

KEEPING A DAILY JOURNAL



University

Counseling

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JOURNAL #10: PERSONAL REACTION LOGS

IDEAS FOR MAINTAINING DAILY LOG ENTRIES:

- Collect ideas, main points of emphasis, particular bits of knowledge that struck you as important from the class session. Put the idea or thought into your own words that make it easy to remember...like an adage, phrase, motto (for example from Poor Richard's Almanac – “A stitch in time saves nine”).
- Maintain an awareness of yourself while involved in class activities or outside of class data that might apply to ideas about stress and the concepts talked about in class. For example how did you react (physically, emotionally, behavioral) to others, the topic, the demonstration, or even thoughts that may stay with you from something else going on in your life. Record these reactions as in a diary (for example – “I felt really anxious when I was asked to demonstrate on the temperature machine” or “I seem tired and distracted today, I keep thinking about something that happened last night.”) Your heightened awareness may then lead you to make some personal assessment about what stresses or relaxes you in everyday life. Reflect upon any insights you might get about yourself.
- Maintain a recording of all biofeedback practice activities including a description of the strategy (ex. Relaxation tape), physiological measures (biofeedback indicators such as skin temperature) at the beginning, during and after the strategy. Note the progress and reactions you are having to the training.
- Try to make connections and applications about ideas, concepts of the class; personal reactions you are becoming aware of about yourself and how this could be useful to you in aspects of your own life. What are the stressors of your life (conflicts, pressures, tensions, people, etc.)? How do your behaviors or habits affect you for better or worse (health and wellness factors including nutrition, exercise, social support, recreation and relaxation, spiritual)? What could you do about it (enhance, change, create, decide, etc)?
- Ideas from these individual logs can be helpful in developing your integrative paper due at the end of this class. Logs will be reviewed by the instructors after Thursday's session and again on the following Tuesday.

THERMAL BIOFEEDBACK - PRACTICE ROUTINE

1. Practice fifteen or twenty minutes each day, using one or more of the methods in your handout.
2. Begin by taping a thermometer on the index finger of your non-dominant hand.
3. Sit comfortably in a chair, feet flat on the floor, back straight, hands in lap, palms up.
4. Record starting temperature on log sheet.
5. Record ending temperature and note the difference between your starting and ending temperatures on log sheet.
6. Use mini-stress management methods throughout the day.
7. Follow this routine for at least one week before making any changes.

Practice on Relaxation/Biofeedback

Observations from Relaxation Practices (both in class and home practice) from beginning of class (Jan. 3) until present.

1. Identify the types of strategies you have practiced:
2. Your observations from trying out strategies (make comparisons, note preferences between strategies, differences in locations of practice, etc.):
3. Biofeedback results (changes in temperature, stress dots) during practice.
4. Effects of practice session. Have you seen improvements or other results in managing stressors or reducing stress symptoms (headaches, sleep problems, etc.)?
5. Have you had specific difficulties in doing stress management? If so, identify and discuss any possible reasons why there have been problems?
6. What situations and future applications do you see for continuing relaxation training, stress management procedures, or biofeedback training in the future?