

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background and objectives of the writer in choosing this translation project.

### **1.1. Background**

The writer's major concern in working on this translation thesis is the Indonesian people's unawareness about the necessity of preserving mental health. In 2016, the World Health Organization (WHO) revealed that Indonesia's number of suicide deaths is predicted to be the highest in Southeast Asia. These suicides are not only carried out by young adults but also by children and teenagers. The number of deaths due to suicide in Indonesia is around 9,000 cases per year (Kementerian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 2019).

Many factors make people decide to commit suicide, but the main factor is mental illness. Mental illness is caused by excessive negative emotions that are not appropriately handled. Unfortunately, Indonesian people mostly do not think that mental health is essential in their life. For instance, in other countries, South Korea and the USA, people who have mental illness already know where to go and what to do. It is perfectly normal for people overseas to go to a psychiatrist when they have mental problems. While in Indonesia, people mostly think someone is weird or not normal when they go to a psychiatrist or when someone tells their friend that they are depressed. Most of their closest people even underestimate the problem and give negative responses. Sometimes

it even becomes an excuse for them to bully their friends. In short, many people shy away from anyone suffering from mental illness. It is unfortunate that in Indonesia, many people are not conscious of the importance of mental health. For all individuals, mental, physical and social health are vital strands of life that are closely interwoven and interdependent. As understanding of this relationship grows, it becomes increasingly clear that mental health is critical to the well-being of individuals, communities, and nations (Government of Canada, 2006).

Every human being must always experience various kinds of emotions every day, positive emotions and negative emotions. Positive emotions include feelings of happiness, calm, and joy, while negative emotions include anger, fear, anxiety, and sadness. Whatever emotions every human being experienced, they must be channeled and appropriately vented to not harm oneself and others.

Moreover, many people do not know how to channel their emotions, especially negative emotions, appropriately. Not everyone can share feelings or problems they have with others because they may feel uncomfortable about it. Unfortunately, many people do not understand how to deal with it. Many of them prefer to keep it to themselves without telling anyone, which often makes them stressed. Habits like this are not good because these bad habits can make people feel even more mentally burdened, making them feel even more lonely.

Mental health must be maintained properly. It is one of the most common difficulties faced by many people. One approach to deal with any overwhelming emotion is to find good and healthy ways to express yourself. This makes

journaling a helpful tool in managing your mental health (Keech & Coberly-Holt, 2021). Hence, the writer could say that journaling is the best answer to overcome this problem. Journaling is familiar to many people. However, not many people know the benefits of this activity. Journaling is one of the activities that need to be done in maintaining human mental health. A journal is often considered the same as a diary containing a person's daily stories for most people. Some people even write diaries to vent both the positive and negative emotions they experienced that day. We can vent our feelings through journaling without worrying that others will find out or judge us because most people harbor their feelings and problems for fear of being judged by others.

Journaling is not just an activity of writing stories about our experiences and daily activities. This activity is useful as a mental therapy which helps us to be able to move the negative emotions we experience to positive things. In the process of journaling, we learn to be honest with ourselves, learn about our own thought patterns, and we can also better understand the emotions we have.

Many studies have shown that journaling can reduce stress. One of which is entitled *The Health Benefits of Journaling*, written by Maud Purcell, a psychotherapist and an expert in journaling. The author states that journaling provides many unexpected benefits. One is to reduce stress: writing about anger, sadness, and other painful emotions helps release the intensity of those feelings. Anyone doing it will therefore feel calmer and stronger able to stay in the present (Purcell, 2006). Not only that, but we will also get many useful things through this activity. Journaling can help us get through tough times. This

activity helps each individual who does it to think more clearly to find answers to the problems at hand. This activity can also hone creativity, improve memory, and other positive benefits. The writer is one of the many people who have experienced the benefits I mentioned earlier.

Writing in particular, is a powerful tool in exploring thoughts, as well as feelings directly, without the need for special training. It permits people to do so privately, without fear of discomfort and embarrassment. Raithatha (2021) claims,

Writing as a form of self-therapy is profound in that it enables the writer to disclose to their notebook or paper, as much, or as little as they wish. It allows the writer to take complete control in what they wish to explore, how far they wish to take it and to stop whenever they wish; a process similar to talking with a therapist but without the financial outlay or time constraints (Raithatha, 2021).

The writer once read a book entitled *Stillness Is the Key*. There is a great saying that I enjoy, “That is what journaling is about. It’s a break from the world. A framework for the day ahead. A coping mechanism for troubles of the hours just past. A revving up of your creative juices, for relaxing and clearing” (Holiday, 2019).

The writer likes reading self-help books because the writer feels that books in this genre are beneficial for readers. Moreover, the writer is one of those who like to write. Because of this book, the writer is increasingly aware of the importance of releasing emotions appropriately. Especially since the COVID-19 pandemic, many people are stressed because circumstances have changed entirely from before. That is why the writer chooses and is motivated to translate a book entitled *WRITE YOURSELF HAPPY: The Art of Positive Journaling* by

Megan C Hayes PhD. This book was first published in 2018. In this book, Hayes shows us how, using a positive journal, could make us happier, maintain our mental health, and help us live better lives, especially in these difficult times.

## **1.2. Project Objectives**

The first objective of translating this book is that it will hopefully help us not simply feel better but also live better. The writer wants to help many people maintain their mental health. Researchers believe this book can be useful for people. Many people struggle because they do not know how to properly vent their emotions, especially those who like to bury their own problems. The writer believes that this book can make many people happier by releasing their emotions, especially negative emotions, through journal writing appropriately. The most important thing is that the writer really wants to raise Indonesian people's awareness of the importance of mental health.

Furthermore, the writer wants to share this true source of positivity for Indonesian readers, especially those whose English capacity does not allow them to access the book. English is an international language that we must learn in school, but there are still many people who do not understand this language. Many people like to read and are attracted to books like this but do not understand them because they use English. It is a shame if the language barrier keeps people from reading this book. There are also many people who understand English but in a broad sense. Reading the original language version of the book, English, can indeed hone our abilities. However, it is unfortunate

if the reader misunderstands the message conveyed and meant by the author because of a lack of understanding of the book's original language.

Apart from language barriers, not all cities have access to purchase imported books. The majority of imported books are only sold in big cities—for instance, this book. In Indonesia, this book is only available in two bookstores in Jakarta. Usually, translated books are easier to find. That is why the writer is motivated to do this translation project.

The writer rarely finds books like this in Indonesia. However, the writer has read several articles about journaling in Indonesian, one of which is an article from (KejarMimpi, n.d.) web entitled *LEBIH POSITIF DENGAN MULAI MENULIS JURNAL. BEGINI CARANYA!* The content presented in the article is very good where it is said that journal writing activities are beneficial as mental therapy that helps us to be able to move the negative emotions we experience into positive things. Hence, the writer believes that this book deserves to be translated because Indonesian readers need many books like this.

Lastly, since many people prefer to keep their problems to themselves, or even feel that it is not enough to tell others and do not know what to do. The writer believes this is the ideal book to translate because, at the very least, people can help themselves deal with the difficulties that arise in each person's life by reading this book.