



A Proposal: Healing Impacts of Writing Groups on Cancer Survivors

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ABSTRACT

Those diagnosed with cancer not only suffer from the disease itself, but also psychological distress, including feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, and depression. Writing groups have been found to positively impact attendees' well-being, including decreasing anxiety, depression, and other psychological symptoms. Despite the benefits of writing groups, little research examines the impact of cancer survivors attending writing groups. This study utilized previous literature to create a curriculum for a writing group specifically for cancer survivors. This curriculum was then pilot tested with a group of cancer survivors in May and June of 2022. Psychological symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress were measured at three different intervals throughout the six-week writing group. Findings included a significant decrease in psychological distress measures, including significant decreases in anxiety, depression, and stress scores for the majority of participants. This study provides all the necessary information for other facilitators to implement the curriculum and group structure and promote healing in their communities. More research is needed to fully determine the scope of healing writing groups can provide vulnerable populations, such as cancer survivors.

INTRODUCTION

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in America, and in 2019 in Mahoning County, Ohio alone, there were 1,424 cancer diagnoses and 624 deaths from cancer (Ohio Department of Health). Along with the diagnosis of cancer, survivors suffer from many additional symptoms, such as psychological distress, that can significantly impact their lives and their treatment outcomes (Block; Kadan-Lottick et al.; Fangand & Schnoll).

Writing groups have been found to positively impact participants' self-esteem, hopefulness, feelings of support, and decrease anxiety, depression, and other psychological symptoms (Cooper; Sjollema & Hanley). However, despite the benefits of these programs, there is limited research on how these writing groups impact participants, especially those from vulnerable populations such

as cancer survivors.

In January of 2021, I became the Outreach Coordinator at Lit Youngstown¹, a nonprofit literary organization in Youngstown, Ohio. In this role, I was determined to begin researching the healing impacts of creative writing by facilitating writing groups with vulnerable members in the community. To prepare for this role, I spent two years studying, creating, and testing an evidence-based curriculum for a six-week writing group with cancer survivors. This curriculum was implemented with a group of cancer survivors in May and June of 2022. In the following paper, I present a review of the literature, a curriculum for a writing group, and findings from a pilot writing group.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Symptoms of Cancer Survivors

Along with suffering from cancer, survivors often endure additional psychological symptoms. For instance, Block explains that terminally ill patients experience psychological distress including depression, hopelessness, negative self-worth, poor self-confidence, and anxiety. Kadan-Lottick et al. expands on Block's research by explaining that psychological distress can often occur in cancer patients as they are faced with factors such as feelings of losing life, worrying about loved ones left behind, and coming to terms with their illness. Cancer survivors have been found to have more psychological distress than the general population and 25-35% of patients experience severe emotional and psychological distress that can last years after treatment (Fangand & Schnoll).

Symptoms of psychological distress are significantly important to consider when working with cancer patients because distress has been found to impact treatment success and overall well-being. For instance, Fangand and Schnoll found that cancer patients with significant psychological distress were more likely to have lower quality of life scores, higher levels of fatigue, and high chances of immune dysregulation and lower immune function. Furthermore, studies have shown that feelings of worthlessness, hopelessness, and lack of self-confidence have been linked to poorer treatment diagnoses, poorer responses to intervention, and more reports of poor quality of life (Jafari et al.; Sanatani, Schreier, & Stitt). Due to these significant symptoms that cancer survivors face and the detrimental consequences of these symptoms, it is critical that survivors are provided with effective interventions that promote positive well-being.

When assessing interventions for cancer survivors, research has shown that support groups can help reduce psychological distress and improve patient well-being. Specifically, Ussher, Kirsten, Butow, and Sandoval conducted a study of peer support groups for cancer patients in Australia, and found that participants reported increased agency, self-confidence, and feelings of support after

¹ Lit Youngstown <https://www.lityoungstown.org/>

attending groups. Lindemalm, Strang, and Lekander dive deeper by measuring specific symptoms and quality of life for 61 cancer patients in Norway that attended support programs, and the authors found that depression, anxiety, fatigue, and quality of life were positively impacted by attending support programs (Lindemalm, Strang, & Lekander). Additionally, Cipolletta, Simonato, and Faccio expand the research by studying psychological support groups with 28 cancer survivors and 21 caregivers and find that support groups decreased psychological distress for families and survivors.

