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"Let us step into the night and pursue that flighty temptress, adventure." — J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

#### For So Long, the Only Thing I've Known Is Stillness by Zohra Zekria

For so long, the only thing I've known is stillness.

I've lived my whole life still.

With still people.

In a still home.

In a still body.

It seemed like the earth that supposedly moves on x-axis had stopped in motion because everything that had surrounded me was a still as I was.

This scared me so much to the point I believed I was going to have a still heart and live the same still life everyone around me has been living their whole still lives.

But I had dreamed to do so much more than be still.

I dreamed to be more.

I began to move.

First with my hands.

Second with my feet.

Third with my eyes.

Fourth with my head.

Fifth with my mouth.

Sixth with my body.

It seemed like the chilly frosticles that surrounded me were slowly breaking one by one as I became unfrozen from the still statue that I was. Time returned to its regular speed, and I moved with it.

I started to venture.

See all the things my eyes were blind to before. Experience all the things that I was well too unfamiliar with.

That's when I began to notice that everything around me started to move as well.

That the people and the places around me were no longer still.

That the only reason why they were still to me, was because I was.

Everything around me was a reflection of me. And because I decided to live my life so still, stuck in an never-ending cycle, everything around me became like me.

When I broke that cycle,

I broke me. And instead of collapsing to the ground and never putting my shattered pieces back together,

I flew.

The cocoon I was trapped in had fractured beneath me. And I became free.

So sometimes, what I think we must realize is that the imprisonment we are trapped in is of our own doing.

So, if we made the jail cell, we made the key.

I hope you find yours.

©Zohra Zakria 2018



#### **1 Step Out** by Miranda Wong

Peering, yet hesitant, I took a step outside. Curious anew Drawn closer to the noise.

A turn of the head Latched onto twinkly eyes On a face warmed With a smile no less.

I dared to hope A journey awaits me Where lessons abound, And company is plenty.

©Miranda Wong 2018

#### An Adult's Tough Journey: Overcoming Unhappiness by Miranda Wong

We started out as children who ventured into new sounds, sights and textures that stimulated our touch, taste buds and squeals, in a perceived consequence-free environment, barred only by discoveries of limits and physical dangers, besides the obvious scorn, thinly-stretched patience and disapproval of adults.

Then, once we passed the challenging years of high school, college, university, jobs, career starts and new family life, we sighed with relief and we looked forward to the future.

But unhappiness and, perhaps for some, depression do eventually hit hard, maybe even earlier in life for some people.

Gratefully, the video by Tony Robbins called "Feeling lost? How to find yourself again@ (https://youtu.be/Xjq\_ow5DrWY) sheds some light on this unhappy topic.

Unhappiness and depression occur once (1) we "realize life doesn't match the way" we "think it should be"; and (2) we feel helpless and have no power to change it. Robbins called it "life prints": our projection of what we think we need to make us happy.



At crossroads, we have choices.

Often-times, we choose to blame others (an event or someone else), or resort to denial, anger and resentment. Dangerously, this choice only leads to the poisoning of our souls and eventual pain and, if I may add, other manifestations like illness, suicide, and societal defects of crime and injustice. The logical choice left is to change our blueprints, or better yet, according to Robbins, a little of both: the blueprints and our lives.

What else can we do? Firstly, realize that we ultimately seek and have the deeper desire for love that is unconditional and everlasting. A noteworthy comparison is the motivation of choosing to have biological children rather than adopting, to ensure the certainty of love. Secondly, give, to bring presence into our lives and feel we matter or are connected with what is more than our individual selves. to feel alive and worthy and to help our spirits grow. Next, push through our own challenges, such as disappointment or trauma, to realize that we are more than the moment and are so much stronger than we think we are. (Robbins attributes this to the little-known "post traumatic growth"). Lastly, deepen our relationships with those who stay true to us and support us.

