

Journaling! A 24-7 Gift to Yourself!

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Journal Idea Starters

I call journaling *A 24-7 Gift to Yourself!* The reason is because I have found it so for myself and many clients over the years.

I always find it interesting that nearly everyone has ideas about how journaling should or should not be done.

Good news is that there is no right or wrong way to journal! Whatever works for you is great. Some seem to think of it as a diary and it can be, but to me it is far more than just a diary or record of what happened that day. Different people find different ways that work well for them. (Write during good times and bad times.)

I have found many people are afraid to write as they believe someone else could read it. Some disguise the content by not inserting any names. Some take care of these fears by buying a lockbox or keeping it somewhere that feels safe or by shredding or tearing or burning what they write.

Probably the very best things that journaling or writing does for us are:

- Writing forces us to STOP and THINK about what we are actually Thinking, feeling and doing and helps us sort things for ourselves.
- Sometimes I call it “playing detective” on ourselves because so much of the time we live on automatic pilot instead of living thoughtfully or *living life on purpose!*
- Sometimes journaling can end up being a “Dear God” letter as I believe He really does know us better than we know ourselves. (My journaling almost never starts that way as I am venting, but nearly always ends up with that as I am starting an Action Plan asking myself the question “What are my choices now?” Next day I have a place to start.
- Some find it helpful to write many letters that they never send just to get at what they would really like to say or do and to “get rid of feelings” by pouring it all out on paper.
- Feelers – are most aware of their feelings
- Thinkers – are most aware of their thoughts
- Doers – are more oriented to acting quickly
- A combination of the three may be the best way to look situations.

Here are the questions that help to get at the feelings you have checked on the feelings chart shown on next page:

Look for 1 or 2 strongest feelings you checked. What, if anything had happened just before the feeling came OR what had you thought about before the feeling?

What do you wish had happened instead?

What am I depressing or beating up myself about now?

What are my choices now? This is where you come up with things you can do even if they do not entirely solve the problem, they are useful things that can help either with the problem or something else that will help you feel better.

Often, it has been my experience when I cannot sleep that when I get to the page 4 or 5 something just comes out that I did not realize was there and it really helps me und:

Feelings: Mon Tues Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun

angry _____

hate _____

sad _____

happy _____

afraid _____

desperate _____

worried _____

envious/jealous _____

guilty _____

lonely _____

embarrassed _____

happy _____

afraid _____

hurt _____

resentful _____

ashamed _____

anxious _____

disappointed _____

frustrated _____

compassionate _____

remorseful _____

insecure _____

secure _____

numb _____

confused _____

disgusted _____

excited _____

love _____