

# Spark Your JOURNALING PRACTICE

hello   
universe,  
*It's Me*

Welcome to the Spark Your Journaling Practice. I am so honored to have you here. We will explore steps to move you towards an AH-MAY-ZING journaling practice. Whether you are a natural writer or the idea of a pen in hand terrifies you, journaling can provide insights and understanding that helps move you forward.

And who doesn't want to move forward? I know each day can feel overwhelming, frustrating, and just down right hard. Our minds are overwhelmed with everything we need to do and all the emotions that go along with it - sadness, hard conversations, heartaches, grief – as well as all sorts of other stressors. Journaling can help to process all that is chaotically frolicking in our brains. This was the case for me. Just the act of sitting down to write provided an avenue to get out of my head and unlock powerful insights that continue to propel my personal journey.

Not only did it provide insights, but it was incredibly healing. It reduced my own stress, helped to manage my anxiousness, put my fears in check and most importantly gave me a forum for some much needed positive self talk and encouragement. It seriously improved my mood and made me feel better about myself. What could be better than that?

While I cannot predict what specific benefits you may realize, Medical Journals, Therapists, Doctors and healers of all sorts recognize the benefits journaling can bring to people's lives. If you commit to the practice something magical is bound to happen for you. That much I know to be true.



*Let's get started.*





# PREPARE YOUR OASIS

I love having my own personal oasis. It's my go-to space when I need to think, retreat or process my day. At first, my go to spot was my closet. Amidst my clothes, shoes and purses I could hide from my real life, turn on the flashlight on my phone and write in my journal.

Over time, I got out of the closet and created an oasis in my bedroom. It became the spot that I could retreat to each evening and focus on my journal writing. For me having that dedicated space shifted my mind from all the day to day noise and into a moment of writing. I would enter my space, sit in the same spot each time, and know that I was about to settle into my journaling.

Do you have a space in your home that can become your oasis? It may be your closet, like mine was for so many years, or a corner of your garage, a home office, a bedroom, a spot in the backyard, or maybe its sitting under a tree at your local park or even your local coffee shop. It is any place that you can dedicate to journaling. A place where you can be alone with your thoughts and really tune into and be with yourself in a meaningful and highly connected way.





To create this oasis, you may want to decorate this space with special items that resonate with you. Perhaps a beautiful candle, a flower or a plant, a pretty vase, an inspirational photograph or quote, perhaps a crystal or some beads. You want to make it conducive for writing so maybe a chair or a desk, a comfy cushion or a cozy blanket. Keep easily accessible whatever helps to transform this space into your personal oasis.

Not only did I have a dedicated space, I also had the most beautiful journal to write in. I loved my journal. The design, texture and beautiful colors of the cover. The weight of each page and its gorgeous golden edges. The pretty flowers that adorned some of the pages. It was beauty in my hands.

To make journaling a special experience, I do encourage you to find a journal or a piece of stationery that you love. Oh and don't forget to have your perfect pen in hand too. Some of you may prefer to use an online journaling app. Luckily, there are many of them out there to try.

Once you have your space and your journal, it's time to set the stage around journaling.

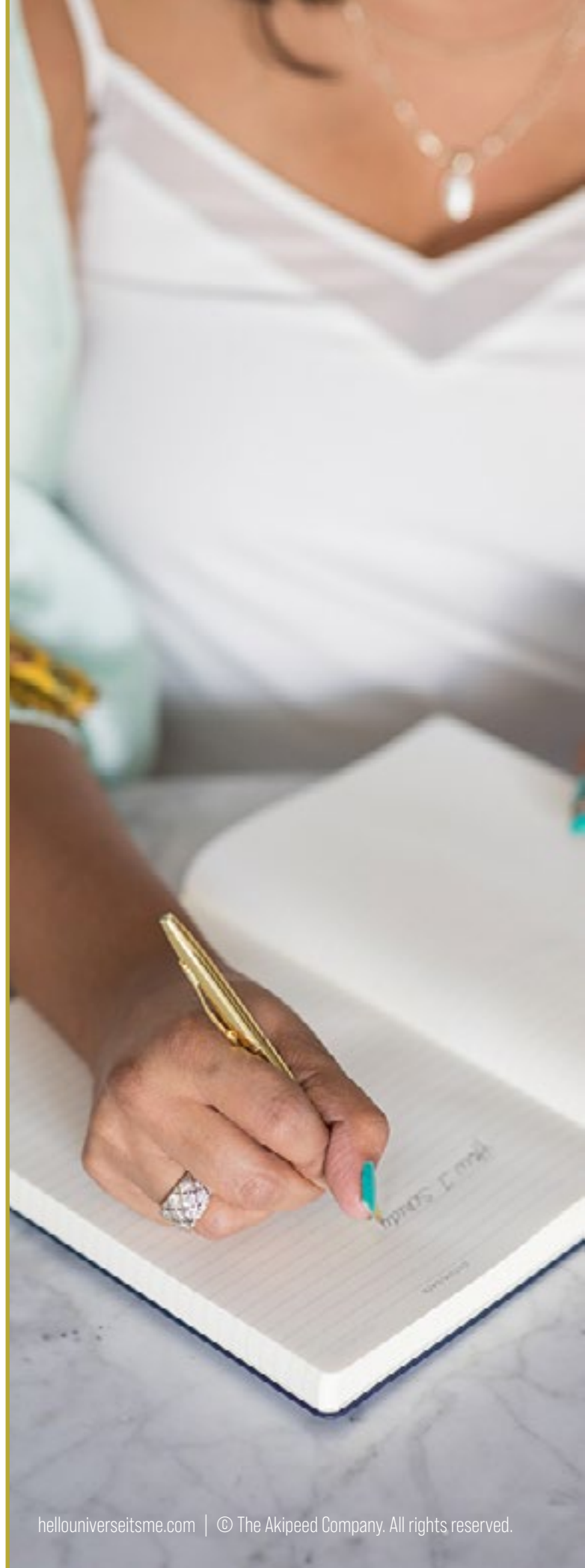
*Are you ready to ease into this practice?*



