



RECONNECT
WITH YOURSELF



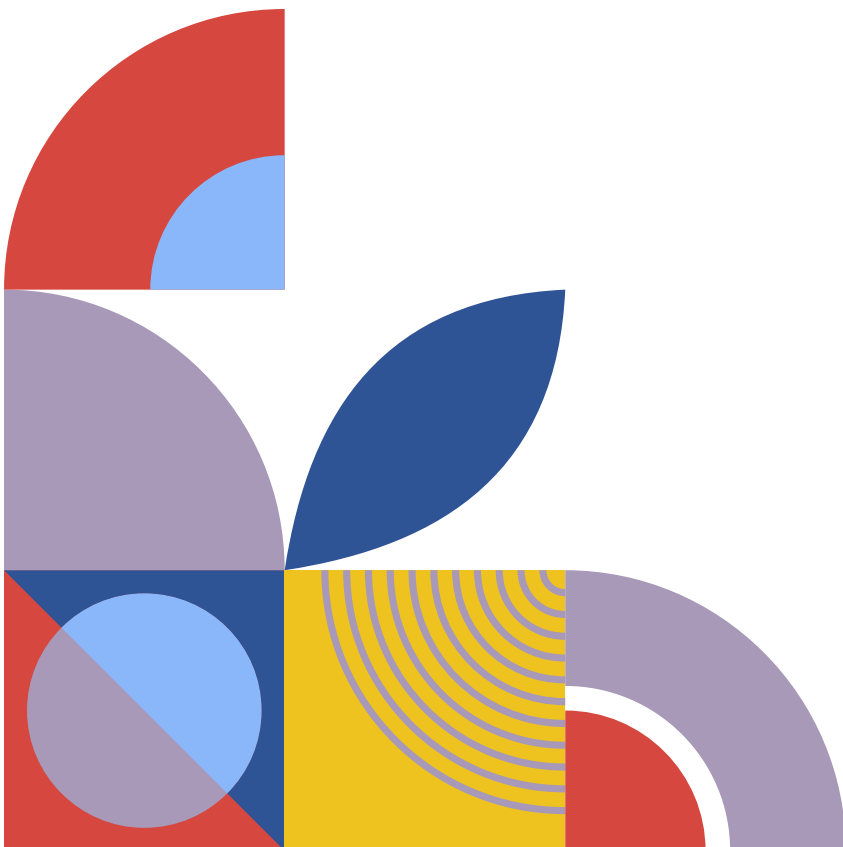
30-DAY EXPRESSIVE WRITING JOURNAL

Discover Yourself Through :

**A Guided Prompts
Journey**



Write For Life



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30-Day Expressive Writing Journal

Prompts Guide

A Guided Workbook for Release, Reflection & Self-Discovery

Welcome to your 30-day expressive writing journey! This guide is designed to gently support emotional processing, self-awareness, and healing through expressive writing. Expressive writing is a powerful tool for self-discovery, emotional healing, and personal growth. Remember, there are no rules – just write whatever comes to mind in response to each prompt. Don't worry about grammar, spelling, or sentence structure. Focus on being honest and authentic. You are invited to show up exactly as you are. No perfect words. No right way to do this. Only honesty. Expressive writing works well with counselling, and doesn't replace therapy if you have high-level mental health needs.

What is Expressive Writing?

Expressive writing involves writing freely and honestly about your thoughts and feelings, particularly in relation to stressful or traumatic life events. It's a way to process emotions, gain insights, and reduce stress.

Research since the 1980s has shown that expressive writing improves both mental, emotional and physical health. It helps reduce anxiety, depression and stress. The process of writing expressively can help change thinking patterns. As Expressive Writing crosses both sides of our brain - accessing the logical and emotional centres, psychologists believe this is why it provides the most holistic level of healing.



What are the Benefits of Expressive Writing Therapy?

Thousands of studies over the past 40 years have revealed the following benefits gained after people have done writing for healing:

Direct Physical Health Benefits:

- Less stress-related visits to the doctor
- Improved immune system response
- Reduced blood pressure
- Improved Lung functioning in asthma
- Improved liver function
- Fewer days in hospital
- Improved Immune response in HIV and cancer sufferers.
- Reduced Hospitalisations for cystic fibrosis

Emotional/Mental Effects:

- Improved mood/affect of individuals practicing it.
- Feeling of greater psychological well-being
- Reduced levels of depression before examinations
- Fewer post-traumatic/avoidance symptoms

Social and behavioural outcomes

- Reduced absenteeism from work
- Quicker re-employment after job loss
- Improved working memory
- Improved sporting performance
- Higher students' grade point average
- Improved social and verbal communicative behaviour (including with language).

