

Journaling, Introspection, and Getting the Most Out of the Therapy Hour

Depending on the amount of time you spend in therapy per week, there is often much more occurring outside of the therapy hour. From the mundane tasks we have to do, the people we meet, and the heavier responsibilities we face, we can often get far away from the insights and gains made in the session. Journaling is an effective method to continue engaging with the material of therapy. Bringing a journal into the therapy hour, and carrying it outside, has been proven to be effective in enhancing gains made in treatment, and providing windows of opportunity for growth outside of the therapy hour.

Therapy is a sacred hour, one in which the client reveals much of themselves to someone else, feels things they haven't felt in a long time, and uncovers beliefs tucked away outside of awareness. Likewise, the introspection that therapy stimulates is sacred. Journaling is a place to be with our own thoughts, feelings, impressions, ideas, wants, needs, etc. without the fear of judgment, and confusion of others' interferences. Consider all that is important to therapy and always worth noticing: What feelings you have, what thoughts arise, what reverberates in your mind, and what you would like to work on moving forward. Understandably, these types of thoughts occur throughout our days, and through journaling we can remember them in their purest forms, grist for the therapy mill.

Journaling comes in many forms, and does not have to be words. For the more artistic minded, journaling can take the form of doodles, drawings, and sketches. The poets among us can compile a meaningful verse that speaks to them. Journaling can be done orally, written, or even acted (in some unique ways). The point is to engage with yourself on the introspective level, and see what material comes up; No rules. No shame.

The benefits are aplenty. You are actually taking time for yourself, something in shorter and shorter supply unfortunately. Journaling takes the jumbled cacophony that is our thoughts and creates something coherent from them. Also, for those in therapy and those out, journaling allows you to track your evolution and growth into the person you want to be.

There are several resources available to anyone who wants to explore this valuable and unique engagement with yourself. There are books that offer prompts and points of reflection, and also websites (see below) that stimulate the introspective nature in all of us. Above all, you learn to love yourself, and celebrate yourself, faults and all.

Resources: <https://www.createwritenow.com/journal-prompts>

<https://journaltherapy.com/>

<https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/writing-therapy/>

