

Journaling

Journal keeping also answers the often unspoken, or unrealized need in all of our lives for writing from the heart as well as from the head. This is what I mean when I talk about “reflective” or contemplative” writing. Most of us live our lives as if action – doing – is our highest priority, or as if information – facts – are the only things worth reading. Attitudes like these are probably a consequence of our technological, data-oriented age. In fact, we get carried along so quickly by the momentum of our own activity and the gathering of data that our time for thinking about the value or significance of what we are so busy about is crowded out.

Journal keeping, the act of writing down what we observe, or think, or feel, slows us down and nudges us to discover the meaning in our lives... (How can) we stop speeding along on the surface facts of life and instead, begin to dive deep and develop a rich, thoughtful inner life?

**Luci Shaw in
Life Path:**

***Personal and Spiritual Growth
through Journal Writing***

Journaling is one of the most helpful exercises we can do to increase our capacity for meditation and prayer. Pausing daily or a few times a week to jot down our thoughts has a way of quieting and un-cluttering our overactive, de-centered lives. Writing helps us to work through detected obstacles to spiritual living . . . A journal is not only a record of events that touch and transform us; it is a private space in which we can meet ourselves in relation to others and God.

It is first of all fascinating to realize that the act of writing fixates on paper the stream of experience constantly slipping away from us. It helps us to remember a few important events among the mass of happenings we experience. Writing stops the flow of experience so that we can look at it again and again and gain insight into what was really occurring in this meeting or in the presence of such a text or during our pause for prayer and presence to the transcendent. Journaling in this regard could be compared to the construction of a dam on the river. The dam stops the rush of water for the sake of re-channeling it for higher yields of power. Similarly, writing channels our attention so that we can see more clearly the mystery of God’s directing will in daily events.

**Susan Annette Muto in Path-
ways of Spiritual Living**

There are no rules for journaling time; here we scrape all the bugs off the windshield to better see the Light. In the journal we dump the accumulated soul-toxins. The clean white pages of the notebook become a metaphor for Jesus, pure and sinless, receiving our spots and splatters and wiping the windshield clean.

Sometimes journaling is a waterfall of words, when all the anxieties and angers and aggravations pour out. At other times, we think back to conversations, attitudes, and relationships and bring them into the Light. Regardless of how we use a journal it can be an instrument for confession, a place to leave the uglies at the foot of the cross.

Here, too, is a quiet place to think in ink about Scripture; seeing the Word in our own writing sometimes highlights the Spirit’s message to us. If your soul quickens over a particular passage or phrase, write it in your journal and catch the feelings as they spread.

Through journaling, we can track the Spirit’s work in our lives. The journal cements our footprints along this road to personal holiness.

Jane Rubietta in Quiet Places