# Set the STAGE

Once you have created your oasis – be it in the corner of a closet, in the garage or outdoors at a local park or café – it's time to set the stage to tune into your journaling. Think of it like a dial on a radio. You have spent your day dialed into work, into taking care of your family, into whatever hustle bustle commotion or irritation consumed your day. Now it is time to leave that station behind and tune into journaling. It's time to engage all of your senses into writing.

For me, journaling is part of my evening ritual. I like to set the stage by lighting the candles in my room, using a little palo santo or sage to cleanse my space. I close my eyes, put my hands together and do a little prayer to thank the Universe for this day. Then as I open my eyes I begin to write.





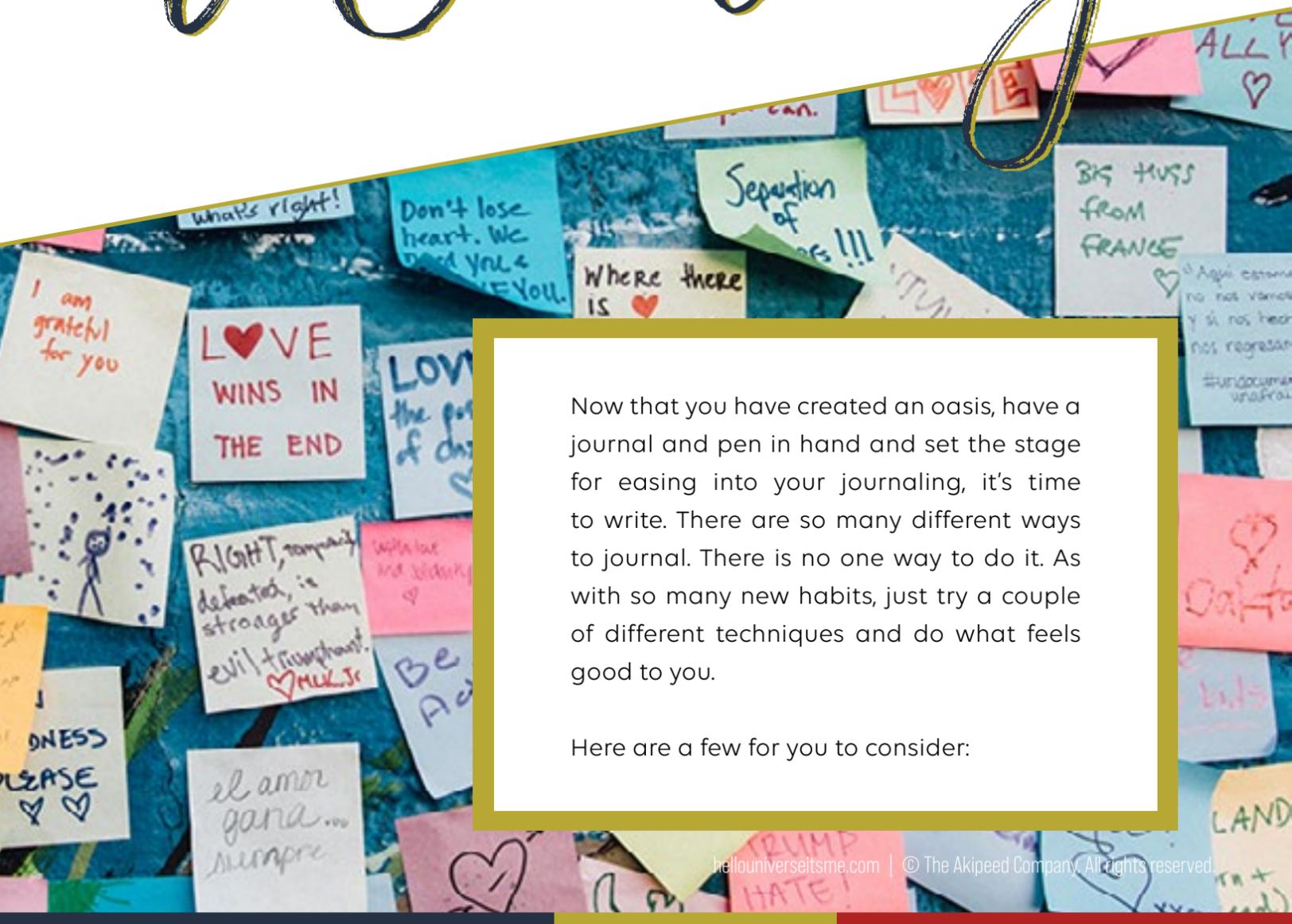
How you set the stage for your journaling should be uniquely your own. Do whatever resonates deeply with you. For some, you may want to take a long quiet bath before journaling. Perhaps playing some soothing music for a few minutes before you begin to write feels good. Others may want to make a nice, hot cup of tea in preparation for writing. Whatever feels right for you, do it. Give yourself some way that you transition into your journaling practice each and every time.

