

# How to Start Making A Journal

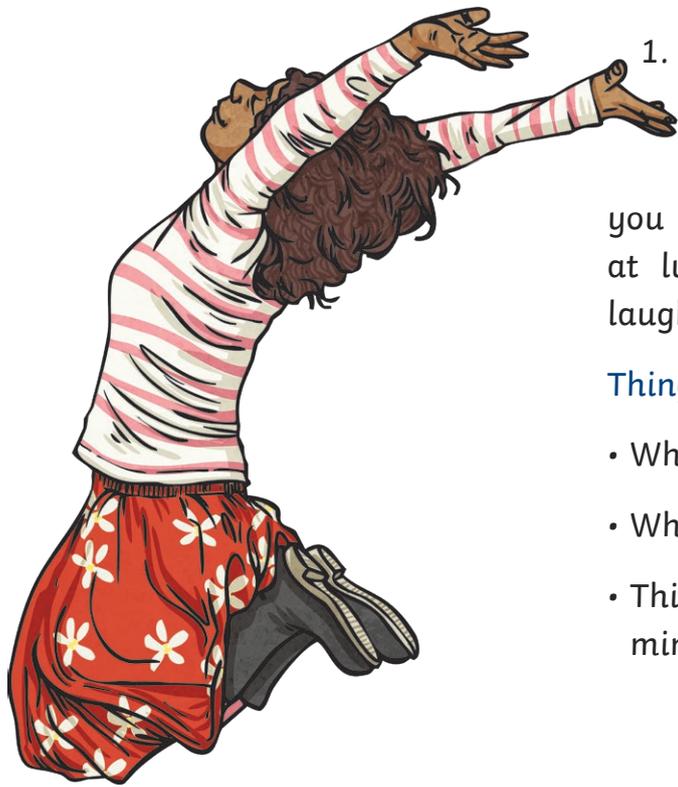
A journal is a notebook that can be used as a diary or a book to write down ideas. The idea of a journal is to help you think about what you are feeling and why you are feeling like that. It will help you to think about what you want to change and how you might be able to change it. It is a time to reflect and think back about the day you have had.

A journal can be kept private and give you the space to record your thoughts. If you choose to share your journal with someone, think carefully about who it is and make sure you are able to trust them.

Journals can help you to cope with difficult feelings such as anger, stress, worry, loss or anxiety. If you make writing or drawing in your diary part of your daily routine, ten minutes or more spent thinking about your day can help you to feel calmer, more in control and more positive about the next day and the future.

Negative emotions can leave you feeling tired, give you stomach aches and headaches and stop you from sleeping well. You may feel upset, cry a lot, feel angry more often than normal, feel lonely and frustrated.

Writing or drawing in your journal can help to reduce these effects by helping you to think about what is causing these behaviours and then think about a solution. If you decide this may help you, here are some ideas to help you get started and make the most of your journal.



1. Write down what has made you feel positive during the day.

Think about what you did and how you felt when you did it. For example, "I played with my friends at lunchtime. I loved running around playing and laughing. I felt good and full of energy."

Things you could reflect or write on:

- What made you feel positive today?
- What other emotions did you feel at the time?
- Think about what your body felt like and what your mind felt like.

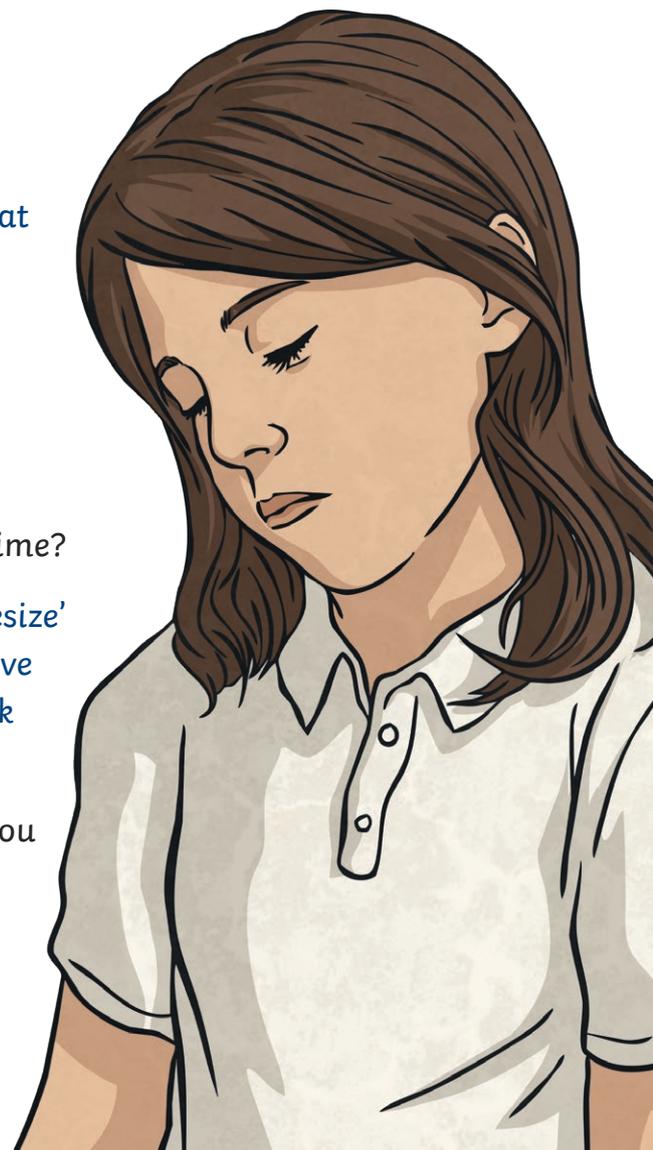
2. Write about what didn't make you happy today.

