



Some thoughts about keeping a journal...

When the mind attaches itself to a thought, it is often very hard to let go of it. You might find it keeping you preoccupied throughout the day, or, awake at night when you would prefer to sleep. Within the mind, these thoughts seem to take on a loop-like effect and they keep repeating over and over and over again. By writing things out, we make these thoughts linear. By its nature, linear has a beginning and it has an end (a sentence starts with a Capital and ends with a period.). It makes sense, then, for writing down your thoughts, to put an end to the circular and looping effects.

Many people find benefit in starting the day off by writing in a journal. They find it settles the mind and clears away random thoughts and sets the stage for a productive and calm day. This kind of entry may or may not include a check-list for the day.

There are also benefits from keeping your journal by your bedside, so that, on those nights when thoughts are rambling through your mind, you can put them to paper and leave them there, freeing you for a peaceful night's sleep.

And last, but certainly not least, you may also find that keeping a journal and using it at any time of the day (or night) can also help you to focus on problem areas of life. Just writing out your thoughts can help you to get to the other side of an issue, or provide some insight and understanding; just by giving it the linear thought process it needs.

Oftentimes, you may sit down ready to write, and find that starting can be challenging and looking at a blank paper can be daunting. So, here are some Journal Prompts for you to use:

On self-talk

Why do I put myself down so much? Do I think I'm doing it before someone else does, therefore eliminating that sense of humiliation? But aren't I then humiliating myself? Why would I do that to me? What do I gain from that? Is it helpful? Or hurtful?

When am I most pleased with myself? Do I acknowledge those times? Am I more likely to express my dissatisfaction than my satisfaction? Is that with everyone, or just with myself?

What can I do to change the negative self-talk? Why don't I use the suggestions made in therapy? When I do use them, they work, so why don't I use them more often?

For those of you who have difficulty getting started, here are some prompts or sentence starters that might be helpful:

Sentence starters

I CUT OFF MY FEELINGS BECAUSE...

I FEEL SAFE WHEN...

IF I EVER LOSE CONTROL...

IF YOU EVER REALLY GOT TO KNOW ME...

SO LONG AS I STAY BUSY I...

IF I EVER REALLY LET GO...

IF I EVER REALLY LET LOOSE...

I SHOULD BE STRONGER BECAUSE...

IF I EVER LET MY ANGER OUT...

IF I EVER FELT ALL MY SAD FEELINGS...

I DON'T EXPERIENCE JOYFUL FEELINGS BECAUSE...

WHEN I EXPERIENCE MY SEXUAL FEELINGS, I...

I FEEL HELPLESS AND...

I FEEL HELPLESS WHEN...

I FEEL SICK AT HEART BECAUSE...

IF YOU REALLY LOVE ME, YOU'LL...

EVERY TIME YOU PUNISH ME...

I FEEL SEXUALLY AROUSED WHEN...

IF I EVER RELEASE MY ANGER...

IF I EVER ASSERT MYSELF...

WHEN I FALL IN LOVE, I FEEL...

I FEEL GUILTY BECAUSE...

I FEEL GUILTY ABOUT...

WHEN I GROW UP...

WHY DO I ALLOW GUILT TO TORMENT ME WHEN I KNOW I CAN'T CHANGE THE PAST? WHAT PURPOSE DOES THAT SERVE?

WHEN MY FRIENDS DON'T CALL, I FEEL...

WHEN I WANT TO SAY 'NO' TO SOMETHING I FEEL...

WHY DO I FEEL I MUST PLEASE OTHERS WHEN I DON'T SEE THEM TRYING TO PLEASE ME?

I LOVE MY FATHER/MOTHER BUT HE/SHE...

I AM SEXUALLY TURNED OFF WHEN...

I LOVE IT WHEN...

MY FEELINGS GET HURT WHEN...

I FEEL SAD WHEN...

BEING AT THE BEACH MAKES ME FEEL...

BEING IN THE WOODS MAKES ME FEEL...

BEING IN BED MAKES ME FEEL...

BEING ...MAKES ME FEEL...

MY FAVORITE WAY TO SPEND THE DAY IS...

IF I COULD TALK TO MY CHILD SELF, I WOULD TELL HIM/HER ...

IF I COULD TALK TO MY TEENAGE SELF I WOULD SAY...

THE WORDS I'D LIKE TO LIVE BY ARE...

WHAT BRINGS TEARS TO YOUR EYES? (AS PAUL COELHO HAS SAID, "TEARS ARE WORDS THAT NEED TO BE WRITTEN.")

WHAT ARE THE 10 WORDS THAT BEST DESCRIBE YOU?

WHAT ARE THE WORDS YOU NEED TO HEAR AND FROM WHOM DO YOU NEED TO HEAR THEM?