Baikie, K.A. and Wilhelm, K. (2018) Emotional and physical health benefits of expressive writing: *Advances in psychiatric treatment*, Cambridge Core. Avail at: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/advances-in-psychiatric-treatment/article/emotional-and-physical-health-benefits-of-expressive-writing> (Accessed: 01 February 2018).



How to Use This Guide

- Set aside 10–20 minutes each day
- Write continuously without editing or judging yourself
- Do not censor yourself, be completely honest and go deep
- Make sure it is confidential. Only share with other people if you want, but writing for healing first of all needs to be private.
- Only write what you are comfortable with—you are always in control
- You can destroy what you write, and sometimes that is an excellent way to release the emotion

There is no right or wrong way to do expressive writing. Write in single words, fragments, poetry, song, story, or lists. The goal is not perfection. There are no rules about what or how you write. Make sure you let yourself be free. The only rules for Expressive Writing are that you need to be totally honest, deep, you are in control of what you write and keep it confidential. These things have to be present to receive the benefits.

Creating a space for your journaling

In terms of a space, find a place in your house, unit or outdoors where you can be quiet and comfortable. The important thing is that you have privacy and quiet. I usually get up before other people in the house so that I have quiet. But you can do this any time of the day. Make yourself a coffee, tea, smoothie or juice and get comfy. This is your time, for you. :)

I love that first coffee in the morning and when I combine it with writing my thoughts and feelings down in the morning, it is a lovely time. I feel I can do what I need to do for the rest of the day. It helps me to feel lighter and released from worries in my mind and heart.

Buy yourself a beautiful journal

Go out and buy yourself a lovely journal that you find attractive and nice to write in. So, that you are caring for yourself in everything. If you do this, it will be an inviting book for you to write in.



Have fun

You can draw in your journal as well after you have written. We will be focusing on a lot of positive things in this journal, so enjoy the process! I love being able to write every morning it is like an internal dialogue, and it is a way for me to release thoughts or concerns so I can feel brighter and more energised for the day.

Have a lovely time with the 30-Day Expressive Writing Journal Prompts Guide - you can use it more than once, as you will find different things come up even when you use the same prompts. I know you will experience the freedom I have from using Expressive Writing to release things that have happened to me, or even normal stress from every day.

Welcome! I am excited to show you how you can use writing to feel lighter from the heaviness of life at times. **Let's get started. This is your time!**

Suzanne



WEEK 1: AWARENESS

Day 1: Where I Am Right Now

Reflection: Begin by meeting yourself where you are, without needing to change anything.

Prompts:

- What emotions are present for me today?
- What feels heavy?
- What feels light?
- If my inner world had a weather pattern, what would it be?

Close: What do I need most today? Do this for yourself. Whether it is talking to your best friend, partner or family member, or taking some time by yourself, do something to take care of yourself. It can be something small.



Day 2: My Inner Voice

Reflection: Your inner voice shapes how you experience yourself and the world.

Prompts:

- How do I speak to myself when I struggle?
- Where did this voice come from?
- What would a kinder voice sound like?

Close: Write a compassionate sentence to yourself to address the negative voice. You have many qualities that people around you love, you need to be your own best friend. The way we talk to ourselves inside is not the way we talk to our close friends or family, so do not do this to yourself.

Write down five positive qualities about yourself, and write down five things people appreciate about you.



Day 3: A Moment That Changed Me

Reflection: Significant moments leave emotional imprints.

Prompts:

- What happened in this moment?
- How did it affect me then?
- How does it still live in me now?

Close: What did I learn from this? It is important to write to yourself and let yourself know that whatever happened in your past, you can now be the adult in your life that you needed. Write a message to your younger self, reassuring yourself that you will be there for yourself, remember now you have people in your life who are there for you and remind yourself of this as well.



Day 4: What I'm Avoiding

Reflection: Avoidance often protects us from discomfort.

