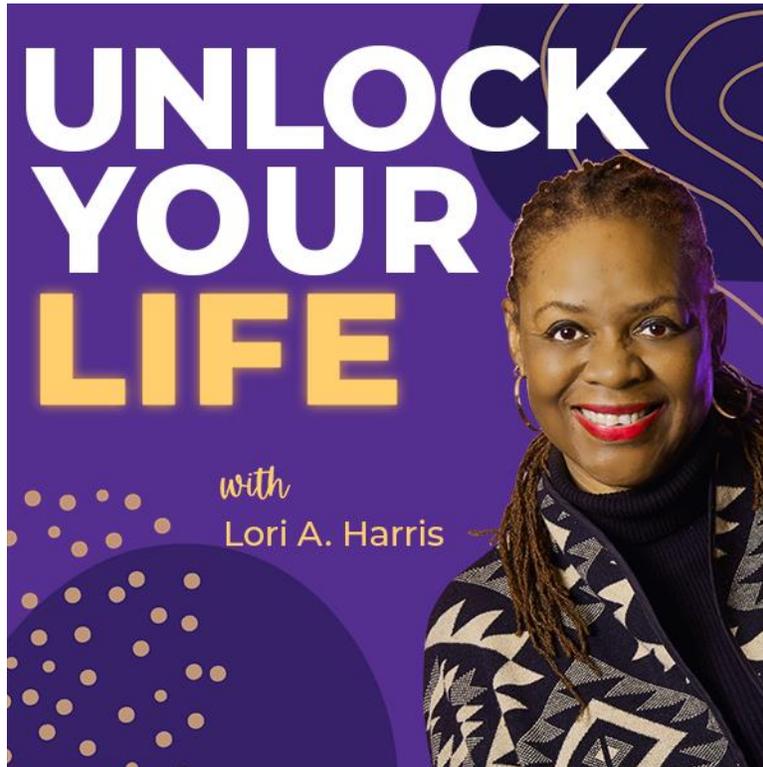


Ep #17: The Power of Journaling as a Ritual



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Lori A. Harris

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Ep #17: The Power of Journaling as a Ritual

Question. How's your relationship to you? How are you checking in and keeping track of yourself and your thoughts and your relationship to you? This month we're exploring the power of ritual. We're going to end this month with an exploration of journaling as a sacred ritual. Let's get it going.

Welcome to the *Unlock Your Life* podcast, a podcast for highly successful visionary women who want more out of life. If you feel that ache of unfulfillment in your soul, you're in the right place sis. Join life mastery consultant Lori A. Harris as she teaches you how to stop living for others and finally put yourself first. Let's dive into today's show.

Welcome back. So how are you doing? I'm doing really well. I just experienced a little tremor here in southern California. The earth literally was moving. I had to turn off the recording because my house was shaking. So I hope that life is good for you, and all is well, and nature and you are living a cooperative life that brings you joy.

So this month we have been talking about harnessing the power of ritual. We talked about creating a vision for your life, which is what we're always talking about on this program. Living deliberately and cocreating with spirit in a way that feels good. So what does that look like for you?

One of the most important tools that one can use in moving your life forward is just to notice what you're noticing. Noticing your own thoughts, and those thoughts impact on your life. So we know that the very basics of our personal development work and self-realization, self-actualization, self-awareness work is just to notice. Notice our thoughts. Because we know that our thoughts are the precursor to the events and effects of our life.

So if you think about it, something happens. Something happens. It can be something really innocuous and unimportant like you stubbed your toe, and then you have a thought about it. Then because you have a thought about

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it, you have a feeling. From that feeling, you develop a belief. You take action or you fail to take action. Then you get a result.

So you can stub your toe and go down a path of, "Oh my goodness. I've stubbed my toe. I wonder what this is going to mean for me. Is it going to hurt all day? I wonder if I broke it." Have a ton of thoughts. Or you can pause, take a breath, take good care of your stubbed toe and investigate. See the level of injury, if any. The same is true with other aspects of our life. We have a thought. Based on that thought, we either take action or we don't take action and we get a result.

Now I want to introduce you to the power of journaling as a ritual. Now it's easy to think of journaling as an exercise that some teenage girl is engaged in, but I'm thinking and introducing you to and inviting you to think about journaling as a way to build your own self-awareness. Now in order to start a journaling practice, the first thing you have to do is just decide. Make a decision that you're going to start journaling.

Pick a medium. Now when I say a medium, I'm just talking about are you going to do it with pen and paper? Are you going to do it with a book? Or are you going to go digital? The most important thing is what can you do with consistency? What can you do consistently on a regular and repeated basis so that you ideally can get the results that you're looking for?

Now if you go pen and paper, know that when you decide to take a handwritten note, generally you're activating a different part of your brain. So there's better cognitive retention. It's better for you from a learning point of view.

Now the purpose of keeping a journal is for your own personal growth. Now if you decide to keep your journal in a digital format then you kind of always have the potential to have it with you. You can have like an electronic paper and still get some benefit of the feel of a handwritten note, but it's not the

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same cognitive impact on your brain that handwriting pen to actual paper has.

