

So many years of education,
yet nobody ever taught
us how to love ourselves
and why it's so important.

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Taking Time for Yourself: Writing and Peer Support Mental Health America



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Disclosures

- Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
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- Master of Arts & Sciences in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
- Substance Abuse Treatment Professional – State of Florida and State of Tennessee
- Provisionally licensed clinical mental health counselor – State of Florida
- Peer with lived experience with both mental health and addiction
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- Serving on the Board of Directors at Peer Support Space
- Dual diagnosis treatment provider
- Diagnostician with use of DSM-V
- Extensive research and training on self-care for healthcare professionals since 2012
- In recovery since 2009
- No financial disclosures

All of the above is true and factual as of May 17th, 2021

What is Compassion?



Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a relationship between equals. Only when we know our own darkness well can we be present with the darkness of others. Compassion becomes real when we recognize our shared humanity.

- Pema Chodron

Self-Compassion



Mindfulness

Being aware of the physical, emotional, or mental pain of the moment.



Self-kindness

Treating ourselves with kindness, considering our own needs.



Common Humanity

Recognizing that these experiences are a normal part of being human.



People in the healing profession(s) are constantly exposed to psychological distress.

Many of us are “feeling healers,” so not only are we exposed to psychological stressors of others but we experience the pain of others deeply – I refer to this as a double-edged sword because it makes us experts in the field however, what we do with the distress matters and impact our work and ourselves in the long

run.

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Compassion Fatigue

Getting tired of doing sh** for others that you aren't doing for yourself

B | A | L | A | N | C | E



B | U | R | N | O | U | T



Self-Care

The deliberate act of consistently tending to one's physical, mental and emotional well-being through restorative and practical activities.

Self-Care Isn't Selfish

We do what we do mostly because of what we, ourselves have been through. But in order to be effective at what we do, we have to ensure our safety and wellbeing, at all times. Self-care isn't being selfish; it actually requires being selfless and considerate of the people around us.

SELF
CARE
ISN'T
SELFISH

The Types of Self-Care



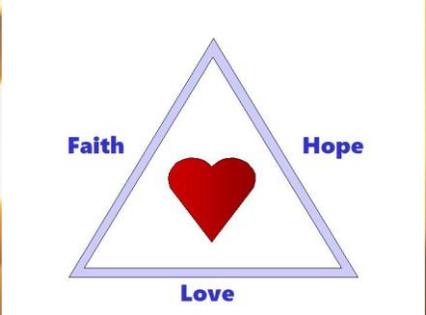
Physical



Mental



Emotional



Spiritual



Social



A “Peace” on Mindfulness

Mindfulness can be defined as the act of exploring truth in the form of a moment-by-moment awareness of thoughts, feelings and emotions, physiological sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, non-judgmental lens.

It is action with intention.

Writing Facilitates Reflection & Introspection in Healing Ways

Find a quiet, comfortable and peaceful space. Take yourself and your notebook and pen (preferably) or laptop with you. Take a seat and take some deep breaths.

Part One:

Think for a moment about your perceived imperfections. What are they and how do they make you feel inadequate? Try free-writing about what makes you feel inadequate, or “not good enough.” What emotions come up for you here?

Part Two:

Now write a letter to yourself from the point of view of an unconditionally loving person/version of yourself. Reflect on what you might say to a loved one who confided in you about feeling so “less than.” What would be the most important message you wish to convey here, from a point of view looking at this “flaw” with unlimited compassion?

