



Sacred Depths Certification

Journaling as a Coaching Tool

Joanna: Okay. All right. This is our second to last class. Oh my gosh. As a reminder, next week... I just want to make sure it's next week. Yes. Next week is our final class for Sacred Depths. It's a long one. It's a three hour class. It is really rich with a lot of content and looking. And part of it, similar to today's class, part of next week's class is very, very participatory. So I need you there in order to make... We're going to be looking at two topics. We're going to be looking at ritual as a coaching tool or transformational tool. And then we're also going to be looking at next steps processes and how to lead one-on-one clients through conversations when they come to the end of their cycle and to see if they'll resign and all of that. So there's a lot...

Okay. So our call today is journaling as a coaching tool. And this really does dovetail with, like I said, we're going to be looking at next week around ritual. I save journaling for the very end of the program because as you'll see, it really brings together so many of the skills and the tools that we've looked at throughout Sacred Depths. When using journaling really well, it requires advanced knowledge. Listening and questioning and befriending fear... All the different pieces can come in.

So just kind of as a little bit of a background, it feels important to share that for me, in my life, journaling has played an incredible role in my business and in my life. Not everybody is a journaler, I happen to be, and I started keeping a journal when I was six years old and I still have it. I have all of my journals through the years and it's... I feel like I can say in full confidence, it's saved my life. It's been one of the things that has saved my

life. It has gotten me through so much. It has helped me understand myself in such deep ways.

And it's been a big part of my own soul work. When I say soul work, what I mean is, a lot of times in coaching where the work that we're doing is to help a client or help ourselves achieve a goal, which is great. Achieving goals is wonderful and of course there's a lot of learning and stretching and transformation that happens along the way to get there. So, there's that work but then... And let me know if this doesn't make sense. Then there's another kind of work that we all need, that coaching can be. And especially if you do it in a Sacred Depths way, but that's separate from reaching a goal that the sole purpose of it is to connect with your soul.

I've found just for myself and really most people that I know, I shouldn't say that I know, that I've worked with, that the soul work part is just vital. It's vital to having our life force energy. So anyway, journaling has been a big... Not the only piece of the soul work for me, but a big piece of that. And of course, you all know we do journaling in almost every class, I use it in curriculum and learning a lot as well. But for today's session, we're not going to look at how to use journaling in a class or within a curriculum. We do that in the, Into The Depths Program. Really our purpose today is to look at how we can use it in our one-on-one work with clients. And as you'll see, we'll look at how to use it mainly as homework and follow up from work that we do in a session, not necessarily to use journaling in session time. So that's how we'll mainly look at it today.

That being said, every now and again... I mean, in general, you're probably not going to ask a client to journal during a session, but every now and again, I just want to make this point, there may be a moment within a one-on-one session time that journaling can be really useful on the spot. So those moments are, if you sense that the client needs a pattern interrupt. So if, for example, they're very much talking about outward things and they need to move into more of an inward space. You can do that with questions. Right? We've looked at that with questions, but sometimes journaling can do that. Sometimes asking a client to journal right then and there can help them move... Pattern interrupt can happen in lots of different ways, help them move from their head to their heart, but it can also help them move, if they're too much in their heart and it's time to move on to strategy, it can help create that transition as well.

Sometimes if a client is having trouble just clearing their head, having a quick journaling question in the session can be helpful as well. Or making a-list. List-making, just to kind of dump the things out so then you can get clear and move forward. I very, very rarely use journaling in a client session, but I just wanted to kind of put that out there quick for you that there, every now and again there's a moment to do that. All that being said, today we're going to really, again, look at how can we use journaling as a homework tool, as a followup tool. And the reason why it can be really useful as a homework or followup tool is because it can help your client go deeper on certain topics that you looked at in the session. It can help a client reinforce the new learnings that came forward, really integrate new learnings. I mean, do that through journaling, well asked journaling questions.

Sometimes there are pieces that you're just not going to get to in a session, but they're timely for the client. A good way to still support the client in holding those issues and to put a container around it is to give some journaling homework around it. Sometimes you'll get to the end of a session and there may be a piece that you looked at together that wasn't fully baked. It kind of needed more processing, because the regulatory process is a process. So that's a great moment to give journaling homework. And then, sometimes I also give journaling homework if there's something that comes up for a client that's just really, really personal, incredibly personal. And I sense that it would be more useful for them to explore it in private first, or even just in general. That's where journaling can really be great for that.

