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**Hanson, Haley A. *Journaling as a Workplace Wellness Program***

**Abstract**

Employee wellness programs are a tool that organizations can use to increase employee psychological well-being, lower absenteeism, and increase productivity (Kelloway & Day, 2005). The following study investigates journaling as a workplace wellness program. More specifically, it investigated the difference between journaling about negative versus positive events and its subsequent impact on job satisfaction and stress level change scores. The researcher hypothesized that there would be a significant difference between the positive and negative group in their job satisfaction and stress change scores. To investigate the hypothesis a true experimental design was utilized (N = 20) with a sample of non-instructional staff from a Midwestern University. Results from the study did not find a significant difference between positive and negative journaling groups and their change scores in job satisfaction and stress. A post-hoc analysis showed that the negative journaling group had a significant change in stress scores following the intervention.

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## **Chapter I: Introduction**

Stress is something that impacts everyone. Stress varies from person to person, and the causes of it vary as well. One study found that the three most common sources of stress were concerns for future of our nation, money and work (American Psychological Association, 2017). When stress goes unmanaged it can lead to severe health problems such as high blood pressure, depression, coronary disease and chronic fatigue (Colligan & Higgins, 2005). One of the top sources of stress that is commonly studied is workplace stress. Recent research has found that not only is work a contributor of stress, but work can also be used as a resource to manage stress (Kelloway & Day, 2005). Today companies are investing in employee wellness programs that aim to reduce stress and increase overall employee health. Employee wellness programs have been shown to increase psychological well-being, which in turn leads to greater productivity and lower absenteeism (Donald, Taylor, Johnson, Cartwright, & Robertson, 2005). Organizations are able to offer support to their employees by incorporating wellness programs into their organizational culture.

### **Problems in Workplaces Due to Stress**

Work is one of the top stressors that people identify (American Psychological Association, 2017). When stress goes unmanaged it can be detrimental to an organization by leading to low morale, hostility, conflict, decreased productivity and absenteeism (Colligan & Higgins, 2005). When employers invest in wellness programs, their return on investment (ROI) has been proven to be high. One study found that wellness programs can decrease medical costs by \$3.27 and absenteeism costs by \$2.73 for every dollar spent (Baicker, Cutler, & Song, 2010). Although the upfront cost of wellness programs may be expensive, the overall benefits and cost savings demonstrates that they are a vital tool in which organizations can invest.



## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to test a specific wellness intervention and its ability to reduce stress and increase job satisfaction. Journaling will be the intervention utilized. One of the most common forms of journaling is emotional expression. When journaling is used as a form of emotional expression, the outcomes include increased health, psychological well-being, physiological functioning, and general functioning (Smyth, 1998). One of the more uncommon ways journaling has been used is in workplace settings. One study found that when employees participated in journaling for one week, they had reduced levels of stress and increased job satisfaction (Alford, Malouff, & Osland, 2005). With the majority of the research into journaling being in clinical settings, more information is needed on the impact of journaling in the workplace and its effectiveness on reducing stress and increasing job satisfaction.

## **Assumptions**

An assumption of this study is that participants that completed the pre and post measure did the journaling exercise during the week. Due to privacy reasons, the journals were not collected from participants. Participants were asked to identify how many times they journaled throughout the week in the post intervention measure. Since journals were not collected, it is assumed that the self-reports given by participants on how many times they journaled were accurate and honest.

## **Hypotheses**

This study investigated the impact of journaling on job satisfaction and stress. The first hypothesis is that there will be a significant difference between the negative and positive journaling groups in their change in stress levels (i.e. stress change score) from pre to post intervention. The second hypothesis is that there will be a significant difference between the

negative and positive journaling groups in their change in job satisfaction levels (i.e. job satisfaction change score) from pre to post intervention.

## **Chapter II: Literature Review**

The current study will focus on journaling as a way of reducing workplace stress. More specifically, this research will compare positive vs. negative journaling. The topics covered in this literature review were determined to be valuable information to better understand the current study. The literature review will examine employee wellness programs, workplace stress, stress management workplace interventions, and journaling stress management interventions/therapies.

### **Employee Wellness Programs**

Today there exists research on what constitutes a healthy workplace. A healthy workplace is one that provides resources, such as wellness programs, that are intended to combat stressors and promote employee health and well-being (Kelloway & Day, 2005). When a healthy workplace exists, it not only promotes employee health, but also addresses organizational outcomes (Grawitch & Kohler, 2007). Such organizational outcomes include absenteeism, workplace injuries, health care costs, higher job satisfaction, and lower turnover (Gebhardt & Crump, 1990; Ott-holland et al., 2017).

One way to create a healthy workplace is by incorporating employee wellness programs into the organization. Employee wellness programs benefit the employee and the organization by increasing psychological well-being, which in turn leads to greater productivity and lower absenteeism (Donald et al., 2005). An employee wellness program is sponsored by the organization to support their employees as they adopt healthy behaviors that will benefit their personal life (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010).

An additional reason for employee wellness programs is to contain organization health care costs. These programs are intended to be cost saving methods for an organization in reducing healthcare costs and re-structuring the healthcare system (Gebhardt & Crump, 1990).

Although the initial upfront cost of a wellness program may seem prohibitive, one article found that employee wellness programs decrease medical costs by \$3.27 and absenteeism costs by \$2.73 for every dollar spent (Baicker, Cutler, & Song, 2010). Based on these numbers it can be inferred that wellness programs decrease an organization's healthcare expenses.

Employee wellness programs are aimed at improving employee well-being. These wellness programs can target various facets of the employee's life such as stress, diet, exercise, anxiety and depression. The area of employee wellness this research paper will investigate is stress.

## **Stress**

According to the American Psychological Association, stress is one's natural reaction to a short-lived or long-lasting situation. It becomes dangerous when it impacts one's ability to live their normal life (2017). The short-lived stress one experiences is known as acute stress. Acute stress can cause physiological issues such as headaches, fatigue, increased blood pressure and heart rate, and inability to concentrate (Zimbardo et al., 2003). Long-lasting stress one experiences is known as chronic stress. This type of stress can be dangerous to one's health. Chronic stress can lead to poor health and illness, such as high blood pressure, depression, coronary disease and chronic fatigue (Colligan & Higgins, 2005). The longer one experiences chronic stress, the more damage it does to their body (Krantz, Thorn & Kiecolt-Glaser, 2006). In August 2017, the Stress in America survey was conducted by the American Psychological Association. It investigated the relationship American's have with stress. From this survey the top three sources of stress were future of our nation, money and work (American Psychological Association, 2017). Over the last decade of the survey being administered, money and work have consistently been at the top of the list.

