



# JOURNALING AND EXPRESSIVE WRITING



Living with PTSD, TBI, or a physical injury can be stressful on everyone in a military family. However, journaling and writing may reduce stress, lower blood pressure, decrease anxiety and depression, and increase positive mood and well-being. Studies also show that students may improve grade point average, memory, and writing skills through journaling. Journaling and writing can also improve emotional intelligence in many ways. Use these research-proven writing techniques with your military child:

## Expressive Writing

Writing personal and emotional thoughts without worrying about punctuation or grammar.

*Ask your military child to spend 10-20 minutes writing about the hardest thing they have gone through. Repeat this activity once a week for a month.*

## Journaling

Recording personal experiences and thoughts regularly; another form of expressive writing.

*The Imagine Project, Inc. offers free downloadable journals by age group: kindergarten, children, teenagers, and adults.*

### [The Imagine Project Journals](#)

## Gratitude Journal

Writing down things you are grateful for.

*Invite your military child to write down the things they are grateful for once a week or just three things each day. Write them individually or together.*

## Best Possible Self

Envisioning and writing a realistic version of your best possible self in the future.

*Choose a future timeline: 1, 5, 10, 20, 50 years from now. Tell your military child to imagine the best possible self they could be at that time. Take about 5-10 minutes.*



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