Journaling for Stress Management:
A Self-Management Project
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Introduction

- Three antecedent manipulations were evaluated over the course of 26 weeks with the final intervention being the most successful for obtaining maximum participation in journaling.

Purpose: achieve effective stress relief by writing a journal entry of at least 500 words daily.

Measurement & Design

- The entries were only counted as occurring if they reached a word count of at least 500.
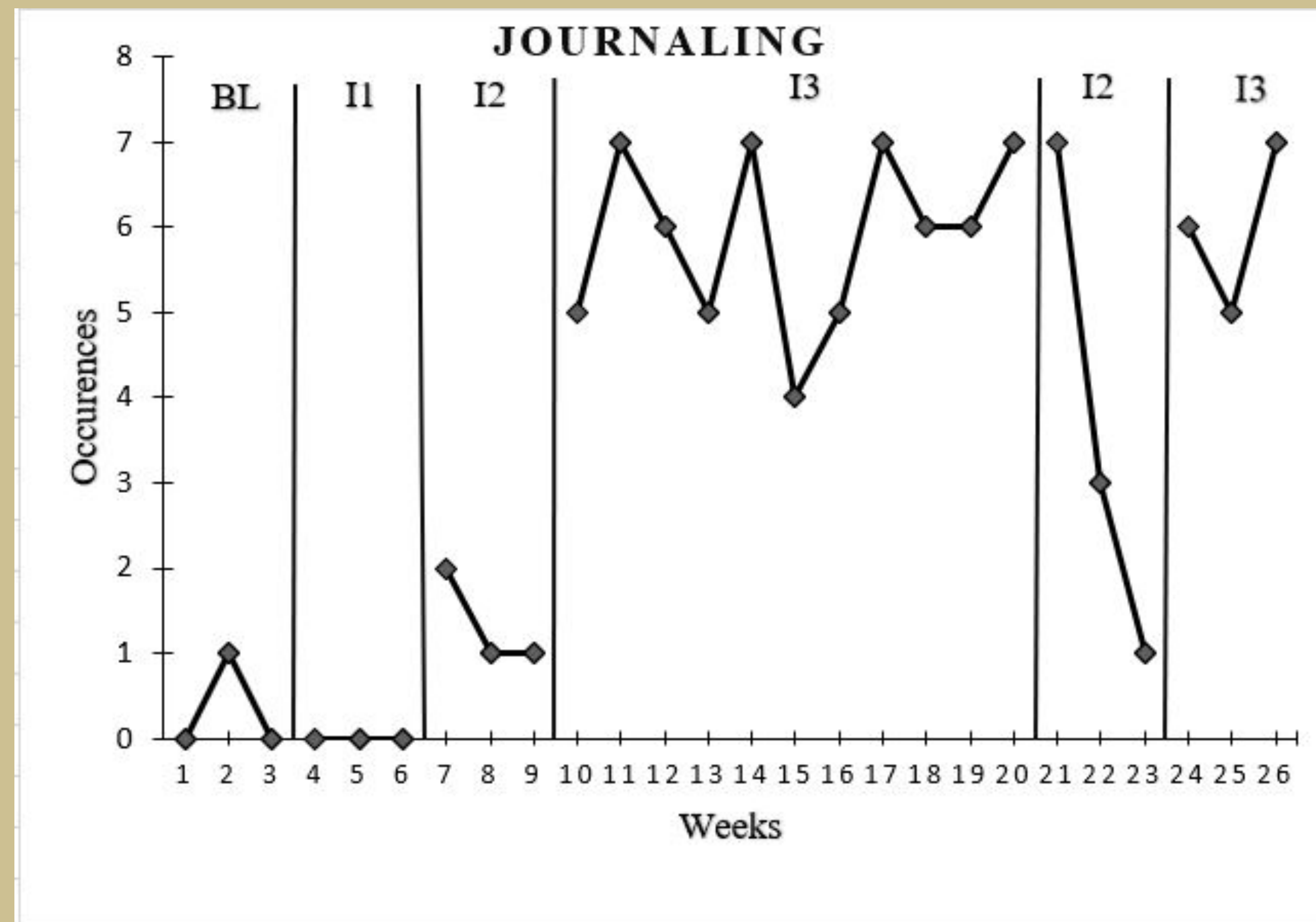- The entries were written on Microsoft Word to keep track of the word count.

Figure 1: Total occurrences of journaling per week during baseline, intervention 1, intervention 2, and intervention 3.

		I2			I3												I2			I3		
Week		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20		21	22	23	24	25	26
Average Pre-journal stress level		3.5	3.5	4.0	3.8	3.6	2.7	2.4	3.1	3.0	3.4	3.3	2.7	2.8	3.2		3.1	3.0	4.0	3.3	2.6	2.9
Average Post-journal stress level		1.5	1.5	2.0	2.2	1.9	1.8	2.0	2.0	2.5	3.0	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.8		2.0	2.0	3.0	2.3	1.8	1.6
Difference		-2.0	-2.0	-2.0	-1.6	-2.0	-0.9	-0.4	-1.1	-0.5	-0.4	-1.7	-1.0	-1.1	-1.4		-1.1	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-0.8	-1.3

Figure 2: Average stress level pre- and post-journal along with the differences of each week.

		I2			I3												I2			I3		
Weeks		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20		21	22	23	24	25	26
Average Pre-Journal (BPM)		86.0	104.0	80.0	92.0	89.7	81.5	68.2	81.9	87.8	93.0	92.3	84.7	80.2	83.9		84.7	87.3	89.0	86.0	78.2	83.1
Average Post-Journal (BPM)		74.0	92.0	80.0	82.2	82.6	78.8	67.6	80.1	84.3	89.8	91.0	82.5	82.5	81.0		81.7	84.0	84.0	80.8	75.8	79.9
Difference (BPM)		-12.0	-12.0	0.0	-9.8	-7.1	-2.7	-0.6	-1.7	-3.5	-3.2	-1.3	-2.2	2.3	-2.9		-3.0	-3.3	-5.0	-5.2	-2.4	-3.2

Figure 3: Average beats per minute (BPM) pre- and post-journal along with the differences of each week.

Procedure

- Baseline: No programmed contingencies
- Intervention 1: An alarm was created to sound every day at 5:00 p.m.
- Intervention 2: Microsoft Word document tab kept opened where the journal is located while homework and other tasks were completed.
- Intervention 3: A reminder was created as a screensaver on the participant's iPhone.

Results and Discussion

- Baseline, Intervention 1, and Intervention 2 were unsuccessful in creating consistent occurrences of the target behavior.
- Intervention 3 provided functional control over journaling.

Limitations

- Self-management project
- No set routine or time limit was in place while the heartrate was recorded.
- A therapeutic journaling approach could have been applied to the journal entries.