Today more Americans feel that there is an increase of on-the-job stress than people did a generation ago (Milligan, 2016). A recent literature review by Katherine M. Richardson (2017) found that new challenges that organizations are facing are technostress/telepressure, multigenerational workforce, and social media. Additional research needs to be done on these technology related stressors as they are becoming increasingly common organizational issues (Richardson, 2017). As organizations are changing, there is limited research on which stress management interventions are effective at combating the new issues that are arising. This paper will investigate journaling as a stress management intervention and its impact on reducing workplace stress.

**Perceived stress.** How stress impacts someone is not only based upon the amount of stress that person experiences, but also how the stress is perceived. A study by Keller et al. (2012) investigated the relationship between perceived stress, the perceived impact of stress on health, and premature mortality. To do this, researchers used the 1998 National Health Interview Survey which was conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics. The survey asked participants to report amount of stress experienced, perceptions of how stress affects health, health status, and psychological distress. The survey was also linked to mortality rates for participants using the National Death Index (Keller et al., 2012). Results from the study found that when participants reported both a high amount of stress and perceived that stress affects health, they had an increased risk of premature death by 43% (Keller et al., 2012). Although no causal relationship can be concluded from this finding, it is still an important one of which to be aware.

The amount of stress one experiences along with how they perceive it could have a critical impact on one's health. To minimize this potential threat, individuals should seek to

reduce the stress in their life or alter how they perceive it. One such source of stress that will be the focus of the current research is work.

**Workplace stress.** As previously discussed, one of the top sources of stress identified by Americans is work (American Psychological Association, 2017). Colligan and Higgins wrote an article on the etiology and consequences of workplace stress based on current literature (2005). They found that when workplace stress is prevalent in an organization, it can impact psychological, physiological and financial costs for the organization and the employee. Workplace stress can also lead to low morale, hostility, conflict, decreased productivity and absenteeism (Colligan & Higgins, 2005). Colligan and Higgins identify three ways in which managers can help to alleviate workplace stress. They include altering the work environment, helping employees improve their relationship with the environment by providing services (i.e. stress management interventions, meditation techniques), and help the employee develop a strategy to improve their relationship with work by identifying the stressful relationships (Colligan & Higgins, 2005). By providing employees with the tools needed to handle the workplace stress, Colligan & Higgins stated that it in turn will have a positive impact on the employee and the organization, such as increased productivity and workplace dynamics (2005).

To understand the relationship between stress, health, organizational outcomes, and how they impact a healthy workplace, Kelloway and Day developed the *Healthy Workplace Model* (2005). This model identifies factors that contribute to a healthy workplace, along with the outcomes of a healthy workplace (Figure 1). This model goes beyond the individual to include both organizational and societal outcomes. The model is viewed as a holistic approach to the development of a healthy workplace.

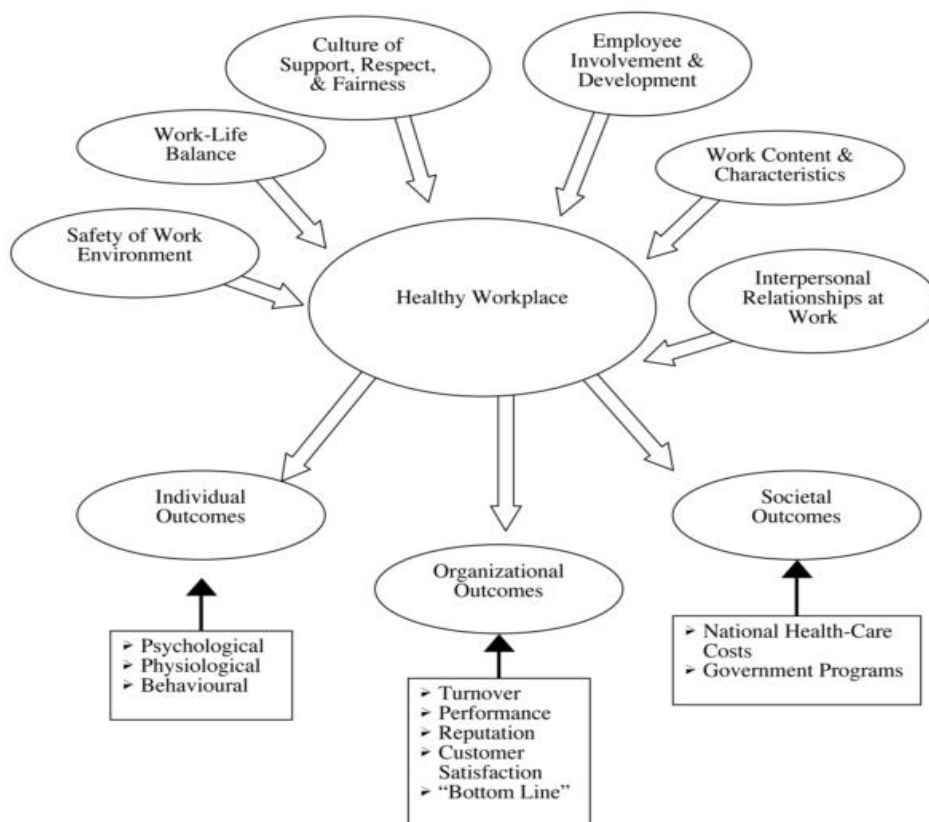


Figure 1. Healthy workplace model.

The components that contribute to a healthy workplace can be viewed as not only a stressor, but also a moderator (Kelloway & Day, 2005). For example, the model identifies interpersonal relationships at work as a contributor to a healthy workplace. If it is contributing as a stressor, this could be that there is an unhealthy relationship that exists at work. If it is contributing as a moderator, it could be that there is a relationship at work that is providing support which alleviates workplace stress. The *Healthy Workplace Model* is a tool showing that work may cause stress, but work can also be used as a resource to manage stress.

To understand how work-related stress impacts well-being, Edwards, Cockerton, and Guppy conducted a study looking into how work and non-work-related stressors impacted general well-being (2007). Participants were given questionnaires to be completed over two-

time periods, with approximately three months between the two-time points. Questionnaires measured work-related stress, non-work stress, work-related mental health, non-work mental health, and general well-being. Results from this study found that both work and non-work stress had a significant negative relationship with work and non-work mental health (each with a  $p < .01$ ). The strongest relationship found in the study was between work-related stress and general well-being ( $p < .01$ ). General well-being was measured using items to detect minor mental health disorders. Results showed that as work-related stress went down, the level of minor mental health problems went down as well (Edwards, Cockerton, & Guppy, 2007). These findings add to previous research on how work-related stress impacts individuals. It demonstrates the spillover effect, which is that work stress influences both non-work and general well-being and vice-versa. Based on these findings, continued development of stress management interventions would prove beneficial at improving general well-being of employees.

### **Workplace Stress Management Interventions**

Workplace stress management interventions (SMIs) are programs/techniques aimed at helping individuals manage stress. There are two main foci of workplace SMI: organizational and individual.

