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# Digging Deep Interview: What Are The Benefits?

## Writing Can Be Therapeutic

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Digging Deep -- Sherri Brisson. Sherri Brisson

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I interviewed Sherri Brisson, one of the co-authors of *Digging Deep*. I believe this is a really great book that can assist a pre or young adolescent in expressing feelings about their asthma. Take a look at the questions I had for Sherri and her really inciteful answers.

**What benefits might a child with asthma or other chronic illness get from going through your journal “Digging Deep?” Why is writing therapeutic? Is this different from talking about illness?**

Chronic illnesses are on the rise and children are surviving life-threatening illness longer than ever before.

But often what is missing in their care is the ongoing emotional support they need to deal with the complexities of their situations. Too many kids and teens are holding back their feelings about being ill, and this is not helping their recovery.

Writing is therapeutic because it allows children and teens to deal with the reality of their situations and build resilience, so they can heal emotionally as well as physically.

Expressing feelings is healthy. There are even clinical studies that show that journaling, the actual process of writing down thoughts, is good for your health. *Digging Deep* teaches these young people not only to accept their own emotions but also to express them to others who are there to help.

The writing prompts in *Digging Deep* are so relevant that just reading them is therapeutic. Seeing their issues laid out in a book helps young journal writers feel heard and understood.

They realize what they are wondering and worrying about is probably very similar to those things other kids with illness wonder and worry about. They feel less alone.

In starting to write, a child or teen may not even know how they feel or what is troubling them. As they work through the exercises, they often discover they are at a different place emotionally in the end—there may be a sense of resolution, a greater understanding, a place of peace.

Talking about illness is very therapeutic as well, but often it is just too difficult for both patients and their families to talk directly about feelings and issues. Too much is left unsaid. By writing in a journal, these young people may begin to express thoughts and feelings they wouldn't dare express verbally, or may not even know how.

Understanding how one feels is the first step in being able to better communicate one's needs, and have these needs met. In this way, our journal truly becomes a tool for communication. In their own time, young people may want to share their entries, but even if not, the skills they gain in being able to better express and understand their feelings by writing them out, will allow them to understand and communicate their needs better

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Choosing when and how to write is very empowering because the young person is in control. This is important because often when kids are sick, they feel very out of control.

The stories we tell about our experiences are important and they evolve over time. Finding meaning in one's personal experience is a critical step to emotional recovery

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