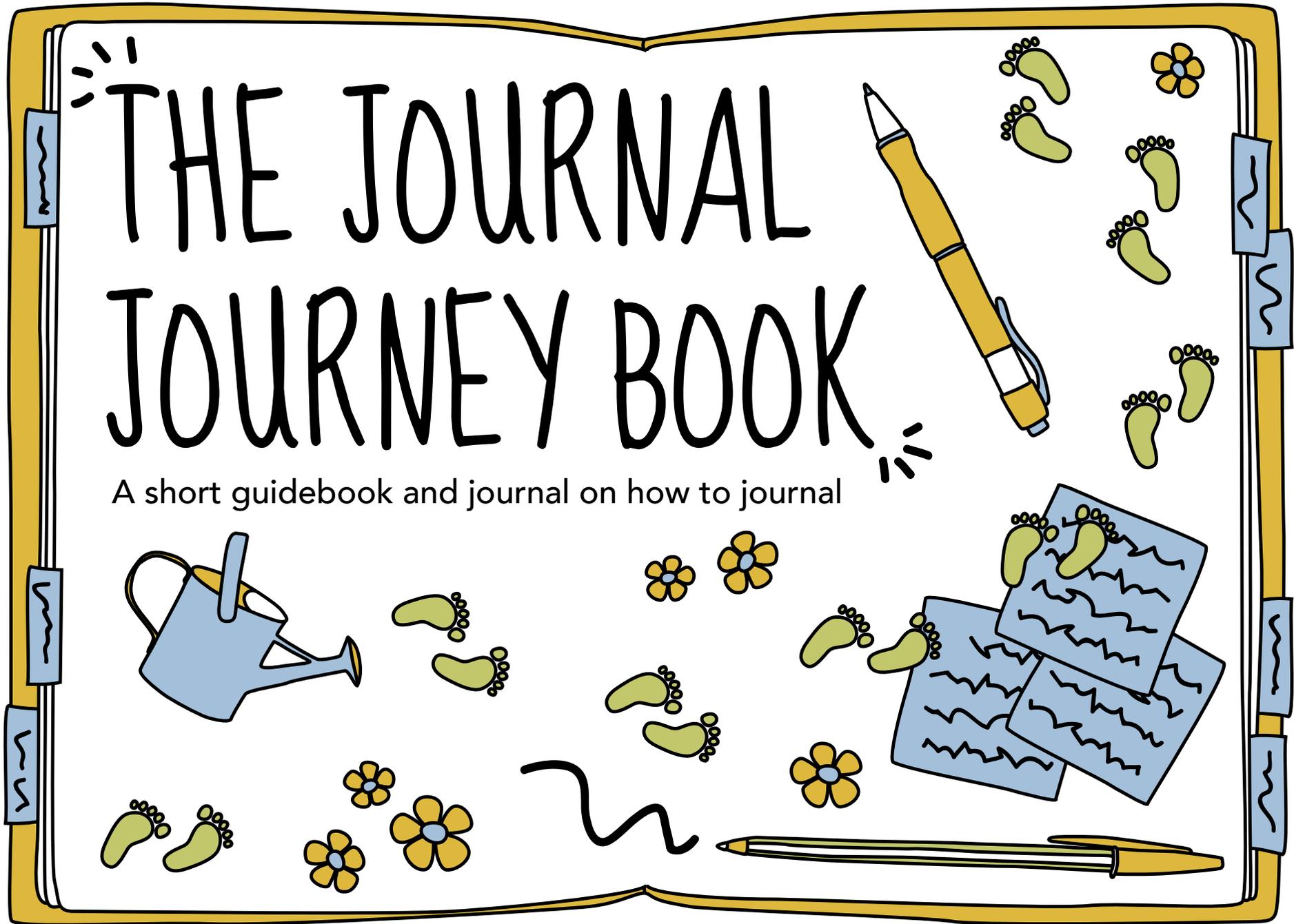
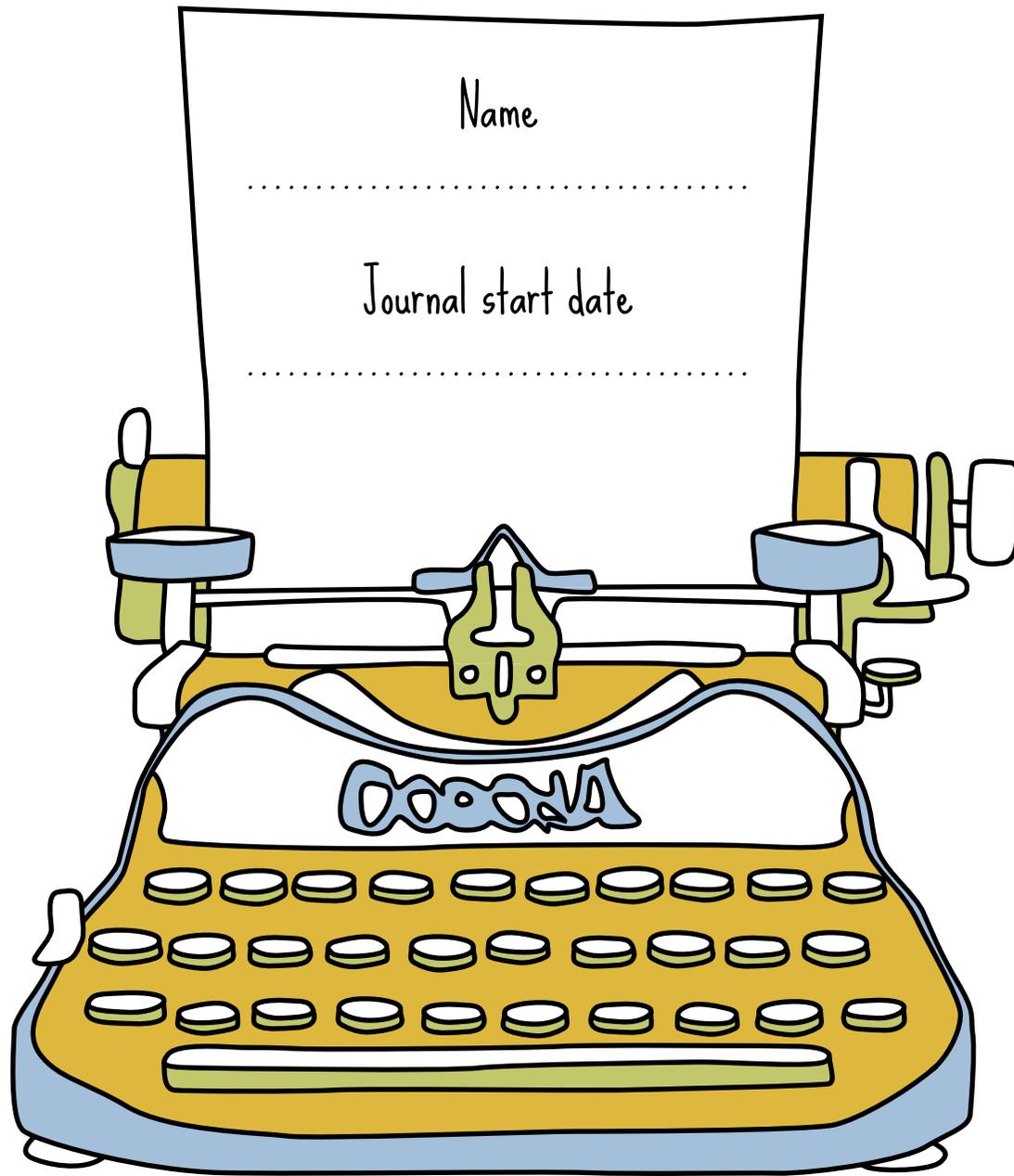


THE JOURNAL JOURNEY BOOK

A short guidebook and journal on how to journal





Name

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Journal start date

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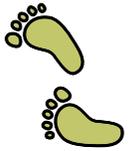
By writing and honouring the content of our journals, we become the guardians, historians, custodians and inevitable creators of the self, both on and off the page.

Jackee Holder



CONTENTS

A short history of journal writing	1
15 good reasons to put pen to paper.....	2
How do I make time and space to write?.....	5
Where's the best place for me to write?.....	13
How much should I write?	16
Making it past the blank page	19
Some simple writing prompts	20
Writing prompts for more seasoned journal writers	23
Journal juicing exercises	24
Doodle!	25
Hands	29
Lists, glorious lists	32
Do I need to read back over what I've written?.....	43
What do I do when my journal is full?	46
Mining your journal.....	49
What if difficult or painful issues emerge from what I write?	55
I send you an energetic letter.....	63
Question time	68
Inner wise self	74
Good thoughts	78
Write to the senses.....	81
Non-dominant writing hand	84
Writing down the good stuff	90
Smile	96
Water your words	99
How to have closure with your journal.....	103
Closing words.....	111
References.....	118
About Jackee Holder.....	119



WELCOME TO YOUR JOURNAL JOURNEY GUIDEBOOK AND JOURNAL

My earliest memory of keeping a journal was when my parents gave me one when I was about 12. It was the early 1970s and it was one of those diaries with a luminous cover and a lock. I remember being cautious about what I wrote on its pages, preferring to keep many of my secrets safely secured in my head – our home was a house full of secrets and at that young age I was not confident my words would stay safe on the page.

As I moved into my teenage years, those secrets became too heavy to carry in my head and slowly I began the journey of unloading them safely onto paper. At first I wrote on scraps of paper and in reporter's notebooks, as I tried to make sense of the chaos and insecurity that marked my life at the time.

By time I was 26 and had a daughter of my own, I had become a regular journal writer. I needed to make sense of a relationship that was in ruins, my fears and anxieties around becoming a single mother and the stress of living with a flatmate who was a nightmare. Whenever I could, I spilled my thoughts onto the page.

My pregnancy marked a watershed for me. In a way, I was shedding a skin and discovering my own true nature, both on and off the page. My journal became a friend, a faithful companion to whom I could safely express and explore my feelings, desires and aspirations without fear of any comeback.

At the time, of course, I was unaware of any research into journaling and had no idea of its therapeutic benefits. I just knew that whenever I wrote in my journal – whether it was a stream of consciousness, emotional venting or a poem that eased its way onto the page – the simple act of writing, in its own strange way, made me feel better.

Fast forward 25 years and, thanks to the wonderful world of research and pioneers like Professor James Pennebaker, we now know that therapeutic and expressive writing – two of the common forms journal writing takes – has many health, emotional and psychological benefits.

Journal writing contributes to better sleeping patterns, reduces stress, helps to starve certain types of depression, and can be self-managed. Given its relatively low cost, it makes sense that, in different forms,

journal writing is being introduced into medical practices, mental health organisations and the mainstream business world across the UK, with much success.

Personally, I would go so far as to say that journal writing saved my life during a particularly bleak period for me, as I was approaching my forties. Because of this and the many rewards I've gained from the practice, my journals and I have now become lifelong companions. They have accompanied me through all of life's emotional and psychological territories and phases, never judging or criticising but remaining a constant, a place of sanctuary, a place to which I can retreat, a home from home whose doorway – the page – is always open.

My journal has been the catalyst for all sorts of ideas and ventures, in both my creative and business life. I've sorted out dilemmas and complex relationship dynamics in her presence. I've rejoiced and danced to celebrations and achievements on her pages. Many of the journals I have filled have acted as the foundation for developing and growing my business, as I drafted courses and workshops across their pages and in their margins. My journal has seen me at my best and she has seen me at my worst and because of this I am a better and less bitter person.

I hope this short guide will support you on your own journal writing journey and inspire you to create and maintain a journal writing practice of your own.

Remember – writing saves lives; and lives are saved by writing! Enjoy becoming a better you through your journal journey.

Warmly



Jackee Holder

*Dulwich Library
27 November 2013*

A SHORT HISTORY OF JOURNAL WRITING

This brief historical overview contains some of the significant moments in diary keeping and journal writing, along with some of the key names and influencers of the modern day journal movement. This short history is by no means comprehensive.

