

**Journaling**

**Your Life**

Disclaimer:

This eBook was written by (your name). I am not a doctor or mental health professional and cannot be held liable for the information written here.

This book is meant to provide information about using a journal for daily living, health and wellness.

It is not intended to provide medical advice. Do not use it as an alternative to seeking help from a medical or mental health professional.

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**Introduction**

Journaling is the process of documenting your life, but there are so many ways to go about it.

Some people prefer to use it as a diary of every event that goes on throughout the course of their days, while others like more specific types of journals like travel or gratitude journals.

This eBook is going to discuss ‘Journaling Your Life’. It talks about some of the main benefits of having a daily journal that documents what you do, who you are, who you want to be, your goals, and so much more.

This is all about improving your life through the act of journaling. You will learn how a journal can provide you with more clarity, how you can discover things about yourself you never knew existed, and how you can create a 5 or 10-year plan with your journal.

Keep reading to learn more about transforming your life with the help of a journal.

**Chapter 1 – Expose Your Inner Demons**

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You will hear a lot about how journaling can help you find clarity, learn more about yourself, and gain some perspective into your life.

This is all true, but there is something else it can do for you – help you to get rid of all that resistance you have been holding onto, the things you tell yourself to feel better temporarily, but really what you are doing is hiding all of your inner demons.

These demons aren’t necessarily bad, or as serious as they might seem. Sometimes, there are just certain aspects of your life or personality that are being held back by worries, fears, regrets, or other concerns.

With journaling, you are going to learn a lot about yourself, your mind, and how you think and feel, to the point where you eventually are able to identify and overcome what has been holding you back for so long.

What You Will Learn in this Chapter

For this first chapter, you are going to learn more about how journaling can help you understand more about yourself, gain clarity, and really embrace every part of you – not just the good.

Are you having trouble understanding your own motivations?

Do you feel like your fears or anxiety keep you from succeeding?

Are you looking for another way to find joy and happiness?

You will get all of this and more just by writing in your journal every day.

**Overcoming Resistance**

The first part of journaling has to do with overcoming resistance. This is when you start by the simple act of writing in your journal every day, then through those fun little lightbulbs that go off, you learn a lot more about yourself.

*Why is this important?*

Because you aren’t just focusing on only the good or only the bad – but a wonderful combination of both. Journaling can help you figure out what is holding you back. And trust us, something is holding back most people in one way or another.

*What do you mean by overcoming resistance?*

Another common trait in many people is that they know what needs to be done to improve their life, whether personally or professionally, but they resist. The problem is that everyone resists for a different reason, so it is hard to get advice from others on exactly how to stop this bad habit.

What journaling does is provide you with more clarity, so that you can actually identify what those inner demons are, allowing you to overcome whatever is causing your resistance.

Remember this can be any facet of your life, such as:

Asking for a promotion or moving up the ladder at work.

Changing career direction or starting a business.

Making adjustments to your personal life.

Finding what will truly bring you joy and contentment.

There are so many ways you can hold yourself back in life, including in relationships, as a parent or friend, personal life, home life, finances, and just about everything else you encounter on a daily basis.

**Gaining More Clarity**

You will hear this a lot when you begin reading about and learning about journaling. Clarity is so important to improve your life, but it is something that isn’t always easy to find.

People often get caught up in their day-to-day life activities, that they don’t take a step back, analyze their own mind and thoughts and feelings, and figure out where their motivations are coming from.

Do you want to understand yourself? Are you having trouble figuring out why you make certain decisions? Do you know that you hold yourself back, but no idea why?

This is the power of gaining clarity. You learn more about yourself in ways you never thought possible without seeing a mental health professional. You can actually look into your own thoughts and actions, and understand where you were coming from.

With a journal, you are writing down your thoughts and feelings regularly, and when you read it back, it often brings a lot of self-awareness. You begin seeing patterns in your behaviors, understand what causes your anxiety or depressive episodes, and have a better understanding at where your mind is at during different phases of your life.

Everyone can benefit from gaining more clarity through journaling.

**Embrace the Good and Bad**

Part of finding and exposing your inner demons in order to move forward with your life in a happy and productive way, you need to embrace both the good and the bad. This is true of everyone – you have strengths and weaknesses. Qualities that make you stand out, and qualities that might need some improving.

There is nothing wrong with things you might view as “faults”, however. There are some things that just make certain aspects of your life a little more challenging, maybe just a little different. Other “bad” things have more to do with your thought processes or feelings about situations, whether sparked by anxiety or regrets in the past that have you a little fearful for making the same mistakes in the future.

