

Meaningful Journaling.....In a Jiffy

The class at the fair will focus on setting up a system that works for you to make your journaling both meaningful and manageable.

Digital copies available at:

<https://www.preservingtime.org/journaling-in-a-jiffy.html>

You've heard of the Pareto principle (80/20 Rule), but have you heard of the Just Enough Journaling Element (95/5 Rule or maybe it is the 99/1 Rule)?

Journaling CANNOT and SHOULD NOT cover every detail of our daily lives.

How do we decide what to include and where do we record it? We need to find a balance between:

- Recording what is most important
- Including enough detail but not too much
- Time we have to do this
- Volume of what we are saving

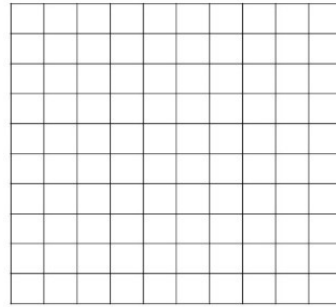
Reviewing what has been saved by others or that you have written in the past will help you decide what you feel is most important to record and how you want to save it.

“THINK FIRST, THEN WRITE” is my motto.

Step 1: Why? do YOU want to keep a journal (mark all that apply):

- ☐ For myself—with for a record of what I've done or possibly a place to vent frustrations
- ☐ For my posterity—so they will know about me as a person
- ☐ Because the prophets have told us to (quotes in "Appendix" section of handout)
- ☐ So I can refresh my memory of the most important things in my life
- ☐ Other:

Finding the Balance:

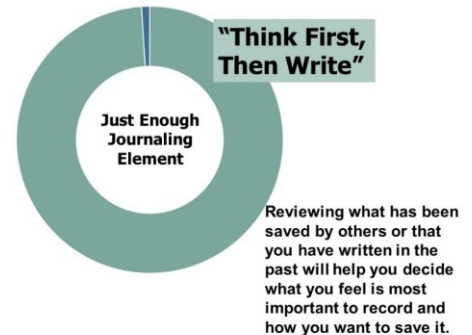


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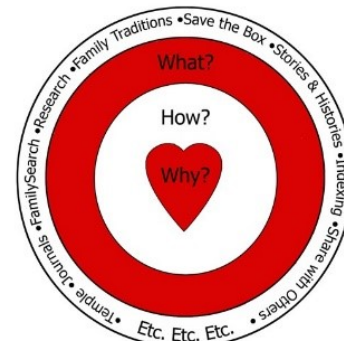
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Daily Activities

Activities to Journal About



Step 1: Identify YOUR "Why"



Step 2: Decide on your "CONTAINER":

☐ Notebook: What size?

- Advantages: You are not limited to a certain amount of space each time you make an entry; Leaves a record of your handwriting; Flexible: Bullet points, Longer entries or a combination of both
- Backup: Scanning

☐ Calendar: Page per month? 2 pages per Month? Weekly? Daily?

- Advantages: Purchase ready to go or print from free online sources (links at the end of this handout; "Bugs" you to write in your "space"; Leaves a record of your handwriting; Gives you perspective for longer journal entries or writing a life history
- TIPS FOR JOURNALING CALENDAR IN THE "APPENDIX OF THIS HANDOUT"
- Backup: Scanning

☐ Computer Document: Saved in a place on your computer where it is easily accessible; KEY: Be consistent in where you make your entries; do not keep creating new documents

- Advantages: Can add to entries later or rearrange the order of what you have written; copy and paste text, photos or graphics into (or out of) the journaling; SHAREABLE; CREATE A DIGITAL INDEX!!
- Backup: PRINT; Easy to back up to the cloud or other backup system you use
- Consideration: Will speech to text help you?

