



Journaling Will Change Your Life

One of the positive habits that I gained since we were all stuck in quarantine from last year was falling in love with writing. Since we were all stuck in our houses with nowhere to go and no real social commitments to attend to, I spent a lot of time writing both to myself and other people. While I don't have the discipline needed to log entries in my journal daily, I've definitely gotten better at recording my thoughts multiple times a week. Over the last year and a half journaling been one of the most gratifying habits I've ever practiced.

I wanted to highlight three different ways that journaling every day has been *changing my life*:

COMFORT

"Paper is more patient than people, we should put our angry thoughts down on the page, leave them there. Rather than projecting them, or hurting others with them." - **Anne Frank**

I've found the pages of my journal to be a great source of comfort - especially during this stressful pandemic. Sometimes, you want to just vent in order to make yourself feel better, even if you are experiencing the same problems over and over again. Friends & family can get tired of you saying the same thing over and over again, whereas journals do not. We all are experiencing different things and emotions right now - write them down in your journal and write them down truthfully - you don't have to impress anyone because you don't have to show your journal to anyone. Simply the act of writing everything out on paper, or even on a word document is a therapeutic experience in of itself and it feels like a big weight off your chest.

REFLECTION

"The unexamined life is not worth living" – **Socrates**

You can't lie to yourself in your own journal. Or at least, it's much harder to. Doing morning and evening pages every day forces you to examine your life - and also examine your life truthfully. We've all gone through stages where the days blend together and I've found that the simple act of reflecting every day is a great way to keep track of your life and where you were at different points. Even if it is writing down a few sentences about how you're feeling, what is going on that day that's important, and what you're struggling with helps you so much. When you take the time to write out the entire situation of the problems that you're experiencing – it actually gives you clarity on what your next step should be and how to solve your problem. The whole process of writing out and as Socrates says "examining", your life makes sure that you make the right decisions going forward after careful reflection.

GROWTH

"When you have to use your energy to put those words down, you are more apt to make them count." - **Raymond Chandler**

When you journal every day, you see yourself grow write before your eyes (write haha). Although I don't regularly review my old journals as the act of just writing is often therapeutic enough for me, when you do review your old entries, you'll usually be shocked at where you were in the past. There are certain times I've laughed at how much I've grown in between entries when I was complaining about a problem that had a very simple solution in hindsight. And it shows you that problems that you feel at times are going to absolutely ruin your life, are just temporary and you might not even think of them weeks or months down the line. In addition, using journaling to make sure you complete tasks and keeping yourself accountable is probably the most helpful aspect of the practice. Using my journal to keep myself accountable to the tasks and habits that I need to accomplish throughout the day forces me to grow and also helps me dissect the things that I am getting right so I can continue implementing them in the future.

IN CONCLUSION:

"Keep a notebook. Travel with it, eat with it, sleep with it. Slap into it every stray thought that flutters up into your brain. Cheap paper is less perishable than gray matter. And lead pencil's markings endure longer than memory." - **Jack London**

Starting a journaling practice really will be one of the most gratifying habits that you can ever implement. I promise you if you start small (maybe just a few sentences at the beginning) and slowly grow it into a habit, journaling will change your life.



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