

How Journaling Can Change Your Life

Whether you're going through a difficult period in your life, or perhaps dealing with anxiety and depression, journaling can serve as a free and entirely self-managed form of therapy that's actually quite effective. In fact, keeping a journal can also be beneficial when you've managed to reach and sustain a state of emotional balance and mental peace. Journaling gives us perspective into our daily life and also helps us see the "whole picture" in life that even talking to a best friend cannot give us. Let's look at some ways in which journaling can be life changing.

Evoke A Sense of Mindfulness

Far too often, we move from day to day without ever stopping to smell the roses [[see my article on this](#)]. Not only are we failing to feel and express gratitude for the many wonderful things that are happening in our lives, but we're overlooking a number of incredible learning opportunities. Writing in a journal provides you a chance to stop and reflect on seemingly minor events that might otherwise go unnoticed.

This practice isn't just about noticing the positive things in life either. During the process of writing about your day and your interactions with others, you may notice negative patterns repeating themselves in your thoughts and deeds, problems within your personal relationships, personal needs that you haven't been paying attention to, and alternative ways of responding to both internal and external stress that you haven't been using.

Establish a Positive Mindset

When you keep a journal, you have the power to fill it with any type of material that you choose. Spending time to reflect on the small blessings in life, however, can automatically

move you from a negative and self-defeating mindset into a more positive and proactive one. You might be swimming in debt, struggling in your inter-personal relationships, or barely hanging on at your job, but you may have the ability to walk, run, and jump, which is something that many people lack.

You have another day to affect change in your life, strong mental abilities, the power of self-forgiveness, and more. Taking the time to list out things that establish you as stronger, smarter, and more enduring than the problems that you're facing at the present moment will give you the strength, and the right attitude, to keep pushing forward.

Start Forming New Goals

Journals are also great tools for overall life planning. If you've ever wondered how some people seem to have their whole lives figured out, you should consider the fact that these individuals may be keeping journals. The best part about using a journal to establish and pursue life goals is the fact that this process can be an entirely informal one. This is merely a platform for bouncing ideas around and helping them take shape. Once you're ready to make an actual commitment to a new life effort, you can always take notes from your journal and use them to draft a more formal plan.

Enhance Your Creative Potential

The act of journaling can be an incredibly creative process as well. After all, you're not just writing about the things that have happened or are happening in your life; you're also writing about the way in which you want things to be. This flexes your imagination, enhances your creative skills, and promotes new and far more interesting ways of thinking. For some people, journaling has even given rise to some fairly impressive works of fiction and fan fiction. If you're a writer or aspire to be a writer, a journal gives you sufficient private space for writing without fear of judgment.

Build Better Communication Skills

In the very long list of benefits that regular journaling can provide, better communication is hardly the least. The practice of writing about your thoughts and feelings will make you more adept in issuing thoughtful responses. It will also improve your emotional intelligence, thereby making you better able to respond to the wants and needs of others in an empathetic way.

PRACTICE:

Tell Your Life Story with a Journal

In the later years of your life, will you remember all of your adventures? Will you vividly recall the emotions that you felt during some of the best times as well as some of the worst times? Will your family be able to learn about who you truly were as a person after you are gone? Will they understand your side of the story or your driving motivations? Each life is filled with incredibly rich and poignant twists and turns. Even on average days of your life, your unique thoughts and daily activities can be rich with meaning and importance in subtle or grand ways. Journaling is an excellent way to tell your life story for your own benefit or to share with others at a much later date.

Get to Know Yourself

Through journaling, you get to take a close, introspective look at who you are and what you stand for. Many people simply assume that they know who they are a person because they live in their own skin, but as soon as you sit down to put pen to paper, you may realize that there are at least a few parts of yourself that are a mystery. With each new journal entry that you write, you may discover a little more about yourself that you previously did not know. Your life story that unfolds on each new page in your journal may fascinate you in different

ways.

Examine Your Highs and Lows

Many people who journal on a regular basis will not have major dramatic events to examine more closely, but no life is without its highs and lows. Journaling gives you a chance to capture the events of each passing day as well as to analyze your own feelings about these events. IF you choose to share your journal with others, the details of each journal entry can give others a day-by-day account about your own experiences and feelings related to routine days as well as to major life events.

Let It All Out

Many people remember major life events, but they fail to remember important smaller details surrounding those events. They may also forget details about day-to-day life that may actually be relevant and interesting in various ways. Through journaling, you can share the details of your life based on your own observations, and you can also let out all of your feelings. When you read back through the journal at a later date, you can recall in clear detail what your life was like at a certain point. This also gives you an opportunity to see how much you've grown since that past experience.

Explore the Big Picture

Everyone wants to find some meaning in their life. That meaning may be something profoundly important to the community, or it may be a special significance to others who are near and dear to you. Through the retrospection associated with reading through the daily journal entries that you wrote, you may be able to see the big picture of your own life. You can understand the importance of your own life. Others who read your journal and hear about the story of your life in your own words may also gain a deeper understanding about the meaning of your life.

Journaling can be a richly rewarding experience. It is an excellent way to de-stress and to sort through difficult emotions. It also is a way to document the story of your life for yourself and for others. You do not need to be going through some major life event to journal. Each day has its beautiful moments as well as its stressful moments. These are precious moments, and journaling captures each day in vivid clarity and great detail.

Please share in the comments section what you find most valuable about journaling.