

# The Sampler

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## Processing Tough Emotions Using Expressive Writing

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Have you ever found yourself ruminating about a negative interaction or a tough situation and can't figure out how to stop thinking about it? This type of thinking can keep us up at night, distract us from our work or family life, and cause us to be in a constant state of stress. Instead of holding it in and letting frustration, disappointment, anger, or any other emotion build up, many people find that writing in a journal can help them deal with and process their emotions.

Although there are many ways to journal, research has shown that a specific type of journaling, called expressive writing, can have a variety of benefits to our personal well-being and our relationships. The practice of expressive writing generally involves spending 15-20 minutes a day for 3-5 consecutive days writing about one's deepest feelings and emotions related to an event or interaction they have had. Individuals may write about the same issue or focus on a different topic each day.



**Benefits of Expressive Writing**

When it comes to enhancing well-being, expressive writing has been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, improve immune functioning, reduce physical stress, and enhance cognitive functioning. It has also been suggested that expressive writing can help reduce fear and anxiety through the process of labeling and identifying our feelings and thoughts. Importantly, it can

help us gain a new perspective on a difficult situation.

Expressive writing can have positive effects on our relationships as well. In couple relationships, when one or both partners write expressively about their relationship, they are

more likely to use positive emotion words in their interactions with each other, which in turn increases the positive interactions they have with each other. Expressive writing can also offer us an opportunity to put ourselves in another person's shoes and learn to understand and empathize with them, leading to stronger relationships. Writing in this way allows

us to organize our thoughts and create a story about what happened, which helps us process and find meaning in our interactions with others.

### How do you do it?

If you are ready to give expressive writing a try, set aside some time and have a set topic in mind. Do your best to relax, don't judge what you write, and keep writing for the entire 20 minutes without thinking about spelling, grammar, or writing in complete sentences. Do your best to stay focused on the experience, issue, or topic you have chosen to write about and concentrate on describing the emotions connected to it as opposed to describing the actual event.

Here are some additional tips to keep in mind:

- Identify and write about the benefits of the experience in addition to what was hard about it. For example, describe what you learned or are grateful for after having this experience.
- Explore how the experience may affect your decisions moving forward.
- If you are writing about an interaction you had with someone else, try writing about the experience from their perspective.
- Remember not to put yourself down for how you might have handled a situation. While it is important to identify areas where you can grow and improve, you should also recognize your strengths.

The next time you find yourself stuck thinking or worrying about the same experience or event, consider using expressive writing as a way to help you process your emotions around it and gain insight into what is at the heart of the issue. ☞

*~Caitlyn Rogers, Intern & Lisa Schainker, Extension Assistant Professor*

“Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.”

*~Winston Churchill*

## FRESH STRAWBERRY PIE

- 1 package strawberry gelatin
- 1 ½ cups water
- 1 quart strawberries, washed, capped, divided
- ⅓ cup sugar
- 1 ½ tablespoon cornstarch
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 1 (9-inch) pie shell, baked
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla

Dissolve gelatin in ⅔ cup boiling water; add ⅔ cup cold water; set aside. Slice strawberries into saucepan and crush (reserve 16 for garnishment). Mix sugar with cornstarch; add to crushed berries. Stir in lemon juice and salt. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture has thickened and is transparent. Stir in softened gelatin; cool. Cut remaining berries in half; gently fold into cooked mixture. Pour into pie shell; chill. Just before serving, whip the cream, sugar and vanilla. Spread over pie filling; top with whole berries. Yield: 6-8 servings.



## Family and Consumer Science Events

### *Home Buyer Education Virtual Classes*

◆ Saturday, July 17, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

These classes help prepare people for the home buying process. Topics that will be covered are: how much can you afford, mortgage loans, credit, shopping for a home, what to expect at closing and much more. Cost is \$30 per household for certificate or free if you only want education. Call 801-399-8207 to register.



### *Stretch Your Bucks Classes*

Zoom Classes  
Thursdays, July 1, 8 15, & 22  
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Learn to stretch you money with these free classes. You will learn how to budget, what your money personality is, and information on credit, investing, and much, much more. Call 801-399-8207 to register. Once you are registered, you will get an email with a link a few days before the class.



### *Food Preservation Course*

Face to face instruction with hands on labs is our Master Food Preservation series held July 12-16th at Roy High School, in Weber County. See page 5 for more details regarding this series. This series is five fun filled days (8am-2:30pm) of both lecture and lab experiences, with lots of sampling!

