



Journalling Information Sheet

Journalling is the oldest form of self-help. In the last four decades, research has shown that journalling has incredible benefits for our mental health and well-being. It can help us become more self-aware, become better problem-solvers, and manage our emotions and relationships more effectively. There is a lot of information and suggestions about journalling, and here are some of the approaches that can be very helpful as you begin your journey.

To get the most out of journalling, don't worry about spelling, grammar, punctuation, or "rules". It has been suggested that writing by hand often has better outcomes for emotional health and well-being. Also, if you are worried your journal may not stay private, consider the art of "write and rip", where you write what you need to and then rip it up so no one else can see it.

Event Journalling

- This is like the "diary" you may have kept when you were younger, a place you write down the events of the day
- Best used when there are memories you want to capture, such as during a trip, a milestone, or starting a new romantic relationship
- This is a journal that you will likely go back and read again

Bullet Journalling

- This is where you write down short-term tasks and long-term goals.
- Great for when you have too much to do and need to organize your time.
- Good to implement if you have racing thoughts about everything you have on your plate (especially at night).
- Make sure to check things off as you complete them!

Letter Writing*

- Use this style when you need closure in a relationship.
- Start with Dear _____, and write passionately.
- The person you are writing to can be alive or dead.
- Set a timer for 10 minutes and re-read it when you are done.
- The letter is for your eyes only – do not send it!

Gratitude Journal

- This should be a separate notebook that you keep on your nightstand.
- This is a daily journal where you write down 1-3 things you are grateful for
- Helpful when you are sad, unmotivated, depressed, or edgy.
- Use this approach if/when you are having trouble sleeping.

Venting Journal*

- Set a timer for a minimum of 4.5 mins (longer if more complex problem or it's the first time you are writing about it.)
- Think of something that is rubbing you the wrong way, and just start writing.
- Keep writing and writing until you feel a "switch" in the tone and content of the writing.
- This technique takes practice. It could take up to 10 days of doing this approach consistently to feel the "switch"

Inner Child Journalling*

- This is a dialogue between different parts of yourself.
- Start by writing a question with your dominant hand.
- Answer the question with your non-dominant hand.
- Go back and forth between hands, either asking and answering questions or having a dialogue.
- Set a timer for a minimum of 4.5 mins, longer if the issue is deep-rooted.

Journalling Prompts*

- Journalling prompts can give us a starting place to begin writing.
- See attached list of prompts to use when you are not feeling very good about yourself.
- It can be helpful to set a timer for a minimum of 8-10 mins.

Fairy-tale Journalling*

- This type of journaling gives us a chance to explore the stories we are telling ourselves.
- Begin with "Once upon a time..."
- Include in your writing a main character, an ally, a problem/bad person, and the problem when it's solved.
- You will need at least 8 minutes to write this story – take more if you need to.
- If you don't like what your story says about you or your problem, see how you can revise it and give it a happier ending.

*A Note about Automatic Writing

When you set a timer, write without censoring yourself, and keep your pen moving even when you are not sure what to write, this is called "automatic writing". People have found automatic writing helps them get in touch with a deeper, wiser part of themselves. Enjoy experimenting to see which style of journaling you like the best, and the time spans and physical environments that give you access to automatic writing.

For more information about automatic writing, check out *Writing Down Your Soul: How to Activate and Listen to the Extraordinary Voice Within* by Janet Conner.