What will it be and what choice do we make going forward? Armed with Robbins' explanation of this phenomenon, can we make better choices, or must we dwell in our harmful habits and hurtful choices? Are we smart enough, and will we wise up?

©Miranda Wong 2018

# "Keep reading. It's one of the most marvelous adventures that anyone can have." — Lloyd Alexander

Never noticed that it was a big black box that I was inside... never knew of the outside

It was getting darker day by day, but I could not leave and could not stay. So complicated... I was stuck with no shackles but did not know what to do. Every time I dared to think of leaving, hesitation beat me.

Afraid that it would be worse; negative vibes humming in my ears

I wondered if there was life outside this darkness... no idea how it could be.

God help me! What to do? I was weak, living in isolation... I wanted to change.

I needed to change.

I had to change.

Suddenly, a light ray snuck into the darkness, crossing all borders to my surprise.

I tracked the ray, widened the crack and... Astonishment The sun was right there, waving at me.

The cloud smiled.

How much time was wasted before I got out of the blindness?

A ray beat my fear of the unknown... causing an internal revolution.

No shackles and no darkness can beat willingness to change.

Life is an adventure and one cannot go out of the darkness without taking that step. Just a step and look for the light!

Open your door and windows... Shine on!

©Lina Ismail 2018

Acceptance by Sajeda Manzoor

I am an individual I came to my dreamland as a landed immigrant

I was told, you are an old school I went to school English was my second language I had to write the TOEFL I cleared it on the first attempt I got admission

I learned some principles I broke some rules So I was ready to assimilate I mingled with lots of people

Once in my childhood My English teacher hit me with a ruler As I made a mistake in direct and indirect speech When I grew up, I became a teacher I learned different skills I never, ever did forget my teacher

When I came to Canada, I learned to speak louder I got a diploma in Early Childhood It taught me love, creativity and motherhood My teachers taught me, who I am?

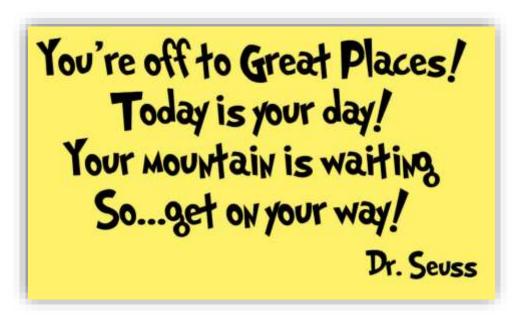
> I wrote many poems I believed on myself I joined a poetry group It gave me beautiful insights

I am content with my experiences I worked hard to achieve them I am a proud Canadian

My first employer was great He treated me like an immigrant I was thankful to my Lord Soon I will be a citizen

My teachers taught me, who I am? I never ever did forget my teachers

©Sajeda Manzoor 2018



#### Adventure by Sajeda Manzoor

Every individual has a curiosity of adventure that pushes them to go out and explore the world. I have an inborn passion of adventure from my childhood. We used to live near a river. On the weekends, we would go swimming with my father. I grew up watching the natural beauty of my birth place. I had a passion to capture the photos of the sun, moon, rivers different creatures and scenery. In the evenings, when we used to go for a walk, the big round moon inspired me and I was curious about it. It looked like a big shiny ball glowing and chasing us. I thought one day I could go on an adventure to the moon. I read books about the moon and believed it to be a hard surface with rocky mountains and big holes. It has no air and oxygen to breathe, so the survival of human or animals is impossible there. I read fantasies and fairy tales about the moon. I imagined that a witch lived there and sometimes brought gifts for children. The moon was idealized by the writers, authors, artists and parents, but there were lots of genius scientists trying to explore it. They worked hard for the expedition and succeeded.

I went to Seattle three years ago a beautiful city close to Vancouver. It is a great place of natural beauty.



