice anything else because then it

would have been flawed. It had to marinate inside me, until this point where I'm ready to let it go in a sense.

**WWW:** This is really common experience for a lot of writers.

**AVL:** Yes, I believe that, too.

**WWW:** So you have tips and ideas from your experience being a journalist and the experience that you have gone through *and* your background as a transformational coach, so you bring that training and experience into your work. I'd like you to tell us, the Write, Woman, Write community, some of your ideas for how to overcome that fear of facing the blank page. The first question I have is, why are we afraid of that blank page?

**AVL:** We are afraid of rejection. That's one. And second, maybe a part of us believes, or fears that our writing is not good enough which stems from a different part. Then, we also have a fear of failure. These are all connected to each other.

Most of us also have a fear of success, because, what would that mean if you should publish you could be really successful and extend out from our range of family and friends. Fear of change. Fear of growth.

**WWW:** Fear of success is one that, it's my understanding in speaking to other women, is rooted in not wanting to stand out and have people looking at you.

**AVL:** Yes, it is very connected to the fear of being seen. Yes, some men also have that, but this is kind of a woman topic. Because in the *olden days* as a child I was taught that I shouldn't stand out, that I should blend in. I think with the millennium generation, they don't have that.

So, up to a point yes, we want to fit in and we want to blend and we want to please so all that fits in there.

So then we have that blank page and we want to write something and maybe we already have an idea or we want to get this book out which is kind of residing inside of us. It is like the blank page is lit from within. It's saying, "There's nothing here. You want to write something, well, let's see..."

This is very common, even as a journalist you have to deliver every day and you have to pitch different ideas and then you have to write in a relatively short amount of time.

It sounds profane but it actually the best thing is to just start writing in an automatic way because most writers want to get it right the first time. And that's nonsense because you have to get in the flow and that is why I am saying that automatic writing is a good exercise. With automatic writing, for those who are not familiar with it, you just start writing anything that comes into you head without censoring it. And then maybe you take a small break and you start writing whatever you want to write. It helps you get in touch

with your feeling side, your intuitive side. You connect with that part and not with the fear-based centre inside of you.

You get in the flow and then the words just come out. And, if they don't come out today, then it's no worry. Go and do something mindless, like housework or whatever.

I'm a good writer in the evening. Some people write in the mornings. That also plays a part. We have moon phases, maybe we have writing phases. Maybe today is not a good day so do some gardening or household tasks or anything that is automated. Go driving. You will get ideas and you'll get inside the knowing and the feeling, intuitive side and out of the strategic and fear-based place.

**WWW:** Yeah, that pressure you feel when you're sitting down and you think, "I have to do it *now*."

In the writers group I belong to, so many woman talk about how clean their house gets when they have a deadline. When you said "driving" it reminded me. I try not to do a lot of driving, but I live an hour outside of a big city. When I have to go to the city I often get ideas. When I'm not even trying, something will come to me. *Ah, there's a good characteristic for this character...*

I never put it together until now, you saying that's a good state to be in. There's no pressure there so it seems to flow more easily.

**AVL:** Yes when we do such things as driving or household tasks we get into a meditative state and our mind gets out of the way and it's easier to get a strike of genius or whatever lightbulb goes off.

I think that is very important.

Another things I'd like to say is that sometimes writers have the idea that if they write a book they have to write it from the first chapter to the last. So, another easy thing could be that if one character is named Aria, for instance, today you write something about her – what she looks like, where she lives, such things. And later on put the pieces together so you get out of your own way of trying to be overly perfect.

**WWW:** That is a great idea. Do you plan out a story or are you more of a 'see where the story goes' kind of writer?

**AVL:** Both. I do guest posting at the moment and due to my work as a journalist I am trained to first think of an overall subject and a headline. I think that's something that I'll never be able to get rid of! I would probably write the headline first and the sub-line and when I am ready and in the mood to write something, I'll start writing.

Last week I wanted to write something about the the pain we accumulate while meeting other people –pain from other people, not our pain – and I had this beautiful headline. And I wrote about 800 words but the story is not yet there! Since I am a coach and a healer, I try to be more in the flow and write when the mood and the feeling is there. It's actually a balance of keep writing and not forcing it at the same time and letting go of the outcome, which I think is the biggest challenges.

**WWW:** One of the bits of advice that you shared with me before we spoke was around letting go of the outcome, of writing something and then destroying it as an approach. And I just went, "Ahh, that sounds so hard!" And then my next thought was, "I have written so many words, because I am a writer in my career do creative writing as a hobby, I've written millions of words. Probably like you. And there are hundreds of thousands of words that I haven't destroyed but they might as well have been destroyed because I've forgotten about them: I stick them in a file and I forgot.

When I realized that, I thought, "Well, maybe this approach of 'write and destroy' might not be so scary." Tell me a little bit about that approach to help to unblock.

