

The 14-Day Trauma Journal

A paced, printable sequence for writing about hard things without flooding your nervous system. One prompt a day, ten to fifteen minutes, with a way in and a way back out.

From the clinicians at Connect Clinical Services

A private-pay trauma therapy practice in Houston, Texas
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Before you open the notebook

Writing about trauma can help you notice patterns, put words to what your body has been carrying, and arrive at therapy with something to work with. It can also stir things up. This journal is built to go slowly on purpose: the first days build steadiness, and the harder material comes later and stays light.

This journal is a good fit if

- You have one or two grounding skills that bring you back into your body.
- You have a private place to write and some time afterward to settle.
- You want a way to track what comes up between therapy sessions.

Put it down today if

- You are in a flashback, or have been today.
- You are numb, losing time, or watching yourself from outside your body.
- Someone could read what you write and that would not be safe.
- You are having thoughts of hurting yourself.

If you are in crisis

Call or text **988** (Suicide and Crisis Lifeline) or go to the nearest emergency room. Do not journal through a crisis.

A note on complex PTSD

If you live with complex or long-standing trauma, writing alone about specific memories can be too much without support. Days 1 to 8 are about steadiness and noticing, and they are a fine place to stay. Save the memory work for a session with a clinician.

The container: in, write, out

The structure matters more than the prompt. Use the same three steps every day, even on days that feel easy.

1. In (2 minutes)

Feet flat on the floor. Name five things you can see and three you can hear. Take three slow breaths with a longer exhale than inhale. Set a timer for 10 to 15 minutes.

2. Write (10 to 15 minutes)

Answer the prompt. You do not have to write well or finish. When the timer goes off, stop mid-sentence if you need to. Stopping on time is the skill.

3. Out (3 minutes)

Close the notebook and put it somewhere out of sight. Rate how activated you feel from 0 to 10 at the bottom of the page. Then do something ordinary with your hands: wash a cup, water a plant, step outside.

Signs to stop early

- Your chest tightens, your breath gets short, or your hands go cold.
- You lose track of time in a foggy way.
- You start writing about the past in the present tense.
- You feel suddenly very young, or far away from your adult self.
- You feel a pull to keep going past the timer "just a little more."

If any of these happen, stop, ground, and come back tomorrow with an easier prompt. That is not failing the exercise. That is the exercise working.

01

DAY 1 • GROUNDING

List ten things in your room that are genuinely yours, chosen by you. Pick one and describe it in detail: its color, its texture, where it came from.

After writing, how activated am I? ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

02

DAY 2 • GROUNDING

Write about the last time you felt even one degree safer than usual. Where were you, who was there, and what was your body doing?

After writing, how activated am I? ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

03

DAY 3 · GROUNDING

Describe a place, real or imagined, where the ground feels steady under you. What does the air smell like there? You can come back to this page any day you need it.

After writing, how activated am I?

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

04

DAY 4 · RESOURCES

Make a list of every person, animal, or place that has ever felt like refuge. Choose one and write about a single moment with them.

After writing, how activated am I?

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

05 DAY 5 · RESOURCES

List the inner resources you used to get through. Humor? Stubbornness? A particular friend? Write a short thank-you note to one of them.

After writing, how activated am I? ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

06 DAY 6 · NOTICING

What physical sensation shows up when you are anxious? Where in your body is it, and is it the same place every time?

After writing, how activated am I? ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

07

DAY 7 · NOTICING

What is one trigger that caught you off guard recently? What set it off, and what did your body do next? Stay with the facts, not the full story behind them.

After writing, how activated am I?

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

08

DAY 8 · NOTICING

Write one thing that is true about your life now that was not true when the hard thing happened. Then list five pieces of evidence that you are older now than you were then.

After writing, how activated am I?

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

09

DAY 9 · NAMING

Finish this sentence ten different ways: "Because of what happened, I believe about myself..."

After writing, how activated am I?

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

10

DAY 10 · NAMING

Now finish this one ten different ways: "What I would like to believe about myself instead..."

After writing, how activated am I?

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

11

DAY 11 • NAMING

What is a rule from the family you grew up in that you still live by, even though it no longer fits? What would it be like to loosen it a little?

After writing, how activated am I? ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

12

DAY 12 • INTEGRATING

What did a younger you do to get through that you no longer need to do? Thank that strategy for its work, then tell it that it can rest.

After writing, how activated am I? ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

13

DAY 13 · INTEGRATING

Where in your life do you already notice the past having less grip than it used to? What changed?

After writing, how activated am I?

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

14

DAY 14 · INTEGRATING

If your future self, a few years from now, could send you one sentence today, what would it be? Write it down, then write what you would say back.

After writing, how activated am I?

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

TWO WEEKS AT A GLANCE

Your activation log

Fill in one row a day. After two weeks, look for patterns: which prompts settled you, which stirred you, and what time of day worked best. If you are in therapy, bring this page to your next session.

Day	Before (0 to 10)	After (0 to 10)	What I noticed
Day 1			
Day 2			
Day 3			
Day 4			
Day 5			
Day 6			
Day 7			
Day 8			
Day 9			
Day 10			
Day 11			
Day 12			
Day 13			
Day 14			

AFTER THE 14 DAYS

When writing alone is not enough

Journaling is a good tool. It is not a substitute for working with a trained clinician, and some patterns are a sign it is time for more support:

- **You keep writing the same thing and nothing shifts.** The story is clear on paper, but your body still reacts the same way.
- **The prompts reliably overwhelm you,** even the early ones, even with the container.
- **You are having flashbacks, panic attacks, nightmares, or stretches of numbness** that get in the way of work, sleep, or relationships.
- **You notice yourself numbing** with alcohol, scrolling, overwork, or anything else, so you do not have to feel it.

How we work at Connect Clinical Services

Our Houston practice offers EMDR, Brainspotting, Somatic Experiencing, and Neurofeedback under one roof, with one Clinical Director, Guy Bender, LPC. Some of these approaches work with what the body holds without asking you to retell every detail. We match the approach, and the pace, to you.

What it costs

We are a private-pay practice. Sessions range from \$125 to \$225 depending on the clinician, and published rates are on our website. We provide superbills on request if you want to seek out-of-network reimbursement.

Where

8100 Washington Ave, Suite 170, Houston, TX 77007, near Memorial Park. Telehealth is available across Texas.

Start with a free 15-minute call

A member of our care team will listen to what is going on, answer questions about fit and cost, and help you decide whether a first session makes sense. No obligation.

(713) 564-5146

Or request a call at connectclinicalservices.com

This workbook is educational and is not a substitute for diagnosis or treatment by a licensed professional. If you are in crisis, call or text 988 or go to the nearest emergency room.