

Preparing for Our Phone Consultation



BY YVETTE E. MCDONALD, LCSW

The great pause.....

Are you starting to think different about your journey in life and how you'd like your present and future to be different and lighter than your past?

4 Ways to Prepare for Our Phone Consultation

Let's walk through our upcoming phone consultation together. Don't forget to have your pen and paper out while reading in order to make note of the things you would like to ask me.

Congrats on taking the first step to changing things! Every step toward change requires an additional dose of courage. It's both and exciting and nerve racking first step for some. For others it's long overdue and for others it's the bravest thing they ever did.

What ever brings you to this point in your journey, I'm excited to have been invited and I have tips to help you prepare for our phone consultation. I hope at the end of this I can give you that dose in order that you can look onto this next chapter of your life with anticipation of things to come as this is a wonderful chance to test drive what it would be like to work with a potential therapist and make sure it's a good fit. Read it over. Write down your questions. Catch your breath and let the adventure begin.

Come Ready To Spit Out Your Questions

A good therapist should welcome questions and their response style will help you decide if you think the therapist can help you. Ask the things that you are hesitant to ask. Are you worried that I'm going to judge you? Are you unsure about how I am going to be able to help your situation? Is there financial, scheduling or insurance questions you have? Ask! Please feel free to ask any questions and state specifically what you are looking to get out of counseling.



Come Ready To Answer Some Questions

I this won't be a time to go into a deep history of your issues, but it is a time to get a snapshot of what brings you to therapy in to make sure we will be a good fit together. Be ready to answer questions about what you want to get out of counseling, what you don't want to get out of counseling, and your goals for our time together. I will also be assessing your motivation for change as therapy is a commitment of your time, energy and resources. We may also clarify your fears and expectations of the process



Think about whether you like the therapist as a person.



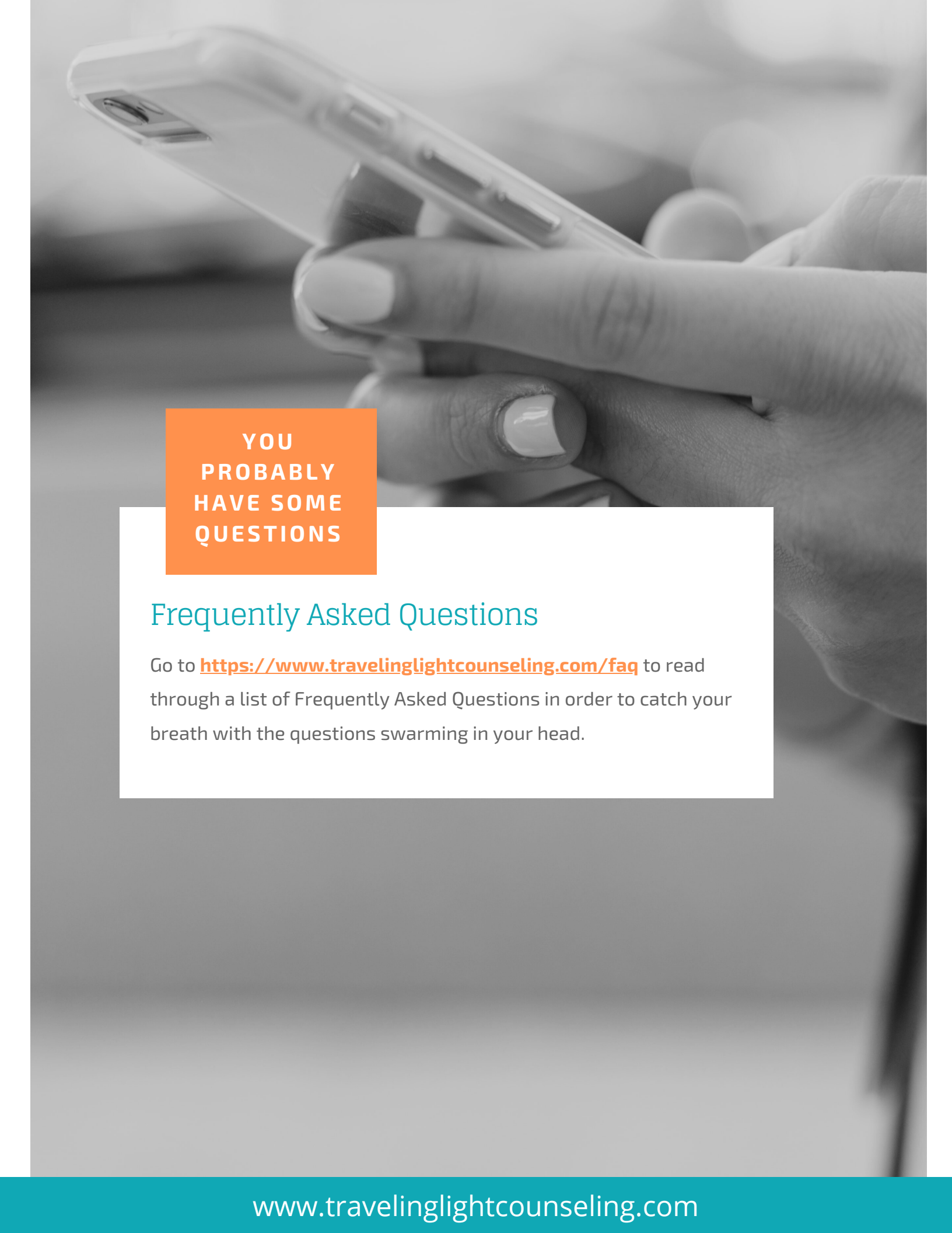
It's most important that you feel comfortable. It's most important that you feel comfortable with me. We should show that our relationship and how much you just genuinely like me as your therapist account for the majority of your progress in therapy. This is more important than my skills, my particular type of degree, etc. while it doesn't mean that these things aren't important, it does mean that your number one task is tuning in to your gut and seeing if I could be a good fit for you. We should show that our relationship and how much you just genuinely like me as your therapist account for the majority of your progress in therapy. This is more important than my skills, my particular type of degree, etc. while it doesn't mean that these things aren't important, it does mean that your number one task is tuning in to your gut and seeing if I could be a good fit for you.