So there are very few... First, I think I mentioned this in the beginning of the call, but I just want to say, I'm going to talk for a little bit, and then we're going to almost have a practicum today. Where I'll give a scenario or two and we'll practice together what would the journaling be for that. But there are a couple of other pieces I just want to share.

So there are very few rules when it comes to journaling, which I think is exciting, it's incredibly creative, it can be anything... It's a place where you can get really creative. And as a part of that, I want you to think of journaling, not just as writing out answers to a question. So the way that we're looking at journaling here is, it can be asking questions and the client answers it, but it can also be things like dialoguing. You're dialoguing with a part of themselves or dialoguing with something

outside of themselves. With the bird that came in during the session. What does that bird have to say? That kind of thing.

When I say journaling, it can be list-making. Sometimes it's super helpful to get organized and making different lists based on whatever topics came out of the session. It can be drawing. Right? Draw X, draw Y. Something comes through and the client speaks about, how it feels like a rainbow that... I don't know, I'm making it up. But based on the other thing you can ask them to draw the rainbow and then dialogue with it. You just have the drawing. Diagram making, mind mapping, there's so much that can go into it, can get really creative.

So there are very few rules, but there are some, and I want to share what I have found helpful when it comes to giving journaling for homework. And I didn't make this point, I know it's kind of obvious but I'll just say it. This goes back to container. So as we've already learned, when we're working with clients, we've got the container of the session that we're holding, and then we're also holding our clients in between sessions as well. If they've signed up for three months or six months or 12 months, we're holding that larger container as well. And oftentimes it can be really valuable also just for the container to give some inner work journaling in between the containers of the sessions.

Okay. So here are the few rules to think about. You don't want any homework that you give to take up too much time. Right? Because if it's going to take too much time, if the client has to put forward hours to get it done, they're not going to do it. Right? It's just not going to happen. That being said, and this is a funny thing to say, but it also shouldn't take up too little time. Journaling homework that just takes three minutes, four minutes, five minutes, probably isn't going to be enough to really integrate or get to the things. So, 10 minutes, 20 minutes, that kind of thing. Ask the client... A lot of times... And this is just human nature, we might be more apt to do the action steps that get us to our goals that come out for homework, but the more inner stuff the client may feel so excited to do it when they are done with the session, but that's going to be the first thing that falls away for some clients.

So just remind them of that and remind them to carve out quiet time and space for themselves and that it's important. Whenever I give journaling, almost always in class and definitely for homework, I always like to ask

the client, after they're done with the writing or everything that they do, to read over it or to look over it. And to read over it, to look over it and to see almost with a more objective eye than... What are they taking away from that journaling? What are they learning for? Just like we would do in a coaching session.

It's important, not always, but most of the time to have some kind of follow-up. So, that might be over email. A lot of times I'll say to clients, "After you do the work share with me." And I'll say to them, "You have to share with me the actual journaling. If that feels like too much or too intimate, or you've hand written it. But share with me some of the highlights." So either to follow up afterwards, either over email or in the next session. There's something that... And this goes for both their own solo review and then the follow up with you. There's something about doing the journaling and getting to things come through, but then there's a whole other thing about being witnessed in what's come through. That's really powerful and really important.

What else? What other rules? Oh, just to say that, if you are someone that doesn't like to journal, chances are that your ideal clients may not be big journalers either. So, this might not be a strategy that you employ all the time. It just depends on who your people are. Okay. We're going to look at two categories of journaling in a moment, but before we do... And then we'll do our practicum. But before we do, let me pause here. And I'd love to hear from some of you, what questions you have, what are you seeing? Are you someone that uses journaling? If you are, what's something that you want to share around that, that can be helpful for us?

