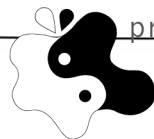


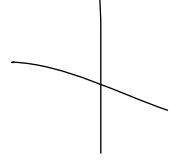
journaling prompts
for self-reflection

a fun lil' guide

to learn more about yourself

presented by upchuck





journaling has been so vital
for my self-awareness and growth

~ i hope you find similar healing ~

lmk if you need anything:
whatexactlyisupchuck@gmail.com

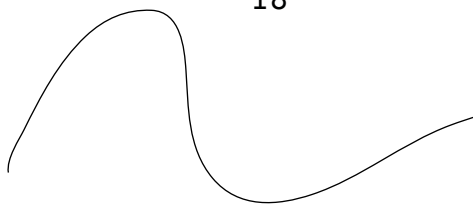
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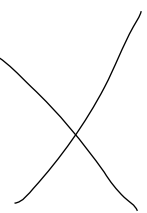
written by charlotte friend
january 2021
for upchuck productions



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IN- TRO:

I wish I could attach a hug to this .pdf so you would feel encouraged and supported in this journey of self-discovery.

It's not easy to dissect yourself on paper. Shame gets stirred up and sometimes we have to face outdated patterns and habits that no longer serve us. When we develop a journaling practice, it becomes easier to boil the noise down till all that's left is the truth.

And then, we have the choice to use these facts to make changes in our lives, or we can decide to close our eyes to the truth and stay right where we're at.

Maybe a good journal prompt to use when uncovering harsh truths would be to write about what you gain by choosing to remain the way you are. Why does it feel beneficial to stay in these old cycles even when you can see that they're no longer beneficial? And conversely, write about all the blessings that await you through your own decision to change.

c o m f o r t
z o n e

low risk/
low reward safe &
in control

f e a r
z o n e

external makes
validation excuses

low self-confidence

l e a r n i n g
z o n e

build awareness notice patterns
face challenges problem solve

g r o w t h
z o n e

set new goals accountability
follow-through new habits

A NOTE

My journaling journey started 9 years ago when I was 16 and totally unable to identify my emotions. My counselor at school suggested the following:

1. Go and buy a journal that you really love to look at. That makes you want to open it and pour yourself in. Take some pleasure in your journal-buying experience. It doesn't have to be expensive--maybe it's not a gorgeous journal, but you put your favorite sticker on the front or always use your favorite pen while writing in it.

2. Write on the first page of the journal that there are no rules for the journal. There's nothing to get right or wrong. No one can judge you for what you write in here. On these pages, you are free. You have nothing to prove here.

3. Try to write in it everyday. Even if that means just listing what you did or a sentence about how you hate to write in your journal--get it out and on the paper. A lot of us have an internal filter that feels afraid to let go even in a safe journaling space. Writing whatever comes to mind helps to get this filter out of the way. Basically, the more you write, the deeper you can see into your own (sub)consciousness.

first prompt:

Write yourself a permission slip in your journal. From here on out, you are free and accepting of whatever comes out on the page. You are not here to judge, but to watch with kind eyes your own mental and emotional processes that often go unseen.

Give as many details as you can about your intentions for the following pages. Whether that be to build awareness (which is the basis of any potential to change) or to practice gratitude, state your intentions so you can look back if you ever feel like you're "off track."

[PERMISSION SLIP]

dear inner child,

i will be going on a trip
of self-discovery and healing.

our mode of transportation
is self-reflection through
a dedicated journaling practice.

from here on out,
i give myself permission to:

- express myself
- practice non-judgment
- accept myself
- be patient
- grow without expectation
- forgive myself
- practice loving awareness
- prioritize my well-being

ON MY TERMS:

A lot of our notions and “rules” of the world were defined for us from an early age. And even if you know that you no longer agree with what family, friends, or society told you, the power of writing out your own definitions brings clarity, liberation, and autonomy. Defining the world for yourself brings greater control.

When I do this practice, I’ll start with defining the term and I end the entry by writing how, when, where, and why I can embody this concept.

Below is a list of words that might feel good to revisit on your own terms:

- happiness
- success
- love
- freedom
- autonomy
- financial security
- career
- work/life balance
- trust
- self-compassion
- validation
- spirituality
- pleasure
- safety
- need vs. want
- success
- failure

I encourage you to make your own list of personal vocabulary words to redefine for yourself. This will help you take a more active role in your life and how you interact with the world.