Ask your therapist what to expect during the first session.

When you schedule the appointment my office is set up like a living room with couches and comfortable chairs. Your paperwork will be sent electronically. The paperwork will include consents, limits to confidentiality and fees for services, and perhaps a release to speak with other treatment professionals. Such as your primary care physician or psychiatrist. There will be a questionnaire you'll be asked about your presenting issue, which is the reason you are seeking therapy.



Humbling yourself and asking for help is the beginning part of the process. Above all, congratulate yourself on beginning the process of change and doing the work for both a brighter and lighter tomorrow, be it in the avenue of parenting, couples work, individual or family. You are working on healing and or growing, which will deeply and profoundly improve your life and positively influence those around you. Reframe your nervousness as excitement and weakness and strength because you are taking forward steps on the path to healing, wellness and achieving your best self personally. I look forward to helping you off load some of the weight you've been carrying as you reach out in your journey for help, guidance and perspective.



**YOU
PROBABLY
HAVE SOME
QUESTIONS**

Frequently Asked Questions

Go to <https://www.travelinglightcounseling.com/faq> to read through a list of Frequently Asked Questions in order to catch your breath with the questions swarming in your head.



Notes



You probably have some concerns about starting. Everyone does.


Welcome to the world of therapy and I am honored that you are considering me to come alongside your journey of healing, growth, change and transformation. You should also be proud of yourself for putting in the intentionality into finding a counselor that will be the best fit. I hope that I can provide you with some peace of mind as you prepare for your first conversation with me or if it turns out that we are not a good fit then perhaps I can provide some information for your journey.

Go to:
<https://www.travelinglightcounseling.com/post/starting-therapy-counseling>. to read about descriptions, processes, benefits and fears about therapy. Therapy unpacked.

A
DEPARTING
QUOTE
ABOUT
THERAPY.

"As the late psychotherapist famously said, "Before successful therapy it's the same damn thing over and over. After successful therapy, it's one damn thing after another." I know that therapy won't make all my problems disappear, prevent new one's from developing or insure that I will always act from a place of enlightenment. Therapist don't perform personality transplants, they just help to take the sharp edges off. A patient may come less become less reactive or critical, more open and able to let people in. In other words therapy is about understanding the self that you are. The part of getting to know yourself is to know yourself, to let go of the limiting stories you told yourself about who you are so that you aren't trapped by them, so you can live your life and not the story you've been telling yourself about your life. "

