



Wright Path Coaching

# Starting Your Journal

[www.WrightPathCoaching.com](http://www.WrightPathCoaching.com)



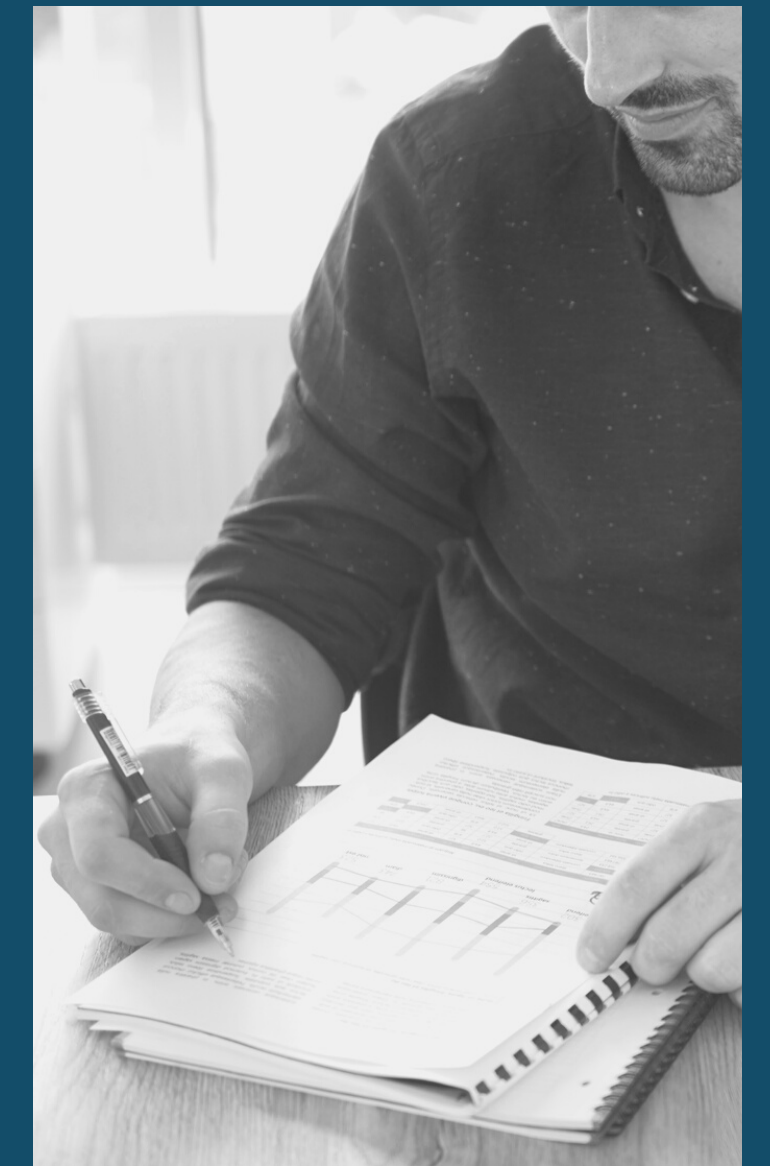
# Benefits of Journaling

Journaling can be effective for many different reasons and help you reach a wide range of goals. It can help you clear your head, make important connections between thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, track your progress and even buffer or reduce the effects of mental illness.



# Journaling as a Habit

Journaling can be a keystone habit that helps you focus your energy and attention on where it will be most effective and has ripple effects that improve your life and get you closer to your goals. Journaling can keep you centered, help you identify your strengths and weaknesses, give you an opportunity for reflection and self-analysis, and much more. Simply keeping a record of your thoughts, feelings, and actions can have a surprisingly big impact on your life.



# GETTING STARTED



## TIMING / FREQUENCY

Choose a time of day you'd like to start your practice and how frequently you will do it. This is totally personal preference and you can change it along the way, but choose the path of least resistance to start. Maybe it's after dinner? Or a 15-minute window in the morning before you shower? Replace browsing the news with taking a little time for yourself? Replacing an activity that no longer brings you joy with journaling, or "piggy-backing" off of an existing habit makes the transition easier. Commit to the number of days per week that feels reasonable for you.

