

THE POWER OF JOURNALING

Tips to start your journaling habit.



Why journal?

Setting aside some dedicated time to reflect on and write about your life can be incredibly powerful, not only as a way to keep a record for posterity but also as a cathartic release.

Scientific research has linked journaling with sounder sleep, better health and improved emotional wellbeing. Writing in a mindful way can help you to:

- process things in difficult times
- solve problems
- tune into the things you have to be grateful for
- think toward the future and develop new ideas
- identify behavioural patterns and negative thought cycles
- set, chase and achieve goals

Find your why

The wealth of benefits listed above are all good reasons to start a journaling practice, but getting clear on exactly why YOU want to journal will help you to stick with the habit.

Try answering these questions before you start putting pen to paper:

- What do I hope to get from keeping a journal?
- How much time can I realistically give to it?
- What things do I want to write about?
- What type of journaling am I interested in?

What should I journal in?

There are a lot of different journals on the market, but the truth is a simple notebook and pen is all that you need.

Of course, you can invest in a special notebook or buy a journal complete with prompts. Choose whatever feels right for you.

How to journal

There really are no rules for journaling. You can literally grab a pen and start writing what is on your mind. It's just about finding what works best for you, and not over complicating, as that is where the benefit and motivation lies.

If you are unsure what may work best for you, then here is a short list of some popular types of journaling you may wish to explore:

- *Stream of consciousness* - no prompts, no specific intention. Simply write whatever thoughts, feelings and reflections come organically to mind.
- *Gratitude* - rather than write about random thoughts about your day, you write about the things you are grateful for (big or small).
- *Journalling prompts* - use specific topics or questions to inspire you and write about.
- *Goal setting* - write about your dreams and set intentions to help you create the future the desire
- *Celebrate your wins* - write down any successes, big or small, and reflect on what you did well and how it made you feel.

Building the habit

Make journaling a daily practice and try to anchor it to an existing habit, like your morning coffee or reading a book at bedtime.

The time of day does not matter so long as it is convenient for you. If you opt for the morning, try to journal before you pick up your phone and engage with the outside world. If you prefer the evening, then incorporate into your wind-down routine before bed.

Write down whatever is on your mind and don't be concerned with the quality of the writing or the length of time you spend journaling. Be in the moment and let the thoughts flow.

Journaling prompts

- 3 things I am grateful for today...
- One thing I'd like to do well today...
- Today I am looking forward to...
- Today I want to make time for...
- What is going well in my life right now?
- What brings me joy? How can I have more of that in my life?
- One thing in my life I would change right now is...
- Today I feel...
- What can I do today to make progress toward my goals?
- If I couldn't fail, I would...
- I am proud of myself for...
- My ideal day looks like...
- Today I learned...
- Tomorrow I hope that...