Despite the vast literature on the benefits of support groups, these services are often underutilized. Grande, Arnott, Brundle, and Pilling found that patients may avoid using group services due to feelings toward needing support, stigma surrounding support groups, and lack of encouragement from others. Chambers et al. adds to the conversation by specifically studying lung cancer patients and finds that health-related stigma is a driving force for why patients do not seek support. This research on underutilization of support groups shows a need for less stigmatized interventions for cancer survivors that help address psychological distress.

The Benefits of Writing Groups

One potential intervention that is less stigmatized to target psychological distress is writing groups as they have been found beneficial for client's well-being, development, and mental health. Specifically, Mazza facilitated a writing group for middle schoolers and found that participants reported more prosocial behaviors, problem-solving ability, and higher well-being and developmental scores. With more of a community focus, Cooper ran a group for clients suffering from depression and found that reflective writing increased clients' understanding of the self, problem-solving skills, and ability to see new perspectives, whereas creative writing increased feelings of support and skills in writing. These themes of increased self-esteem and positive well-being have been revealed in several other studies of writing groups as well (e.g., Rousseau et al.; Sjollema & Hanley; Stickley, Hui, Stuble, Baker, & Watson). This research shows that writing interventions have the potential to help decrease additional psychological symptoms among cancer survivors.

Although limited, literature exists on the benefits of writing groups specifically for cancer survivors. A study by Tegner, Fox, Philipp, and Thorne focused on poetry in a group with 12 participants who had cancer and found that after only six weeks, participants reported less depression and anxiety and more emotional resilience (Tegner et al.). Similarly, Peckham, Block, Buchanan, and Pommier ran a creative writing workshop with young adults with cancer and found that participants reported a better understanding of cancer, increased social support, and decreased symptoms of distress. The benefits of writing group intervention, such as less psychological distress, shown in these studies has been correlated with increased patient treatment progress and general well-being (Jafari et al.; Sanatani, Schreier, & Stitt). These limited studies support the idea that writing groups

are an intervention worthy of exploration.

CURRICULUM

When I explored the literature on writing groups and cancer survivors, I didn't find any curriculums for how to structure sessions and order the material. Using literature and research, I created the following writing group curriculum for a 6-week writing group. This curriculum was piloted with cancer survivors in 2022 and participants were provided the following document prior to the start of the writing group.

WRITING GROUP CURRICULUM

Overview

During this 6-week writing group, you will participate in activities, workshops, and a community reading. The goal of this workshop is to promote healing and community building. This is a research study, and as such, you will have the opportunity to take a survey three times and informed consent will be given.

WEEK/DAY	TOPIC	ACTIVITIES
WEEK 1: DATE	Community Building Setting Norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction activities • Brief of the research • Creating group rules • Discussion about projects and feedback • Freewrite • Survey • Check out
WEEK 2: DATE	Writing to Heal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freewrite • Discussion on writing to heal • Writing activity • Optional sharing • Check out
WEEK 3: DATE	Description/Mindfulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freewrite • Discussion on descriptive writing and mindfulness • Writing activity • Optional sharing • Check out

WEEK/DAY	TOPIC	ACTIVITIES
WEEK 4: DATE	Writing Craft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freewrite • Q & A • Writing activity • Optional sharing • Check out
WEEK 5: DATE	Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freewrite • Discussion on closing and next steps • Writing activity • Optional sharing • Survey • Check out
WEEK 6: DATE	Community Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pieces aloud • Small celebratory gathering before and after

SUPPORTING RESEARCH

Creation of Group Guidelines

In week 1, the group creates group guidelines together. This is supported by interviews I conducted with over 23 experienced group facilitators across the country. In the interviews, most interviewees stressed the importance of creating group guidelines to ensure everyone knows the boundaries and rules of the group. Some example rules may include not taking phone calls in group, respecting the space of others, and following feedback requests of other participants. The facilitator should guide this conversation.

