



April's Blog # 2
Finding Routines in the New Norm

Without a doubt every single person in the United States is facing the same challenge of being stuck at home and dealing with the reality that previous routines no longer exist and these same busy routines have halted to a slow and “not business as usual” process. The positive routines that are vital to ensuring productivity to assume our purpose and value in society, as they make us work towards reaching an optimum goal productivity level at the highest level.

However, without essential routines in our daily work to school life, people somehow lack smooth order in our outstretched timeline. In our previously fast-paced life, it is as if the society has instinctively reacted to new “in-bound” routines to feel the negative effects sprinkled with a little confusion causing small domino effects that triggers a life productivity to a slow decline. Then as the society productivity falls, we can also assume that disorder and chaos will ensue. Right? Perhaps in scenario a well-oiled society in sci-fi or high action movies, the society often crumbles in the depths of dark depression and that is how these cause-and-effect have been infused in our routine minds. As the experts mention this “movie like scenario,” they are quick to support that routines are in fact vital for not only working society but the education community with educators, students, teens, and young children.

True, routines are vital for all of us; but unlike the movies, we will not be defined by them. No! We are not about to crumble to the depth of darkness and crumble with lack of a routine. We, as a society, are creative and loving people who will strengthen through challenges to come together and make things right, not just as individuals but as a community. People together are strengthening and creating new ways to strive positively.

At Active Aging 365, we have begun the fight together in a short-limited time and already embraced numerous activities as the new norm. Although it is true that we are faced with the challenge of establishing new routines but given the fact that we are all now adhering to the “Sheltering-in-Place” policies, we are not too weak or fearful of establishing new routines as necessity. While trying to develop our own new routine, we have come to the conclusion that a new routine (yet an old routine that we just didn’t have time to pursue) is actually just what is needed in order to get rid of some aspects that feel negative because of non-routine. In this resolve, we all have made room for many new and healthy choices at Active Aging 365. Yes! We are in this together and we are absolutely dedicated to helping you establish new positive routines “one day and one step at a time.”

In helping you find a new routine that works for you, remember that planning out a new routine is going to require flexibility and willingness to draft and redraft your routine until you figure out what works best for you. And since you are working on the new normal, we are going to suggest some things to integrate into your routine. So, here we go!

Start by setting an alarm so that you get up at the same time every day. Next, figure out if you would like to incorporate an exercise routine in the morning or in the afternoon. If exercise was not a part of your previous routine, now is the time to begin! Don’t panic, exercise does not have to be long or hard. You can simply start by walking daily for a few minutes, and it can be as short as 10 minutes! You can find lots of examples or videos to follow on YouTube.

Then you can start mapping out steps and timeline to complete your work (if this applies to you). For those of you with kids at home, your routine has definitely multiplied, and mapping out when school time fits into the schedule is paramount for success. Make sure to work in breaks for yourself as you go about writing out your new routine. It is imperative that you take time to breathe, meditate, stretch, and take care of yourself.

Another add-on to your routine that we encourage is journaling. It is important to think and write about your feelings and emotions, especially in these trying times. Also, make sure that you have time to connect with others, socializing during this period of isolation is essential to your mental health.

Remember, establishing a new routine is a process, so make sure to be gentle with yourself while you are working towards a new normal which can make you feel great! If you work out a new routine, undoubtedly, you will feel better and be more productive, or just find your way out of those pesky ruts that spirals to precious time lost. We at Active Aging 365 are super excited about our new norm and hope this will inspire you to start working on your new routine today!

Download our full article for **additional bonus** materials on:

(1) “Benefits of Journaling” and we share how you can (2) “Start a Journal” with (3) “10 Tips When Writing a Journal.” Lastly, if you are a new at this writing then start with the (4) “8 Extra Tips for New Journal Writers.”

