## Mind Body Medicine: Writing as Self-Therapy

Karen Gorrin, MA, LMHC

Fred Hutch Cancer Research Center Survivorship Program November 23, 2019

Biomedical Model 19th century Focus on physical emphasizes freedom from disease, defect

# Mind Body Medicine is a biopsychosocial whole-person Approach

### Mind Body Medicine is evidence-based

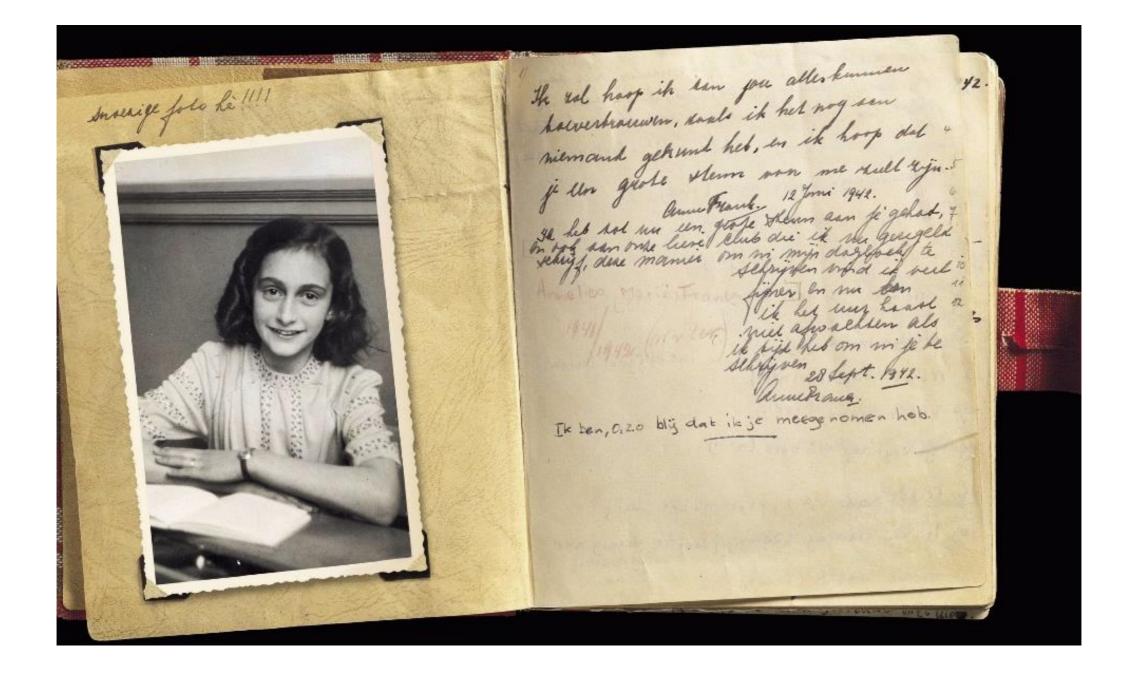
Mind Body Medicine emphasizes patient self-reliance as integral to clinical practice.

- -Mindfulness
- -Expressive Arts
  - -Biofeedback
- -Imagery & Visualization
  - -Yoga



