

## Reflecting on daily experiences

### How to keep a journal

Too often, we're swept along by the demands of each day with little time or inclination to reflect on how the day has gone - what went well and what didn't, how we felt and why, would we have done anything differently given the opportunity again.

By reflecting on your experience of the past 24 hours in a particular way we increase our awareness of how we experience life. Journaling helps us to get to know ourselves so that we can *more often* be who we want to be and to become – more patient, kind, confident, organised, calm, thankful, empathetic, a better listener....

When you commit to journaling, it will bring great insight.

### Getting started:

*Get yourself a nice A5 notepad and make it yours.*

I recommend using pen and paper to ensure a direct connection between your brain, thoughts, feelings and body sensations.



*Set aside 10-15 minutes each day.*

This time will become a treasured moment in your day.

Set an intention when *you will journal* for 10-15 minutes every day vs *try to journal* – when we say to ourselves 'I'll try to journal', it already implies doubt and there's a good chance that we won't do it.

It's often easier to make it a habit, to integrate it into your day at the same time. The most important thing is that you do it every day, and if you miss a day, you can always start again the next day. I journal first thing in the

morning after my shower and with my morning coffee. I do it at the same time every day.

### Now you're ready to journal:

*1. What was the best part of your day?* Write down one thing – a happy, pleasant moment - you experienced that made you smile or that you enjoyed.

*2. What didn't work so well in the past 24 hours?* Take care to use *neutral* language. Bring a curious and friendly attitude towards what was going on for you.

What was happening for you during that time? Ask yourself: 'What could I do differently next time?' Be encouraging, use language such as 'Next time I want to...', 'I would like to...' or 'I will...'. vs 'I should have done...or I must do x, y, z'.

'Should' and 'must' can have a detrimental impact on how we experience our life, i.e. putting ourselves under undue pressure.

Exploring, bringing interest and curiosity to ourselves, reflecting on what was going on for us in a particular moment enhances our learning mind, helps us to develop as a person, avoids spiraling down into self-criticism.

*3. What would you do differently next time?* This is the opportunity to learn from what hasn't worked so well. Write down 1-3 things that you would do differently next time when you are in a similar situation.

*4. What has worked well in the last 24 hours?* Write down 1-3 things that you feel have worked well, for example, the lunch break you took away from your desk although you felt you were too busy, remembering to breathe and to stay calm when you were in a difficult meeting at work, leaving the pub at the time you wanted to vs staying out late and feeling exhausted the next day, getting up earlier twice during the week to exercise in the morning, walking to work...

It's so fascinating and encouraging when I randomly open a notebook to read back, to see where I've come from on my personal journey.

Drop me a line or if you'd like some support or book a [free 30-minute coaching taster session](#) in Victoria Park, east London, via phone or Skype.

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