

CAPTURE YOUR LIFE ONE DAY AT A TIME

Keeping a journal is a lot easier than you think.

By Joshua J. Perkey
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Journaling. You and I both know it's important, but have you ever struggled to write things down? I know I have. Like when I sit down to write and realize it's been two weeks since I last wrote. Wait, what? How did *that* happen? And with so many things to catch up on, how do I know what to write? There's just too much! Or how about those times when I *have* been writing consistently for a good while, but then I look back at what I've written and realize it's this long list of events, and it feels boring? It makes me wonder, "Who will want to read *that*?"

And sometimes things have felt too personal to share. Or I can't figure out whether to write by hand, type on my computer, record audio, create a video, or track my social media posts. Which way is best?

Yeah, sometimes (maybe a lot of times) it's been easy for me to lose steam and just not do it. But here's the cool thing: once I realized what journaling does for me and I discovered some sweet tricks to make it easy, I realized I could totally do this—and I have! I've written every day now for quite a while—and that evidence keeps proving I can do this.

Here's a little secret: so can you! When you arm yourself with reasons why journaling is great and have a few good ideas about how to do it, you make it so much easier to be successful. So here are a few things to think about.

TWO TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Be consistent. Even if you begin by writing just one sentence a day, start there. Over time you'll be amazed at the things you record—and how much easier it becomes each day to write.

It doesn't have to be perfect. Just focus on getting the important thoughts, experiences, and inspiration recorded. The big ideas are more important than the details.

 **Five Journaling Ideas**

Want some ideas for how to record your life? Check out five creative ideas at lds.org/go/fiveNET17.

GOOD REASONS TO JOURNAL

1. You just feel awesome. Honestly. A few months ago, a friend encouraged me to write in my journal every day at least one good thing that happened that day and then see how it made me feel. So I gave it a try. The first night it felt really good. But after a few days it felt even better! I had all these examples piling up of neat things happening in my life. And I began to feel more positive and enthusiastic about life. I felt happier about myself and about others, and that affected how I treated myself and others. It's been amazing.

2. Recording helps you connect with God. When you record positive things, such as what you're grateful for, spiritual experiences and impressions, and successes or accomplishments you've had, then you become more in tune with God. And you'll probably notice those things more often. It's happened for me just like it has for President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, who said that because he journaled how he'd seen the hand of God in his family's life every day:

"More than gratitude began to grow in my heart. Testimony grew. I became ever more certain that our Heavenly Father hears and answers prayers. I felt more gratitude for the softening and refining that come because of the Atonement of the Savior Jesus Christ. And I grew more confident that the Holy Ghost can bring all things to our remembrance—even things we did not notice or pay attention to when they happened" ("O Remember, Remember," Oct. 2007 general conference).

3. You feel good because you're following the counsel of prophets. They've been telling us for a long time that we should keep records of the important things in our lives. When I make a mental note to remember I'm following the counsel of prophets, seers, and revelators, then I feel the blessings that come from it. That's great inspiration right there. And it's motivating.

4. Journaling regularly helps you focus on things that really matter. Once I started recording marvelous things Heavenly Father brought to pass in my life, I was able to see more clearly into some of the really important things that I was doing, feeling, and learning. And that got my journaling ball rolling.

5. Journaling is a great way to work through issues that trouble you. I often write those down so I can more easily ponder and pray about them. It helps me solve problems. And I suspect that one day those experiences might help my family later on—so it's a double bonus! **NE**