PRE-400AD

Journals evolved from the earliest forms of diary writing; in Ancient Greece, Egypt and Africa, early scribes recorded observations of life

400AD

St Augustine of Hippo wrote one of the world's most famous journals

10TH CENTURY

Japanese courtesan pillow diaries: women of the Japanese court kept notebooks of poetry, introspection and detailed accounts of their lives, and hid them in their pillows

1000AD

Middle Eastern travel diaries

16TH CENTURY

Puritan diaries

Samuel Pepys' diary, famous for his account of the Great Fire of London

17TH CENTURY

Middle Eastern travel diaries Quakers recorded observations of everyday and spiritual life in diaries

18TH CENTURY

Pilgrims and The Mayflower

Stendhal's observations of France, part travelogue, part journal

French Revolution (Journal In Time)

19TH CENTURY

Diaries of pioneer women in the west of the US

Slave narratives (see Gates, 1987 and Douglass et al., 2008)

20TH CENTURY

Naturalist diarists: Emerson, Thoreau and Synder

Pioneers of journal writing: Katherine Mansfield (1888–1923); André Gide (1869–1951); Colette (1873–1954); Virginia Woolf (1882–1941); Anais Nin (1903–1977); Anne Frank (1929–1945)

In the 1960s, Ira Progoff introduces the intensive journal process at a journal workshop

The New Diary by Tristine Rainer and At A Journal Workshop by Ira Progoff published in 1978

In the 1980s, One to One: Self-Understanding through Journal Writing by Christina Baldwin and Journal to the Self: Twenty-Two Paths to Personal Growth by Kathleen Adams were first published

Seminal research in the 1980s on the effects of therapeutic writing on the immune system and managing stress by James Pennebaker at the University of Texas

School education systems in the USA introduced response and dialogue journals in the 1980's

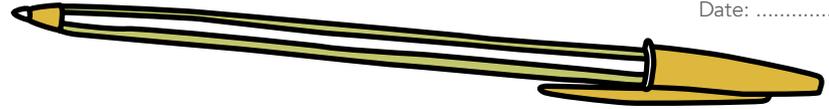
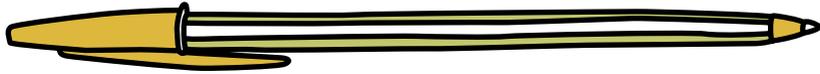
15 GOOD REASONS TO PUT PEN TO PAPER

Journal writing is:

1. A safe and private space for you to vent, emotionally and mentally
2. An easy and accessible way to release mental clutter
3. Where negative and emotional feelings shared on the page eventually create space in which you can connect with your natural flow
4. Inexpensive
5. Something you can do on your own, anywhere
6. A process of deep listening to the self, leading to you getting to know yourself better
7. Something you can use to prepare and evaluate your day
8. Something that offers emotional, psychological, spiritual and well-being benefits
9. Considered a useful and valuable means of personal self-care
10. Flexible; you can change, augment and rewrite your entries
11. An effective way of handling and reducing stress
12. A way to help you communicate and improve the way you express yourself
13. A system that allows you to track your progress and see concrete evidence of improvement
14. Private – you don't have to share it with anyone and the page does not judge
15. Open 24 hours a day.



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HOW DO I MAKE TIME AND SPACE TO WRITE?

Asked how he gets inspired, Somerset Maugham famously responded, "I write only when inspiration strikes. Fortunately it strikes every morning at nine o'clock sharp."

It's a good idea to set up a routine and decide on a set time to write each day. Once embedded, your routine means you get yourself into the habit of turning up to your journal writing on automatic pilot.

Most of us are engaged in a constant battle with time, however – it's not just a cliché that there aren't enough hours in the day. To be perfectly honest, if you're going to keep a regular journal you'll need to break all the rules and simply make room every day at a time that works for you. You'll probably need to try out different times to see how they feel and you'll probably need to be flexible, depending on your schedule and the demands of your work and life.

The ideal times to journal are those moments in your day when you know you'll be least distracted. For some of you, this will be first thing in the morning, and this is the approach I strongly advocate in my book *49 Ways To Write Yourself Well*.

Another way is to turn your journal writing into a ritual. Rituals are a creative way of sending a message to your muse, that you intend to write. Setting up a ritual will move your journal writing into an activity that you'll eventually do on automatic pilot.

How can you make it into a ritual? If you are writing from home you might light a candle, sit in a special chair or light an incense stick as an indicator that you've arrived at your appointment with your journal. You might write with a special pen or you might write at the same time each day if you commute by train. Perhaps you can make notes on a phone app, or journal with a favourite tune on your mobile in the background. Or how

about simply choosing your ritual to be the first thing you do when you wake up?

If finding a regular timeslot is a challenge, you could try practicing writing in the cracks in your day – those dead spaces that would otherwise be filled with trivia. Those times when are kicking your heels in a long queue at the supermarket or waiting in the doctor's surgery or waiting for a friend to arrive.

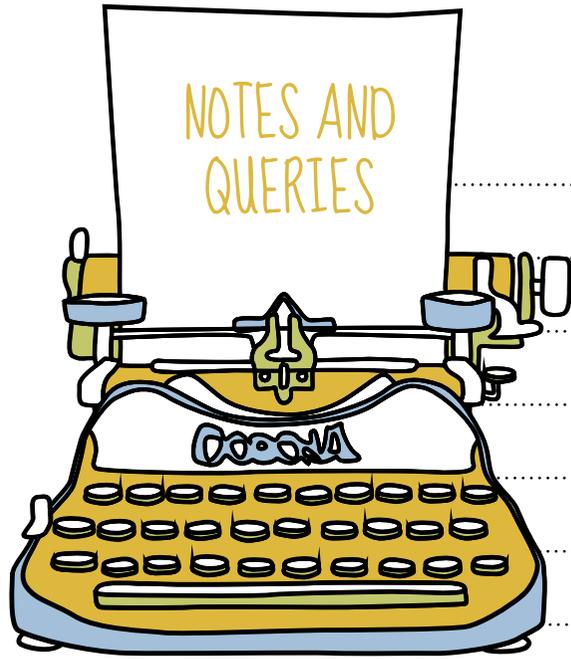
Or you might be someone whose journal writing is best done last thing at night as a nightcap, a perfect way to review and reflect on your day.

I think by now you get my point. You'll need to experiment and find the time that works for you and then be prepared to flex those writing muscles.

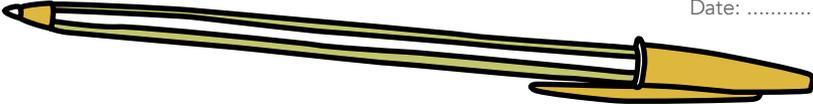
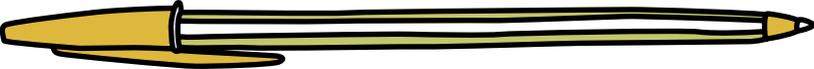
You don't need huge amounts of time to journal; a short burst of 10 minutes can be long enough to set up and maintain a regular writing practice. You'll also need to be mindful of the fact that the time of day and your mood may have an impact on the energy and mindset you bring to your writing.

Be prepared to change your preferred times when your schedule won't allow it. Writing outside your usual times can stimulate different writing voices and, often, different subject matters. So, too, does writing when you feel tired, when your inner critic can be caught off guard. So if your preference is to write in the morning, try out some evening writing slots too, and if you're an evening person, write in the morning.

Whatever time of the day you choose, it does help if you can allocate at least 10–15 minutes for each journal writing session. This will give you enough time and space to express yourself and dip beneath the surface.

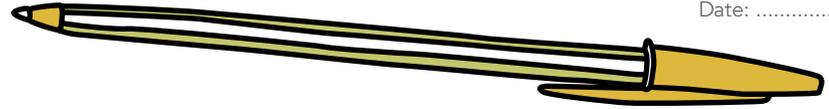
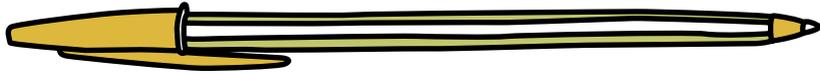


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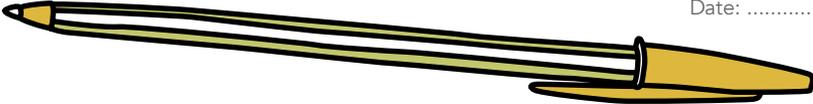
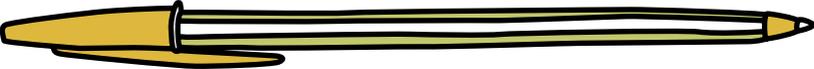
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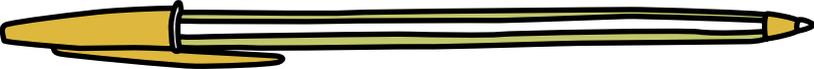
"Write, write, write and the words will appear."
Jackee Holder

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WHERE'S THE BEST PLACE FOR ME TO WRITE?

Every space around you is a potential writing space, whether outside or in your home, although obviously some spaces will work better than others.

Your first step is to decide whether your preference is to write in a public or private space. You may feel safer and find the thought of a blank page less threatening when you write in a public space, with background noise and conversations going on around you. This actually works for many people because noisy spaces are a good way of distracting your inner critic, which will do all it can to convince you not to journal.

For others, the opposite is true and they need silence in order to concentrate, focus and communicate with the page or computer screen.

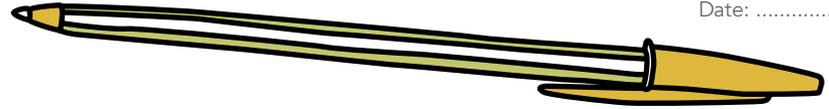
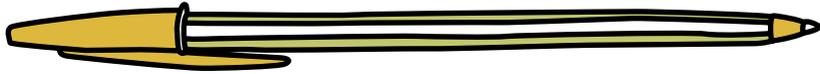
You might need to experiment before you find the right place for you. During the winter months you

might find that writing from your bed is ideal, either at the start of your day or as it is coming to a close. In the summer months the lure of a café or an outdoor space in nature may be far more enticing. Many people swear by the impact of writing on public transport. It's as if the journey itself transports them somewhere else.

You might decide to designate three or four different writing spots. By knowing these in advance, you won't waste time trying to decide where you will write at any given time.

If it's just not practical for you to designate a fixed place to write, make your journal as portable as possible so it's easy to pull out and write in those in-between spaces. That's why we made this journal this size.

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HOW MUCH SHOULD I WRITE?

Nobody's going to judge your journal writing and it will probably be for your eyes only – at this stage, anyway! So there is no word count. Really, there isn't. Your journal entries can be as long or short as you want them to be.

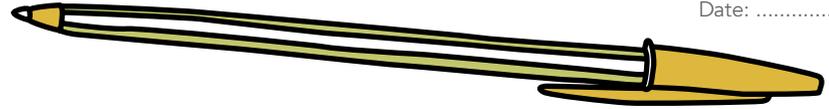
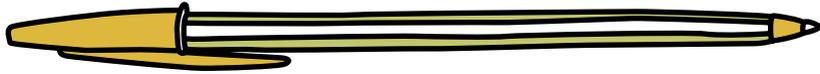
Now the pressure's off, you're free to go ahead and enjoy the process.

You will probably build up momentum and find your flow as time trickles along and you warm up to the different rhythms of your journal writing. You'll probably realise that you have plenty to say.

For more seasoned journal writers, three pages of handwriting a day (as suggested by Julia Cameron, originator of the writing practice known as morning pages) could be an achievable journal-writing target. It's the equivalent of a long walk on the page.

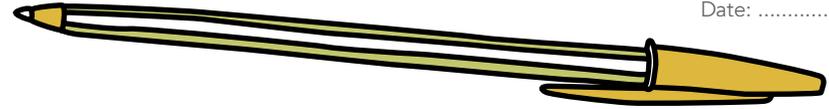
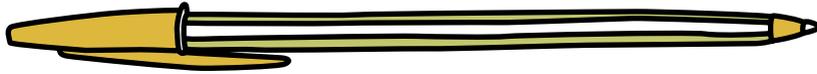
The trick is to get going on your 10–15 minutes of journal writing practice. More often than not, you'll find that you routinely spend more time writing than you set out to do. The magic is in the writing; once you get going you'll be surprised at what emerges.

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“Catch the censor off guard. Write at odd moments in even odder spots. This week, I filled pages while waiting for gas (cheap spiral notebook kept in my handbag); while stuck on hold (index cards near the phone); in a grocery lane (back of bank deposit slips).”

Alexandra Johnson

MAKING IT PAST THE BLANK PAGE

One of the most common reasons people give for not keeping a journal is that they don't know what to write about. They convince themselves they have nothing worthwhile to say and the very idea of the blank page causes them to freeze or take flight before they've even started.

But if they just sat down and started writing, writing anything at all, they would realise that something magical happens, and their thoughts and feelings will spill forth, almost in spite of them – thoughts and feelings they might not even have known were there. Journal writing is a rich, resourceful way of releasing these onto the page.