# "There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."

Maya Angelou





### Therapeutic Writing

- Writing to heal a past Trauma
- 2. Writing to create our future self



### mental rehearsal

### "She believed she could, so she did."

— R.S. Grey

## mind body connection

### Psycho-neuroimmunology

# What are the effects of expressive Writing??

### Biological

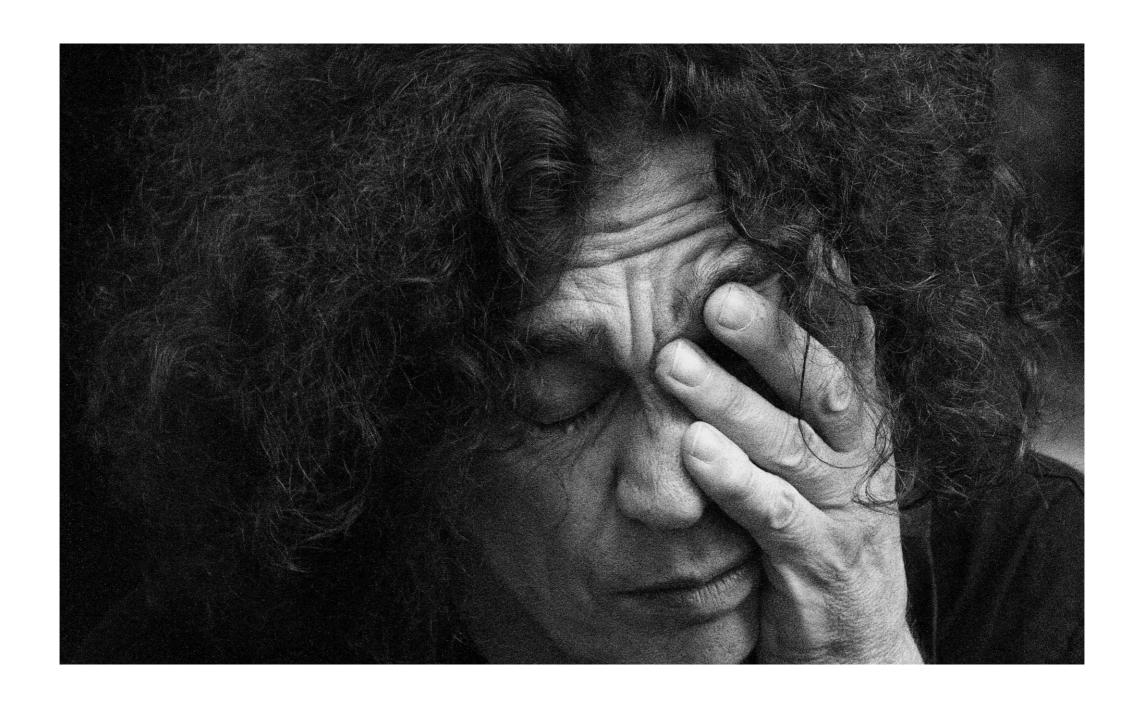
- Improved Immune function (T-cells)
- Less sleep disruption with metastatic disease
- lowered blood pressure and heart rate
- Reduced muscle tension and overall stress
- Boosts working memory

### Psychological

- one's mood changes immediately after writing
- Short-term: Sadder but wiser
- Long term: happier and less negative
- Reduced depression
- Reduced Anxiety
- Reduced ruminatioN

#### Social

- People visit their doctors less often
- Enhanced Work and School performance
- Increased empathy
- Improved satisfaction in social relationships



### Technique

- Create the environment (Comfort and Security)
- Create a ritual (lighting, objects)
- Write for 20 minutes (minimum)
- Write for 4 days in a row (minimum)
- Write at about the same time each day