Hope to see you this summer for food preservation.

### *Upcoming Date Nights . . .*



### *Shooting for Par Date Night*

Friday, August 20, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
Davis Technical College, Kaysville  
\$25 per couple

Learn tips and traps of disc golf and healthy relationships at the same time in this fun outdoor date night. Cost includes two disks, refreshments, and prizes.



### *Marriage...Not so Impossible! Scavenger Hunt Date Night*

Friday, Sept. 10, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
Red Butte Gardens, Salt Lake City  
\$20 per couple

If you choose to accept, your mission is to work as a team to capture clues to healthy relationships while exploring the Red Butte Garden on this fun-filled scavenger hunt. Cost includes activity costs, refreshments, and prizes!

## Adult Financial Peer Pressure

Do you find yourself in awkward situations where as an adult, you realize you made unnecessary purchases based on peer pressure? It's a fact, that at times (perhaps out of fear of seeming rude, or 'tight', or unsupportive) we make financial choices that can significantly add up and sabotage our budget. Whether it is fund raising for your neighbors' sports team, supporting your friends essential oil business, or even a sales pitch, we find it difficult to express a hard financial 'no'. This is called peer pressure. Peer pressure is defined in the Cambridge Dictionary as "the pressure that you feel to behave in a certain way because your friends or people in your group expect it."



While not all peer pressure is a bad thing, it is good to be aware of when it may not be such a good thing, or when it ends in you feeling guilty for spending the way you did.

Here are a couple of tips that might help you navigate your way through adult financial peer pressure.

1. Have a game plan: When your friend asks you to support her child by buying Girl Scout cookies, have a plan. Maybe it is to set yourself a limit—only so many boxes, or even just one. Perhaps it is to put money aside each month for just those occasions when you are invited to a 'sales' party—kitchenware, jewelry, make-up, etc.
2. Be ready with an alternate solution that stays within your boundaries: Having boundaries (knowing your budget) is important in dealing with adult financial peer pressure. Don't be afraid to suggest an alternative to an expensive dinner out, or a less expensive activity. There may be others in the group that would appreciate a break from the more expensive options as well.
3. Buy time by deferring to 'later': Let your friends know that you will gladly consider the offer, and that you will build that into your budget for next

month. Be gracious and sincere, and then follow up by sticking to a dollar amount that is not impulsive. This puts you in control.

4. Know your needs, wants, and goals: This refers to knowing both your physical needs as well as your emotional needs. Understanding why you make the money choices you do will help keep peer pressure spending in check. Are there certain emotional triggers you may need to watch out for? The more defined your needs, wants, and goals are, the less likely you are to be influenced by others and what they are doing.
5. Know who it is that seems to put the most pressure on you, and 'why?': Why is that you find yourself 'spending alongside them'? What is the 'need' that is not being met? Are they really putting the pressure on you: are you putting it on yourself when you are around them for some reason?
6. Draft an honest response: There is nothing wrong with owning up to the fact that there are aspects of your budget you are trying to get in check, or that you are trying to pay down some debt, or that you are working on saving for that dream vacation. Most people will understand if you explain your frugality—not that you owe them an explanation in all cases.

Peer pressure to spend can come at us from many different angles and sources. Be aware when that might be happening and put a few of the above strategies in place early to avoid the moment altogether. Keep your focus with the end in mind, know your limit and your budget, and you will be able to avoid many financial mistakes caused by peer pressure. ☞

~Teresa Hunsaker

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/debtfreeguys/2019/03/31/what-you-need-to-overcome-peer-pressure-to-spend-money/?sh=4464e1d26956>

<https://www.1stsource.com/advice/personal/money-management/spending/article/how-peer-pressure-can-destroy-your-finances>

<https://www.realsimple.com/work-life/money/refuse-to-loan-money-overspending>

# MASTER FOOD PRESERVER

## WORKSHOP SERIES

Do you enjoy the art and science of food preservation and canning? Are you interested in updating your skills? If so, this training is just for you! It can be taken as a series or in parts by your topics of interest.



DOOR PRIZES  
AND FREEBIES!

