Journaling for Health

When faced with overwhelming or powerful emptions (e.g., anxiety, unwanted thoughts, or sadness) people often find it helpful to write or journal. Writing can help reframe things and just getting it out of our heads can make us feel better. Some people find it helpful to write daily and others as they feel inclined. There is no right or wrong way. It can take as little as a few minutes. If you are new to journaling it can be helpful to have prompts. We've included several here. Some people prefer to express themselves through other artistic mediums (e.g., paints, crayons, cooking, etc.). You can use these prompts to create your artwork, too. Don't worry about being perfect, just write (or create) what's in your heart.

What do you feel grateful for at the end of the day?

Write about someone you admire and how that person handles the COVID crisis.

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Write about friendship in these uncertain times.

Create a list of words/phrases/sayings/poems that inspire you or make you feel good.

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For fun: Open a book or magazine and circle some words. Then write a micro-story (one page or less), poem, or journal entry using the words you've circled.

Write about not being able to see ahead of you.

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List 10 things you're looking forward to when this crisis is over. What's at the top of the list and why?

What if your mirror started talking to you? What might the mirror say?

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Write about waking up.

Think of a place you went to when you were younger but is now no longer there or is something else. Capture your feelings about this in your writing.

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List 10 things that always make you laugh.

Imagine you have a touch of magic and can make impossible things happen. What would you do?

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Take a few deep breaths and list 5 items you see around you, 4 sounds you hear, 3 odors you smell, 2 items you can reach out and touch, and one item you can taste. Write about this little exercise. How did each sense you use affect you? How do you feel after doing all 5 steps?

When this crisis has passed, and things have calmed down, how would you like to remember yourself during this period? Write about that.

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Where were the sparks of light in your day? Were you able to bring light to someone else?

What has been your greatest learning during this pandemic?

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Write about what motivated you to get out of bed in the morning.

List all the places you go in your mind when you want to feel peaceful and quiet.

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Write about your greatest talents.

Write about making mistakes.

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Write about an event you reluctantly went into that ended surprisingly well.

Write about ways you have changed for the better as you've grown.

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What first attracted you to the work you do? What did you hope to get out of it? What did you hope to contribute? Write about how easy or hard it has been to fulfill your expectations. What surprised you along the way?

If you meditate, write about what the experience is like for you.

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If you could teach the entire world just one concept, what would it be? Write about why you chose this concept, it's importance to you and to the rest of the world, and how you try to live or be this concept every day.

A difficult situation that I had and keep thinking about is…

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What has been hardest for me has been…

An image (visual or auditory) that keeps staying with me is…

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I have felt conflicted about…

A difficult situation that I had and keep thinking about is…

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I regret…

I'm afraid that…

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Nobody knows that…