☐ Scrapbook style Journal

- Advantages: If not in a bound book, can be place in page protectors; add programs, awards or other memorabilia
- Disadvantage: Can easily become cumbersome; NOTE: individual pages or items may be scanned and added to computer document journals
- Backup: Scanning

☐ Online App: We will only briefly talk about this because of how many online apps I've seen come and go. Choose an app that provides a way FOR YOU to back up your journaling—if you can find one

- Advantage: With you on the go
- Disadvantage: The least likely to endure the test of time and be around for you later; easy to not be consistent in where you record your entries
- One exception: print a book (from Instagram or similar site) where the book actually contains the date and all of your journaling AND you order the PDF back up of the book

☐ Separate journal containers for different kinds of journaling:

- Calendar for day to day recording
- Notebook or Computer Document for spiritual and other important experiences
- Specific topic journals:
 - Separate journal for cute sayings of children or grandchildren
 - Travel journal or other journal for your specific interests



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CONTENT

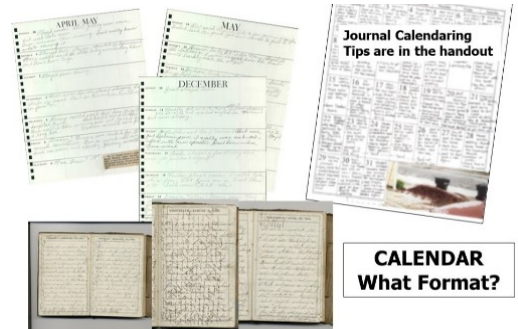


WHERE?

=

CONTAINER

CONTAINER:
???—Handwritten



CALENDAR
What Format?

Notes about bullet journaling:

- Can be done on a calendar, in a notebook or digitally
- Notebook and digital allow more flexibility
- Does not have to be done artistically
- Think of your phrasing before writing on paper
- A lot of imagery/detail can be included in a very short phrase if you choose your words carefully

• First Flower in the yard
• Did the Laundry
• Cleaned the Bathrooms
• Ran Errands

• Months of work last year paid off—1" flowers in the yard
• Mountain of Laundry from trip (worth it!)

- Cartoons, Meaningful Quotes etc. with comments about why you saved them
- Visual Journals—term explained in class; beyond the scope of this handout

Step 3: Define your System—THINK: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?

- ☐ How frequently will you write/record? Where will you make your entries?
- ☐ Do you have the supplies on hand that you want to use?
- ☐ Is this truly manageable for you?
- ☐ Set aside a regular time to write
- ☐ Do you have an established habit that this can piggyback on? (AM/PM prayer; Daily planning, etc.)

Step 4: Set up your “PROMPTERS”:

- ☐ Planner or To-do program
- ☐ Email or Text yourself
- ☐ Small notebook; Post it notes
- ☐ All of the above, plus napkins and backs of envelopes
- ☐ **Highly discouraged:** mental note in your brain
- ☐ **“Prompters” are the KEY to keeping things MANAGEABLE!**

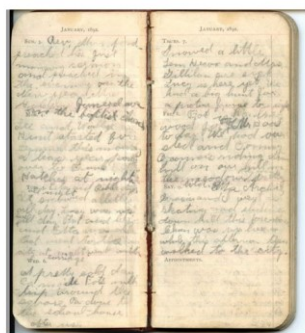
Step 5: Follow through with your journaling by making it one of your daily jobs until it becomes a habit!