Discussions

Participants will engage in mini lectures and discussions for around 30 minutes on specific topics based on various creative writing research (Brandt; Cooley). Occasionally the mini lecture will include a discussion of a model text that writers will use to guide their own writing and thought processes (Cooley; Vakil). The goals of these discussions are to provide a space for learning and exploration for participants. Some discussions include writing to heal and descriptive writing/mindfulness.

Writing to Heal

The discussion on writing to heal is mostly supported by Pennebaker and DeSalvo's scholarship. This discussion focuses on encouraging, praising, and supporting vulnerability in participants as they write about their own life experiences and build a community of support (Bauer; Cepeda et al.; Charon; Zaharias). Participants will be encouraged to heal through the process of writing itself by constructing a coherent story to explain their various life experiences (Pennebaker). Specifically, the discussion on writing to heal includes exploration of the misconceptions of writing and research on what type of writing promotes the most healing.

Descriptive Writing & Mindfulness Discussion

A discussion of descriptive writing and mindfulness occurs in week 3. Since 1969, articles have supported the benefits of descriptive writing including that it is more enjoyable, teaches problem solving skills, promotes craft in writing, encourages thought of audience, and endorses creativity (Hauck; Stinson). Additionally, topics such as mindfulness have been found effective in promoting emotional growth in participants (Bauer; NCCS). By promoting both descriptive writing and mindfulness practices, the goal of this discussion is to provide participants with tools to use at home to improve their mental health and writing craft.

Writing Prompts

During each week, the facilitator should encourage creativity through optional writing prompts. In this model, prompts were informed by DeSalvo's book *Writing as a Way of Healing* to include the following options:

The goal of these writing prompts is to promote different types of writing that focus on healing and positivity in participant's lives. Alongside prompts from the literature, I utilized prompts from a variety of writing resources written by cancer survivors such as the book *Truth: Voices of Women Changed by Cancer* by Whistle Words and *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi. These resources helped bring in specific prompts and examples from fellow cancer survivors and sought

Link feelings to an event in your life

Write a letter to someone/something

Write a self care plan

Reflection letter

to help participants relate more to the prompts, writing, and one another. One important thing to note is when introducing writing prompts each session, I explained that these were optional, and participants were always welcome to work on a current project or other idea instead.

Freewrite

One key activity that is incorporated in five of the six group sessions is a freewrite. Freewriting

has been found effective for promoting writing skill development (Li), confidence in writing (Castle), and establishing a writing practice (Yates). Length of time was 10 minutes for each freewriting activity since this time interval was shown to keep participant's attention and stimulate crucial thought processes (Krut).

For each free writing activity, I provided several prompts. Many of these prompts such as week 2's prompt: "Look through the physical things you're carrying...write about the memories or emotions tied with each of them" and week 3's prompt: "A shoe falls out of the sky. Justify why" came from Staffaroni. During each free write, participants have the option to ignore the prompts and write what they would like instead. This is based on interviews conducted with writing group facilitators who explained that providing participants with options leads to a more cohesive and successful group.

Optional Sharing

A big component of the curriculum is optional sharing where participants will have the option to read what they wrote aloud and ask for feedback if they want to. In my experience, group members most frequently request that fellow participants comment on content or share similar experiences rather than focus on writing craft related feedback. Participants will discuss their writing projects as well as what kind of feedback they generally are looking for in week 1. This discussion is based on models where participants discuss what feedback they have gotten in the past and what good feedback is to them (Woods). The goal of optional sharing is to provide a space for participants to build community by sharing their projects and receiving feedback on it.

The most important aspect of this portion of the curriculum is the "optional" part. Based on interviews that I conducted with 23 professional writing group facilitators, it is critical to never require that participants share what they write during group time and facilitators give them agency in deciding when they would like to share.

