Mastering Journaling: Tips and Tricks to Become a Journaling Expert

Journaling, in essence, is a simple concept. You write your thoughts, feelings, goals, and anything else you want into a journal or notebook, and gain a lot of different emotional, mental, and physical benefits.

Everyone who participates in journaling does so for a different reason. Some people prefer to journal because it helps reduce their stress and anxiety, while others are interested in finding more clarity and self-awareness. Regardless of your reason, it might be time to look at the next steps of journaling.

The following sections are not only going to help you re-evaluate your current journaling goals, but help you to move to the next level and really become a journaling expert.

Happy journaling!

**1. Journaling Prep**

While some of this information is for people who have been journaling for a while and are interested in getting to the next level, it is also great for beginners. Maybe you have only dabbled a little bit in journaling, but didn’t really start in the way you wanted, so you gave up pretty fast.

This could be for a few different reasons, but one of them is that you didn’t prepare enough. When you rush into doing something, it doesn’t always work out, especially when you aren’t in the habit of doing it, which is writing in this case.

Here are some journaling prep tips that are really going to help you to become a journaling expert.

*Find Supplies You Fall in Love With*

It will be hard to find a journaling tips blog post or other form of content without it telling you that you need to first buy your supplies. You already know this. However, let’s take it to the next level. Don’t just buy any notebook or journal or pen to start with. You need to LOVE it.

There is something about buying your favorite pen or a brand new journal that is beautiful on the outside, has the perfect types of pages, and just makes you want to write. It is almost hard NOT to write in it.

When you find journaling supplies you love, you feel passionate and excited to get started, and often want to journal every time you find a few spare minutes. This is what you’re looking for.

Take your time as you go shopping for your new journal, pens, and other supplies if you intend to do coloring or planning with the journal. And keep picking up new items as you come across them. This might be what keeps you from journaling casually, to journaling passionately.

*Get Into the Habit of Writing*

Another prep step often missed is just getting back into the habit of writing. If you start using your journal for this purpose, it might keep you from being motivated to enjoy this practice on a daily basis.

Are you someone that doesn’t really enjoy writing, or hasn’t written anything in a while? If so, take some time getting into the habit of writing things down. Not with your computer or phone – but actual pen on paper.

The writing itself might be what you don’t enjoy, not necessarily what to write about. Find an inexpensive notebook or just some printer paper, and start writing with pen or your favorite writing utensil every day.

This can be anything from your daily task or to-do list, some goals you want to get accomplished in the near future, or a kind of pre-journaling where you think of what you will want to journal about. The amount of time you do this for will depend on how long it takes you to get comfortable with writing. You will most likely have a moment where you feel ready to start with journaling.

*Explore Different Types of Journaling*

This is completely optional, but something worth exploring. If you want to master journaling and become an expert who does it every day, that doesn’t always mean the same thing to everyone. Some people want more conventional journaling methods, while others just want a gratitude journal or travel journal.

Here are some different types of journaling you might want to explore:

Stream of Consciousness  
Daily Journaling  
Gratitude Journaling  
Travel Journaling  
Bullet Journaling  
Art Journaling

**2. Getting Started**

Now that you understand the importance of the pre-journaling preparation steps, you can get started with journaling. Again, these tips help anyone who wants to master journaling, whether you are brand new to journaling, or you have been doing it for a while, but find you are lacking motivation or inspiration.

Here are some tips to follow in order to get started with journaling and become an expert in it:

*Commit to Journaling Every Day*

Do you want to know the secret of being a good writer? Here it is – you write! That’s it. You want to master journaling and become an expert in it? You just need to write every day. Try not to miss a day, even if all you have time for is writing down what you did today or just something you are grateful for.

Journaling doesn’t need to be complicated, and it doesn’t come with a set of rules. Becoming an expert in journaling in order to really benefit from it just comes down to doing it. Make a commitment to yourself that you will write in your journal every day. You will soon learn how beneficial just that simple act has been.

*Ditch the Conventional Rules of Writing*

When you are just starting with journaling, it is also important to remember that there are no writing rules. You don’t have to worry about how you write, how messy your writing is, how to spell a word, and the proper way to arrange a sentence. All spelling and grammar rules go out the window. A journal is not meant to be an essay for school or a book you send to an editor. It is personal and private and should be written however you want to write it.

