

Tips for Journaling

1. Use an inexpensive spiral notebook or composition book as your journal. It's hard to scribble freely in a special or expensive book and you need to be free to write or draw anything. Save your beautiful leather-bound journal with handmade paper pages as a place to record your favorite poetry or quotations.
2. Keep a special pen with your journal or even a set of colored pens. You can use a color that matches your mood or switch colors to highlight a portion of your journal entry.
3. Have crayons or colored pencils on hand if you enjoy drawing. Some days it is nice to illustrate your journal entries or use a picture instead of words to convey your feelings.
4. Choose a regular time every day for journaling and try to stick with it. Some people like to get up a little early and journal in the morning to set their intention for the day. Others like to write before bedtime and reflect on issues and events that arose during the day. It doesn't matter when you journal, only that you do it consistently.
5. Start with a 90-day journaling challenge. Commit to journaling once a day – even if only a few sentences – for the next 90 days. Once you complete the challenge journaling will have become a habit and will be much easier to follow through with every day.
6. Even if you are very short on time, write at least a few sentences in your journal. The act of opening your journal, recording the date and scribbling a few lines will help you continue your practice.
7. Do a 4-spectrum check-in when you journal: How am I doing right now in Body, Mind, Spirit and Shadow?
8. List all the things you are grateful for in your life.
9. Document your ups and downs in life by recording all the positive things that have happened since your last entry and the things you wish had been different.
10. Set a goal for the coming day and write about how you intend to meet that goal.
11. Reflect on the day that has ended and write about what you have learned.
12. Record any dreams that you remember and write your analysis of the meaning.
13. Keep track of ongoing conflicts you have with other people and reflect on why you have issues with those people and what you might do to make things better. This can help you get in touch with your own Shadow.
14. Try writing in a free-flow style and just record anything that comes into your mind without judging it or trying to make the words sound good. Sometimes amazing insights can arise from this type of writing.
15. Make a list of your grandest goals for your life. What would you do if money and time were no object and anything was possible?

16. Use your journal as a place to ventilate your emotions. Since no one else will read it you can freely let out all your frustration and anger until you feel a release inside. After you exhaust your negative feelings it's a good idea to end the entry on a calmer note and try to come to a positive conclusion about the situation that has been upsetting you. Can you find anything good to say?
17. Draw a picture of your negative emotion: what color is it? What shape does it have? Where does it live in your body?
18. Make a list of the people who have influenced you the most in your life and record what you have learned from them.
19. Record all significant events of your life in your journal such as a wedding, new job, new relationship, loss of an old relationship, birth of a child, travel, illness, award or accomplishment. In the future you will appreciate being able to look back at an intimate record of these special times.
20. Write about the people in your life who have caused you the most frustration. What have you learned from them?
21. Attach photographs to your journal pages that represent significant events to provide an even more memorable record of the event.
22. Write about what you have learned from failure and from success in your life. How have those lessons been similar and how have they differed?
23. Write about the "sentinel moment" of the preceding day. In what moment did you stop for a second and savor life, truly appreciating everything?
24. Use your journal as a place to track your progress when you are working toward a new goal, such as changing your lifestyle or learning a new skill.
25. Write a letter to yourself in the past. Comfort your child-self or explain how things will get better if there is an unhappy memory that still haunts you.
26. Write a letter to yourself in the future. Tell your future self what dreams you have and what you hope to accomplish or learn.
27. Record the small details of life along with the big events. Write about how much you enjoyed eating a fresh peach or watching the sunset or going for a walk.
28. Listen to a favorite song while you journal and write about how the music makes you feel. Where does it take you? Why do you love it?
29. Write a letter to someone who hurt you in the past. Write about your negative feelings but try to reach a place of peace and forgiveness toward that person.
30. Write about your deepest fears and concerns. Look at them courageously and have compassion with yourself for being fearful, but imagine yourself being unafraid.