Check Out

Another structural element to the curriculum is for participants to "check out" of each session by sharing what went well, identifying what they wanted more or less of, and committing to one take-away from the session. These check outs are supported by interviews conducted with facilitators that indicated that when participants have time to reflect on the group before leaving, they felt more satisfaction and cohesion.

Closing Discussion

During week 5, I allocated time to discuss the concept of the group ending. This is based on

termination research from therapeutic groups showing that allowing participants space to talk about their feelings and thoughts of the group closing promotes healthy, secure separation and boundaries (Syracuse University; Felton & Polwy). The goal of this discussion is to prepare participants for the end of the group, while ensuring they have a safe space to discuss the idea of the group ending. Some specific questions and prompts that are used include:

Community Reading

The last week of the curriculum is dedicated to a community reading. This concept comes from the creative writing field which encourages writers to read their work aloud for an audience. When it comes to scholarship on readings, there are many blog posts and tips on how to perform a good author reading or how to be a good audience member (e.g., Berve; Derk). However, I found little to no research on the actual benefits of community readings for a writing group. Author readings and



community readings/open mics are very common in the creative writing community, so I was a bit surprised to see such little research on their effectiveness, benefits, or structure.

Despite the gaps in research around this topic, I incorporated the community reading element into the curriculum as a way to celebrate, recognize, and honor the work the group has done over the previous weeks. The reading begins with a small welcoming ceremony where the facilitator should reflect on the time spent together. After, each person in the group reads a piece or section they wrote aloud. The community reading ends with a small closing gathering.

To determine the audience for this reading event, facilitators should ask participants what they feel comfortable with through a survey to determine if the event will be public (open to everyone and promoted in media), semi-private (friends and family of group members), or private (only group members).

METHODOLOGY

Summary

In the summer of 2022, I piloted the curriculum with a writing group of six cancer survivors. Due to the pandemic and in-person constraints with vulnerable populations, I decided to host the writing group over Zoom.

Recruitment Process

To qualify for this study, participants were required to be healed from cancer for at least one year, be 18 years or older, and live in Ohio. Recruitment was conducted through several organizations' platforms. First, Lit Youngstown is "a community-based literary arts nonprofit with programs for writers, readers and storytellers" (Lit Youngstown). The organization's mission is to "provide opportunities for writers and readers to experience and enjoy the literary arts" (Lit Youngstown), which included hiring me on as the Outreach Coordinator for the organization and supporting the pilot test writing group. The writing group was promoted across Lit Youngstown's newsletter and social media platforms as well as press releases for several months leading up to the start of the group.

Additionally, Yellow Brick Place (YBP) was a partner throughout this research and implementation process. YBP is a nonprofit organization in Youngstown that focuses on providing non-medical services free of charge to cancer patients, families, and caregivers. YBP promoted the writing group through their social media, newsletter, and events.

Finally, in May of 2021, I consulted several times with a research team of professionals in the writing field. They included: 1). Hilary Plum of Cleveland State University (CSU), 2). Zachary Savich, an instructor at Cleveland Institute of Art who has survived cancer, 3). Valentino Zullo, a therapist specializing in maternal depression and an instructor at Cleveland Institute of Art, and 4). Rachel Bracken from the Northeast Ohio Medical Program, NEOMED. This research team assisted me in obtaining IRB approval for this study through CSU and helped ensure the curriculum was evidence-based and effective for the population.

Through the assistance of these people and organizations, we were able to recruit six amazing participants that completed the six-week writing group.

Overview of Participants

Upon registration, each of the six participants signed informed consent forms and completed baseline characteristics forms. Of the six participants, there were five female participants and one

male participant. Additionally, participants ranged from 25 to over 75 years old with most participants being between 35-54 years old. Four participants identified themselves as Caucasian, one as “other,” and one as Latina. Participants had a variety of cancers including breast cancer, prostate cancer, and T-cell lymphoma. Most participants were at least two years healed from cancer with one participant being healed for seven years.