Think about these questions and how they related to you at different points in the day:

- What made you feel unhappy?
- Why did it make you unhappy?
- What part of it caused you to feel like this?
- How could you change this and make it better for next time?

Think about whether you can break the problem into 'bitesize' pieces so you can fix one part of the problem and then move onto the next part until the whole problem is solved. Think about how you can work on this first piece:

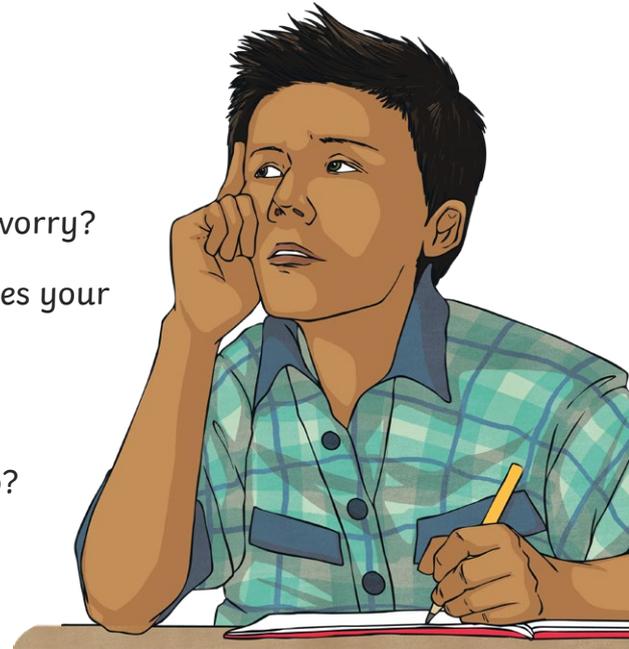
- Do you need certain people to help you? If so, how are you going to ask them?
- What can you do yourself?
- How long do you need to give yourself to work on this?
- How will you feel afterwards?



### 3. Write about your worries.

Think about anything that made you feel worried today. Once you have thought about it, answer the questions below:

- How did the worry make you feel?
- Does the worry stop you from doing anything?
- Do you avoid certain situations or people because of the worry?
- Do you get physical symptoms of worry? For example, does your stomach ache when you feel worried?
- What can you do to help this worry?
- Is there something you haven't tried yet but would like to?



### 4. What have you achieved today?

Every day you will achieve something. It may be extremely small or it may be something you have been working towards for a long time. Both types of achievements are important.

- How did the achievement make you feel?
- What did it make you think?
- Did it impact other people positively or negatively?
- Did you share your achievements with anyone?
- If so, who and why?

Think about highlighting the achievements in a different colour so that when you are having a tough day and can't see any achievements, you can look back through your journal and read through all the highlighted parts.





### 5. Write about what decisions you need or want to make.

During each day you will need to make decisions. There will be some decisions that will take a lot of thought and possibly involve asking adults or your friends for help. Other decisions will need little help from others and you will be able to make them quickly and easily.

Think about a decision you have made today:

- Did it go well?
  - What would you do differently next time?
    - Would you get help from other people?
    - Would you take more time?

### 6. What makes you proud to be you?

Try and think about at least one of these questions each day and take time to really think about it:

- What are the five proudest moments of your life to date?
- What is your special talent?
- What makes you feel good?
- What is your biggest achievement?
- What does your best day look like?
- What have you achieved that you thought you couldn't?
- What makes you brave?
- What is your favourite memory so far?
- What do you want to achieve in your life?



## Summary:

Journals should be a creative way for you to think back about your day and try to make sense of things. You should reward yourself by thinking about the things that made you proud of yourself as well as thinking about things that didn't go as well as you wanted.

Having a good balance like this will help you to think about you and your behaviour. Journals are private and should be kept as a safe place for you to say how you are feeling and why. Your journal is for you but, if you do choose to show someone, make sure it is someone you can trust.

The time you spend making your journal is worth it. Hopefully, creating a journal will help you to feel better emotionally and physically. If you are still unsure about how to get started, talk to an adult who may be able to help you create the first page. Often the first page is the hardest. The more you use your journal, the easier it will become and the more rewarding it will be.

Good luck and enjoy journaling!