



A BEGINNERS GUIDE TO JOURNALING



BY SAKSHI SINGLA



“Write what disturbs you, what you fear, what you have not been willing to speak about. Be willing to be split open.”
Natalie Goldberg



ABOUT ME & MY JOURNALING JOURNEY

I am qualified child and family counsellor and coach who helps people let go painful past, resolve unresolved issues and break unhealthy patterns that are longer serving them. I guide parents, teenagers and young adults to connect more deeply to themselves and others. Journaling has been a tool I have been using forever and It has helped me overcome some incredibly difficult times, understand myself and my purpose in life. I write entirely to find out what I'm thinking, what I'm looking at, what I see, and what it means. What I want and what I fear!

And so I write on a daily mostly or at least every other day basis and will highly recommend to you to do the same..
Thank you for being here.

Much love to you and your evolving journey!

Saakshi Singla

“Sometimes the only paper will listen to you.”



WHY IS JOURNALING HELPFUL?

Stressed, Anxious and feeling isolated? **Try expressing your thoughts and feelings in writing.** People had been keeping diaries for centuries but in the past three decades more and more research have uncovered the benefits of putting pen to paper with your deepest thoughts and feelings. Research also supports that journaling helps ease our distress when we're struggling. In a 2006 study, nearly 100 young adults were asked to spend 15 minutes journaling or drawing about a stressful event, or writing about their plans for the day, twice during one week. The people who journaled saw the biggest reduction in symptoms like depression, anxiety, and hostility.

Journaling has proven to help with our psychological states and also our physical beings. In a world that is so full of outer influences and stimuli, tuning in to your own thoughts and feelings can seem difficult sometimes. Journaling allows you to **tune in and connect to thoughts, patterns, stories and dreams within you that you didn't even realise you were carrying.**

It is a tool that not only helps you to form a **heart relationship with yourself** but in doing so, **creates closer, more intimate connections with others.**

The relationship we have with ourselves determines how we see the world hence, journaling works because it helps us get more and more self aware, **helps us to heal and decrease our self love deficit and increase self care and self acceptance !**

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BENEFITS OF JOURNALING

- Journalling helps in the **brain dump** on paper which in turn helps you out of a Amygdala Hijack.
- **Helps to reduce stress and anxiety** if you get your thoughts and emotions out and down on paper
- It is helps in **self reflection** and pushes you to understand yourself on a deeper level.
- **Conscious awareness** that comes through writing your thoughts down helps to leave behind your internal unconscious stories and programs that may be holding you back.
- It helps with **goal setting** and tracking progress.
- It helps with **feeling gratitude** and increases **sense of worth.**
- Journaling also helps with **trauma healing** and **nervous system regulation.**
- It is also a great tool to use with your partner, family in your relationship creating a **deeper emotional connection.**

"I can recapture everything when I write, my thoughts, my ideals and my fantasies." Anne Frank



WHEN SHOULD YOU JOURNAL?

There are no rules or any right or wrong time. When it feels best for you. My suggestion is **try different times**. If this is new for you, try out the morning and night journaling prompts and see what works for you. Having a structured journaling time works for some and not others.

WHERE SHOULD YOU JOURNAL?

Again there is no right or wrong place. Journal wherever it feels good for you - your balcony, study, garden or a cafe outside. Try a few places out. You can also **create a cozy undisturbed corner in your home that feels safe**, flowers, indoor plants and candles all work wonders.

WHAT DO I EVEN WRITE?

Hmmm... this is the toughest one and fear of what to write stops a lot of people. **Don't complicate it in your mind** because what you write, how and when you write are just guidelines. First and foremost **journaling is an enquiry into your inner self**. A journey of bringing self awareness and through this awareness self care begins to blossom. Then over period of time deeper layers, patterns, thoughts and behaviours that were previously unconscious are brought to the light. Journaling is the **process of breathing conscious awareness into yourself and your life**.

SO WHERE DO I ACTUALLY START?

