

# Leslie Jamison

## Quotes

*Empathy, Writing, People, Thinking, Knowing, Hurt, Mean, Might, Pain, Our  
Actions, Chocolate, Brain, Past, Way, Horizon, Answers, Suspects, Should  
Have, Girl, Ifs*

Empathy isn't just something that happens to us â€” a meteor shower of synapses firing across the brain â€” it's also a choice we make: to pay attention, to extend ourselves.

~Leslie Jamison

No trauma has discrete edges. Trauma bleeds. Out of wounds and across boundaries.

~Leslie Jamison

The pain is what you make of it. You have to find something in it that yields. I understood my guiding imperative as: keep bleeding, but find some love in the blood.

~Leslie Jamison

When bad things happened to other people, I imagined them happening to me. I didn't know if this was empathy or theft.

~Leslie Jamison

Commonality doesn't inoculate against hurt.

~Leslie Jamison

I'm happy not knowing. Most of the time (except when I'm a neurotic mess about uncertainty) I feel glad that the horizon is a mystery.

~Leslie Jamison

Imagining someone else's pain with too much surety can be as damaging as failing to imagine it.

~Leslie Jamison

I've been thinking so much about writing as a gift to readers - and how newness of subject (place or topic or person) is one of the biggest gifts at our disposal.

~Leslie Jamison

Empathy requires knowing that you know nothing.

~Leslie Jamison

Empathy is cloaked in our actions - as in, we might be experiencing empathy but not realize it's empathy.

~Leslie Jamison

I needed people to deliver my feelings back to me in a form that was legible. Which is a superlative kind of empathy to seek, or to supply: an empathy that rearticulates more clearly what it's shown.

~Leslie Jamison

Learning the edges or limits or sources of friction in empathy was one of the big issues for me.

~Leslie Jamison

Perhaps if we say it straight, we suspect, if we express our sentiments too excessively or too directly, we'll find we're nothing but banal.

~Leslie Jamison

Whatever we can't hold, we hang on a hook that will hold it.

~Leslie Jamison

I like thinking of the writer as a kind of curator; the collection as curiosity cabinet - in a non-demeaning, non-objectifying sense - but an array, a set of offerings.

~Leslie Jamison

I loved the full heat of being drunk, like I was made of melting chocolate and spreading in all directions.

~Leslie Jamison

We think we should have to work in order to feel. We want to have our cake resist us; and then we want to eat it, too.

~Leslie Jamison

I've been lucky enough to work with extraordinary teachers along the way, and I'm excited to share what I've learned with graduate students at SNHU. I'm just as excited for what I'll learn from them.

~Leslie Jamison

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