*Working on Embracing Both*

As you begin writing in your journal more often, you will gain that beautiful clarity, and start to see these patterns emerge. You learn in what ways you are making great strides to be a happier, more fulfilled person, but also some choices that you might keep making over and over again that are halting your progress.

Appreciate both!

Let the good enlighten you, and the bad challenge you. Become a better version of yourself. A happier person.

**Utilizing Your Journal Entries**

Your journal is going to become your new best friend in so many ways. Before too long, it is no longer something you schedule in to your day or feel forced to do, but actually look forward to do. This is partly habit, but mostly because of everything you gain.

Who knew just writing down your thoughts or your day on paper could make such a drastic difference in your life?!

*The Next Steps*

Once you have journaling down and you have started exploring who you are and what you want to do next, utilize your older journal entries. Don’t just write things down, put it away, and never look at it again. Use them!

You can keep looking back on older journal entries as often as you need to in order to understand where you were at a certain point in your life.

This comes up a lot more often than you might think.

Maybe you are struggling with something that happened about a year ago, and you want to see if you wrote anything about what you were going through.

Last week you might have ended up with severe panic attacks, and want to see if something triggered it.

Or maybe it is a little lighter than that, and you simply want to remember what your goals originally were, compared to what they are now.

Save your journals and read through them often to refresh your mind.

**Chapter 2 – Use the Journal for Recovery**

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The next amazing way you can journal your life is through recovery. This can be recovery for anything in your life that you are working through, whether it is from a mental illness, physical injury, or substance abuse recovery.

It also might be more simple than that, where you are recovering from a breakup or something that was affecting your mental state for a while. Perhaps you were struggling financially, and just now coming around to getting your life back.

Whatever it is you feel that you are recovering from, writing in a journal can help tremendously.

**What Type of Recovery?**

Don’t stress too much about the type of recovery. Everyone has something they are trying to work through. The journal is really going to help you get to that next step, but also have a place to vent and discuss what you are going through in private, in the meantime.

**Ways to Use the Journal for Recovery**

There are many ways you can utilize a journal to help with the recover process. Here are just a few options available to you:

Keep a Daily Journal – The simplest way is to write in your journal every day, whether it is about your recover or not. Chances are, aspects of the recovery are going to come up. This is a good way to stay on track and also look back at choices you made to figure out how you ended up where you are.

Make Sketches and Drawings – A journal does not just have to be words on a page. Many people benefit greatly from sketches, doodles, or drawings. The entire journal entry one day can be nothing but drawings and art, while other days it might be in the margins. Art reflects so much of how you feel, even it if you don’t realize it.

Document the Process – Similar to a daily journal, you can instead make the entire journal about your recovery. This is when you are documenting the recovery process each day, talking about the ups and downs, struggles and triumphs, successes and failures, and everything in between.

Try a Gratitude Journal – Another way to approach a recovery journal is to start a gratitude journal. Instead of dwelling on how hard the recovery process is or constantly talking about the challenges, you instead shift your mindset to what you are most grateful for each day.

Set Goals – It is a great idea to add your goals, both short and long-term, to your recovery journal. A short goal might be following your diet if you are recovering from an eating disorder, while a long-term goal could be going back to school when you are done with substance abuse or another type of recovery.

**Chapter 3 – Find Peace and Happiness**

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When you start journaling your life, you begin to find all of these amazing benefits. It is wonderful for your mental, physical, and emotional health. These benefits might take a little while to become apparent, so be patient! And don’t force yourself to feel or experience something you think you should be experiencing. Just let it come naturally.

One of our favorite benefits of journaling is the ability to truly become a happier and more peaceful person. This is through the act of journaling, the clarity you get, creating plans for the future, and so much more. Here is a quick look at how you can become a happier and more content person with journaling.

**It’s Not Meant to Be Perfect**

The first thing to remember is that journaling is not meant to be perfect. It is not something you need to do a certain way and there is no “right” way to do it. But that’s the beauty of it – it becomes whatever you need it to be.

This is at the forefront of finding more peace with journaling, because there is no pressure. You are not showing your journal to anyone (unless you want to), so you can write anything and everything you want without worrying about the repercussions.

Your journal is your private sanctuary, your safe haven, the one place you can go to where you can express all your inner thoughts and hopes and fears without worrying about judgment or ridicule.

This provides so much power for your life, allowing you to become a much more peaceful person, and ultimately, a happier person.

*Expert Tip – Keeping Your Journal Private*

If this is something you hope to get out of your journaling experience, keep it private! Either don’t tell people you have it or always keep it with you or in a safe place. Knowing nobody can find your journal and read it makes it even more freeing for you.