You can start by trying the journaling prompts you will find in the next pages and see how that feels. If the journaling prompts don't feel quite right, try simply writing your stream of thoughts, Don't think so much about what it says at first, **let your pen do the work for you**. It doesn't need to make perfect sense at first. Sometimes it's good to get out of your head and write whatever wants to come out.

The understanding may come at a later date.

Trust the process.

"Write hard and clear about what hurts." Ernest Hemingway



MORNING JOURNALING PROMPTS

TODAY I WOKE UP FEELING ...

E.g. I woke up feeling a tired in body today. My mind feels frozen and my heart feels a little closed off.

Whatever you notice physically and emotionally , write about it.
Just be true to yourself on the paper.

WHEN I GO TO BED TONIGHT,I WANT TO FEEL...

E.g. Peaceful & Productive

Write down your ideal feelings. If that feels hard, write down what you would feel if you were living your best life.

WHAT OR WHO DO I WANT TO MAKE MORE TIME FOR TODAY?

E.g. I will make more time for myself today, to read and meditate when I get home from work.

3 THINGS I WILL DO TODAY THAT BRING ME JOY ...

E.g. I will dance, go for a walk and see my friends.
Try to avoid smoking or mindless Netflixing or Doomscrolling

TODAY I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO...

E.g. I am looking forward to my morning coffee with my parents, a bubble bath and spending time with my kids.

The things we look forward to can be big events or the little things like eating an ice cream

I WELCOME INTO MY DAY

E.g. I welcome into my day: More joy, more fun, more gratitude, more peaceful moments.

"Keeping a journal of what's going on in your life is a good way to help you distill what's important and what's not." Martina Navratilova



JOURNALING PROMPTS FOR NIGHTTIME BEFORE GOING TO SLEEP:

1. THE HARDEST MOMENT FROM TODAY WAS...
DID I LEARN ANYTHING FROM THIS HARD/DIFFICULT/ PAINFUL SITUATION?

E.g. I learned that I am stronger than I realised and I stay calm in stressful situations.

Sometimes the things we learn don't feel obvious straight away. Sit with it for a moment and see what comes up for you.

2. DID I SHOW UP AS MY BEST SELF TODAY? IF NOT, IN WHICH SITUATIONS WOULD I HAVE LIKED TO SHOW UP DIFFERENTLY?
I AM PROUD OF MYSELF FOR ...
3 THINGS I AM GRATEFUL FOR TODAY...

E.g. I am grateful for the sun for shining, I am grateful for the help I received at work, I am grateful for my children for always making me laugh.

Write whatever comes up and feels true for you.

3. THE HARDEST MOMENT FROM TODAY WAS...
DID I LEARN ANYTHING FROM THIS HARD/DIFFICULT/ PAINFUL SITUATION?

E.g. I learned that I am stronger than I realised and I stay calm in stressful situations.

Sometimes the things we learn don't feel obvious straight away. Sit with it for a moment and see what comes up for you.

"Fill your paper with the breathings of your heart."

— William Wordsworth



JOURNALING PROMPTS FOR SELF REFLECTION AND
GROWTH:

WHAT IN MY LIFE ACTUALLY BRINGS ME JOY?
WHAT IN MY LIFE AM I DOING BECAUSE I FEEL LIKE I
HAVE TO NOT BECAUSE I REALLY WANT TO?

Take your time with this one. Examine the bigger things
in your life as well as the smaller. Be as honest as you
can.

WHERE IN MY LIFE AM I NOT SETTING BOUNDARIES
AND GETTING HURT AS A RESULT?

A boundary is anything that crosses the threshold of
what feels okay and good. Physically, emotionally,
spiritually.

WHAT WOULD THESE BOUNDARIES LOOK, FEEL AND
SOUND LIKE?

I FEEL MOST MYSELF WHEN I AM ...

What are you doing? Where are you? Who are you with?

I HAVE TROUBLE SLOWING DOWN IN THESE AREAS...

Where do you find it hard to slow down? E.g. At work
and in the bedroom.

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."