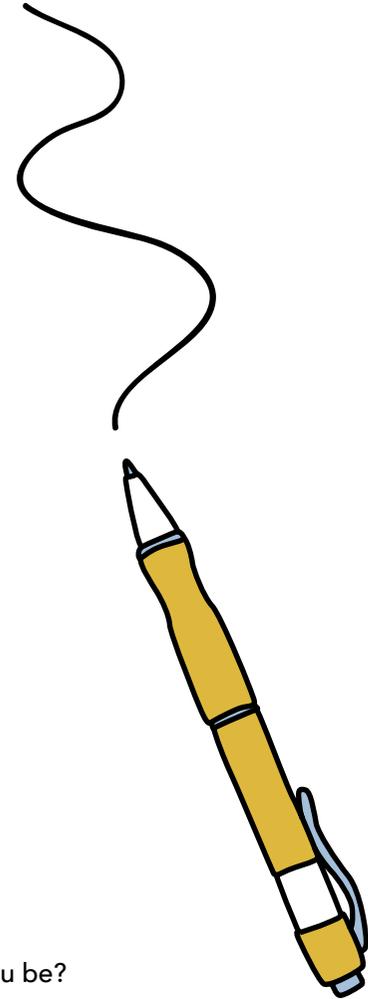
Writing prompts are a simple and effective way to access topics to write about if you're worried about having a blank mind. You just need to show up, pick a prompt and hey presto – you're off.

Write the prompt (which can be a word or a sentence) as a header, then free write any direct or associated thoughts and feelings that arise in response to the prompt. Then give yourself permission to go off-topic and write down anything else that occurs to you – you don't need to be loyal to the prompt. You have the freedom to jump ship and swim in another direction on the page, to wherever you wish to go.

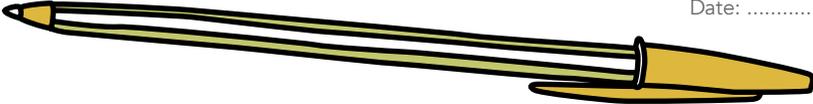
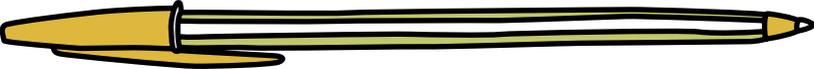
As Flannery O'Connor reminds us, if we've survived childhood then we have plenty to write about. How's that for a little nudge? We all have plenty to write about. But a little help from me is on its way, too. On the next pages are some suggested writing prompts – they'll be especially useful if you are new to journal writing. The prompts are a combination of suggestions for self-reflection and observations about daily life.

SOME SIMPLE WRITING PROMPTS

- * Write about your fears and anxieties about writing a journal
- * Write about moments from your day
- * Write about what you are thinking and feeling right now
- * Write about a relationship you would like to improve, either at home or at work
- * Write about a concern you have right now
- * Write about the best job you've ever had
- * Write about the kind of day you would like to have tomorrow
- * Write about a memory from yesterday
- * Write about something that is going well in your life right now
- * Divide the page in half: on one side write down three problems you have; on the other side write answers and solutions to your problem
- * Today I want to write about...
- * Write about a view from a window in the room you're sitting in or standing in
- * Write about a missing person from a family photo
- * Write about your worst job ever
- * Brainstorm ten reasons why you should...
- * Write one way that describes your day
- * If you were a tree, based on your mood and interactions right now what kind of tree would you be?

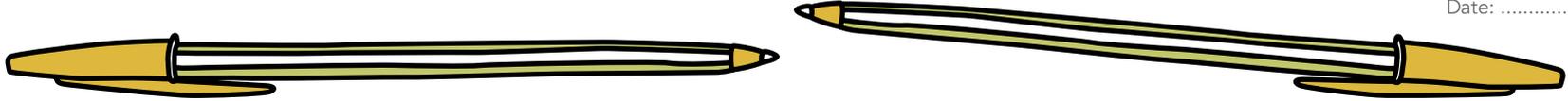


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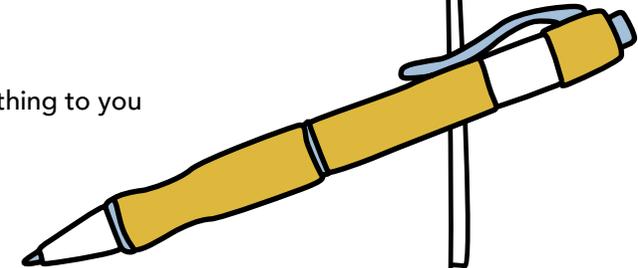


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“Metaphor can be a way of writing about events in our lives which we may not be able to fully articulate, but can be conveyed through the image.”
Nigel Gibbons

WRITING PROMPTS FOR MORE SEASONED JOURNAL WRITERS

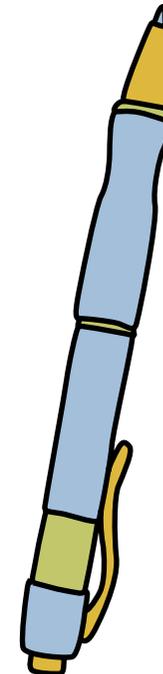
- * A memory of getting lost
- * Memories of your first day at school, your first kiss and first prize in a competition
- * A betrayal
- * A home that was important to you
- * Memory of an ending
- * The thing you least want to write about today
- * A memory from yesterday, last week or a month or two ago
- * Your best working day a year from now
- * The small or big things that are going well
- * Read an earlier journal entry and write about what you didn't write about then
- * For the next three days, write on the back of envelopes and scraps of paper. See if there's a difference between what you write on these and what you write on the page
- * I remember
- * Write a confession or secret, then give yourself the option to tear it up and burn it
- * The place I visit when I need to gain perspective on life
- * What really happened at a family celebration
- * What was found in a secret drawer
- * Describe your own face when you are asleep or dreaming
- * Write a memory of Christmas Day or New Year's Eve
- * The things you carried in your suitcase on a journey
- * It was the night of a full, blooming moon...
- * A small disappointment
- * A moment of regret
- * The language of loneliness
- * The people who loved in your home in the past
- * It was the morning after
- * An overheard conversation you were not meant to hear
- * A miracle
- * A tree that means something to you



JOURNAL JUICING EXERCISES

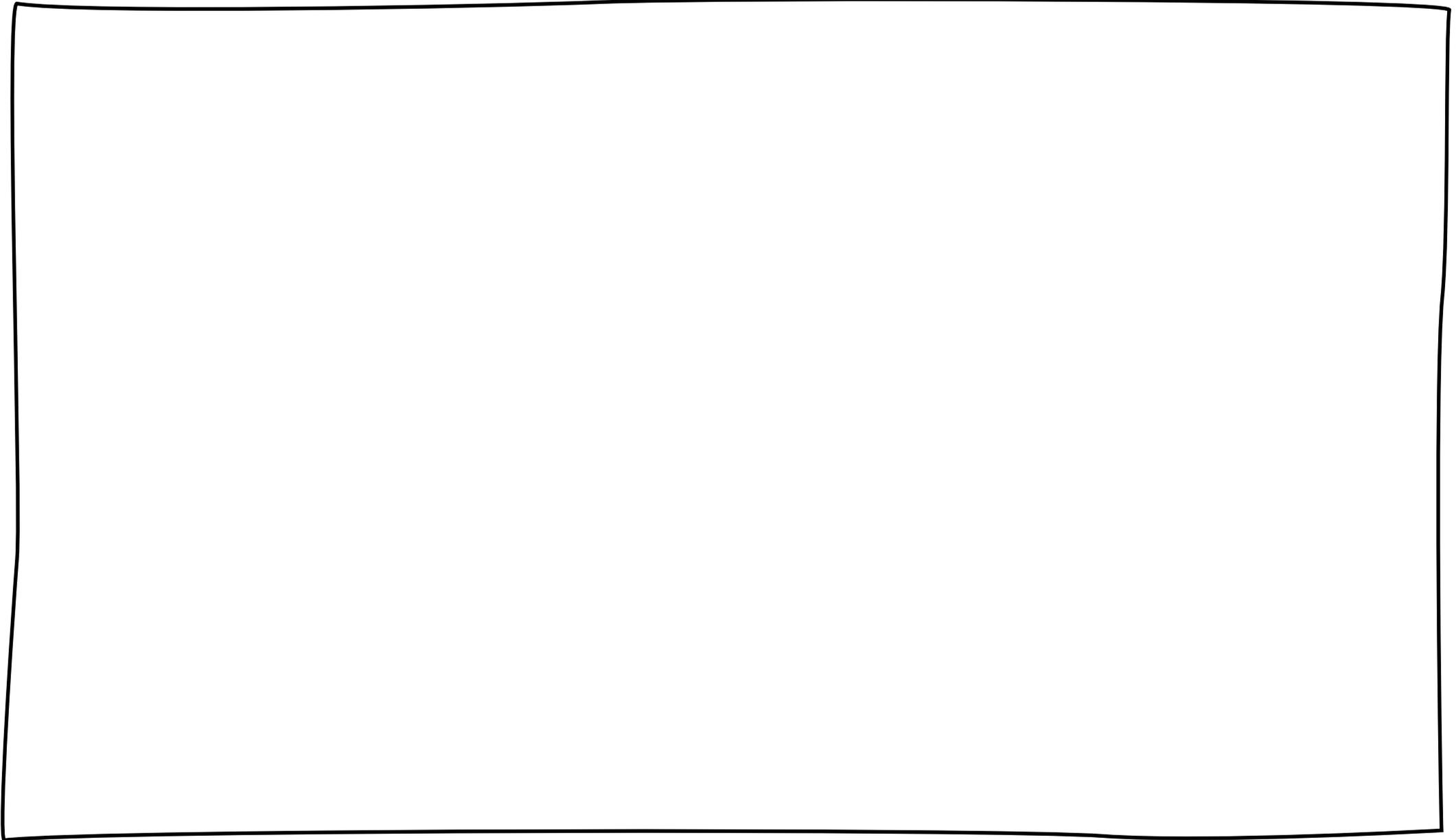
So, now you have your theme. Still stuck? Here are some ways to get started:

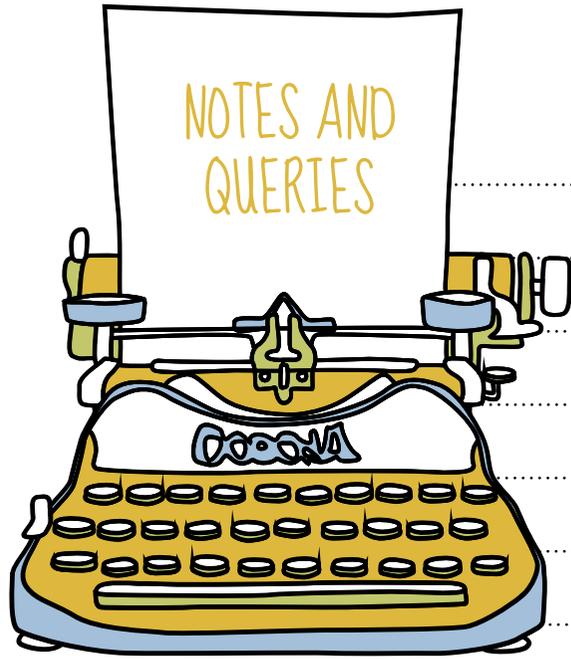
1. Using free writing, as fast as you can, write down whatever thoughts or ideas come into your mind
2. Make a list of words associated with the theme you want to write about
3. Can't find the words yet? Make a start by drawing or doodling
4. Use a quote from your own journal pages as an extra writing prompt
5. Write a letter to yourself or someone else
6. Ask a question and write the solution
7. Break away from the familiar – turn the journal round and write upside down
8. Want to connect with your unconscious? Write with your non-dominant hand and get novel and unexpected answers
9. If you're stuck for words, get creative and draw a mind map
10. Write in coloured pens other than blue or black



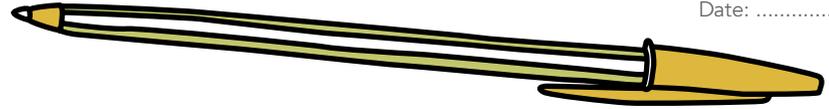
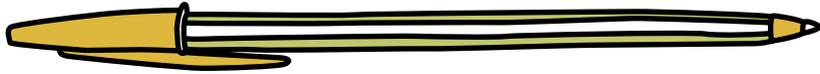
DOODLE!

