

Inside Integrative Medicine

May 2022

Integrative
Medicine
Virtual
Group Classes
Now Available

Journaling Your Journey

By Amaka Agbor, CHES(R)

“Writing is medicine. It is an appropriate antidote to injury. It is an appropriate companion for any difficult change.”

– Julia Cameron.

For many, writing is therapeutic. Writing can come in many forms with journaling being the most familiar. Journaling is a form of writing that helps keep a record of your personal insights, reflections, ideas, feelings, and experiences. Your journal can be whatever you want it to be. It can be a letter to yourself or someone else, a summary of your day, or a record of your feelings, hopes, and fears. There are several methods to journaling, which makes it easy to adopt this practice. You can journal using traditional pen and paper, your computer, an online blog, pictures, or a mobile app. Journal entries are private unless you intentionally share them, therefore you can freely express your thoughts and feelings without worrying about what others think.

Research has found that journaling may reduce anxiety, improve sleep, regulate your mood, relieve depression, and combat stress. There is also evidence that a specific form of journaling called expressive writing can improve those same quality of life outcomes and immune function. Enhancing multiple aspects of quality of life and immune function is important to those undergoing medical treatment.

Anyone can journal. You do not need to be an experienced writer to express your thoughts or feelings. You do not need to spell correctly. You do not even need good grammar. There is no “right” or “wrong” way to journal. The best way to journal is to “just do it.”

If you want to explore and experience the benefits of journaling, you are invited to participate in *Journeys: Journaling Workshop*. *Journeys* is held virtually, twice a month on Friday, from 1 to 2 PM, CT. The workshop is available for patients and caregivers and is led by a Health Education Specialist from The Learning Center. Each 1-hour class uses writing prompts to explore different journaling techniques. These techniques help to clarify thoughts as well as to promote meditation, stress relief, and self-expression. At the end of each writing session, participants are given an opportunity to volunteer to share and discuss. First time attendees will receive a special journaling package in the mail. *Journeys: Journaling Workshop* does not require a referral. Please contact the Integrative Medicine Center to reg



Integrative Oncology Consultation

Our physicians can give guidance on achieving a comprehensive and integrative approach to your cancer care via MyChart/Epic Zoom.

Exercise/Physical Activity Consultation

A senior physical therapist provides recommendations on achieving safe and optimal exercise during each consultation via MyChart/Epic Zoom.

Oncology Acupuncture Treatment

Acupuncture is a safe and often effective medical treatment that can be used to manage side effects from cancer and related treatments, including nausea and vomiting, pain, neuropathy, hot flashes, fatigue and dry mouth.

Oncology Massage Treatment

Oncology massage may help patients address anxiety, relieve pain, decrease fatigue and improve sleep quality. Cost: \$55 per treatment.

View audio and video resources online:
www.mdanderson.org/integrativemedcenter

Health Psychology Consultation

A licensed clinical psychologist will provide both evaluation and interventions to help with lifestyle change and address symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression via MyChart/Epic Zoom.

Nutrition Consultation

A registered dietitian provides personalized nutrition counseling and education to help patients manage side effects and reach their goals during and after cancer treatment. Education emphasizes a whole food, plant-based diet for optimal health via telephone visit.

Yoga/Meditation Consultation

Yoga/meditation lowers stress, depression, and anxiety, improves sleep, memory, physical functioning, and overall quality of life, as well as increasing spiritual well-being. A yoga/meditation therapist would provide interventions via MyChart/Epic Zoom. Cost: \$50 per session.

Music Therapy

Individual music therapy is provided by a board-certified music therapist (MT-BC) and involves engaging in music interactively in a variety of ways, with outcomes including anxiety reduction, fostered well-being and exploring ways of reconnecting to music for daily quality of life. Cost:\$50 per session.

Prices for IMC services may be subject to change depending on insurance coverage.

May 2022

How to Register for our virtual classes:

1. Call Integrative Medicine Center at 713-794-4700
2. All classes are free
3. Complete e-update *liability waiver and telemedicine consent in MyChart at least 48 hours prior to scheduled class

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Yoga for Health 10:30-11:30	Cooking for Optimal Health Noon - 1:00 (2nd Tues)	Yoga for Health 10:30-11:30	Connect & Reflect with Music 1:30-2:30	Yoga for Health 10:30-11:30
Healing Through Writing 2:00-3:00 (2nd & 4th Mon)	Connect & Reflect with Music 3:30-4:30	Collage Studio 1:30-3:00 (1st & 3rd Wed)		Journaling Workshop 1:00-2:00 (1st & 3rd Fri)

Class Descriptions:

Yoga for Health- Features a gentle form of yoga including stretching, breathing, relaxation, and meditation techniques.

Connect & Reflect with Music- An interactive and supportive music group, led by a Board-Certified Music Therapist, using music engagement and conversation to enhance well-being and encourage connectedness. No music experience is required.

Collage Studio- offers the chance to play with color, shape, and composition while making personalized collages. In the Collage Studio, we'll be cutting, tearing, and gluing a variety of papers to create new images. Chance and surprise are the key ingredients.

Journaling Workshop- Journal writing can be a form of meditation, stress relief, and self-expression. Journeys is a guided journaling workshop for patients and caregivers to practice creativity and express themselves in a safe space.

Healing Through Writing- Using expressive writing as a tool to identify and process difficult emotions in a supportive environment.

Cooking for Optimal Health- Learn new recipes and different tips for preparing whole food plant-based meals. Participate in the comfort of your own kitchen or observe and ask questions.

Avocado Soup

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Serves: 4

Website: <https://atthetable.mdanderson.org/recipe?id=463>

Ingredients

- 2 medium avocados
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1 cup low sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 pinch cayenne (optional but very good!)
- 1/2 lemon, juice only

Instructions:

1. Remove pit and skin from avocado and place in blender.
2. Add all other ingredients to blender and process until smooth and creamy.
3. Serve cold.