Research Questions

This study sought to determine the healing benefits of a writing group for cancer survivors. The purpose of this study was to answer the following research questions:

- 1). Was the curriculum effective for a writing group with cancer survivors?
- 2). What correlations exist between attending a writing group and participants’ anxiety, depression, and stress scores?

Surveys and Questionnaires

To measure psychological distress and healing benefits of the 6-week pilot group, participants took a survey administered three times: at the end of week 1, at the end of week 5, and after the last group meeting. The survey was the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale formally called the DASS-21 (Appendix A). This survey has been found to be successful in measuring depression, anxiety, and stress for over 20 years (Brown et al.; Gloster et al.). Specifically, this survey has been shown to have high internal consistency and reliability (Kipu Health).

Additionally, at the end of the 6-week group, participants had the option to partake in a focus group. Two of six participants joined this focus group and Hilary Plum facilitated it to prevent bias or hesitance to speak negatively about the group in front of the facilitator. Focus group questions included the following: 1). Tell me a little bit about how you feel now that the group is over, 2). What were some of your favorite activities in the group? 3). What is your favorite memory from group? 4). What are some tips you would tell a new participant coming into the group? 5). What do you think the group facilitator could improve for next time? 6). Is there anything else you’d like to share about the group?

Participants were provided a total of \$30 in gift cards as compensation for research surveys. The first \$10 gift card was provided at the end of meeting 1 after participants took the survey, a second \$10 was given at the end of meeting 5 to those who completed another DASS-21, and a third \$10 was provided after participants submitted responses for the last survey post-group.

Analysis Method

DASS-21 scores were compiled and analyzed utilizing the scoring measures of the assessment. From there, point differences were rated throughout the three survey results, determining if participants' psychological distress changed throughout the intervention. The focus group was recorded and transcribed to determine feedback and responses to the intervention. All results were anonymized and compiled into findings for this pilot test.

Limitations

There are many limitations of this study to take into consideration including that individual characteristics of participants may impact satisfaction of the group experience. For instance, individual factors such as enjoying writing, preferring one genre over another, or seeking professionalization could greatly impact one's enjoyment of this writing group.

Another limitation is that outside factors such as complications with further illness, financial problems, and so forth could significantly impact the participant's ability to participate meaningfully in the group. Additionally, this study will not be generalizable across the United States or for all community-based writing groups.

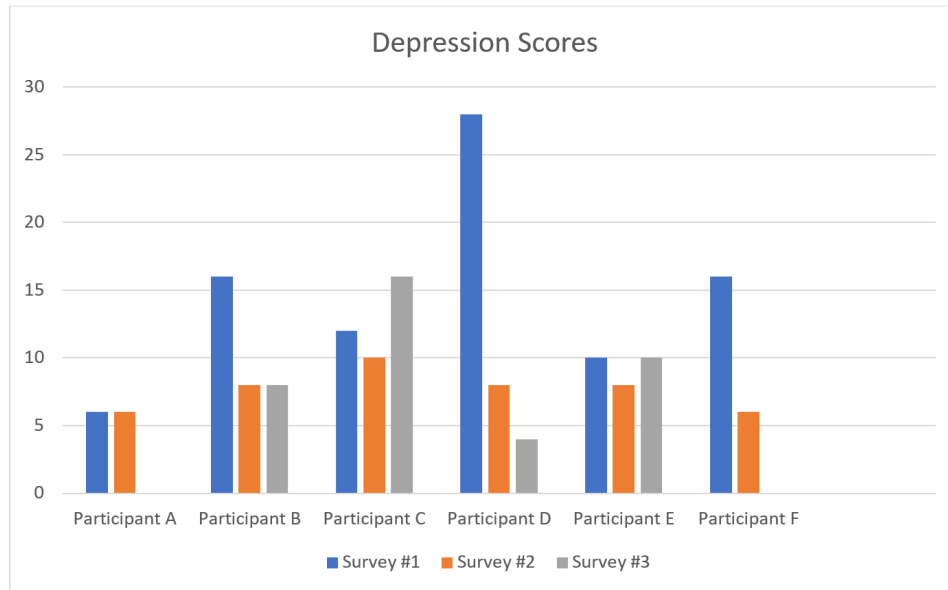
The largest limitation of this study is the small sample size and lack of comparison groups. Due to constraints from the pandemic, this research struggled to obtain enough participants to conduct a full experimental design study. With only six participants partaking in the study, it is difficult to say for certain if the intervention of the writing group participated to the psychological findings of the study. However, the positive findings and feedback from the participants creates a need for this curriculum to be conducted and studied with more participants in the future to continue increasing the database of healing impacts of a writing group for cancer survivors.