Organizational focused SMIs aim to reduce stress on employees by making changes at the level of the organization (i.e. job redesign, decreasing role ambiguity. Individual focused SMIs attempt to reduce stress by focusing on interventions that impact the individual directly. There are many individual centered approaches, with some examples cognitive behavioral therapy, exercise, meditation, journaling or time management (Richardson & Rothstein, 2008).



A meta-analysis, conducted by Richardson and Rothstein on studies of individual and organizational focused workplace SMI, found that the two most common techniques are cognitive-behavior therapy and relaxation (2008). Cognitive-behavioral therapy consists of employees identifying the role of their thoughts and emotions when dealing with stress. From there the employee works to modify those thoughts and responses to stressful situations. Relaxation consists of the employee employees reducing their adverse response to stress by having a physical and mental state that is opposite of stress (i.e. calm).

It was found that both cognitive-behavioral and relaxation approaches had significant effect sizes ( $d = 1.164$ ,  $d = .497$ , respectively) (Richardson & Rothstein, 2008). Further, Richardson and Rothstein also found an overall significant effect across all studies they reviewed ( $d = .526$ ). This illustrates that overall, both the individual and organizational focused workplace stress management techniques are effective. Results also found that of the stress management techniques, the two with the highest effect sizes were cognitive-behavior therapy and alternative techniques ( $d = 1.164$ ,  $d = .91$ , respectively). Alternative techniques were interventions that didn't fit into cognitive-behavioral and relaxation techniques (Richardson & Rothstein, 2008), such as journaling and education seminars. Therefore, most of the studies in this category were dissimilar in their techniques and this finding should be viewed with caution. An additional limitation of the meta-analysis findings is that the studies used varying outcome measures, so it is difficult to generalize findings on any specific outcome of interest to other populations. Yet overall, results from this review found that both individual and organizational SMI's have a positive impact on employees and therefore should have continued use. One workplace SMI that is of interest to this study is journaling.

## **Journaling**

Journaling is one specific stress management intervention used in the workplace. Journaling can serve various purposes from self-expression, to therapy or even as a tool for reflective practice. When journaling is used as a form of reflective practice, it allows the author to gain better meaning and understanding from events and emotions (Boud, 2001). For journaling to be of value to the participant, it needs to be free of judgement and evaluation from others. Those who partake in journaling need it to be a safe space for their ideas in order for the greatest and most meaningful reflection to occur (Boud, 2001). Journaling is also used in therapy and is considered a less structured activity that allows the patient to have freedom in their emotional expression. Journaling can be a useful tool when working with patients who have difficulty with face-to-face interactions (Kerner & Fitzpatrick, 2007). The versatility of journaling makes it a useful stress management intervention for individuals. It can be tailored to fit the needs of the individual by developing a specific structure for it, or by keeping it unstructured. Journaling is an effective strategy for organizations in that it is flexible to meet their needs and is inexpensive. The tools and resources needed for journaling are minimal, which makes it an appealing workplace stress management intervention for organizations.

One study on journaling in the workplace was conducted by Alford, Malouff, and Osland, (2005). It investigated journaling as a stress management intervention for child protective service officers. Before beginning the intervention, participants were asked to fill out a General Health Questionnaire-12, Positive Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS), and Job in General Scale (JIG). Once questionnaires were completed, participants in the intervention group were to journal for 15 to 20 minutes for three consecutive days about their recent stresses, emotions and related thoughts and plans. Once completed, they again filled out the questionnaires that were

completed before the intervention. The control group also filled out the questionnaires twice but did not do any form of journaling. A total of 61 people participated, with 31 participants in the intervention group and 30 participants in the control group.

Results from this study found that participants in the journaling intervention had a decrease in psychological distress ( $p = .003$ ) and an increase in job satisfaction ( $p = .002$ ) one week after the intervention. The study did not find any significant changes in the PANAS scale, which measured positive and negative affect. Overall findings from this study illustrate that a workplace journaling intervention had a positive impact on those who participated in it. Unfortunately, other than the above study, currently there is limited research on journaling as a workplace stress management intervention. Instead, much of the research on journaling is in therapy settings. Due to this, the remaining studies will investigate journaling in settings outside of the workplace.

A study conducted by Krista K. Fritson investigated the impact of journaling on college student's self-efficacy and locus of control (1993). Students were randomly assigned to one of two groups: a cognitive-behavioral journaling approach and a non-cognitive-behavioral journaling approach. The cognitive-behavioral approach received a 10-minute weekly discussion on cognitive-behavioral strategies as well as the journaling assignment. The non-cognitive-behavioral group only received the same journaling assignment without the discussion. The intervention lasted an academic semester at a university. Results showed that both forms of journaling had a significant positive impact on self-efficacy ( $p < .001$ ) from the beginning of the year to the mid-term (Fritson, 1993). These findings suggest that journaling in either of these forms will have a positive impact on the participant. It is important to note there was no true control group in this study. Therefore, the results should be viewed with caution as it is difficult

to rule out extraneous variables (i.e. environment, instructor characteristics) being the cause for the change in self-efficacy. However, the results are still promising in showing the benefits of a journaling practice. The remainder of this paper will discuss a type of journaling called emotional expression. It is the style of journaling that will be used for the current research.

Emotional expression is one of the most common forms of journaling used in non-workplace settings. It involves the participant writing about stressful events and their emotional reactions to it. Emotional expression is a common practice for dealing with trauma victims and those who work in jobs that frequently encounter high-stress situations (i.e. police officers, doctors, nurses). Emotional expression can be considered a form of psychotherapy, where the individual is to disclose personal experiences (generally traumatic) and their emotional response to it (Pennebaker, 2013). Writing being viewed as a cathartic experience came from the assumption that not discussing traumatic events is a form of inhibition. When this type of inhibition occurs long-term, it produces a stressor with which the individual now has to cope (Pennebaker, 2013). From this assumption, Pennebaker theorized that if the person is to disclose what is causing them stress, it will benefit their well-being by removing the stressor (2013). One such way of doing this is through writing, more specifically emotional expression.

A literature review by Smyth investigated the effect sizes and outcomes associated with written emotional expression (1998). For studies to be included in this literature review they had to meet the following criteria:

- Contained an experimental written emotional manipulation
- The experimental group had to write about a traumatic experience, while the control group had to write about neutral topics
- Study had to include some sort of outcome measure of health

- The study had to contain enough information to calculate an effect size (Smyth, 1998)

Thirteen articles met the criteria and were included in the study. The overall effect size of the 13 studies was significant ( $d = .47, p < .0001$ ). Smyth stated that based on this finding and the inclusion criteria, it can be inferred that written emotional expression tasks lead to positive outcomes (1998). These outcomes included increased health, psychological well-being, physiological functioning, and general functioning (Smyth, 1998). Findings from this literature review show the promising benefits that journaling has on individuals.