Joanna: So this is getting a little bit more into group facilitation versus... I'll give a couple of answers, but there's a lot more. So when something like that happens... I mean, I'd be willing to bet, without knowing any more details than what you've given me. I mean, it could be wrong but, I'd be almost willing to bet a 100% that the resistance had nothing at all to do with the actual journaling and had so much more to do with whatever was coming up for her through the content and through what you've been looking at or through the... Your sister issues come up in groups or mother issues come up with the leader of the group. It could be one of so many things, but to have that level of resistance, to just write something down, unless she had something in her past where she was ridiculed for writing

or told she wasn't smart enough in her writing, but I guarantee it doesn't have to just do with the journaling itself.

There's something else that was coming up through the content. And maybe you didn't pick up on it until it got to the point where she was like, "No, I'm not going to do a journaling exercise." There was some resistance building up. I would be willing to bet a good amount of money on that. And that's what can oftentimes happen with resistance in groups. Resistance on one-on-one is... When we looked at this with resistance archetypes is that, there's something that... And it's harder to track in a group than one-on-one. Right? So it could have happened a half hour before in the session, but you didn't necessarily notice it. That's something came up that was so scary for her or so triggering for her and she may have been just sitting there stewing for 30 minutes, not even realizing that a part of her... Her fear was looking for the moment to act out on it.

So I love that you gave her the suggestions of... If someone is like... Because the way that she responded is more of a resistance archetype than, "I just don't like journaling. It's not my thing." Right? Because if someone's [crosstalk] like, "I just don't like journaling. It's not my thing." I love your answers. Draw it out, move it out, visualize it, giving them... Because they're actually looking for a solution, but when someone responds... I think she responded in a resistance archetype way. There was something else energetically happening for her.

Joanna: All right. Anything else that anyone wants to share so far, before we look at what's next? All right. So for our purposes, I want to think about two categories of journaling. Category A, we can call it a more general journaling practices like, general journaling as a practice, as a consistent practice. So category A, the practices, you wouldn't necessarily give these to every client. You'd give these journaling practices to clients who really have the space and desire and the willingness to do longer term consistent inner work on their own time. The type of journaling practices again, these are just for the clients that really have the desire and the space and the willingness to do longer term consistent inner work on their own time. It's for the people that really are committed to going deeper consistently in between sessions and not everybody is up for that, right?

That's not good or bad. It's just dependent on personality and values, and time, all of those things. So these more general journaling, again, I'm going to emphasize that they're practices because they're ongoing, they're consistent for a period of time. The purpose of these, they're less related to any idea that comes out of any one session or issue that necessarily comes out of any one session, and that's why they work best kind of long-term consistently. The purpose is to help the client connect with their self, with their spirit, with their heart, with their soul.

And there's lots of different journaling practices out there. I'll name a couple of my most favorite. And I want to hear some because I'm sure some of you have some. So of course, just regular journaling, right? Here I am today and just writing from that place. And speaking of which, I mean, I generally just start writing with whatever, but sometimes having a prompt like, I am or today I am, is just a nice kind of everyday prompt, another example. And again, there's so many of a journaling practice morning pages from Margaret Julia Cameron, is that the name of her book Morning Pages? No, The Artist's Way. It's from the book, The Artist, she talks about every morning writing for 15 minutes, and that sort of thing. Another example of a journaling practice, a dreamwork consistently writing down dreams and there's different practices for unpacking them.

For those of you that are going to be in advanced steps, we're going to do a whole retreat on imagery as soul work and dreams are going to be... I'm going to give lots of different methods for how to unpack dreams. Another consistent journaling practice is gratitude lists, right? Lists can be a practice too. That's something that I use, not always in my life but when I noticed that I've gotten to a place where I just feel everything sucks and nothing is going the right way. And I am just feeling like, I'll give myself two, three weeks of every evening. The way that I like to do it is every evening I'll write down at least five things that I'm grateful for from the day, I'll write down five things that I want to celebrate about the day. For me, the gratitude is a little bit different than the celebration.

And then any learnings from the day, what did I learn that day? And for me, that combination of gratitude, celebration, it could be honoring what is it that I want to honor from the day and learning? It always helps me even if there's excuse my language, shit going on, it always helps me feel more alive and grateful and things are okay, right? So that's an example of a journaling. They don't have to go on forever. Like I said, I'll do it for

three weeks or two weeks, that sort of thing. We spoke our last session. I was sharing my practice of writing letters from the Goddess. That can be a great one-off a journaling piece of homework, but doing it consistently a couple times a week for a couple of weeks, There's a cumulative effect to it.