**AVL:** It's a releasing technique which is often used combined with automatic writing. You set a timer, you write for 5 or 10 minutes or whatever you feel

good with. You don't censor it. You don't overthink it. and then when the timer goes off you don't even read it. You just take it and burn it or bury it or tear it apart and release it.

It sounds hard, and it is in a way, but like you said it helps in letting go of the outcome. By destroying it, in a way you're making room inside yourself for more. It's not like you have a certain amount of words inside of you and when they're gone, they're gone. There's more from where that came from, so it is always a good thing to either do this automatic writing and destroy it.

Or change the perspective. Like maybe you want to write a book, but today maybe is a good exercising day, so you might just sit there and think about a plant and what it would be like to be a plant and write something or journal about this plant: how does it feel? What does it think? How does it grow?

That exercises you to see and take different parts of yourself inside a story. And all those exercises detach you from the outcome because you learn to write without overthinking it, which is the death of creativity.

**WWW:** Changing the *place* where you write. That was another thing that you had suggested. A lot of people will go to a coffee shop when they can't write in their office. They find that going out to another location will help them. How has that helped you and what advice do you have around that?

**AVL:** That's actually an advice from a creative writing course I took a couple of years ago. My teacher told us that that would be a good idea, in combination with another exercise to change your perspective. Because when you're sitting in a cafe or a bistro/restaurant, somewhere where there are a lot of other people, you can watch them and use this as information for your book or story. We all have imagination, but when we have to sit down and describe a scene, it might be difficult to make it up as we go. So we can watch and listen to other people, and then weave that inside your story.

And then later on, when I learned a little bit about Feng Shui, I realized that maybe sometimes our desk is not in the "right" position, so sometimes it can help to sit somewhere else to get the energy flowing, to be more relaxed.

When we have a fear of the blank page, or fear of rejection or whatever it is that's bugging us, we'll combine that feeling with our desk. So anytime we pass the desk, we'll think, "ooooohhh, that's my space of frustration." So what we're trying to do is detach the location from the writing.

**WWW:** What great advice! I've spoken to someone who's talking about Feng Shui and creativity. That's another one of the videos that's available. She didn't mention the specific piece that you just did – attaching emotions to the space. Her advice to me when she saw my desk, which has a wall of books in front of me, was, "Oh! Those are all going to fall down on you. How can you

work with all of that weight just about ready to fall on top of you?" And that's exactly how it feels. It feels like a great weight. It doesn't feel like inspiration up there.

It's interesting how important our environment is to our creativity and our confidence and all of those things that go into making us comfortable and successful in getting our words down on paper.

**AVL:** We are energy beings, so of course, that has an effect. If we look in the direction of Feng Shui, even turning your desk could help you overcome some blockages because the energy will be free-flowing. In Feng Shui you talk about the power position in the room, and you can combine it with numerology... I thought that was kind of "out there," but I tried it and for me it worked. I feel more productive and energetic when I sit in a certain direction.

**WWW:** It's all worth trying. Why not?

Your Facebook page is fabulous. It's so inspiring. I encourage everyone to go and join or like Angelique's Facebook page because it's truly inspiring. It's heart. And it's smart. ([www.Facebook.com/AngeliqueLoebbecke/](http://www.Facebook.com/AngeliqueLoebbecke/)).

Anything else that you'd like to share?

**AVL:** I wanted to add something about the 'good enough' feeling. Everybody who writes knows JK Rowling, so anytime you feel like something you've

written is not good enough... and there will always be people who critique you and there will be naysayers, even family and friends... the critics and naysayers might be harsh. Whatever you write, you, in your heart, know if it's good or not. If you're really honest with yourself you know it. And if you feel that it is good, it *is* good.

We are 6 billion, 7 billion people on Earth. There are a lot of people out there who will like it. And even if somebody rejects you, just keep on trying. There's no right or wrong. You just have to find the right medium and go for it.

**WWW:** It's true. This idea that without dark, you can't have light, without heat you can't have cold, without some people not loving what you're doing, you can't have the people who fall in love with what you're doing. We're all different and that contrast is a natural part of being.

That was a huge thing for me to overcome: the fear that people won't like me. They'll read my book and if they don't like my book that means they don't like me. Of course, that's ridiculous! But it's what I believed until I convinced myself that it was ridiculous!

Angelique, it is such an honour to speak to you.

**AVL:** Thank you. It was so much fun.

**WWW:** I look forward to hearing about your fairy tale fantasy book and following that adventure that you're about to embark on.

**AVL:** Yeah. It's going to be very interesting. I haven't yet decided if I'm going to self-publish or go the traditional route. I've already talked to some illustrators and am looking both ways.

**WWW:** That's so exciting! Is it in German or English?

**AVL:** It's German but I'm going to translate it.

**WWW:** Thank you so very much. It was truly a treat to talk to you. I look forward to following where you go with with your writing.

**AVL:** Thank you so much.