### Tips for journaling

**PROTECT** privacy

Begin Mindfully

Date Your entries

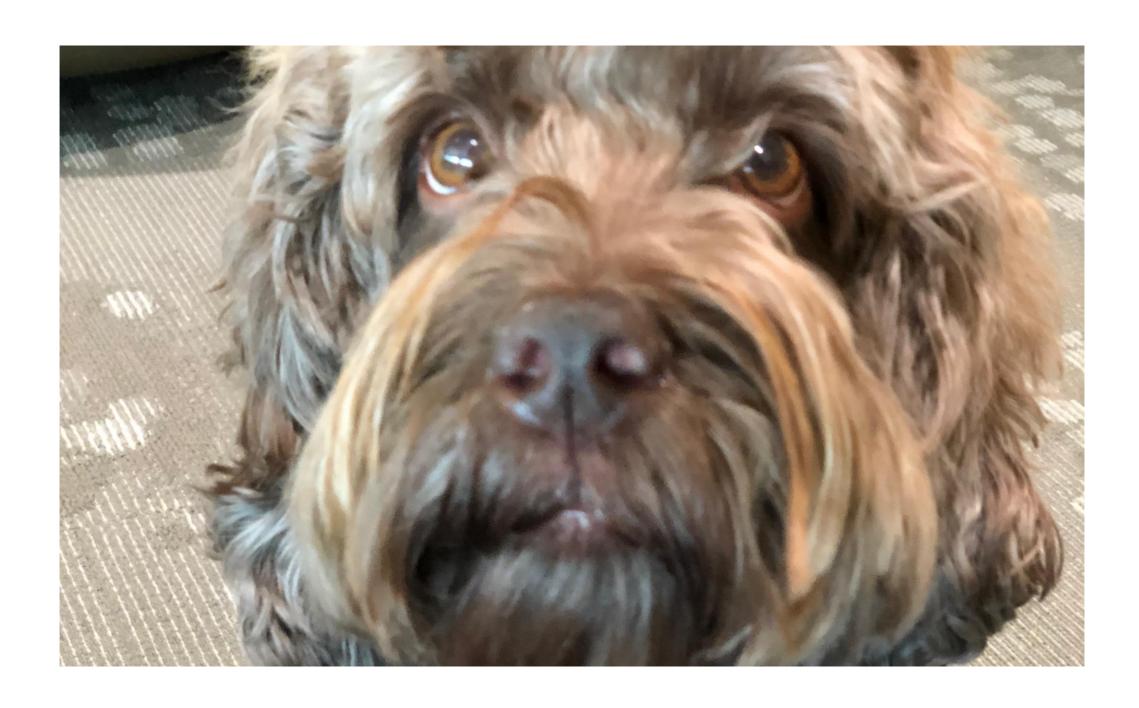
Write quickly

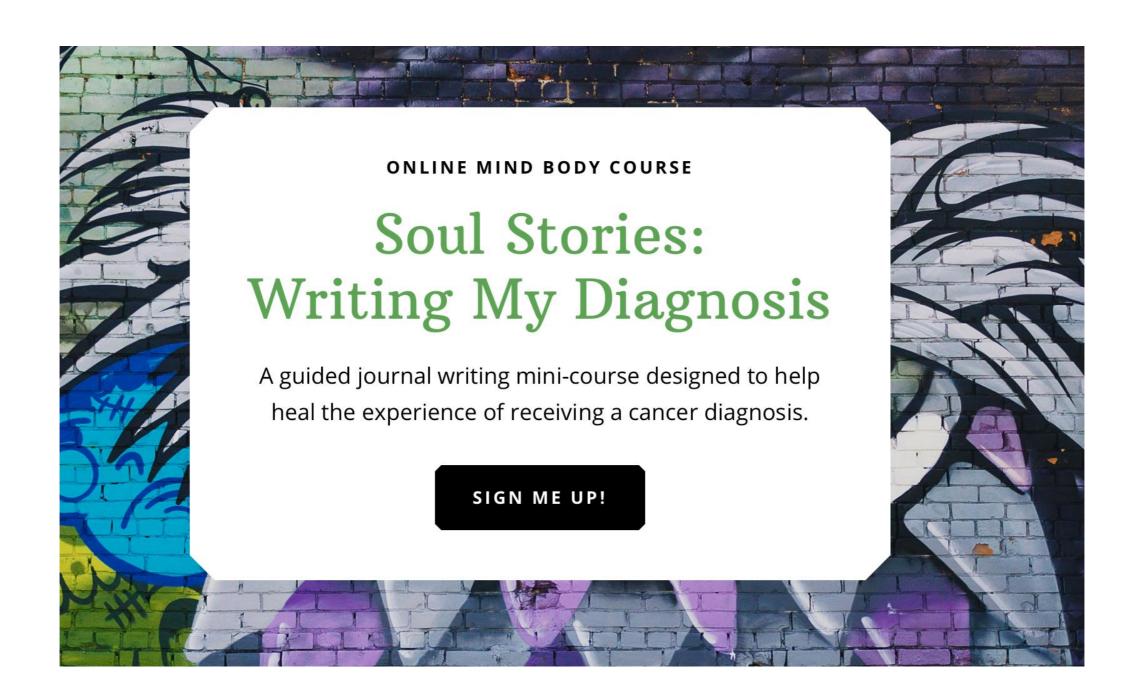
write the truth

Write naturally

"Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass...It's about learning to dance in the rain."

Vivian Greene





## "The scariest moment is always just before you start."

Stephen King



#### Thank You!

www.karengorrin.com