All right. So let's pause here. I'd love to hear some other ideas. Let's generate some other ideas for a journaling, not a one-off a journaling homework assignment, but journaling practices. What are some things that you use or that you've seen out there or ideas that come to mind for you? Kristen is saying there's an app called the Five Minute Journal that works great for gratitude practice. That sounds awesome. And sometimes having an app can help with accountability. All right. I know you guys have some ideas on this. What are some journaling practices? Kathy, I ask people to do letters to nature.

What does nature have to say today? I love that. Gloria writes letters from love. I love that. That feels similar to the letters from the Goddess in a way. And that's another point, right? That we have just learned throughout. Use a language that resonates for the client. That same journaling practice could be couched or the words that we use. It could be 20 different types of ways that we say it. Jackie is saying, I journal around what showed up today. Yeah. What's today. Rose saying, after meditation in the mornings. Yeah, that's a great time to journal to integrate the meditation and then not consistent. I know, we can all work on that, right?

Joanna: The writing piece to not re-traumatize is what we need to know, and yes, to everything that you said. Okay. So that's category A, is consistent practice, a consistent practice that we may toss to a client to see if they want to do. The second category is more about specifically, like what specifically came out of the session. It's more of a one time coaching homework, journaling homework. And just like, there are infinite amounts of questions or sequences of questions that can be asked based on what's happening in a session and with a client, same with category B, this is our opportunity to really tailor what happened to a session and to ask ourselves, okay, this is what a client has received so far from the time we've had together, this is what they're taking away.

How can I support them now? To do all those things that I spoke about before. Integrate more deeply, go deeper, what didn't we have time for

reinforced learnings, all of that. So how we're going to kind of together look more at this is I'm going to give you, we'll see how many examples we have time for. I can give you an example or scenario. And then what I want you to be thinking about as I describe the scenario is what homework? What journaling homework? And the ways that we've been talking about it, would you possibly give this client? Remember journaling can be drawing, list-making, diagrams, or any kind of art making, collaging, whatever it is. So we can get really creative here. This is about, like I said earlier, using all of your skills that we've learned together. Okay. So here's the first scenario for us to look at. In a client session, your client shares that she hasn't done any of the action steps that the two of you strategized out the session before. So she comes to the session saying, she hasn't done any of the action steps.

This is a client that is working on starting up her new logo design business. And you would strategize some steps for her to bring on new clients, for her to take on clients. This also happens to be the second session in a row where this happened where she just didn't take any action on what you strategized. And so when you looked at this together more deeply, you saw that a few things were at play. You looked at this in the session and here are some things that came up. Number one, she didn't quite have the time in her schedule to complete all of the action steps. She definitely had time for some, she didn't do any, right? She definitely had some time for some of the action steps, but she didn't quite have time to do all of the action steps in her schedule. So that's the one thing that you saw.

The other thing that you saw is that together you realized that she has some fear and resistance around being visible. So when that came to surface in the session, you led her through be-friend your fear process around her fear of visibility. And through that BYF process with you. She connected really deeply with a time when her first boyfriend made fun of her for wanting to become a famous artist. She was 16 and her boyfriend had made fun of her for wanting to become a famous artist. She was able to see that the way she perceived that rejection from that first boyfriend, made her feel ashamed of her creativity and nervous to let others know that she wanted to create a business around her creativity. This logo design business.

The other thing that came through the be-friend, your fear process that you did with her is the higher level message that the fear ultimately gave her was trust your create tricks, trust your create tricks. So all of that took most of the session and now you're at the end of the session and you want to give her some homework to go deeper, to integrate, to get to the next pieces, to really mind all that is coming through. I'll give you all a minute or two to write down some ideas. What journaling homework would you give her?

Let me give you another minute. Okay. So I'd love to hear... I want to hear all of your ideas. If you have a couple of questions, I want to hear all of them, but just share one or if two go together. Because other people... just to give everybody a chance and then I'll come back to you if you've got more. But don't be shy. Even if you're not 100% sure, share what's coming through, what your ideas are because it's a great way for us all to learn together and to go deeper. So what journaling homework would you give this client?