Here is a quick link to an article that suggests 8 benefits of journaling thanks to <https://penzu.com/journaling-benefits>

(1) Benefits of Journaling

Everyone has different reasons why they journal. There are a multitude of [types of journals](#) to be kept, and many people keep specific ones for different aspects of their life. From [travel journals](#), to [dream journals](#), to [prayer journals](#), you can write yours about anything. It doesn't even need to be about anything specific, just simply getting your thoughts down on paper is a great habit.

There are many benefits of keeping a journal, but journaling is especially helpful when used as an outlet to create, experiment and manage various parts of your life. It gives you a place to practice writing techniques, flesh out ideas, as well as just keeping a record of times you never want to forget or things you need to remember.

Here are the top 8 reasons why you should be [starting a journal](#) today:

1. Improve your writing.

If you have ever wanted to practice or improve your writing, the best thing to do is write. You don't have to have the perfect topic or a specific theme, you just need to start getting your ideas on paper. The more you work through them, the more those ideas will flourish into something more complete.

2. Inspire creativity.

Everyone is creative. If you don't think you are, then maybe you haven't tried. Your journal is a place to write down anything that comes to mind. The crazier the idea, the better. Let your imagination wander to the farthest parts of your mind and record the journey. The more you practice experimenting with possibilities and opportunities, the more inspiration you will find. Keeping a diary is a great way to help your creativity flourish.

3. Brainstorm ideas more effectively.

The benefits of journal writing are that you are able to keep all of your ideas in one place, no matter how all over the place they may be. Feel free to jot down whatever pops into your head and let your mind wander. Later on, you can come back to these ideas and look for connections and conclusions that may promote even more new and awesome ideas.

4. Stay organized.

Diaries help keep your thoughts organized and comprehensible. You can record daily musings, the feelings you had about a certain experience or the opinions you had about a specific event. Penzu allows you to tag and archive your entries, so whatever you have written can be found in an instant. They can become memory banks of whatever you wish or reminders of anything you want.

By creating diaries that are specific to certain topics, you can organize and archive your thoughts even more. Journals can take you back to that year you spent backpacking, they can remind you of a business you wanted to start or they can guide you to a happier state of mind.

Whatever you decide to write about, writing in a diary helps you sift through the clutter in your mind by organizing your thoughts into notes, lists, memories, stories and more.

5. Reduce stress.

Writing down your feelings acts as a release and can be very cleansing. If you are able to put your anxieties, frustrations and pains on paper, then you are less likely to harbor them inside, which creates stress. Expressing yourself in a diary is a positive way to free tension you may be internalizing.

6. Allow yourself to self-reflect.

To quote Ferris Bueller, "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it." Our lives can become very hectic, making it easy to get caught up in the day-to-day. Responsibilities and expectations start to consume us. Journaling is a way to take a step back from all of that and reflect on yourself. You may begin to see patterns in your behavior, or in the behavior of others. The benefits of diary writing in are that you are able to look back at pages you've written and think about how you've changed, discover things you want to change or decide on things you need to change.

7. Achieve your goals.

It is known that you are more likely to achieve your goals if you write them down. By keeping a diary, you not only can write down a list of ambitions and aspirations, you can expand on them. You can monitor your progress and continue to motivate yourself by documenting new developments and achievements.

8. Improve your memory.

By writing down ideas and thoughts you have had throughout the day, your brain is more likely to store that information. If you learn something new, a diary is a place to store the details, but as you recover those facts and write them down, your brain will make stronger connections with that information and you will have an easier time recalling it.

It is time to get those creative juices flowing, those ideas rolling and that brain of yours growing. But remember, the reasons of [writing a journal](#) do not stop here. Discover more by starting your journal today!

We keep a lot of things in our heads, but we put less down on paper. All those thoughts and ideas bouncing around can sometimes feel overwhelming. You have to-do lists, hopes, dreams, secrets, failures, love, loss, ups and downs. Ideas come and go, feelings pass. How do you remember all of them? How do you keep them organized? A great way to keep your thoughts organized and clear your mind is to write them down in a journal. Writing is a great exercise for anyone and by expressing yourself in a personal place is a wonderful way to stay sane.