Scribble or draw here inside the box or in the margins





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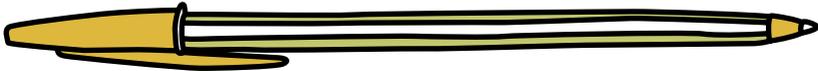


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HANDS

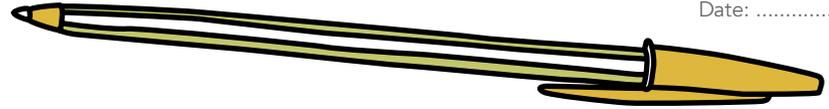
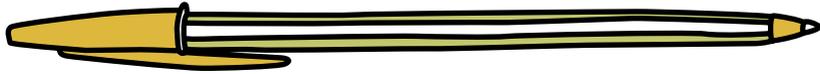
Trace your right or left hand and write a memory about your hand or the hands of someone you love.

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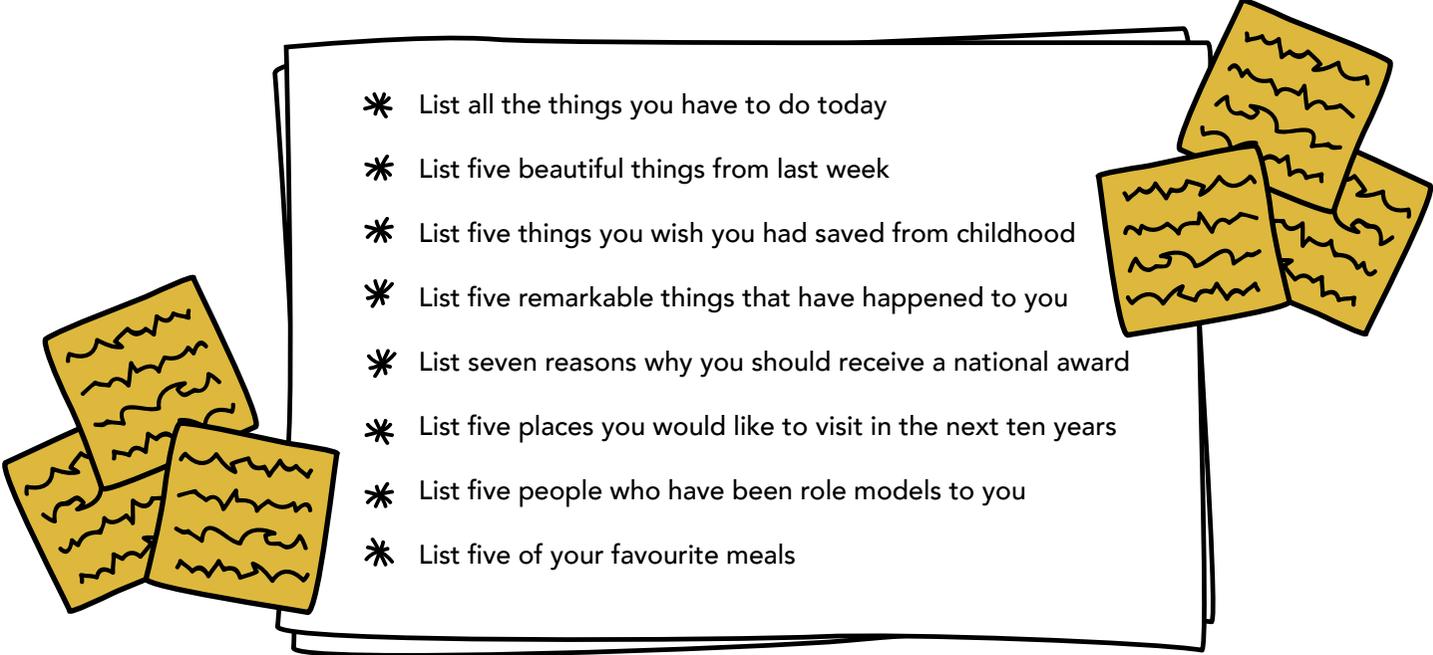
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LISTS, GLORIOUS LISTS

Lists are a perfect way to kick-start your writing and get your creative juices flowing. Lists are easy, and they're great catalysts for ideas and memories. To get you started, here are a few ideas for lists:

- 
- * List all the things you have to do today
 - * List five beautiful things from last week
 - * List five things you wish you had saved from childhood
 - * List five remarkable things that have happened to you
 - * List seven reasons why you should receive a national award
 - * List five places you would like to visit in the next ten years
 - * List five people who have been role models to you
 - * List five of your favourite meals

You could even write lists of things to buy from the supermarket, an itinerary of clothes to wear for the week, a menu of your daily meals for a week, things to remember, birthdays to remember this month or things not to do!

Use the following pages to write your lists.

LISTS

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LISTS

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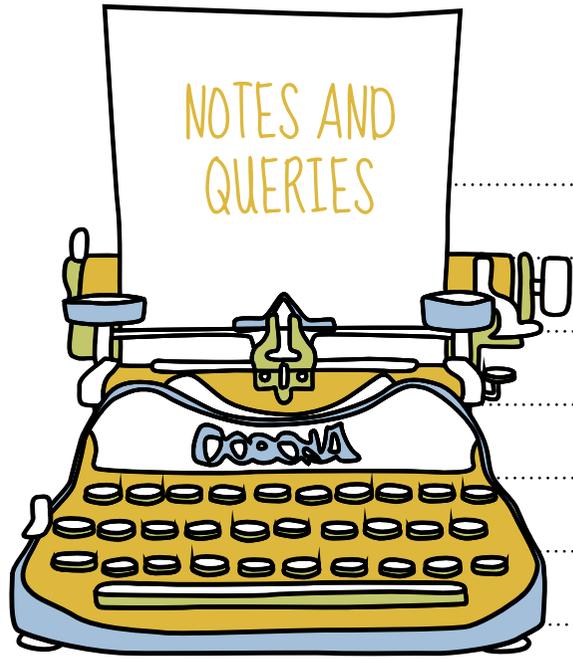
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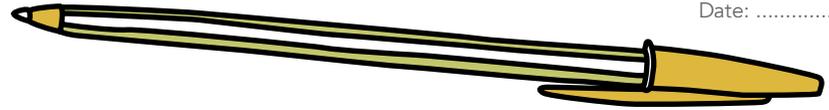
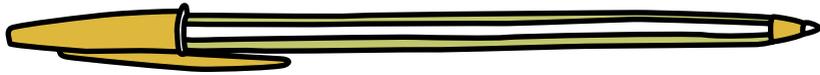
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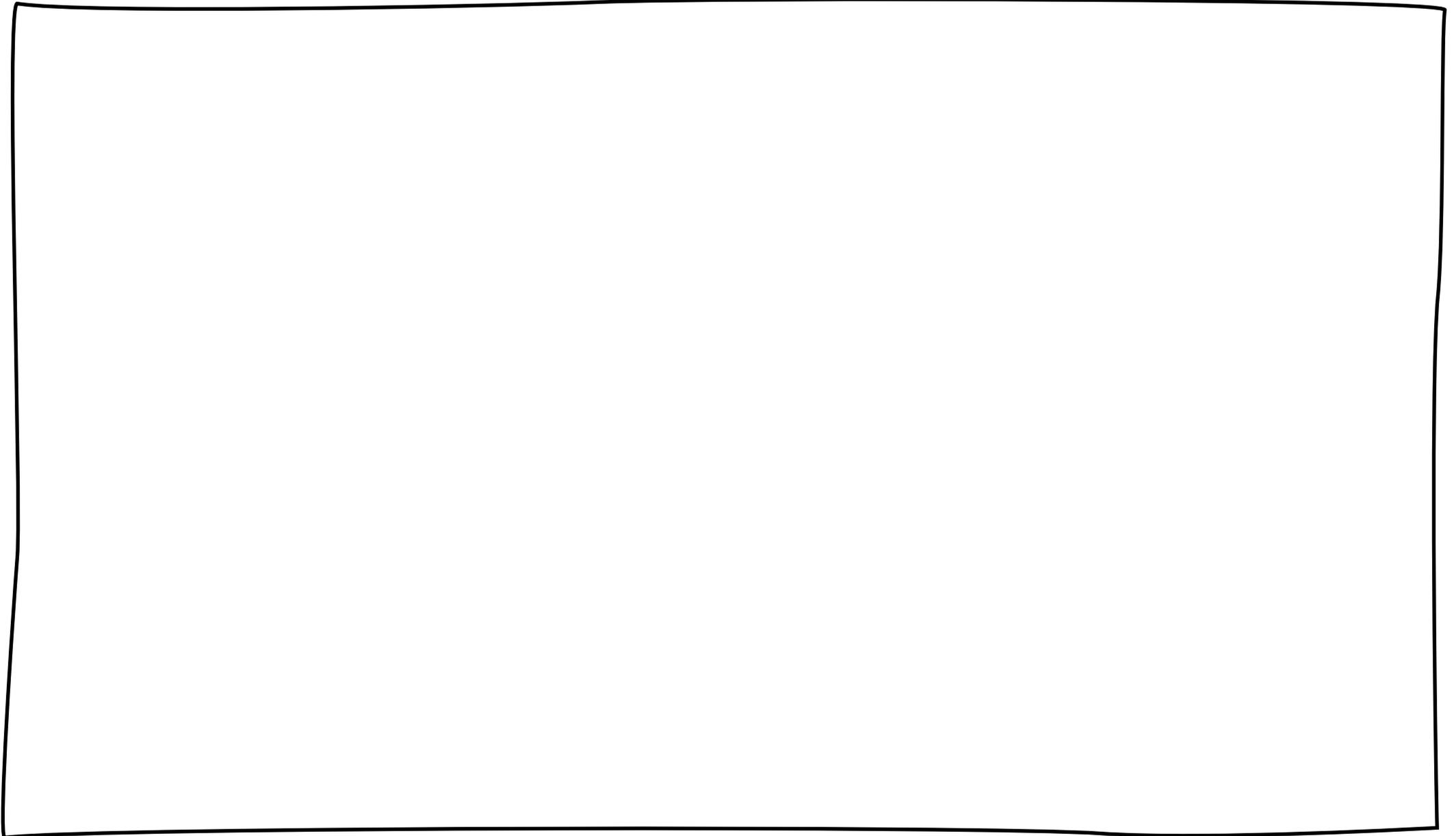
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DO I NEED TO READ BACK OVER WHAT I'VE WRITTEN?

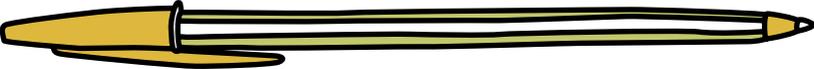
The answer to this is both yes and no. You don't have to read over your journal, especially in the early stages of your journal writing practice. If you're doing a lot of venting then it's probably best to give yourself space away from your material then return to it at a later stage when you will read it with an eye that is less attached, less judgmental and more compassionate.

By reading over your work, you'll be reminded of the good stuff. You'll discover things about yourself you may have underestimated or overlooked. Your

journal is a record of the good things, which can be invaluable to read during later times when life or work may not be feeling that great. The contents of your journal are like a treasure map. Sometimes the treasure won't always be visible to the naked eye and you'll need to read between the lines.

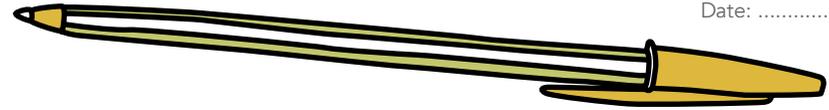
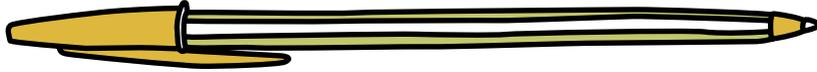
Engaging with your journal in this active way ensures that you reflect and excavate the learning and insights that you have accumulated in your journal. When you don't look back and retrieve this, there's a danger that a lot of good stuff will get left behind.

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"Babbling on paper helped me. It tidied up the mess that was inside my head.
When it was done. I felt right-side-up again."
Betty Rollins, quoted in First You Write by Joni Rodgers

WHAT DO I DO WHEN MY JOURNAL IS FULL?

Purchase or download another Journal Journey journal!