**Journaling for Mindful Thinking**

The next way journaling can help you become a happier person is through mindful thinking. Mindfulness is all about living in the current moment and acknowledging what you feel right now, whether it is good or bad. You take each moment to reflect on your current mental and physical state, without worrying too much about the future or dwelling on the past.

It is used in many different scenarios, with some people doing mindful meditation on a daily basis, while others practice mindfulness for things like weight loss (mindful eating) or just mindful thinking as they go throughout their day.

It is an amazing tool for your mental and emotional wellbeing.

*How do You Use it in Journaling?*

Something to keep in mind is that you don’t need to try to be mindful while journaling, because the act of writing in your journal alone will become a more mindful experience. However, here are some tips for being more mindful as you journal:

**Take a minute to think about your thoughts first.** There is no need to rush into writing in your journal if you have a little extra time. Take a few minutes to just sit quietly, close your eyes, and explore what your mind is providing you. It will typically guide you in one direction or another, giving you clues as to what is a priority right now in your thought process.

**Journal about what you are feeling at this very moment before going into the past or future.** Yes, there are a lot of benefits to journaling about what you have gone through, remembering important moments in your life, and making plans for the future. But for mindful journaling, always start with the present and what you are experiencing at this point in your life before exploring other moments.

**When making plans, think of what you can change NOW.** Another way to be more mindful in your journaling process is to think of what you can change now, or in the near future, as opposed to what you can do in 6 months or a year or longer. As you make plans and set your goals for the future, always start with the present day and circumstances right now in your life.

**Allow yourself to be grateful for your current life**. A big part of being mindful is understanding, acknowledging, and appreciating how you feel right now. Listen to what your mind is telling you, feel those emotions, be grateful for your life, then move on.

**Express Gratitude**

Speaking of gratitude, this is another amazing benefit you get by journaling. Sometimes it can seem a little counter-intuitive, but when you are more thankful for what is in your life, it brings in even more happiness and more things to be grateful for.

*Never underestimate the power of gratitude.*

No matter where your life is now, you have something to be grateful for. There are big things and small things, and everything in between. Here are some examples, though what YOU are grateful for is going to be unique for YOU.

* You have steady employment – whether it is your dream job or not.
* Your personal/family life is going well.
* You got up today.
* Your illness is improving.
* You have amazing friends in your life.
* You accomplished something today.
* You are working hard on your goals.
* You have all the basic comforts people need.
* You had help with a big problem you were experiencing.
* Your faith is helping to bring you peace in a dark time.

Remember nothing is too small or insignificant.

*How to Express Gratitude in Your Journal*

This part is easy – just write it down! Some people will have a journal specifically dedicated to their daily gratitude, but this isn’t necessary. If you are journaling your life and writing in it every day, you can have one section each day where you list at least one thing you are grateful for today. This is also going to help with mindfulness.

Don’t feel too much pressure to make it long and detailed. Just a simple sentence about something you are grateful for today is all you need.

**Happiness Through Achievements**

Another thing that people tend to underestimate in their life is how much happier and fulfilled they feel when they accomplish something. Making goals and reaching them is so much more than what it brings to you on a financial or professional level – this can bring you so much joy when you realize you set a goal and accomplished it.

These can be achievements in your personal or professional life. There are a lot of wonderful things to set your mind to and work hard to strive for.

Every small and large achievement is worth celebrating.

Use your journal to celebrate every single achievement you have, from small things like getting up the courage to meet someone new, to large achievements like completing a big project or a goal you wrote in your journal a while ago.

**Memories and Nostalgia**

We are going to talk a little more about memories in a later chapter, but for now here is a little introduction to why this is helpful for peace and happiness in your life.

There are some memories in your life that you might not want to remember – mistakes you have made, regrets you have. But those good memories – the ones you really want to hold onto, can bring you joy.

Think about a time when you were truly happy. It can be one small moment, a compliment paid to you, a fun birthday, a special moment between you and a beloved family member. When you think back on it, it brings you joy, right? You smile at the thought of it.

This is what nostalgia can bring to you. When you write everything down in your journal, you have all these opportunities to bring back your happy memories, reflect on them, and become a happier person having experienced them.

**Chapter 4 – Make Plans for the Future**

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When you think about becoming happier in your normal life, what do you think about? Chances are, you think about what you can change. Not necessarily what to change about yourself – though that is definitely part of it – but what you can change in your life.

Journaling is a wonderful tool for this, because not only are you learning more about yourself and how to make positive changes and work on a more positive mindset for happiness, but you can also identify and achieve your goals.