There is some benefit too. You can keep it locked. You can keep it from other people. It can become a searchable document. You can continue to build upon it. So there is some benefits to using a digital device to record your thoughts, but you are going to retain less of the information that you record. You may have some technical issues. It is going to be yet another thing that's adding to your screentime.

When you're using regular paper and pen, you have the benefit of not being distracted with notifications, pings, bells, and whistles from your computer and other electronic devices. So it's something to consider, but it is highly portable when you're using a digital device. I'm old school. I like it pen to paper.

The best method that you can use is the method that you actually will use. That's the most important thing. So keep that in mind when you make a decision about how you want to move forward with keeping a journal. Since the purpose of doing a journal is to increase your own self-awareness to increase your growth, the most important thing is to get it done.

Next you need to decide on what format you're going to use for doing your journal. By that I mean are you going to work with a template? You can go freeform, which is the artist way. Which is just basically you commit to writing every day. Having a practice of checking in with yourself. There are no rules. You just write.

Basically it's an inelegant way to say it, but one of my coaches calls it a brain dump. You just write everything that's coming to you. You don't require it to make sense. You don't require it to do anything. You just write and get into the habit of creating a practice of writing and see what is revealed to you. That's one way.

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Another way is to have a very deliberate practice where you are deciding not only am I going to write every day or five days a week or whatever in intervals, but you decide how you will approach it. One thing you can do is get a format. Perhaps you want to write down what happened to you today. What were the major events of the day? What did you learn from it? How did you grow from it? Then perhaps close out with a gratitude. This is what I'm grateful for for today.

You can look to yourself to check in with yourself to say, "What was my daily experience? What did I learn? Did I read anything? What did I gain from reading?" Go from there. Look for places in your life where you were helped or perhaps you helped someone. I love the idea of reflecting on your impact in the world on a daily basis. So depending upon what you're doing for employment, it's a great opportunity to ground yourself in your work makes a difference.

A very easy way to approach doing this work is to look at the four quadrants of life. You look at your health and review and reflect on how are you caring for your body? What did you do to show appreciation to your body or to make note of what your body is capable of? How's it going? Did you try a new regiment? What impact has that had on your body and your mental and physical health?

Another thing is to check in with your relationships. What's going well with the people that you love? How are you sharing with them and reflecting upon that relationship? What are you bringing to the table? What would you love to receive? What are you already getting from your relationships and what would you love more of? Then how are you being in relationship? How are you showing up? Are you being the person you intend to be in a relationship?

You can check in the area of vocation. What are you doing with your creativity? How are you expressing yourself? Is it of value? Are you being

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and living a life in alignment with being the creative person that you want to be?

Then just check in. What's going on with the money and the time? Where are you putting your money and your time? These forms of energy that you have creative control over, what are you doing with them? Is it reflecting you and your values? So that's one way that you can approach it.

If you just want to really make sure that you're doing it, perhaps just check in with yourself weekly. What happened to you this week? What were the events, the tasks, the questions that you want to ask yourself? Do a review of the week. Perhaps this is something you can do on a Sunday morning reflecting on the week that's gone by and set some intentions for the week that's coming up.

The most important thing is to have a practice that's going to give you an opportunity to check in with yourself and to know yourself on a different level. So these are things that you can consider. I want to invite you to think about journaling as a ritual to bring more beauty and life to your life.

Putting pen to paper can be a way of clearing the cobwebs from your mind and checking in with yourself. Checking to see what you're actually thinking and perhaps checking in to see what is actually true. You can know if you're on track with your goals and make sure that if you aren't, it's an opportunity to reset.

So this month we're talking about harnessing the power of ritual. This week in this particular episode we're looking at creating a journal as a sacred act, a sacred ritual for self-awareness and self-exploration. I've reminded you that you can go digital, or you can go old school with putting pen to paper. You get to decide what your journaling practice is going to look like.

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The most important thing is that once you've made the decision that this is something that you would like to engage in then. Regardless of whether it's digital or pen to paper, it's about making the commitment and keeping the promise to yourself.

You get to decide what template you're going to use and how you want to reflect in this document. It can be freeform, or it can be in a framework or a template. You get to decide. The most important thing is decide to harness the power of ritual. Allow ritual to bring more joy and beauty into your life. Don't make it a chore. Make it a sacred act of self-care, and learn to enjoy being in your own skin, being in your own life, and having a great experience with reflecting and building on your self-awareness and creating a life that you absolutely love living and being in and being reflective with.

Use your journal to be a place of discovery. Notice patterns. Notice places in your thinking that bring up negative aspects of your life that you don't want to repeat. So your journal can be a tool for exploration and creativity.

Thanks for listening to the *Unlock Your Life* podcast. This is episode number 17. We've been talking all month about using the power of ritual. If you enjoyed today's episode and don't want to worry about missing another episode, you can subscribe and follow the show wherever you listen to your podcast.

If you haven't already, I would love it if you could leave a rating and review and let me know what you think of the show and help others find the *Unlock Your Life* podcast. Now when you leave a review, it doesn't have to be a five star rating, but I really hope you're enjoying the show and you're getting good value. I want to know what I can do to make it the best show possible.

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