



Keeping a journal can seem like an impossible task or even a waste of time. A friend sent me the article below and I have found it simple, practical and helpful. I want to share it with you.

Mary

Keeping a Journal Doreene Clement

Writing, expressing can heal us. It can focus, support, and enhance our lives and well-being. Whether we laugh or we cry, whether through sorrow or joy, we can understand more about ourselves, and each other, through keeping a journal.

Journaling

On a piece of paper, write your answers to the question, "Which 3 words best describe how you are feeling right now?"

When you are done writing, you have just completed your first journal entry.

Writing about whatever is important to you right then and there is journaling. Tracking what you have planted in your garden is journaling. Writing about the family holidays or coffee with a friend is journaling. A journal does not require a set amount of words or pages.. There can be a set theme or topic in your journal, but there does not have to be. I have written about soup, the weather, myself, my friends, and my dreams for the future, in my journal. A journal, which is the same as a diary, is a place where you choose to store what is important to you.

When to start journaling

Any day of any year is a good time to start your journal. The day you feel you want to start recording your experiences and thoughts is the perfect day to star, whether on January 1, November 3, or today. Some people like the idea of starting their journal on January 1. They write their goals and ideas starting at the beginning of the year. Others like the idea of starting the very day it occurs to them that they want to write about their lives in a journal. Whatever you choose, it is the right way for you, and that is all that matters.

What to journal in

There are a lot of choices of where to record all those thoughts, feelings, ideas, dreams, and desires. What you will write in and what you will write with again is up to you. Try several choices, several types of books, and several types of pens or pencils. Find the tools that fit you. You can also record your journal on tape, video, or the computer. Writing a letter can be another form of journaling your experiences.

What to write about

I know of a woman who wants to be a comedian. In her journal, she writes a joke a day. Another person had been stuck for several years writing her novel. She started to journal about writing her novel and gained the focus she needed. She finished her novel within a few months. The beauty of keeping a journal is that it is your book. You get to choose not only when to write, but what to write.

How much I write in my journal

Journaling is about what you want to express that day so, you can write as much or as little as you want; a word, a thought or two, pages, you choose.

Remembering to journal

Place your journal where you will see it every day. I do not mind taking vitamins, but if I do not see them, I do forget to take them. Place your journal on your nightstand or the place where you have coffee each morning. I keep mine on my desk, where I will see it everyday.

Part of keeping a journal, for me, is skipping a day, or maybe four. I usually write every day, but some days I do not. I forget to write or I do not get to it, or I have nothing to say that day. Skipping a day is a part of keeping a journal.

Keeping your journal safe

You may want to have a special secret place for your journal so no one else can read it. You can keep it in a locked box, or tuck it away. You can also ask the people around you not to read your journal. It is private and only concerns you. As you journal about specific events or people you can also use code words for those experiences. It is important that you feel safe writing about your thoughts so think about how you can create that sense of safety for yourself in your own environment.

With the passage of time, we gain a different perspective. Time is a healer. What was once hard, or unbearable, can now make more sense, giving us a clearer picture. Recording and tracking our lives, by keeping a journal, can actually bring relief, clarity, joy, and laughter.

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