If you are not sure what to do, try this. Sit quietly for a few minutes (use a timer on your phone if needed), close your eyes if that feels comfortable to you, and take a few deep, long breathes in and out. Try to stay in that space where all you are doing is internally observing your breath flow in and out for a few minutes. Then, when you are ready, simply open your eyes and begin to write.

If easing into journaling through some type of ritual doesn't feel right to you, that is totally fine too. Everyone is different. Maybe over time you will find a rhythm that works well for you.

*Now, let's start to write.*





Now that you have created an oasis, have a journal and pen in hand and set the stage for easing into your journaling, it's time to write. There are so many different ways to journal. There is no one way to do it. As with so many new habits, just try a couple of different techniques and do what feels good to you.

Here are a few for you to consider:

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# FREE WRITE

For many of you, just letting the words flow onto the page will feel like a comfortable place to start. In this form of journaling, you write uninhibited. Whatever comes to mind, you put on the page. There is no need to edit yourself. No need to form complete sentences. No need to judge or analyze what is coming out. Just write. Let the words flow. Allow whatever you are thinking, feeling or curious about to float from your fingers to the page. Even if you don't know what to write, you can write just that. It is a completely free and open writing.

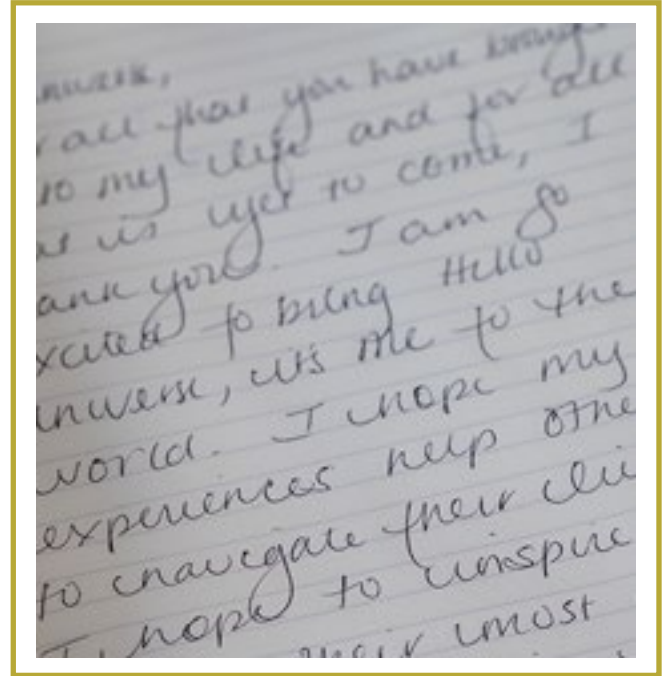
For me, the more I started to journal the more I gravitated towards free writing. I enjoyed letting whatever was inside of me pour out. I could be free to flush through and freely explore in my journaling whatever needed processing. When I wrote freely, more of what I needed to understand came through.

