

Suggested Spiritual Journaling Format

- Suggest Follow this format for a week. If it's not working, let's discuss. We can change it for something that works.
- Do this Daily, about 20-30 minutes, longer if you enjoy it. I try to do this at the same time everyday. I do it first thing and wake up early to ensure I do it.

4 sections

Section 1: Time, and How I feel (Maybe 1-3 minutes)

Allows to spot trends over time

Example entry:

9am Saturday

In the basement. I am mad at everything. I have a headache and don't know why.

5am Monday. Fine mood.

Section 2: How did God Show up in your life yesterday (about 5 to 10 minutes).

Review life since my last entry. Key events that stand out. How have you experienced God since yesterday? What events occurred? What "God Shots"? Did God talk to you through others? How were you cared for today? What unexpected things happened?

Example entry:

I walked upstairs and there was a mess everywhere. Instead of saying something in anger, I went outside and called Paul. He and I talked, I said " I think I have OCD because I'm so focused on the mess." We talked for 10 minutes. I was no longer angry about the mess, and was in a good mood. Then Oscar came out and offered to help me shovel the sidewalk. Had I reacted in anger, Oscar wouldn't have helped.

If you have to skip a day, or have a ton going on, try to do sections 1 and 2. If you skip a day, be aware of how you feel. I've seen that skipping a day causes me to have a bad day.

Section 3: Spiritual Reading (this can take as long as you like)

Spiritual reading/ meditation / reflection. What are my thoughts / reactions to the reading?
Does it resonate?

Example entry:

Wow! This perfectly describes what is occurring. (reaction to Anthony De Mello reading) I can look at a situation and start getting all out of Whack, I look at Kathy , and the same situation doesn't phase her. My programming does impact the way I react and 2 people react differently.

Section 4: Prayers (1-5 minutes)

What prayers do I have? What do I want to say to God? (This helped me see that my prayers were getting answered.)

Example entry:

God how many of the things do I have to accept?

God please help me see this more often.

God please help me with fear, please let me turn it over. I don't like the process I've seen reversing the gains you've given me. Please lead me in this time.

Day 7 - Review of the week

Review the previous weeks entries in place of a spiritual reading, (this becomes your section 3). Sections 1,2,4 are the same. Day 7 will probably take a little longer than the other days.

The weekly review provides insights about you. The journal captures your experiences in such a way that you can review them and spot the larger insights about yourself, and how God is showing up in your life. I have used this to build my body of evidence that God is active in my life.

Example Summary.

1. When things go poorly I am willing to get on my knees and pray, but when things go well, I forget how God worked in me and brought me to this point, and stop doing the things that bring me relief and contact with god.
2. Pain and Misery make me willing, as soon as I am not in pain, I sometimes let up on my spiritual discipline: I could avoid the pain by doing the work
3. Pain is God calling
4. I miss a day, I notice; I miss two Kathy notices; I miss 3, everyone notices.

Prepare for Sharing

After reviewing your journal, consider the major themes that have occurred and think about what you would like to share with the group. You share only what you want to from your insights about yourself. Where have you struggled, where have you had success. Your sharing might be 3-5 minutes, it can be more or less depending on the week.

What I have experienced

- Spiritual journaling captures my experiences, and lets me examine them again; seeing patterns, and gaining self insight

- A daily discipline that draws me closer to God, gives me time to pray and be with God, I have found praying difficult, and this has helped me.
- In the weekly journal review (day 7) I have seen that things I thought were super important early in the week, were forgotten later in the week.
- Seen Prayers answered