Much of the research into journaling focuses on writing about a negative emotion/event or stressor. A study conducted by Burton and King investigated if writing about positive experiences lead to the same health benefits as writing about negative events (2003). Participants were undergraduate students assigned to one of two groups: a control group writing about mundane topics, or the intensely positive emotion (IPEs) group that was receiving the intervention. They were instructed to write for three consecutive days for 20 minutes each day. They also took a mood questionnaire at each session. The intervention used instructions developed by Maslow in 1971. The intervention group was to write about the most wonderful experience in their life. They were to picture themselves at that moment and to discuss their feelings and emotions associated with it (Burton & King, 2004). Results from this study found that the IPE scored significantly higher in positive affect immediately following the writing compared to the control group one. It was also found that participants in the intervention group had significantly lower medical visits compared to the control group, over the three months following the intervention (Burton & King, 2004).

As of today, there are no studies comparing if there is a significant difference when participants journal about negative versus positive events/topics. The current research will

investigate if there is a difference between journaling about negative versus positive workplace experiences on the participants levels of stress and job satisfaction.

### **Summary**

The literature review provided investigated wellness programs, workplace stress, stress management interventions, and journaling. Methods for the current study are based on the research by Alford et al. (2005), and Burton and King (2003). With the limited research into positive emotional journaling, the researcher determined it to be useful to include two intervention groups in the proposed study: positive journaling and negative journaling. Based on the literature review, the researcher has developed the following hypotheses to occur one week after the intervention:

- Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant difference between the negative and positive journaling groups in their change in stress levels (i.e. stress change score) from pre to post intervention.
- Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant difference between the negative and positive journaling groups in their change in job satisfaction levels (i.e. job satisfaction change score) from pre to post intervention.

### **Chapter III: Methodology**

The purpose of this study was to see if there was a difference between journaling about positive or negative workplace experiences in alleviating stress and increasing job satisfaction. The study replicated and extended the studies of Burton and King (2003), along with Alford et al. (2005).

#### **Subject Selection and Description**

Participants for the intervention were full-time staff at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. Instructional staff at the university were not be used in this study. Student workers were excluded from the study. Of the 688 staff members that were invited to participate, 41 completed the pre-survey measure. Of the 41 that completed the pre-survey measure, 25 completed the post survey measure as well. This yielded the total number of participants to  $n = 25$ . Of the 25 participants, 24 were female and 1 was male. All 25 participants identified as White, with one participant also identifying as Hispanic. Participants time working for the University ranged from less than one year to over 21 years.

#### **Procedures**

Faculty contact information was requested from the office of planning, assessment, research and quality (PARQ) for recruitment. Non-instructional staff at the university were sent an email asking for their participation in the study (Appendix A). Initial contact email directed participants to click on the survey link if they wished to participate. Once the pre-survey was completed, the journaling prompt was sent to the participant. Participants were instructed that they can keep their journal after completing the study in the initial contact email. Implied consent was given at the beginning of the pre-intervention materials, with participants indicating their consent by continuing to fill out the pre-intervention measures.

Participants were randomly assigned to either the negative or positive journaling groups. See Appendix B. If participants consented to participate in the study, they were instructed to complete pre-intervention measures. Half-way through the intervention, participants were sent a reminder email to continue to journal (Appendix C). Following the intervention, participants were instructed to complete post-intervention measures (Appendix D). Once all measures were completed, participants were thanked for their time. Participants were then given the opportunity to be added to a raffle for a gift card for their participation. The online survey that participants were sent to for the raffle was kept separate from the intervention surveys (Appendix E).

### **Intervention**

The negative journaling prompt instructed participants to write about recent stresses, emotions, and related thoughts and plans during their intervention, while the positive journaling prompt instructed participants to write about recent successes, emotions, and related thoughts and plans. Participants were to write in their journal for 3 consecutive days, for 15-20 minutes each day. A reminder email was sent to participants half way through the intervention week (Appendix C). Participants were informed that they had one week to complete the journaling. After completion of the intervention week, participants were sent an email (Appendix D) that instructed them to complete the post-intervention measure administration.

**Pre-intervention.** The General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12), Job in General Scale (JIG), and a demographic information measure were utilized in this study.

**Post intervention.** Measures used in the post intervention were the GHQ-12, JIG and a brief overall experience measure that was developed specifically for the purpose of this study.



## Measures

Measures used in this study assessed participants' impact of stress and job satisfaction. Specific measures employed were the General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12) and the Job in General Scale (JIG). Also used was the Overall Experience measure.

**Stress.** The General Health Questionnaire-12 is a twelve item measure (GHQ-12; Goldberg, 1992; Appendix F) frequently used in published studies to measure psychological distress (Alford et al., 2005). Each item is posed in a time frame of "over the last week", with participants answering using a 0-3 scale for each question. Scores range from 0 to 36, with positive worded items recoded so that a higher score indicates more distress. One study of general population working people found that for the GHQ-12, the cutoff point for detecting mental health disorders is 2/3 (Makowska et. al, 2002). This would be interpreted as a score that is equal to or greater than 24 signifies a participant with a mental health disorder.

Regarding reliability of the GHQ-12, a study found the internal consistency ranged between .82 to .90 over three participant groups, which consisted of employees at an engineering plant, 16 year old students that recently dropped out of school, and unemployed men (Banks et al., 1980). Regarding validity, one study compared the validity of the longer General Health Questionnaire-28 (GHQ-28) with the General Health Questionnaire-12 (Goldberg, 1997). Results from the study found that the smaller of the two tests (GHQ-12) was robust enough to measure distress and was recommended to be used over the longer versions. The study also tested the GHQ-12 in 15 cities worldwide and found an internal validity score of .88. More recent studies have further established validity of the 12-item measure (Lund et. al, 2015; Kashyap & Sigh, 2017). For example, a study conducted with an elderly Iranian population found that the content validity of the measure to be .92 (Namjoo et al. 2016).

**Job satisfaction.** The Job in General Scale (JIG; Appendix G) measures job satisfaction in working populations (Ironson, Smith, Brannick, Gibson, & et al, 1989). The scale consists of 18 items assessing one's feelings toward their work. Scores on the 18 items are summed, with a possible total score of 54 (Alford et al., 2005). Negative worded items were reverse coded so that a higher score indicated a higher level of satisfaction with one's job.

A study consisting of three heterogeneous samples found the convergent validity score to range from .66 to .80 when compared with four other scales measuring general job satisfaction (Ironson et al., 1989). One review compared 29 studies that used various job satisfaction instruments (van Saane, et. al., 2003). The JIG was found to have high internal consistency (.91) and the authors deemed it a strong scale for measuring job satisfaction. A study of normative data for the measure found that 50% of a population's score fell between 33 and 55 on the JIG, with a median score of 44 (Gillespie et al., 2016).

