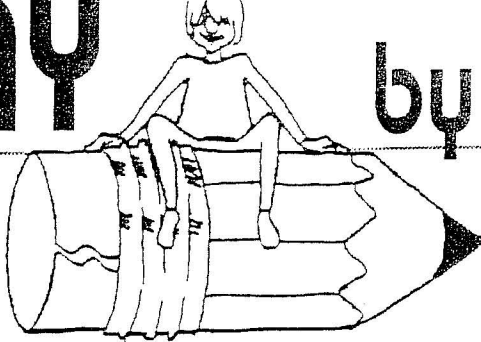


DAY

by



DAY

SELF-NURTURING JOURNAL of

(Name) _____

One way to improve your self-esteem is to do something for yourself everyday and let yourself appreciate it. Because you may not be accustomed to doing something for yourself, you may feel strange, or impossible to do, but keep it for at least one full week to start to train yourself. It does not need to be a big or time-consuming activity, just as long as it is something that you do because you choose to do so.

Date and Situation

How I felt

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

7) _____

PERSONAL STRENGTHS JOURNAL of

(Name) _____

One way to improve your self-esteem is to recognize the strengths that help you to do the things you do every day and let yourself appreciate them. Because everyone has good days and bad days, and no one can achieve huge successes every day, it may sometimes seem hard to recognize your strengths. Persist and be sure to appreciate even the seemingly little things every day!

Date and Situation

Strengths Involved

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

7) _____

DAY by DAY

I. PURPOSE:

To use journalizing as a method to monitor and increase self-esteem.

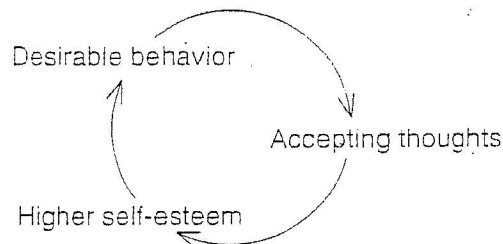
II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

Here are two different but similar ways to increase self-esteem. The first is to spend special time regularly to nurture oneself. This also leads to higher energy level and improved ability to cope with stress. The second is to recognize one's strengths and accomplishments on a regular basis. Both ways can be developed as skills with practice, support and encouragement. Journalizing assists the process by noting progress and level of commitment. Depending on group needs and time availability, offer one or both halves of the handout.

III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

A. (For top activity)

1. Introduce concept of self-nurturance and how it relates to self-esteem.
2. Facilitate discussion around the impact of behavior on thoughts and feelings.



3. Ask participants to identify personal examples where each saw this positive cycle.
4. Brainstorm as a group, activities or behaviors that are self-nurturing.
5. Distribute handouts, offering the following examples, or using some from the group:

August 24	read an entertaining book for 1/2 hr.	interested, relaxed
August 25	made MY favorite meal for supper	satisfied, capable
August 26	ENJOYED my usual cup of tea	warm, cozy, relaxed

6. Ask participants to keep journal for one week to discuss at next meeting or in individual sessions.
7. Process by asking group members to summarize topic and purpose of this activity.

B. (For bottom activity)

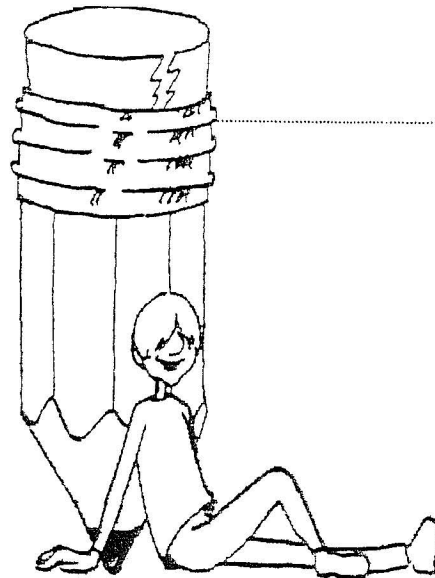
1. Introduce topic of self-esteem and the importance of acknowledging one's accomplishments and strengths.
2. Distribute the handouts.
3. Use the following examples or one from the group:

Jan 22	I phoned a friend because I felt lonely.	self-awareness
Jan 23	I felt tired, so I took a hot bath and went to bed early.	self-caring, flexibility
Jan 24	I did laundry even though I didn't want to.	organization, discipline

4. Ask individuals to think back over previous week and identify one accomplishment and the personal strength(s) used.
5. Instruct the individuals to maintain this journal for one week and to take the issue of self-esteem day by day. The journals can be reviewed at the next group session or individually.
6. Process by discussing what the impact might be of recognizing strengths, especially on *bad days* when the awareness of strengths is needed the most.

Write to Heal

There are many ways to heal.
One of them is to write – the art of journalizing.
Here are 2 different activities:



1. LETTER OF TRAUMA SURVIVOR

By releasing pent-up anger and guilt you are taking responsibility for your healing process.



Dear _____,

You _____ me on _____.

I feel _____.

I think that you are _____.

I have _____.

I am not responsible for you hurting me.

The best thing I can tell you is that I am recovering from this.

You do not control me through this.

I have found support from _____.

From, _____

2. MY JOURNAL

It's important to take time out for yourself. One way to do this is by keeping a journal. Set a time for yourself to jot down feelings, beliefs and actions. This will not only help you review the day, but also organize your thoughts. You may even learn something about yourself in the process! To get you going, a few idea-starters have been written below. This format can be used afterwards as you continue to write.