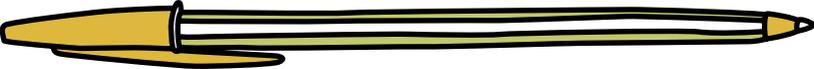
No, seriously, there are a number of things you can do with a journal once you have completed it. Here are some ideas:



- * Start a library of your personal journals
- * Mine the journals for useful information and ideas – perhaps use different coloured pens to categorise themes
- * Read back over your journals on your birthday or at the end or start of a new year. This can be a really good way of reviewing your year and tracking down the progress you've made
- * You might decide to let them go or burn them – but beware! Many people have done this and regretted it later
- * Use them as reference material for other writing projects, such as memoirs, personal essays or fiction



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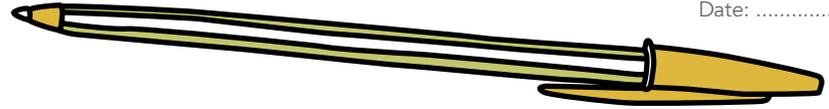
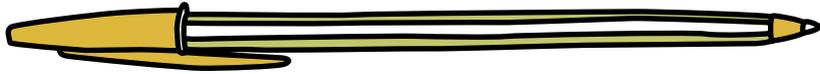
MINING YOUR JOURNAL

The more seasoned journal writer will probably have collected a lot of information, so may be in a better position to mine their journals for material to use in other forms of writing and/or as an aide to becoming more self-aware. You'll need highlighter or coloured pens so you can index your finds.

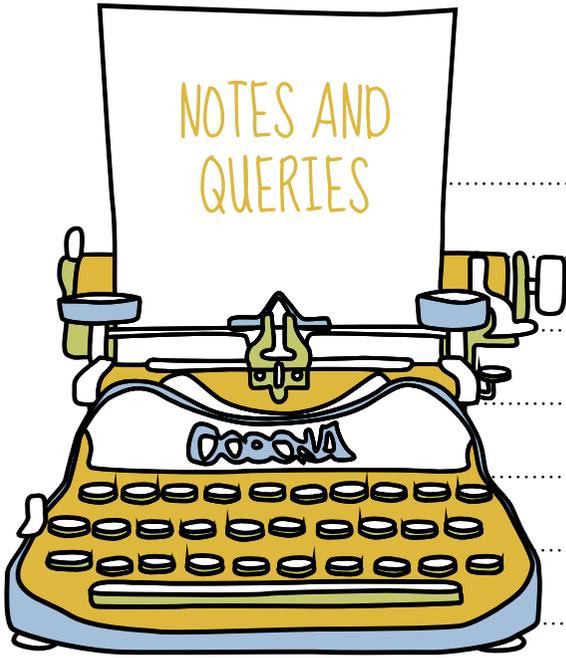
Mine your journal to discover:

- * recurring themes and emerging patterns of behaviour, thoughts or actions
- * ideas and inspiration – these will pop up in the course of your journal writing process
- * evidence of progress, changes and new ways of behaving and relating that you've made – your journal writing will capture these
- * writing prompts and sections of your writing you wish to develop or write more about
- * actions you wish to take.

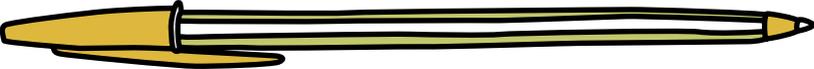
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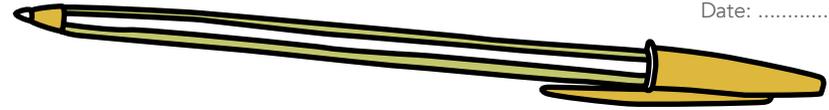
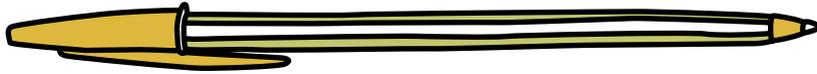


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"The pen is the tool of the intuition. It won't take you further or deeper than you want to go, but it might take you to uncharted places you never thought about consciously."
Judy Reeves

WHAT IF DIFFICULT OR PAINFUL ISSUES EMERGE FROM WHAT I WRITE?

One of the greatest fears we have about writing a journal is that feelings or memories might surface that we won't be able to handle. The body is a warehouse of our past memories and experiences – good, bad and indifferent – and journal writing can be the first time many of us enter the warehouse. We never know what we might uncover.

Research carried out by Professor James Pennebaker at the University of Texas, confirmed by a number of consequent studies, found that there are psychological and physical health benefits to writing for four consecutive days about a traumatic experience. However, there are clear boundaries to this: if you try it, don't dwell too long on the trauma or you could fall into the trap of ruminating too much over the experience and end up feeling even worse.

Your pen or fingertips are like little tentacles, writing (righting) you in the direction in which you need to go. It's unlikely that you will write anything that is more than you can handle. I believe that whatever we write is right for where we are right now. I have always liked this quote from the Persian poet Hafiz: "This place where you are right now, God circled on a map for you".

I believe that where you are in your writing is where you need to be. If difficult or painful thoughts surface, take a moment to acknowledge your feelings. Take a break and demonstrate some form of kindness or

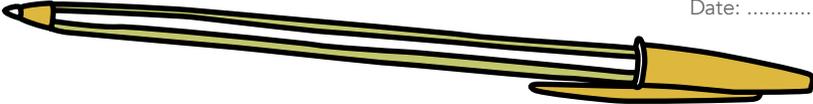
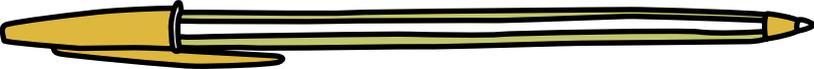
compassion to yourself. Do something nourishing and protective of how you are feeling like calling a friend for a chat. Then, when you're ready, return to your writing.

Alternatively, you could check in with your body and do a self-assessment scan on the page to explore how your body is responding:

- * Write about or make a list of words that describe how different parts of your body feel right now.
- * What feelings or emotions did you notice as you were writing about the difficult or painful subject?
- * If your main feeling or emotion were a colour, what would it be?
- * If it had a message for you, what would that be?

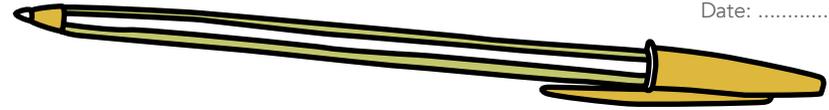
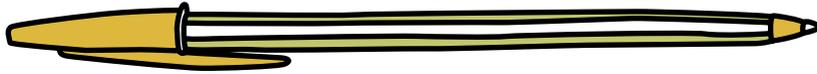
Finally, try answering this question in your journal: What information or message might my writing have for me right now?

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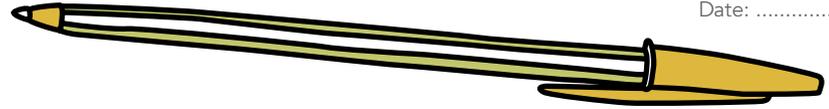
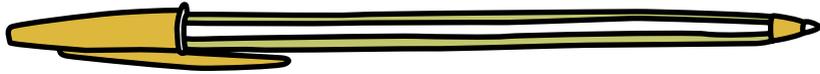
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"Many found that they wrote only when angry or depressed.
The richest part of the story was left out."
Alexandra Johnson

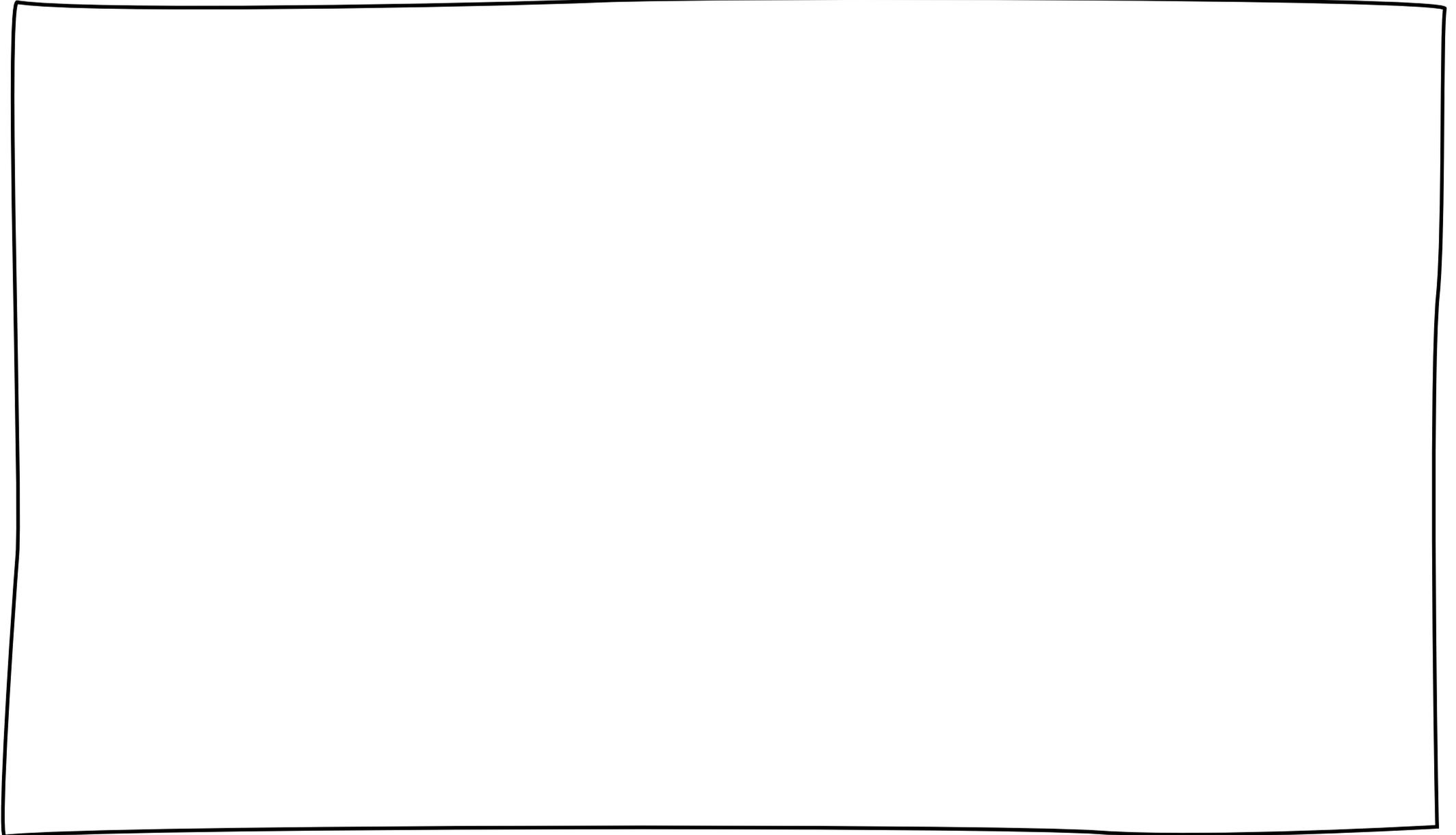
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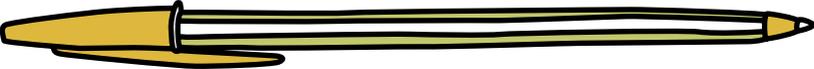
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I SEND YOU AN ENERGETIC LETTER

One way of using your journal to deal with unresolved issues or unfinished business in your relationships with others, is to write a letter that you don't send. By doing this, you are getting down on paper the feelings and emotions you are holding onto and that are holding you back. Writing unsent letters to others is a safe way to manage and release your feelings without creating further harm or estrangement in relationships that can be difficult and complex.

As an example, in an article in the Observer in 2002, Jim Pollard described how he contacted a best-selling author for an interview. When the author realised Jim hadn't read his book the interview didn't go ahead, leaving Jim feeling "small, stupid and stressed". His response was to write the author an email, "part apology, part justification, part exposition of my feelings. It wasn't very long and I didn't send it, but I felt a whole better afterwards."

Letters can be written to explore a range of emotions and feelings. Write letters to:



- * say goodbye
- * say sorry
- * ask for what you want
- * express strong feelings
- * say thank you.

Once you've finished your letter, perhaps put it aside for a few days, then you can make a decision about whether or not you actually want to send it.

The next two writing activities (question time and inner wise self) are particularly useful for supporting you with writing your way through everyday problems and challenges.