**Demographics.** The demographic information consisted of questions regarding participants' occupation, age, gender and ethnicity/race (Appendix H).

**Overall experience.** Participants were asked to identify how many times they journaled during the week and to identify about what topics they journaled by selecting all relevant topics from a given list, and an 'other' open-ended response option. Participants were then asked 5 Likert scale level of agreement (i.e. strongly disagree to strongly agree) items, assessing their perceptions and feelings about the process: *I felt this was a good use of my time, I learned something during the process, I will journal again following this study, I believe journaling is a useful tool for stress management, and I would recommend journaling to others.* Items on the Likert Scale were reverse coded so that a higher score indicates greater agreement. Lastly, if a

participant found they learned from the experience, they were asked to explain why via an open-ended item. (Appendix I).

### **Data Analysis Plan**

*Hypothesis 1:* There will be a significant difference between the negative and positive journaling groups in their change in stress levels (i.e. stress change score) from pre to post intervention.

*Hypothesis 2:* There will be a significant difference between the negative and positive journaling groups in their change in job satisfaction levels (i.e. job satisfaction change score) from pre to post intervention.

Both hypotheses were analyzed using an independent t-test. Prior to using the independent t-test, the assumptions were tested. Assumptions of the t-test include normal distribution, homogeneity of variance, interval level data, and scores are independent from one another. Both the assumption of interval data and scores being independent have been met due to study design and measures used. To test for normal distribution, a Kolmogorov-Smirnov was run. If a significant value was found, the distribution would not be normally distributed, and the t-test could no longer be used. To test for homogeneity of variance, the Levene's test was used. If a significant value was found for this test, there was no homogeneity of variance in the data and the t-test could not be used. If neither test was significant, the independent t-test could be used. If either test was significant, non-parametric tests would be used to analyze the data.

Also prior to using the t-tests, participants that identified journaling less than three times during the week were removed from the analyses. This was done to best ensure data integrity, specifically that the comparisons being done were only on participants who had the required dose of the journaling intervention (i.e. a minimum of 3 sessions).

To test hypothesis 1, the General Health Questionnaire-12 scale was used. Difference scores were created to assess the change in scores from pre to post test for each participant on the GHQ-12. Difference scores were calculated by taking participants' post measure score minus their pre-measure score. An independent t-test was used to assess for significant differences in mean difference scores between journaling groups. If a significant difference was found, the effect size (Cohen's D) was calculated to measure the magnitude of the effect between groups. To test hypothesis 2, the same data analysis procedure was used with the Job in General scale. A one tailed test was used to test both hypotheses, with a p-value of rejecting the null hypothesis  $p \leq .05$ . Familywise error rate for planned analyzes was .10. A two-tailed test was used as no previous research has indicated whether the positive or negative journaling will perform better than the other.

Journal entries were not analyzed in this study. For items on the Overall Experience measure, descriptive statistics were run for the quantitative questions to determine frequency of responses. A thematic analysis was done for the open-ended items. For a response to be considered a theme, it needed to appear at least 3 times in the data. Descriptive statistics were also calculated for the demographic data. Results were analyzed for all participants, as well as separately for the positive and negative journaling groups.

## Chapter IV: Results

The invitation to participate in the study was sent out to 688 non-instructional staff members at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, from which 41 staff members consented to being in the study and completed the pre-survey measure. This yielded an initial participation rate of 6%. Of the 41 participants, 21 were randomly assigned to the positive journaling group while 20 were assigned to the negative journaling group. Of the 41 respondents that completed the initial survey, 25 completed the post survey, of which 20 self-reported journaling at least 3 times. This yielded a total  $n = 20$ , for a final participation rate of 2.9%. Of the 20 participants, 9 were in the negative journaling condition and 11 were in the positive journaling condition

### Demographics

All but one participant identified their race to be white, with one participant identifying an ethnicity of Hispanic or Latino/a. Of the 20 participants, 19 were female and 1 was male. Participants identified the department they were part of at the university; a total of 13 different university departments were identified. Time participants have worked at the University ranged from less than 1 year to 21 years or more, with 1 to 5 years being the mode ( $M = 2.8$ ,  $SD = 1.2$ ).

### Stress Level Analysis

The General Health Questionnaire-12 was used to measure participants' distress levels. Table I lists the mean and standard deviations of the pre and post stress scores, along with the difference scores for both journaling conditions. Overall stress scores for both the positive and negative journaling groups were similar at the beginning of the intervention, indicating that participants were not suffering from a mental health disorder as they fell below the clinically diagnostic cut-off point (i.e. score of 20).

To test hypothesis 1, a t-test was used to compare the stress change scores across journaling group type. The Levene's test was significant ( $p = .03$ ), concluding that equal variances cannot be assumed. Data was normally distributed with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test found not significant ( $p = .2$ ). No significant difference was found between the negative and positive group in stress change scores from pre to post intervention,  $t(14.98) = .67, p = .51$ . Due to these findings, Hypothesis 1 is rejected as there is no significant difference in stress level change pre-post intervention between the negative and positive journaling groups.

Table 1

*Overall Stress Levels of the Positive and Negative Journaling Group from Pre to Post*

*Intervention*

<u>Journaling type</u>	Pre Intervention		Post Intervention		Difference Score	
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
Positive	18.0	5.4	15.9	7.3	-2.1	8.3
Negative	18.2	4.5	14.2	5.3	-4.0	4.0

*Note.* There were more participants in the positive journaling group ( $n = 11$ ) versus the negative journaling group ( $n = 9$ ).

### **Job Satisfaction Analysis**

Table II lists the means and standard deviations for the pre and post job satisfaction scores for the positive and negative journaling groups, along with the difference score. Job satisfaction scores for both the positive and negative journaling groups were around the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile (Gillespie et al., 2016), indicating that participants' level of job satisfaction was low and fell below the median score of 44.

To test hypothesis 2, a t-test was used to compare the job satisfaction change scores across journaling group type. The assumption of normality was tested by using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed that difference scores deviated from normality,  $D(20) = .27, p = .001$ . Due to this assumption being violated, the Mann-Whitney-U test was used. No significant difference was found,  $U = 42.5, p = .60$ . Due to these findings Hypothesis 2 is rejected, as no significant difference in job satisfaction change scores was found across journaling groups.

Table 2

*Overall Job Satisfaction Scores of the Positive and Negative Journaling Group from Pre to Post Intervention*

<u>Journaling type</u>	Pre Intervention		Post Intervention		Difference Score	
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
Positive	37.7	6.1	36.5	5.7	-1.2	5.7
Negative	35.3	2.6	34.2	2.4	-1.1	4.3

*Note.* There were more participants in the positive journaling group ( $n = 11$ ) versus the negative journaling group ( $n = 9$ ).