(2) Starting a Journal

To start a journal, you just need to be willing to write. You don't have to write well, you just need to want to do it. You don't even need to decide what to write, you just need to let your words flow. Once you've decided you want to create a journal, here is a long list of instructions to guide you:

Set up a schedule of when you play to write in your journal. You want to turn your writing into a habit, so create a schedule. Pick a time and the days of the week you will want to write and create a timely calendar reminder, so you don't forget. By scheduling the same times, journaling will become a natural and regular part of your agenda that you can look forward to.

Today	<	>	November 2016	Day	Week	Month	4 Days	Agenda	More ▾	Settings ⚙
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat				
30	31 Halloween	Nov 1	2	3	4	5				
6 Daylight Saving Time ends	7	8 Election Day	9	10	11 Veterans Day	12				
13	14	15	16	17	18	19				
20	21	22	23	24 Thanksgiving Day	25	26				

Find the right space to write.







When you're writing, it is helpful to be in a space where you can focus and concentrate. A quiet room with no distractions works best. Allow yourself to focus on your writing, without any interruptions. Make sure you are able to sit upright and are comfortable. An office or a study room is always great.

Close your eyes and reflect on your day.



You may not know what to write about and that's okay. Your journal can be about anything you want. A good way to begin writing is to close your eyes and think about what you're feeling.

<p>Ask yourself questions.</p> 	<p>What has happened that day? How did that make you feel? Are you excited about anything? Why? Reflect on the thoughts and feelings you've been having.</p>
<p>Dive in and start writing.</p> 	<p>It is easy to begin sentences with, "I feel," or "I think," or "I wonder." Don't feel pressured to stick to any particular form or topic. The beginning of your journal writing can just be an introduction to your thoughts at the time. This is your personal space, so you should feel comfortable writing.</p>
<p>Time yourself.</p> 	<p>Set a time for how long you want to write. Somewhere between 5-20 minutes is ideal, depending on how much you want to jot down. Setting a time will help you stay focused and stop you from getting carried away. It is easy to feel like you need to write down every detail and this will help prevent that.</p>
<p>Re-read your entry and add additional thoughts.</p> 	<p>When you are finished writing a journal entry, go back and read through it. Once you have reviewed what you have written, add a couple sentences at the end about what you noticed or thought about your words. If you can, summarize your thoughts in a sentence or two. That is a great way to narrow in on topics.</p>
<p>Buy a physical journal or Sign-up for Penzu</p>	<p>Penzu is a digital journal that will allow you to write from any device. It will make your journal writing incredibly easy-to-use, accessible, organized and private. It will save all your work and date it for you, so you never need to remember. It is a great tool for writing anywhere and keeping your work in one place.</p>

(3) 10 Tips When Writing a Journal

Here are some tips to get started properly and consistently writing in your journal.

1. Set a schedule

As we mentioned earlier in the article, setting a schedule is a great first step. Decide how many times you want to write and set a schedule. Whether it be once a day, or once a week, decide on a time you want to write and don't skip it.

2. Keep it private

A journal is personal and should be a place you feel comfortable expressing yourself honestly and truthfully. Penzu keeps your journal safe and secure, with all your entries made private by default, only made available to share under your command.

3. Meditate

Any journal entry will benefit from some moments of reflection before you begin writing. Before you start writing, go to a quiet place and focus on your breath for a few minutes. This is a wonderful exercise to clear your head and settle your [thoughts](#).

4. Brainstorm

If you want your journal to be about something specific, brainstorm ideas to write about. You can write a [bible journal](#), a [dream journal](#), cooking, work, school, anything you want! Feel free to start writing down ideas of what you are interested in or feel you should be writing about. This is the perfect place to get your creative juices flowing. Check out this page for a list of all the different [types of journals](#).