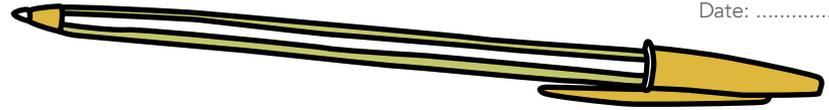
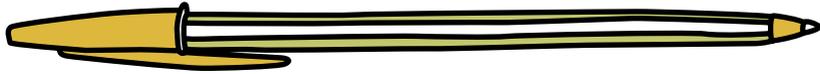
GOOD THOUGHTS



Ask someone you trust and feel safe with to write good thoughts about you on this page in your journal

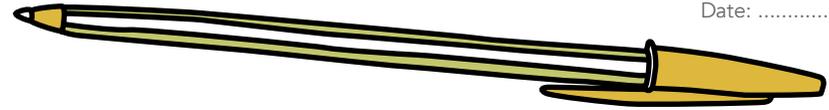
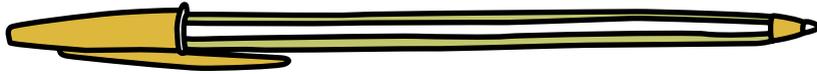
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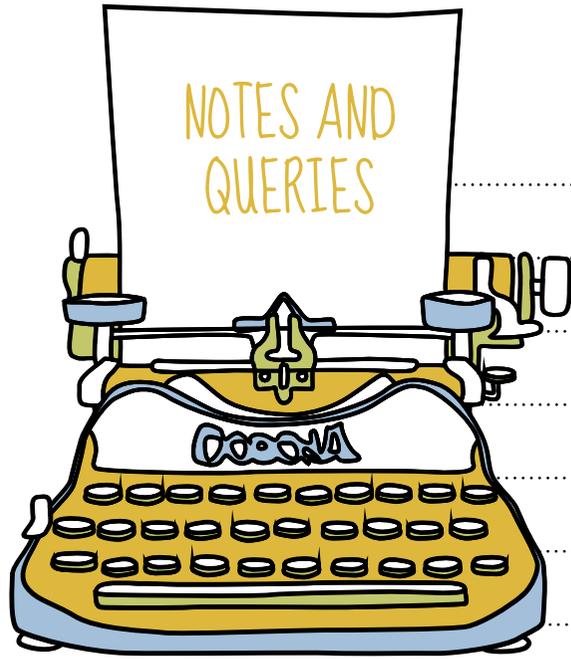
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"I love journal keeping because it helped me to discover and uncover myself, to encourage my own bravery, sort out my difficulties with other people, to invent new ways of being."

Sark





QUESTION TIME



For five minutes, use free writing to describe a problem or challenge you are having right now.

Free writing is a writing technique where you focus on the issue you want to explore and writing as fast as you can write down whatever comes into your head. Focus on writing fast without stopping for three to five minutes.

- Now ask your problem a question.
- Write your answer to the question.
- Ask it another question.
- Write your answer to that question.
- And so on, until you feel you have run out of steam.

Ask the question

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Write your response to the question

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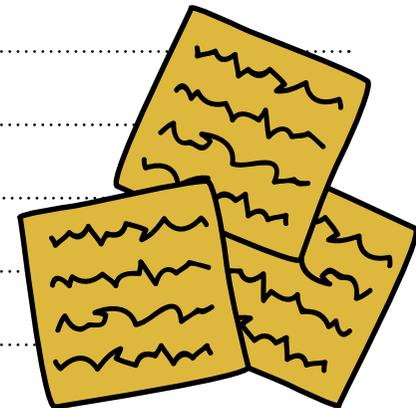
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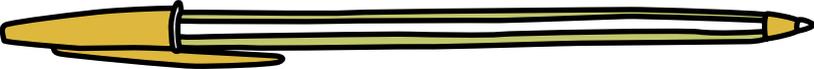
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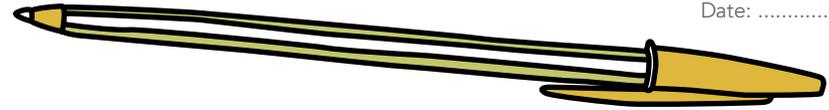
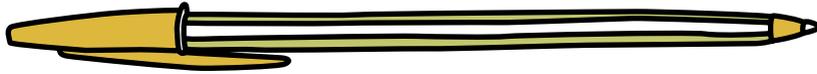


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"Journals encourage me to see with an inquisitive eye and they're more faithful than any camera."
Photographer (unknown source)

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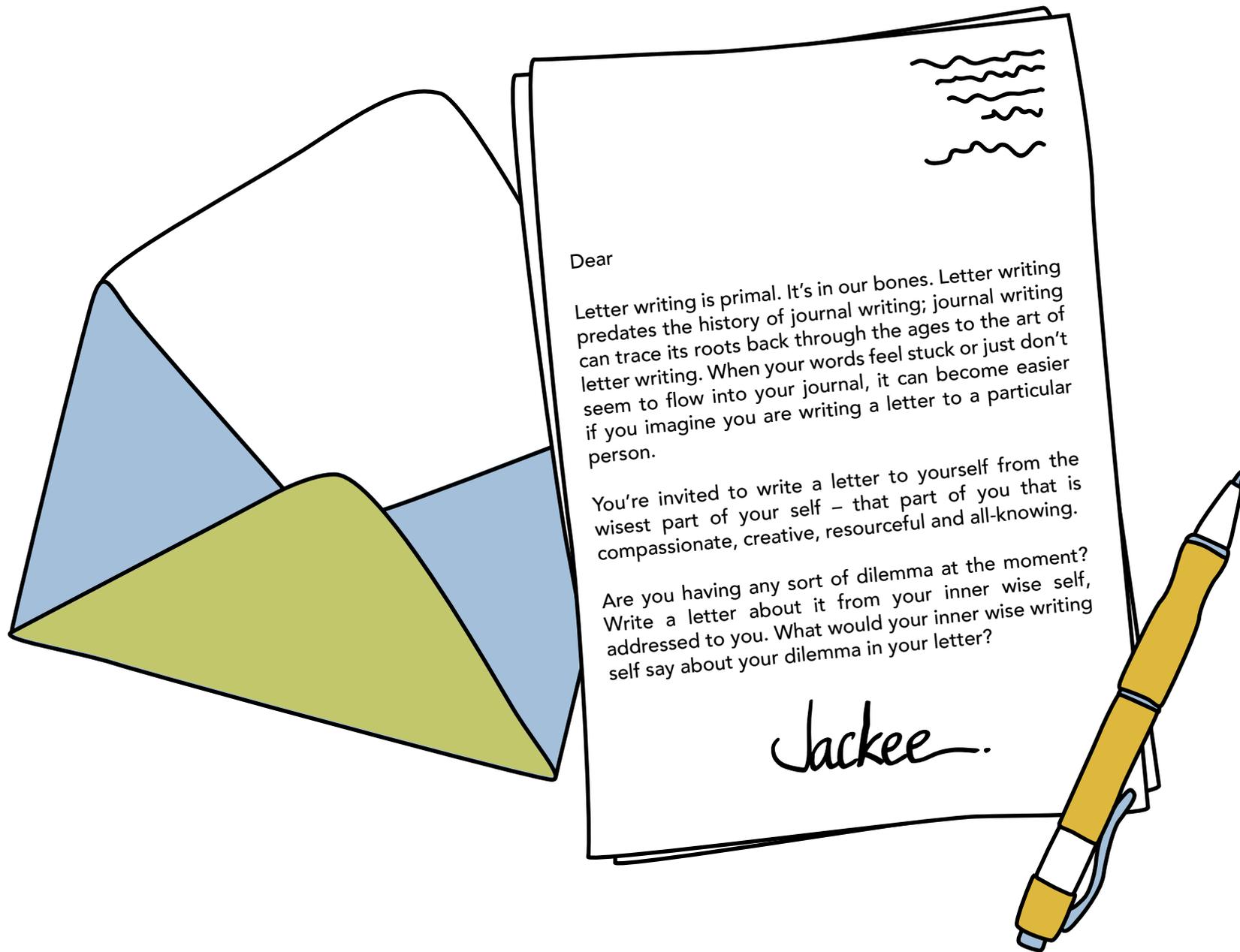
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INNER WISE SELF



Dear

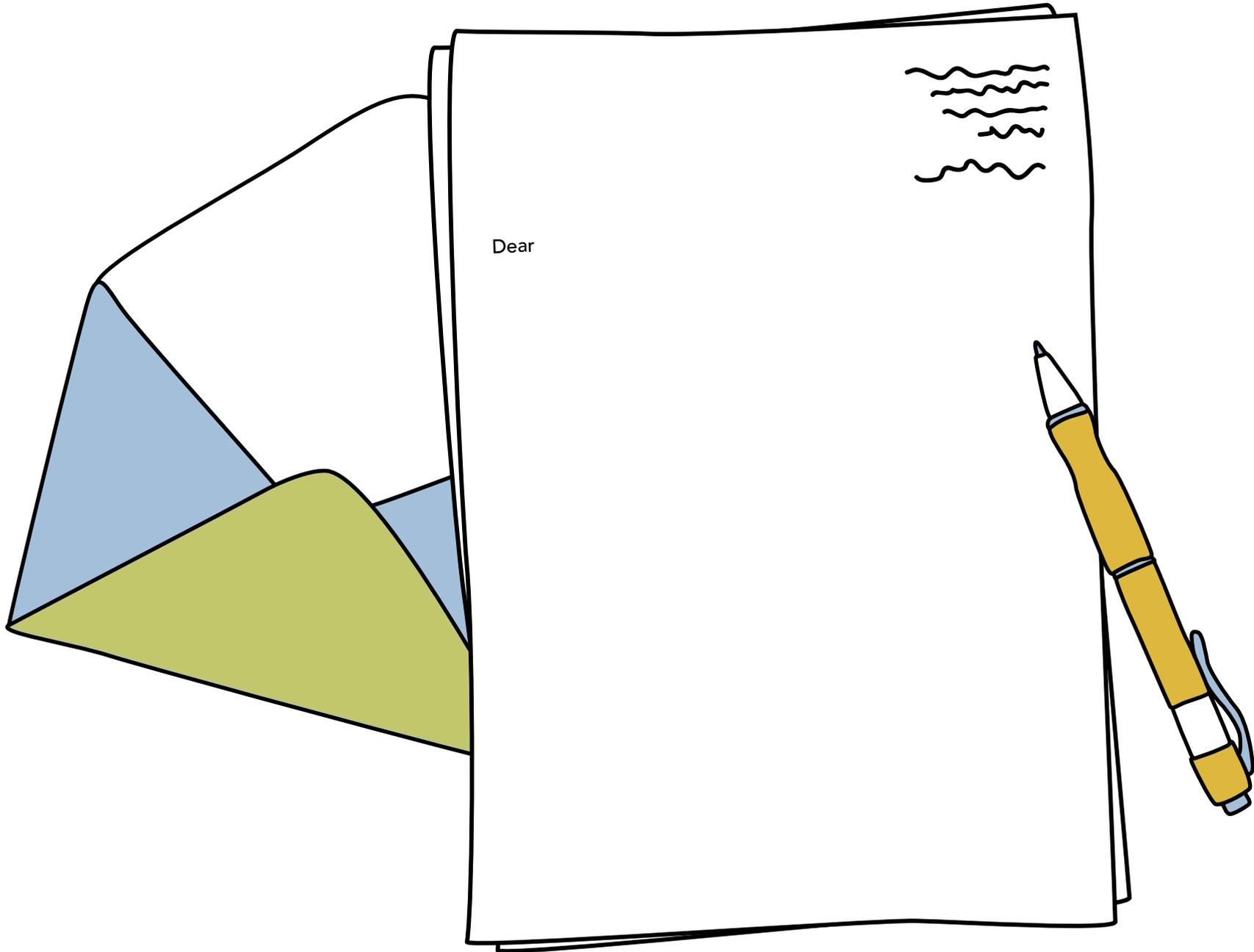
Letter writing is primal. It's in our bones. Letter writing predates the history of journal writing; journal writing can trace its roots back through the ages to the art of letter writing. When your words feel stuck or just don't seem to flow into your journal, it can become easier if you imagine you are writing a letter to a particular person.

You're invited to write a letter to yourself from the wisest part of your self – that part of you that is compassionate, creative, resourceful and all-knowing.

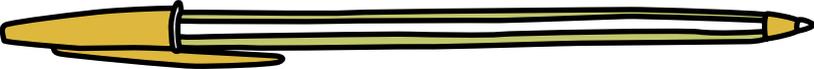
Are you having any sort of dilemma at the moment? Write a letter about it from your inner wise self, addressed to you. What would your inner wise writing self say about your dilemma in your letter?