### **Overall Experience**

Table 3 shows the frequency of responses for how much time participants self-reported they spent journaling during the week, for the full group and each journaling condition.

Table 3

*Number of Times Participants Journalled During the Week*

# of Times Journalled	Frequency
3	10
More than 3	10

Participants were also asked to identify about what topics they journalled, with many participants indicating they journalled about more than one. Family was the most common topic participants identified, with work being the second. Table 4 displays the frequency of topics, for the full group. Topics that participants identified in the ‘other’ category include: feelings, dating, goals, spirituality, and personal finances.

Table 4

*Topics Journalled About During Intervention for the Full Group of Participants*

<u>Topic</u>	Frequency
Family	17
Work	14
Health/Medical Issues	6
Hobbies	8
Pets	4
Other	7

Regarding participants’ perceptions and feelings about journaling, Table 5 lists the frequency of responses, means and SD. Overall results from this question showed that participants found the experience to be positive.



Table 5

*Perceptions of Journaling Experience in Full Group (N = 20)*

	Neither					Mean	SD
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree		
I felt this was a good use of my time.	0	0	2	9	9	4.4	.65
I learned something during the process.	0	0	4	8	8	4.2	.75
I will journal again following this study.	0	3	2	10	5	3.9	.96
I believe journaling is a useful tool for stress management.	0	1	0	10	9	4.4	.73
I would recommend journaling to others.	0	0	3	8	9	4.3	.71

At the end of the Overall Experience measure, participants were asked a qualitative question to explain if they learned anything following the intervention (Appendix I). A thematic analysis was performed on the qualitative data from Overall Experience measure. Of the 16 participants who provided qualitative responses, three themes were found: self-reflection, organization, and perspective (Table 6). Some participants stated multiple themes in their response. Themes are defined as follows:

- Self-reflection: reflecting and identifying on emotions and attributes that are personal and within one’s control
- Organization: creating tasks/plans to better maintain daily expectations and workload. Can involve making lists or setting goals.
- Perspective: reflecting and identifying events and things that are outside of their control

Other topics mentioned at least once were stress relief, enjoyment, and habit forming. Some participants journaled about multiple topics in their responses.

Themes and topics mentioned indicated that participants found participation in this study to be meaningful and worthwhile. No responses indicated that the experience was aversive or negative.

Table 6

*Thematic Analysis of What Participants Learned Following the Study for the Full Group*

Theme	N	Example
Self-reflection	10	“Evaluating my progress honestly.”
Organization	3	“It helped me organize my thoughts, get them out of my head and make real progress on work tasks.”
Perspective	3	“I was able to get a better perspective on things and start to determine next steps.”

*Note.* To be considered a theme the topic was to be mentioned 3 or more times.

A comparison was done of the Overall Experience data for the negative and positive journaling groups. Table 7 shows a comparison of the amount of time spent journaling between the negative and positive groups.

Table 7

*Number of Times Participants Journalled During the Week Per Journaling Group*

# of Times Journalled	Frequency Positive	Frequency Negative
3	4	6
More than 3	7	3

Table 8 shows the means and standard deviations for both groups on the Likert scale items. The results in the below table show that the scores for the positive and negative journaling groups were similar. Based on these findings, it is inferred that perceptions of the process were similar for the negative and positive journaling group.

Table 8

*Comparison of Perceptions of Journaling Experience of the Positive and Negative Group*

	Positive		Negative	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
I felt this was a good use of my time.	4.2	.72	4.6	.50
I learned something during the process.	4.2	.72	4.2	.79
I will journal again following this study.	4.1	.90	3.6	.96
I believe journaling is a useful tool for stress management.	4.2	.57	4.7	.47
I would recommend journaling to others.	4.3	.75	4.3	.67

The below Table 9 gives the frequency that thematic responses were stated by negative and the positive group on the item querying what the participant learned from journaling. Based on the below table, the negative and positive journaling group were similar on their qualitative responses.

Table 9

*Thematic Analysis of What Participants Learned Following the Study for Positive and Negative Journaling Groups*

Theme	N	Positive	Negative
Self-reflection	10	5	5
Organization	3	2	1
Perspective	3	1	2

The below Table 10 provides the frequency for topics journaled about between the negative and positive journaling groups. The category with the biggest difference in frequency scores is Other. The remaining topics journaled about were similar in their frequencies for the positive and negative journaling groups.

Table 10

*Topics Journaled About During Intervention by the Negative and Positive Groups*

<u>Topic</u>	Positive Frequency	Negative Frequency
Family	10	7
Work	7	7
Health/Medical Issues	3	3
Hobbies	5	3
Pets	3	1
Other	1	6

Collectively, based on the comparison data of the Overall Experience measure, the positive and negative journaling groups appeared to have similar experiences and perceptions of the intervention.

## Post-Hoc Analyses

Upon completion of the planned analyses, it became apparent that an interesting question remained unanswered; did the intervention have an impact on alerting participants' job satisfaction and stress? Since previous research, found an effect when participants journaled for three consecutive days during the week (Alford et. al, 2005), a post-hoc analysis was done to see if in this study the same finding occurred. Four paired t-test were calculated to answer this question. The four tests were pre to post stress levels for the positive group, pre to post stress levels of the negative group, pre to post job satisfaction levels for the positive group, and pre to post stress levels for the negative group. The family wise error rate of .20. For each t-test, a one tail test was used with a p-value for rejecting the null hypothesis of  $p \leq .05$ . A one tail test was used, as based on previous research, stress scores were expected to decrease, while the job satisfaction scores were expected to increase (Alford et al., 2005).

Three of the tests met the assumptions required for a t-test. Those groups were the positive stress group, the negative stress group, and the negative job satisfaction group. The positive job satisfaction group violated the assumption of the data being normally distributed ( $p < .001$ )

There was no statistically significant change found for the stress scores for the positive journaling group following the intervention,  $t(10) = .84, p = .42$ . However, participants in the negative journaling group had a significant change in stress scores following the intervention,  $t(8) = 3.0, p = .02$ . For job satisfaction, there was also no significant difference found for the negative journaling group following the intervention,  $t(8) = -.78, p = .46$ .

Due to the scores of the positive job satisfaction group not being normally distributed,  $D(11) = .38, p < .001$ , the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test was used. For the positive journaling

group, it was found that there was no significant change in job satisfaction scores following the intervention ( $Z = -1.9, p = .06$ ).

## Chapter V: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to measure if there was a difference in changes in stress levels and job satisfaction when participants journaled about negative versus positive events/emotions. This chapter will discuss results found, study limitations, future recommendations and overall conclusions.