Maya Angelou



JOURNALING PROMPTS FOR DEEPENING YOUR RELATIONSHIP:

AM I FEELING SEEN AND HEARD IN MY RELATIONSHIP AT THE MOMENT?

IF NOT, WHAT AM I NOT SPEAKING UP ABOUT AND COMMUNICATING WITH MY PARTNER?

ARE MY PARTNER AND I MAKING IT A PRIORITY TO CONNECT AND CHECK IN WITH EACH OTHER THROUGHOUT THE DAY?

JOURNALING PROMPTS TO DO WITH YOUR PARTNER:

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT YOU WOULD LIKE MORE OF IN OUR RELATIONSHIP?

WHEN DO YOU FEEL THE MOST LOVED BY ME?

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU HAVE BEEN WANTING TO TALK TO ME ABOUT THAT SCARES YOU?

WRITE DOWN A BUNCH OF FUN DATE NIGHT IDEAS FOR EACH WEEK.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT ME? WHAT DO YOU APPRECIATE ABOUT WHAT I DO?

ARE WE STILL ON THE SAME PAGE ABOUT OUR FUNDAMENTAL RELATIONSHIP DESIRES?

E.g We both want to live in the countryside and are saving up to make that possible in year. We both still agree on how many children we want, or if we want children at all. We both agree on the sexual agreements that we have in place at the moment.

If you and your partner haven't talked about these things yet, I highly

recommend having this bigger conversation with each other and getting clear on what both of your nonnegotiable are and if those align.

"This pouring thoughts out on paper has relieved me. I feel better and full of confidence and resolution." Diet Eman





Saakshi Singla

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KINDS OF JOURNALS

1. GRATITUDE JOURNAL

Writing in a gratitude journal every night before going to bed is a great way to create a gratitude practice. Write down at least three things you are grateful for that day. Each day they have to be three different things. It is especially helpful on bad days, as you can look back on previous days and remind yourself there is a lot to be grateful for and the bad days will pass.

2. DUMPING JOURNAL

Create a dumping journal. This journal is beneficial to "dump" the negative thoughts and feelings that creep up during the day. It is not necessary to review the previous entries, as it may create negative thoughts and feelings again.

3. I AM AWESOME JOURNAL

Having an "I am awesome" journal is a great way to boost self esteem and realize your self worth. Everyday write down at least three things you love about yourself. They cannot be the same things each day. If your self esteem or self worth is low, read back some of your previous entries

4. DREAM JOURNAL

Record your dreams on a regular basis in a dream journal and keep track of the dream's themes and patterns. Dreams can provide an insight into your most important thoughts and concerns in the real life.

5. TRAVEL JOURNAL

In a travel journal, you can document your adventures, road trips, places that you have visited, and discoveries that you made along the way.

6. FIVE YEAR JOURNAL

A five year journal makes sticking to a journal routine easy. Write one line a day for the next five years.

Saakshi Singla

COUNSELLING | PARENTING | LIFE COACHING

We are visual creatures. When you doodle an image that captures the essence of an idea, you not only remember it, but you also help other people understand and act on it - which is generally the point of meetings in the first place. Tom Wujec





WHAT YOU'LL NEED TO GET STARTED:

A journal.

A pen you like writing with.

A cozy corner that feels safe and you don't get disturbed.

That's it.

ADDITIONAL TOOLS I LOVE TO HAVE WITH ME WHEN I JOURNAL:

Aromatic Candles for creating a cosy space.

