

~ *Going on After Trauma* ~

In life there are times when we feel that there will be  
no end to the pain we endure.

After suffering emotional hurt and fear for so long,  
it is easy to despair.

Yet many find it most difficult to face life after the  
crisis has passed.

It may be because our trust in God, in others or  
in ourselves has been broken.

To resolve this issue of trust we must be willing to  
look at what role we played.

So often we have allowed things to happen that  
we needed to stop.

By seeing the part we played in the problem,  
we can feel less a victim.

It is helpful to see that at any time we can choose  
to act in a loving way.

This does not mean that we allow another to act  
in an abusive manner.

We cannot change anyone, but we can choose to  
act assertively and wisely.

Anxiety can rob us of any happiness we find today  
by living in fear of the future.

Worry never helps us to change the future —  
it only destroys our peace of mind.

Thoughtful planning may help avert future problems,  
but worry just keeps us spinning our wheels.

At other times we obsess about past hurtful  
events we cannot change.

We can learn from the past and accept the fact  
we can never change it.

Acceptance is the key for discovering peace of mind  
and changing how we live.

Acceptance is realizing we cannot control the future  
or change a single thing that is past.

With acceptance we understand we can handle  
any crisis with dignity.

Acceptance, trust, and hope are the virtues that  
allow us to go on after the trauma.

Journal to Grow and Heal

1. Write about how some trauma or painful experience has had a negative impact on your life.
2. How have you been affected by the experience long after it was over?
3. Write about steps you feel you might take to help you heal from or overcome a past painful event.

*~ Letting Go ~*

One of the most difficult tasks in life  
is letting go.  
As long as we're tied to the dock  
we cannot sail.  
It is sad to see persons so tied  
to the past,  
They are unable to enjoy the present  
or relish tomorrow.  
Certainly life offers us many opportunities  
for letting go.  
To take our first step we must  
courageously let go.  
We cannot enter kindergarten without  
leaving home.  
To become more independent we must  
venture from our family.  
Letting go of one we love is a most  
difficult challenge.  
Sometimes death takes away one  
we dearly love.  
Loss may also come from relocation,  
separation and divorce.  
Letting go requires time and work  
to heal our hurt,  
But refusing to let go is unwise and  
approaches insanity.  
We need to accept letting go is a difficult,  
but a most necessary step.

Journal to Grow and Heal

1. Write about worries or painful memories that you need to let go of to be happier and at peace.
2. Write about something that you let go of that made you feel better.
3. Write about someone you know who experiences suffering because they refuse to let go.

~ *Choose Life* ~

My dear friend, I know you hear  
death calling —  
Telling you that it is no longer  
worth going on.  
It lies to you and whispers that  
you're worthless —  
And have nothing of value to  
give this world.

You have shared your heart and  
pain with me,  
And I understand how deeply  
hurt you are.  
If it were not for your big heart and  
exceeding sensitivity,  
Death would not so easily deceive  
and snare you.

Again and again death tells you  
vicious lies like —  
No one cares or would be heartbroken  
if you were to die.  
I fear in your despair and confusion  
you may believe  
This sad delusion that deeply hurts  
and is so untrue.

In the darkness of your crippling  
depression,  
It is quite hard for you to  
clearly see.  
I ask for my sake that you  
please wait  
For dawn's light to show  
a better way.

Although you believe your heart to be  
broken beyond repair,  
I can see it has just been stretched  
to make room for healing.  
At the light of day you may see  
things differently,  
And realize you have more to learn  
and more to give.

Trust me to help you through  
the night.  
Hold my hand and together  
we will cry.  
Death does not wish you to  
discover  
How precious you truly are  
to others.

Choose life and bravely confront  
death's lies,  
And in so doing you will find hope  
to help you go on.  
Believe in the healing power  
of love,  
And then you will embrace the  
strength you need.

You alone have a special  
gift to share.  
Imagine in your mind your  
own unique purpose.  
Open your stretched heart to love's  
healing power,  
And lean on me, my friend, for as  
long as you need.

Journal to Grow and Heal

1. Write briefly about one of the darkest hours you have experienced in your life.
2. Did the thought of suicide raise its ugly head? What helped you work through this difficult time?
3. Write about something you feel could be done to help a person when they feel suicidal.

*~ Change is a Part of Life ~*

All too often it is tempting to crawl into a hole  
and refuse to change,  
But we do not have the choice to change whether  
we like it or not.  
Change is as much a part of our existence as  
is breathing air.  
The tide comes and goes and the earth spins  
on its axis  
Bringing both the light of day and the  
darkness of night.  
We can only choose how we are to meet  
change when it comes.  
We can bury our head in the sand or complain  
about things not being the same.  
I believe it is wise to meet change with an  
open mind and caution.  
It is often helpful to see the true intentions  
underlying the change  
Before one jumps quickly to one side of  
the fence or the other.  
We cannot stop change or control others,  
but we can respond wisely.  
I hope that in looking back when my life  
nears completion,  
I see for the most part I faced change with  
courage and dignity.

## Journal to Grow and Heal

1. Write briefly about your typical response to change.
2. How would you like to respond to change differently?
3. Write down some simple things you can do to respond to change in a positive way.

~ *On Angel's Wings* ~

If I could send a letter on angel's wings  
To heaven above where angels sing,  
I would tell you how much you're missed,  
And I would send my love with a kiss.

Let me tell you from the depth of my heart  
How sad and hurt I felt when you did part.  
At first I believed I would never again smile,  
For without you nothing seemed worthwhile.

At times tears filled my weeping eyes,  
As I struggled to tell reality from lies.  
Ever so slowly the time did pass  
And one day I did again smile at last.

Initially I felt so guilty for just having fun,  
For simply enjoying the warmth of the sun.  
But the darkness of night gives way to dawn,  
And I know deep down you want me to go on.

Gradually with the passing of time I find  
The will to live and peace of mind.  
Sweet memories of loving times shared  
Would my letter sent on angel's wings bear.

Letting you know I must and I will go on  
Even though a precious part of my life is gone.  
Comfort I find knowing you'll always be a part  
Of my life for your love lives on in my heart.

Journal to Grow and Heal

1. Write about how you experienced grief when someone you loved died.
2. What emotions did you feel? Were you angry, sad, devastated, accepting, fearful, or guilty?
3. Write about what helped you to gradually heal and find the strength to continue on with your life.