Findings from the current study found that there was no significant difference in change scores between the positive and negative journaling groups on job satisfaction and stress measures. As no previous literature had investigated the difference between journaling about negative versus positive topics, there is nothing in current research to compare these findings to. One possible explanation for this finding is no effect for either journaling condition actually occurred. Yet, it may have also been the opposite, that both journaling conditions were effective and had equal changes in their stress and job satisfaction scores, and therefore when compared, would not have a significant difference in their change scores. To provide more insight into if either intervention had an effect, post-hoc analyses were run.

The post hoc-analysis found that one group had a statistically significant change in pre-post scores; the negative journaling group saw a decrease in stress scores following the intervention. No intervention effect of journaling was found for stress reduction in the positive group, nor for job satisfaction in either group.

One of the more common types of journaling used in clinical settings is emotional expression. It involves the participant focusing on negative or traumatic events. One researcher theorized that when traumatic events go unexamined, it creates a stressor the individual must now cope with (Pennebaker, 2013). Previous research has shown that those who participate in written emotional expression can experience positive outcomes, including increased health and



psychological well-being (Smyth, 1998). By participating in written emotional expression, it allows for the participant to reduce or even remove the stressor they are experiencing (Pennebaker, 2013). Based on previous research of written emotional expression, the current findings in the negative group regarding a significant reduction in stress are not surprising. The current intervention may have provided participants an outlet to cope with stressful experiences/emotions that they previously were not addressing.

Although much of the research on journaling focuses on journaling about negative events, one study investigated if writing about intensely positive events would lead to positive effects. Results from this study found that those who journaled about intensely positive experiences for three consecutive days scored significantly higher on positive affect than those in the control group (Burton & King, 2004). Another study that examined college students with high levels of perceived stress found that after doing gratitude journaling, which focuses on writing about experiences you are grateful for and made you feel good, for three weeks, participants experienced significant gains in life satisfaction and positive affect (Isik & Erguner-Tekinalp, 2017). Both studies measured different outcomes than the current research, and found that journaling about positive events was beneficial. Even though the current study did not find an effect on the positive group's stress and job satisfaction outcomes, this does not mean that positive journaling doesn't work. It may just not benefit emotional distress and job satisfaction as much as enhancing positive mood and overall life satisfaction, as compared to work satisfaction.

Most of the literature reviewed involved investigating journaling's effects on stress. The study replicated for the current research (Alford et al., 2005) is one of the few studies to investigate a link between journaling and job satisfaction. With a lack of additional research on the relationship between journaling and job satisfaction, and the inconsistent finding across this

study and the 2005 study, it may be that journaling, either positive or negative, is not an appropriate method for effecting job satisfaction. Further research is needed on the effects of journaling on job satisfaction

Although our current study was unable to find a significant difference in change scores of the negative and positive journaling groups, the ratings on the Overall Experience Likert items and thematic analysis of the qualitative responses showed that participants found it to be a beneficial practice. Some quotes that participants stated about their experience included:

- “While I was journaling, I noticed a transformation in my mood and thought processes even when I was writing about very stressful issues. I became calmer and felt more positive. I could clearly see the benefits of journaling.”
- “Journaling helped organize my internal monologue and helped me develop an approach to handle stressors in my life. I found it to be a worthwhile activity for dealing with procrastination that results from uncomfortable or complicated work and life issues.”

The first quote supports this study’s finding that journaling about negative events/topics reduced participants level of stress.

Participants’ positive feedback from this study aligns with existing literature. Journaling has been shown to be a useful tool by allowing participants to gain a better understanding and meaning of their actions and emotions by being a form of reflective practice (Boud, 2001). One study that reviewed literature on the topic of journaling found that overall themes and outcomes from the studies included increased health, psychological well-being, physiological functioning, and general functioning (Smyth, 1998). When journaling is utilized as a form of emotional expression, the outcomes demonstrate that the experience is positive for the participant.

Lastly, the current study may have had difficulty in discovering more significant findings as the proposed methodology may not have been suitable in terms of intervention dose. Previous research found that journaling for 3 consecutive days was enough time to influence participants on outcomes of interest (Alford et al., 2005; Burton & King, 2004). Although the same amount of treatment was to be used in the present study, it is possible that it was not administered correctly. Specifically, it is possible that it was not administered for three consecutive days, for the right amount of time, or at all. Each could have affected the effectiveness of the treatment.

### **Limitations**

One limitation that impacted this study was sample size. Although 688 staff members were invited to participate, only 25 did. Of those, only 20 had useable data. With 5 participants not getting the full dose of treatment, the useable sample was limited to only those that followed through on the treatment. This made it more difficult to find statistically meaningful results. Despite multiple attempts to recruit staff members, the overall participation rate was low.

A second limitation would be the self-reported assessment of journaling duration, as there is no way to ensure participants received the required dose.

Two of the statistical tests conducted did not meet the assumptions needed to perform a t-test. Due to this, non-parametric tests were used for the analysis. This may have impacted the chances of having significant findings as non-parametric tests tend to have less power than their corresponding parametric test.

A limitation of the stress analysis is that the measure selected is a measure of psychological distress. Thus, current findings do not reflect the impact of journaling on the physiological and psychological response to stressors.

A final limitation would be the timing of the academic year in which the study was implemented. Participants were invited to the study over the winter break of the university they worked at. During this time, most students are gone from the university. Having less students at the university during the study may have impacted the stress levels at the beginning of the study, with lower amounts of stress being associated.

### **Recommendations**

Future studies should continue to investigate the differences between journaling about negative and positive events. Although the current study did not find significant differences between the two in changing participants stress and job satisfaction levels, there still may be instances where negative versus positive journaling is ideal. Future research should consider investigating the differences between the two types of journaling and their outcomes, and if one is better suited for one setting over the other.

Future studies should expand recruitment efforts to gain a larger sample size. If future studies are to use instructional staff, the time of year should be considered when administering the intervention as this could impact the level of participation.

To ensure a larger amount of people getting the full treatment (i.e. 3 days of journaling), future studies should consider expanding the amount of time given to participants to complete the treatment. Although previous research suggested that one week was enough time for participants to journal 3 times (Alford et al., 2005), for the current population one week may not have been enough time with their work demands.

Future studies should also consider the relevance of outcomes measures they are using with their population. Reviewing and identifying measures most appropriate for the worksite

setting and population is an important step for demonstrating if journaling is truly an effective worksite SMI.

### **Conclusions**

Although this study was unable to show a significant difference in change scores between positive and negative journaling interventions, it did find that both positive and negative journaling interventions were overall beneficial, and that journaling about negative events decreased psychological distress. Future research should continue to investigate the effects of journaling on workplace outcomes. As stress leads to negative health outcomes, organizations are having to spend increased amount of money in healthcare expenses (Gebhardt & Crump, 1990). Further research should be done to investigate the appropriate settings for positive and negative journaling, and if one is better suited for the workplace.