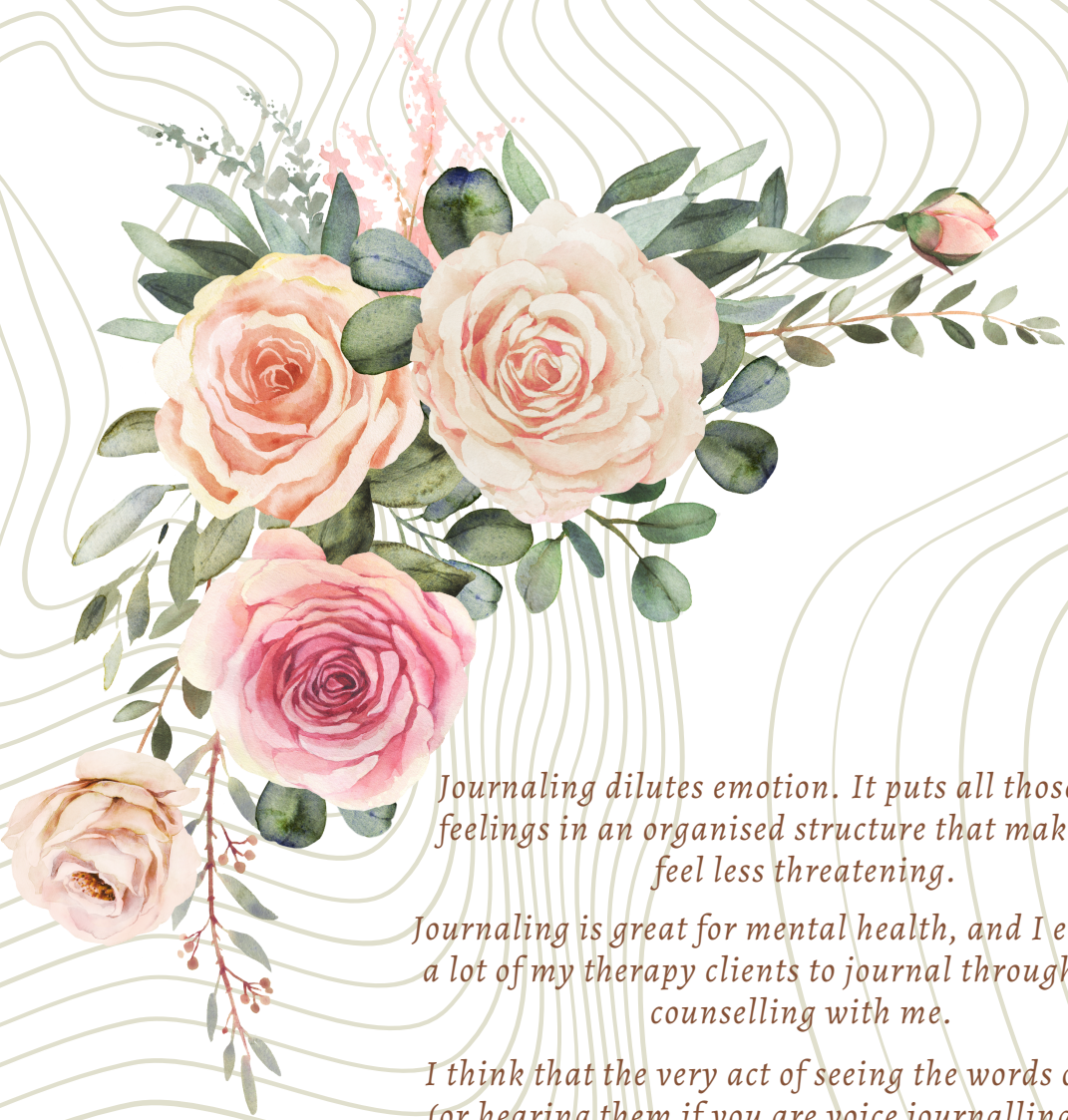
Large cushions if you love sitting on the floor.

Some green plants. Essential oils. Flowers.

Family picture frames

"I owe a good deal to this journal. By unburdening my mind on paper I feel, as it were, in some degree to get rid of it; it seems made over to a friend that hears it patiently, keeps it faithfully, and by never forgetting anything, is always ready to compare the past & present and thus to cheer & edify the future." — Anne Lister