*Don’t Think About it as Being Better – But Happier*

There are some mindset tricks that can make you feel better or worse about yourself. You shouldn’t think of yourself as flawed in a negative way. Don’t tell yourself you want to be a better person, but just a happier person. Someone content and more fulfilled in your daily life. Someone who has found peace in who you are and what you do and the people you surround yourself with.

This mindset shift is very important moving forward.

**Personal and Work Goals**

This is an easy place to start in your journal, since you probably already have an idea of some of your goals. However, just journaling every day can help you really delve into this and find new goals you didn’t even know you had.

Don’t put too much pressure on yourself here – just write in your journal daily, and you will most likely have a long list of things you would love to accomplish.

*How to Start with Your Goals*

If you are having trouble knowing where to start, just start small. Think of what your current goals are. You can mix and match personal and professional, or just do one category at a time.

Do you want to go to college?

Are you looking to advance your career?

Is there something in your personal life you want to achieve?

Looking to start a business?

List any and all goals you currently have on your mind, no matter how big or small they seem. Remember they might seem inconsequential, but even goals like completing a home renovation project or calling a long-lost friend are something to strive for.

Once you have listed your current goals, you already have a better picture of who you are and what types of aspirations you have in life. As you begin your journaling every day, you will start to add to this list, and possibly even modify other goals you thought were important, but are now overshadowed by something more important in your life.

**Improving Yourself**

This can be a tricky one, because there is a delicate balance between accepting who you are, and wanting to change. There is definitely a middle ground where you fully accept and acknowledge all of your traits, but still want to work on yourself.

Think about it like this – **you want to be come the best version of yourself**. Not different, not better. You still want to be you, but at the peak of who you are and what you can accomplish.

*How to Do This*

This requires a lot of self-reflection and clarity, which is what you are going to get from journaling. It is also not something you will learn the first day you write in your journal. This is more of the long-term process of journaling, where every day, you understand more about yourself, flaws you don’t like, things you love about yourself, and things that you believe changing will improve upon your life.

**Set a 5 or 10-Year Plan**

Now for the fun stuff – long-term goals! While short-term goals are great, don’t forget about things you want more in the distant future. Creating a 5 or 10-year plan lays out everything for you. You begin by setting the main goal, which is what you want to accomplish in a certain amount of time.

Ask yourself this question – *Where do you see yourself in 5 years? What about 10 years?*

Once you can answer that question with certainty, you can start working on your 5 or 10-year plan right in your journal.

Write down your goal, what it would take to achieve, and always have realistic expectations about it. Wanting to be a millionaire in 10 years is a lofty goal, so try to be a bit more realistic given the time period you have for whatever goal it is, going step by step with choices to make in your life in order to achieve it.

**Chapter 5 – Preserve Your Memories**

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As we mentioned in a previous chapter, one of the great things about having a journal to document your life is that you have an easy way to preserve your memories. You are writing down every piece of your life, or at least the things you personally find the most important.

Over time, you will probably collect many journals full of thoughts, feelings, memories, and yes some regrets and bad choices. But everything you do in your life is what makes you who you are, not just the good parts.

**How to Preserve Your Memories with a Journal**

You can start preserving your memories in a journal simply by writing everything down. Document your days, including what you did, plans you are making, whether things went the right or wrong way, and how you felt about certain situations.

When something notable happens, such as meeting someone new, write it down! Don’t worry if something seems inconsequential right now – later you might change your mind. You might have an acquaintance that someday becomes your best friend or even spouse. You want to have the memory of how you met.

While you don’t have to feel pressures to document every second of every day, writing down what happens each day is a great way to start using the journal, and is especially helpful during times when you might have a little writer’s block.

*Don’t Forget to Add Pictures!*

As you are documenting your life in the daily journal, try to add pictures when you can. Maybe there were moments like parties or other special events where a picture would add to the journal entry, or you just want to doodle a picture that explains how you were feeling at that moment. These all become precious keepsakes later on.

**Organize Your Journals**

If you are like most people, you will have a large stack of journals every year. There will be days when you fill up one page or not even a page, but others days are so filled with thoughts that you end up filling up multiple pages. With daily journaling, this can add up quite a bit.

When you want to have memories saved in your journals, it means a little organization so you can look back and find the right one.

As you finish a journal, skim through it and make notes elsewhere about what went on in your life. This can be somewhat of a summary or index about your life in this specific journal. Keep that piece of paper inside the journal as a quick reference.

**Make Events More Meaningful**

Don’t forget that writing everything in your journal makes all of these events and memories more meaningful. You don’t just have something happen that passes you by, only to think about it every once in a while. It turns your entire life into a series of nostalgia, allowing you to look back at specific moments in time whenever you want to.