For some people, this means shorter paragraphs and proper sentence structure. For others, it means random words on a page, individual lines, or one page with absolutely no breaks. Anything is acceptable when it comes to journaling as long as you are writing consistently with honesty and openness.

*Find Your Why NOT*

You have probably been given this advice before – if you need to be motivated to write in your journal, figure out your WHY. This is where you think about the benefits of journaling and the top reasons for starting this practice.

Instead of doing that, why not try a different approach? Thinking about the benefits of something is not always enough to encourage you to stick with it. This is when you need to think about the why not, or what will happen if you don’t commit to journaling each day.

Think about it like this: if you are starting a new diet to lose weight, it can be hard to motivate yourself after the first few days or weeks. You know you need to lose weight for health, but that isn’t always enough motivation.

However, if your doctor tells you that you are at a high risk for a heart attack or stroke, you start thinking about your healthy diet from a different angle. Not for weight loss, but because you want to be around for your kids and grandkids. THIS is the motivation you need. Not the WHY, but the WHY NOT. The consequence of not doing it.

So, let’s go back to journaling. You want to improve your emotional and mental health, reduce stress, and find triggers for your anxiety. These are good benefits and reasons why you should journal. But if they aren’t enough, how about the why not.

What will happen if you don’t journal? Maybe your anxiety will get worse and keep you from being as social as you want, or your stress is causing physical effects like hair loss and severe headaches. Think of the consequences, and you might just find the right type of motivation.

**3. Re-Igniting the Journaling Spark**

This is for those of you who have started and stopped journaling a few times, but can’t seem to stick with it. This is likely going to keep you from feeling the full benefits of a journaling practice. You might see some short-term changes, but without journaling on a regular basis, you might be missing out.

Do you need to re-ignite your journaling spark? Find your inspiration again? Here are some tips that may help.

*Find New Reasons to Journal*

Maybe the old benefits of journaling are still in the back of your mind, but they aren’t quite enough to keep you writing every day. That’s okay! All you need is to find some new reasons to journal, even aside from the consequences of not journaling discussed in the previous section.

These are going to be personal to you, and sometimes it does require thinking outside the box a little. A lot of people promote journaling for anxiety and stress, but if this isn’t your main reason, what is? What do you feel when you see journals? Are you looking for self-awareness? Do you feel confused and lack of focus in your daily life? Or are you just looking for a creative outlet.

There are so many reasons to write in a journal aside from the slightly generic reasons you might be reading about. Really focus in on what the experience of journaling is to find your own personal reasons for doing it.

*Re-Read Your Old Entries*

This is a little trick that can really put that writing spark back into you. If you are struggling with what to write or just finding that excitement you used to have with journaling, then go back to the beginning. Read your first few journal entries or find an old journal from months or years ago when you used to journal more regularly.

This is such a fun and often cathartic experience. It is like reading a story you wrote to yourself in the past. You are instantly brought back to that time in your life, remembering what was going on and why you were thinking these thoughts. It can also inspire you to keep writing, to reminisce and write about how far you have come since then.

*Find a Journaling Community*

Don’t forget there are journaling communities out there! Talking to other people who also have a passion for journaling can re-ignite that passion in yourself. Be inspired by others, whether they show that they write in their journal every day, have beautiful pages in their bullet journal, or just want to talk about journaling itself.

You can ask friends or family, find a local journaling meet-up, or join online communities through social media like Facebook and Instagram.

**5. Mix it Up for a New Experience**

The last bit of advice we want to offer you if you are interested in becoming more of an expert in journaling, regardless of what definition means to you, is that sometimes you need to mix it up.

Journaling in a different way or under different circumstances can offer more motivation, give you a little clarity about what you are writing, and can also help with writers’ block. Here are some ways to mix it up a little:

**Write at a Different Time of Day** – If you are used to writing in the morning, why not try writing before bed? You might have a completely different way of writing in your journal.

**Write When You Are in a Different Mood** – Another way to mix it up a little is to write when you are in a different type of mood. Perhaps you like to journal when you’re struggling, but you instead try journaling when you are extremely happy and having an amazing day.

**Try Adding Sketches** – Why not draw in your journaling pages? This is another way to make it more enjoyable for you, and to have something to look back on later. Instead of just text, add some sketches on the pages to express how you are feeling or what you are talking about.

Now that you have some tips to get further into the journaling practice, it is time to write!