

FAMU-4019 Complementary and Integrative Medicine

Journaling

Goals and Objectives

Knowledge

1. Demonstrate knowledge of foundational research in the field of therapeutic journaling and identify landmark studies.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of a variety of styles and types of journaling, diaries and lifewriting explaining the differences between them and recognizing which ones might be most effective for specific patients.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the history of journaling and some notable journals or diaries that have left an important impact on society.

Skills

1. Identify certain chronic and acute illnesses for which therapeutic journaling can be an effective adjunct to an overall plan of care for the patient.
2. Develop strategies for instructing patients in journaling for wellness, self-care or healing and learn effective approaches for motivating them to practice this technique.
3. Understand when patient reporting from journal writing can assist in diagnosis and treatment.
4. Personally practice one of the styles of therapeutic journaling for an extended period of time and have the skill to assess outcomes for personal wellness.

Attitudes

1. Recognize the potential for empowering the patient to take an active role in wellness, self-care and healing through the habitual practice of therapeutic journaling.
2. Acknowledge that much preventive care and healing can be done by the patient away from the healthcare setting. Since journaling is a tool available to every patient it can be helpful to patient and healthcare provider as well in reviewing patient history.
3. Be open to introducing this effective modality to patients but have a sound understanding that this, like all techniques, has appropriate uses and also has limitations.

Description

Types of Students Who Would Benefit from this activity

Medical students, residents, nursing (they are not included on the website – does nursing not allow them to attend?) and allied health science students with an interest in this topic.

Required Activities

Keep a daily journal of your experiences throughout the month.

Evaluation for Required Activities

Description of how the journaling you did this month felt and how you might use it for patients.

Optional Activities

Become familiar with assigned readings from bibliography. (See attached list) One of three core readings must be completed before the course begins in order to participate fully.

Write up three cases using therapeutic journaling as an intervention with a real or simulated patient. (As an alternate you may present the case to a group of your peers in a learning setting such as Grand Rounds or your POM group, for instance.) Select a pediatric patient, a geriatric patient and a third patient in the age group between those two.

Write a critical evaluation of one of the peer-reviewed, evidence based studies in the bibliography. Identify one new question that a researcher could ask in a subsequent study built upon what was learned from this study.

Attend at least one lecture on or off campus related to journaling and life story writing. Write a brief (one-page) summary of the talk with three key learning points and a synopsis of the speaker's view. In that summary, describe one piece of information you have learned in this course that you could have shared with the speaker, or mention an author on your reading list that was mentioned at the lecture.

Prepare a patient information handout describing therapeutic journaling which could effectively educate and motivate a patient to practice this intervention on a regular basis – or during an acute period (such as after the death of a loved one, etc.).

Upon completion of this course, list a positive and a negative life experience that occurred during the month. For each of those experiences describe whether they were recorded in your journal. If they were, evaluate whether or not journaling about the experience was therapeutic for you. Determine why journaling was or was not an appropriate therapeutic intervention in your particular situation. If you failed to mention those experiences in your journal, assess why you did not include them.

Write a brief definition of at least 10 styles of journaling. Select one that you might incorporate as a lifestyle practice for yourself explaining why you selected it and how you would implement it as a routine.

Cite the work of two authors from the bibliography and describe their views of journaling as promoting health, as having a wellness benefit or as a therapeutic intervention.

Evaluation for Optional Activities

Oral discussion with faculty or three-page essay demonstrating your understanding of therapeutic journaling.

Write a self-evaluation of new skills you learned during this elective describing why this experience will be valuable in treating patients. Use specific examples and cite supporting research.

List one addition to the bibliography and support why it would be a valuable enhancement for future learners.

Provide written evaluation of the exercises in this elective assessing their usefulness to you and their applicability to personal wellness or patient care in the future.

Submit a brief design of a research study examining one of the types of journaling defined in your reading. (Required for residents, optional for others)

Journaling Bibliography

*Baldwin, Christine, *One to One Self-Understanding through Journal Writing*, New York: M. Evans and Co., 1991 – Read pages 5 – 56 for required reading

Cameron, Julia, *The Artist's Way - A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity*, New York:

Putnam, 1992 (there are several other excellent books on writing by this author)

Countryman, J., *A Father's Legacy - Your Life Story in Your Own Words*, Dallas: Word, 1996 (there are others in this series *A Mother's Legacy*, etc.)

DeSalvo, Louise, *Writing as a Way of Healing - How Telling Our Stories Transforms Our Lives*, New York: Harper Collins, 1999

Goldberg, Natalie, *Writing Down the Bones*, Boston: Shambhala, 1986

Greene, Bob and D. G. Fulford, *To Our Children's Children - Preserving Family Histories for Generations to Come*, New York: Doubleday, 1993

*Guarino, Lois, *Writing Your Authentic Self*, New York: Dell Publishing, 1999 – Read pages 1- 35 for required reading.

Lawlis, G. Frank, Ph.D., "Storytelling as therapy; implications for medicine," *Alternative Therapies*, 1995, 1(2); 40-45

Nagai-Jacobson, Mary Gail, RN, MSN and Margaret A. Burkhardt, RN, Ph.D., "Viewing persons as stories: a perspective for holistic care," *Alternative Therapies*, 1996; 2(4), 54-8

Offner, Rose, *Journal to the Soul - the Art of Sacred Journal Keeping*, Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 1996

Pennebaker, J. W., et. al., "Confronting a traumatic event: toward an understanding of inhibition and disease," *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 1986; 95:274-281

Pennebaker, J. W. and J. D. Seagal, "Forming a story: the health benefits of narrative," *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 1999; 55(10); 1243-54 (Pennebaker has done numerous studies related to the therapeutic and healing effects of writing.)

Progoff, Ira, *At a Journal Workshop - Writing to Access the Power of the Unconscious and Evoke Creative Ability*, New York: Putnam, 1992 (There are a dozen other books in this Putnam series "that explores psyche and spirit through writing, visualization, ritual, and imagination.")

Scheetz, Anne, MD and Mary E. Fry, MD, "The stories," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 2000; 283-15; p 1934

Smyth, Joshua, et. al. "Effects of writing about stressful experiences on symptom reduction in patients with asthma or rheumatoid arthritis," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, April 14, 1999; Vol 281, No 14; 1304-09

Spiegel, D., "Healing words: emotional expression and disease outcome," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1999; 281(14):1328-9

*Choose either of these readings for a basic definition and effectiveness of journaling.