I felt _____

today.

I believed _____

today.

I did _____

today.

Remember - Take Responsibility - You Have the Right to Heal!

Write to Heal

I. PURPOSE:

- To explore journalizing as a coping skill.
- To take responsibility for healing by confronting the perpetrator in a constructive way.
- To use journalizing to examine how thoughts, feelings and actions relate to each other.

II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

Sometimes thoughts, feelings and actions can be overwhelming. In order to gain perspective, it is often healing to write or journalize. The first activity provides a precise format for a trauma survivor to release pent-up anger and guilt that often impedes recovery. The structure suggests which areas are advisable to cover.

The second activity ties together how thoughts, feelings and actions interrelate. For some people, it is helpful to write in a journal, walk away from it and then come back and reread it, to gain clarity. Depending on group needs and time availability, offer one or both halves of the handout.

III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES: This handout can be in conjunction with HEALING MEDITATION page 52.

- A.
 1. Distribute handouts. Explain to the group members that there are 2 activities; the first will most likely be more emotional than the second.
 2. Ask the participants to think of their abuser. This will enable group members to complete the first activity.
 3. Encourage the trauma survivors to write even though they may have no intention of mailing the letter. Explain to group members that by specifically stating what the abuser did and when, the survivor can begin the process of recovery.
 4. Encourage exploration of the feelings of grief: anger, denial and depression.
 5. Describe the purpose of the second activity and the importance of doing activities that support and help one gain insight. Instruct group members to complete the journal by the next session.
 6. Provide support and encouragement to those group members who choose to read the letter aloud to the group.
 7. Process by asking group members to describe any support available from agencies, individuals or groups to provide reassurance that "you are not alone".
- B.
 1. Open discussion of each individual's *right to heal*.
 2. Distribute handouts explaining that one very effective way to heal is through writing. Allow group members to discuss previous experiences with writing.
 3. Ask the participants to think of their abuser. This will enable group members to complete first activity.
 4. Encourage the trauma survivors to write even though they may have no intention of mailing the letter. Explain to group members that by specifically stating what the abuser did and when, the survivor can begin the process of recovery.
 5. Ask group members how each felt before and after writing using the EMOTIONS® handout/poster, Life Management Skills I, page 11. Instruct group members to share the letter with trusted friends/family after the group session.
 6. Introduce next activity as a way to sort out thoughts and gain insight.
 7. Use the following example or one from the group:
Date: July 1
I felt... lonely because no one called me.
I believed... that no one cared about me because of my past.
I did... something about it by calling a friend and asking her to visit.
 8. Ask each group member to complete one journal entry.
 9. Share as a group and process benefits of each writing project.

JOURNAL KEEPING

What is a journal?

◦ an account, or record of what one thinks, feels, notices, or experiences

What are some of the benefits of "journaling"?

◦ time to reflect ◦ increased awareness, and insight
◦ historical perspective ◦ a place to let go

How to journal?

◦ try to use a theme like anger, serenity, a poem, a quote or saying
◦ pretend you are writing to a best friend
◦ think that one day your family might read this to get a better understanding of you

When to journal?

◦ morning, to start the day with a fresh start
◦ afternoon, a mid-day break to collect thoughts
◦ evening, to review a day's events

JOURNAL KEEPING

I. PURPOSE:

To increase coping skills by learning how to journal.

II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

Learning to journal is an inexpensive and very effective way of coping. It is a unique coping skill in that it can be done individually, it can be looked at by others (friends, family, professionals) at a later date, and is always a "safe place" to reveal one's true self. Like any new skill, it requires practice on a daily basis to be effective.

III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- A. 1. Introduce topic of journaling to group using above general comments as a guide.
2. Distribute handout allowing discussion of top half, encouraging group to offer their experiences and insights.
3. Set a realistic goal for group members to practice journaling, e.g., for three days. Photocopy entire handout 2 times, then cut off bottom portions and put together to make one 8-1/2" x 11" sheet. Photocopy this new sheet as many times as needed for all group members. Distribute correct number of journal sheets and staple together.
4. Reconvene, if possible, with group members as a group or individually, to discuss the "benefits" experienced with journaling, the "how-to" hints that worked, and the journaling that was most effective.
5. Process potential benefits and "trouble shoot" as necessary for effective journal keeping.
- B. 1. Introduce topic of journaling to group using above general comments as a guide.
2. Distribute handout allowing discussion of top half, encouraging group to offer their experiences and insights.
3. Choose a theme that is common to the particular group right now, e.g., coping skills, grief/loss, anger, codependency, time management, communication skills, etc.
4. Ask group members to practice journal writing (within this identified theme), focusing on a situation that occurred during the past three days.
5. Allow 10 minutes to complete. Instruct members to pair off to share responses and to get feedback from partner for 5-10 minutes.
6. Encourage partners to share, if they are comfortable, the content of what they wrote, however to focus primarily on the process of journaling an event.
7. Reconvene as a large group to share insights and summarize information.
8. Give seven journal sheets (stapled together) as a homework assignment to each group member to be discussed next week on a 1:1 basis. (Photocopy entire handout 2 times, then cut off bottom portions and put together to make one 8-1/2" x 11" sheet. Photocopy this new sheet as many times as needed for all group members.)
9. Process benefits of this activity.