Jackee.

INNER WISE SELF



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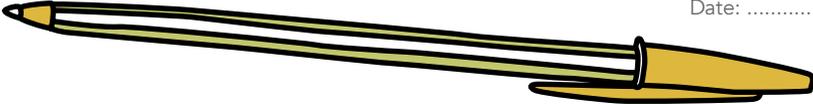
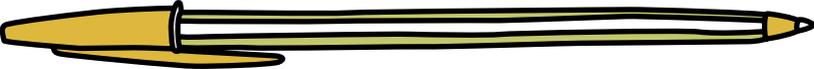
GOOD THOUGHTS



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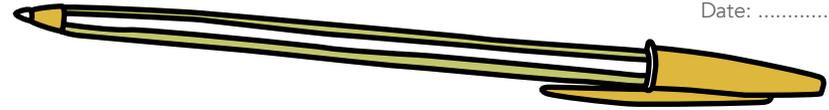
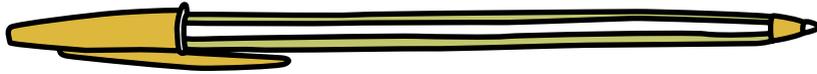
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“Who we are on the page is who we
are off the page.”
Laurie Wagner

WRITE TO THE SENSES

Not sure what to write about? Here's a journal writing activity to warm you up.

Think about a moment or episode from your day or from the last few days.

Write about what you saw, observed or didn't see or observe in that moment.

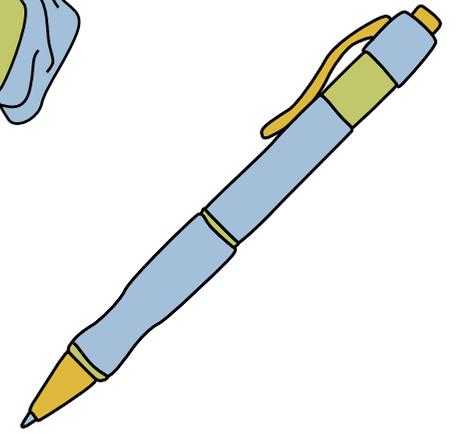
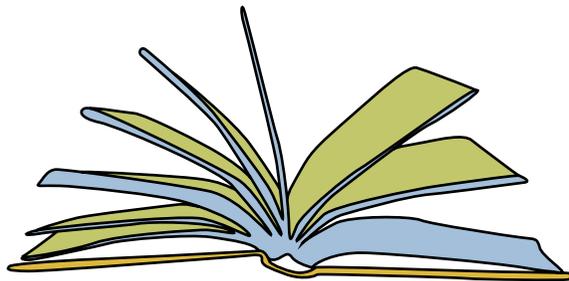
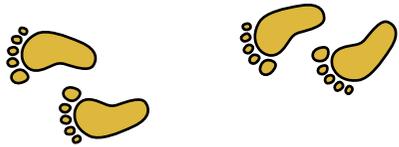
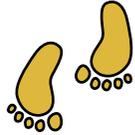
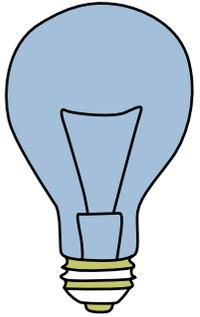
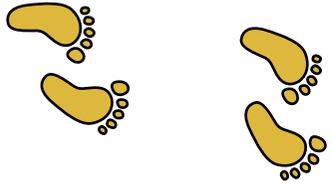
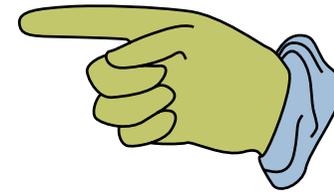
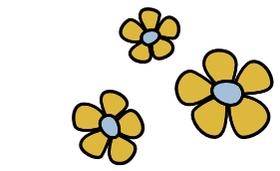
Smell is one of the first senses we're in touch with and is reportedly the last of the senses to go. What do you recall smelling during your observation? List the smells if that feels easier to connect with.

What were the different sounds associated with your observation? Can you isolate and name what you were hearing at the time?

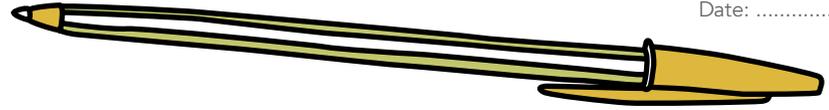
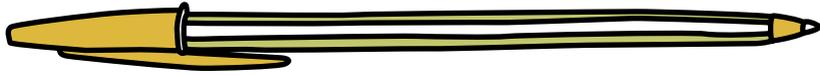
Was one of the sounds your own voice? How would you describe your voice to someone who can't hear but can read?

What feelings and emotions did you experience during this time?

What was your experience with touch? How many people did you touch? Whose hand held yours? What did the touch or sensation of the other person's body or hand feel like? What didn't feel pleasant to touch? What metaphorically touched you?

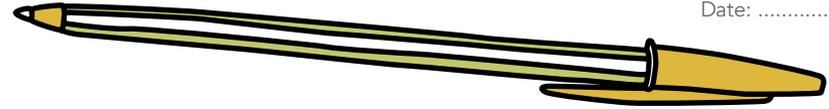
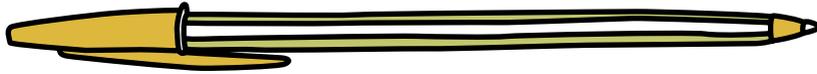


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"I think we're starved for a life of the senses. We're in the garage, we're in the car, we drive to work, we're in a windowless cubicle that's grey and beige."
Janet Fitch, quoted in A Writer's Book Of Days by Judy Reeves

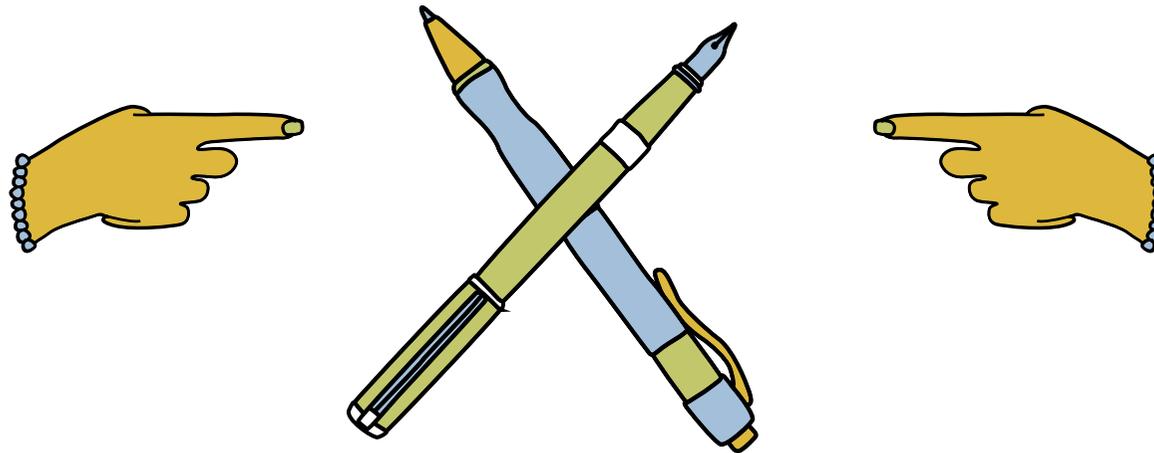
NON-DOMINANT WRITING HAND

Try this journal writing exercise when you're feeling stuck and want to get yourself out of a rut, or if you ever find that you keep doing the same thing and it isn't working for you.

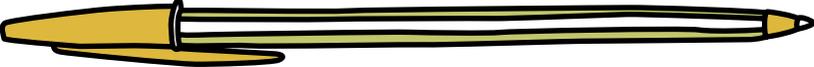
Do step one of the "question time" writing activity on page 68, using your dominant writing hand.

Now switch hands. Using your non-dominant writing hand, write a response to the dilemma or challenge. When you write with your non-dominant writing hand, you are writing away from the familiar and towards your unconscious thought processes. Some surprising ideas and solutions can surface when you write with your non-dominant writing hand.

A fun variation on this exercise is to try writing with your eyes closed.



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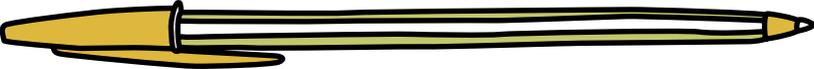
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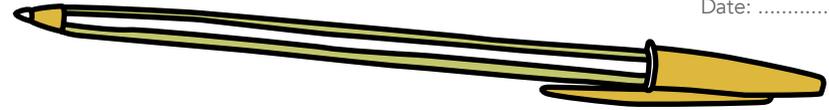
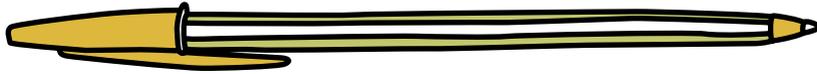
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"A diary lets us put who we are on paper, but it also allows us to describe who we want to be."
Ross McGuinness

WRITING DOWN THE GOOD STUFF

You can easily find yourself spending a lot of your writing time complaining and venting on the page. If you catch yourself doing this, simply switch to the writing prompt “I remember” and write a positive memory from your day or any time in the past. That way, you’ll have a collection of positive memories dotted throughout the pages of your journal as reminder of good times when times get tough.

Some of you might find it a lot easier to write in a journal when things are really difficult. This is understandable because the intensity of your feelings and level of awareness during such times means you are more vulnerable, therefore more willing to be open and reveal more of your true nature on the page.

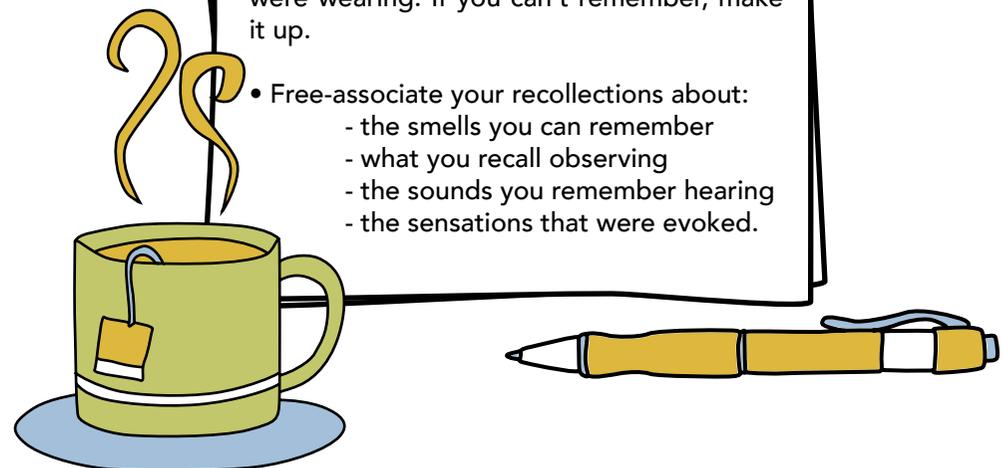
In short, it’s good to capture those moments when things are going badly and those moments when things are going well. If you wrote primarily about what was wrong, just imagine how much rich material from your own life would be overlooked. By recording the good stuff as well, you have the power to conjure up your own therapist on the page, one who is available 24 hours a day.

Writing about times when you’ve been tested may well throw light on the strengths and skills you drew on to get you through. So, when times are rough, you’ll have in your own written records a constant reminder of the tools that have helped you in the past, as well as inspiring accounts of times when life has been good. Over time, your journal will become a living document of your past, present and future selves.

You’re probably very familiar with the words and language associated with the less positive experiences in your life but perhaps less used to the language you might use for better times. So when you write observations about positive experiences, you’ll probably need to exercise those writing muscles that little bit more.

Use the following template when you want to bring your positive experiences to life in your journal in much more detail:

- Think about a positive experience you’ve had, at any time of your life.
- Locate it in time and space.
- Describe the weather at the time.
- What time of the day was it? What was the temperature and atmosphere in the air like?
- What were you wearing? Was it fashionable to wear that at the time? Describe the colours, tones, shape and texture of the clothes you were wearing. If you can’t remember, make it up.
- Free-associate your recollections about:
 - the smells you can remember
 - what you recall observing
 - the sounds you remember hearing
 - the sensations that were evoked.