**Chapter 6 – Create a Self-Care Journaling Routine**

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Unless you have been living under a rock, you are probably well aware of what self-care means. It is the act of doing something for you, and only you, to help with overall health and wellness.

You can also combine journaling and self-care to create a healthy routine each day that will improve your life, health, and happiness.

Don’t think of it as something selfish, but more as improving yourself, so that not only you benefit from it, but other people do as well. It is something everyone should strive for. You want to be the best version of yourself, but in order to do that, you need to take care of yourself.

Keep reading to learn how you can take the simple act of journaling to create a self-care routine.

**What is a Self-Care Routine?**

A self-care routine is something you do each day, typically around the same time each day, that is meant to be just for you. This can be as simple as watching a movie, taking a bath, or walking your dog. You want it to be something that makes you feel at peace, reduces stress, and helps you to spend at least a few minutes a day to yourself.

Everyone needs to unwind and relax at the end of the day (or the beginning), but far too many people get wrapped up in their busy lives, they don’t even take the time out to do it. Make yourself a priority, and you will see what a drastic difference it has on the rest of your life.

*Creating Your Self-Care Routine*

There is no right or wrong way to have a self-care routine. It can include just one thing or a combination of things each day that will help you practice self-care and do something for you. Remember that it isn’t meant to be something that makes you feel selfish, but is important your for emotional wellbeing.

The self-care routine is going to be unique for you, but here are some things you might include:

Writing in your journal.

Having a morning cup of coffee or tea.

Writing in your planner.

Taking a hot, bubble bath.

Meditating with an essential oil diffuser.

Going for a walk.

Sitting outside for a few minutes of alone time.

Relaxing on the couch with a good book.

*Choosing the Right Time*

Once you have chosen what to do during this self-care routine, you can then decide on a good time. The two most obvious times include the beginning or end of the day. The best time is also individual for you, so it depends on your schedule and when it is more likely you will have some time alone.

*Can you wake up earlier than your family?* If so, this might be good for you as you can have 10-15 minutes (or longer) in the morning to get ready for your day.

*What about at the end of the day?* If you live alone or your roommates are busy in the evening, this might be the perfect time for a little self-care.

**Use Journaling as a Catalyst**

The reason journaling goes hand-in-hand with a self-care routine is because it becomes a catalyst. Journaling is often what sparks the idea of having a routine just for you each day. Maybe before you didn’t see much reason, but now that you are writing in your journal every day, you have the desire for a few minutes alone.

Most people prefer to write in their journal when they are completely alone, whether it is in your bedroom at night or early in the morning while sitting at the kitchen table. This becomes a very personal and private experience, so it is good to not have outside distractions.

**Mix it Up**

Don’t forget that once you settle on a routine, it doesn’t necessarily mean that is the end of it. You can always switch it up by the day or week, depending on your schedule or what your days look like. Add more things to the self-care routine or take away activities that don’t seem to be working well for you.

**Chapter 7 – Give it a Month**

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For this final chapter, we want to go over the stress or pressure you might feel when you first start journaling. As you read through all the potential benefits of journaling, it can start to be more intimidating, instead of motivating.

If you find that you aren’t sure journaling is right for you, don’t worry. It might not be right for everyone, but that doesn’t mean it isn’t worth trying!

However, if you are all in, here are some tips to help keep you motivated in the beginning.

**Start Slow with Journaling**

While it is great to journal every day as part of your routine and to document your life, it is by no means mandatory to benefit from it. Some people prefer to just journal every once in a while at first, then when they start thinking of more to write about, they will write in it more often.

Take it slow in the beginning. Get a journal and a pen you would love to use, and just start by talking about who you are or where you are in your life right now. Or maybe you just want to use some journaling prompts in the beginning.

This is YOUR journaling experience, so it is perfectly fine to cater it to your own personal life.

**Don’t Give Up – Give it a Month**

Before you give up on journaling and assume it isn’t for you, just give it a month. One month. Write in your journal every day or at least every couple days for one month. Make note of the day each day for the month until you reach at least 30 days and see how you feel.

Still not into it? That’s ok! Keep the journal around in case you ever feel inclined to write in it again. But don’t give up after a few days because you don’t have this magical clarity and self-awareness you keep talking about.

It rarely happens that quickly.

**Think of it as a Journal, Not a Diary**

One more thing before we go – if you are thinking of your journal like a diary, you might not get the full effects of it. It is great to write about your day, but don’t just leave it at that. Really focus on your thoughts and feelings, goals, dreams, and aspirations. Go a step beyond what your childhood diary was like and really delve into who you are and who you want to be.