



Journaling

Source: John Bingham of Bingham Counseling

The process of journal writing is an activity that enables self-acceptance. What is important is honesty and being truthful. This is why journal writing is for your eyes only. What should I write in my journal? Here are some ideas:

Dreams	Work you do on your dreams (amplification, etc.)
Free associations, brain storming	Vent your anger, frustration, despair
Reflections	Memories (Begin with "I remember...")
A painful experience	Write about what disturbs you
A joyful or pleasant experience	Write about what excites/stimulates you
Write about a meaningful relationship	Daydreams
Feelings	Hopes and plans for the future
Mistakes and what you have learned	Successes and what you have learned
Dialogue with an inner figure or outer person	Fears and doubts
Write about your family, school, church	Prayers

To get started, write about one of the following:

- What would I most like to remember about today?
- What would I most like to forget or ignore?
- What would I like to say to someone who touched my life today?
- What feelings did I have today? And how often do I have these feelings in my life?

Ideas for Using and Maintaining Your Journal

Allow yourself to do nothing at all until you feel a deep and genuine urge to write. Write only what, when and where you want to do so. Write as much or as little as you like.

Date each entry and include the name of the day, the time you start, your location if you are not in your customary place. Journal writing is for YOUR EYES ONLY. Write freely, uninhibitedly, candidly. Be honest with yourself. Write spontaneously, quickly, including everything. Do not edit yourself. Don't cross out or throw away anything you write.

Write about feelings. This is where the action is: how you feel about what is occurring. What are your feelings telling you? Review your writings periodically. Look for patterns, recurring themes, images, issues, values.

Write with color. Use different colored ink for different kinds of writings. Perhaps blue for reflections, purple for poems, green for meditations, etc. Colors keep a journal lively and make it more fun to read later. It is a simple way to organize your material too.

When you are tired of writing, quit.