

BENEFITS OF JOURNALING

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Journaling is an opportunity to externalize one's emotions, struggles, frustrations and triumphs. It's especially useful for those who push their emotions away. By expressing them in a safe, contained space, difficult emotions become less overwhelming and easier to manage. Further, the repetitive hand motion required to write induces a meditate state, calming our mind and emotions.

As part of your grief work, learn to keep a spiritual journal as part of your caring plan.

HELPFUL HINTS

- ✓ Write whatever comes to mind without censoring yourself.
- ✓ Keep it honest.
- ✓ Don't worry about editing, grammar, vocabulary or punctuation. Just put pen to paper to externalize your thoughts, emotions, experiences, or anything you want to vent about.
- ✓ Journal for at least 5 minutes at a time. Set a timer if needed.
- ✓ A journal is for your eyes only. If you keep it confidential, you're more likely to be brutally honest. Keep it private unless you wish to share it with someone you trust.
- ✓ Consider keeping your journal for the long haul. Revisiting it can help you continue to process your grief, and often becomes an opportunity to recognize how far you've come.

PROMPTS TO HELP YOU BEGIN

If you get stuck and the words just won't come, use the prompts on page 155 or the prompts below to begin, and then let your heart guide the pen from there.

- This is what happened today
- I'm experiencing these feelings about it
- I'm thinking these thoughts
- I'm struggling with this emotion the most right now
- I'm most angry at
- I'm most fearful of
- I wish others knew this about my journey
- I'm grateful for

WHAT TO KNOW

Research shows that penning your deepest emotions helps to reduce stress and improve one's mood.