5. Date your entry

It is important to keep each journal entry dated, so you know when you wrote it. You will want to go back through your journal at some point and see when the entries of the topic you're writing about were added. Also, it will be nice to see how you were feeling at different points in your life. Penzu automatically dates your entries for you, so you don't have to worry about remembering to do it.

6. Title your entry

If you can, try and title your entries. This will help you navigate your journal and keep your writings focused. You don't need to title it before you start writing though. A great way to think of a title is after you've written, but it is something to keep in mind.

7. Write naturally

When writing, don't feel like you have to follow any form or structure. Just do what comes naturally. Follow your train of thought and see what kind of writing follows.

8. Write quickly

Don't let writer's block get in your way. Just keep writing whatever comes to mind. It is always hard to stop and start again, so keep writing. It doesn't have to make sense. Don't think too much about the words you are putting on the page. You can make sense of them later.

9. Write honestly

Your journal is for your eyes only, so be honest. You don't want to lie to yourself. Be real with your thoughts, feelings and opinions. Be as candid as you can. You want your journal to be an honest representation of yourself and the times you're writing in.

10. Have fun

Writing a journal should be an enjoyable experience. Have fun with your writing and take pleasure in it. Writing in your journal shouldn't be a chore. It should be something you look forward to doing, so make it a fun exercise.

(4) 8 Extra Tips For New Journal Writers

Writing a [journal entry](#) is different for everyone. We all write differently and about different things, so it is a different experience for everyone. We can help with pointing you in the right direction, whatever that direction may be. Here are some tips to start:

1. Think about what you want to write.

Your journal doesn't need to have a theme, but an easy way to start writing an entry is to think about what you want to write about.

- Do you want to write about that day's events?
- Do you want to write about your plans for tomorrow?
- Are you planning a trip?
- Are you working on a project?
- Are you in a new relationship?
- Do you want to discuss your family?

Decide what you wish to discuss and go in that direction.

2. Try writing with a journaling prompt

If you are having trouble deciding on a topic, try writing personally and/or creatively to get you started. Here are some [journaling prompts](#) you could think about:

- What is your earliest childhood memory?
- What is/was your favorite subject in school? Why?
- Write a poem about your first romantic encounter.
- What is your biggest secret?
- Who is someone in your life that made a large impact on you? Why?

3. Plan ahead

Make sure you have a designated time to write. That way you can start thinking about what you want to write throughout the day and can prepare ideas. This will also get you looking forward to writing.

4. Practice

Write as much as possible. Writing will become easier you more you do it. Try and get into the habit of writing regularly and your entries will start coming to you naturally.

5. Write letters

There are certainly times in your life where you wish you said something, or wish you didn't say something. Write about these moments. Think about writing letters that you will never send. They can be addressed to specific people or not, but they are great outlets for honest thoughts and make for compelling entries.

6. Try different perspectives

A helpful method of writing is to write from different perspectives. Pick a topic or event to write about and try writing in from someone else's perspective, like a parent's, a friend's, or even an animal's. It is healthy to think about things from different points of view.

7. Add pictures

Pictures say a thousand words and can certainly inspire more. With Penzu you can import photos right into your entries, so feel free to add them throughout or just at the beginning to give you inspiration. You can talk about what is happening in the picture, the person that took it, what isn't pictured, or just what it means to you. Think of it as giving the picture a long caption.

8. Free write

Free writing is without direction, structure or motive. This means just take yourself to the page and go wild. Whenever an idea pops into your head, just write it down. It doesn't have to be cohesive or have a purpose.

To Start Writing in a Journal With Penzu

Now that you've learned many tips of how to start and write in a journal, it's time to get started with Penzu. Here's how to get started:

1. Grab your phone, computer or tablet.
2. Make sure you are connected to WiFi.
3. Go to [Penzu.com](https://penzu.com) to create an account.
4. Enter your name, email and a password for your account.
5. Download the apps.
6. Log in and begin writing!

Writing journals is simple and easy! Download Penzu today and get let the words flow!