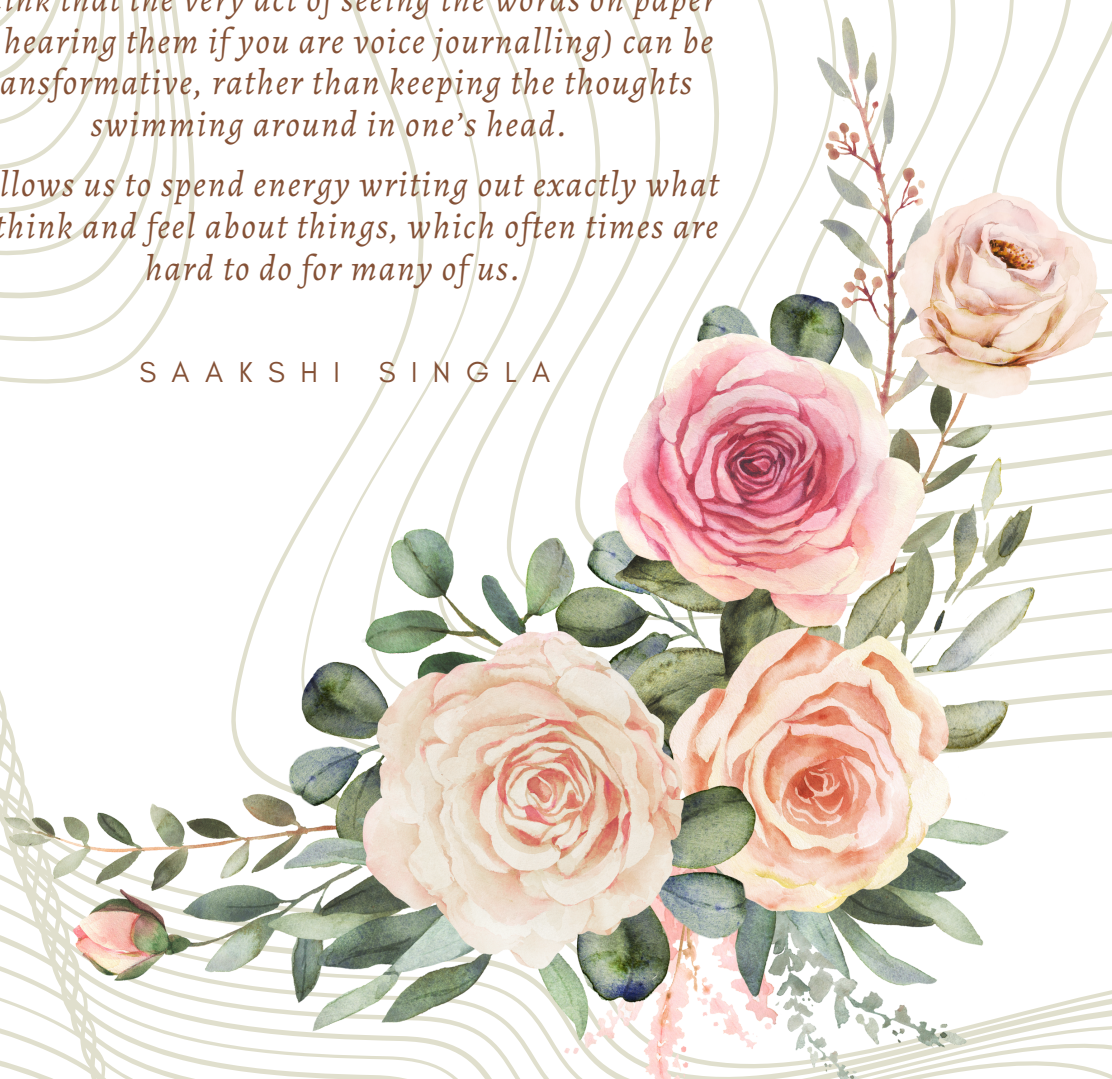
Journaling dilutes emotion. It puts all those messy feelings in an organised structure that makes it all feel less threatening.

Journaling is great for mental health, and I encourage a lot of my therapy clients to journal through getting counselling with me.

I think that the very act of seeing the words on paper (or hearing them if you are voice journalling) can be transformative, rather than keeping the thoughts swimming around in one's head.

It allows us to spend energy writing out exactly what we think and feel about things, which often times are hard to do for many of us.

S A A K S H I S I N G L A



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