Prompts:

- What am I not wanting to face? Write about something gently, only what you wish to write and don't force yourself. Writing is a safe process and you need to write what you feel comfortable with facing.
- What am I afraid will happen if I did?
- What is this avoidance trying to protect me from?

Close: By writing about this, you can think of how you can take small steps to face some of these things, or you can simply write about them. Maybe you need to see a counsellor about what it is you are avoiding. Whatever action you feel you need to take, take one small step to allow yourself to safely face this. This writing will help you to do this safely.



Day 5: A Letter You'll Never Send

Reflection: Writing can release what has been held inside.

Prompts:

- Write a letter to friend, or family member who has hurt you, or you have hurt. Be completely honest and delve deep into your emotions.
- What do I wish I could say that I have not been able to say?
- What emotions need expression?
- What truth has gone unspoken?

Close: How do I feel after writing this? Do not send this letter or email this is simply for you to release this emotion onto the page. The main purpose is for you to release hurt, anger or confusion onto the page, this works for me all the time. It releases you from how you feel. I also try to forgive in this process but if you can't at this point, that's okay as well. Take your time.



Day 6: My Body Speaks

Reflection: The body holds emotional memory.

Prompts:

- Where do I feel tension or sensation?
- If this part of my body could speak, what would it say?
- What might my body need from me?

Close: One way I can care for my body today. Do I need to go for a walk, get out into the sun, get a massage, go to the gym, play some sport, or even rest how can I look after my body today?



Day 7: What I Need

Reflection: Needs are valid, even when unmet.

Prompts:

- What do I need emotionally, physically, spiritually?
- Where do I deny my needs?
- What would it feel like to honour them?

Close: One need I can acknowledge today. Write this down, is there someone you can ask for this need to be met? If not, maybe do some things that can help to meet this need. Sometimes it is just enough to acknowledge the pain inside, this makes us feel heard and relieved, as sometimes we are not even aware of this need until we ask ourselves the question.



WEEK 2: EXPLORATION

Day 8: Childhood Echoes

Reflection: Early experiences shape our inner world.

Prompts:

- What memory stands out? Write about this. Your feelings and what happened.
- What did I feel as a child on the whole? Be specific though, delve deeply into this.
- How does this affect my life now? Do you feel the reverberation of this in your current life?
- What belief do you think has arrived from this experience?

Close: What did I need back then? How did I need to be reassured?

Write yourself a letter and tell yourself you are safe now, and you will provide what you needed. I have done this in counselling, and it is a very useful process to reflect on your childhood and an experience that has cemented an incorrect belief inside yourself.



Day 9: A Time I Felt Safe

Reflection: Safety is an important internal resource.

Prompts:

- Where was I?
- Who was with me?
- What made it feel safe?

Close: How can I recreate even a small part of this feeling?

Appreciate the people who make you feel safe. Write down about these people what you appreciate about them. If you can, spend some time with them.



Day 10: The Masks I Wear

Reflection: We adapt to belong and be accepted.

Prompts:

- What roles do I play?
- When do I feel most like myself?
- What am I protecting by wearing these masks?

Close: Where can I be more authentic? Embrace the things you love to do, and do these more. Embrace yourself and enjoy who you are!

Who do I feel most comfortable being with myself with? Make sure you spend time with these people.



Day 11: My Fears

Reflection: Fear often sits beneath many choices.

Prompts:

- What fears are present in my life?
- How do they influence my decisions?
- What might exist beyond these fears?
- Ninety-five percent of what we worry about doesn't happen, so write reasons why this fear is unfounded, write rational reasons why you do not need to fear.
- How can I choose to act instead of giving in to fear? Do one thing that you are afraid of and write about it. Once we act, or don't react, we realise that the fear was unfounded. Regardless, we need to remove our fears one by one, or at least make them quieter voices inside our heads.

Close: One fear I will not allow to take over. Write this down.



Day 12: Anger Unspoken

Reflection: Anger can signal unmet needs or boundaries.

Prompts:

- What am I angry about?
- What has been left unsaid?
- What boundary may have been crossed?

Close: What is my anger trying to tell me?

Write all of this down, use this as a time to look after yourself. You can write a poem if you would like to as well. I have found this also helps me, and writing a letter always works for me as well, with anger.



Day 13: Grief and Loss

Reflection: Grief takes many forms.