FINDINGS

Psychological Well-Being Scores

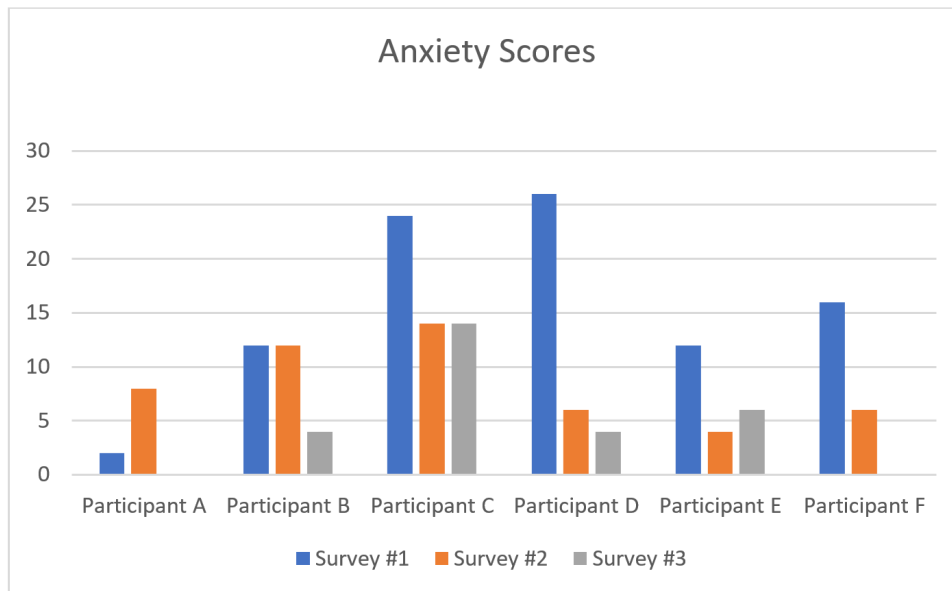
Though survey scores cannot be entirely attributed to the writing group intervention, there was a staggering amount of positive psychological outcomes among the six participants. Five of six participants took all the surveys, and one participant took the first two surveys but not the third. Every participant showed decreased measures of at least one psychological distress symptom (depression, anxiety, or stress) between week 1 and week 5 as shown in the charts below.

When looking at depression scores among the participants, five of six participants decreased at least once throughout the six-week intervention. Two participants decreased twice between



survey #1 and #3. Specifically, between survey 1 and 2, Participant B went from moderate levels of depression to normal levels, Participant C decreased depression by 1, Participant D decreased from extreme levels of depression to normal levels, Participant E started with mild levels of depression and decreased to normal levels, and Participant F decreased from moderate levels to normal levels of depression. Participant A had no data for survey #3.

