

WRITING THERAPY

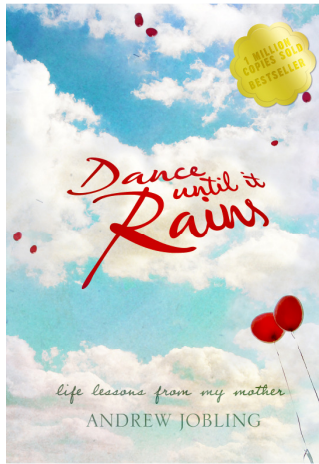
I am going to try an interesting experiment that you are going to see unfold as you read this week's article. I am also going to be very transparent! At this very moment as I write this I am going through a personal challenge which I am struggling to find a solution for. I am feeling down and discouraged and not even the support and love of my beautiful wife seems to be helping. One thing that has always helped me feel better and become more solution oriented is writing - so I am going to see if it works right now...



One of the things that happens as a speaker and an author/writer is that the perception you can put across to others is that you have all the answers and never suffer the challenges of life. In fact I actually got asked this question at a talk I did about a year ago; *"so don't you ever feel sad, depressed or discouraged?"* That was obviously the vibe that I was giving, but I can tell you that it couldn't be further from the truth. The reality is that we all suffer challenges and 'downers' in our life and so we should expect them. The secret is not to try and avoid them but to be able to find something that can get us back feeling strong and in control again ... writing has always done that for me.

The healing power of writing

When I lost my mum to cancer I was absolutely shattered - even with 15 years to prepare myself I was a total mess for a long time. I found getting on with even the simplest things in my life overwhelmingly difficult. It seemed I would never recover from the massive piece of my heart that had ripped out of my chest. That was until I started writing the book about her life and cancer journey. As I started writing an amazing thing started to happen ... I began to look differently at the significance of her life and death. I began to celebrate her life and achievements rather than mourn her death. I began to be grateful for having known her rather than devastated for having lost her. I realised that she is with me every single day inspiring me to get up one more time and go after the things in my life that I want. Whilst I missed and still miss her physical presence and touch, I am no longer sad. My heart has healed and is stronger than ever and I feel blessed to have her as my mother.



The actual writing process was responsible for this change - I hate to think how I would be today had I not taken the time to write the book about her life and the incredible lessons from it. It enabled me to get the things out of my heart & head and onto paper (or computer as the case may be) where I could make more sense of them. In fact, it is as I write articles every single week that I seem to gain a new perspective on things that helps me see challenges and obstacles with fresh eyes. So whilst you think I am writing this for you, I am actually doing it for myself - It is an effective and very inexpensive form of therapy!

How and why does writing work so well?

I can't really answer this question with supreme confidence because I am not a psychologist, but my theory is that it helps us deal with the things we bottle up inside which potentially cause problems in our life. Where does stress and anxiety come from? Where does low confidence and self esteem comes from? It comes from the words we tell ourselves based on feelings that we hold onto and stuff deep into our subconscious minds due to our own perception of the events in our lives. That was a long sentence – I hope it made some sense!!

The act of writing brings these negative thoughts and feelings out and onto paper (or computer) where we can look at them more objectively. In many cases we see how insignificant they really are or we can see a solution. This is actually happening to me right now as I am typing this sentence!

Write for freedom

It really works! I am seriously feeling better and starting to get perspective and solutions for my challenge. Why not start writing today? It doesn't have to be a book or articles that anyone else read except you. It can just be a bit of scribble on a pad or exercise book, or it could be a journal that you decide will become a regular part of your healthy and happy life.



As you begin to write whatever is important to you, allow yourself to experience the incredible feeling of freedom that comes with it. No-one can control what you write, no-one can judge or criticise. Your writing is yours and yours alone - it has the power to heal, to inspire and to change your life. **Let it flow today!**

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October 1, 2010*

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