Prompts:

- Write about a person, pet, job or friendship you have lost
- You can write a poem if that helps.
- What do I miss about them or it?
- Write down your deep pain about it.
- Also, write a tribute to the person if you have lost someone in grief, write all of the good things you miss about them. I have used poetry for this process, and it is powerful. You can also write about the bad too if you need to, it is totally up to you.

Close: How can I honour this loss? Do you need to light a candle and think of this person, pet or other thing? Or do something personal to honour them.



Day 14: What I've Survived

Reflection: You carry resilience within you.

Prompts:

- What challenges have I faced?
- What helped me get through? Spiritual beliefs, friends, family.
- Who helped me get through? (Friends, family, God, colleagues).
- What strengths did I discover in myself?
- How did I get through? Remember to do those things if you need to, and also remember you have the strength to get through tough times.
Acknowledge your own strength.

Close: What am I proud of in myself?



WEEK 3: HEALING

Day 15: My Inner Child

Reflection: Your younger self still lives within you.

Prompts:

- What does my younger self feel?
- What did they need?
- What can I say to them now? Write a letter to your younger self.

Or write a poem to your younger self.

Close: A message of comfort. Write a message to your younger self and tell them you will look after them now.



Day 16: Self-Compassion

Reflection: Healing begins with kindness.

Prompts:

- Where am I hardest on myself? Write down all of the sentences you find yourself saying to yourself.
- Would you say this to a close friend in this situation? Think of what you would say to a friend. Write some of these sentences out.
- How can I soften the way I talk to myself in future?

Close: A compassionate affirmation. Write down an affirmation or three that you could say to yourself often, during the day, here are some examples:

“You are doing well”

“You are doing your best”

“You will get there”

“You are beautiful”

“You are loved, lovable and loving.”

I always include affirmations in the journals I give out in my workshops so that people always remember to put the positive into their minds, while removing the negative.



Day 17: A Turning Point

Reflection: Change often begins with a choice.

Prompts:

- What moment changed my direction?
- What led to that decision?
- How did it shape who I am now? Reflect on the positive and negative from this moment.

Close: What did I gain from this experience? Write down what are you grateful for from this change. I have reflected on this often, something that changed my life dramatically, but I am so grateful for so many things that came from this.



Day 18: The Stories I Tell Myself

Reflection: Our beliefs shape our identity.

Prompts:

- What stories did I gain from my past that I keep telling myself?
- Are they true?
- Where did they come from? Who did they come from?

Close: A new story I might choose. Write a new story or sentences that you want to tell yourself from now on, that is the opposite of these negative stories.



Day 19: Letting Go

Reflection: Release creates space.

Prompts:

- What am I holding onto?
- Why is it hard to let go?
- What would freedom feel like?

Close: Write down what you are ready to release. Write this down, how it makes you feel and what happened. Then write “I let this go. I surrender this.” Write down how you feel about this now.



Day 20: What Brings Me Joy

Reflection: Joy is a wonderful companion in life.

Prompts:

- What lights me up?
- When do I feel most alive?
- What small joys can I invite in?

Close: One joyful action I can take. Write down what you are grateful for in your life. Write a poem if you would like using this joy and gratitude.



Day 21: My Values

Reflection: Values guide our decisions.

Prompts:

- What truly matters to me?
- What do I stand for?
- Where am I living out of alignment of these values? What small change do I want to make in one area.

Close: One value I will honour and incorporate into my life in a more active way.



WEEK 4: INTEGRATION & GROWTH

Day 22: Boundaries

Reflection: Boundaries protect your wellbeing.

Prompts:

- Where do I need create stronger boundaries? With who?
- What makes it hard to set them?
- What would healthy boundaries look like?

Close: One boundary I can begin with. A boundary that helps you to protect your own mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing. We often think we don't deserve to have boundaries that we have to keep giving and giving as we want to please people. In the last few years, I have stopped doing this, of course, I still help people and put myself out, but I do this to a degree, and then I put up a boundary. I don't need to be suffering over and over, I can help, without self sacrifice.



Day 23: A Difficult Conversation

Reflection: Expression can bring clarity.

Prompts:

- What do I wish I could say? To who do you want to say it?
- Express the emotions you feel about this.
- What outcome would I love to have happen?