Start your free write by just pouring onto the page whatever flows naturally.



# LETTER WRITING

Writing a letter can be a great way of easing into a journaling practice. It's a way to release whatever may be within you that needs to come out. Most importantly, it is a letter you write without any intention of sending. This allows you to be more free with what you write. You don't have to worry about hurting the recipient's feelings or worrying about what they will say in response. You can just freely express yourself to the person and that can feel incredibly liberating. It can be a powerful way to share whatever is deep within yourself and needs to be released.



Your letter can quite literally be to anyone. Some of you will immediately know who you want to write a letter to and others of you may have no clue. Here are some ideas of who you can write a letter to:

- Your current self
- You 10 years in the past
- You 10 years from now
- A relative (parents, siblings, grandparents, children)
- Friend
- Teacher
- Confident

My most recent journaling practice involves daily letters to my daughter. I felt a deep desire to share my life with her so that when my daughter is a grown woman she would better understand the struggles, challenges, triumphs, loves and heartaches that her mother experienced.

If writing a letter to yourself or someone in your life, resonates with you then give it a try. It is a great way to begin your journaling journey.



# GRATITUDE

Being appreciative and deeply grateful for the regular everyday happenings in our lives is incredibly important. In fact, in positive psychology, gratitude is associated with greater levels of happiness. Focusing in on 1 or 2 things each day that we are grateful for and appreciative of can make us feel better. When we feel better, more

positive, more appreciative of our day, we actually begin living on a wavelength that is far more uplifting and energizing than the wavelength we are on when we are not actively practicing gratitude.



Starting a journaling practice on gratitude is incredibly simple. Write on your page 1 – 2 things in your day that you are grateful for.

If you really want to challenge yourself, try and not have your gratitude journal repeat. Meaning each day find something unique about the day that you also haven't written about before. Maybe you already wrote being grateful for your family or for the nice weather. Now today find something new or more specific. For example, maybe you feel grateful for the kind person you encountered in your day who paid you a compliment that changed the mood for the rest of the day. Or that wonderful phone call with an old friend that warmed your heart. Or something specific a family member or friend did for you.

It's not always easy to find something to be grateful for especially in the midst of a difficult day but once you start writing about gratitude, you will find that you go through your day searching for the good stuff so you can write it down in the evening.

*Give it a try and see how it feels.*



# PROMPT BASED

We can all use a nudge in the right direction sometimes. This is where prompts come in. You may know you want to write but starting feels daunting. This is when a prompt can be incredibly helpful. It just gives you a few words to begin your writing. It can also be incredibly helpful on days when you feel blocked.

I use prompts on days I want to reflect on topics or feelings that I haven't considered in my free writes or letter style journaling. It adds a freshness to my journaling practice and often what comes up for me is surprising and enjoyable.

Here are some prompts for you to consider:

- Today, I celebrate that I am...
- I feel like myself when...
- My favorite way to spend the day is...
- I could not imagine my life without...
- I wish others knew this about me...
- The five things I am deeply grateful for in this moment are...
- What I know to be true today that I did not know a year ago is...
- I can show myself more self love by doing more of...
- I can make more space for self love by adding or removing the following from my life...
- If I could share one truth with others, it would be...
- My deepest self needs to hear...
- My favorite memory is...



