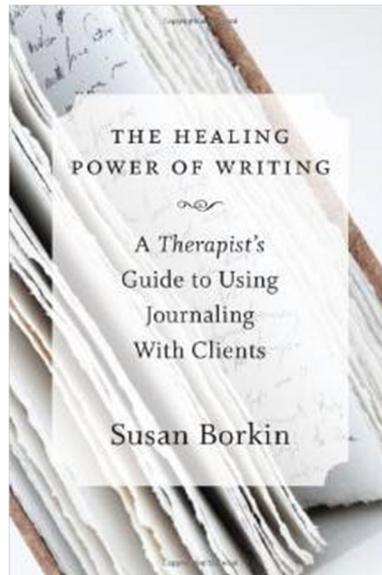




## The Healing Power of Writing: A Therapist's Guide to Using Journaling with Clients

Written by Susan Borkin

Reviewed by Sue Roh



**The psychological benefits** of writing have been studied extensively, but little has been written for mental health professionals about how to effectively integrate writing into therapy sessions. Susan Borkin's *The Healing Power of Writing* effectively tackles this necessity by instructing mental health professionals on how to maximize the benefits of therapeutic journaling. For both experts in writing therapy and those who are just beginning to integrate writing into their sessions, *The Healing Power of Writing* will contribute significantly to your practice. The book is an unbelievably clear and concise guide, elucidating the power of writing in psychotherapy while simultaneously providing a plethora of writing ideas to the psychotherapist.

**Although primarily** targeted to psychotherapists, *The Healing Power of Writing* offers powerful tools for both clinicians and non-clinicians. We often forget that writing is a powerful therapeutic instrument and, when we do engage in writing, freeform

writing does not specifically target our needs. Borkin, in this book alone, offers over seventy writing practices for the reader to achieve creative and meaningful expression. No longer relying on freeform journaling alone, one can pick and choose which writing assignment will be most effective.

**Sample responses and** extracted dialogue from her sessions decorate each chapter, which enable a better understanding about the writing assignment's main objective. Borkin takes the reader step-by-step through

real life examples: from the initial assignment to the final analysis. Whether it is by journaling or writing letters, she provides the reader with the option to mix, match, and omit assignments.

**However, it is also** important to note that Borkin, by no means, is pushing the clinician to integrate writing into his or her practice. In this chapter, she focuses on specific situations in which writing as a therapeutic tool is not advised. Moreover, Borkin emphasizes that writing is an adjunct to psychotherapy and therefore should not be used as a substitute. The clinician should be, first and foremost, a clinician, using writing as a point of clarification rather than his or her main form of diagnosis.

**Sue Roh** is currently an undergraduate third-year at the Columbia University in the City of New York with a double major in psychology and mathematics. Beyond her course of study, she is interested in international development and founded Save Mae, a non-profit organization that provides medication to the Mae Ra Ma Luang Refugee Camp located along the Myanmar-Thailand border.