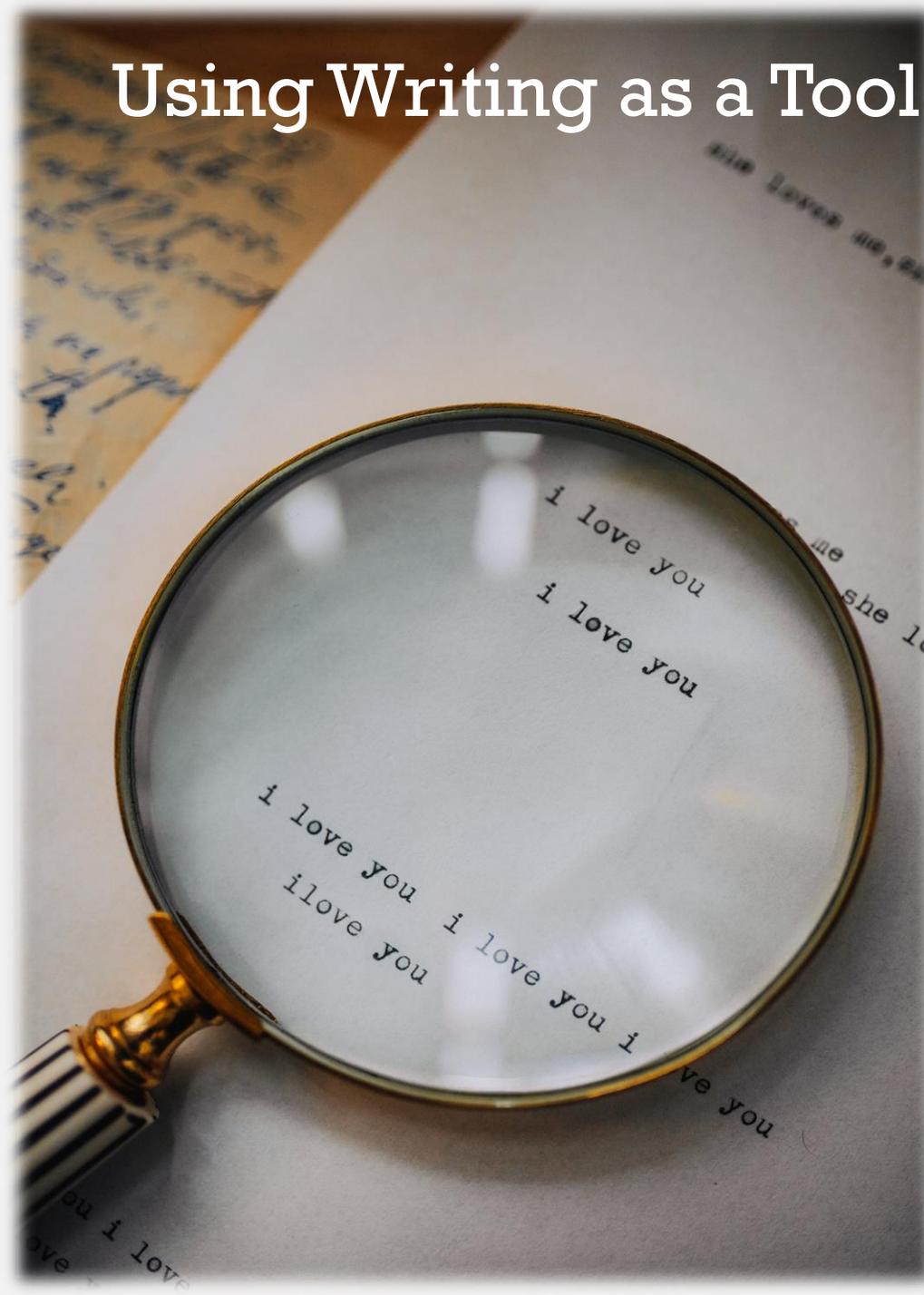
Part Three:

Put your writing tools down for a bit. Get up and perform usual tasks. Spend another intentional, mindful moment on going back to the letter and breathing in the words of compassion you wrote to yourself – the words of true and genuine self-compassion. Come back to this letter as needed when feeling “not good enough.”

Using Writing as a Tool to Engage in Self Care

Writing comes in many forms including, but not limited to:

- List-writing
- Thoughts
- Prayers
- Hopes
- Quotes
- Daily check-in's
- Vision-casting
- Storytelling
- Journal entries
- Guided journaling



References

- <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/what-to-look-for/mood-disorders>
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- <https://medium.com/thrive-global/compassion-blockers-what-gets-in-your-way-of-expressing-compassion-e8bb32614c9b>
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Go be whole and honor yourself... I dare you.

Thank You

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