Many people who are diagnosed with cancer may experience emotional distress. Their loved ones and caregivers can also experience emotional distress. This distress can be impacted by physical symptoms of the disease, side effects from treatment, financial impact of cancer, and other life stressors. Additionally, distress can impact the way a person copes with their diagnosis, makes decisions about their medical care, and can affect their interpersonal relationships. There are many effective ways for someone to manage their distress including individual counseling, meditation, journaling, and joining a support group.

Why Join a Support Group?
Oncology support groups provide a unique opportunity for patients and caregivers to both provide and receive support from their peers. A common cause of distress is feeling isolated and alone due to their disease. Attending a cancer support group helps patients and caregivers identify with others in similar circumstances. They can share their experiences and learn from others. The comradery from a support group can be vital to emotional well-being.

What is Expressive Writing?
Expressive writing is different than journaling which is a common practice to improve coping in patients with cancer and their caregivers. Typically, expressive writing is structured and focused. Participants write for 10-15 minutes a day for 4 days on their deepest thoughts, feelings and experiences. Research has shown that expressive writing provides long-term improvements in mood.

Overview of the Group
Participants in the group will receive a writing prompt and instructions after registration. You will be asked to spend 10-15 minutes a day writing in response to the prompt. Participants will then attend a 60 minute virtual support group in which 20 minutes will be spent allowing participants to share excerpts from their writing and the remaining 40 minutes processing any emotional responses. By combining the elements of expressive writing and a support group, we hope you will experience a positive impact on your mood and coping skills. Healing Through Writing class does not require a referral. Please contact the Integrative Medicine Center at 713-794-4700 to register for the journaling class.
Ingredients:
• ¼ cup almond milk
• ¼ cup plain kefir
• 1 teaspoon Agave nectar (optional)
• 1 cup frozen peaches

Instructions:
1. Place all ingredients in the order listed and secure lid.
2. Blend for 1 minute or until desired consistency.

*Recipe courtesy of https://www.justataste.com/healthy-easy-peach-frozen-yogurt-recipe/