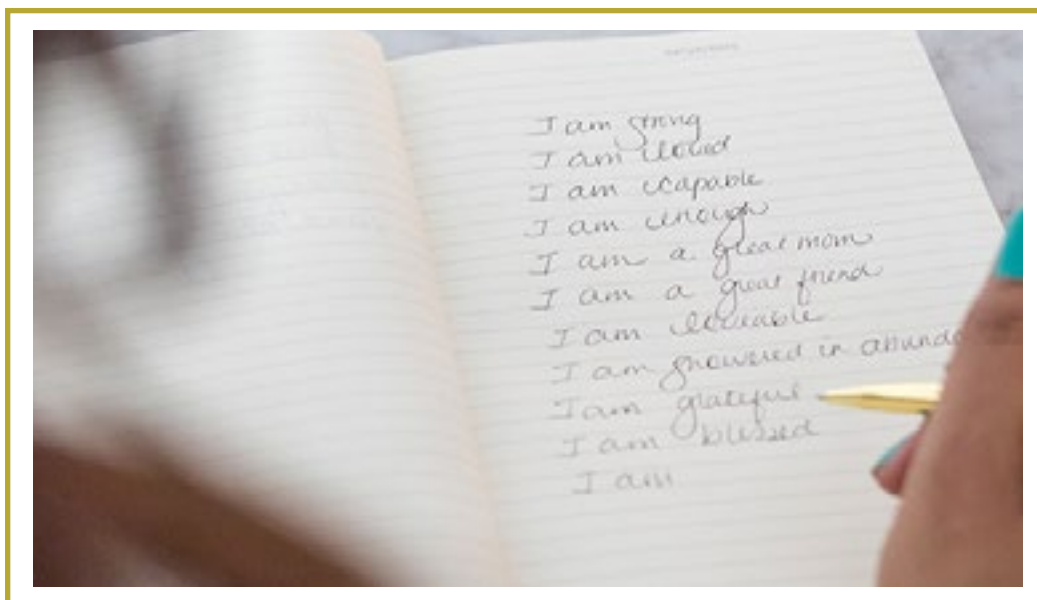
# POSITIVE SELF TALK AFFIRMATION

I am a firm believer that we need to speak more kindly to ourselves. We tend to focus on what is wrong in our lives more than what is right. Not to mention, we are inundated in today's society by all that is going badly. Negative news and information makes up our airwaves far more than anything positive or uplifting.

This is why I love incorporating positive self-talk into my journaling. Writing positive thoughts starts shifting our brains to think in more optimistic terms about ourselves. By showing ourselves some compassion and understanding we are giving ourselves a warm and loving embrace for all that we have been through. What could be better than that?

I always add positive self talk to my journal entries. Positive self talk involves writing something nice or uplifting about yourself. It can be as simple as "Today I am strong" or "Today, I honor all the hardships I have experienced. They have made me who I am today."

Can you think of a positive self-talk affirmation that you can write today? It may feel hard or unnatural at first to speak to ourselves so kindly, but just like anything else it will get easier with continued practice. Or let's work together to define the perfect self-talk mantra for you. Give it a try. If you need help getting started, send me an email and let's work on this together.





# NOW IT'S *Your Turn*

Clearly, I love journaling. In the toughest periods of my own personal journey, journaling is what saw me through by allowing me a safe space to say and contemplate all that was jumbling up my airwaves. It is healing, insightful, and a powerful way to wind down and reflect on my day and my life.

I want you to love journaling too. I want you to experience the way that putting pen to paper (or fingers on your keyboard) can help to release whatever is within you. And most importantly, I want you to be happy, to experience joy in this life and honor your true self. I want you to talk to yourself with kindness. I want you to be your own coach and encourage yourself through positive self talk and find ways to lift yourself up little by little, word by word. We all need a little lifting up to traverse this life. It all starts with you.

To encourage your process, I have created the following journaling sheets, which you can use, to start your journaling journey. Also, each week, I will send you more prompts, a link to a journaling meditations and other fun things to consider as you embark on your journaling practice.

*And now, it's time to write.*



# ABOUT DEEPIKA



Deepika Sandhu is a Partner at a San Francisco Bay Area-based consulting firm, mom to a fun-loving, sassy, brave and courageous seven-year-old, and a writer. Hello Universe, It's Me is Deepika's first book. Deepika works to inspire others through workshops, customized events, speaking to audiences of various sizes and 1:1 coaching to help you live your very best life. Let's talk about curating an amazing event for you or even better, let's start working 1:1 to help you realize your life's full potential. Learn more at [hellouniverseitsme.com](http://hellouniverseitsme.com)



# HOW TO USE YOUR PRINTABLE **DAILY JOURNAL**

Think of your daily mantra or affirmation as the words that serve as your motto for your day. If you write in the mornings, this will be the words that guide you through your day. If you write in the evening, these will be the words that you wish to deeply embed within your being as you sleep and carry with you into the next day.

## Today's Mantra/Daily Affirmation

Today, I am grateful for

Practicing gratitude daily is an incredible healing practice. See if you can list at least one, specific aspect of your day that you are grateful for. Try not to repeat something but keep finding new things in your day to be grateful for.

Today, I release from my day (or my life)

What do you need to let go of in your day or in your life? Write it out here and as you do imagine it slowly drifting away from your life.

Today, I want myself to remember that I am

This is the place to write your positive affirmation. What is it about yourself that you want to remember about yourself? Something that you know you need to hear. Write it here and really feel these words deeply.

Free-Write Pages

Free Write – Use this space to write whatever needs to come on to the page. Remember, don't judge or analyze, just write free!





# PRINTABLE **DAILY JOURNAL**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Mantra/Daily Affirmation \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Today, I am grateful for \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Today, I release from my day (or my life) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Today, I want myself to remember that I am \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## FREE-WRITING PAGES