I captured countless photos of the sun, moon, mountains, animals and insects. I went to different famous attractions like Snoqualmie Falls and Whidbey Islands (north of Seattle). I saw crystal clear lake water falling from the mountains and enjoyed the rocky mountain beaches. When I saw the moon standing on a mountain. I was mesmerized by its beauty. I wrote a few poems about the moon and sun. In my opinion, adventure keeps us doing great things.

Life is either a great adventure or nothing.

—Helen Keller

I think, in history, the most amazing adventure is the expedition to the moon. The footsteps of humans on it was incredible. Apollo 11 was the first space flight that took a team of astronauts, among them Neil Armstrong and pilot Buzz Aldrin first landed on the moon in July 1969. Tt was the greatest adventure of the universe and was telecast all over the world. The

American Flag was hoisted on the surface of it. NASA played an important role in exploring the beautiful moon that has been the beauty icon of lovers and poets. The exploration made a blast, and it cost NASA \$209 billion to build the Apollo 11 and prepare for the big adventure. It makes me curious. Is the huge amount of money spent on the adventure worth it? May be one day NASA will discover a spaceship that can take common people to the moon. It will be so much fun.



As I was writing this article, I got the news of Space X's Falcon Heavy rocket. It took off at 9.30 pm Eastern time on 06/02 2018 from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida. It was a huge blast again. It is on a mission to cruise around solar system. А great the adventure of 2018 and effort of NASA. There were three engines to land but the middle booster failed to land on its drone. The Heavy's outer Falcon cores succeeded, and two others were detached from the rocket. They fell and hit the water at 300 miles per hour. The upper stage is doing well and spending time in space, exploring the greatest adventure and cruising towards Mars. I am so excited about this great and costly adventure. Wish I could have been in Florida to watch the space ship taking off.

One million people watched the greatest adventure of 2018, and people all over the world are curious about it. Different news channels covered it with live footage. I enjoyed watching the videos and wished I could capture the photos.

Here are a few lyrics about the adventure:

A trip to the moon fast and soon Booking in advance is a million dollars Later it will be million eight A great adventure book it soon The spaceship will blast off to the moon

©Sajeda Manzoor2018

"Why do you go away? So that you can come back. So that you can see the place you came from with new eyes and extra colors. And the people there see you differently, too. Coming back to where you started is not the same as never leaving." — Terry Pratchett, A Hat Full of Sky On that September evening when I landed at Toronto International Airport, it was about sixteen degrees Celsius. That was the first time I ever felt cold in my life because I was wearing a very light shirt and pants. Luckily, I wore a pair of good shoes and not flip-flops as I had the habit of wearing them back in Mauritius. After clearing immigration, I took a taxi and went to my apartment.

The next few days, the temperature went up and therefore the need to buy winter clothes and shoes never occurred to me. Frankly, the idea of getting ready for winter never crossed my mind at all because, firstly, I did not know how and, secondly, the temperature was bearable. I carried on with my daily routine, that was going to college every day. I made some good friends at school, and they all vaguely mentioned winter clothes at some point. But I ignored them because I was too busy concentrating on my studies. However, one dear friend purposely gave me a very light jacket of his and said, "Vidya, why don't you take this jacket? I have another one like this at home and I think you will need it very soon." He knew what he was doing because he knew about the cold weather which was coming in the next few days. I did not know because, at that time. I had no means of listening to the news. I had no radio or television, and I was not buying newspapers

because I was saving money for my studies.

A few days went by and that light jacket was sufficient to protect me from mild weather. But then one day in October, the temperature went down quite low. I started to walk along Danforth Avenue, from Sibley Avenue to Main subway station, to catch the next train to go to my college in Toronto. Back then, I was living in East York. As I reached Dawes Road, I felt that I could not breath. I did not know was happening to me. I thought I was dving or something. But then I realized that I was too young to die because, just before coming to Canada, I had done a physical examination. complete including chest. heart and lung x-rays. All my vaccinations were up to date. At the same time, I also felt that my chest was being squeezed by some force. When I noticed my hands and feet were cold, I decided to warm them by taking shelter in a store. I just entered in a store and waited for about fifteen minutes before I started to feel better and my breathing became normal. At that point, I thought I was feeling better and everything was all right. Then I started to walk again.

