

JOURNALLING FOR THE BUSY/LAZY/CREATIVE

My journal failures

I own so many incomplete journals. Beautiful covers and a chunk of pages filled with my thoughts, reflections and memories. Every time, the same thing happens. I miss a day. Or two. And I feel like a failure. So I stop. It's also because I struggle to find enough time, and my creative soul gets bored of repeating the same thing every day.



Beautiful books with empty pages

“Journaling is like whispering to one’s self and listening at the same time.”

- MINA MURRAY, DRACULA

Why do it?

The benefits are undeniable. I felt far more grounded and reflective when I did keep it up. The memories it evoked were also more vivid. For writing, it allowed me to flick back through thoughts and ideas as a source of inspiration. It occurred to me that the process of reflection was the important thing, not necessarily the record itself.

My solution

I started using a hybrid. A mixture of words, images and creative input that meant it took up less time, and also stopped the monotony of doing exactly the same thing every day.



simple kit – a small notebook is easy to carry

1. THE JOURNAL – OLD SCHOOL

This is for when you're on a long lunch, a holiday, or a train journey and your kid's having a nap (unless you want to nap as well). Basically your traditional, 'Dear Diary, this is what went down today and how I feel about it.' Great if you have the time, but, if you do it daily, could be a recipe for failure and yet another discarded fancy notebook.



2. SPEED JOURNALING

You can do this on the bus, the train, before bed, while the kids play nicely (yeah, I know); whenever you have a spare few minutes. My favourites for this have included: 3 things I am grateful for today, 2 things that made me smile today, 1 thing that made me so angry I thought my head might explode (anger needs as much processing as the good stuff). Keep it quick, keep it listy and simple – you're still doing the all-important reflection.



3. DRAWING

I find it impossible to write something interesting every day (maybe my life is just dull) and I find repetitive actions monotonous. So, if words aren't coming to me, I let my mind wander and do a little doodle. If you like you could add a note about how you feel, but the most important thing is that you're tuning out the rest of the world for a bit and making pretty shapes on the page. Plus, it's fun.



4. TAKE A PICTURE/MAKE A VIDEO

This is another way to focus your energy and time on something you find important. What that might be is entirely up to you. I like to paste it into my 'journal' notebook in Evernote which keeps a record of the date. Sometimes I add a note, but the physical act of selecting a photo or video to capture a feeling achieves the journalling goal. You're still reflecting, taking time from your day and recording it. You're just not using words.



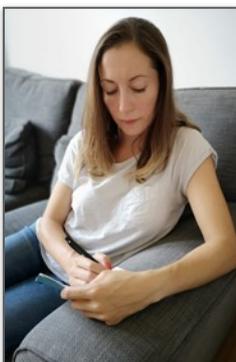
5. LISTEN TO MUSIC

I mean, really listen. Cleaning the sink and singing loudly (sorry, neighbours) doesn't count. If you can, sit down. Do nothing else but listen - the lyrics, the effect they have on you. Again, I like to stick a link in Evernote, although here I usually just write a word that I thought of or felt while I was listening.



6. MAKE SOMETHING

While this one is a bit time-heavy (depending on what it is), I use it as a treat for when I have a big chunk of time. I've used paper, playdoh, fimo, cardboard, whatever I have lying around. It doesn't have to be big, or even any good. The important thing is that you let your hands do something creative and your mind wander. I've often found that these are the most interesting journal entries. I take a picture of it and often it gives me enough thoughts and ideas for written entries for the next few days.



Find a moment
to reflect

Next steps

Of course, you might find something else that works just as well for you. If you do, I'd love to hear about it. Share your ideas with me @sarahtinsleyuk

If you like this resource, you can sign up for my newsletter at <https://sarahtinsley.com> to get the latest writing ideas, inspiration and to find out about my writing journey.

Thanks for taking the time to read this and happy journalling.

Sarah xxx

**You can't use up
creativity. The
more you use,
the more you
have."**

-MAYA ANGELOU