Journaling advice for Women – Nicola Lynch EXEMPLAR

• Connect in and try to understand the purpose and why it will help you?
• I think it’s really important to connect into why this process could help you,
especially if you have never done it before.
• If you are resistant, nervous or scared, maybe sit down with someone that has done
it before (or the person asking you to do it) and get them to explain some of the
benefits they have seen as a result. Journaling can be a good tool for:
o Releasing anxiety and anxious thoughts – by somehow writing it down,
maybe you are able to acknowledge which can be the first step
o Dreaming - opening up some possibilities for the future depending what
menopause phase you find yourself in
o Changing perceptions of the menopause and the journey ahead
o Reconnecting with your inner voice
• By observing habits and behaviours, you really can start to see patterns for
menopause symptoms that maybe you have not connected before (or have been
choosing to ignore). Maybe certain foods, drinks, places, activities, situations and/or
people. And also to capture how it made you feel mentally, physically, emotionally
and spiritually (depending on how important the last one is)
• Ultimately - there is no wrong or right. This is a journey into being self-aware, letting
go, opening up, listening to yourself and others, connection, illumination, intuition
and expression
• Have a structure to get yourself going – start simple and then develop it
• Set yourself a simple list of questions that you answer so you have a place to start.
Sometimes it’s helpful to use an app (i.e. balance)
• Once you get comfortable with these, then you can expand the type of questions
you are asking yourself and become more reflective:
• Set a frequency, do it at a good time for you and try to be consistent
• Decide how frequent you want to do this (this may be set for you) – weekly, daily or
monthly. I think if you are just starting out, more frequent is better because you see
patterns quicker and also maybe start seeing results which will encourage you to
keep going
• Do it in a place that you feel comfortable – maybe with a cup of tea and a comfy
chair (with a blanket). Or take a walk in the garden as you formulate your thoughts?
Maybe just write the big words, pictures that come to you first? But always have a
way to record the important elements.
• Think about the best time in the day. Maybe first thing in the morning over your
morning cup of coffee or later in the evening maybe kids are in bed or all your main
tasks are done. Maybe after some exercise when your mind is a bit clearer. Maybe
after meditation, visualisation or pranayama. Maybe after a MY class J
• Know if you are a lark or an owl for considering life, the universe and writing things
down. Try to work within these parameters.
• Re-read it and see how things have changes (or not)
• Take a moment and reflect on what you have written so far - maybe each week (if
you are doing it daily). See what you think? Can you make any connections? But no
pressure – just to see what is coming up. Observe for as long as you need too.
• Try different methods of journaling
• Draw, speak, dance, sing, record your voice. However, ensure you can note it down
so you can come back to it and establish patterns of symptoms & behaviours.

• Reflective journaling – asking the more reflective and deep questions. What makes
me happy? What else do I need? Do I have purpose? How do I feel today?
• Affirmations – always present tense and use them as a prompt for journaling. How
do you feel when you say them? How connected are you? Do they help you?
• Intentions – framed as questions. What do I need today?
• Scripting – pick a day in the future and write the perfect life in the present tense.
How do things feel, taste smell? Once completed, how does this help you? Does it
give you hope? Purpose? Drive? Or something more negative. Never going to get
there. Explore all reactions.
• Gratitude journaling – what are you grateful for? Something you are proud of? And
how does make you feel? Does it calm you? Release anxiety?
• Dream journaling – recording what happened in your dream which can enable you to
reflect and work out what you have been processing.
• Free writing – be creative, open, free and not prescriptive. This can be a bit scary to
start with but can be incredibly empowering.
• Don’t ignore what its telling – even if you don’t like the answer
• if you have symptoms after drinking alcohol or hot spicy foods – don’t just ignore if
they are your favourite foods. It could be that you need to avoid those at certain
times/situations. Try to keep an open and honest mind.
• During the menopause, due to fluctuating levels of oestrogen, your body could
develop new allergies or make you more sensitive to food, products, environments,
clothing. So super important to just note down what is happening rather than pre-
deciding or discounting certain ‘known’ outcomes.
• If you have hot flushes more at work than at home – why could that be?
• Be open and maybe discuss your thoughts/observations with a trusted person
• Perhaps it might be helpful to share some reflections with others and seek their
perspective of you? You need to trust and respect them. And be open to listen to
them. Especially for managing symptoms. They may have a different
view/experience than you have.
• Don’t give up if you have a few bad days. It can still help!
• So what if you miss one or 2 days. Don’t let that be the excuse for you to stop
altogether. Try to remember what days you have missed and note down some
thoughts if you can but otherwise just resolve to keep going or maybe review the
frequency you set yourself? If it continually not working for you, may need to revisit
the task. This should not be a source of additional stress.
• Seek support if you are unearthing things which are upsetting or unsettling you
• Journaling can bring up past traumas and things which you thought maybe were
dealt with – and this is especially true in the menopause
• If you are struggling to deal with some of the things which are bubbling up to the
surface, you may need to help support through a partner, friend, family or
potentially professional help depending on how distressed you are feeling.
• Please don’t ignore or dismiss what is coming up – you will need to understand the
impact this is having and whether it is something you can let go or need to address.
This will only be amplified as you go through your menopause journey.