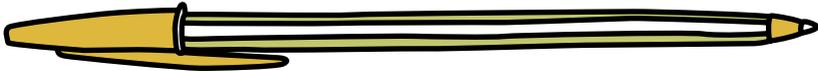


WRITING DOWN THE GOOD STUFF

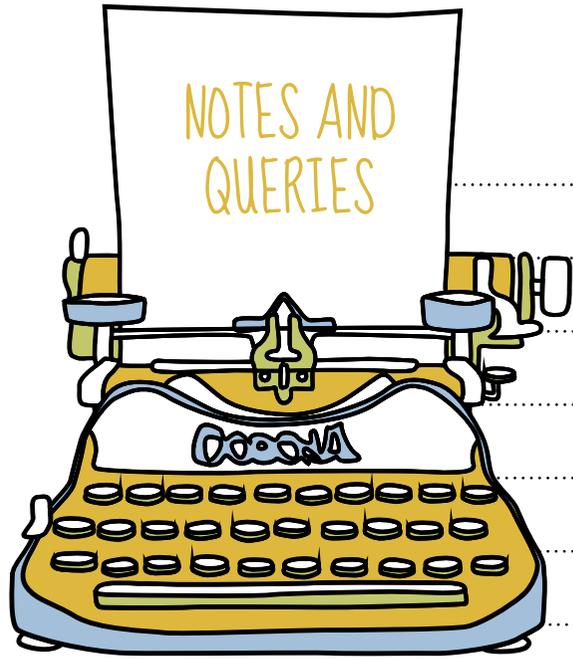
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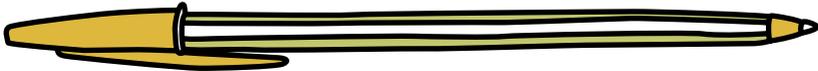




Write down things that made you smile today

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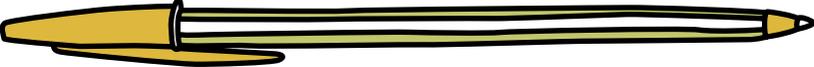
WATER YOUR WORDS

Whether you're immersed in water or in its presence, water has the ability to stimulate you and get your creative juices flowing. Have you noticed how often, when you're in the shower or bath, you get really good ideas or find the solution to a problem that has been niggling you? Being close to running water is intensely relaxing and research indicates that listening to the sound of water increases concentration.

Have a go at writing in your journal while taking a bath or when you are out in nature and close to water.

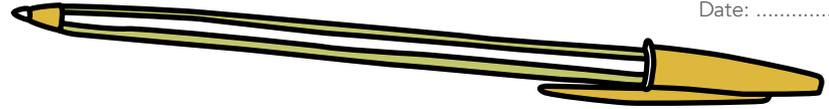
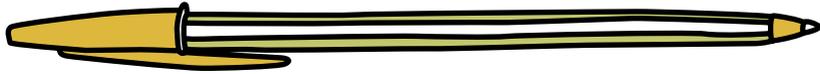
- * How does being near water make you feel?
- * Write about your first or an early memory of water.
- * Use this as your writing prompt:
The sound of water crept forward...

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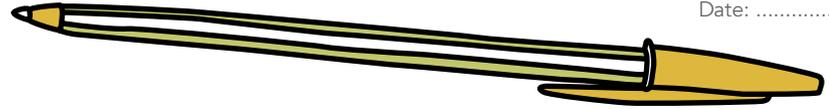
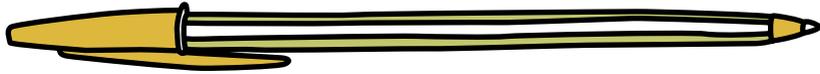
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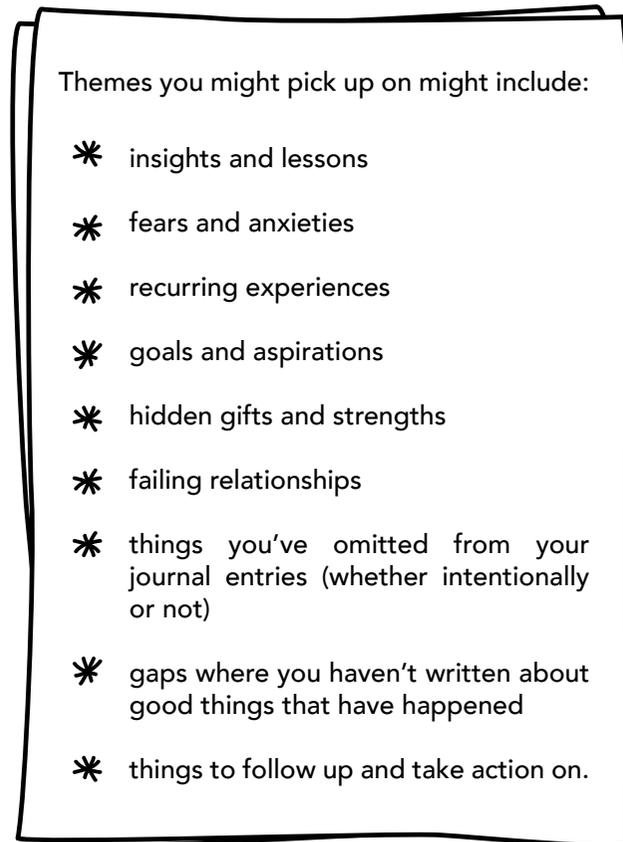


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HOW TO HAVE CLOSURE WITH YOUR JOURNAL

I usually get through a journal a month. In that time, I capture a surprising amount between the covers.

Re-reading your journal can reveal many unexpected surprises. To make sure these are not lost, record any recurring themes and patterns using coloured pens and post-it notes.



One approach is suggested by Alexandra Johnson in her book, *Leaving A Trace: On Keeping a Journal*: "It's most helpful if you go back through your journal first by posing each life pattern as a question."

HOW TO HAVE CLOSURE WITH YOUR JOURNAL

Using this approach, your questions will be things like:

- * What are the insights and lessons I'm taking away with me?
- * What are the good things I want to hold onto from this journal-writing journey?
- * What are the fears and anxieties I need to be more aware of?
- * What have been the recurring experiences or patterns?
- * What goals and aspirations am I excited to make progress on?
- * What are my hidden gifts and strengths that I will put to better use in the future?
- * What are the failed relationships I need to clean up or let go of? How do I plan to do this?
- * What might the omissions – the gaps in what I wrote about – be saying to me?
- * What will I be taking action on?
- * What one thing do I plan to do differently?

You don't always need to read through your journal word for word; a quick browse may give you enough information to go forward. Bringing about closure with your journal sharpens your self-awareness and reduces the possibility of you becoming entrenched in a blind spot when it comes to your own understanding of your habits and patterns.

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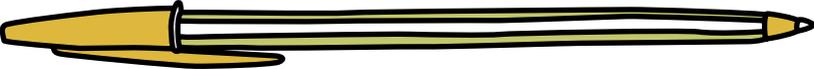
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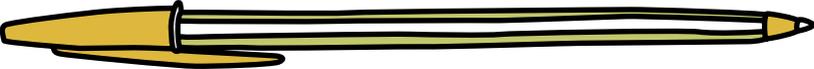
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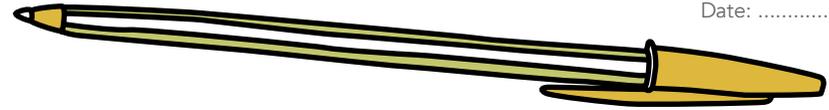
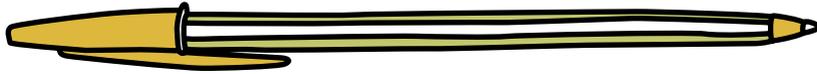
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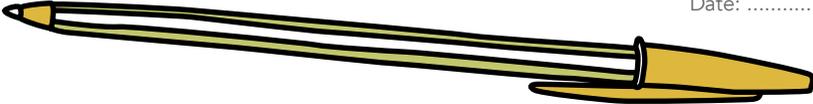
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“When I don’t write for a while, I feel as if I’m skimming over the surface of my life. When I get going on a story, I get to relive beautiful places I’ve been to when I use them as settings, and remember interesting people I’ve met. Like a good dream, writing is a great way to digest what I experience each day.”
Abby Clements

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CLOSING WORDS

What one word describes the essence of your journal?

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If your journal was published, what title would you give it?

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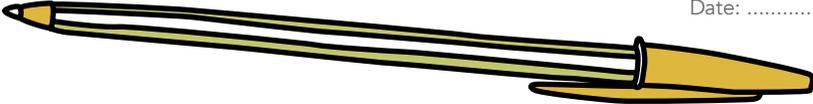
In the same way that a pebble into a pond causes a ripple effect, what's the one "pebble" you would adopt right now, as a result of your journal review, that would make a real difference to how you do things?

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I'll leave you with a final thought from the essayist Kim Stafford, who is quoted in *The Pen and The Bell* as saying that a violin, played every day, will keep the vibrations of the music in its body, even while it is lying still and silent. If it is not played every day, the vibrations dissipate and the wood grows lifeless.

May your journal writing keep your vibration alive, both on and off the page and in the stillness and the silence.

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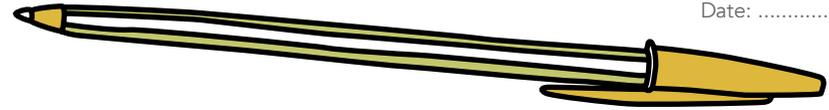
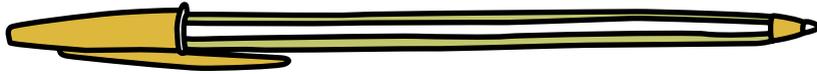
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"You must have a place to which you can go, in your heart, your mind, or your house almost everyday, where you do not know what you are anymore or what anyone owes you. You must have a place you can go to where you do not know what your work is or who you work for, where you do not know who you are married to or who your children are."
Joseph Campbell, quoted in Crossing The Unknown Sea: Work As A Pilgrimage Of Identity by David Whyte

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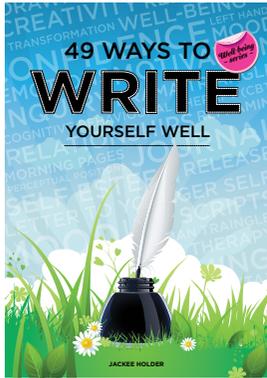
* I have tried to include as many of the references and quotes used in the *Journal Journey Guidebook* as possible. If you have any queries about references, please email me at: info@jackeeholder.com



Jackee Holder is a transformational coach, coach trainer and coach supervisor. She is the author of three books, *49 Ways To Write Yourself Well* (Step Beach Press, 2013), *Be Your Own Best Life Coach* (Infinite Ideas, 2009) and *Soul Purpose* (Piatkus Books, 1999). Jackee helps and inspires others to connect to their creativity and authenticity through coaching, writing, training and her love of trees and nature. As a passionate lover of books you can read more about her loves and likes and what she gets up to on her blogs at:

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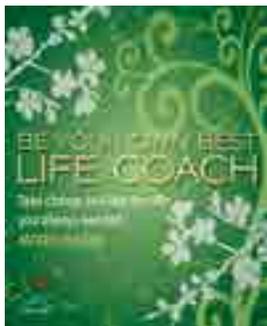
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Creativity Manifesto <http://ow.ly/grCKJ>

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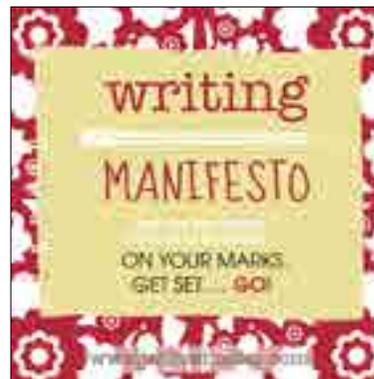
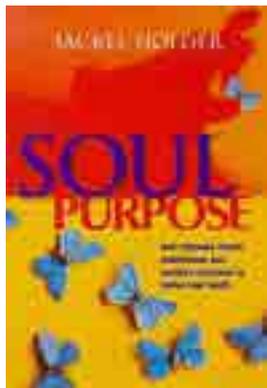
Wheel of Life Tree Audit <http://ow.ly/grEFY>

Wheel Of Life Tree downloadable e-book guide (2013)



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If you're interested in coaching with Jackee one on one or attending one of her writing workshops or retreats in 2014 she'd be delighted to hear from you. Contact her @ info@jackeeholder.com



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