After few blocks, I started to feel the same thing. Then I did the same thing as before, that is, I took shelter in a store. I waited until I could breath properly and then started to walk towards the subway station. And I continued to do the same thing a few times until I reached Main subway station. During the forty-five minutes on the subway train, I realized that it must have been the cold weather that was giving me those health problems. Moreover, I was perfectly all right during that train ride.

When I reached my college, I told my friend who gave me that light jacket what had happened to me on the way to the college. He laughed and said, "My friend Vidya, this is not Mauritius. This is Canada, and Canada has very cold weather. This jacket of yours would have been just fine for Mauritian weather but not here. You should buy a winter coat and shoes if you want to survive the cold Canadian weather. I have been telling you since day one, and you just ignored it. Now you see what happened to you. You are lucky the temperature was not negative fifteen degrees. Otherwise you could have gotten frostbite and damaged your fingers and toes. In the worst case, doctor would have to amputate them to save your health." The moment I heard about amputation, I became terrified. During the next break, my friend and I went to the nearest store and bought my first winter coat and shoes. In retrospect, when I tell my ordeal to my friends, relatives and newcomers in this country, they all think it is comical and hilarious.

©Vidya Gopaul 2018



#### **Road Trip** by Clover Sterling

Going on an adventure is always exciting. The expectations are high, and the experience will last a life time. I am planning an adventurous road trip that I can hardly wait to explore.

Ever since I moved to Canada, I was told that Yonge Street is the longest street in Ontario, running a total of 86 km... or 1 896 km—which is quite the difference but I like the 1 896 km version, even if it's not officially "Yonge Street". My curiosity rose. I am very free spirited, so I thought how wonderful it would be to drive along the longest street from top to bottom just for fun.

The more I thought about it, the more exciting the idea became. I would love to go with friends who are as outgoing and vibrant as I am, the ones who love to have a great time. I have been speaking to different people in my circle, such as my co-workers, members of my church group and also family members, about taking this trip with me. However, of the ones I shared my idea with, none of them have the same interests I do, and they cannot fathom why such a trip as driving along Yonge Street would be of interest.

I am still hoping someone will change their mind and join me. We would go in a big spacious vehicle. The trip would mainly be a sightseeing tour for photographic purposes. I would take my camera to capture interesting moments, as well as pen and paper to document our every move, just so I can reflect years after and possibly write an article about the experience I have had. I imagine making frequent stops at interesting places along the route.

The furthest I have been on Yonge Street is the intersection of Yonge and Bloor. At that moment, I wondered what it looked like in the distance to the north.

Yonge Street begins at is at Queens Quay in Toronto at Harbourfront. I plan to do this trip in the summer, preferably in July, going its entire length up to the Minnesota border. I will make sure we are flexible with time, so my crew and I would leave very early as 5 a.m. to make the most of the daylight. I assume there will be scenic trails to feast my eyes on, and maybe lush green meadows extending for a mile or two, and beautiful neighbourhoods with happy people walking by.

Years have now passed and I'm still planning my trip. I am yet to embark upon my adventure, my anticipation is growing—and I know it will be awesome.

©Clover Sterling 2018

I have never thought of myself as an adventurer, but I am usually the first one in when there is something new to be done.

Six years ago, I sat with some other authors at a Word Fest in the Central library. We didn't know each other but two of us were at the same table and a man was at the next. Being a writer, a published one or an aspiring author, is a very expensive and scary endeavour. You not only have to write something but you have to decide what you want to do with it—and is it worth having it published?

The three of us started talking, and I was interested in what was available help aspiring or established to authors. I had five self-help books already self-published, so I was just interested in finding ways to improve and get information to further my writing skill. We talked about workshops, websites, etc. but they were quite pricey and you weren't guaranteed to get what you needed, even if that was what they advertised.

