



LOOK WITHIN:
A Woman's Journal



Melanie J. Davis, PhD, CSE

Praise for Look Within: A Woman's Journal

"In Look Within, Melanie Davis combines the girlfriendly truths of our adolescence with the wise reflections of womanhood into one thought-provoking journal about life, sex, and self-esteem. Grab a pen and your copy and prepare to re-awaken your sexual curiosity and self-awareness."

*Jen Singer
author and blogger*

"By creating Look Within: A Woman's Journal certified sex educator Dr. Melanie Davis has given a gift to women, who will appreciate a place to reflect on topics they may never have thought of before. Professionals also will like the book as a tool to use with individual women and groups. Dr. Davis includes fun quotes to give the reader encouragement along the way.

*Stephanie Buehler, PsyD, CST-S
Author of What Every Mental Health Professional
Needs to Know about Sex*

"Look Within is a lovely book of questions for women to reflect upon in a gentle, self-accepting way. This book will help many women explore, nurture and reclaim their sexuality and selves. I love it!"

*Andrea Reese
Certified NYC Barbara Sher
Success Team Leader*

“This is one of the most user-friendly and comprehensive guides for women’s reflection I’ve seen. Dr. Davis’s thoughtful and intriguing prompts mirror her warmth, insight and intelligence and combine to offer a unique and exciting addition to a woman’s personal journey and to women’s support groups or discussion groups.”

Yolanda Turner, PhD
Eastern University & Central Counseling
Associates



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Illustrated by Paige Davis-Kleppinger



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Introduction

Welcome to *Look Within: A Woman's Journal*, where you can more deeply explore what makes you a special, unique woman.

Within these pages, you are encouraged to explore your thoughts, feelings and ideas by reflecting on what you appreciate and enjoy about yourself as well as your expectations and hopes for the future.

Look Within asks you to reflect specifically on your sexuality, which is an essential part of what makes you human. The prompts help you consider how you feel about yourself, your body, relationships, desires, fantasies, needs, womanhood, wants, fears, challenges, turn-ons, habits, joys, memories, dreams and passions. When you increase your understanding of your sexuality, you understand yourself better overall.

Look Within is different from other journals you may have used. Each two-page spread prompts you to reflect on a specific topic. You can address the prompts in order, or you can jump around, visiting topics that intrigue you.

Try to use this as a reflection journal rather than a daily diary. Bypass first impressions in favor of considering new ways of looking at yourself and the possibilities that await you. For example, if a prompt says, "My body feels best when..." you may immediately think, "I take a walk." However, if you were to reflect before answering, you may realize that the act of walking makes you feel healthier or closer to nature or relieved to escape stresses at home. Once you identify the core answer, you may also want to consider whether or not any changes are necessary, for example: more walks, closer communication with your friend or changes at home that may help you reduce your stress.

You may want to leave space at the end of each reflection so you can revisit topics as time passes. If you date each entry, you can observe your personal growth and changing perspectives over time. You may wish to discuss your insights with other women who are also using the journal; tips for creating a discussion group or book club based on the journal are included at the back of the book.

Allow yourself to capture your reflections without censoring them, because there are neither right answers nor wrong ones. Personal reflections are not a contract, a promise or an obligation. They are opportunities to explore ideas differently than you otherwise might. You will likely find some prompts more challenging than others; indeed, some may bring up uncomfortable memories, while others put a smile on your face, a flutter in your heart or a sexy tingle on the back of your neck.

If the reflection process raises new or troubling issues that you want to discuss with a professional, you may find a provider in your community by contacting the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists or by contacting the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists.

I hope you will appreciate and enjoy this process of self-reflection and self-exploration—you deserve a chance to get to know yourself better!

Peace,
Melanie

PS: I would love to know how you use this journal, what helped you and what you would like to see more of. Please send feedback to me at Answers@MelanieDavisPhD.com, with Journal Feedback in the subject line. I look forward to hearing from you.

About the Author

Melanie Davis is a Certified Sexuality Educator through the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists. She provides private sexuality education consulting to teens and adults and is a highly popular speaker as well as a sexuality trainer for healthcare providers and educators.

Melanie holds a doctorate in Human Sexuality Education from Widener University and is an adjunct professor at Moravian College. She is co-president of the Sexuality and Aging Consortium at Widener University. Her first book was *Sexuality Talking Points*, a manual for parents seeking to talk comfortably with their children about sexuality. She and her husband, Bill, have three adult daughters and two dogs.

*Honor your younger self, no matter how naïve, silly,
scary, sad or heedlessly optimistic you were. Your
earliest ideas and experiences helped create
the woman you are today.*

Look Within

My Younger Self



