

Self-Care and Clarity of Mind...a weekly column by Princess Lakshman (Sister Iqra)



Welcome to my weekly column on **Self-Care and Clarity of Mind**. If you're taking time out to read this, pat yourself on the back because you have shown commitment to taking care of your mind and body.

Today, In Shaa ALLAH, we will explore the topic: **Writing Therapy...The Power of Journaling**

Writing freely from your heart, without self-criticism or judgment, brings about tremendous emotional, mental and physical release. When you express yourself on paper, hidden or suppressed feelings and thoughts become tangible and you are able to view them objectively. Once you can see and feel things outside of yourself you can understand yourself better and make positive changes. Journaling brings clarity to your mind and vision. Believe it or not, it certainly increases your passion for life. The best thing about journaling is that it is very different from a lot of other healing therapies.

Journaling is all about you and your page. You would only ever write about things that you are ready to face or explore. By recording these thoughts, feelings, emotions, memories, fears, concerns, or anything really, leads to mental detox where incredible amounts of emotional baggage is off-loaded. Before you know it, you begin to experience holistic wellness.

Awesome Facts About Journaling

There is absolutely no cost involved in journaling, except an initial investment in buying a journal of your choice and a pen. Avoid online journaling if possible. We use a different part of the brain when we hand write, which actually helps open the mind. It's not the same as using fingertips on the keyboard or tapping on your smartphone.

Journaling is a highly self-initiated exercise. Have a daily ritual where you wind down with a hot cuppa and your journal or make it a morning ritual.

Journaling requires no previous writing talent and you can use any language to express yourself. It's your private space to be yourself.

Your mind is clearer afterwards and you are more aware of your own patterns.

You experience personal and spiritual growth. Knowing thy own self is bliss :)

Journaling Ritual

- Create your special writing space, a place where you are totally relaxed and surrounded by peace, natural light (soft lighting if writing in the evenings), perhaps your favourite essential oils in the burner (Frankincense, Myrrh, and Sandalwood, 2 drops each, make a wonderful meditative blend).
- Clear your mind, take a few deep breaths and relax. Let your thoughts flow freely. Do not let the inner critic's voice censor that creative flow. Remember, no one has to read your work unless you let them so make the most of this privacy and politely ask that inner voice to "back off!". Grammar and punctuation are the least of your worries when you are journaling.
- Choose a topic. If that seems too hard then just start to write in the moment...begin something like this..."I'm putting my pen onto paper and waiting for a topic to come into my head. Right now, I can smell / I can hear/I can remember..." You will be surprised how writing in the moment can lead to hundreds of other topics you may want to write about.
- Put every thought onto the page. Start writing words and let them guide you through what you are feeling inside. As you feel the emotions, write them down. Make these feelings tangible.
- Ask yourself simple, everyday questions: How was my day today? Did something happen to me today that made me feel joyful or upset? Did I discover anything new about myself or anyone else today? Are there any unresolved issues in my life? Do I want to say something to someone but haven't been able to? Why, what is stopping me? What do I fear? What do I rejoice over? What or who hurts me? Why?

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