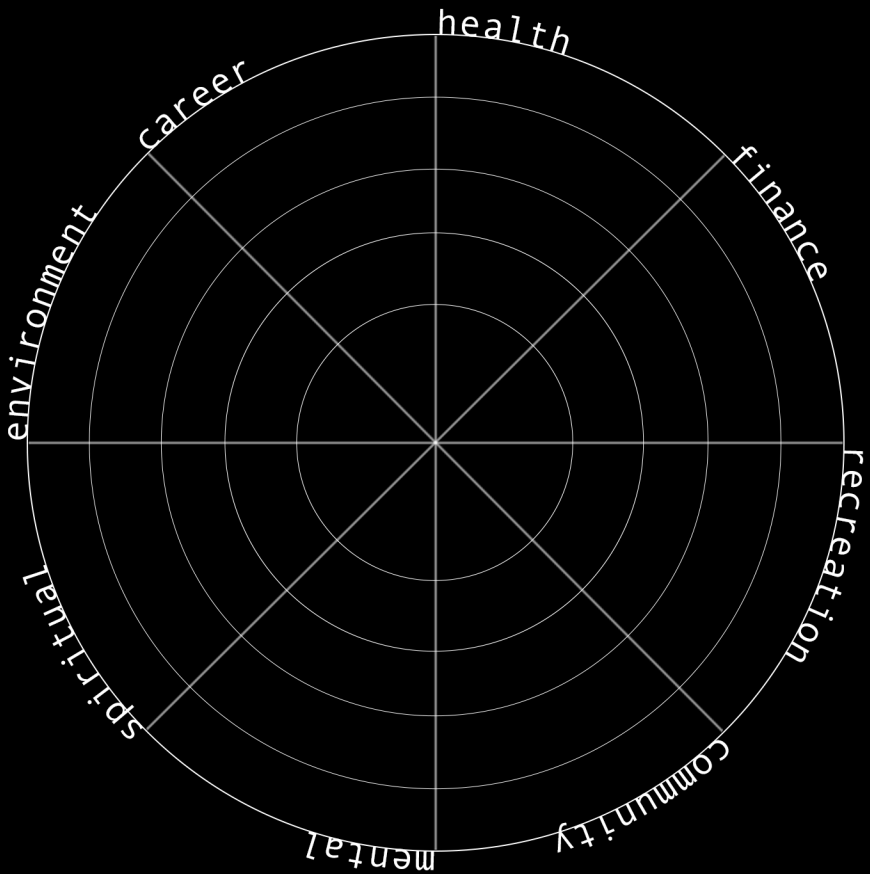
Generally, I use this practice when I notice I've been writing a lot about a certain topic or area of life feeling "difficult," but not really understanding why...it's usually because I'm trying to achieve something that I no longer really believe in.

Giving these terms a definition that you really believe can help keep you focussed on what actually matters to you, and not what you were told you "should," do, feel, or be.

***should is a dirty word. It usually doesn't reflect your true intentions, wants, or needs, but rather is a holdover from past understandings of the world. When I catch myself writing "I should probably apply for this job" or "I should have handled that differently," I scratch it out and write: "I would really like to apply for this job," or "I would like to handle these kinds of situations differently in the future."*

This keeps me positive and in control of what I feel like I need to do, rather than shaming myself into doing it :)

wellness wheel



Track your feelings of fulfillment by assessing each of these areas of your life. Fill in each section according to how satisfied this slice of life is to you at the time. Your feelings of fulfillment will change over time which is why it's a good idea to fill out a wellness wheel periodically. Draw them in your journal to visually track how your feelings shift over time.

1. health
physical fitness, good sleep hygiene,
vitamins & supplements, strength,
healthy & balanced diet
2. finance
budgeting, savings, treating yourself,
giving to charity
3. recreation
hobbies, relaxation, resting, vacation,
going out, anything other than "labor"
4. community
connection to those around you, feeling
supported, being accepted & understood
5. mental
positive mindset, being non-judgmental,
acceptance, feeling in control of your
thoughts and feelings
6. spiritual
seeking understanding/a higher purpose,
faith in humanity, connection to soul,
life-affirming rituals, non-dual thinking
7. environment
safe home, healthy working environment,
access to basic needs
8. career
enjoy going into work, access to future
opportunities, feel like you're making
a difference, collaboration

JOURNAL

1. Who am I when I'm alone? Am I the same person when I'm with company? Why or why not? Who makes me feel safe to be myself unapologetically? How do I feel when I'm in their presence? Are these feelings a good litmus test when assessing the character of new friends?
2. What are some of my least favorite qualities in other people? After airing that out, is there anything on the list I've done or characteristics that I embody?
3. Remember a time someone confronted me and held me accountable for my mistakes--how did I react? What do I feel in my body? How did I feel and act in the following weeks after being called out?
4. What's something I never understood as a kid? What silly little things did adults do that made no sense to me? Does it make any sense now?
5. Why is it easier for me to forgive other people than it is to forgive myself? How did I learn this habit? Does this pattern of forgiving others and scorning myself help anyone?