With my first book in 2009, I started with an Ottawa publisher that a friend recommended. I was told that I would be lucky to get a publisher. My book was unusual because it was self-help, so I had to make sure that I found a publisher who handled that genre. My books were different than what was on the market because I wrote all about the process of meditation taught in my classes rather than just talking about meditation. I had taught meditation since 1996 in school boards and Parks and Recreation classes.

I submitted my draft of the book to my friend's publisher. I was accepted right away. The process started. They sent me a draft of my book so I could check it out. I had them send it to my work because it was coming by courier. It arrived, and I sat at my desk and opened it. I realized that this was my book. Honestly, I began to shake and almost cry. Here was something that was mine, that I had created-other than my children. It was an amazing feeling. I couldn't hold it close enough. I approved it, and it went into print and I got my first box of printed books. All "firsts" were still unbelievable to me.

Eventually I became disappointed in my publisher. I found that there wasn't much they were doing, and I had to get my books printed by them at their price. I also was expected to do my own promoting and marketing. Royalties would be sent to me if they sold any, which they hadn't. I was supposed to get a contract from them, but none came. I thought it was strange because that was their hold on me. Finally, after a year with them, I decided to quit. No contract had come, so I didn't need to do anything but tell them I quit.

Then, they sent me a contract. Ι refused to sign it. I told them to send me their inventory, and they sent me over 30 units. They told me they had sold quite a few at some event months before, so I told them to reduce the cost of the books with the amount of royalties they owed me. They sent me the books and then waited for me to pay the outstanding amount. They still had my book listed on their website. I waited and, when they called, I told them to remove my book from their website. They finally did, and I paid them.

What was I going to do with my books? I had also written more books by that time. I did book signings at a large consumer, but I found that it was difficult to get paid for my book sales because I had to invoice their head office for 65% of the sales. Several times, the sales information from their locations was lost in transmission.

Finally, I decided I had to do something different. There were two spiritual stores in Brampton Τ frequented, and they had books similar to mine. I went to the first one and asked them where they ordered their sales stock and they said, "Quanta", which is a Toronto-based distributor of spiritual books and items. Quanta is a distributor for stores all over Canada both large and small. I went to the second spiritual store and the answer was the same, and they said they don't even bother with anyone else and Quanta was honest.

OK. I phoned the Quanta contact, and it took a couple of days for him to get back to me. We had a great talk, and the process was that I had to give them an inventory and they would pay me quarterly on their sales. I would also have to send him a copy of my book file to see if it was what he would handle. Usually, they didn't support selfpublished authors. My book was called *Meditation, The Physical Body,* so there was a caution with promotors to see if this was legitimate or the topic was acceptable.

Off the book file went and, within days, he called back and told me he would definitely like to handle it. He really enjoyed it. I sent him an inventory. That was back in 2010, and I am still with them.

I had an inventory from my first book, but then I had written another book and I had to find a printer. Luckily, someone I knew had a printer who printed books. Another step conquered. I sent my second one off to Quanta, and they quickly accepted it. This process went on for the next couple of books, and then I was being told not to even send them a draft for approval. They would accept anything I wanted to send them. What a compliment! It did feel good to know that.

In 2014, I went to the Hay House "I Can Do It!" Conference. This is the biggest self-help publisher in the world. They had many different tables outside the auditorium for their writers where you could buy their books. They also had one for their publisher for self-publishing books called "Balboa". I had written a sixth book but hadn't finished it completely, so I wondered what I was going to do with it. I spoke to the Balboa representative and took the information on how to submit it. My latest book was about setting up a meditation practise. This contained many possible ways to add different and unique aspects to a practice, and an explanation of how to use them.