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## Appendix A: Initial Contact Email

Good Afternoon,

You are invited to participate in the study titled Journaling as a Workplace Wellness Program. This study is being conducted as a thesis project by a graduate student.

This study involves journaling for three consecutive days during a week, for 15 to 20 minutes each time. Journals are to be hand written during the study. This study will require 60 minutes of journaling during the week, along with 60 minutes to complete survey items. Benefits for participating in this study include lowered levels of stress and increased job satisfaction following the three journaling sessions. If you choose to participate, you can be entered into a drawing for one of five \$20 gift-cards for completing the study.

If you choose to participate in this study, please click on the survey link below to get started:

***[place Survey link here]***

The survey should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Upon completion of the survey, you will be emailed the journaling prompt to be used during this study. We would greatly appreciate your participation by XXX.

If you have questions about the study, please contact Haley Hanson by email at Hansonh9022@my.uwstout.edu

If you prefer to opt-out of future emails regarding this survey, please click on the following link.

***[place opt-out link here]***

Thank you for your time. I look forward to having you be part of this study.

Haley Hanson

651-592-4580

Hansonh9022@my.uwstout.edu

## **Appendix B: Journaling Prompts**

### **Positive Journaling Prompt:**

Please write about recent successes, emotions, and related thoughts and plans that have happened over the last week. This can be in your professional or personal life.

### **Negative Journaling Prompt:**

Please write about recent stresses, emotions, and related thoughts and plans that have happened over the last week. This can be in your professional or personal life.

### Appendix C: Reminder Email

Good Afternoon,

On XXX, you should have received an email from Haley Hanson (Hansonh9022@my.uwstout.edu) containing a link to the Journaling as a Workplace Wellness Program study. By completing the initial survey, you consented to being part of this study.

This is a reminder to journal for three consecutive days, for 15 to 20 minutes each day. Your journaling should be completed no later than XXX. Your journals will not be collected at the end of this study. Below is a reminder of the journaling prompt to be used for each journaling session.

#### **Journaling prompt:**

**Please write about recent XXX, emotions, and related thoughts and plans that have happened over the last week. This can be in your professional or personal life.**

Thank you for your participation in this study. You will receive one more email with the last survey to be completed at the end of this study.

If you have any questions, feel free to email Haley Hanson at hansonh9022@my.uwstout.edu.

Thank you for your time.  
Haley Hanson  
Hansonh9022@my.uwstout.edu  
(651) 592-4580

## Appendix D: Post-intervention Measures Email

Good Afternoon,

Last week you received an invite to participate in the study Journaling as a Workplace Wellness Program from Haley Hanson. I wanted to thank you for taking the time to participate in this study and hope that it proved valuable to you. This email is regarding the final survey for this study. It is a follow up on your thoughts and feelings you experienced during your week of journaling.

Please fill out the below survey link to complete this study. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, there will be an opportunity to be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of five \$20 gift cards.

**Follow this link to the Survey:**

[\\${I://SurveyLink?d=Take the Survey}](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[\\${I://SurveyURL}](#)

Thank you for taking the time to be part of this study. Your participation is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions about the study, please contact Haley Hanson by email at [Hansonh9022@my.uwstout.edu](mailto:Hansonh9022@my.uwstout.edu)

Thank you,

Haley Hanson  
651-592-4580  
[Hansonh9022@my.uwstout.edu](mailto:Hansonh9022@my.uwstout.edu)

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:  
[\\${I://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe}](#)

### Appendix E: Survey for Raffle

Q1 Thank you for your participation in the study. If you would like to be entered in to the drawing to potentially win one of five \$20 gift-cards, please enter your information below. The personal information you provide will not be linked to your survey responses.

Thank you.

Haley Hanson  
651-592-4580  
Hansonh9022@my.uwstout.edu

- First Name (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- Last Name (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- Email (3) \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix F: General Health Questionnaire-12

Q11 Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible using the phrase "have you felt over the last week you" before each question:

	Less so than usual (1)	No more than usual (2)	Rather more than usual (3)	Much more than usual (4)
Been able to concentrate on whatever you're doing? (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lost much sleep over worry? (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Felt that you are playing a useful part in things? (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Felt capable of making decisions about things? (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Felt constantly under strain? (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties? (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Been able to enjoy your day-to-day activities? (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Been able to face up to your problems? (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Been feeling unhappy and depressed? (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Been losing confidence in yourself? (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person? (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Been feeling reasonably happy all things considered? (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



### Appendix G: Job in General Scale (JIG)

Q12 Think of your job in general. All in all, what is it like most of the time? In the blank beside each work or phrase below, indicate whether or not the adjective describes your job.

	Yes, it describes my job (1)	No, it does not describe my job (2)	Can't decide if it describes my job (3)
Pleasant (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bad (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Great (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Waste of time (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Good (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Undesirable (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Worthwhile (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Worse than most (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Acceptable (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Superior (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Better than most (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disagreeable (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Makes me content (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inadequate (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Excellent (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rotten (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enjoyable (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poor (18)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Appendix H: Demographic Questions**

Q18 Race (choose 1 or more):

- African American or Black (1)
- American Indian or Alaska Native (specify tribal affiliation) (2)
- 
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (3)
- Cambodian (4)
- Hmong (5)
- Laotian (6)
- Vietnamese (7)
- Other Asian (please specify) (8)
- 
- White (9)

Q16 Ethnicity: Are you Hispanic or Latino/a origin?

- No (1)
- Yes, Cuban (2)
- Yes, Puerto Rican (3)
- Yes, Mexican American or Chicano/a (4)
- Yes, Other Hispanic or Latino/a (5)
-

Q10 Sex/Gender:

- Female (1)
  - Male (2)
  - Intersex (3)
  - Transgender (4)
  - Alternative identity (specify) (5)
- 

Q4 Please select the department or office to which you belong:

▼ Athletics (1) ... Vice Chancellor's Office (47)

Q6 For how long have you been working at UW-Stout?

- Less than 1 year (1)
  - 1-5 years (2)
  - 6-10 years (3)
  - 11-20 years (4)
  - 21 or more years (5)
-

**Appendix I: Overall Experience**

Q12 How many times over the last week did you participate in journaling?

- 0 (1)
- 1 (2)
- 2 (3)
- 3 (4)
- More than 3 (5)
- 

Q13 What topics did you journal about over the last week? (Please select all that apply)

- Family (1)
- Work (2)
- Health/Medical Issues (3)
- Hobbies (4)
- Pets (5)
- Other (6) \_\_\_\_\_

Q14 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly agree (1)	Somewhat agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
I felt this was a good use of my time. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I learned something during the process. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I will journal again following this study. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe journaling is a useful tool for stress management. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would recommend journaling to others. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Q15 If you indicated that you learned something during this process, please explain what it was that you learned.

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