

Reflecting: The Power of Daily Journaling

Here's how to get 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 over using an electronic device that will take you further away from your direct experience.

Set aside 10-15 minutes each day.

If you're thinking I don't have time for this, ask yourself, is that really the case? Indeed, spending 10 -15 minutes every day will become a treasured moment in your day, a quality moment in your own best company.

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. For some people it works best to do it at the same time every day. It's often easier to make it a habit and to integrate it into your day. The most important thing is that you do it every day. And if you don't do it one day, that's okay. You can always start again the next day.



Now you're ready to journal

1. What was the best bit in 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?' This is what I call 'the learning question'. 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 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...