You will learn the latest information on:

- Food safety in food preservation
- Prevention of food-borne illnesses
- Food storage and safety
- Canning basics
- Canning acidic foods
- Canning low-acidic foods: meats, vegetables, etc.
- Pickled and fermented foods
- Preserving jams and jellies
- Freezing foods
- Freeze drying
- Drying food products
- Canned pie fillings



### OGDEN, UTAH

July 12, 13, 14, 15 & 16 - 8:00 AM -2:30 PM

Roy High School FACS Kitchen  
2250 W. 4800 S., Roy, Utah

\$135 for the entire series

See full class schedule on the back or go to [www.extension.usu.edu/weber](http://www.extension.usu.edu/weber) and look under Home, Family, Food and & Finance. To register for the course, or for more information call 801-399-8207, or email [linda.black@usu.edu](mailto:linda.black@usu.edu).



**EXTENSION**   
**UtahStateUniversity**

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## Time to Retire

After 41+ years with USU Extension, it is time for me to move on to other endeavors. I have loved working with the wonderful people and families of Weber County, and will truly miss my associations with you. I am hoping that our paths cross in other aspects of my life here in the county, and hope to find new ways to be in your company.

I want to thank you for the support through the years! Your attendance at classes, conferences, workshops, and trainings all these years has been such a highlight of my career. I also loved working with your youth in 4-H, afterschool child care programs, and through so many youth-serving agencies here in the county.

Utah State University Extension has been good to me, is such a proactive research-based institution, and will always hold a place in my heart. I hope you will continue to look to USU Extension for your learning and enrichment. I count it a privilege to rub shoulders with you, and to be part of this great land grant institution.

I also want to express my personal appreciation to our Weber County Commissioners who have supported USU Extension through the years, and have given us insight and direction for our programming in the county, so that we might better serve the residents of this county through the expertise of our Extension faculty and staff. We couldn't do what we do without them.

We truly live in a great county, and am so grateful that this career allowed me to learn and grow from you, both here in the county and throughout the state. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your life for so many years! ☘

~Teresa Hunsaker

For those interested in stopping by to say "congratulations" to Teresa, there will be an Open House Thursday, August. 26, 2021 from 1-6 pm, at the USU Extension Office. 1181 North Fairgrounds Drive, Ogden, Utah.



# Create Better Health News Corner

## Make this Summer a “Berry” Good One

Has summer been dull so far? If the answer is yes, maybe it is time to add the brilliant colors and sweet flavors of berries into your life. You can't go wrong with bright red strawberries or dark juicy blackberries to get into the spirit of summer.

Berries are not only colorful, juicy, and sweet but they are filled with good nutrients. Berries are high in dietary fiber, antioxidants and vitamins; they are free of sodium, fat, and cholesterol; and they are low in calories. Dietary fiber helps keep the digestive tract running smoothly and may also play a part in the prevention of certain diseases and diabetes. The antioxidant found in berries, anthocyanin, is known to reduce the risk of cancer and diseases. Berries contain vitamins, including but not limited to vitamin C, and vitamin E, and minerals - all vital to good health. The capacity of fiber, antioxidants and vitamins to provide benefits depends on the type of berry but all berries promote health and help to prevent cancers and diseases.

Summer is a great time to add berries into your diet because berries are in season and plentiful, making them more affordable at the store and even more affordable if grown in your own garden. Add berries to yogurt or use them in a fruit crumble, homemade popsicles, smoothies, in cereal, in salads, and the list goes on. About 1 cup of berries is a good serving size for one day, but it is also important to eat a good variety of fruits daily.

The recipe for a “berry” good summer is easy! Eating more berries will add brilliant colors, sweet and juicy flavor, and good health to your summer. ☘

Jacquelyn Roberts, Former Dietetics Intern

## Fruit Crumble

### Filling:

7 ½ cups sliced fruit (berries, plums, peaches, apricots, apples, etc.)  
3 tablespoons sugar  
3 tablespoons whole flour  
3 tablespoons orange juice

### Topping:

1 ½ cups rolled oats  
¾ cup nuts, chopped  
½ cup brown sugar  
⅓ cup whole wheat flour  
¾ teaspoon cinnamon  
5 tablespoons canola oil

Lightly oil a 9 x 13-inch baking pan. Combine filling ingredients in a large bowl and pour into pan. In same bowl combine topping ingredients. Pour over fruit. Bake at 400° for 20-25 minutes or until bubbling and golden brown.



## Topical Blueberry Smoothie

1 can (8 oz.) crushed pineapple, drained  
1 medium banana, frozen  
1 cup milk  
1 cup frozen blueberries

Combine all ingredients in a blender. Cover and blend until thick and smooth. Serve immediately.  
Yield: 3 cups.

*Adapted from [www.dole.com](http://www.dole.com)*

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 1.800.221.5689 or visit online at <http://fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/coalition/map.htm>. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture's policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.