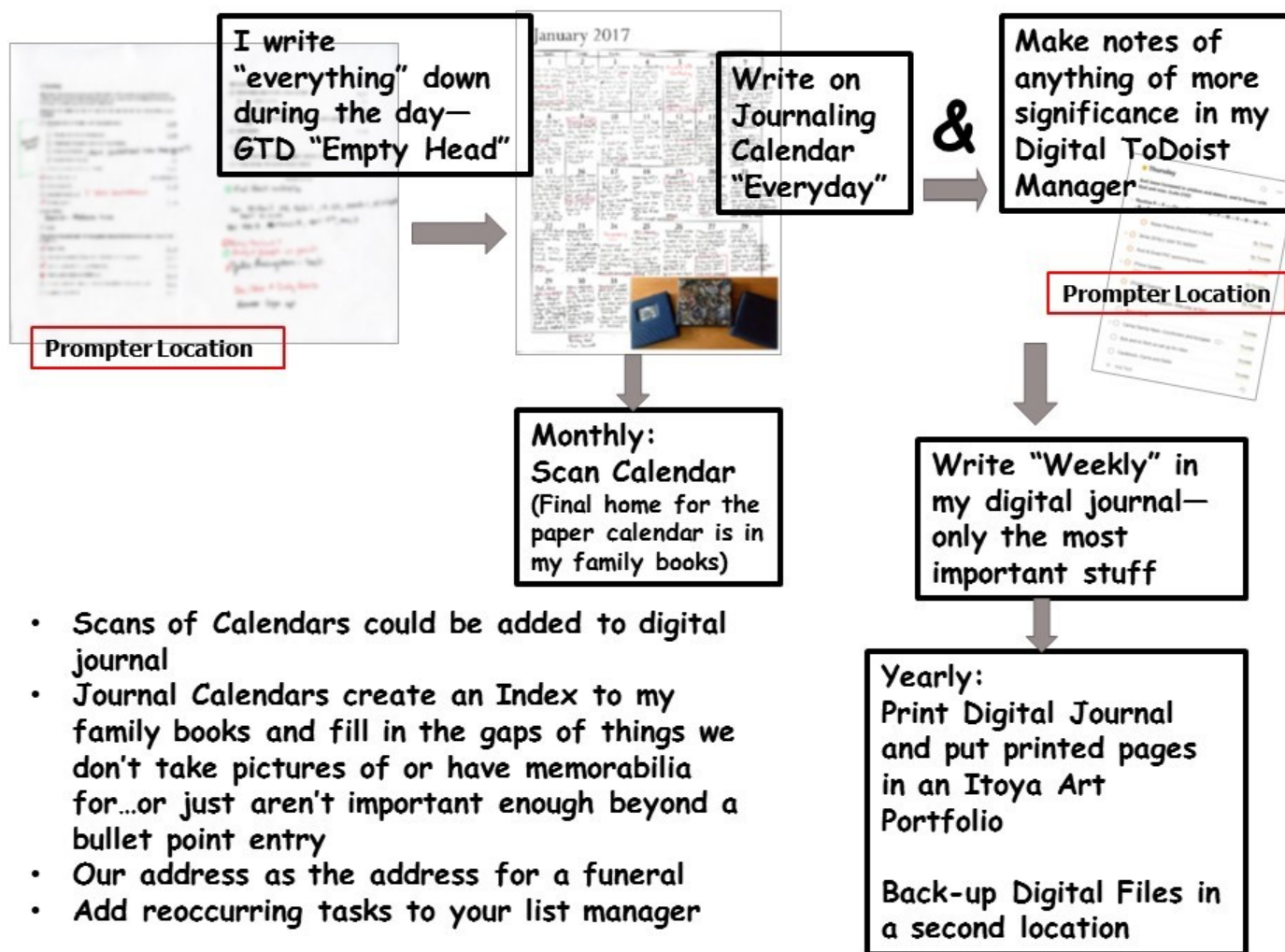
- ☐ **If you fall off the wagon—get back on as soon as possible.**
- ☐ Catch up if it has only been a few days or start fresh from where you are and recommit yourself.
- ☐ Remember **WHY** you are writing your journaling!
- ☐ Journaling provides many (well documented) personal benefits

Important Tips:

- DO NOT use anything with slick paper for handwritten entries
- Use permanent ink pens or markers for handwritten entries; Highlighter markers generally do not fit this requirement. Quality (Acid free) paper is best
- DO NOT use an ink jet style printer for documents printed from the computer; Laser print only
- (If not using a calendar) Date each entry; even include the time if it is significant
- Number pages and create an index in notebooks and computer documents
- Include the first and last names of people mentioned (within reason)
 - Keep your journal HANDY! Do not buy a notebook that is so “precious” you won’t write in it
 - Make your journaling fun and let your personality come through; Life is not all serious
 - Let your journal reflect real life and your true self; don’t over emphasize the positive or the negative
 - Ask first: Do I need to leave margins for punching or binding when printed?
 - Leave a document in your important papers file (money, will etc.) with the locations of your journals—printed and digitized and how to access them
 - Don’t destroy old journals without going through them carefully; there may be a few very important entries you will want to save first.

I can give you examples of WHY every single tip is in the “Important Tips:” section of the handout. PLEASE read them!