~Lori Gottlieb



REMEMBER WHY YOU STARTED

A JOURNAL



Date: _____

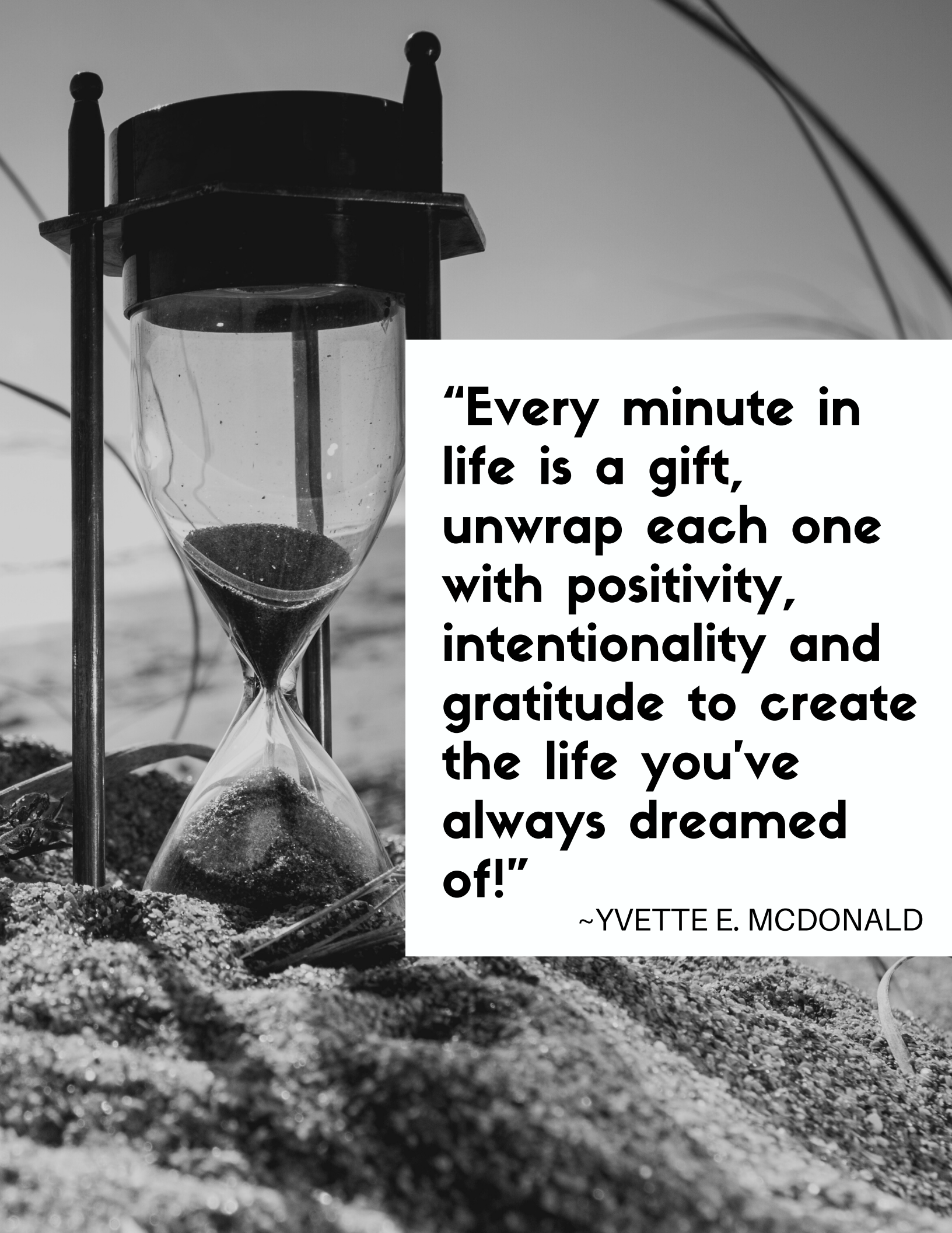
Journal Writing: An Exercise

Reflection and Realization

A journal allows you to freely express yourself without fear of disapproval or criticism. Not only is it a good outlet, but it is also a great therapy tool.

On this page, write Your Letter To Your Future Self

Identify a time period to write to, imagine what you would be like, and then start writing! Think about the kind of person you would like to be, what you would want to be doing, what you would have accomplished by then, and so on.



**“Every minute in
life is a gift,
unwrap each one
with positivity,
intentionality and
gratitude to create
the life you’ve
always dreamed
of!”**

~YVETTE E. MCDONALD

COPING WITH STRESS DURING COVID-19

*It's normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared, or angry.
Talking to people you trust can help.*

MAINTAIN A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

as best as you can with proper diet, adequate sleep and exercise, and social interaction with loved ones at home or online.

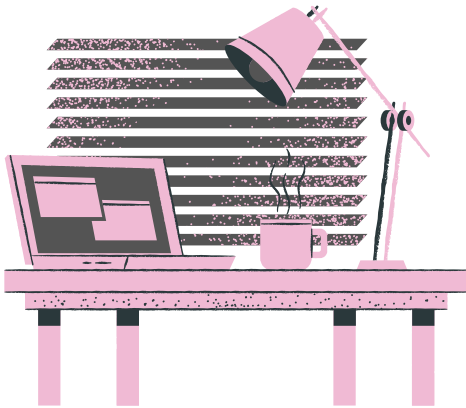
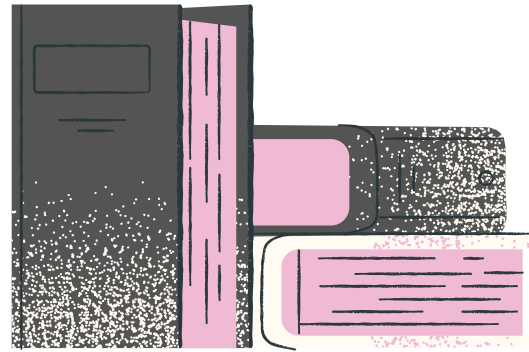


SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP

for physical and mental health needs instead of using smoking, alcohol, or drugs to cope.

GATHER FACTUAL INFORMATION

from credible sources to help you accurately determine your risk and take reasonable precautions.



AVOID BAD MEDIA

Lessen the time you and your family spend watching or listening to media coverage of news that you find upsetting.

MANAGE YOUR EMOTIONS

by using skills that you've used in the past when facing life's adversities.



