

Journal Writing

for Yourself and Others

Charlottesville LDS FHC
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What is a journal?

- * *a notebook of ideas*
- * *a tool for self analysis*
- * *a day to day diary*
- * *a log of action and reaction.*

Why should I keep a journal?

- Not just a legacy, but a therapy
- Helps us learn who we are
- A place to think, feel, discover, expand, remember, dream
- Reliable record of the past
- Can become a valued gift to those who know you, and want to know all about you,
...just because you're YOU.

Are there different kinds of journals?

Travel

Gratitude

Day to Day

Discovery

What tools are needed?

- Notebook or bound book
- Permanent ink and archival paper

How often should I write?

Daily

Weekly

Occasionally

What method should I use?

- **Hand written**
- More personal
- Could be tiring
- Harder to locate specific passages
- Don't have same power to organize / reorganize
- **Bound book**
- Less flexible than binder
- Feels more permanent
- **Computer**
- Faster, more legible
- Can find particular entries quickly
- Easy to duplicate
- Lacks personal touch
- Could be lost if computer crashes
- **Online journals** (“blogs”)
- Cyberspace is open to anyone at any time

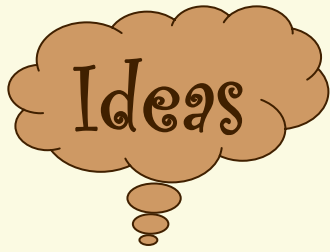
How do I get started?

- **CREATE A HOME** for your journal in your private space
- **PENS** nearby
- Ask yourself: **WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH** by doing this?
- **DATE** each entry
- **BLANK PAGES** at beginning for an **INDEX**?
- Note the **TIME, PLACE, DETAILS** about your mood and emotions -
helpful for context when you read back
- Give a **TITLE** to journal entries?
helps you sum up what you're feeling at the moment
helps you reflect on specific days / entries in the future

What should I write about?

- **SNIPPETS OF EVENTS IN YOUR LIFE:**
A sentence or paragraph about a funny, embarrassing, happy, or infuriating experience.
- **DESCRIPTIONS:** *people / situations / encounters you meet each day*
- **HISTORICAL EVENTS:**
Issues of the day, events in your family (national elections, 9/11, new baby)
- **DESCRIBE WHAT YOU FEEL AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT**
- **YOUR FAITH, COURAGE, CHALLENGES, HOW YOU REASON**
- **BE WILLING TO BE VULNERABLE**
Let them see the real you, your struggles & triumphs.
- **LET THEM SEE YOUR HEART** - *it will encourage others in their own lives.*





Ideas to help you think about your day

1. Use “Starter Questions”

- As I look back on the day, what were the most significant events?
- In what ways was this day unique, different from other days?
- Did I have any particularly meaningful conversations?
- Did I do any reading? What were my reactions to it?
- How did I feel during the day? What were the emotional highs and lows?
- Why did I feel as I did?
- Is God or my spirit trying to tell me anything about these feelings?
- Did I find myself worrying about anything today?
- What were the chief joys of the day? What did I accomplish?
- Did I fail at anything? What can I learn from this?
- What did I learn today? When did I feel most alive?

2. “Mine your subconscious”

- Use creative techniques, such as:
 - Try recording snippets of conversations
 - Facts, feelings, fantasies
 - Descriptions, impressions
 - Quotes, images and ideas
- Clustering – write one word and build a matrix of ideas
- Write whatever comes to mind for a certain period of time.
 - Gets your mind flowing
 - Can bring things to the forefront that were not there

Benefits & blessings of keeping a journal

- **Helps us become more alive to what's happening around us**
- **Remember experiences longer and with greater accuracy**
- **Clarity of thought; an aid to concentration; mirror for the soul**
- **Encourages reflection; we actually take time to reflect on our lives**
- **A way to gain insight, refine observations or express feelings**
- **A place to generate and capture ideas; a creative process**
- **A way to chronicle a journey**
- **A record to look back on**
- **Improves writing ability in general**
- **Preserves our observations for ourselves & future generations**
- **Gratifying pursuit**

Ask yourself.....

*What
do you want
people to
know and say about you
after you are gone?*

A few more questions for you.....

- **Who gets the journal when you pass on?**
- **Does one person get everything?**
Others may never see it.
- **Should you make copies?**

Online resources:

- **Journalingprompts.com**
(get ideas daily on what to write)
- **Lifejournal.com**
(quotes to spark your entries; thought provoking questions, etc.)

INSPIRING QUOTES

“Experience is the raw material of life. It is abundantly available to every person. We can use it to discover, grow and change; or we can simply let it happen and keep breathing until something else happens, never using what we have learned to positively influence and shape future generations. “ (Virginia Pearce, A Heart Like His, p.84)

And last, but not least...

*Wouldn't all of us love to have
a journal,
a memoir,
a letter,
from those we have loved and lost?*

SHOULDN'T ALL OF US LEAVE A BIT OF THAT BEHIND?

(Anna Quindlen, Newsweek Magazine, 22 January 2007, 74)

Thank you for being here



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