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Thank You for the Encouragement

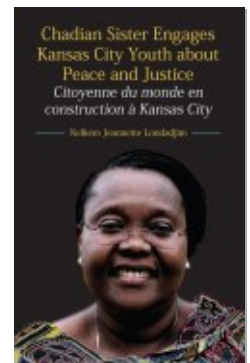
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## Thank You for the Encouragement



I never considered writing as a way of communicating. Now I realize it's a form of dialogue. Who would have thought that small reflections put in writing to focus my attention, resolve my misunderstandings, express my emotions, and describe my discoveries could speak to others?

Writing what we see, hear, and experience and expressing it honestly is a way to reach others. In any case, I discovered this as part of my activist-in-residence experience. Thank you!

Kathryn, you're right. Writing is sacred, in every sense of the word. It is when we read it. It is when we write it.

We write when we're sad or happy or unhappy. We write when in love, embarrassed or hesitant to say something, or not wanting to face an interlocutor directly. We write at every moment of life finally!

I think of the Gospels, the books of the Bible where the life and teachings of Jesus Christ are written. The testimonies shared in the Gospels have marked my life and moved me forward. I have experienced the strength of testimonies and of the Scriptures and their capacity for transformation.

Testimonies are not necessarily teachings. They are a form of dialogue.

I also think of Reyna Grande. In her memoir, *The Distance Between Us*, she shares her experience of negotiating multiple cultures and borders. Yes, through writing, one communicates beliefs, convictions, and struggles. Those who recognize themselves in what is shared enter into a dialogue with the text. Those who do not recognize themselves in it also enter into a dialogue.

I do not write to convince others but to convince myself of my fears. I write to remind myself what I think and as part of my striving to live fully and communicate with young people, as you saw me doing, Kathryn, at Avila University. Writing helps me move forward. It helps me renew my trust in others by accepting and recognizing my limitations. It helps me believe in myself and in life.

Amadou Hampâté Bâ was nourished by the oral teaching of his mother and of his mentor Tierno Bokar. Hampâté Bâ taught through his oral teachings. He also wrote many books to share thinking and transmit knowledge. I myself have benefited from the oral teachings of my grandmother and many others. I also feed on the writings of others. And I too can write.

Thank you, Kathryn! I think it's good to move in this direction. I think writing can be a very fertile pathway. I think writing has opened me up to new possibilities and perspectives. In the end, writing is one way, among others, of sharing with others. Writing is a way of remembering and of journeying into our own heart and the heart of others.