

Step into YOURSELF –Step into YOUR LIFE
A Journey into Being and Living Authentically

Be You

Listen to your Heart

Being True to Yourself and Living an Authentic Lifestyle

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Becoming You and Living an Authentic Lifestyle

Journaling

Hopefully you have already started journaling during your sacred time but if not it is time to begin to get into the habit. For those of you who are already journaling - great. Here we are going to go a little deeper into the methods and techniques of journaling.

Journaling will be an important part of your process. Journaling will be where all your thoughts, ideas, insights and discoveries are made and recorded.

This is where I really have always gone in times of need, in times of fear, in times of loneliness, in times of need. Writing has always been my connection to myself but more than that it has been where I have felt safe, felt like I belonged, felt like I connected. It was where peace and harmony was. It was home long before I discovered that my environmental home is the sea.

I have been writing since I learned the letters and how to write them. I was writing poems and stories as a child. I was journaling long before I knew what journaling was. It was fashionable as a child to keep a secret diary. I had one which I kept my secret thoughts about what was happening around me, what I thought about people and things. That grew into journaling as a teenager.

There have been periods where I didn't write but they were brief. I feel like I have always had a notebook that I wrote my deepest most secret thoughts in. Sometimes it might have only contained elements of my day, what transpired but I have always had a notebook around somewhere.

Sometimes the words come easily and flow, sometimes I sit there and nothing moves from my mind to my hand, to the pen and page. Writing with pen and notebook are my friends. I always go to them when I need to express what's deep inside or discover what is really hiding within me.

When writing a first draft or coming up with a new idea or direction I always begin with a pen and notebook. Even though the computer has now taken over how we

write it is not the place I begin. Once I have started my fingers begin to flow over the keyboard but to get the muse to come I need the old way of pen and paper.

Writing is where you can let loose and express yourself or in art of any kind. Whatever actually is your medium will be the place for you but writing in a journal is still important. Write what you created and how you created it and what you were thinking and what it says to you. It will open new insights.

I believe in words and putting your thoughts into words on a page. There is a magic in it. Even musicians write their music and lyrics on a page to see them to expand on them to adjust and change them as they hear. This enables them to share them with others.

For journal writing we are only sharing with our self but it allows us clarity that we might not see in our thinking. It allows us to adjust our thinking, our thoughts, our feelings, our perspectives.

Writing is our door into our deepest desires and our deepest fears. It opens our imagination. It can show us how we see our life, our days, how we see others, the world around us and our self. Then it can show us the disconnection and disparities from what we see on the outside and what is real on the inside. It leads us into our authenticity.

In journaling you will record what you learn and discover along the way.

How you journal will depend on what you are trying to accomplish or discover. There are many types of journal keeping. You can combine different types of journal writing into one journal. You can use separate journals as I do or just one journal for all the different types of journaling you may do.

We will explore several of them. Use one type or use various combinations of them. Try out several and see what works for you.

Different Types of Journals

- *Idea Journal*: Capture inspiration and creative thoughts
- *Personal Journal*: Explore your personality, how you feel, roles you play, career choices
- *Goal Planning Journal*: Set short term, long term goals based on your interests, values, beliefs.

I actually use a variation of a goal planning journal, a Vision Journal. It is similar to a goal planning journal because I do set short and long term goals but it is filled with how I vision my next steps and where I want to go and how I want myself and my life to look like both short term and long term, It also has dreams and hopes for my future as well as bucket list items.

- *Problem Solving Journal:* Explore alternative solutions to a problem or situation by looking at them from different points of view
- *Art Journal:* Use creativity through different art mediums to show your feelings or ideas. You can add writing or not. This may work best for you if you see and feel things in a more visual way.
- *History Journal:* Chronicle your life, your family history through writing, photos & mementos. This helps to see your progress and changes over your life and gain new insights and perspectives about yourself or the people who influenced you.
- *Nature Journal:* Chronicle outdoor experiences (hiking, fishing, fishing etc) and capture nature's inspirations in your writing
- *Spiritual Journal:* Explore your values, beliefs and your faith. What are some of the larger questions you have about life?

The easiest way is to use one notebook/journal and just incorporate all these different types of journals into one place. It is entirely up to you. There are NO rules about writing or drawing or what you put in your journal. With that said here are a few suggestions to get you started writing:

- Your journal is your private place where it is safe to express, explore and process your thoughts and feelings. Find a special place to be alone and quiet. Make journaling a special time. Breathe, relax
- Date the entry. This helps in looking back over the process and see the changes that occur within. It also helps if later you decide to use your writing to create a public piece of writing. (like personal essay or memoir)
- Start writing when you are ready, write when and how long you want to
- No critics are allowed in your journal. No worries about neatness, spelling, grammar etc. Avoid making judgments.

- It is ok to start with facts but move beyond facts to feelings and what is going on inside you. Your journal is a safe place. Be as honest with yourself as you can be.
- Talk to yourself. *Get to know yourself.*
- Use your journal as a garbage can. Discard your angers, fears, doubts and frustrations. This will lessen their power over you. You will feel better.
- Ask questions- keep questioning but do not seek answers let them emerge if they want to.

Techniques

- Dialogue writing - Have a conversation with your inner wisdom or someone you admire
- Timed writing - Set a specific time, 5 minutes, 10 minutes and write without stopping until the time is up
- Observations - Pick an object and write what you see, use details
- Letters (unsent) - Write a letter to someone you love or need to express something to or someone you admire or yourself when you were younger or to your future self.

Suggestions to try:

- Write at a specific time of day
- Write a specific amount each day
- Write whenever you feel like it
- Write as much or as little as you want
- Write on special occasions
- Carry the journal with you. Write anywhere, everywhere any chance you get
- Keep your journal in a special place & write only in that special place

Your journal is for spontaneity, creativity, and discovery. Try using the different kinds of journaling processes, the different techniques and the suggestions. Stay open. Expect the unexpected. Wonder-Wander-Speculate.

Assignment

Get a Notebook or Journal to use. Decide if you just want a simple notebook or a fancy journal, or a sketch book. What you use is up to you. Experiments with several different types and see which you like best.

This is an excerpt from my NEW Book *Becoming You: Step into Yourself/Step into Your Life*

Coming out in 2021

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