Close: What do I need to feel heard? How would this look? Sometimes it is hard to get people to hear us. If the person is safe to bring this up, then do so. But if the person is defensive, then it may not be positive to bring it up, in this case, writing it down will give you a voice, and you can express how you feel. You will be heard by yourself, and you will release this and feel more at peace. You don't have to take action with this, the action of writing this down will help you to feel more understood and lighter. It has worked for me for many years.



Day 24: Forgiveness

Reflection: Forgiveness is a process, not a demand.

Prompts:

- What does forgiveness mean to me? How do you feel about it?
- What feels possible right now? Do you think you can forgive this person who has hurt you?
- Write down your feelings towards this person, and see how you feel afterwards, often this removes your emotions and allows you to see things a bit differently.

Forgiveness is a process and it can be a long journey if you can manage to do it, then great. Sometimes I will write in my journal that I forgive someone and pray for help with that as it can be hard to forgive. The thing is, people often make mistakes over and over, and forgiveness is like an onion, it has layers. So just see what you can do at this time. I try to forgive, as I know this will release me from holding on to bitterness or anger with the other person.

Close: Forgiveness provides a big positive step toward your own peace.



Day 25: My Strengths

Reflection: Strength exists in many forms.

Prompts:

- What strengths do I have? Write this down, just list them.
- When have they shown up? When have you used these strengths in your life, think about this and write this down.
- What quiet strengths do I overlook in myself? What do other people say about me?

Close: Write down “I acknowledge that I am...” and write what you have heard other people describe you as, and what you know deep down are your strengths. It can be hard for us to do this at first, but if we start to encourage ourselves and write this down, it becomes easier to do.



Day 26: A Future Version of Me

Reflection: Growth is ongoing.

Prompts:

- Who am I becoming?
- What has changed in my life over the years?
- What does my life look like now?
- What would I like my life to look like in five years?
- What would I like to **be** like in five years?

Close: One step toward that future. This is the beginning of your new life. You only have today and the future - the past is gone. So it is important to look forward to what you are becoming, the potential of who you will become and towards a future that you have envisaged.



Day 27: Gratitude

Reflection: Gratitude shifts perspective.

Prompts:

- What or who am I grateful for?
- Why does it matter?
- What small things in my life bring meaning?

Close: A moment of appreciation. We have touched on this in previous days, but it is good to focus solely on gratitude, this is how we can be more joyful in our lives.



Day 28: What I Want to Create

Reflection: You are creative by nature.

Prompts:

- What do I enjoy creating? What do I want to build or express? (Do you like doing craft, painting, pottery, gardening, or anything else creative? Do you love making furniture or other woodwork items).
- What holds me back from doing this? What is stopping me from doing this?
- What would it feel like to begin?

Close: One small creative step. So, make a plan to do some painting, craft, woodwork, gardening or your creative thing in the next few days. Start small, and then you can build into something more in the future. Just spend 30 mins on it, so you make time for it. I have started to do this with doing visual art, I spend about 30-40 mins, this way it does not feel like you are taking too much time and you are less likely to put it off.



Day 29: Trusting Myself

Reflection: Self-trust is built over time.

Prompts:

- When have I not trusted myself before? What happened?
- When have I trusted myself before?
- What makes it difficult now?
- What would trusting myself look like?

Close: Write down “I trust myself to...” fill in what you are going through at the moment.



Day 30: Integration

Reflection: Take time to honour your journey.

Prompts:

- What have I discovered about myself over this past month?
- What patterns have emerged?
- What has shifted? How do I feel now about myself, other people, and my life?

Close: What will I carry forward from this journey? What is the biggest thing you have gained from this 30 day journey. Overall, how do you feel?



Closing Ritual

Take a final moment to reflect:

- What surprised me?
- What changed?
- What will I continue?

Acknowledge that you have done something good for your inner mental and emotional health. Well done! I am proud of you for doing this and putting yourself first, as well as being really honest with yourself.

I hope that you have been able to delve into the depths of the richness of who you are as a person, and to release emotions that you have wanted to be free from.

I look forward to sharing more about Expressive Writing with you, for more information you can visit my website www.suzannestrong.com where you can find details of my Expressive Writing for Healing Online Course. This course is more in-depth and takes you through many different expressive writing tools, including poetry, free writing, metaphors, and reflection. Feel free to contact me on my suzanne@writeforlife.com.au

Congratulations for completing the 30 days!

Kind regards,

Suzanne

