

Journaling

A Tool for the Times of Your Life

By Minx Boren

I have been a journal keeper for the last 45 years. What began as a girlish "Dear Diary" has become a lifelong self-reflective process that has served me well. During the most difficult times of my life my journal has been my "dumping ground" — a place to release the fears, angers and frustrations that threatened to disturb my equilibrium and sense of perspective. At other times, my journal bears witness to the celebrations of my life as well as to my achievements and triumphs. But always, it has been a place to explore the innermost concerns and convictions of my heart. And, as a regular practice, it has allowed me to keep a finger on the pulse of my life.

A journal is a place to explore, acknowledge and record our thoughts, feelings, our beliefs and actions. It can be anything from a hand bound book of the finest quality paper to a loose-leaf binder with hole-punched sheets. What matters is the respect with which we approach the process of committing our words to paper.

Why become a Journal Keeper?

Regular journal writing is an effective tool for self-reflection. If, as Swedish statesman Dag Hammarskjöld put it, "The longest journey is the journey inward," then the act of journaling is a conscious, consistent commitment on this path to self-intimacy, a willingness to "in-to-me-see" (pronounced: intimacy). Reflective writing can be a powerful tool for self-discovery. Keeping a journal is a way of making the inner voices of the heart more audible. By choosing to journal we are actually demonstrating our sense of self-worth. We are acknowledging that our lives are worthy of our consideration.

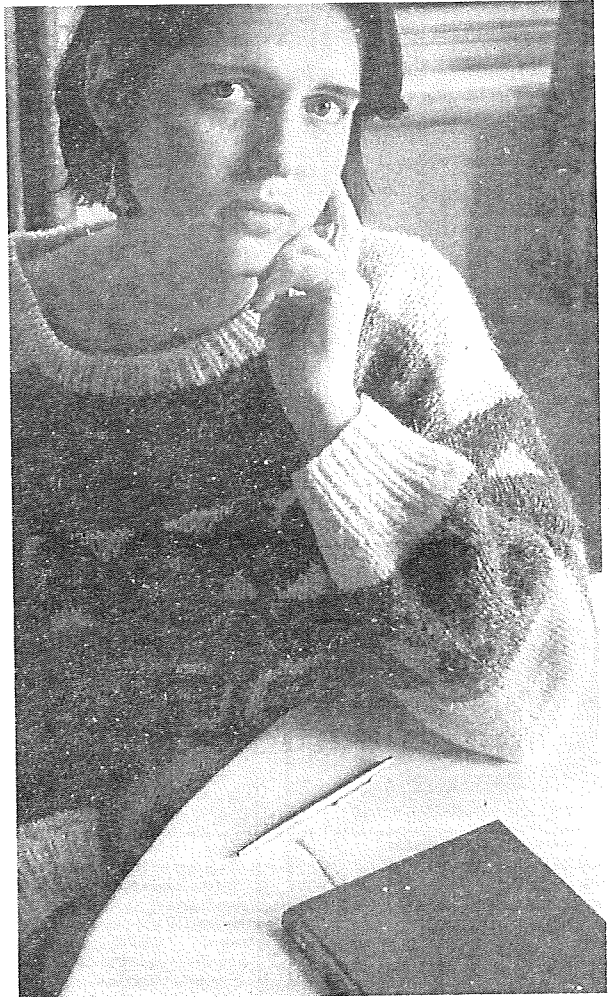
There is no time like the present to start to document who you really are, your thoughts and feelings, and what really matters most to you. What is required quite simply is:

1. A willingness to be *completely honest* with yourself
2. A commitment to *write regularly* — to set aside time for this reflective process to unfold
3. A decision to *not be a tough critic*, to let go of unreasonable standards and expectations concerning both your ability to write and the validity of what you have to say

You might also want to consider purchasing a special book or a loose-leaf binder or folder in which to collect your pages. This accumulation of journal pages allows you to look back from time to time, to measure and evaluate any shifts in consciousness and/or action that may have taken place.

To journal is to empty ourselves, to bring into the light of day our most secret and tenaciously held beliefs and assumptions, joys and heartaches, hopes and fears, all for the purpose of reflection and release. By becoming the scribe of one's innermost thoughts you can come to know and appreciate your most authentic Self. CC

Minx Boren is a Professional Certified Coach, freelance writer, and author of Soul Notes. Contact her at minx@CoachMinx.com.



Ways to Journal

- Morning pages – Upon waking, write three pages in longhand using stream of consciousness
- Daily review
- Daily specific journal entries
- Specific reflections on topics, quotes, issues
- Letter writing and dialoguing
- Connecting with angels and wisdom guides
- Journaling as prayer