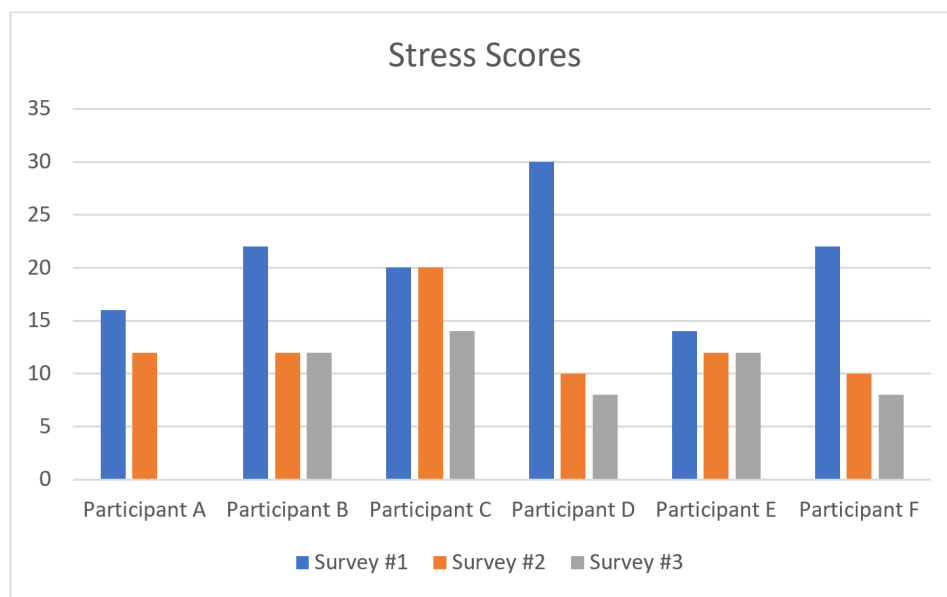
Between survey #2 and survey #3, Participants D and F decreased in depression whereas Participants C and E increased slightly. It is important to note that neither participant increased enough to



where it was a significant increase; however, some increases in depression could be due to sadness from the group ending.

For anxiety scores, five of six participants decreased scores between Survey #1 and Survey #3. Specifically, Participants B, D and F decreased significantly between the second and third surveys. Participant C, D, E, and F decreased significantly between the first and the second surveys. Participant A had no data for survey #3.

When analyzing stress scores, every participant's scores decreased by at least one measure throughout the 6-week period with no participant's scores increasing. All six participants scored at



normal levels of stress by the third survey according to DASS-21 measures. Specifically, Participants B, D, and F went from severe or moderate levels of stress to normal levels by the end of the intervention.

While scores and improvements in depression, anxiety and stress cannot be attributed entirely to the writing group, participants reported the group as a positive force in their life. Specifically, during the focus group there were several positive responses.

Focus-Group Responses

Due to schedule complications, only two participants joined the focus group but several more gave their thoughts about the group through emails and post-group writings. During the focus group, participants answered six questions with several in-depth responses.

1). Tell me a little bit about how you feel now that the group is over.

The first participant began by saying that she “already misses it” and it was something she looked forward to every week. The second participant agreed saying that she “misses it too” and explaining that she polished the poem from the community reading and shared it with her family. The second participant shared that the group was a welcoming and inspiring space for her. The first participant explained that the “group was really cohesive” and it feels “sad now that it’s over.”

2). What were some of your favorite activities or memories from the group?

The first participant explained that she “liked having the prompts and that there was an option to have a freewrite or the prompts” and that “it was nice to have those options.” She expanded, saying that “the talks were great. Especially talking of our own experiences” and that “the last night that we met and read our work and did the reading, that was my favorite.”

The second participant said that “our first meeting was wonderful. She [facilitator] had us do a poem where we shared where we were from. The last meeting where we shared our writing was the highlight of the group. But when we shared our cancer journey, that was another highlight of the group. So, I would say the first night, the last night, and the sharing of our cancer journeys.”

3). What are some tips you would tell a new participant coming into the group?

The first participant said to “be open to a new experience, to listening to other people. There’s an opportunity to be vulnerable but you don’t have to if you don’t want to be. But it’s a chance to really explore some deep stuff. It’s more than just a writing group where you share writing, we shared a lot of stuff. Be open to that possibility.”