PROMPTS:

6. What is an ego? What does it look like? How can I spot it? How has my ego kept me safe? How has it caused harm?
7. Make a list of all the ways my life changed because of the pandemic. I will write these out anytime I notice them, even if it's across multiple pages and weeks or months. How do these differences make me feel? Have I had the chance to process them before?
8. When I see X, I feel jealous and wish I had it. What thoughts do I have when I feel jealous? What is jealousy trying to tell me? How can I take this jealous energy and direct it toward obtaining this thing that I clearly want? What step can I take today to get closer to this goal I'm now aware of?
9. What does self-validation mean to me and how can I practice it when I'm feeling small and dismissed?
10. What's the best lesson I've learned from a painful experience? Have I taken a moment to be proud of myself for not only getting through this tough time, but also making something beautiful out of it? Can I write a thank you letter to myself today?

11. How do I feel when I read the news (or doom-scroll)? Do I fully process the information I consume? Would it be more beneficial to spend some time processing my emotions in regard to the news? Can I put these feelings into an outlet that feels grounding and beneficial to my community?
12. Is there a part of myself that I miss? A quality I used to embody that has faded over the years? Is it worth working to regain this quality or can I smile at my growth, no matter what twists and turns it has taken?
13. Is there something that happened or came up today that I didn't get a chance to process? Maybe I'll list out what I did today to see if anything comes up?
14. What're two things that feel at odds, but are actually two sides of the same coin?
15. What does it mean to be compatible with someone? What does that feel like?
16. No matter how imperfect my parents were, what am I thankful they passed down to me? Is there a story that embodies this familial strength?

17. What do I think happens after death?
Is this a comforting or disturbing topic to think about? Why? Am I more afraid of living or dying?
18. What's no longer worth my time and energy? How do I know when I need to step away from a job, project, or person? What're my boundaries?
19. What's the emotion behind my procrastination? Am I afraid of an outcome? Overwhelmed by a current situation? Can I write until the pen and I figure out a solution to this issue?
20. What do I expect out of life? From my friends, family, lovers, coworkers, strangers, etc.? Are these expectations realistic?
21. Where do me and my boundaries end and the rest of the world begin?
22. How do I deal with discomfort?

Every morning since starting The Artist's Way in September 2020, I write my morning pages. After emptying all the gunk out of my mind, I dedicate the last page to affirmations; telling myself whatever the prior two pages have revealed I need to hear right now.

Most of my inner-healing work over the past 2 years has boiled down to building more self-trust and self-validation. To me, these two concepts are a single object with 2 different spirits. If I don't trust myself, then any words of affirmation I try to speak will fall flat. But if I'm not validating myself, then I must seek it from outside sources (which has never ended well for me).

It's a headache and has been such a slow and steady process, but I promise even writing a one-sentence affirmation at the end of a journal entry makes a BIG difference. I've found that it's much easier to hold myself accountable and face my messy parts when I speak kindly to myself.

If the idea of affirmations is triggering your fight or flight response, then congratulations, you're like most people. I've had multiple therapists make me say nice things to myself out loud and it is...a lot harder than it sounds. Many times, I literally couldn't even get the words to come out of my mouth.

I hope that you muscle through this affirmation practice until it feels comfortable and easy. You deserve to receive the kindness you give to others.

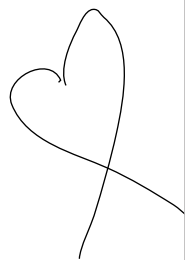
AFFIRMATIONS:

Building an affirmation practice helps cultivate shame-resilience and makes recognizing intrusive thoughts a helluva lot easier.

Here are some simple affirmations that have brought me a ton of healing:

- I am always doing my best. Yes, even when I make a mistake.
- I am unafraid of my mistakes and failures.
- I love myself unconditionally.
- I am inherently worthy of dignity, love, and respect.
- Setting boundaries is an act of love to myself and those around me.
- My heart opens easily to my community and I have the tools to heal myself if someone takes advantage of my kindness.
- I am resilient.
- I deserve success.
- My hopes and dreams will become reality because I make decisions every day that bring me closer and closer to these goals.

OUT- RO:



You're doing great, sweetie!

And I really hope you take responsibility for your greatness. Own your story, how far you've come, and accept the beauty of your growth. Before starting a journaling practice, I felt like nothing was within my control, but the more I wrote, the more I could see the truth. I lifted my own veils of hopelessness and began seeing reality as it was and not as I wished it to be or how I was told it should be.

Being honest with ourselves can be a lot harder than we think. Once we begin to unpack one outdated belief, we often discover a larger knot of beliefs that no longer serve us. Even if this process is difficult, I promise it is much harder to stay stuck in your old ways.

I hope the empty page holds a loving and caring space for you--space that you deserve to inhabit.

i'm always here to listento your
questions, comments, and concerns.

and if you find yourself bumping into
the same types of problems over and over
again, reach out and maybe we can find a new
question, another angle to look at it, or
another way to use the page to your benefit

you know where to find me:

@whatexactlyisupchuck
whatexactlyisupchuck@gmail.com

:)

upchuck

