

## Spotlight on Phebe Beiser

### My work with WWf(a)C

In January 2006 I retired as a librarian just in time to immerse myself in the leadership training at WWf(a)C. I thought I was on vacation although the experience did include work, along with sisterhood. Eager to facilitate a class of my own, I filled in for summer classes (when the regular teachers took a break) and was fortunate to be on a team with WWf(a)C Founder Mary Pierce Brosmer for the coed class “Living and Leading Like a Poet.” When Diane Debevec became Executive Director, she approached new leadership graduates, asking where we saw ourselves in the organization. I told her “I want a class!”

For over five years now, the Thursday morning class has been my favorite part of each week. The Core Class consists of  $\frac{3}{4}$  “regulars,” a few new women, and several who come and go as life prompts determine. These women are more than writing colleagues; many of them volunteered with lunches and household chores back in February 2015 while I recovered from heart surgery. Some of us have become friends. I remain grateful for all the connections. And we’ve all grown in our writing.

This is a perfect time to announce my just co-signing a book contract with Hay House (India)! This collaboration with Rashma Kalsie in New Delhi consists of years of online chat conversations about life, love, spirituality, and—of course—writing. How we met and my 2013 trip to India became the background of the book. The tentative title is *The Buddha & the Bitch: 2 Women, 2 Worlds, 1 Practice*. Don’t laugh—I am the Buddha! You’ll have to read it to find out why.

### How my experience with WWfaC has influenced other aspects of my work & life.

As a longtime activist in the feminist and lesbian movements, I need women’s circles in my life. Since Crazy Ladies Bookstore closed (a former bookstore/women’s center in Northside), I hungered for deep and truth telling connection. Women Writing for (a) Change has served to fulfill me on many levels: mentally, emotionally, spiritually. With an emphasis on the Conscious Feminine, this organization is almost like my temple. While writing is the emphasis, sharing in confidential space can become sacred. I feel so fortunate to have discovered us!

Recently I led a writing workshop with eleven lgbtq’s at the annual Youth Summit sponsored by GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network). I was moved to hear their strength and pain in our readaround. As a gay elder, I always feel such hope and gain tremendous energy being in their presence. Outreach with these young ones may balance my concerns about aging. As always, I will continue using the writing prompts Life tends to bring me. (Follow my blog @ “The Goddess Babe” <https://phebek108.wordpress.com>).