Okay. Let me see if I have anything else on my list that you didn't... You guys hit a lot of them. I also had a letter to her 16-year-old self. So from her adult self writing a letter to tell her 16-year-old self all the things that that teenager didn't know when the boyfriend made fun of her in that way.

The other area to look at, I mentioned it very quickly, but worthwhile could have been in the session or as homework is to actually look at her schedule. So back to our time, all the work that we did around time, asking her to create a blueprint of those action steps and to send it to you so that she knows what days... because there was that time issue. Creating an ideal schedule could be helpful as well.

All right. Let's do another one. Okay. So, "You're working with a client on setting boundaries, working with a client on setting boundaries. And through the work, in a session that you do together, your client realizes that she's kind of been a doormat in a lot of her relationships. She over-gives in relationships. She sees through the session with you that she takes over-responsibility and it doesn't serve her. She allows others to be critical of her and even sometimes allows others to take advantage of her. And through this exploration in session together, you uncover that she has a fear of others being angry at her. She is really scared that other

people are going to be angry at her. And that's why she does all this over-giving and over-responsibility and allows herself to be a doormat.

"And in that conversation, the two of you also discover that she's got inside of her some buried energy of the warrior woman. She mentioned, she's like, 'It's almost like I have this warrior woman inside of me that is buried.' So you set up some outer action homework assignments based on this. So part of her homework is to set boundaries with one of her close friends. And the specifically, this friend is someone who always asks her to lend money and then she never pays her back.

"So one piece of the outer homework for her, the action step, is to set a boundary with this friend, no more lending money that never gets paid back. And then the other outer piece of boundary homework that the two of you come up with is with her parents, for her not to call them every day. Because she usually calls them out of a sense of taking over-responsibility.

"And the last thing in the session is she says that she really wants to set both of these boundaries this week with confidence and with love. What's some journaling homework that you would give her alongside these action steps? What's some journaling homework that would be good for her?"

(silence)

How can you go deeper into the issues of the session, help her integrate more, learn more?

(silence)

I'm going to give you guys, another half minute.

(silence).

Okay. One thing I want to make sure that I mention before we hear what you've come up with is a lot of times, if I think a client needs to go deeper journaling at the end of a session, I'll know exactly what the questions are and I'll make them up on the spot and that's great. But I just do want to share that sometimes at the end of the session, I know that the client is ready to go deeper, but I'm not 100% clear in that moment what it is that I think they need. And so in that case... I mean, first of all, you can always ask, "If you were to give yourself some journaling questions or inner

homework, what would it be?" That's always one great thing to do. But sometimes I'll also say to a client, "I know I want you to go deeper on this topic and this topic. I'll send you some questions later today because I want to just have time to articulate them." And that's absolutely a totally fine and good thing to do.

Joanna: But what I would say for now is if that comes up, like I was sharing earlier, writing is a very safe way to explore shadow. Writing is just a safe way anyway. So, if she's up for it, you can ask her to channel the words of that too fierce warrior that pushes people away. And just to go there, not that she would ever do that, but just to move some of that energy through. What will often times happen is someone will start in that extreme place and just the fact that the individual is giving that energy attention and expression, it will start moving towards that more aligned warrior place as the writing goes on. Not always, never expect anything, but that can be. And if the person is just too scared of that energy, again, we'll look at all of this in the coming year, but if that's too much, then don't give it for homework and just work with it in session. Work with it next session. They can hold off on the setting the boundary. You may need a couple of sessions to work through, for sure.

All right. I hope you all enjoyed this session as much as I did. I love hearing your creativity and all the things that are coming through. Your homework for this week is, if you're working with clients and you don't normally give journaling homework, or even if you do normally give journaling homework, to assign some journaling homework. You can do it on the spot. You can think about it, let them know and send it later that day, the next day, whatever it is. If you're working with a partner in this program, same thing. Coach the session, but then give some homework at the end and then talk through, in your talk through time, talk about what would the best journaling homework questions be?