

Therapy Notebook

I recommend to anyone who is interested in doing personal growth and/or recovery work, that they do what I choose to call a therapy notebook. To put together a therapy notebook you need some sort of book with blank pages and dividers to demarcate up to approximately fifteen sections. I use a three ring binder, some college ruled paper and a set of dividers with index tabs. A therapy notebook is a portable device in which to keep everything related to your personal growth/therapy work. It keeps it all together so that any time you want to work on it or to consult it, it is all readily available in one place.

A therapy notebook is like a journal. In fact it contains a journal as part of it, but it is more than a journal. Journaling is one approach to personal growth/recovery. It is one facet of a multi-faceted venture. Other facets of this venture/adventure include such things as reading self-help books, examining dreams, exploring decision making processes, recording and processing your story, making a time-line of your life, and going to see a therapist. Below is a list of suggested headings for the sections of a therapy notebook. You may choose to only use some of these. You may decide to use all of them. Or you may come up with additional sections of your own that I haven't included here. For one client, I recommended that he include a section entitled "thoughts upon waking" as he tended to wake up to a mind full of negative thoughts and I felt it was important for him to record and process these to see what they were about.

Here are some suggested sections for a comprehensive therapy notebook.

1. Notes to Self.
2. Life Story.
3. Life Time Line.
4. Family Genogram.
5. Dreams and Interpretations.
6. Negative Self Talk.
7. Journaling Questions.
8. Journaling.
9. Letters to Address Unfinished Business with another Person.
10. Special Projects, e.g., Relationship issues with another Person.
11. Drawings and Visual Aids.
12. Decision Making Processes.
13. Questions for the Therapy.
14. Therapists Comments.
15. Insights.
16. Ideas and Insights from Reading.
17. Positive Affirmations.
18. Personal Ads/Positive Presentations to Others.