# GETTING STARTED



## CHOOSE YOUR TOOLS

To help create a habit around journaling, it's important to enjoy the act of writing. Find a journal that you are drawn to and a pen with which you'll enjoy writing. For pens, I am a fan of Cross, Le Pen, and Pilot, and particularly love Moleskine journals. A laptop is another option, but you'll have to commit to closing all distractions. I also feel it's more cathartic to write by hand than typing on computer, and it may aid the creative flow. The benefit of a computer is that you can get the words out faster. What matters most is choosing a mode in which you'll be more prone to writing on a regular basis.

# GETTING STARTED



## CREATE YOUR SPACE

To help create a habit around journaling, it's important to enjoy the act of writing. Find a journal that you are drawn to and a pen with which you'll enjoy writing. For pens, I am a fan of Cross, Le Pen, and Pilot, and particularly love Moleskine journals. A laptop is another option, but you'll have to commit to closing all distractions. I also feel it's more cathartic to write by hand than typing on computer, and it may aid the creative flow. The benefit of a computer is that you can get the words out faster. What matters most is choosing a mode in which you'll be more prone to writing on a regular basis.



# GETTING STARTED



## FOCUS & BE PRESENT

Take a few minutes to become still and calm your breath. Breathe & get present in your body - take 4 or 5 slow, deep belly breaths. Inhale calm, exhale commotion. What are you feeling, right now? Do a body scan... start with your toes and end at the top of your head. I can't emphasize this step enough - you need to connect with your feelings in order to really benefit from the journaling practice. This step alone takes practice, so be kind and patient with yourself.

# Journaling Prompts

If you're new to journaling, prompts are a great way to get your started in the habit. Sometimes staring at a blank page can be a little daunting. However, for some people, prompts can become a "check the box" type of process versus a cathartic way of creatively expressing yourself or actually connecting to your thoughts and feelings. Be mindful while you're writing and don't feel like you have to stick to a script. The following prompts are to help get your creative juices flowing if you're feeling stuck or intimidated.





# Journaling Prompts



- What/how am I feeling right now?
- What am I thinking/feeling/doing related to finding the next step in my career, family, and/or personal development?
- Where is my attention? (work, self, others, daydreams, vision)
- What's a challenge?
- What's going well?
- Where do I see an opportunity?
- What are my strengths and areas for improvement?
- What do I notice in my (work, home, school, community) environment?
- What matters?
- What am I not considering?
- What is causing me anxiety, overwhelm or stress? What can I do to put an end to it?

# Journaling Prompts (cont'd)



- What happened today that was joyful, fun, or really felt good?
- What am I really sick of happening over and over again in my life?
- Why do I feel so bored/stressed/angry (insert any emotion) at work/home? What can I do to change it?
- What are 5 things I did right today (no matter how small or seemingly insignificant)?
- I feel like my days are all really similar, how can I change things up a bit?
- I know there's a bigger idea in me, somewhere, but what is it?
- What's keeping me from making change in my life?
- What are 5 things I am most grateful for in my life today?
- What's next?

# Reflect & Review

After each journaling session review what you've written. Read without judgement. Just observe. Do you see any themes in your writing? How does your entries vary over the days and weeks? What are you learning about yourself?



# Other Resources

The Tiny Buddha website also has some interesting ideas and prompts that you can use to get started or get out of a rut. Their 10 tips can be found here:

<https://tinybuddha.com/blog/10-journaling-tips-to-help-you-heal-grow-and-thrive/>

I've become a big fan of Christie Zimmer who creates "colourful, curious, forward-looking printable guided journal pages designed to help you journal your way to a life you love." Here's her website: <https://www.christiezimmer.com/>





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Wright Path Coaching

# Work with me

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