



Journaling to ignite your best thinking



Journaling is a powerful way to spend time with yourself and acknowledge that your thinking matters. It provides an opportunity to stop, pause, reflect and plan. It invites you to participate fully in your life's journey and become both the participant and the observer, a witness, of your work and life. By engaging your Whole Brain® Thinking, journaling helps you to view your life holistically, clarify your goals and grow your awareness of self and others.

A useful JOURNAL acronym (adapted from the Coach Federation, 2013)

J – Judgement-free

Write whatever is in your heart. Your journal is personal, private, and a safe space to express your thoughts and feelings without judgement. Withhold the temptation to 'censor' yourself and allow yourself to write whatever comes up.

O – Observation

It's an excellent opportunity for you to step into an observer role of your work and life. Write down things that happen during the day and spend some time thinking about how you interpret them and the impact they may have on you. What do you think, or feel about what happened?

U – Understanding

What we observe can help us reach understanding about ourselves. How we perceive what happens to us is more important than what actually happens, and observing how we think can help us understand our own thought patterns, which can lead to effective management of our thoughts and behaviours. Self-awareness is key to building emotional intelligence.

R – Revelation

This process of reflection can often lead to revelations about your desires, dreams, goals, and aspirations. This includes your relationships and your leadership. Journaling can help you get in touch with your core self.

N – Needs Assessment

Journalling makes it easier to notice problems and potential solutions, as the simple act of writing can make it seem simpler and clearer. Keeping everything bottled up can be harmful, and just putting pen to paper can sometimes be all that is needed to release some pressure.

A – Awareness

Writing down your experiences helps you to take a wider perspective on your life, as well as reminding you of challenges, opportunities and what you have to be grateful for. Raising awareness of these areas is the first step towards making the necessary changes and appreciating what you have.

L – Life

Quality Journaling is known to be an effective way to de-stress and decrease anxiety. Just a few minutes a day can have a major impact on your health and happiness.



Practical steps and prompts to get you started

Practical steps

1. Use pen and paper – you use a different part of your brain when you write things down
2. Make it a habit – have a consistent daily trigger in either your morning or evening routine
3. Embrace slowness – resist the instinct to rush through it
4. Don't make it sound or look good – it's only for you, so don't worry about your spelling, handwriting, syntax or flow
5. Make it yours – personalise it, there is no 'correct' way to journal
6. Consider including your goals, values, ideas, gratitude, etc.

Prepared by Melanie Kiley
Managing Director | Facilitator | Executive Coach
CreateConsulting 2021

Prompting questions to use daily

1. What did I enjoy about my day and why?
2. What problem did I face and struggle with? What might the lesson be?
3. What small win can I celebrate today?
4. What am I most grateful for today?
5. What do I need to decide, acknowledge or let go of, to feel complete with my day?

Prompting questions for dealing with a challenging situation

1. If this situation was intentionally designed for me to learn, what might the lessons be?
2. What would change if I were loving to myself in this situation?
3. Which of my characteristics is this situation accentuating?
4. How do I feel right now?
5. How can I utilise my strengths in this situation?
6. Which of my weaknesses has my current situation unearthed that I need to work on?
7. Am I fulfilling my goals by participating in this situation?
8. What steps can I take to create value for the situation I am in?
9. What relationships can I draw on and add to from the situation I am in?