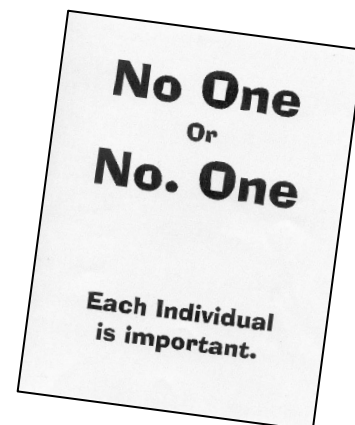


Links for Printing your own Calendars:

<https://print-a-calendar.com/make-a-calendar>
<https://www.printable2019calendars.com/>
<https://freeology.com/forms-for-teachers/calendars/year-at-a-glance-calendars/>
<https://www.printablepaper.net/category/calendar>
<https://www.rocketcalendar.com/>

Links for other Articles of Interest (see also FamilySearch Blog):

★Systems: <https://jamesclear.com/goals-systems>
<https://jamesclear.com/personal-values-journal>
<https://jamesclear.com/journaling-one-sentence?s=oiqj7ext1u6q2nvzf43d>
<https://blog.doist.com/benefits-of-journaling-81b663a27608>
<https://zapier.com/blog/best-journaling-apps/>
<https://lifehacker.com/the-best-apps-journaling-for-every-type-of-journaling-1828858051>
<https://lifehacker.com/the-bullet-journal-minus-the-hype-is-actually-a-reall-1786382012>



“APPENDIX”:

What should I include in my journal? Some prompter ideas:

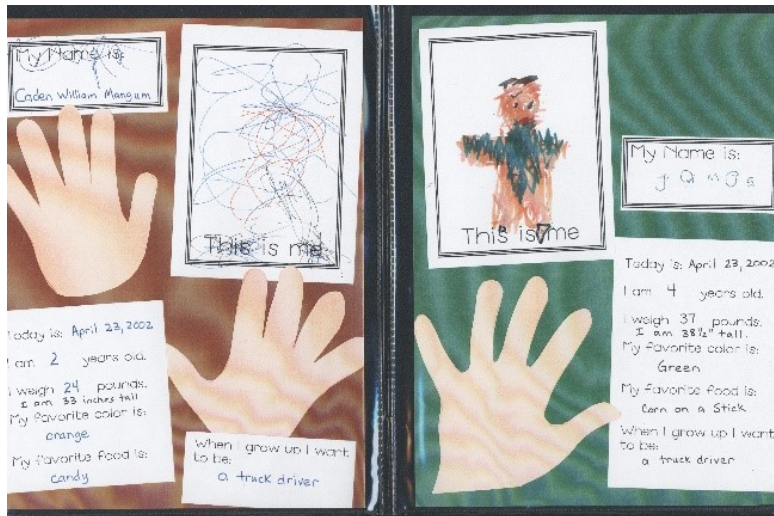
- Impressions from the Spirit and personal feelings
- How have you seen the hand of the Lord in your life?
- Things you are grateful for
- Funny things that happen
- Important events in your life or family life
- Community or world events
- Births, Deaths, Marriages, Baptism and Temple Ordinances; Promises and Counsel from Priesthood blessings received
- Scripture study insights
- Life changes and feelings about them
- Personal triumphs, failures and struggles and how you met them
- **Simple joys in daily life**
- Lessons of life you have learned
- How have your choices affected you?
- Personal goals and commitments
- Ask for the year’s highlights and lowlights as you celebrate birthdays with other family members. Use your own birthday as a time to reflect and record memories about the past year

A few suggestions for the Journaling Calendars:

- Put the current month’s calendar in a place where you can conveniently get to it. Don’t tuck it away in a drawer to protect it or it will get forgotten. Have a special place for it in your office or hang it on the fridge.
- Write on the calendar at least every few days so that catching up doesn’t seem overwhelming or impossible. If you do get behind, just start where you are and go back if time allows—DON’T GIVE UP! It takes awhile to get into the habit.
- Use a permanent, pigment ink pen. I like the Micron pens by Sakura because of the type of tip they have and the fact that they last a long time. Gel pens are okay, but give them a little longer to dry.
- Look for little, everyday things to include on your calendar (cute things kids say, 1st flower in the yard). Don’t wait for “important” things or big events to write something.
- I fill in the spaces at the beginning and end of each month with cropped pictures. Sometimes there will be something happen during the month that is fun or important to remember, but that doesn’t warrant a full journal entry or scrapbook page. With some creativity these items can usually be worked into the calendar. (Example: the newspaper included our address as the address of a funeral. We took a picture of the poster we made with the correct address and included it on the calendar. Luckily the family thought that it was funny.)
- The spaces at the beginning and end of the calendar can also be used to journal about events that take more space than just the daily space available.
- A journaling calendar can be done exclusively on the computer. I have found that people are less successful with this approach. Out of sight, out of mind. This however would be a good way to include lots of information in a neatly printed format. It would definitely be worth the discipline to develop this habit if you are not otherwise a regular journal keeper.
- A journaling calendar is the 80% of the 80/20 rule—or the 5% of the 95/5 rule. Do not neglect writing more about the most important things in your life in more detail. What do you remember about your baptism day? The first time you went to the temple? What ways has Heavenly Father helped you through the trials you have faced?

A note about PERSONAL HISTORIES:

A personal history will be much easier to write if you have journaled. Apply the **Just Enough Journaling Element (95/5 Rule or maybe it is the 99/1 Rule)** to what you have journaled in order to write a personal history that those who follow you will read and learn from. Are the stories that are told every year at family gatherings recorded for your descendants?



**START YOUR
CHILDREN
EARLY!!**

MOTIVATIONAL QUOTES:

President Henry B. Eyring:

7 October 2007—"My father-in-law, who lived near us, surprised me as I walked toward the front door of my house. He was carrying a load of pipes over his shoulder, walking very fast and dressed in his work clothes. I knew that he had been building a system to pump water from a stream below us up to our property.

"He smiled, spoke softly, and then rushed past me into the darkness to go on with his work. I took a few steps toward the house, thinking of what he was doing for us, and just as I got to the door, I heard in my mind—not in my own voice—these words: **'I'm not giving you these experiences for yourself. Write them down.'**

"I went inside. I didn't go to bed. Although I was tired, I took out some paper and began to write. And as I did, I understood the message I had heard in my mind. I was supposed to record for my children to read, someday in the future, how **I had seen the hand of God blessing our family...**"

President Wilford Woodruff:

"Some may say [journal keeping] is a great deal of trouble. But we should not call anything trouble which brings to pass good. I consider that portion of my life which has been spent in keeping journals and writing history to have been very profitably spent.

"Should we not have respect enough to God to make a record of those blessings which He pours out upon us and our official acts which we do in His name upon the face of the earth? I think we should.

"We are not apt to think of the importance of events as they transpire with us, but we feel the importance of them afterwards. We are living in one of the most important generations that man ever lived on earth, and **we should write an account of those important transactions which are taking place before our eyes in fulfillment of the prophecies and the revelation of God.**

"Let all boys and girls get them a little book, and write a little in it almost every day....But the object is not so much to get you to keep a journal while you are young, as it is to get you to continue it after you become men and women."

President Gordon B. Hinckley:

31 October 2006—President Hinckley spoke at the BYU devotional. He gave nine accounts of “random” memories and experiences from his life. I have transcribed his closing remarks: “I have given you a sampling of significant occasions that have forever touched my life. They have influenced my thinking and my behavior. They have affected my life in an unforgettable manner. You likewise will have significant experiences. I hope that you will write them down and keep a record of them. I hope that you will read them from time to time and refresh your memory of these meaningful and significant things. Some of them may be funny. Some may be of significance only to you. Some of them may be sacred and quietly beautiful. Some may build one upon another until they represent a lifetime of special experience.”

President Spencer W. Kimball:

“Those who keep a personal journal are more likely to keep the Lord in remembrance in their daily lives.”

“Every person should keep a journal and every person can keep a journal. It should be an enlightening one and should bring great blessings and happiness to the families. If there is anyone here who isn’t doing so, will you repent today and change--change your life?”

“Your journal should contain your true self rather than a picture of you when you are ‘made up’ for a public performance... The truth should be told, but we should not emphasize the negative.”