



## 4 Key Ways Journaling Can Help Coaches, Helpers & Healers Thrive & Have Greater Impact With Clients

### 1 Be in integrity, walk the talk and make a difference

Journaling can be very powerful, emotionally stirring, cathartic, and impactful in our clients' lives and in our own lives too. If you are suggesting journaling to your clients, then it is important you have some experience with this transformational tool in your own life.

You likely wouldn't take advice on the benefits of healthy eating from someone who does not eat healthy themselves. It is much easier to advocate and suggest transformational tools that we have some first-hand experience with.

This principle was fundamental to our training as coaches or counsellors – we practiced being on the receiving end of the very helping processes we engage with others. In this way, we have experience as both coach/helper and the client.

By using the transformative tool of journaling yourself, you are walking your talk and doing what you suggest others do for growth, well-being and change. This congruence and integrity shines through and benefits both the giver (coach, counsellor, healer) and receiver (client) – allowing you to make the biggest difference in the lives of others.

### 2 Prevent burnout, enhance resilience and well-being

There are many rewards and opportunities for fulfillment as a heart-centered professional. There are also occupational hazards relevant to caring work that is aimed at serving the growth, healing, success and/or well-being needs of others. The hazards for helping professionals can include such things as professional burnout, compassion fatigue, and/or vicarious trauma, if working with clients who have been traumatized directly or indirectly.

Expressive writing is a proven way to reduce stress, lower the risk for burnout, as well as mitigate compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma. Journaling is a reflective practice by nature. Regular self-reflection leading to increased self-awareness can help cultivate resilience for coaches and other helping professionals.

Journaling can be good for your emotional, physical, psychological and spiritual health. Healthy helpers are able to do high quality work when serving clients. Thriving and self-aware professionals are able to have greater positive impact and co-create better client outcomes. Transformational journaling can help you thrive!

*“Writing asks us to be awake and settle inside of ourselves.”*  
NATALIE GOLDBERG, Author of *Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within*

### 3 Increase professional mastery

To awaken and nurture our full potential as coaches, change agents and helpers, we must listen to our intuition and instincts about our own lives, our own ways of knowing and our own stories. We must constantly tap into our inner wisdom and potential, and help others do the same.

We can achieve greater coaching mastery through transformational journaling, perhaps in part because it supports us in “coaching from presence,” which, according to Janet Harvey, MCC, involves taking time to be still, attentive and reflective on practice. This can support us to nurture what Harvey calls the “artful pause that generates professional mastery.”

### 4 Balance caring for others with caring for yourself

All heart-centred helping professionals benefit from having self-care practices that help fill one’s own emotional cup. When doing work of this nature, the focus is often outwards on serving the learning and growth needs of others. Journaling is a way of coming home to the self, to reflect, relax and replenish. Journaling is a self-caring act!

“Today, I focus on this simple truth: To be kind to another, I need to be kind to myself.”

GAIL STRAUB, Author of *Circle of Compassion: Meditations for Caring – for the Self and for the World*.

### Suggested Reading

Borkin, S. (2014). *The Healing Power of Writing: A Therapist’s Guide to Using Journaling With Clients*. New York, NY: Norton.

Cutler, W., Monk, L. & Shira, A. (2014). *Writing Alone Together: Journalling in a Circle of Women for Creativity, Compassion and Connection*. Salt Spring Island, BC: Butterfly Press. <http://writingalonetogether.com>

Kominars, S. B. (2010). *Write for Life: Healing Body, Mind, & Spirit Through Journal Writing*. New York, NY: Kaplan Publishing.

Pennebaker, J. W. & Evans, J. (2014). *Expressive Writing. Words that Heal – Using expressive writing to overcome traumas and emotional upheavals, resolve issues, improve health, and build resilience*. Enumclaw, WA: Idyll Arbor.

Thompson, K. (2011). *Therapeutic Journal Writing: An Introduction for Professionals*. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

