

# 10 Journaling Tips to Help You Heal, Grow and Thrive

By [Loran Hills](#)

**“The more light you allow within you, the brighter the world you live in will be.” ~Shakti Gawain**

Keeping a journal has many positive benefits. Journaling can help with personal growth and development. By regularly recording your thoughts you will gain insight into your behaviors and moods. Journaling can be used for problem-solving and [stress reduction](#). It's been proven to improve mental and physical health. It can lead to [increased self-esteem](#).

Dr. John Grohol, CEO of Psych Central, estimates that one in three people suffer from a mental illness. Anxiety disorders, mood disorders and substance abuse can be treated with a combination of medication and counseling.

**In addition, writing in a journal is an effective tool for use in the healing process.**

I started keeping a diary at age 8. As I grew up, I wrote the normal kinds of teen angst entries but eventually I turned journaling into a more sophisticated practice. In my 20's I read all of Anais Nin's Diaries.

I studied Ira Progoff's [At a Journal Workshop](#) and implemented his methods—an elaborate design for generating the energy for change. Using his methods I was able to sort through turbulent emotions during the divorce from my first husband and discover hidden lessons from the experience. To this day I continue to use some of his techniques as well as others I've learned. Recently I've discovered a new creative world in art journaling. Using mixed media has helped me express myself in refreshing and unusual ways.

There is a lot of power in the written word but occasionally words are hard to find. By drawing or making a collage I have been able to create a representation of how I feel that moves beyond my analytical writing.

**Writing has helped me to process not only failed relationships but also to recover from grief and loss.**

Reading back through my journals has helped me reflect on where I used to be and where I am now in my life. It's a method of allowing the light of understanding and compassion to shine on my past. In [The Artist's Way](#) Julia Cameron suggests writing three handwritten pages or 750 words every morning. At first there is a lot of “dumping” but eventually little jewels of wisdom and direction emerge. I found myself creatively energized when I participated with a group for 12 weeks using her book as a guide.

**If you want to improve your perspective on life and clarify issues, start writing in a journal.**

You can't know where you're going if you don't know where you are. Be sure your journal will remain private or write online so that you are writing for your eyes only.

Here are 10 tips to get started:

**1. Start writing about where you are in your life at this moment.**

Describe your living situation, your work, and your relationships. Are you right where you want to be?

**2. For five to ten minutes just start writing in a “stream of consciousness.”**

Don't edit your thoughts or feelings and don't correct your grammar. Don't censor your thoughts.

**3. Start a dialogue with your [inner child](#) by writing in your subdominant hand.**

Answer with your dominant hand. What issues emerge?

**4. Cultivate an attitude of gratitude by maintaining a daily list of things you appreciate, including uplifting quotes.**

Keep it in one journal or in a separate section so that you can read through it all at once. When you feel down you can read through it for a [boost of gratitude](#) and happiness.

**5. Start a journal of self-portraits.**

You can take pictures, draw colors or shapes or collage images. Learn to love and accept yourself just the way you are today.

**6. Keep a nature diary to connect with the natural world.**

The world we live in is a magical and mysterious place. Record the things you notice about the sky, the weather, and the seasons.

**7. Maintain a log of successes.**

Begin by writing the big ones you remember then regularly jot down small successes that occur during the week. As you pay attention, your list will grow and inspire you.

**8. Keep a log or playlist of your favorite songs.**

Write about the moods they evoke. When you hear a song that triggers a strong memory, write down how you feel and explore that time and space of your life.

**9. If there's something you are struggling with or an event that's disturbing you, write about it in the third person.**

This will give you distance and provide a new perspective. Write down what you learned about yourself.

**10. Develop your intuition.**

Write down questions or concerns then take a deep breath and listen for a response from your Higher Self. Let yourself write automatically. If you don't get an answer right away, look for signs during the day.

We all have dark days, black moods, and anxious feelings. Use writing in a journal to explore the darkness. You will find your inner light when you do.

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