Now I had to wait for their approval. Again, I was accepted quickly, and the process of editing began. Back and forth we went, but the funniest edit was "Do I want Canadian spelling?". They told me if I wanted to have it go could international. that be а drawback-but I kept the Canadian. So, for several thousand dollars, I was with the biggest self-help now publisher. I wanted this because it also advertised my other books. I was very careful not be caught up in it because Τ was being sent promotions constantly, and each one cost a lot of money. They do know how to handle books; they give tremendous

opportunities and they are the best for self-help books. So, I have been lucky to have these outlets.

Back to the library and the two-other people: I wanted something that was local, free and helpful for aspiring authors. With the help of these two people and five other authors, we started our writers group. We went step-by-step to ensure we set it up as a business and presented it professionally. I always worked in an office admin position, so I knew format, software and, of course, set-up. My one demand was that we used our city in our group name. It ended up being the Mississauga Writers Groupwith no apostrophe because it couldn't be used in the name of our website.

We set up an agenda and minutes for each meeting and, eventually, after using one of our original member's venue, we ended up at the Central Library where the original idea was created. Since January 2013, I have only missed one meeting, and that is when I went to the Hay House Conference.

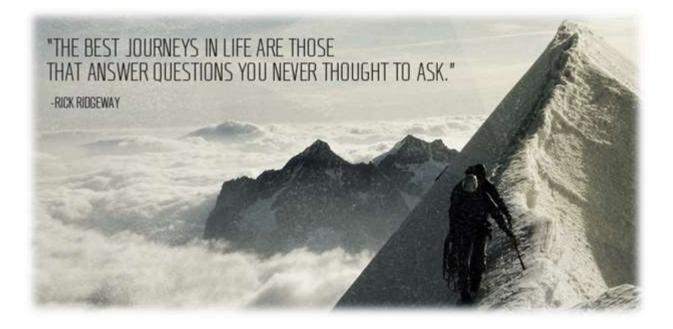
Me-an adventurer? Still not sure, but it has been quite a journey. Wouldn't want it any other way.

©Elizabeth Banfalvi 2018

#### Adventure by Hunyah Irfan

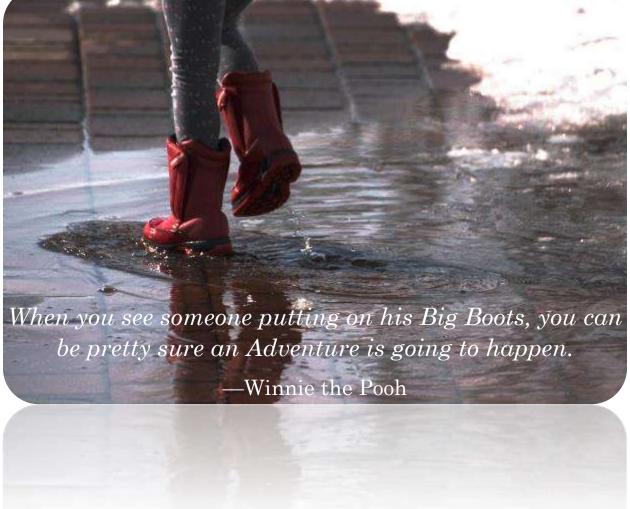
There are many things you can do for adventure. You can go sightseeing, you can go hiking. You can do so many things. You can take trip in the city. You will find many things that will make feel you're in another city. Toronto is full of adventures and there is a lot to it.

©Hunyah Irfan 2018



### Writing Exercise

### 1. Adventures in Books



As children, we learn to take adventures through reading. Most of us fondly recall those texts that aided our escape, taking us so far into fantasy that we didn't notice reality happening around us.

Set your timer for 15 minutes.

Write a memoir about your favourite childhood aventure book.

#### 2. Sorry, the Hero's on Strike

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate; our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.

--Marianne Williamson

In his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell identifies the parts of The Hero's Journey. After hearing the Call to Adventure, the Hero initially refuses the call.

