

Journaling for Self-Care

There are many ways to express our self-care because we are many different types of people who all cope in many different ways. Painting and listening to music, being arty and crafty, having coffee with friends and finding other ways to capture what we are thinking and feeling, such as writing a journal.

We know of people who have taken the concept of journaling and instead used different mediums, such as photography and video.

Below are some excerpts from a couple of websites for you to look at and ponder. They are not here to say, you must do it like this, but they are here to give you some ideas to consider and to see what jumps out to you.

Websites you might like to visit:

- littlecoffee.com/30-ways-to-use-a-blank-notebook/
- developgoodhabits.com/what-write-journal/

How to Write a Reflective Journal

from Penzu: penzu.com/how-to-write-a-reflective-journal

One of the most commonly used and therapeutic ways to utilize your journal is to reflect upon experiences you deem profound or that had an impact on your life. Getting it all down on paper can really give you a completely different perspective on things. Writing in your journal can be an incredibly useful tool to help you better understand yourself and the world you operate in. Reflective learning journals are also a great way to find creative solutions to difficult problems.

So, what exactly is a Reflective Journal?

A reflective journal (a.k.a a reflective diary) is the perfect place to jot down some of life's biggest thoughts. In a reflective journal, you can write about a positive or negative event that you experienced, what it means or meant to you, and what you may have learned from that experience.

A well-written journal can be an important tool. As with any tool, to get the most benefits, you need practice. This could mean forcing yourself to write, at first, but after a while, it will become like second nature. Write down your entry as soon as possible after the event. This way, the details will still be fresh in your mind, which will help later in your analysis.

4 Tips To Get Your Reflective Journaling Started

Writing a reflective journal requires not only that you describe a learning experience, but also that you analyse the topics covered and articulate your feelings and opinions about the subject matter. There is no set structure for writing a reflective journal, as the diary is meant for your own use. The writing process is entirely free-form. However, there are certain guidelines to follow that will make you more successful at this. Here are some basic tips at how to write a reflective journal.

1. Always keep the journal nearby

The first step in learning how to write a reflective journal is as simple as being prepared to jot down your thoughts and opinions on something you are learning anytime the mood strikes. For example, if you have an insightful observation about a book you're reading while on the bus, it pays to have your journal with you.

2. Make regular entries

While you can write in whatever form and style you please, it's important to write regular entries, even if a moment of inspiration doesn't arise. This ensures you are reviewing content and actively thinking about what you have learned. This will develop your writing and critical thinking skills while keeping you organized. In the end, this should enable you to better understand specific topics you are studying.

3. Participate, observe, summarize and contemplate

While reflecting is the main part of keeping a reflective diary, it's also vital that you first participate in a learning activity, make observations, and summarize facts and experiences. For example, if you are writing a lab for science class, be sure to first cover what you did and what the goal and outcome of the experiment was prior to elaborating on your ideas and opinions of what was discovered. Reflective journaling is first about participating and observing before writing.

4. Review regularly

Take time to read over previous journal entries and see how new experiences, additional knowledge and time have altered how you think and feel about the material you've been analysing and contemplating. This will make the journal more valuable to you personally, as it will shed light on how you've grown.



Creative Ways to Use Journaling

from Mothers Niche: mothersniche.com/five-creative-ways-journal

1. Vlogs

Yes, you read that right! I mean, who says a journal has to be written?! Some of us are great writers, others are great talkers. If you don't have the time or energy to write in your journal at the end of the day, make a vlog. With modern technology, we almost always have a video camera or recording device at arm's length, and plenty of free online storage to organize and keep our "journals."

Vlogging is a creative way to journal because you are able to express yourself with more than just words on a piece of paper. In my opinion, vlogging is the most real, pure form of journaling there is.

2. Lists

I know some people are list people and others aren't, and that's okay! There is an amazing challenge that goes along with journaling called "Listers Gotta List." Each month, a new list of prompts comes out, and you journal each day by making a list that goes along with the prompt. You can be as creative or plain as you want with your journaling, but the goal is to follow the prompts and make a new entry each day. My mum introduced me to this way of journaling - it's great for those people who are short on time (or open their journals and sit there for ten minutes wondering what the heck they should write about).

3. Words of Inspiration

I love quotes - I always have. So why not use quotes and words that inspire us in our journals? I have what I call an "inspiration" journal. I will keep it with me and write quotes in it when I hear an address or words that really speak to me or inspire me. I sometimes wish I knew calligraphy so that it was a little more easy on the eyes, but it is such an important book for me. I can see what I was struggling with and where I was at in life, when I go through the book, because of the quotes that stuck out to me at the time they were written. When I was preparing for the birth of my son, there were multiple pages filled with words of affirmation. When I was struggling with my business, there were words about perseverance and hard work. I can guarantee you that no matter what you're going through in life, there's a quote for that! Grab a notebook and record those quotes that speak to you.

4. Collages and vision boards

Do you remember how, in grade school, we were handed stacks of magazines and told to make a collage about ourselves? One that described who we were and what we enjoyed? Well, why not journal that same way? This probably isn't one to do daily, but a couple of times a year, take your journal or notebook, some magazines, and scissors, and go to town! Unleash your creativity and lay out your goals, dreams, and plans.

5. Tweet

Twitter is still a thing, right?! Keep things short and sweet and at the end of the day, "tweet" in your journal. See if you can write about your day in 140 characters or less. It really is harder than it sounds, and requires a bit of creativity. For those days where you feel like you have nothing to say, even the most simple entry is better than nothing, right?!