The second participant expanded “there was an opportunity to have more than just superficial sharing, and everyone seemed to want to do that. Cassandra was wonderful because she was open, and she provided structure but not insisting that we stick to some kind of agenda. If there was some kind of tangent, she went where the group was going. Be open to where the group is going, even when the group doesn’t know where it’s going, but be trusting in the process of the sharing and the writing.”

4). What do you think the group facilitator could improve for next time?

The first participant said that there were some practical and logistical things such as scheduling group meetings that were tough at times. The second participant explained that she would have

liked more “guided poetry. Because that helped me tap into something I hadn’t experienced before as someone new to writing and poetry.”

5). *Is there anything else you’d like to share about the group?*

The first participant explained that the online opportunity “allowed them to meet one another” and they wouldn’t have met each other otherwise since “Zoom opened it up to other geographical areas” beside Youngstown. The second participant expanded saying that “Zoom worked better than I expected, and it didn’t seem to take away from the coming together of the group. We really were connecting to each other even though it was a Zoom format and not in person.”

The first participant explained that “the group was a really great opportunity to meet like-minded people. It was a good group of personalities in general and everyone was willing to share things and participate. She got to know people that she wouldn’t have known otherwise.”

The second participant explained that “I wish we could continue meeting. I felt like the premise of our meeting being cancer survivors brought it down to a human level. We were talking about what our experiences as a human being are. That means a lot. We were not wearing masks or labels; we were just being ourselves.”

The second participant ended by explaining that “the whole point of the group was healing through storytelling and I think that was proven to be true. I think we all verbalized that, and we all found it to be a therapeutic experience. I certainly did. I feel like I’m in a different place than I was six weeks ago, in large part because I met with this group of people and doing what we did and sharing what we shared.”

CONCLUSION

Cancer is an illness that rips away so much from thousands of Americans each year, and once surviving this illness, survivors are faced with significant additional symptoms such as psychological distress that can impede them from enjoying their life to the fullest. Writing groups are one of the few destigmatized interventions that have the potential to promote positive well-being for cancer survivors. Through the creation and pilot testing of the curriculum, I found writing groups to be especially beneficial in assisting cancer survivors with anxiety, depression, and stress.

Overall, I hope my fellow writing group facilitators will implement the curriculum as they see fit and work with the populations that are close to their hearts. Through more research, we can gather larger amounts of data to help show the benefits of writing groups for a variety of populations.

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APPENDIX A: DASS SURVEY

DASS21	<i>Name:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<p>Please read each statement and circle a number 0, 1, 2 or 3 which indicates how much the statement applied to you <i>over the past week</i>. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any statement.</p> <p><i>The rating scale is as follows:</i></p> <p>0 Did not apply to me at all</p> <p>1 Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time</p> <p>2 Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of time</p> <p>3 Applied to me very much, or most of the time</p>		
1	I found it hard to wind down	0 1 2 3
2	I was aware of dryness of my mouth	0 1 2 3
3	I couldn't seem to experience any positive feeling at all	0 1 2 3
4	I experienced breathing difficulty (e.g., excessively rapid breathing, breathlessness in the absence of physical exertion)	0 1 2 3
5	I found it difficult to work up the initiative to do things	0 1 2 3
6	I tended to over-react to situations	0 1 2 3
7	I experienced trembling (e.g., in the hands)	0 1 2 3
8	I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy	0 1 2 3
9	I was worried about situations in which I might panic and make a fool of myself	0 1 2 3
10	I felt that I had nothing to look forward to	0 1 2 3
11	I found myself getting agitated	0 1 2 3
12	I found it difficult to relax	0 1 2 3
13	I felt down-hearted and blue	0 1 2 3
14	I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing	0 1 2 3
15	I felt I was close to panic	0 1 2 3
16	I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything	0 1 2 3
17	I felt I wasn't worth much as a person	0 1 2 3
18	I felt that I was rather touchy	0 1 2 3
19	I was aware of the action of my heart in the absence of physical exertion (e.g., sense of heart rate increase, heart missing a beat)	0 1 2 3
20	I felt scared without any good reason	0 1 2 3
21	I felt that life was meaningless	0 1 2 3