Create your Hero and outline the adventure they must go on.

Now, set your timer for 15 minutes.

Write the Hero's refusal.



#### Write ON! The Summer Issue

#### **Call for Submissions**

The theme for the summer issue is

#### Mythology

The deadline is May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

Stuck for ideas? Consider some of these words:

folklore	god	actuality
belief	goddess	history
tradition	hero	reality
legend	monster	truth
story	devil	experience

Submission guidelines:

- electronic submissions only
- send submissions to <u>sheilavdhc@gmail.com</u> and <u>info@mississaugawritersgroup.com</u>
- include submission, a short bio (2-3 sentences) and an author's photo
- ensure submission is relevant to theme
- content must be in English or include an English translation

**N.B.** Content which contains hate speech or images, extreme violence or explicit sexuality will not be published

### Write ON! in 2018

Not inspired by the theme for the upcoming issue of Write ON? Perhaps you need a different theme. Here are the upcoming themes for the 2018 Write ON! issues:

Summer 2018	Mythology	deadline May 15 <sup>th</sup>
Autumn 2018	Humour	deadline August $15^{ m th}$
Winter 2018	Science	deadline November 15 <sup>th</sup>

A reminder that Write ON! also accepts theme-related drawings, paintings and photos from group members. Please send images in .jpg format

#### **Biographies** Elizabeth Banfalvi is the Elizabeth author of *Meditation* book Banfalvi series, and conducts workshops on stress relief naturally & meditation. Vidya Gopaul is the author of a novel, *Race the Time*, and a screen play, Fires of Vidya *Times*. He is a regular contributor to the Gopaul publications of anthology and e-zine of Mississauga Writer's Group. He is currently working on other novels. Hunyah Irfan is a 25-year-old author from Brampton. She writes Hunyah about travel, poetry and romance. sherryhunyah2017.wordpress.com/ Irfan Lina Ismail immigrated from Jordan in August 2013,. She is currently Lina practicing her passion for writing in several Ismail Newspapers and Literature periodicals in Kuwait & Canada as well as working with Children & Special needs in Reading Clubs and various Events as Multi-Lingual Storyteller. Sajeda Saieda Manzoor RECE Writer MSW Manzoor Books: Canada, Our Home, Word Fest (2017)

Clover Sterling is a Canadian broadcast Journalist she is the Host and producer of the TV show "Coffee with Clover". She studies Journalism Print and Broadcast at Humber College. She joined the Haze FM as a writer and was the voice of the public service announcements. She contributes to musically Yours TV show and is a contributing writer for their magazine.

## Miranda Wong

Miranda Wong lives in Mississauga and is a mother of two children. She endured heart breaking struggles related to disability and discrimination and losses of loved ones to long fights with cancer. She found pleasure in writing and poetry to express her grief, create awareness, pay forward and find peace. She participates in Wordfest series and anthologies.

Zohra Zekria Clover Sterling



Zohra Zekria is a 17-year-old aspiring poet currently living in the city of Mississauga, Ontario. She is known for her blog site @zohrazekria.wordpress.com where she posts blog posts full of heartbreak, contentment, fulfillment, the wonders of life, etc. Whether it would be writing rough drafts or posting her blog posts. Zohra is always working hard on making sure her content is better than the day before and hopes to be a published author after completing a degree program in creative writing and publishing.

#### We Are the Mississauga Writers Group

We are a group of writers who have established this forum to share our experiences and pursue our dreams through creativity, knowledge and mutual respect. We want to learn from our strengths and talents and have enjoyable and stimulating conversations that only writers can relate to! We would love to have writers from our community join us. All aspiring and established writers are most welcome. We believe we all have something special inside us. Come explore your talent with the Mississauga Writers Group!

#### Website - mississaugawritersgroup.com

Email - info@mississaugawritersgroup.com



Every day's an adventure when I step out of my door. That's why I usually wear a hat and keep my head low. --Steve Buscemi